



Birch Newsletter - Autumn 2026

Welcome back! We hope you have all had an amazing summer break and are feeling well rested and ready to start the new school year. We are so excited to begin our year in Birch and to work with your lovely children.

In this newsletter, you will find information about what we will be covering during the Autumn Term, along with some useful information for the school year ahead.

Our Topics This Term

Our topics for this term are: **'Through the Ages'**, **'Cook Well, Eat Well'** and **'One Planet, Our World'**.

We will start the year by ensuring that the children have a smooth transition into their new year group. We will use this time to get to know the children, learning about their strengths and interests, as well as identifying any areas in which they may need support. During these early weeks in Birch, the children will become familiar with their new learning environment, their new teachers, and will reflect on their goals for the year.

Our **'Through the Ages'** topic will teach children about the Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age. The children will learn about how people lived long ago and compare life then with life today. We will also explore a range of artefacts and discover how they were used.



In our **'Cook Well, Eat Well'** topic, children will learn about what makes a balanced meal and will have opportunities to prepare and cook healthy dishes using fresh ingredients.

Our **'One Planet, Our World'** topic introduces children to map work. They will begin by locating the countries of the United Kingdom and researching their capital cities. Year 2 children will then move on to locating and researching countries around the world.

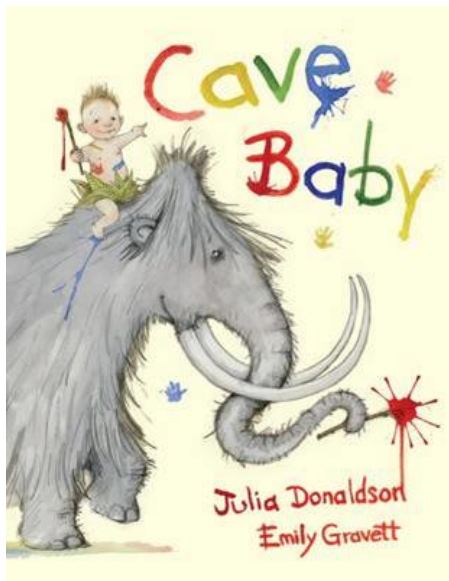
To support our Year 1 children in their transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage, our classroom will include areas for continuous provision, and much of the Year 1 curriculum will initially be delivered through play-based learning. For our Year 2 children, learning will become slightly more formal to reflect their increasing independence and maturity.

Phonics

Children in Birch will begin the school year by reviewing Phases 3 and 4 of the Little Wandle Phonics Programme before moving on to Phase 5. Phonics lessons will provide opportunities to learn new tricky words and practise oral blending, sentence reading and spelling. Year 2 children will also continue to take part in phonics sessions to reinforce and consolidate their phonics knowledge, supporting their reading fluency, accuracy and confidence.

English

We endeavour to use the children's interests to inspire our English curriculum wherever possible and use a wide range of high-quality texts to spark their imagination and creativity.



To support their transition from the Early Years, Year 1 children will have opportunities to mark make in every area of the classroom, encouraging them to use writing in their play. They will write labels, lists and captions, while practising the correct use of capital letters, full stops and finger spaces.

Our handwriting sessions will focus on correct letter formation and, when children are ready, they will begin to use cursive handwriting.

Our English texts this term will link closely to our history topic. We will begin with work based on *Cave Baby* before moving on to *Stone Age Boy* later in the term. These texts will inspire a range of writing outcomes, including narratives, instructions and chronological reports.

Maths

In Maths, we will begin the year by exploring place value, including counting, writing and ordering numbers correctly.

Year 1 children will focus on numbers up to 20, while Year 2 children will develop their understanding of three-digit numbers up to 200. We will then move on to addition and subtraction, using concrete resources and pictorial representations to support understanding.

During Autumn 2, Year 1 children will explore numbers to 50 and begin learning about multiplication. They will develop their understanding of equal groups and practise counting in 2s, 5s and 10s. Year 2 children will build on this by learning how to represent multiplication using the multiplication symbol

(×), as well as speaking, reading and writing multiplication sentences. They will use practical resources and arrays to deepen their understanding of multiplication.

There will be opportunities in every lesson for children to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills, both during Maths lessons and through activities within the classroom environment. We encourage children to use mathematical vocabulary confidently when discussing and explaining their thinking.

Science

Our Science topics this term are **Everyday Materials** and **Humans**.

Children will learn about a range of materials and their uses. Year 1 children will identify the properties of everyday materials, while Year 2 children will investigate and evaluate the suitability of different materials for purposes. After the October half term, we will begin our **Humans** topic. Children will learn about the human body and the five senses. Year 2 children will also learn about the human life cycle.

Homework

Your child will receive a weekly spelling list to learn and practise at home. These words will include a mixture of tricky words and words linked to the phonics phase or spelling pattern they are currently learning. A spelling test will take place every Friday. For Year 1 children, these will begin in Week 3. The tests are carried out in a relaxed and supportive manner.

Reading and Reading Records

Your child has been issued with a Reading Record, which will be used to log their reading progress throughout the year. They are expected to bring their reading book home each day. Books will be changed when children are ready to move on. Please note that books are not always changed immediately after they have been read, as we encourage children to develop both fluency and comprehension before progressing to a new text.

Please leave a comment in your child's Reading Record whenever you have listened to them read at home.

Year 2 Assessments

Year 2 children will take part in the Key Stage 1 assessments in May. We aim to ensure that children feel confident and well prepared. The assessments are completed in a calm and supportive environment, and children are generally unaware that they are completing assessments. Further information will be shared nearer the time.

Year 1 Phonics Screening Check

All Year 1 children will complete the Statutory Phonics Screening Check in June. During the screening, children work one-to-one with their teacher to read a range of real and nonsense words. These words are designed to assess children's phonic knowledge and decoding skills.

Children will have had plenty of experience with this type of activity before the screening takes place, and they will not be aware that they are completing the check. Further information will be provided closer to the time.

PE and Forest School

This half term, PE will take place on **Thursday afternoons** with DF Coaching. Children should come to school wearing their PE kit on Thursdays.

After the October half term (Autumn 2), PE will move to **Wednesday afternoons**.

Forest School will take place on **Tuesday afternoons** after the October half-term. Children should come dressed in suitable outdoor clothing that can get muddy and is appropriate for the weather conditions. Please ensure your child brings a pair of wellies, as our supply in school is limited. This will help keep children comfortable and dry and avoid them having to spend the rest of the day in wet or muddy shoes.

We are thoroughly looking forward to working with your children this year. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Thank you for your continued support.

Mrs McGregor