



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



2014-2015





**BIRCH HILL PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

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Welcome to our school

We would like to extend a warm welcome from the staff and governors to you and your child. We hope that you will have a long and happy association with the school.

This booklet is intended for parents whose children will be attending or already attend Birch Hill Primary School. Please read this booklet in conjunction with the school **Prospectus**. Together, they give you essential information regarding school procedures.



SCHOOL TIMES

School starts at **8.50** each morning. Foundation Stage (FS) and KS1 pupils have a break in the morning from **10.20-10.35** while KS2 children have theirs from **10.45-11.00**. The lunch break is from **12.00-13.15**. School finishes at **15.15** for FS and KS1 and **15.20** for KS2.

SCHOOL LUNCHES

Children may have a cooked meal, packed lunch or go home.

A choice of three, well-balanced meals is offered each day. These are of a very high standard and represent excellent value. The menus are on a three-week rota which may be obtained from the secretary's office. Menus are also sent home to parents.

Packed lunches should be brought in a container which is stored in class areas until children are called for lunch. Please do not include cans of fizzy drink or glass bottles. Lunches may be supplemented by purchases from the food counter.

These items include fruit drinks, home made cakes and biscuits.

You may vary your eating pattern during the week if you wish as meals are paid for daily. However, some consistency would be appreciated to make the ordering and catering a little easier.

If you are receiving income support or job seeker's allowance your family qualifies for assistance with school meals. The Headteacher will authorise receipt of free school meals. Application forms are available from the school office.

Breaktime Snack

Children may bring in a snack of fresh fruit or raw vegetables to eat during morning break. In order to continue to support healthy eating, no other form of snack will be allowed. Infant children will be able to eat theirs seated in the amphitheatre in the lower playground, Junior children will sit under the pergola in the main playground. Bins will be provided and all litter must be placed in them.



SCHOOL POLICY ON DRESS

The school policy is that all pupils come to school dressed in the school uniform.

UNIFORM

The school uniform consists of a royal blue jumper or cardigan, white shirt or blouse, royal blue or white Birch Hill T-shirt, grey trousers or skirt and blue and white dress.

A games and PE kit is also required, consisting of a T-shirt and shorts in white or royal blue and plimsolls or soft soled trainers. For safety, indoor PE is always undertaken in bare feet. PE is an important part of the curriculum and children must bring the correct kit for PE. Please ensure that you know when your child's class do PE and that they have the correct kit in school.

An apron or old shirt is provided for art and craft work.

The games kit and apron should be kept in a small named shoe bag.

All items of uniform should be clearly marked with the child's name.

Some items of uniform can be purchased from or ordered through the school secretary.

JEWELLERY

No jewellery is to be worn in school.



There have been incidents of serious injuries caused by the wearing of jewellery. It is not possible for parents to accept responsibility for any injury caused by their child to another parent's child.

If parents are unable to comply with this, and children come to school wearing earrings, these should be plain studs. These must be removed for games, PE and dance, in accordance with Bracknell Forest Borough Council Education Department Policy. It is preferable that the children do not wear them to school on days when these activities will occur, as staff are not able to remove or refit earrings, nor can the school accept any responsibility for the safe-keeping of items. Children will be asked to remove other items of jewellery at the start of the school day.

If children are to have their ears pierced then this is best done so that the healing process occurs during the summer break. If this cannot be complied with, then children may take part in physical activities ONLY if the studs are covered with surgical tape. Once again, it is parents' responsibility to fit and remove the surgical tape. Once healed, the studs must be removed for games, PE and dance.

ABSENCES

If your child has to be absent for any reason, you must either phone the pupil absence line or send a note to the class teacher on the child's return. Any absence without notification will be classified as an unauthorised absence. Please notify us of any infectious illnesses **as soon** as they are diagnosed.

The school works closely with the Education Welfare Officer to monitor absences and to encourage regular attendance.

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

TERM TIME LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Continuity of education is important, particularly during the primary school years, if children are going to make progress. Regular attendance at school is vital. Children should therefore **not** be taken out of school for holidays. If An official term time leave request form should be obtained from the school office, completed and returned prior to the start of the period of leave. It should however be noted that in accordance with the 1981 Education Act no child, leave of absence will not be granted, except in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Headteacher.

PUNCTUALITY

Children must be in class by 8.50 a.m. Lateness will be monitored and the E.W.O. (Education Welfare Officer) will follow this up. Where possible doctors and dentists appointments are to be made outside of school hours or during school holidays.

