

# Birchwood Avenue Primary School's News



Issue 3, November 2025



## Dates for your diary

9 <sup>th</sup> December	KS1 nativity @ 2:00pm
9 <sup>th</sup> December	KS1 nativity @ 5:30pm
10 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas jumper day
10 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas lunch
11 <sup>th</sup> December	YR Christmas sing-a-long
16 <sup>th</sup> December	Rocksteady concert @ 2:30pm
17 <sup>th</sup> December	KS2 Carol Concert 2:00pm
17 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas parties for YR, Y1 and Y2
18 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas parties for Year 3, 4, 5 and 6
19 <sup>th</sup> December	Term ends... School closes @1:30pm
Dates for 2026	
5 <sup>th</sup> January	Return to school
16 <sup>th</sup> - 20 <sup>th</sup> February	Half-term
16 <sup>th</sup> March	INSET Day
27 <sup>th</sup> March	Term ends @ 1:30pm
13 <sup>th</sup> April	Children return to school
4 <sup>th</sup> May	Bank Holiday
25 <sup>th</sup> -29 <sup>th</sup> May	Half-term
21 <sup>st</sup> July	Term ends @1:30pm

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Uniform

## Message from Miss Hall

What a miserable month November was! We had rain, wind, snow and more rain and more wind! Many of our children have been poorly with coughs, colds, sore throats and high temperatures. Please be assured that if there are any serious illnesses doing the rounds, we would share this information with you. We have had no such information from the local authority so far nor had any illnesses which we have a duty to report to the local authority.

The children have all completed assessments this month in reading, writing and math. This data is used internally, and teachers and senior leaders use this to inform interventions and teaching and learning activities.

If you have a clear out of toys before Christmas, please can I make a request. We are very short of decent games to use in class when it is wet playtimes. If you have any board games, Lego, Uno etc which your children no longer use (and have all the pieces), please could we repurpose them in our school. Thank you very much in advance.



Let's hope the next few weeks go smoothly, the children are happy and healthy and the run up to Christmas is full of festive fun.

### Reception Class- Local Area Walk & Diwali

We have been learning about our local area and the story of The Jolly Postman. We went on a local area walk and posted our letters to the characters in the story.





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.

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### A Visit from a Choir

Mr Wiltshire is one of our reading volunteers. He performed with his choir 'The Jupiter Singers' last week. My favourite part was the Taylor Swift mash-up. It was uplifting and thoroughly enjoyed by all. Many thanks to the choir members who made the time to perform for us.

Year 2 - I really liked the choir. My favourite song was the Merry Christmas song because it made me feel happy and we could get up and dance.

Year 6- It was really fun. The choir were really talented. There were lots of different songs and they were very creative. (Elsie)



I think the choir was good. The way they harmonised sounded very organised and they were very talented. (Russell)

### Sporting Events Update

In RE, we have been learning about the Diwali story of Rama and Sita and we made our own diya lamps.



### Speech and Language Update

Many of our children receive support with their speech and language. One approach used in school is 'Gestalt Play'. **Gestalt Play** is a way of supporting children's speech and language by using play to model natural, meaningful *whole phrases* rather than single words. Some children learn language best by first copying larger "chunks" of speech, such as "Let's go!" or "All done!", especially if they use echolalia or scripts. In Gestalt play, adults follow the child's lead, use simple, fun, emotional phrases during play, and allow lots of repetition. Over time, these phrases help the child break language into smaller parts and eventually create their own original sentences.

### Curriculum Focus- History

Reception Class- We learnt about the history involving Remembrance Day. We made some poppy handprints to create our own wreath.

We used potatoes to make poppy prints.



## Boys' Football

The boys team showed great teamwork and abilities in their narrow loss to HCFS. Losing 3-2 with a very late winner for HCFS.

## Girls' Football

Girls continue their good form with a 4-0 victory over HCFS and look to keep this momentum going against green lanes next week.



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

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

### Year 1 & Year 2 Trip to Sea Life

Thomas - I loved seeing the sharks because there was one big shark swimming around near the floor like a secret agent.

Olivia - I liked seeing the penguins because one was pretending to be a statue.

