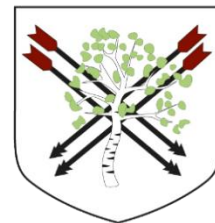


Birchwood Avenue Primary School's News



Issue 8, May 2026



Dates for your diary

| Summer Term 2026 | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 14 th May | Kin-ball workshops for all |
| 18 th May | YR & Year 3 Herts Zoo trip |
| 25 th -29 th May | Half-term |
| 1 st June | Return to school |
| Wb 1 st June | Year 4, Multiplication Tables Check |
| Wb 1 st June | Year 6 swimming lessons |
| Wb 8 th June | Year 6 swimming lessons |
| Wb 8 th June | Year 1, Phonics screening check |
| 15 th June | DRUMBA sessions for all |
| 19 th June | Sports day |
| 24 th June | Glow in the dark dodgeball for all |
| 24 th June | District Sports |
| 26 th June | (Sports day reserve date) |
| Wb 29 th June | Assessment week in school |
| 1 st July | Year 6 production |
| 2 nd July | Handball workshops for all |
| 3 rd July | Fun Friday tbc |
| 7 th July | Parent Consultations |
| 8 th July | Parent Consultations |
| 9 th July | Transition Day |
| 14 th July | Rocksteady Concert |
| 15 th July | Year 6 Leavers' Assembly |
| 21 st July | Term ends @ 1:30pm |
| Autumn Term 2026 | |
| 1 st September | INSET day |
| 2 nd September | Children return to school |
| Wb 28 th Sept | Year 3 swimming |
| Wb 5 th October | Year 3 swimming |

Message from Miss Hall

I hope you've all enjoyed the half-term and the glorious sunshine we had.

There's not too much to share this month really. You may have noticed the new purple astro-turfed area by the Year 2 classroom; this will be used as a 'chill-out' area during playtimes. We've also upgraded the gates as you walk in to the playground. Hopefully this will alleviate some of the 'bottle-necks' we see at the beginning and end of the day.

I would like to thank the parents who were able to join me for a cuppa and a chat on 19th May. Personally, I found this a valuable session. It was very relaxed and an opportunity to listen to each other's thoughts and opinions on school matters. I will be holding another of these sessions this half-term. It would be lovely to see more of you and hear your thoughts. I would especially welcome more parents who represent the diversity of our school community to attend this meeting, so we can explore and better understand different cultural expectations and perspectives.

It is nearing the time when our Strategic Plan is to be reviewed. This is informed by the views and perspectives of different stakeholders; this includes parents, pupils, staff and governors. Libby Hughes, our chair of governors, will be sending out a short online questionnaire shortly via the school office. Your views on how we strategically plan for the future of our school are important

You may be aware that the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act received Royal Assent on 29 April 2026. Most provisions will come into force in stages through commencement orders, and no confirmed dates have yet been published. Here is a link to the DfE's summary for parents and what this may mean for you and your children. [The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act: what parents need to know – The Education Hub](#)

Let's have a wonderful half-term. You will see from the school diary on the left that it is a very busy term. I hope you are able to join us for some of the events.

Reception and Year 3 class visit to the zoo.

Please check the school diary on our website for updates for school events. This calendar can be synced to your phone.

[Calendar | Birchwood Avenue Primary School](#)

Uniform



In school, there is a growing collection of uniform with no names on. Please write your child's name or initials on the label of their uniform. This is costly and 'lost' uniform can be avoided.



I am also seeing too many children wearing white or brightly coloured trainers. Please be reminded that black shoes or black trainers are the expectation for school footwear.

S Please follow the link below for
E a wealth of resources, websites
N etc. Miss James has created this
D page of useful information.

[Support for Parents of Children with SEND](#)

On 18th May, our reception class and our Year 3 class visited Hertfordshire Zoo. It was a lovely day out with many excited children. The dinosaur park was a big hit!

The children represented the school wonderfully and a good time was had by all.

Reception Class

Reception class have been learning about animals and we went to Hertfordshire Zoo to see animals up close. We had a fantastic time!



Hatfield Foodbank

If you are experiencing difficulties, please speak to Miss Hall or Miss James and we will support you with getting a code to access the Foodbank.

