



BIRCHES PRIMARY SCHOOL

Newsletter

September / October 2020

On behalf of the staff and governors I would like to welcome everyone back to the start of our new school year.

Medical Information

Please keep the school informed of any recently diagnosed allergies or other medical conditions. Medical forms can be found on our school website.

If applicable, please complete these and email them to Mrs Greer jgreer521@c2kni.net

Allergies

We have children in school who have severe allergies. Therefore, it is extremely important that **NO NUTS or foods containing nuts** are to be brought to school by the children. Thank you.

Medication

For all children who use inhalers please ensure that their teachers have been given two named inhalers. It is not necessary for brown inhalers to be kept in school.

It is essential that parents keep a regular check on the expiry dates on inhalers or other medications stored in school and ensure they remain in date as teachers are not permitted to administer any medication that is out of date.

COVID-19 Concerns

If you are concerned that your child or a member of your family has COVID 19 or has been in contact with someone diagnosed with it, please refer to the chart at the end of the newsletter for advice on procedures to follow. Please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Watson if you have any concerns pwatson676@c2kni.net

Illness

There are occasions when your child may suffer from childhood illnesses eg: chickenpox, vomiting or diarrhoea. As has always been the case, a child who is unwell should not be attending school.

Absent Notes

If your child is absent, please email a note to our school secretary Mrs McClelland on the day they return to school stating the reason for their absence hmclelland012@c2kni.net

Emergency Contact Numbers / Personal Details

Please ensure the school has at least three up to date contact numbers for your child should you need to be contacted during school hours and while your child is travelling home on the school bus.

School Uniform

Please ensure children's names are on your child's school uniform and water bottles. If possible, please use name tabs as names written in ink can wear off during the year.

The only piece of jewellery to be worn in school is a watch.

For health and safety reasons **earrings, rings and necklaces are not to be worn. If your child has recently had their ears pierced and needs to keep their earrings in, please contact Mrs Watson.**

Healthy Breaks – P3 – P7

We are encouraging children to bring healthy food with them to eat at break times. They are able to bring a wide selection of food to school including a pancake, sandwich, fruit, yoghurt, cheese and vegetables. Please ensure that all packaging can be easily opened by your child.

Water Bottles

Children can bring their own water bottles to school. Please make sure they are named and filled up each morning as the children will not have the opportunity to fill them during the day.

School Meals

School meals cost £2.60 per day - £13.00 per week. Please consult the dinner menu which will be on our school website and send the correct money on a **Monday** morning for the whole week. We are unable to lodge cheques or send home change and can only accept the correct money. Thank you.

Free School Meals

ARE YOU ENTITLED TO FREE SCHOOL MEALS?

Parents/Guardians can apply if your son or daughter is in full-time education and if you are in receipt of one of the following benefits:-

Income Support; Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance; Income Related Employment and Support Allowance; Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit; Child Tax Credit or Working Tax Credit with an annual taxable income of £16,190 or less; Universal credit and have net household earnings not exceeding £14,000 per year.

<https://www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/free-school-meals-uniform-grants>

Money Wallets

Money wallets are available to buy from school. These come in packs of 40 and cost £3.00 per pack. These can be purchased from your child's class teacher. The correct money can be sent to school in a clearly marked envelope.

Communication

- Letters / information will be available on our school website www.birchesps.com as well as through SEESAW. Letters will no longer be sent out in paper form due to Covid-19 guidelines.
- Text messages will also be sent to parents. If you have not been receiving text messages, please forward your details to Mrs Watson, pwatson676@c2kni.net
- Teachers will communicate with children and parents through SEESAW.
- If you need to get in touch with your child's class teacher or the Principal, please send them an email or contact them through SEESAW.
- If you need to contact school regarding a message relating to your child, you can telephone the school office and the message will be passed onto your child's teacher - 028 38851443.

Email addresses

P1	Mrs Morrow	cmorrow528@c2kni.net
P2	Mrs Greer	jgreer521@c2kni.net
	Mrs England	rengland244@c2kni.net
P3	Mrs Boyd	jboyd601@c2kni.net
	Mrs England	rengland244@c2kni.net
P4	Mrs Dunlop	cdunlop764@c2kni.net
	Mrs England	rengland244@c2kni.net
P5	Mrs R Patterson	rpatterson275@c2kni.net
	Mrs K Patterson	kpatterson388@c2kni.net
P6	Mrs Galway	agalway951@c2kni.net
P7	Mrs McLelland	cmclelland124@c2kni.net
Principal	Mrs Watson	pwatson676@c2kni.net

SEESAW

Your child's class teacher will send you QR codes for logging into SEESAW this week. If you are experiencing any difficulties logging in, please email your child's teacher.

It is essential that you are logged into SEESAW as it will be used for communication and for homework.

As you are aware a pupil or a class could, at very short notice, be asked to self-isolate. We would have to move very quickly to use SEESAW as a means of providing remote/online learning.

