

Birches First School



OUR PROSPECTUS **2025-2026** NURSERY

Believe, Grow, Succeed... to be the best 'me' I can be!

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Welcome



Welcome to Birches First School Nursery

We aim to create a happy, secure and stimulating environment in which each child will be given opportunities to develop socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually. Our School and Nursery promote the needs of each individual child, and through the expert guidance of our highly qualified and experienced Early Years staff, we will help your child to develop a wide range of pre-school skills. The Nursery curriculum is carefully planned and structured to encourage the development of these early skills through practical 'play' activities. Children's progress is monitored and recorded so the needs of the 'whole' child can be met appropriately.

The Nursery is very much an integral part of the school and with Reception Class creates our Early Years Unit. Nursery children take part in school activities and become familiar with members of staff and school routines. Our Nursery provides the best possible preparation for future life at school.

We actively encourage a close partnership between home and school by working together to support your child's needs.

Nursery is a very special time and we believe your child will have a happy, rewarding and productive experience at Birches.

Miss. S. Varricchione - Headteacher

Mr. T. Abbiss - LAB Leader

General Information



- Address** - Birches First School
Birches Avenue
Codsall
Wolverhampton
WV8 2JG
- Telephone** - 01902 297910
- E-mail** - office@birches.staffs.sch.uk
- Website** - www.birches.staffs.sch.uk

School Governors

- Mr. A. Wynne-Jones - Co-opted Governor
- Mrs. K. Lawley - Co-opted Governor
- Mr. T. Abbiss - Parent Governor (LAB Leader)
- Mr. K. Goodridge - Parent Governor
- Mrs. K. Graham - Parent Governor
- Miss S. Hulme - Assistant Headteacher
- Miss. S. Varricchione - Headteacher

Teaching Staff

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| Miss. S. Varricchione | - | Headteacher |
| Miss S. Hulme | - | Assistant Headteacher/Year 2-PT (0.5) |
| Mrs. K. Dudley | - | Nursery Teacher (Mornings 0.5) |
| Mrs. E. Buckley | - | Reception EYFS Leader |
| Mr. D. Jones | - | Year 1 |
| Miss. S. Cartwright | - | Year 3 |
| Mrs. K. Kandola | - | Year 2 (PT) (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday Thursday) |
| Miss. J. Ayling | - | Year 4 |
| Support Staff: | | |
| Mrs S. Causer | - | Extended Care Assistant (Nursery) |
| Mrs. J. Wardlaw | - | Extended Care Assistant (Nursery) |
| Mr. G. Hallmark | - | Teaching Assistant |
| Mrs. E. Bleakley | - | Teaching Assistant |
| Miss E. Kavanagh | - | Teaching Assistant |
| Mrs C. Banks | - | Teaching Assistant/ Club Manager |
| Mrs N. Bell | - | Teaching Assistant |
| Miss J. Seabridge | - | ELSA/Lunchtime Supervisor |
| Miss D. Fisher | - | SEND TA |
| Mrs. C. Lawley | - | Clerical Assistant |
| Mrs. A. Burkitt | - | Clerical Assistant/Forest School Leader/Games Cover PPA |
| Mrs. S. McLeod | - | Catering Supervisor |
| Miss. K. Ash | - | Catering Assistant/Cleaner |
| Mrs. H. Gayden | - | Catering Assistant |
| Mrs. M. Ash | - | Senior Cleaner/ Senior Lunchtime Supervisor |
| Ms. L. Shephard | - | Lunchtime Supervisor |
| Mrs. C. Fox | - | Lunchtime Supervisor |
| Mr. M. Tomkinson | - | Site Technician |
| Mrs. H. Harrold | - | Birches Club Assistant |

Aims of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

1. To create a safe, caring and stimulating environment where each individual child will feel valued, happy, secure and eager to learn.
2. To assure the quality of teaching and provide an appropriate Foundation Stage curriculum which supports the social, emotional, moral, intellectual, creative and physical development of the 'whole' child.
3. To help children understand and follow the school's Golden Expectations.
4. To foster a sense of community by working with parents to build effective relationships based on respect and trust.
5. To help children develop respect and tolerance for all cultures within our society so they begin to understand the world in which they live.
6. To encourage and celebrate the achievements of all our children so they become confident, motivated learners who are well prepared for the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum.



