

Birch Church of England (VA) Primary School

WB 16th March 2026

Edition 25



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Dear All,

It has been lovely to see so many great outfits in school showing people 'taking themselves funny'. I look forward to seeing (and maybe joining in) some of the 'silly races' later in the day.

Also this week, Class 1 have continued with Jack and the Beanstalk and have taken home some beans in pots to grow at home. Class 2 have carried on with their talk for writing units and, this afternoon, will be learning about compasses and direction with some support from Buddy in a 'Dography' rather than Geography lesson!

In Classes 3 and 4 the children have been writing Haiku poems and exploring soluble and insoluble materials in science and in Class 5 the science is focussed around electricity. They are designing and making some steady hand games for our Phyzzi Forces Festival next week.

FOOTBALL TEAM

The football team played an excellent match this week against St Luke's which they won 1-0. They should be incredibly proud of their approach to the game. They were determined, calm, intelligent and confident. Really well done team! Next week they have a match against Mildene which I am sure they will approach with an equally positive outlook.

PEACOCK RELOCATION

Following consultation with the RSPCA, RSPB, and a specialist peacock relocation company, the peacocks have been safely relocated to a more suitable environment where they will be better protected.

Although peacocks are not a native species, they are protected by law. However, as a non-native species, relocation is permitted when it is in the best interests of animal welfare and the local environment.

As many of you will know, a male peacock first appeared on site in 2018, followed by a female, which at the time brought much enjoyment to the school community. Since then, the population has grown, and the challenges associated with maintaining a group of this size on site have become increasingly evident. With the current number of females, the population could have expanded to 30 or more by the end of the summer, which is not sustainable in this setting.

ANIMAL WELFARE AND PUPIL SAFETY

The school site and surrounding area are not a safe or suitable environment for the birds or for road users. The RSPCA advises that peacocks are best suited to large rural estates, away from busy roads. A number of parents have raised concerns about the risks when the birds cross nearby roads. While there have unfortunately been some peacock casualties, there have been no reported incidents involving injury to people.

At this time of year, the behaviour of male peacocks can also become more intense during the breeding season. On several occasions, males have repeatedly pecked at windows, sometimes injuring themselves in the process, which has been distressing for pupils to witness. There have also been instances where children have observed injured birds, including one that later died.

While many pupils have enjoyed seeing the peacocks, others have found them intimidating, and the birds themselves can become stressed in a busy school environment. A school setting is therefore not an appropriate location for a growing population.

IMPACT ON NATIVE WILDLIFE

Peacocks are opportunistic feeders and can have a negative impact on local wildlife. As a school, we have a responsibility—supported by government guidance such as the Climate Change Action Plan—to promote and protect native species.

We are currently working to restore our pond area, with the aim of supporting healthy populations of newts and invertebrates. Peacocks forage around pond margins and may feed on amphibians, invertebrates, and reptiles, as well as damaging important plant life.

DAMAGE TO PROPERTY AND SITE

A large population of birds has also had a significant impact on the school site. Their presence has resulted in ongoing cleaning requirements and damage to outdoor areas. The school garden has been particularly affected, and as a result, our gardening club (“Mud Club”) will need to be paused temporarily to allow for recovery.

In addition, there have been multiple reports of damage to vehicles on site, including scratching and pecking at paintwork.

IN CONCLUSION

While we all appreciate the beauty of peacocks and have enjoyed their presence over the years, this decision has been made with careful consideration of animal welfare, pupil safety, and the wider environment. Relocating them to a more suitable setting will allow them to thrive.

We understand that this decision may be disappointing for some members of the community and appreciate your understanding.

Next week is the last week of the half term. Y6 have their Forest School afternoon at Layer Breton Heath on Wednesday and Friday will be our Phyzzi Forces Festival– we look forward to seeing some of your engineering feats to bring an egg to the ground safely!

Finally, following the tea and chat afternoon, ACL will be running a parent course on anxiety here on 16th April. Details will follow but it will start at 9:00 and finish at around 11:00. Please put the date in your diaries if this is something that interests you.

Have a great weekend all!

Rebekah May

WEEK BEGINNING	DAY	EVENTS
SATURDAY: POND DIGGING TASK CONFIRMED TIME TO BE DECIDDED – PLEASE RESPOND BY EMAIL WITH SUGGESTIONS		
WB 23 rd March	Monday	Football Club
	Tuesday	Gym Club
	Wednesday	Y6 Forest School Layer Breton Heath
	Thursday	
	Friday	FRIDAY PHYZZI FESTIVAL – an Easter-themed Physics Festival plus PAFA’s Easter Egg Hunt. STEM ambassadors HW due in
EASTER HOLIDAY		
13 th April	Monday	1 st day of summer term
	Tuesday	Y6 revision sessions 8:00
	Wednesday	Y6 revision sessions 8:00

		NETBALL TOURNAMENT THURSTABLE
	Thursday	ACL ANXIETY TRAINING OFFER AT SCHOOL 9:00-11:00
	Friday	Y6 revision sessions 8:00
20 th April	Monday	
	Tuesday	Y6 revision sessions 8:00
	Wednesday	Y6 revision sessions 8:00
	Thursday	
	Friday	Y6 revision sessions 8:00
27 th April	Monday	FOOTBALL MATCH AFTER SCHOOL AGAINST MERSEA
	Tuesday	Y6 revision sessions 8:00 Y5 FOREST SCHOOL TASTER
	Wednesday	Y6 revision sessions 8:00
	Thursday	
	Friday	Y6 revision sessions 8:00
4 th May	Monday	BANK HOLIDAY
	Tuesday	Y6 revision sessions 8:00 Y5 FOREST SCHOOL TASTER
	Wednesday	Y6 revision sessions 8:00
	Thursday	
	Friday	Y6 revision sessions 8:00
11 th May Y6 SATS WEEK	Monday	Y6 Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar tests
	Tuesday	Y6 Reading paper
	Wednesday	Y6 Arithmetic paper 1 and Reasoning paper 2
	Thursday	Y6 Reasoning paper 3 Y6 FOREST SCHOOL PM
	Friday	Assembly and Parent Forum for Classes 1 and 2 9:10
18 th May	Monday	
	Tuesday	
	Wednesday	
	Thursday	CENSUS DAY: please order a school meal on this day as this impacts our funding. Thank you! Y6 ROUNDERS TOURNAMENT AFTER SCHOOL THURSTABLE
	Friday	Class photos for all classes and individual photos also for Y6 leavers.
Key dates to note for Spring/ Summer Term		<u>Spring 2: 24th Feb- 27th March</u> <u>Summer 1: 13th April – 22nd May</u> <u>Summer 2: 1st June- 17th July</u> Monday 20 th July: non-pupil day 12th June Classes 3 and 4 Assembly and Parent Forum 9:10 16th JUNE Great Science Share for Schools and KS2 Consortium Athletics competition SPORTS DAY AND PAFA COLOUR RUN FRIDAY 19 th June WB 22 nd JUNE Y6 SECONDARY SCHOOL VISIT DAYS (25 th JUNE for many schools) PROVISIONAL KS2 SHOW: afternoon Monday 6 th July, Evening Tuesday 7 th July PROVISIONAL Reception 2026 home visits Tuesday 7 th July, Wednesday 8 th July THURSDAY 16 th JULY: LEAVERS TEA FOR Y6 and FAMILIES

PHOTOS: RED FROM NOSE TO TOES/ TAKE YOURSELF FUNNY FOR MONEY

