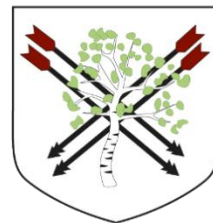


Birchwood Avenue Primary School's News



Issue 6, March 2025



Dates for your diary

Dates for 2025	
4 th April	End of term- school closes 1:30pm
7 th -18 th April	Easter break
21 st April	Easter Monday- Bank holiday, school closed
22 nd April	Children return to school
24 th April	Goalball workshops
28 th April	School Council visit Houses of Parliament
30 th April	BMX Academy display & workshops Y5 & Y6
6 th May	YR visit Hertfordshire Zoo
12 th -16 th May	KS2 SATs week
19 th -23 rd May	Year 6 Cuffley Camp residential
20 th May	Year 5 STEM workshop
26 th - 30 th May	Half term
2 nd -13 th June	Y6 Swimming top up lessons
6 th June	Owl visit
12 th June	Ultimate Frisbee workshops- whole school
20 th June	Sports Day- a.m
26 th June	Y2 & Y3 visit to Kew Gardens
27 th June	Reserve date for Sports Day
2 nd July	Parent Consultations
3 rd July	Parent Consultations
3 rd July	Street Dance workshops- whole school
10 th July	Transition day

Message from Miss Hall

Dear families,

We're at the end of another term; I can't believe how fast this term has gone. The sun has made an appearance, the clocks have changed and I'm hoping the miserable weather is behind us.

You will have received your child's midyear school report. I hope this has given you a clear picture of their attainment and progress. In the report there was a parent reply slip. Please take time to complete this and return to the class teacher.

You will see in this month's newsletter that it has been another busy time at Birchwood. We've had 'Bikeability' in again for the children in Year 1 and Year 2 who needed a little more time and support with learning to ride a bike. *Bikeability* is a Herts initiative supporting children with developing their skills and confidence riding a bike.

Our children have been to the quarry, had visitors in from Cemex, been busy planting and enjoying the outdoor learning environment. We've had a live performance of Pinocchio in school, a full day of bocchia workshops and celebrated World Book Day.

School trips are a wonderful way to bring the learning in the classroom to life. Some classes have been to RAF Hendon or the Natural History Museum. Next term is looking equally as busy. I'm particularly looking forward to a visit from a BMX world champion who will be showcasing his skills and some of the older children will be taking part in workshops and learning some BMX tricks.

Our Forest School base camp area is looking good. Thank you very much to FoB for releasing a substantial amount of the legacy fund which enabled us to have the shelter in stalled by the pond. Mr Hendon, our site manager, is working hard to complete the work in this area. Please can you speak with your children about respecting the school site. We are working hard to improve this- it costs a great deal of time and money. Some children think it's acceptable to throw objects in the pond- it isn't.

Thank you for your ongoing support. It is recognised and appreciated. I hope you all have a restful Easter break and enjoy time with friends and families.

11 th July	Y6 Leavers' Disco pm
18 th July	Last day of term School closes at 1:30pm
21 st July 2025	INSET
22 nd July 2025	INSET
23 rd July 2025	INSET

Lost Property



In school, there is already 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.

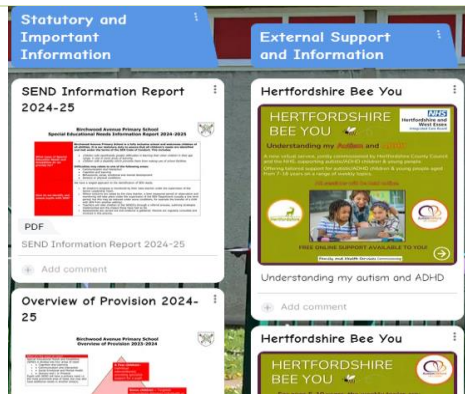
SEND at Birchwood

Miss James has been updating the page providing support to parents of children with SEND needs.

[Birchwood Avenue Primary School SEND](#)

Please follow the link above and find all our SEND info in one place.