'Believe, Grow, Succeed...to be the best 'me' I can be'

Our Environment



Session Times and Arrangements

All children are entitled to 15 hours of maintained Nursery provision which is allocated as either 5 morning or 5 afternoon sessions. We also offer 30 Hour Child Care (free for families with a valid HMRC eligibility code or paid for other families). This will be provided as three hours in the morning and three hours in the afternoon session with a paid lunch care between am/pm sessions.

Morning session – 8.30 am – 11.30 am

At 8.30am the bell signals for parents to take their child to line up on the playground. Children should line up ready for the Nursery teacher to greet them. At the end of the morning session (11.30am) parents should collect from the pedestrian field gate where Nursery staff will bring the children to you.

Afternoon session - 12.00 to 3.00 pm.

A member of staff will greet you and welcome your children into school at the main entrance door. Please be prompt so the session can start on time. When collecting at 3.00pm please queue on the pedestrian path and the children will be dismissed via the playground doors.

Please be on time as children can become upset if they have to wait. If you have to collect older siblings from other classes or another school, it is advisable to collect the youngest first.

Add-on sessions are available. These are subject to availability and charges apply.

Wraparound - 11.30am to 3.00pm

Lunch Club - 11.30am to 12.00pm (charges apply)

Birches Club - before and after school 7.30-8.30am and 3.00-5.30pm (charges apply)

Parents of children who do not qualify for the 30 Hour free childcare entitlement may stay after the morning session for a hot school dinner and afternoon 'Wraparound' care. You may also choose 'Lunch Club' as an addition to morning or afternoon sessions. Charges apply to both of these options. Before and after school care is also available for Nursery children.



Session Times and Arrangements Continued

| Type of offer | When available | Options |
|--|---|--|
| 15 hours care funded by parents 'Rising 3s' | From the day after a child's 3 rd birthday. | 5 mornings or 5 afternoons charged at £16.50 daily. |
| 15 hours free funded childcare '3s' | From the beginning of the term following a child's 3 rd birthday. January or April. | 5 mornings or 5 afternoons. |
| 30 hours care funded by parents 'Rising 3s' | From the day after a child's 3 rd birthday. | Monday to Friday 8.30am-3.00pm charged at £43.95 |
| 30 hours fully funded childcare (for families with an eligibility code from HMRC). '3s' | From the beginning of the term following a child's 3 rd birthday. January or April. | Monday to Friday 8.30am-3.00pm. There is a daily charge of £7.95 for lunch and lunchtime care...this is not covered by the 30 hours funding. |
| 'Nursery' | From the September following the child's 3 rd birthday. | For 15 or 30 hours funded as above. |
| All of the above may be extended with the option of the following additional sessions (subject to availability and additional charges) | | |
| Breakfast club care 7.30-8.30am | | £5.00 |
| Lunch and lunchtime care 11.30am-12.00pm | | £8.20 |
| Afternoon session 12.00-3.00pm | | £18.00 |
| Afterschool club care 3.00-5.30pm | | £5.00 per hour |

Children generally settle into Nursery very quickly as they respond to a regular structured routine.

Parents are encouraged to give their child a positive send off at the door when they are greeted by Mrs Lloyd, as problems may occur with lingering good-byes. If you are concerned about an upset, you may wait by the office until you feel reassured.

If your child is to be collected by anyone other than the usual parent or carer please inform the staff in advance and discuss collection procedures. We will ask for a password which is only to be shared between school, yourselves and the nominated person collecting.

Please notify the school office if your child is absent through illness or needs to attend an appointment.

Whilst children are not of Statutory School Age we do ask that parents support the schools expectation of good attendance. It is school policy not to authorise leave during term time, even for Nursery children.