Do you need to update your contact details?



If you have changed any of your contact details recently, please could you update the office with your new contact details.

These may include:

- Mobile number
- Home address
- Email address
- Emergency contact details

There are some pupils who only have one emergency phone contact on their records. Please provide the office with a second contact if necessary.

Year 3 Class

Isla - "I liked seeing all the different animals and walking around with my friends."

Aron - "I really liked seeing the robot dinosaurs and the lions who were sleeping."

Abdoul - "The monkeys jumped right across us; it was really cool!"

Elijah - "We got to see all of the birds fly and do tricks!"



Governors' Corner

As school governors, one of our main roles is to work with the Miss Hall to set the school's aims and objectives and consider how the school should develop and improve.

Whilst we continually monitor how the school is doing and how well it's meeting the needs of our pupils, every 3 or 4 years we have the opportunity to step back and take stock. What are we doing well? What could we do differently? What kind of school are we hoping to be? And what do we want to offer our community?

To be able to do that effectively, we also need to understand what's important to everyone who is part of that community - our staff, our pupils, and you as parents and families. As part of that, we've created a short survey for you to share your views.

You can access the survey here or via the QR code that will be on display in the school playground in the next few days.

[Our 2030 vision for Birchwood Avenue - Parent Consultation – Fill in form](#)

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/LjPBKBq6K6>

Young Carers

Hertfordshire County Council have improved services for identifying and supporting young carers. If you feel your child (or you if you're a pupil reading this), is a young carer, please speak with Miss Hall, Miss James or Mrs Dyos for signposting and support. The statistics are quite shocking.

Carers Trust estimate there are:

- 1 million young carers in the UK
- 5-10% young carers per school
- 2-3 young carers per class

277,480 under 18s in Hertfordshire

- 3505 YC registered with Carers in Hertfordshire (Sept. 25)
- 1483 YC identified in Jan 25 school census;
- 60% of schools in Hertfordshire recorded zero young carers

Could you be a young carer?

If you help look after a friend or family member who needs extra support - you may be a young carer and there's one easy place to get help.

WELCOME

- Be part of a young carers community
- Friendly welcome from the young carers team

Support for the whole family

- Friendly chats to consider everyone's needs
- Check ins to make sure you're doing ok
- Help as you grow up and move into new stages of life

A new young carers webpage

- Clear information on what help you can get
- Links to opportunities, activities & wellbeing support
- Designed by young carers for young carers

Get involved

- Conference designed by young carers, workshops, fun sessions, meeting others
- Opportunities to have your say
- Work with SEND Youth Councils

Additional support

- Support in your school / college
- Meet other young carers
- If you're eligible for free school meals, you can get discounts with a **Herts Card**
- Free activity camps in school holidays - **HAPpy Camps**

How to get support

- Ask an adult in your family to help you get in touch
- Speak to your teacher or a trusted member of staff
- Visit the website or call 01992 658469



www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/youngcarers



Curriculum Focus- Computing

This term in Computing, children across the school have been developing their creative media skills using the Teach Computing curriculum. Each year group has explored different ways technology can be used creatively, helping pupils build confidence, problem-solving skills and digital literacy. In EYFS, children have been introduced to word processing, learning how to use keyboards and creating simple pieces of digital writing. Year 1 have explored digital writing in more detail, practising typing, editing and formatting text on a computer. Year 2 pupils have enjoyed creating digital music, experimenting with sounds, rhythms and patterns using technology.

Key stage 2 children have been developing their skills further. In Year 3, children have been learning about desktop publishing, designing and arranging text and images to create posters, leaflets and other publications. Year 4 have developed their photo editing skills, learning how images can be changed and improved using different editing tools. In Year 5, pupils have been introduced to vector graphics, creating digital illustrations using shapes and layers. Finally, Year 6 have been exploring 3D modelling, designing and manipulating three-dimensional objects using specialist software. It has been wonderful to see the children's creativity shine through in their computing lessons, while also developing important digital skills for the future.