Homework

SEESAW will be used for homework on a regular basis. Further information regarding homework will follow.

Contacting School

If you are concerned or unsure of anything relating to your child please do not worry at home, pick up the phone and speak to either Mrs Watson or your child's teacher.

We will be only too willing to talk to you after school at a mutually convenient time.

Holidays

If you are arranging a holiday for your child, please arrange it within our school holidays. Thank you.

Parent Interviews

Information regarding the format of interviews this year will follow.

Music Tuition in School

We are delighted that music tuition will continue this year from the end of September. Information from the Music Service relating to their COVID guidelines and refunds/new payments will be available soon.

School Bus

Our school bus will run as normal from Tuesday 1 September. Although not mandatory for children under 13, the Department of Education strongly advise that ALL children wear face masks on school buses.

The bus will park in the lay-by at the front of school from 2.25pm. This area must be kept clear.

Tuesday 1st September onwards

These times outlined are specific to our restart and will be reviewed as needed.

All children in the same family can be dropped off at the same time as their eldest sibling.

Drop off

8.30 am	P7 Main Entrance P3 Side gate C (Robinsonstown)
8.45am	P5 Main Entrance P6 Side gate B (kitchen side) P4 Side gate C (Robinsonstown)
9.00am	P2 Main Entrance

ALL CHILDREN WILL LEAVE THROUGH THE ENTRANCE THEY USED IN THE MORNING

When waiting for your child, please be mindful of social distancing.

Pick up times

1.20pm	P1
1.30pm	P2
1.45pm	P3 every day for the first half term (this will be under review)
2.20pm	P4 – P7 for parents collecting 1 child only
2.35pm	P4 – P7 for parents collecting more than 1 child.
2.35pm	School bus available for eligible children. The bus will park in the lay-by at the front of school.



**Dates for your Diary
2020 - 2021**

School Holidays

Half Term

Monday 26 October - School closed to
Friday 30 October
School starts again on Monday 2 November

Christmas Holidays

Monday 21 December - School closed to
Friday 1 January
School starts again on Monday 4 January

Half Term

Monday 15 February - School closed to
Friday 19 February
School starts again on Monday 22 February

St. Patrick's Day

Wednesday 17 March

Easter Holidays

Monday 29 March - School closed to
Friday 9 April
School starts again on Monday 12 April

May Holidays

Monday 3 May - School closed

Tuesday 25 May - School closed to
Monday 31 May
School starts again on Tuesday 1 June



Birches Primary School

IMPORTANT PROCEDURES REGARDING COVID -19

Dear Parents/Carers,
I realise that, especially as we move into Autumn and Winter, your child may present with Covid-19 symptoms.

These are the symptoms as listed on the PHA website:
<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus/covid-19-information-public>

- If you have:
- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature); OR
 - a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual); OR
 - a loss of or change in sense of smell or taste.

You can ring NHS 111 for information or advice

School Procedures to follow

My child or family members have symptoms
Please read the chart below, hopefully this will help you when making a decision on whether or not you should send your child to school. Please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Watson if you need further advice.

What to do if...	Action needed...	Return to school when...
My child has Coronavirus symptoms	<u>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL</u> Contact school Self-isolate Get a test Inform school immediately about test result	Your child can return to school when - the test comes back negative. - everyone with symptoms who was tested in their household receive a negative result. - they are fever free for 48 hours.
My child tests positive for Coronavirus	<u>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL</u> Inform the school immediately about the test result Self-isolate for at least 10 days Contact school before returning	- Your child can return to school after 10 days self-isolation. - They can return after 10 days if they still have a cough or loss of taste of smell/taste and NO high temperature. These symptoms can last for several weeks once infection is gone. If they continue to have a high temperature they should stay at home.
Somebody in my household has Coronavirus symptoms	<u>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL</u> Contact school Household member to get a test, Inform the school immediately about the test result	- Your child can return to school after 14 days after the first person in your home started having symptoms.
Somebody in my household has tested positive with Coronavirus	<u>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL</u> Inform the school immediately about the test result Contact school before return to school	Your child can return to school once they have completed 14 days of self-isolation
The Track and Trace scheme has identified my child as a close contact of somebody with symptoms of confirmed Coronavirus	<u>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL</u> Contact school Self-isolate for 14 days	Your child can return to school once they have completed 14 days of self-isolation
My child has travelled abroad and has to self-isolate as part of the quarantine procedures	<u>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL</u> when returning from a destination where quarantine is needed Contact school Self-isolate for 14 days Provide information to the school as per attendance policy	Your child can return to school when the quarantine period of 14 days has been completed
Staff or pupils in my child's bubble have tested positive (you will be notified by the school if this is the case)	<u>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL</u> Inform the school Everyone in the bubble must self-isolate and take a test.	Your child can return to school when a negative test is confirmed or the necessary isolation period has been completed.