Educational Programmes: The Foundation Stage

The Foundation Stage covers a wide span of child development which takes into account a young child's aptitude to learn through different forms of activity, in particular through 'play'.

The process by which they learn is as important, and inseparable from, the content. Young children learn most effectively when they are actively involved in practical, purposeful, rewarding experiences that encourage success at their own level. Through these experiences we develop each child's self-esteem and confidence so they can become active learners.

Different teaching strategies are used in order to allow each child to achieve his/her true potential. We strive for high standards and celebrate achievement which has a positive effect on attitude to work, self-esteem and motivation. Children need to learn how to become learners, how to listen, talk and work together and how to develop social skills. The emotional development of the child is essential as emotional stability is linked to academic ability.



Our Foundation Stage provision offers the necessary balance of 'teacher-led' input and 'pupil-initiated' learning. We create a supportive, stimulating context in the school indoor and outdoor learning areas for children to play and engage in enquiry, discovery and reflection. We want our children to be confident in expressing their ideas, happy to make independent choices, and keen to explore the world around them.

It is really important to us that children are encouraged to think and talk about what they are learning and how they are developing, using the language of learning even at this young age. This is an early approach to 'metacognition', enabling the children to begin to see themselves as learners and build on their love of learning! We know that Birches children love learning, thrive on knowledge and like to bring what they discover at home into the classroom during our Show and Tell sessions.

Learning habits and routines are very important and we teach pupils how to look after and enjoy the resources around them. We aim to make the learning relevant to children's lives through our EYFS themes and colourful, engaging, learning environment, and we place the pupils' individual interests and choices at the heart of the classroom so they feel unique, safe, secure and ready to explore. In our Early Years provision we also focus on supporting our children to become independent. We take time to support the children in being able to take care of their own physical needs, understanding how to keep their bodies safe and healthy, from hand washing to brushing their teeth!

It is our aim to provide quality learning experiences that prepare children for full time education and the National Curriculum.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Manager takes overall responsibility for the EYFS curriculum and the smooth, effective running of the Early Years. Working very closely with the Nursery and Reception staff to ensure all children's needs are catered for at an appropriate level.

Progress and Reports

Children's progress towards the 'Early Learning Goals' are carefully monitored and recorded. Early Years staff work very closely together and meet regularly to evaluate learning. Children's development is monitored through a variety of tasks, observations and teacher interactions to give the best possible picture of where a child is and what their next steps will be.

The EYFS Framework outlines the statutory expectations and guidance for the learning, development and welfare of children from birth to five. This framework provides details of ongoing child development in all areas of learning and how this progress should be assessed and recorded. These assessment records begin in Nursery and move with them to the receiving Reception class teacher, (either at Birches or elsewhere), where the information is used to track progress through to the end of Reception class.

Each term parents will be invited to parents evening to discuss their child's progress and set targets for future learning. Parents receive a Mid-Year and final written report when their child leaves the Nursery.

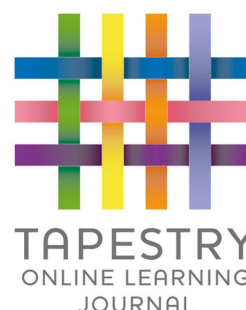
Keeping you informed as to what and how your child is doing

The majority of the assessments that we make of your child's progress are taken from observations of their play and interactions with their peers and supporting adults. We assess their learning using criteria within the EYFS curriculum which are called 'Development Matters'. We not only focus upon what children learn but how they learn.

At Birches First School we use a wide range of tools to help us document children's learning from observational notes to digital images and primarily an online learning journal called 'Tapestry'.

Tapestry: Online Learning Journal

Each child has a secure online journal that documents their learning and progress throughout the time that they are with us. You will be able to view photos and video clips of your child's learning and also add your own.



School Website

You can also keep up to date about what has been going on in class and in school via our school website. We regularly upload information telling you what we are focusing on each term and ways you can help your child at home. You will find these links on the Nursery pages on our school website.

