



Birchfield News

Message from Mrs Thewlis

Term dates:

- Term 1.2 ends on Friday 20th December. This will be a half day for all pupils.
- 6th January is a teacher day. School is closed to pupils
- Term 2 for pupils starts on 7th January 2020
- Term 2.1 ends on Friday 14th February

The autumn term has flown by at Birchfield. Our new whole class texts and books for the library have arrived in school and we have also invested heavily in home reading books and class libraries. All the money raised at the summer fete was added to this investment so thank you so much to all of you who joined us and contributed. We have done a huge amount of work on the curriculum this term; all year groups have been fully immersed in their enquiry and we have been working hard to ensure that the children are learning in depth and gaining knowledge and skills in their subjects. We have also appointed our new pupil groups,

enjoyed our wow days and visits; set up our new book corners and enquiry displays; launched our growth and change program in Key Stage 2; raised money for children in need; enjoyed weekly singing assemblies; held exhibitions and workshops and so much more. As ever our staff and children have worked extremely hard and I couldn't be prouder of them and of what we've achieved. I wish you all a happy and healthy holiday and look forward to welcoming you back in 2020.

Thank you for your continued support.

Mrs Z Thewlis

Follow us on twitter to keep up to date with the latest Birchfield news!



@Birchfield_Sch
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You can also find more information in the 'parents' and 'latest news' sections on our school website. Look out for changes to the website coming soon. www.birchfld.bham.sch.uk

Pupil premium funding:

If your child is eligible for 'free school meals' and you register them for this, we will receive extra funding called 'pupil premium'. We use this extra money to improve the educational provision and resources at school. Please find out how to apply in the 'parents' section of our school website or ask at the school office for more information.

It is our aim that all parents have the opportunity to participate in their children's learning and to understand the direction of the school curriculum; that way you have the knowledge to support your children at home. Parent engagement continues to be an important focus for us. Our knowledge organisers have hopefully been a useful tool for discussion and learning at home. We also

saw the launch of our exhibitions. These were extremely well attended and a chance to share with you the work that we've been doing. There will be exhibitions each term for each year group as well as workshops and meetings to attend throughout the year. The parent feedback from the exhibitions this term was extremely positive and supportive; thank you to all those who attended. Please can we also

ask all parents to ensure you are reading with your children at home and that you write in the children's home reading diaries. Please talk to the children about any homework they are completing. Finally, can I say a huge thank you to those of you who worked on projects at home to bring into school. We hope you enjoyed working on these with your children as much as we enjoyed seeing the work!

Parent Partnership

Staff Updates



Art work by children in the Nurture Group

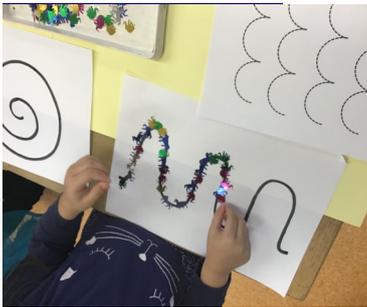
Mrs Mattu and Miss Burmi are leaving Birchfield at Christmas. We would like to wish them the very best for the future and thank them for their service to the school. Due to personal reasons, Miss Jawad will also be leaving Birchfield at Christmas. We wish her all the very best. Miss Mushtaq is leaving Birchfield as she has secured another position. We congratulate her and wish her the best.

We are delighted to welcome Mr Hyatt back in the new year. He will be working with Year 6 and we are extremely happy to have back with the team. Ms Fowler will be working in year 6 from January, and so Miss Begum will be joining us in Year 3. Miss Makoni will also be joining the Reception team. Mrs Usmani will be working in the Nursery and we also welcome Mrs Virdee to the school office team.

For those who are moving on, we wish them all the best and on behalf of us all, we warmly welcome new staff to the team. I'm sure you'll make them very welcome.

To all the staff at Birchfield, thank you for all the work you do for our school and our children.

Nursery



Exploring letter shapes in Nursery

This half term has been a really exciting one for nursery. The children have explored the provocation of Autumn and have loved our stories of 'The Gruffalo', 'Owl Babies', 'Stick Man' and 'Whatever Next'. The children have been really busy mark making and the nursery is full of photos of their work. For Culture Week, the children learnt all about the different cultures we

have in our nursery. We listened to stories in other languages and learnt some new nursery rhymes. The children have had the pleasure of Mrs Percival, a music specialist, who has visited nursery each week. She has taught the children how to warm up their voices and they have learnt some fabulous new songs with actions. Thank you to everyone who came to the Nursery Exhibition. The children were so

confident when they performed for you and we can't wait to do another one. To finish off this half term, we planned a sleepover for the children. We all came to school in our pyjamas and made a midnight snack to eat while we enjoyed a bedtime story. Next term we have our Splish Splash Splosh provocation where we will be learning all about water and reading 'The Rainbow Fish.'