A couple of screen shots are below to give you a taste of what you can access.



School Diary

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](#)

March's Highlights

Reception Class

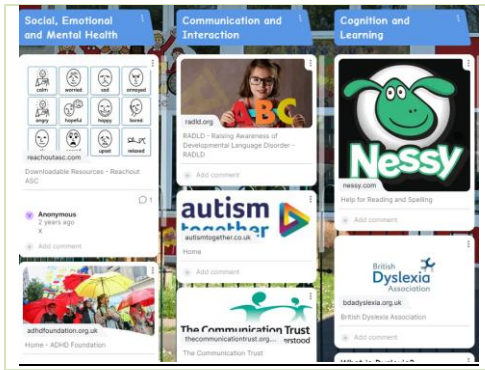
We have been celebrating St Patrick's Day, looking after our growing garden and enjoying investigating the pond.



Pinocchio Theatre Show

We managed to secure a last-minute booking with a theatre company performing the tale of Pinocchio. Here's what the children said about the show...

Byron - 'I thought it was really funny. I liked when Pinocchio came to life and was dancing around everywhere.'
 Dhyaan (Y4) - 'I loved it when Pinocchio escaped from the circus that was the most enjoyable part.'
 Jaiden (Y4) - 'The Pinocchio show was a great experience for me because there were a lot of funny parts, and we couldn't stop laughing.'
 Reece (Y4) - 'I liked the songs and the jokes, and I liked when Pinocchio's nose went bigger every time he lied.'



Messages from our school office.



Please check that you are receiving emails from Arbor. Some people have not been receiving these due to changes in contact email addresses.

Please check that you log-in to Arbor and SchoolGrid are working. Please let the school office know if you need support with accessing either of these platforms.

Hatfield Foodbank

If you are struggling at the moment with the cost of living and buying essentials, please speak to Miss Hall or Miss James and we will support you with getting a code to access the Foodbank.

Girls' Football

Our girls' football team played against Oak View Primary. Final score 1:1. Well done girls- you've not been playing together for long and did yourselves proud!



Year 3 Quarry Visit

*Kit – We went to the quarry and looked at lots of different materials. I know where clay and sand comes from now!
 Damilola - I saw things I'd never seen before. My favourite part was watching the huge machines splitting up the different materials. It spits parts out.*



A Note from Mrs Mowatt

World Book Day 2025

We had a fantastic time on World Book Day, celebrating reading our way. Everyone dressed up and completed lots of book themed activities during the day, including making bookmarks and reading rivers. Year 1



Staffing Updates

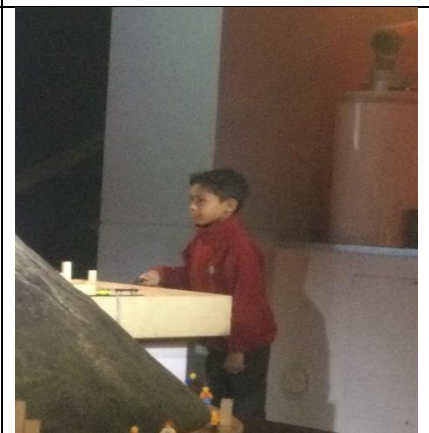


We would like to wish Miss Hanneghan all the very best as she leaves us to begin her maternity leave. We are delighted for Miss Hanneghan and her family and hope they enjoy every moment with their little one when he/she arrives.

Unfortunately, Mrs Kiely is leaving us this term. She has been an absolute joy to work with and will be sorely missed by the staff and the children. Thank you Mrs Kiely for everything you have done for the children at Birchwood. We wish you well for the future.

particularly enjoyed being book detectives and searching for characters and themes in their class books. It was lovely to see so many parents coming in to listen to story time. On Tuesday, Mrs Bird and our reading volunteer, Mr Wiltshire, bravely read to a hall full of Reception and KS1 families. On Friday we opened our doors to all parents and really appreciated the large numbers of you that came to support reading at our school- thank you!

