

Birchwood Avenue Primary School's News



Issue 2, October 2024



Dates for your diary

28 th October - 1 st Nov	Half-term holiday
4 th -8 th Nov	Year 3 & Year 5 swimming
4 th November	Bikeability (Y1 & Y2)
7 th November	F.O.B. AGM
11 th - 15 th Nov	Year 3 & Year 5 swimming
12 th November	Open afternoon YR 2025
15 th November	Children in Need day
26 th November	Open afternoon YR 2025
2 nd December 2024	Occasional Day
11 th December	KS1 Nativity 2:00 & 6:00 performances
13 th December	FoB, Winter Wonderland Disco
TBC	KS2 Carol Concert
16 th December	YR Christmas songs 9:00am & 3:00pm
18 th December	Christmas jumper day
18 th December	Christmas lunch
20 th December	End of term School closes @ 1:30pm
Dates for 2025	
6 th Jan 2025	INSET
7 th Jan 2025	Children return to school
9 th Jan 2025	Young Hearts, Healthy

Message from Miss Hall

I can't quite believe that we've made it through the first half-term of this academic year. You will see by looking at the photos below that the children have been enjoying many enrichment activities. Some of these have been to help bring their learning to life whereas others activities have been to develop interpersonal skills, problem-solving skills.

Thank you for your support and engagement in attending some of our school events. The children loved welcoming you to their classrooms a couple of weeks ago. There has also been very high attendance at our parent consultations this week.

I'd like to wish you all a happy and healthy half-term. Enjoy the time with families and friends.

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](#)

Staff Vacancy



We have a staff vacancy at Birchwood. This is for a part-time office admin assistant. This position is for 20 hrs/week. If you're interested in this, please find further information at: [Teacher Recruitment, Hertfordshire UK - Office admin assistant](#)

We've been busy this half-term.

Have a look at some of the things the children have been up to.

Reception Class- visit from the police

	Minds- Year 6
13 th Jan 2025	Athlete visit
16 th Jan 2025	Young Hearts, Healthy Minds- Year 6
27 th Jan 2025	Athlete visit
21 st July 2025	INSET
22 nd July 2025	INSET
23 rd July 2025	INSET



The children enjoyed the visit from the police last week. Lots of them were playing in the police car and asking some really interesting questions.



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.

Our head, and deputy, boy and girl

Thank you to all the Year 6 children who wrote a letter of application and attended an interview for one of our pupil leadership roles.

Our head/deputy boy and girl for this year are:

Head boy	Vinnie
Head girl	Teyahna
Deputy head boy	Samarth
Deputy head girl	Lilyrose

Year 1- Toy Workshop 'Toys Through Time'

The children enjoyed exploring many toys from the past. 'I liked playing with the pull along toys best. They were fun.' 'They were different to toys now.'



Forest School

Year 4 have been building shelters in Forest School sessions. The children have been developing their problem-solving skills, team-building skills and being resourceful!





Congratulations!

Cross Country Update

The Whole Team



Special well done to Kayla who came 2nd in the finals at Stanborough Park.



Few 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



Year 5

Creating Anglo-Saxon huts and making bread



Year 6

Ancient Greece Workshop

Adura - It was really fun listening to stories about the Gods and creating our own stories. I got to try on the helmet and shield which was nice.

Daniel - My favourite part was holding the sword - it was a genuine sword and not a replica!




school office know after half-term if you need support with accessing either of these platforms?

New lunch menu starting after half-term.



MOMENTS MATTER, ATTENDANCE COUNTS.

The data below shows attendance for this term so far. It's looking positive!

	Year 4	96.38%
	Year 6	96.16%
	Year 5	95.07%
	Year 2	94.78%
	Year 3	94.5%
	Year 1	93.38%
	Reception	92.47%

Our whole school attendance figure for the term so far is at **94.7%**. Thank you for ensuring your child attends school daily and is punctual.

Unfortunately, we already have 16.8% of our children who are 'persistent absentees'. This means their

A Musical Christmas Event

Two of our pupils are talented brass instrument players and play in St Albans City Youth Band. Please see information below for an 'afternoon of festive music'. Tickets are reasonably priced and children are free.