At Birches First School we recognise that as parents/carers you have a very important part to play in educating your child. We want you to gain enjoyment from watching your child progress throughout their Nursery year and encourage you to take part in their education. We have a number of 'Inspire Workshops' for parents and children to discover fun and exciting ways to learn together and we hope to see you at these throughout the year.

Statutory Assessments

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

The Reception class teacher completes a EYFS Profile assessment at the end of the Reception year. This assessment begins in Nursery and is progressive throughout the EYFS Stage. The learning targets identified from these early assessments will be discussed at the first parent consultation evening in the autumn term. School results are as follows:

| | 2016 | | 2017 | | 2018 | | 2019 | |
|---------------------------|--------|----------|--------|----------|--------|----------|--------|----------|
| Good Level of Development | School | National | School | National | School | National | School | National |
| All Pupils | 83.3% | 69% | 87% | 71% | 80% | 72% | 77% | 71.8% |

| | 2020/2021 | | 2022 | | 2023 | | 2024 | |
|---------------------------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|--------|----------|--------|----------|
| Good Level of Development | School | National | School | National | School | National | School | National |
| All Pupils | n/a | n/a | 87% | 65.2% | 87% | 67.2% | 79% | 68% |

2020/2021 – No results due to Coronavirus

Premises

Our Nursery class is part of the Early Years Unit. Two adjoining rooms provide an integrated and appropriate environment for our youngest children. The Nursery classroom is spacious and well resourced. The children also have direct access to an outside secure play area, garden and playing fields. Work is planned so that our outside resources, including a conservation area, are used to the best ad-

'The early years classrooms provide children with a super start to school. There is lots of purposeful play, constructive talk and warm encouragement. This paves the way for learning in different subjects in key stage 1 and beyond. Ofsted 2023



Admission Policy

Parents who wish to apply for a Nursery place should complete a school admission form and provide proof of their child's date of birth. An application of interest form is available from the office.

If vacancies exist, parents may apply for a place after this date according to our admissions criteria. Parents are offered a place in writing by the school in April. Application forms are available by downloading from the school website, alternatively please contact the office and we will happily assist. Application forms should be returned direct to the school office by the set closing date.

Children are usually admitted into Nursery in September after they become three years-old. Children generally experience three terms of part time Nursery education before they enter full time school. The maximum admission number of children in any one session is 39.

Rising 3s

Governor Run Rising 3s

Any available places following the allocation of free entitlement places will be allocated in accordance with the criteria for Rising 3s and subsequently charged sessions for children accessing our Rising 3s.

How to apply for Rising 3 places

Subject to availability and possible charges, children may start Nursery immediately after their 3rd birthday (Rising 3s).

However, parents should be aware that a Rising 3s place does not guarantee a place in Nursery from the September of the Nursery year or a school place in Birches Reception. There are two separate application procedures for Nursery and main school. All admissions to Reception are dealt with in accordance with the schools admissions policy and criteria.

Oversubscription

1. Children who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan that names the school are admitted before the oversubscription criteria is applied.
2. Children with an EHC plan that does not name the school will be referred to the School Admission Team to determine an appropriate place, in accordance with the LA's Fair Access Protocol.
3. The oversubscription criteria, set out in priority order, are as follows:
 - ♦ LAC or children who were previously looked after but have subsequently been adopted or become subject to a residence or special guardianship order.
 - ♦ Children who will have a sibling attending the nursery or the main school at the time of admission (For admission purposes, a brother or sister is a child who lives at the main address provided and either: have one or both natural parents in common; are related by a parents marriage; are adopted or fostered by a common parent or are unrelated children who live at the main address, whose parents live as partners.
 - ♦ Children of staff who have: - been employed at the school for two or more years at time the application for admission is made.
 - ♦ Children living within the catchment area for the nursery school.
 - ♦ All other children

Induction

We place great emphasis on a successful induction process to Nursery for both parents and children. We address this by running PALS visits to school during the half term preceding entry, when parents are able to leave their child in Nursery to spend a short time with the Nursery staff. Parents are able to talk with staff and generally get to know how the Nursery operates. In this way a partnership is established prior to admission. A meeting for parents to discuss their children with the class teacher is offered prior to visits.