Year 5 Trip to the Natural History Museum



Boccia Day in School

Each year, the school receives a PE and Sport Premium grant. This is to make improvements to the provision of PE and sport for the benefit of all pupils in school. We have allocated some of 2024-2025's funding to activity days which all year groups participate in.

Recently, the children have enjoyed learning a new sport, boccia. Thank you, Mr Connolly, for organising this and similar events which will take place in the summer term.

What did the children have to say?

Year 2- We really enjoyed our session, as it was something we have not tried before, and it was fun to challenge ourselves to get the ball in different areas.

Ross (Y6) – I thought it was very fun to learn about sports that people with disabilities play, and how it's not really a well-known sport.

Alfie (Y6)– It was very interesting, usually you have to stand up but we had to sit on chairs and it was really fun.



Year 1 and Year 6 Visit to Hendon RAF Museum

Our oldest pupils (Year 6) spent the day at RAF Hendon with some of our younger pupils (Year 1). The children represented our school beautifully and thoroughly enjoyed their day out. Here's what they have to say...

Year 1 loved seeing the way that planes have changed. They became experts at spotting the difference between the plane flown by the Wright brothers, and the modern stealth plane. They became pilots when they threw their gliders.

Mariam (Y6) – I really enjoyed the RAF trip because I got to learn even more about World War II and I got to see other peoples' perspective on things that happened during that time.

Kacper (Y6) – I really liked the RAF trip because there are many interesting facts about the planes, and it's really detailed with many fun activities





Have a look at these posters.... This is what our eco-council is working on at the moment.

Little people can make a big difference

Creating a planting station
 At the back of birchwood field, we will be growing our own vegetables to use for cooking and giving them to people and families who need them. Each class will be growing their own vegetables.

Electricity survey
 we will be doing a week tally at the end of march to see if electricity is being turned off and saved.

Yoga
 we will be implementing yoga in transition times to support wellbeing and focus of all children in birchwood.

STAY CALM

Creating a Planting Station

We will be growing our own vegetables to use for cooking and giving to families who need them.




taryo

MOMENTS MATTER, ATTENDANCE COUNTS.

The data below shows attendance for this term so far.

A free online safety guide on social media & mental health.

An estimated one-third of children have a social media account, so it's important that trusted adults know what content young people are consuming; what they're posting; and what interactions they're having. On social media, it can be easy to go down a rabbit hole that isn't beneficial to our wellbeing. As platforms grapple with managing 'legal but harmful' content, lives are being impacted – sometimes to tragic effect. We might be daunted by the scale of the tech giants and their content which enthralls young people, but we can still help children to be mindful

	Year 6	96.97%
	Year 5	95.78%
	Year 2	94.95%
	Year 3	94.41%
	Year 4	94.29%
	Year 1	92.6%
	Year R	91.51%

Our whole school attendance figure for the school year so far is at **94.3%**. The national average to date is 94.5%. Thank you for ensuring your child attends school daily and is punctual.


Unfortunately, we already have 16.7% of our children who are 'persistent absentees'. This means their attendance is below 90%. This remains an ongoing concern. For these 32 pupils, their learning and sense of belonging is being affected.


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@birchwoodave.nue.herts.sch.uk

 01707 262503

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

of their mental wellness: recognising when something isn't OK ... and knowing what to do about content that upsets them. In the guide, you'll find tips such as how to hide content, setting daily limits and discussing what children have seen online

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about SOCIAL MEDIA & MENTAL HEALTH

An estimated one-third of children have a social media account, so it's important that trusted adults know what content young people are consuming, what they're posting and the interactions they're having. On social media, it can be easy to go down 'rabbit holes' that aren't beneficial to our wellbeing. As platforms grapple with managing such 'legal but harmful' content, lives are being impacted – sometimes to tragic effect. We might be daunted by the scale of the tech giants and their content which so enthral young people, but we can still help children to be aware of their mental wellness: recognising when something isn't OK ... and knowing what to do about content that upsets them.