Days off and persistent lateness all add up to a loss of learning. There are 190 school days each academic year during which your child is expected to attend. There are 175 days off, which includes week-ends, school and bank holidays. This is your family time for visits, holidays, shopping, household jobs and other appointments. If your child has 16 days off during the academic year then



they will be out of school more than they have attended. (175+16=191). A day out of school each week of your child's entire school life is equivalent of missing 2 years of school

WHAT TO DO IF THERE'S A PROBLEM

Inevitably there will be occasions when things don't go according to plan.

- The first point of contact should be your child's teacher. You might be able to catch them at the beginning or end of the day. Alternatively, you can phone the school office or email the school secretary with the name of the teacher in the subject line.
- If your child has a falling-out with another child, please don't approach either the child or their parent as this can cause extra difficulties. Once again, the best person to contact with is your child's class teacher.
- You can also contact the relevant Team Leader, the Deputy Headteacher or the Headteacher. This is best done through the school office.

ILLNESS AND INJURY

If your child feels unwell whilst at school and cannot join in normal school activities, the best cure is normally home comfort. It is therefore important that we have an **up to date** contact number.

A form requesting all the details we require is given to all new children and our records are updated annually. Could you please notify the school secretary immediately of any change of address or telephone number?

If your child is injured at any time and we suspect that the injury is serious, we will contact you and ask you to take your child for medical treatment.

MEDICINES

If a doctor has said that a child is fit for school but that a course of treatment needs to continue, you may wish to take your child home at lunchtime to administer the medicine. Alternatively, medicine will be administered by the school secretary on receipt of a completed medical form, which is available from the school office.

HEADLICE

Please remember that the responsibility for treating children rests with parents. If your child has headlice, they should not come into school until they have been treated. If a member of staff notices that a pupil has headlice, then the school office will notify parents before the end of the school day, if possible. A Berkshire Health Authority leaflet will be sent home to parents of all children in the class. Only in extreme cases will we ask parents to come and collect children.

Prevention is better and cheaper than cure. Parents must take responsibility for their child's hair.

ROAD SAFETY

We are conscious of the safety of children as they travel to and from school. This is why we requested crossing patrols in Leppington and Ringmead and flashing warning lights on Ringmead. Please emphasise to children that they should use these crossings or the Birch Hill Road pedestrian crossing or the underpass at all



times.

Our car park at the front of the school gets very congested in the morning and evening and so it is advisable, if children have to be brought by car, to deposit them in the Waitrose car park and to cross to the school via the Leppington crossing patrol. Whilst waiting for school children, parents should be aware that noise outside a class may disrupt what is going on inside. Pre-school children should not play on any school equipment and should always be supervised to ensure their safety.

CYCLING TO SCHOOL

There are facilities for storing bikes during the school day in the playground near the Upper Junior wing, and, children in the Upper Juniors (Y5&6) may cycle to school. It is also possible for younger children to ride bikes to school accompanied by their parents and then leave the bikes there to be collected at the end of the day. These regulations need to be followed:

- ✓ Children must wear a helmet;
- ✓ They must walk their bikes in the school grounds;
- ✓ They should enter the school using the alleyway between the library and the caretaker's house;
- ✓ They must lock their bikes;
- ✓ They must accept full responsibility for their bikes.

It is particularly important that no bikes are ridden in the school grounds. It will cause a health and safety hazard for others. No bikes are to enter the school at any entrance other than the one leading to the Upper Junior playground.

HOME LEARNING

Reception

Book with sounds and sight vocabulary words to practise

Reading book as and when ready

Year 1

- Book with sounds and sight vocabulary words to practise
- Phonics lists for reading sounds

- Reading book: at least twice weekly
- Spelling book: weekly lists given and tested every Friday
- Numeracy sheet: every Friday reflecting the class numeracy learning for the week (we encourage this to be done alongside an adult)

Year 2

Children will be expected to learn a weekly list of spellings. They are given a spelling book and we encourage them to write the words 3 times each to promote the spelling and to work on handwriting. They should be able to use these words in a sentence.

Children will also be expected to complete the one maths sheet that is given out every Friday. They are able to complete and return the homework any time over the next week.

Children will be reading an appropriately levelled book from the reading scheme. The parents are expected to listen to their children read. They will be receiving one to one reading with a teacher or teaching assistant once per week as well as a guided reading session (a group reading with discussion) to improve a variety of reading skills. Guided reading books will also be sent home for further practice.

Years 3 and 4.

- Reading activities, every night.
- Weekly spelling lists.
- Times tables, including division facts, every night.
- Half Term grid-includes maths & science: cross-curricular
- Half Term project

Years 5 and 6.

