

Note from Staff Team

We hope you have had a wonderful time this Christmas. It was a term full of fun!

Birch staff team are extremely proud of the children's performances in the Christmas production of 'The Lion King'. The children worked hard dancing, rehearsing lines and creating props which wouldn't have been possible without the support of our fantastic parents and carers. Thank you to all who supported us by supplying boxes, outfits and supporting your child to learn their lines and dances at home.

Another exciting and fun filled term has begun and we look forward to our trip with Hazel to the coal mining museum in February, where we will be able to consolidate and further extend our knowledge of this period in time. Finally, the Birch staff team would like to say a big thank you for your gifts, cards and well wishes for the holiday period. They were all very kind and thoughtful.

Mrs Pullin (Class Teacher), **Mrs Bell** (Learning Support) and **Mrs Coward** (1:1 Learning Support)

Important Information

Day	Timings of day	Timetable Information
Monday	8.45am - 3:15pm	Mrs Pullin + Mrs Bell (all day) Mrs Coward (am) Learning Log review + book change <i>Whole Class Read to go home</i>
Tuesday	8.45am - 3:15pm	Mrs Pullin + Mrs Bell (all day) Mrs Coward (am)
Wednesday	8.45am - 3:15pm	Mrs Pullin (am) Mrs Bell (all day) Mrs Hamilton (pm) PE - children come to school in their PE kit for the day. <i>Prepare for all types of weather.</i>
Thursday	8.45am - 3:15pm	Mrs Pullin + Mrs Bell (all day) Mrs Coward (am)
Friday	8.45am - 3:15pm	Mrs Pullin (all day) Mrs Bell (am) Mrs Coward (pm) PE - children come to school in their PE kit for the day. <i>Prepare for all types of weather.</i>

Expectations

Reading

In KS2, unless there is a specific need, children have completed Phonics so will no longer take home a Phonics Bug book to read. Instead, the focus moves to Whole Class Read and they will bring a Year 3-4 appropriate reading text home in a blue wallet. They spend a week in class unpicking ambitious vocabulary and answering different types of questions about this text. It may be challenging initially, but they build their confidence across the week the more times they read the text. Please read this text at home with them at least *4 times in the week* and talk about the words they have highlighted in it. Their blue wallet will need to be returned to school each day as this is the text that is used in school as well as at home.

Reading for Pleasure is something we value at our school and it is a joy to see the engagement our children have in these sessions. To support this, your child will bring home a book they have chosen either from the school library or our class bookshelves. This may be seen as an 'easier' book for them or may be one which is more challenging that they need held reading. As long as they're enjoying the book, we don't mind! We support their independence in changing this book whenever they need to. If you have any concerns that your child doesn't seem to enjoy reading, please speak to one of the Birch team. There is a style of book or author for everyone so we will support them in finding theirs!

Spellings

Spelling - There is an expectation for children to be practicing the spellings from their learning logs at home. This half term, we ask you to work on the following 20 spellings ready for a half termly assessment on Thursday 27th February.

The Year 4 children will have started to learn these spellings last year so can challenge themselves to spell the words within sentences if they are already confident with them.

favourite	grammar	heard	imagine	island
February	group	heart	increase	knowledge
forwards	guard	height	important	learn
fruit	guide	history	interest	length

They can of course practice as many spellings as they want in addition to this from their learning log.

If your child has spellings on a SEN support plan, they need to practice these but as part of our ambitious curriculum, we would also like them to access the class spellings too.

Maths

Fluency Facts – Fact Fluency within Maths is of the utmost importance at Harthill Primary School therefore we have streamlined our number facts so that children are learning no more than 4 facts for 3 weeks. Supporting your child at home at the correct time would be most beneficial.