An induction evening meeting is also held providing the opportunity to discuss the curriculum and daily routine. This helps parents develop an understanding of the school's philosophy and pedagogy towards Early Years. We stagger entry days for ease of induction. Our induction programme provides children with a secure, happy start to Nursery life.

Links with Main School

The Nursery class is very much a part of general school life. The Nursery children are involved in our weekly Singing Assembly, and celebrate Harvest, Christmas and Easter along with everyone else. They also take part in special events and visits outside school. Many of our Nursery children move on to the Reception class at Birches, although a place in Reception is not guaranteed.



Golden Expectations

We aim to promote self-discipline by raising children's awareness of their behaviour and the effect it may have on others. We endeavor to create a friendly but well ordered and busy Nursery and unacceptable behaviour is rare. The children are made aware of our 'Golden Expectations' which operate throughout the school:

1. We care for everything and everyone.
2. We are polite.
3. We tell the truth.
4. We listen.
5. We walk around school.
6. We work together.
7. We try to be the best 'me' I can be.



If a child misbehaves persistently parents are invited in to discuss the problem with the staff and Headteacher in order to identify both causes and solutions.

N.B. In accordance with the Education Act, 1986, corporal punishment will not be administered in county and voluntary controlled schools maintained by Staffordshire County Council Education Committee.

In addition to their studies, pupils are taught how to look after themselves and others. They learn about safe, respectful

Special Needs (SEND)

relationships and responsible behaviour. They know the difference between right and wrong. Ofsted 2023

Some children may need additional support for different reasons during their time in Nursery. Some children may have specific or particular special needs which require special provision. Birches policy of 'inclusion' for all children, whatever their need, seeks to identify and provide suitable support within the normal classroom situation whenever possible. Nursery staff will discuss any concerns they may have with parents.

Equal Opportunities, Disability and Race Equality

Miss S Hulme is our Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCo).

Staff make suitable adaptations in lessons and provide additional resources. Pupils with SEND access the same learning as their peers and achieve Ofsted 2023

We treat each child as a valued individual and want every child to achieve his/her full potential by becoming a confident active learner. The school operates an equal opportunities policy based on mutual respect and co-operation, which encompasses all aspects of school life. The needs and interests of all pupils are promoted, irrespective of gender, race, disability or social

Health and Safety







It is the intention of the Governors and Estates for CMAT (Codsall Multi Academy Trust) that the school is a safe place and that employees are aware and adhere to the Health and Safety procedures within the school.

To ensure the safety of our children we ask that parents or carers remember our safety rules when bringing children to and from school:

1. Always walk along the footpath
2. Do not turn your car in the school drive or drive onto the car park.
3. Do not allow children to climb on walls, trees or railings, or run in the gardens and back of the mobile.
4. Children are not to ride scooters or bikes on school premises.
5. Parking is an ongoing problem, due to the location of the school in Birches Avenue. If you drive to school you are requested to park legally and sensibly, and have due regard for local residents. Parents are asked to inform other adults who may collect their child about considerate parking. The school car

Safeguarding

At Birches First School the safety of our children is of upmost importance. It is everyone's responsibility to safeguard our children but speak to one of the people below if you are worried.

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p>Miss S Varricchione</p> <p>Headteacher</p> <p>Designated Safeguarding Lead</p> |  | <p>Miss S Hulme</p> <p>Assistant Headteacher PT Class Teacher</p> <p>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</p> |  |
| <p>Mrs E Buckley</p> <p>EYFS Leader/ Reception</p> <p>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</p> |  | <p>Mrs C Banks</p> <p>Club Manager & TA</p> <p>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</p> |  |
| <p>Protect and safeguard the welfare of all our children.</p>   <p>Working together to help safeguard our children.</p> | | | |

All staff are responsible for safeguarding the welfare of pupils and all adults in school have full DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) clearance **NB:** In the event of any concerns that a child may be at risk from abuse, Child Protection Procedures will be followed and a referral will be made without parental consent. We are an Operation Encompass School.