- Reading activities, every night.
- Weekly spelling lists.
- Times tables, including division facts, every night.





- Half Term project

Further details can be found on the school website in the Home Learning section.

MONEY

Children should bring their dinner-money in a clearly named envelope or purse. Money sent in for a trip or other event should be in a named envelope with the trip or event and amount enclosed clearly marked on it. This envelope should be placed in the class collection box.

THE SCHOOL COUNCIL, BUDDIES AND PEER MEDIATORS

The School Council has representatives from different classes. They meet regularly to discuss matters of interest to the children and to organise events. They also provide play equipment for the children for use during the lunch break.

Buddies are older junior children who help the younger children during the lunchtime and also find friends for any lonely children in the playground. They wear a yellow fluorescent tabard.

Peer Mediators are older junior children who have been chosen by their peers to undergo training that helps them solve simple playground conflicts. They wear red tabards.



- Half Term grid-includes maths &

DOGS

Dogs should not be brought on to the school site **at any time**.

SMOKING

Please note that Birch Hill Primary School is a no smoking zone. Smoking is not allowed anywhere within the school grounds or buildings.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURE

The school will remain open unless there is really no option other than to close. In the event of bad weather, please listen to local radio stations who will broadcast a



science: cross-curricular

list of schools that are closing. Please don't phone the school: if the school is not in the list of closing schools, then it is remaining open! The same procedure applies in the event of a problem with heating, power or water that necessitates a closure. However, these are thankfully rare occurrences.

BROADMOOR SAFETY

If there is an escape from Broadmoor, the warning sirens will sound and all schools within approximately seven miles of the hospital will be notified. The warning siren is tested at 10:00am each Monday for 2½ minutes. After a break of two minutes, the all clear siren is sounded for another 2½ minutes.

Schools will stay open and operate as normally as possible. Parents who know of an escape before their children leave home for school will be expected to arrange for them to be escorted on their journey.

When an escape occurs before the start of school or during the morning session, pupils will be kept at school at midday unless collected by their parents and will be provided with a meal to the extent that the emergency arrangements allow. Parents will be asked to pay the appropriate charge for the meal in due course. If parents decide to collect their children at midday, they will be responsible for their safe return to school in the afternoon.

If the emergency extends to the end of the school day, no child will be allowed to leave the safety of the school premises until collected by a parent or responsible adult known personally to the staff or, in exceptional circumstances, a responsible adult known personally to the child.

On subsequent days parents will be solely responsible for the safe conduct of children to and from the school.

Parents should discuss with the Headteacher any special difficulties which

are likely to arise in individual cases.

If an escape takes place, parents are asked to keep telephone calls to the school to an absolute minimum.

PTA

Every parent is automatically a member of the Birch Hill Primary School PTA. The PTA meets every month at 7.30 in the evening; the actual meeting date will be announced in the newsletter. Every parent is very welcome to attend the meetings. The PTA plans fund-raising and social events, such as the Christmas Bazaar, Summer Fete, children's discos, film-nights, family discos and adult quiz nights. The PTA AGM is held during the Autumn Term.

EXTRA ACTIVITIES AND EXCURSIONS

Trips, Journeys and Activities

During the school year various visits and activities may be arranged as part of your child's education. We also occasionally have productions from visiting theatre groups and talks and presentations from appropriate experts. In addition, day trips and visits may be organised in relation to school work

We will give you advance notification of such events and will usually request a voluntary contribution to cover our costs.

STATEMENT OF POLICY ON CHARGING FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Charges

The school will apply any charges levied by the LEA for services which it provides and also the remission arrangements for which the Authority considers appropriate. The school reserves the right to levy a charge in any circumstances permissible under the Education Reform Act.

Voluntary Contributions

Parents may be asked to make voluntary contributions for any visit or journey

organised by the school and approved by the governors. Although the matter of a voluntary contribution will not be a factor in deciding whether a pupil is allowed to participate in an activity to be financed by voluntary contributions, the school reserves the absolute right to determine whether the level of voluntary contributions is sufficient to enable the activity to take place.

Remissions

The governors shall apply the statutory minimum remissions to any charges which they make; that is, in respect of pupils whose parents are in receipt of income support or family credit. Any further remission of charges will be at the absolute discretion of the governors.

Breakages

The governors reserve the right to ask parents to contribute to the cost of replacement items incurred as a result of breakages, loss or damage to books, equipment or material, other than normal wear and tear.