Miss Brown (Computing subject leader)

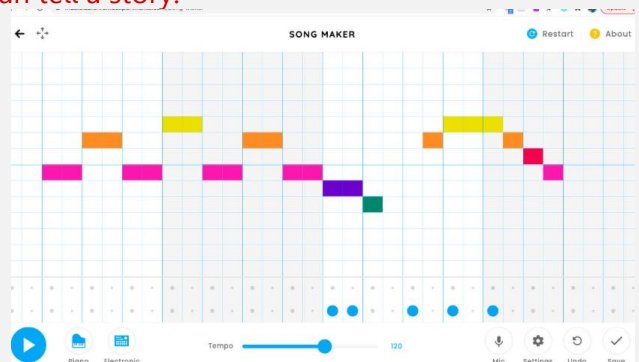
Year 1

Year 1 have been developing their digital writing skills this term. They've been learning how to type using a keyboard, exploring where letters and punctuation are found, and practising how to change the appearance of their text using simple on-screen tools.



Year 2

In computing lessons, Year 2 have been investigating how music can be made using chrome music lab. We were seeing how different pitches and tempos made us feel and how music can tell a story.



Year 3

Year 3 have been learning about desktop publishing in Computing. The children have explored how to combine text and images to create eye-catching posters and publications, while developing their understanding of layout, design and presentation skills.

Year 4

In computing we are learning about editing photos, this week we were blurring out part of the images. I really enjoy getting to pick a picture and change the way that it looks.



Chloe - "We got to make our own magazine covers which was really interesting putting all of the parts we had learnt together."

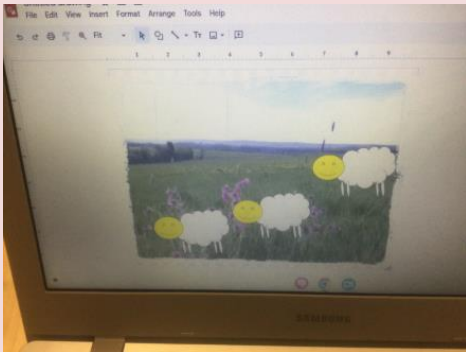
Belles - "I liked using canva to create my magazine cover because I could change my backgrounds."



In computing, we have been editing photos by cloning, blurring, cropping and rotating to change the image completely. I like being able to make an ordinary image look funny.

Year 5

This term we have focused on vector drawing and learned that vector images are created using shapes.



Matilda - "I liked combining shapes to create images and using lots of different tools."

Cynthia - "We had to select, zoom and copy and paste images and objects."

Year 6


This half term, we have been 3D modelling using software. We have looked at how we can use different 3D shapes together to create a new shape or object and have designed our own desk tidy.



We will continue this next half term and demonstrate our learning throughout the unit by designing and creating 3D models of buildings.

MOMENTS MATTER, ATTENDANCE COUNTS.

The data below shows attendance for this term so far. It's quite concerning really in some classes. Lots of learning is missed here.

| | | |
|---|--------|--------|
|  | Year 3 | 95.78% |
|---|--------|--------|

Attendance

Attendance is still a concern across the country. It is part of the government's national agenda to improve pupil attendance in educational settings.

This document was released last year; it includes a summary table of the roles and responsibilities of parents, schools and the local authority.

[Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#)

Please speak to Miss Hall, Miss James or Mrs Dyos if we can support you by helping you to ensure your child is in school.

From the first day of term to the last, the small moments in a school day make a real difference to your child. #AttendanceCounts"

| | | |
|---|--------|--------|
|  | Year 6 | 95.07% |
|  | Year 1 | 94.8% |
| | YR | 93.08% |
| | Year 4 | 93% |
| | Year 2 | 92.85% |
| | Year 5 | 91.6% |

Our whole school attendance figure for the term so far is at 92.8%. This is becoming more of a concern and is significantly below the national average to date which stands at 94.6%. Thank you to those of you for ensuring your child attends school daily and is punctual. There have already been many unauthorised holidays or long weekends.

