

Birch Church of England (VA)

Primary School

*Guided by the Good Shepherd, we serve as
compassionate leaders*



☎ 01206 330224

email: admin@birch.essex.sch.uk

www.birch.essex.sch.uk

WB 13th July 2026

Edition 39

WB 20 th July	MONDAY 20 th July is a non-pupil day	
PE DAYS AUTUMN TERM:	Class 1: Thursday, Friday Class 2: Thursday, Friday Class 3: Monday, Tuesday Class 4: Tuesday, Wednesday Class 5: Monday, Thursday	
Key dates to note for Autumn 2026		First day of new school year Wednesday 2 nd September Dates for school tours for Reception 27: Wednesday 7 th October 9:30 and 11:00, Tuesday 22 nd October 9:30 and 11:00, Monday 9 th November 9:30, Tuesday 8 th December 9:30, 11 th January 9:30

Dear All,

It's our final day of the year, and I am pleased to see that today's weather is better than predicted. As a result, all parents are invited to join us for an outdoor assembly under the trees at 2:30pm. I will open the pedestrian gate to the playground at 2:20pm so that you can come in. I will use cones to indicate where the children will be sitting, and I hope there will also be enough shade for all the adults. However, please do bring hats and water to keep yourselves safe.

Our Year 6 pupils have enjoyed a number of leavers' events this week. A pizza-fuelled *Moving On Camp* on Monday gave them the chance to enjoy one another's company, play 'slip rounders' and reflect on their journey so far, as well as where they will be going next. Last night, we were brilliantly entertained at their Leavers' Tea, where they performed a series of skits that certainly put the 'variety' into the 'Variety Show'. They also helped prepare a wonderful afternoon tea, with support from our kitchen staff, for their families and members of staff, which was very well received. I wish all of our Year 6 pupils the very best for their next steps and thank them, and their families, for the many contributions they have made to our school community over the years.

PE PREMIUM AND FOREST SCHOOL UPDATE:

I would like to thank all parents for their support in exploring solutions to the changes that the withdrawal of this funding will bring. However, after I sent my letter last week, the DfE announced that the interim funding already being offered will be increased. As yet, we are not certain exactly what this will look like, but we believe it will be sufficient to fund Key Stage 1 Forest School sessions with our previous provider leading these during the Autumn Term. This gives us a little more time to consider our longer-term provision, and I am very grateful that so many of you are willing to contribute towards this should it become necessary.

Other parents have also begun thinking about sports club provision and how they may be able to help with this, and we look forward to exploring these ideas further in September.

OTHER BITS:

- Please refresh yourselves with the school uniform requirements on the website before buying uniform in September. Please note that we do not want children wearing branded items of clothing, including trainers for PE.
- There is now an option live on ScoPay to contribute towards stationery, such as glue sticks. This was a sensible suggestion from last year's Parent Forum to relieve parents of the need to provide these items individually. Children do not need pencil cases in any class, as we will provide everything they need, but we do need a little financial support to help us do this. Many thanks!
- Please remember to sign up for the Summer Reading Challenge at your local library. Reading is an important foundation skill within the whole curriculum but more than that, we hope that this sort of challenge will help foster a love of stories, books and reading in all forms.
- Menus will be uploaded over the summer. We are trying to change the cut-off to 24 hours over the summer holidays, as requested in Parent Forum. All allergy information will be on the website
- Music lessons: Guitar and piano start Monday 7.9.26; Singing starts Friday 11.9.26; Drumming starts Thursday 17.9.26

Finally, I have a number of people to thank. I would like to say a huge thank you to the staff and volunteers at Birch who are an incredible team of people who give so much to support all the work we do here for our children. Our music teachers, Forest School provider and our EPC sports coaches have also contributed so much to the curriculum we can offer and our dedicated Governors work incredibly hard behind the scenes to support the strategic plans of the school. Many thanks also to all our families for the support you have given your children and the school over the last year. It is very much appreciated.

Finally, finally, PAFA, thank you for all the work you put into all the events you organise and your ongoing support to the school ...and please remember everyone, that it is 'ice-cream Friday' after school today!

I hope you all have a wonderful, restful summer break, and we look forward to welcoming everyone back in September.

Best wishes

Rebekah May

PHOTOS: Y6 at their Party arranged by families at Mersea Outdoors with Mr Turnbull and I being all 'gladiatorial' for their entertainment! Y6 in their Robin and the Sherwood Hoodies costumes. Thank you, parents who sent these photos in to me – definitely better quality than mine!



YEAR 6 LEAVERS' CAKE!