Y3 Spring			
16-18	19-21	22-24	25-27
4 x 4	7 x 4	10 x 4	1 x 8
5 x 4	8 x 4	11 x 4	2 x 8
6 x 4	9 x 4	12 x 4	3 x 8
<i>Plus corresponding division facts</i>			

Y4 Spring			
16-18	19-21	22-24	25-27
9 x 9	1 x 12	5 x 12	9 x 12
10 x 9	2 x 12	6 x 12	10 x 12
11 x 9	3 x 12	7 x 12	11 x 12
12 x 9	4 x 12	8 x 12	12 x 12
<i>Plus corresponding division facts</i>			

Home Learning

Using their learning logs, all children should be:

- Practicing reading at least **4 times a week** using their whole class reading extracts.
- Reading their library book, sharing stories and facts at home and developing their love of books with your help.
- Practicing spelling their statutory spellings and zero tolerance words. We do not have spelling tests but we do teach spelling and focus on children applying these in their writing, which is how we assess their spelling. Reinforcement of their year group words will help your child make progress with this.
- Access Times Tables Rockstars **3 times a week** and practice their tables at home.

PE – This half term, our PE sessions are on a **Wednesday** and a **Friday**. Please note that PE uniform is a plain white t-shirt, black or navy shorts/leggings/jogging bottoms, black or navy sweatshirt/fleece and trainers. Coloured clothing must not be worn. Spare PE uniform is available in school if children come in incorrect clothing. Please tie long hair up and remove any earrings or you can provide sterile tape to protect them.

The children will be completing more outdoor sport skills this year so please ensure they are prepared for all types of weather.

Communication – Feel free to catch me at any point on the playground in the morning if there is anything you'd like to chat about. However, I appreciate this is a busy time and some discussions may need to be private. If you'd rather, call or email the office and I will give you a ring back at a suitable time. Don't ever feel this is a problem – I am very happy to do this!

Ways to Help your Child

Please encourage your child to read as much as possible. It has been great to hear the children read so far and it is clear how much of a love they have for reading. We are continuing with our 'Reading for Pleasure' and we strongly believe that there is a book/genre for every child. If your child is struggling to find reading material to engage them, let me know and we will help.

Joining the local library is a huge benefit for all children as it opens their possibilities when choosing books. I would highly recommend signing up if you haven't already as they also hold lots of fun activities throughout the year for children to engage with.

If you would like to practise spellings with your child, please refer to the Year 1 and 2 and the Year 3 and 4 words in the learning log. If they find some of the spellings easy, try asking them to put them into sentences as well. We will be continuing to develop the cursive script with a focus on the size of the letters being appropriate so please use the guide in the learning log to support this.

This year's focus is 'Writing for Pleasure' and each term a writing competition will be launched. The children can write fiction or non-fiction in any genre as long as it includes the competition topic. Keep a look out for the next competition launch.

What we will be learning this term

<p>English Our class text Matilda (Roald Dahl) Zoo (Anthony Browne)</p> <p>Additional texts: Dirty Beasts (Roald Dahl) Revolting Rhymes (Roald Dahl) Poems from a Green and Blue Planet (Sabrina Mahfouz) Amazing Islands (Sabrina M Weiss)</p>	<p>Maths Concepts covered Year 3 and 4 will be starting multiplication and division this half term and moving on to fractions. Time tables to practise- The Year 3 children will continue focus on the 6 times table then onto 4s and the Year 4 children are learning the 7s and 9s. As a reminder. The Year 3 children should be confident with 2s, 5s, 10s and 3s and Year 4 children should be confident with 4s, 6s and 8s in addition to these. Please keep practising these at home to support their fluency.</p>
<p>Other Curricular areas: This half term our Science unit is Animals including humans where we will look at the work of Ivan Pavlov (Physiologist) Charlotte Armah (nutritional biochemist - looking at the effect of diet on human health) In History, we will be looking into how the Roman Empire has impacted our modern way of life. Within PE we will be covering gymnastics and cheer whilst the weather remains cold. In Geography, we will be looking at the formation and impact of the activity of volcanoes on our planet. Our My Happy Mind sessions continue to be extremely successful and the children have now completed the 'Celebrate' unit. The next weekly unit is called 'Appreciate' where we will learn to develop a habit of Gratitude by learning to use the 'Wheel of Gratitude'.</p>	

Useful Websites

Websites	Resources
https://www.topmarks.co.uk/maths-games/hit-the-button	This is a great game for developing quick recall skills in Maths
https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/login?c=0	As previously, you can find additional books here. If you have any trouble logging on, please let me know.
https://trockstars.com/	Your child will have their login in their learning log.
https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/reading/	Free to register with additional books you can enjoy with your child