Term Time Holidays

Families are reminded that Amendments to the 2006 Pupil Registration (England) Regulations, which came into effect on 1st September 2013, removed all references to *family holidays and extended leave for holidays in term time*. The amendments make clear that Headteachers may **not** grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Contact us...

admin@birchwoodavenu.e.herts.sch.uk

01707 262503

[@birchwoodavesch](https://www.facebook.com/birchwoodavesch)

Safeguarding Focus

'Road safety'

I am becoming increasingly concerned that there will be a serious accident outside our school. It seems some parents, and members of the public are not being responsible car drivers. Many are not observing the zebra crossing, many are parking on the zig-zag lines outside the school and many are racing down the road without a care in the world. Unfortunately, we are unable to control these irresponsible and dangerous behaviours, but we can teach our children how they can be vigilant and try to keep themselves safe.



SAFETY ON THE ROAD

Traffic-related incidents are a significant risk for young pedestrians and cyclists, so understanding road safety is crucial for children's wellbeing. While all road users share responsibility for keeping one another safe, this guide offers strategies for empowering young people to navigate the roads confidently and responsibly.

- 1 TAKE PRACTICE JOURNEYS**
Making 'practice' journeys with children is a great way to help them stay safe, thereby modelling responsible behaviours and having road safety conversations as they prepare to travel independently. Add hazard perception activities like spotting electric vehicles - which may have a green number plate - and point out how quiet they are. Children learn by watching others; remind them that their peers might not always be the best role models.
- 2 BE BRIGHT, BE SEEN**
Visibility is lower during darker winter days, and drivers need to take extra care to look out for pedestrians. Wearing bright and reflective clothing can help make children more visible to drivers near roads. In poor daylight conditions, encourage children to wear light, bright or fluorescent clothing. When it's dark, wear reflective clothing or materials such as a reflective armband or jacket.
- 3 EYES UP**
Encourage children to look up and keep their eyes on the road. Teach them to constantly watch for traffic and practise double-checking the road before crossing - looking right, left and then right again.
- 4 LIMIT DISTRACTIONS**
Where possible, devices like phones should be kept away from children while out and about near roads. If they're carrying devices, these should be put away until they've reached their destination. Children must also avoid playing with toys or being distracted by friends. If a friend wants to show them something funny on their phone, there'll be time for that once they've safely arrived.
- 5 SLOW DOWN**
Discuss the importance of waiting instead of crossing immediately. It can be tricky to judge the speed of traffic and spot obstacles that could cause a trip or a fall. For safety, children must stop and think before they get to the kerb and should always walk - not run - when crossing the road. They should avoid crossing until they're certain they have plenty of time. Even if traffic seems a long way off, it could still be approaching very quickly.
- 6 STOP BEFORE THE KERB**
Teach children to stop before reaching the kerb - not right at the edge of it. Halting before they get to the kerb allows them to see if anything's coming, whereas getting too close to traffic is dangerous. If there's no pavement, children should stand back from the road's edge but ensure they can still see approaching traffic.
- 7 CROSS SAFELY**
Children should always find a safe spot to cross the road, prioritising zebra crossings or pelican crossings, footbridges and subways. Find a place where they can see traffic coming from both directions. Avoid crossing near junctions, bends in the road, or obstacles that block their view. Instead moving to somewhere they can see and be seen. Remind them to use their eyes and ears together when checking the road, as sometimes they can hear traffic before they can see it. Looking and listening while crossing helps them quickly spot traffic, including cyclists and motorcyclists driving between other vehicles.
- 8 PARKED VEHICLES**
Crossing between parked vehicles is very dangerous. Teach children to use extra caution if crossing in this way, and, ideally, avoid it altogether. They should use the outside edge of a vehicle as if it were the kerb, waiting and checking for traffic before moving. They should ensure vehicles aren't about to move, by looking for drivers in the vehicles and listening for engines running - but remember that electric vehicles may move off silently. They should always make sure there is a gap between any parked vehicles on the other side, so they can reach the pavement.
- 9 REVERSING VEHICLES**
Children must never cross behind a reversing vehicle - it's extremely dangerous. Remind them to look for white reversing lights and listen out for warning sounds. Can they hear the engine sound or a radio playing inside the vehicle?
- 10 WAIT FOR THE BUS TO LEAVE**
When getting off a bus, children must wait for it to leave before crossing so they can have a clear view of the road in both directions. This also allows them to see and be seen by other road users. Crossing near large vehicles is particularly dangerous and should be avoided.