<https://www.operationencompass.org/what-we-do>

Uniform

Uniform helps to prepare your child for further education and also promotes a sense of belonging. Birches Nursery has a uniform which all children should wear.

We suggest a combination of red, grey, black and white:

Winter Uniform

- Red zipped hooded Birches embroidered jumper
- White Birches Round Neck PE T-Shirt
- Black tracksuit bottoms
- Trainers

Summer Uniform

- Red shorts or grey tailored shorts
- White Birches Round Neck PE T-Shirt



Hair must be tied up at all times in red, white or grey bobbles.

No large accessories

Jewellery

No jewellery is worn for physical activity. Any new piercing should be carried out at the beginning of the summer holidays so that jewellery may be removed. This information is communicated to parents through our newsletter. If a pupil cannot remove their studs for any reason they may not be able to take part in the physical elements of the lesson due to the associated risks however, alternative involvement in the lesson will be provided. Parents are welcomed to come at lunchtimes to take earrings out if necessary.

Parental Support and PFA

We aim to give parents as much information as possible about our Nursery and the education we provide. We build on what children have already learned at home and to continue this process we aim to involve parents as much as possible in their child's school life. You are also welcome to offer help in school at anytime.

When you become a parent of Birches First School you also become a member of our Parent and Friends Association, which works to raise funds for the school. Your support would be appreciated if you are able to become involved in any way.

Snack and Fund—£1

Children are provided with a healthy snack and milk during the session. To cover the cost of the snack we ask for 50p a week. An additional 50p will cover the cost of extra items and activities. Nursery school fund is used specifically for Nursery resources.

And finally.....

The Early Years are precious for children and parents, and they pass all too quickly. There is so much to learn that is fascinating for young minds. Our Nursery will give your child an excellent pre-school experience.

PARENTS...

Parents are essential partners in Education. Pleasurable experiences begin at birth with our parents. Play is a young child's work and the way in which they learn to make sense of the world. They develop what they already know and consolidate their knowledge and understanding.

All children are individuals. Give them time to develop at their own rate. Obviously if the staff are concerned about progress, the appropriate help is provided.

Attitudes are very important.

Read to the children frequently. Enjoy stories together.

Respond to their questions and listen to them. They are young people who have opinions and ideas.

Reassurance and praise are essential. Anxieties and fears need to be allayed in their early stages.

Encourage enquiry. Children need to experiment with ideas, to make mistakes without a sense of failure. Praise is necessary for growth, self esteem, and a feeling of self worth which are vital for a child's development.

Nurturing the whole child is the responsibility of those at home and at school. Intellectual and social skills are of equal importance. Children are social creatures and need to learn to share and play together with their peers.

Talk with children. Children will learn language through involvement in real life experiences.

Support your child. Success breeds success. We need to build on children's successful experiences. These of course began at birth within the family.

Academic Year 2025-2026

Please note the following **Inset Days** for your diaries:

1/9/25

3/11/25

23/2/26

1/5/26

1/6/26

Full Diary Dates for 2025-2026

Autumn Term 2025

Inset day: Monday 1 September

Term Starts: Tuesday 2 September

Holiday: Monday 27 October – Friday 31 October

Term Ends: Friday 19 December

Holiday: Monday 22 December – Friday 2 January

Spring Term 2026

Term Starts: Monday 5 January

Holiday: Monday 16 February – Friday 20 February

Term Ends: Friday 27 March

Holiday: Monday 30 March – Friday 10 April

Easter Sunday: Sunday 5 April

Summer Term 2026

Term Starts: Monday 13 April

May Day: Monday 4 May

Holiday: Monday 25 May – Friday 29 May

Term Ends: Monday 20 July

Holiday: Tuesday 21 July – Monday 31 August

Autumn Term 2026

Inset day: Tuesday 1 September

Term Starts: Wednesday 2 September