[Excited to play our Christmas Extravaganza 24 joint concert – St Albans City Band](#)



Safeguarding

attendance is below 90%. This is a huge concern.

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.

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.

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

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

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about HORROR GAMES

Horror video games come in a such a variety that the genre can hard to define. The overlapping element is that these games are designed to scare or unsettle the player through gameplay, atmosphere, story, music, setting and 'jump scares'. The most common sub-genres are survival horror, action horror, psychological horror, 'jump-scare' horror and reverse horror. These games originate from a range of developers, including smaller indie studios which release download-only titles (that is, they aren't physically sold in shops) and therefore aren't subject to age ratings.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

ADULT THEMES
Horror games are typically made with adults in mind, which means by default that they feature adult themes. Outlets, for instance, is a popular horror game series including material such as nudity and extreme violence. Other games, like Five Nights at Freddy's and its actually reverse horror, don't feature explicit adult themes.

VIOLENT CONTENT
Not all horror games contain graphic violence. Games like Five Nights at Freddy's and Phasmophobia (a PC game) are generally less violent, but still feature graphic violence. Other games, like Five Nights at Freddy's and its actually reverse horror, don't feature explicit adult themes.

ONLINE INTERACTION
Some horror games are played cooperatively with others online. This is one of the most popular titles in this category, and while it doesn't feature any explicit violence, it does feature frequent and prolonged online communication with other players is an advantage.

PSYCHOLOGICAL HORROR
Rather than simply leading on the blood and gore, psychological horror games try to scare the player through subtle, mental and emotional means. For this reason, some of the most disturbing examples include Alien: Isolation, The Darkness and the Amnesia series. All have a longer-lasting effect on players; some occasionally 'haunt' the player well after interesting directly with the player as if they were real.

LONG-TERM FEAR FACTOR
Horror games are designed to be scary; most players accept this fact in advance. They can, however, include content which leaves an unexpected lasting impression. By focusing on our fears and concerns to elicit an emotional response, horror games can be triggering in unexpected ways for some players. It's difficult to predict when – and how – a game might have long-term effects on individual's mental well-being.

Advice for Parents & Carers

BEWARE OF JUMP SCARES
Jump scares in video games are often no worse than they are in movies. If a young person doesn't cope well with being suddenly startled by something on the screen or on TV, they probably won't be able to handle horror games featuring jump scares. Some games (such as Five Nights at Freddy's) are built entirely around this technique and aren't suitable for younger children or those who are easily frightened.

RESEARCH THE GAME
It's best to look into a horror game thoroughly if your child expresses an interest in playing it. Many indie horror titles are downloaded only and therefore aren't required to come with an age rating – see our 'If need to do some background reading and judge the game's content for yourself. Check out the game's web pages, read any 'lore' it (including fan art) and watch videos of the gameplay.

ENCOURAGE BREAKS
It's easy to lose track of time when gaming, and horror games are no exception. A 'hard' game that's fun to play can be stressful, especially if it's traumatic and follows the plotline – especially if it's traumatic and follows the plotline. For horror gamers, breaks also give the added benefit of helping reduce stress afterwards, which can mean a scariest gaming session when they resume!

IF IN DOUBT, SWAP IT OUT
If your child finds a horror game to play, but after doing some research you decide it doesn't look like the right one for them, swap it out! There are a lot of horror titles to choose from, and some will be more appropriate than others. Work together with your child to find a suitable game. For them, 'scary' horror games don't have to be gore-spattered and graphic to be enjoyable, scary!

STAY RECEPTIVE
Maintaining good communication with your child is vital for safe gaming. If they see something in a horror game that disturbs them in ways they didn't expect, then they should feel comfortable speaking up to you about it. Try not to simply laugh it off or shake your head at it, and always make time to listen. It's a useful reminder that they can talk to you about any type of problems they have in the future.

Meet Our Expert
Clare Oakley (A.K.A. Lunavox) has worked as an editor and journalist in the gaming industry since 2010, providing videos with expert coverage, reviews and gaming guides. She is the owner of Lunavox Gaming and is currently working on various gaming-related projects including game development and writing non-fiction books.

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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.

Contact us...

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