Reception

Reception have had a fun filled half term! They have read lots of stories including The Jolly Postman, The Three Little Pigs and The Gingerbread Man. These stories have led onto lots of learning opportunities. The children have made their own gingerbread men and then wrote out their own recipes. They created their own gingerbread houses and decorated them with items they found outside such as leaves, twigs

and pine cones. In Maths, the children having learnt about shape, size and one more and one less. The children have also really enjoyed having their parents in school for various workshops such as a Phonics and a Picasso Exhibition. On the last week of term, Reception are excited to be visiting Birchfield Library where they will have the opportunity to become li-

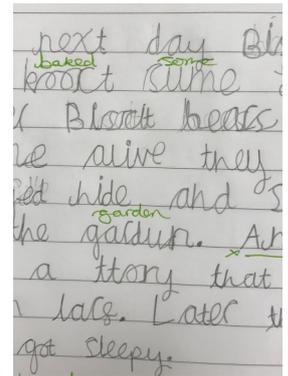
brary members and get to choose from some of the wonderful books. Thank you for all your support this term.

Year 1

Year 1 have had a great start to the new academic year with lots of exciting adventures. Their enquiry questions were 'How have homes changed?' and 'What is it like to live in Aston?'. They have had great fun with these by making houses at home with family, walking around Aston to explore the area and they had a brilliant time building structures during our wow day with Gallifordtry. The children have also been really learning new vocabulary to use when explaining their

learning. They have applied this in their Writing and have started to produce some amazing pieces of work. The children have built upon their number skills and have been using a number line to add and subtract, as well as learning the number bonds to 10 securely. The children researched an Artist called Peter Siddell, who lived in New Zealand and drew many homes inside and out. He mainly used straight lines to create his work, so the children emulated this style in their own work. In Sci-

ence they have investigated Materials, focusing on what materials homes are made of and they completed an investigation finding out which materials would be best for a roof. What a busy first time year 1 children have had!. Thank you all for your support and for attending the workshops and exhibitions we have delivered across the term.



Tahurah's writing 1S

Year 2

Over the past half term, Year 2 have immersed themselves in to their enquiry question 'What can we learn from The Great Fire of London?' We had a fantastic time exploring the story of the Great Fire of London at Aston Hall. We learnt more about 17th century fire-fighting methods and we even dressed up as key figures such as Thomas Farriner and King Charles II! For our WOW day,

we designed and built our own Tudor houses. Then, we re-enacted the fire on Pudding Lane in the playground using paper houses and burning them to study how the fire spread. We also came up with our own dances to depict the events that caused the Great Fire. In Art, the children have enjoyed creating 'fire' pictures which were inspired by the artist, Jan Griffier. In Maths, the children have

worked really hard to add and subtract numbers using the column method. It was such a pleasure to see so many parents/carers attending our exhibition. Thank you for your input and your on-going support with your child's learning.



Part of the Year 2 Enquiry wall

Year 3

What a wonderful term we have had in year 3. The children, parents and staff have all worked together to answer our enquiry question – "How did life differ in the Stone Age from the Iron Age?". We have been on a learning adventure where we have followed the life of 'Om' and the way in which a modern boy learnt how to survive in a stone age village. We have learnt some new amazing vocabulary through

our History including: Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic. The children know that these are periods in which humans developed from nomadic tribes' people to eventually live in settlements as farmers. The children have also designed and built their own tepees and have used them as reading corners in their classrooms. They have built meat drying racks and learnt how ancient people preserved their food. They know how ancient

people made stone tools using knapping techniques. On our WOW day the children had great fun making Bronze age shields; the covers to their tepees and ancient cave paintings of their hands, hunters and animals. During half term the children and parents made wonderful models of a range of ancient settlements - the models were absolutely magnificent! They also now know how ancient people extracted iron from iron ore using a bloomery. To finish off the term, the children presented all they had learnt to their parents. The hall was set up with all their models and the three tepees set up as a small Stone Age camp. The children answered the enquiry question by detailing how humans have developed from ancient times and the parents really enjoyed hearing about everything they had learnt during this wonderful first term of year 3.



Year 3 Stone Age exhibition

Year 4

The Romans have invaded Birchfield this term! After 1,600 years, the Romans have returned to Britain and they have taken over year 4. The children have really enjoyed learning from their class story book, 'Romans on the Rampage' so they can answer their enquiry question, "What did the Romans do for us?" The children have really enjoyed learning about the life of a Roman family. The main character in their book is 'Scorcha' and he wants to be a charioteer and he is desperate not to work in his Dad's bank.