Year 1- Last half term we looked at what childhood was like in the past; we even invited a special guest to come to speak to year 1 about his childhood. We also compared our childhood in the present to childhood in the past, identifying similarities and differences. We also explored our own History and special memories which we put in our memory boxes.



Year 1 - "We still have cake and presents on our birthdays like in the past"

" They didn't have an Xbox in the past!"

### Year 2

Last half term we learnt about schools in the past. We learnt about what school were like in the 1900s and how they were different from today. We were lucky enough to invite some parents into school and ask them about their time in school.

Year 2 pupil voices - It was really cool, boys and girls learnt different things. Boys learnt about woodwork and girls were taught cooking and sewing. Birchwood Avenue is better than the schools before.

### Year 3

Year 3 have been exploring the Stone Age in history, discovering how early humans lived, hunted, and created tools. They investigated the differences between the Paleolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic periods, learned how people moved from nomadic lifestyles to farming communities, and examined Stone Age artefacts to understand daily life. The children especially enjoyed



creating their own cave art and discussing how historians uncover clues about the distant past.

"I didn't know people made tools from flint – it must have taken so much practice!" Teddy

"I liked making cave art because it felt like we were telling a story just like Stone Age people did." Cora

"It was interesting seeing how people changed from hunters to farmers. I think farming would have been really hard at first." Abdoul

"Learning about the different Stone Age periods helped me understand how slowly life changed." Elanor

"I enjoyed looking at artefacts because it felt like being a real historian trying to work out what they were used for." Isla

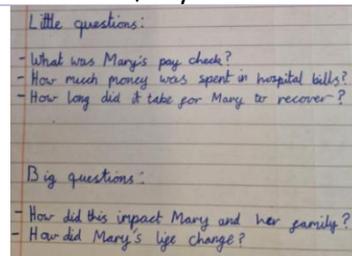
#### Year 4

I loved learning about the things the Tudor children had to do and got to play with compared to us today.- Aarya

I liked hearing stories of the children and how their lives were different during the Tudor and Victorian times. - Rares

#### Year 6

Last half term, we looked at what we can find out about the past from the census. We asked questions about individuals' lives and what we could work out from looking at the census. We also looked at the suffrage movement and "no vote, no census" campaign where women, including Emmeline Pankhurst, boycotted the census.



Ebony - I thought that topic was quite fun because we were talking about the past and learned a lot about it.

Atal - We learned about women's rights and how they got the right to vote. I enjoyed making a timeline in groups and presented to the class.

# 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	96.05%
	Year 6	95.55%
	Year 4	92.8%
	YR	92.57%
	Year 5	91.26%
	Year 2	89.53%
	Year 1	88.55%

Our whole school attendance figure for the term so far is at **91.9%**. This is becoming more of a concern and is significantly below the national average to date which stands at **94.9%**. 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.

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## 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 James or Miss Hall 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”*

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## Governors' Corner

Well done to everyone for making it to December! It's always a long term and it can be harder to stay motivated as the weather gets colder and the days get shorter. Whilst the start of winter can feel a little challenging, it also usually coincides with one of the best times for our governing board, and that's the opportunity to spend an entire morning in school!

It's wonderful to have the chance to spend time with the children and staff; to see the school in action and get a small insight what it's like to be at Birchwood Avenue.

As it was a Friday we were able to watch Celebration Assembly and see how much the children supported each other and activity celebrated the success of their classmates and friends. We were also fortunate to be able to spend lots of time talking with the children as they shared work that they were proud of. They spoke enthusiastically about the books they had read in class and the different types of writing they had done which linked to those books. Many of them were proud of how their handwriting had improved and others were excited to explain some of the maths concepts they had been learning across the term. All the governors commented on the positive behaviour of the children through the school and across the day, from quietly and politely coming in their classrooms at the start of the day and settling down to work, to inclusive play at break time, and their attitude to learning in the classroom.

A huge thank you to both the staff for making it possible for us to come, and also the children for making us feel welcome and for all the hard work they put into their learning and to making Birchwood Avenue a great community. Please tell your children how proud we are of all they are doing and achieving,

# 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.

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## 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.

### Contact us...



[admin@birchwoodavenue.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@birchwoodavenue.herts.sch.uk)



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