



## **Birch Newsletter Autumn Term 2024**

Welcome back! We hope everyone had a lovely summer break and are all feeling ready to start our new year. We are really looking forward to beginning our year in Birch and to work with all of your children. In this newsletter, you will find information about the topics we will be covering during the Autumn Term and some helpful information for the wider school year.

Our topics for this term are:

**'Childhood', 'Our Wonderful World' and 'Funny Faces and Fabulous Features'.**

We will start the year by making sure the children's transition from Reception or Year 1 into their new year group is as smooth as possible. Across these early weeks in Birch we will use this time to get to know each child: learning about their strengths and interests as well as identifying any areas in which your child may need further support. The children will have a chance to explore all aspects of their learning environment, get to know their new teachers and reflect on their individual and our class goals for the year.



Our 'Childhood' topic will teach children about change over a long period of time and explore the stages of human life. The children will learn about how people lived in the 1950s and be given opportunities to compare this to our lives now in the modern day.

In our 'Funny Faces and fabulous features' topic, children will explore a collage technique to create humorous portraits and capture an abstract style, giving them lots of room to be creative and explore their artistic vision.

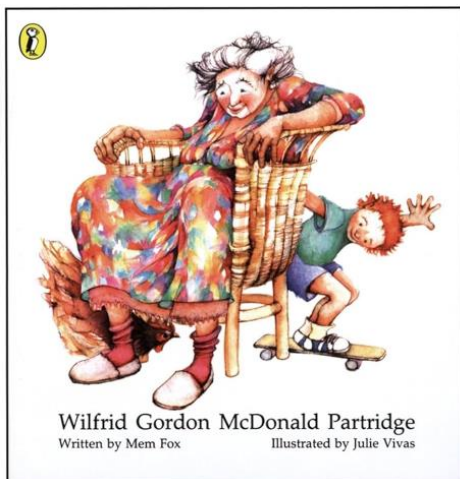
Our other main topic for the first term is 'Our Wonderful World'. This topic explores all aspects of the world looking at each of the 7 continents and their surrounding 5 oceans. We then zoom in to focus our learning on the United Kingdom and conduct our own geographical enquiry to strategise a way to help keep our planet healthy.

## Phonics and Spelling

Year 1 children will begin the year by working to secure their existing phonics knowledge by reviewing phase 3 of the Little Wandle Phonics Programme, before moving on to begin phase 4 and 5. Year 2 children will all work together within Chestnut class to consolidate their phase 5 phonics and begin phase 6. The phonics sessions allow children to learn new tricky words, while continuing to practise their oral blending and sentence reading and writing. The spelling rules children explore throughout these phonics sessions will be sent home to learn as homework each week.

## English

To start the year and support their transition from the Early Years into year 1, and year 1 into year 2, the children will have the opportunity to engage their writing in every area of the classroom, encouraging them to use writing in their play. They will begin by writing lists, labels and captions and regularly practising their use of capital letters, finger spaces and full stops. Our handwriting sessions will focus on letter formation, and once they are ready, helping them begin to use cursive writing to join their letters.



We strive to use the children's interests to devise an English curriculum full of wonderful activities and inspiring texts that spark their imagination and creativity. Our first half term will be spent working on the essential basic skills that are the foundation of the whole English curriculum. Once children are confidently using punctuation and grammar for their age range, we will begin to focus on a range of writing, including informative texts, letters and non-chronological reports. Our writing will be supported by a range of texts, starting with Mem Fox's 'Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge'.

## Maths

In Maths we will begin the year by exploring place value which involves ordering, writing and counting numbers correctly. For year 1 this will include numbers 1 to 20 and year 2's will explore further focusing on the place value of 3-digit numbers up to 200. Once children have a secure understanding of these numbers we will move on to addition and subtraction, using a variety of concrete resources and images to help their progress. In autumn 2 we will continue to develop this area, in year 1 working on number bonds to 10 and 20 and introducing doubles, and in year 2 working towards subtracting 2-digit

numbers. Towards the end of Autumn 2 we will explore shape, learning about both 2D and 3D shapes and looking to sort and compare these using our knowledge of patterns.

## **Year 2 SATs**

There will be no Year 2 SATs this year.

## **Science**

Our science topics for this half term will be 'Everyday Materials' and 'Humans and Health'. In Everyday materials children will explore the vast range of materials used in everyday life, having the opportunity to examine and observe their properties and uses. In 'Humans and Health' we will learn about the different parts of the body and what we can do to help our own thrive and grow healthily. Both topics will be explored very practically with lots of opportunities to experiment and investigate.



## **Homework**

We use the Seesaw app to issue our homework tasks. These will be given weekly, uploaded every Friday to be completed and submitted, ready for marking, the following Thursday. Your child will also be given a weekly spelling list to learn, which they should practise at home. These spelling words will be a mixture of words and sounds they are learning to spell in school and some of their tricky words. Spellings will be sent home via Seesaw and Edshed.

All children's Seesaw and Edshed login details have been printed and stuck into the inside cover of their reading records. If you have any issues or further questions regarding the seesaw app, please do not hesitate to ask!

All homework and spellings will be printed and available as a paper copy in the classroom, should that be preferred. If a printed copy is preferred it is the child's responsibility to pick up a paper copy when leaving on a Friday, equally please do ask at the door if your child forgets!

## **Reading and Reading records**

Your child has been given a reading record which will be used to record their reading progress throughout the year. They will be expected to take home their reading books,

each day, and return them the following day. These will be changed to a new book on Mondays and Thursdays. Once you have listened to your child reading, please make a note of the date and leave a comment in their reading record. On each Monday and Thursday we will be awarding children a stamp if they have a comment written from an adult at home. Once they have reached 6 stamps they will have the chance to 'Spin the Wheel' in class and earn a little reward.

### **Year 1 Phonics Screening Test**

All year 1 will complete the Statutory Year 1 Phonics Screening Test in June. During the screening test your child will work 1:1 with their teacher to read a range of real and 'nonsense' words. These words are designed to test your child's phonic knowledge. Across the year the children will all be given lots of experience of this kind of exercise and when it comes to the test in June, they will not know they are doing any kind of assessment. More information will be given closer to the time.

### **PE and Forest School**

In Birch, our PE lessons this half term will be on a **Tuesday** afternoon and run by a specialist PE teacher from Conyers. Although, the day for P.E. will unfortunately have to change soon due to difficulties out of our control. As soon as we know the change of day, we will make parents and carers aware. Thank you in advance for your understanding.

Children should come to school on P.E. and Forest School days in their outdoor P.E. kit. They should wear a **sweatshirt/hoodie, t-shirt, jogging bottoms or shorts and trainers**. No jewellery (especially earrings) or football kits, please. Children with long hair must tie hair in a bobble prior to PE lessons. **All pupils should have a water bottle in school every day**. As well as this, we will be participating in the Daily Mile, so your child is welcome to keep some trainers in school (in a bag on their peg).

Our Forest School sessions will be on a Wednesday afternoon. Please make sure your children are dressed appropriately for the weather as it does get very cold towards the end of the half term. Please make sure they also have their wellington boots ready should it be wet or muddy.

We are extremely looking forward to working with your children this year, and as always please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any worries or queries.

Thank you,  
Miss Briggs  
Mrs Sinclair