The children learnt all about Charioteering and the races in the Circus Maximus and how there were different coloured teams racing against each other – sometimes to the death! The children also have had a wonderful WOW day where they made Roman bread. The children now know that rich Romans ate white bread and poor Romans had brown bread. They made the most beautiful woven white bread and they loved eating it on their way home from school. Over half term, they designed and made their own Roman villa,

Colosseum, Roman armour, shields, helmets, spears and swords. The children's models were amazing and they have made such a wonderful display of work in their classrooms. The exhibition was a massive success with the children presenting their answers to their enquiry question. The children all performed with confidence and sang, "Just Like a Roman" with sign language. It has been a fantastic term and the children have really enjoyed their learning and we all look forward to seeing how they approach their study of the Anglo Saxons in Spring.

I'm a proud mum—so nice to see what they have been learning
Year 4 Parent

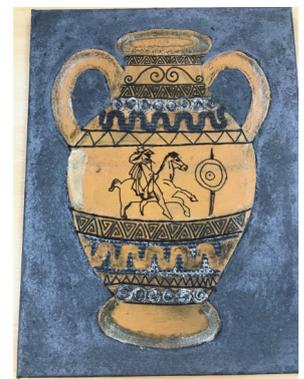
We were blown away by the exhibition—amazing work!
Year 5 parent.

Year 5

So, as 2019 draws to a close, a very eventful and exciting term does too. We, in Year 5, have thoroughly enjoyed the variety of learning we have experienced this term, with the culmination being a well-attended Exhibition, showcasing our expertise and acquired learning skills in all things Ancient Greek. Art, DT, drama, pottery and English skills were all on show and with a typically lively Greek song to finish, children and staff enjoyed showing our learning. A group of girls have attended further

mornings and afternoons at King Edwards VI Grammar School, specialising in maths workshops which really stretched and enthralled those taking part. We have also enjoyed using the new library this half term and we were amazed at the range of new books we could borrow. Earlier in the term, Year 5 had the pleasure of the inaugural Daily Mile with guests from Aston Villa running the course with us as well as Mrs Thewlis strutting her stuff! Well done to all those children and staff who have continued to

complete a mile every day. Our annual visit from the Combined Church Group ensured we learned about the Nativity Story and it was delivered in a fun, modern way that brought this special story to life. The Christmas Fete has seen us all preparing our stalls and creating decorations to make our school look and feel festive. Year 5 staff would like to wish all our parents and children a happy and fun time together.



Year 5 Art work on canvas.

Year 6

What an exciting term we have had! Our enquiry led curriculum has enabled the children to deepen their understanding of the events of World War 2 and the effects upon children during that time. Through their learning they have been able to explore the core values Birchfield uphold: Determination, Respect, Curiosity, Ambition, Resilience and Empathy. They now understand what Britain was like during that time and how children felt. Through our English lessons, we have read

'Letters from the Lighthouse' by Emma Carroll and the children were able to learn more about why children were evacuated and to where and also why food was rationed. They have also learnt about the timeline of crucial events that took place and the countries and people involved.

They have explored how life has changed since WW2 and the current issues we face as a country. Alongside this, Year 6 have designed and made air raid shelters, gas masks and Spitfire

planes, assessing and evaluating the materials they used and analysing how they could make further improvements to their designs. To further explore the topic, we will be going on an educational visit to RAF Cosford to understand, see and feel real artefacts and listen to experts on the topic, enabling year 6 pupils to delve further into this part of British history.

The engagement and enthusiasm this term has been lovely to see. With 2020 nearing and a new term beginning, Year 6 staff would like to thank you for your continued support and we wish you a very happy and prosperous new year.

Year 6 Art work based on their learning about World War 2



Attendance

It is extremely important that children come to school every day. Thank you to all of you for your support with the school procedures and for helping us to improve our attendance in line with National figures. We need to continue to improve our punctuality figures. Please remember that school starts at 8.55 a.m. every day. The school doors open at 8:45am and we would like all children to be in their class by 8:55am so that they can start their lessons promptly. Coming late to school is an unsettling way to start the day and valuable learning time may be missed or disrupted. Let's work together to get all children into school on time. Well done to the children who are on time every day.

A number of children in school have achieved 100% attendance. This is a fantastic achievement considering that there have been lots of bugs going around over the last term. The children with 100% attendance will be invited to a very special afternoon tea party with Mrs Thewlis as our way of saying well done and thank you. They will also receive a certificate. Very well done all!

Christmas Fayre

A huge thank you to the parents and children who turned out on Friday afternoon to attend the Christmas Fayre. A huge amount of work went into organising and running the event so it was just wonderful to see how well this event was supported.

Special thank you's go to all the parents who donated items—we really couldn't run the event without your help. As many of you will know, we were able to hold a very successful auction thank to a very generous parent donation and additional thanks to Mr Aldred for stepping in to act as auctioneer!

We are already planning our Spring event so if you know you have skills or support that you could lend us, please get in touch with a member of the team.



Happy holidays X