- 1. UNDERSTAND THE ALGORITHM**
Algorithms rank content by user interest: someone who regularly interacts with sports news, say, will see the latest results at the top of their feed. Likewise, if a user browses content that can cause harm, that's what will be recommended to them in future. Someone who's had a bad day and looks for posts which reflect their mood will find similar content being suggested to them more and more.
- 2. AVOID THE MAIN FEEDS**
Avoiding the default feeds on social media platforms limits the amount of recommended content that's shown. Users can opt to only scroll through the accounts they follow, use restricted modes, or highlight posts that they don't want to see more of. Explore the platform safety settings to see how you can take control of what your child's phone shows them when they open the app.
- 3. DISCUSS WHAT THEY'VE SEEN**
Chatting about what your child's seen online keeps you aware of the content they're interacting with. Don't assume that parents are screening out inappropriate material, or even that your child will recognise content as being harmful. Discuss who they follow, what posts they like and what comes up in their feeds: if a warning ring, it could be time for a more in-depth talk or to seek support.
- 4. LEARN HOW TO HIDE CONTENT**
If your child stumbles across unsuitable content on social media, there's the option to hide that post as well as indicating you'd prefer any similar material not to be suggested in future. On some platforms, you might be able to block posts that contain specific words, which is an excellent way to start talking about what your child sees online.
- 5. SET DAILY LIMITS**
Phones and most apps can tell you how much they're being used. Spending too long online can mean a child misses out on other activities that are important to all-round wellbeing. You could set some family rules – for everyone to follow – around device use, such as screen time limits and tech-free spaces: involving your child in creating this agreement makes them more likely to stick to it.
- 6. MONITOR THEIR ACTIVITY**
Keeping a discreet eye on how your child is using social media can help ensure they're not entering potentially dangerous situations. As they grow up, of course, children need space to exercise their independence – but you can still occasionally ask to see what they're looking at. Be transparent about your own social media use and try not to sound judgemental about your child's.
- 7. TURN OFF PUSH NOTIFICATIONS**
Even for adults, it's tempting to check an email or message as soon as the alert sounds pings. Push notifications encourage people to open their apps and spend time on their device, so turning them off will help your child to practise mindful use of tech. Most of us have other things that we need to focus on as a priority – and those notifications will still be there later, when we have more time.
- 8. USE DEVICES TOGETHER**
Giving children internet-enabled devices and complete freedom to explore platforms on their own can lead to exposure to hugely damaging content. You could consider making a particular area at home a designated space to use phones, tablets and so on – making it much easier to monitor what content your child is viewing and (if necessary) steer them away from any potentially harmful posts.
- 9. ENCOURAGE OTHER ACTIVITIES**
Mental health professionals often highlight the importance of exercise, quality time with loved ones, a balanced diet and restful sleep for our mental wellbeing. Spending hours on social media can cause us to sacrifice other activities that our brains need to feel well – so encouraging your child to put down their phone and enjoy something that doesn't involve a screen can be immensely beneficial.
- 10. TALK ABOUT PEER PRESSURE**
Most platforms default children's accounts to private, so only people they've accepted as friends can see their posts. This reduces the risk of bullying or unkind comments, but just like offline life – the digital world can still make children feel as if they need to fit or look a certain way to fit in. Talk to your child about peer pressure, and listen to any concerns so you can provide the support they need.

Meet Our Expert
Shazia Sarwar-Asim is executive headteacher at a specialist primary school and, as an emotional therapy coach, works with school leaders to focus on the SEND, mental health and wellbeing agenda. A passionate advocate for vulnerable learners, Shazia is a Fellow of the Chartered College of Teaching and the author of *The Rainbow Within*, a book which supports children with SEMH needs.

National Online Safety
#WakeUpWednesday

www.nationalonlinesafety.com @natonlinesafety /NationalOnlineSafety @nationalonlinesafety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 30.11.2022

Safeguarding

If you specifically have a safeguarding concern, please contact Miss Hall, Miss James or Ms Swash.

Alternatively, you can still contact Children's Services directly on 0300 123 4043.



Educating Hearts and Minds