Charging in Kind

Where parents indicate in advance that they wish to own the finished product of a practical activity they may be asked to provide or pay for the required ingredients, materials and equipment etc. No child will be at a disadvantage because of their parent's unwillingness or inability to pay.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE STATEMENT

Complaints About the School Curriculum

Complaints under this heading only refer to curriculum areas, collective worship, the charging policy and the actions of the governing body and the LEA. Concerns about individuals should always be referred to the Headteacher in the first instance.

All complaints must be investigated fully, fairly and carefully and those people making the complaint must be kept informed of progress during, as well as at

the end of, each stage.

The procedures to be followed are:

1. Informal discussion with the Headteacher (where it is hoped that the complaint will be resolved);
2. If attempts to settle the complaint informally, fail, the complainant should write to the clerk of the governing body for presentation to the governors. The written notification should make the nature of the complaint very clear.
3. If the person making the complaint is not satisfied with the outcome, they are able to make a formal complaint to the LEA.

If the person making the complaint is still dissatisfied after these procedures have been exhausted, it will be possible for the complainant to pursue the matter with the Secretary of State.

IS YOUR CHILD FINDING IT DIFFICULT AT SCHOOL? INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

The School is responsible for helping your child if he/she starts to experience difficulties in learning. Most children will have their needs met with appropriate support in school. However, if your child needs more detailed consideration of their difficulties and how they can be helped, the local education authority (LEA) will be responsible for ensuring that this happens.

If you have concerns

If you are concerned about how your child is coping in school then you should talk to your child's teacher. This can either be during a parents' evening or you could ask for a specific appointment.

Other people you can talk to about your concerns are:

- The special education needs co-ordinator (SENCO) in school.
- The Headteacher.
- The Governor with responsibility for special educational needs (SEN), contacted via school.
- The Parent Partnership Service, Bracknell Forest Education Centre, Easthampstead Park, Wokingham RG40 3DF, Tel: 01344

354011

What the school does

The teacher may also be concerned about your child's progress and raise this with you. The class teacher will help your child, which may include simple changes to the classroom or to the materials being used. In most cases, this is all that is needed to make it easier for your child to learn.

After a while

If you are concerned that your child is still having difficulties then continue discussing this with your child's teacher. The teacher may be able to reassure you that your child is progressing. If the teacher agrees that your child is still having difficulties, then he/she will ask for more help and advice from the SENCO to make greater changes in the way your child is being taught.

How will this be done?

The SENCO will discuss with you and the teacher different ways of helping your child. This discussion will lead to the creation of an Individual Education plan (IEP) to help your child. The IEP will relate directly to your child's difficulties and is a detailed plan of the targets that have been set for your child. It will also describe how your child will be helped to achieve these targets and when you will all meet to discuss how your child has progressed.

When you meet again to review your child's progress a new IEP may be drawn up. When support is given in this way it is called **School Action**. In many cases, children make sufficient progress with this kind of help.

What the school can do next

If it is thought that your child is not making enough progress, then the school may look for help or advice from outside the school. This could be from an Educational Psychologist (EP), the Behaviour and Emotional Support Team (BEST), or the Teaching & Support Service (TASS).

This support will help the school to make

all the necessary changes to help your child progress and will be written into a new IEP. This kind of specialised advice is called **School Action Plus**, and most children will make progress with this help.

If you are still concerned

Meeting regularly to review the IEP will give you the opportunity to discuss with professionals how much progress your child is making. If it is clear that this is not as much as expected then it may be necessary to ask the LEA to carry out a more detailed assessment of your child's needs. Either you or the head teacher can request the LEA to carry out this assessment, which is called a Statutory Assessment. If you would like further information then please see the Bracknell Parent Partnership leaflet, "Your Child's Statutory Assessment Explained", which should be available from school, local library or the LEA Special Needs Department.

The Code of Practice

- The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice is published by the Government and outlines how children with special educational needs can be helped by their parents, schools and the LEA. A booklet for parents on the Code of Practice is available, or alternatively the full guidance can be requested. Both are available from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES).
- The Bracknell Forest Borough Council Parent Partnership Service can also provide you with these booklets and other information. The service offers support from the Independent Parental Supporter Service, which links parents with trained volunteers. These volunteers help parents understand the process and can attend meetings with them.
- There are also voluntary organisations that provide information and advice on educational matters such as ACE (Advisory Centre for Education). Their telephone helpline number is 0800 800 5793.

Gobbledygook

Sometimes specialists may use initials in their reports or when discussing issues with you. It is important that you understand what is being said. The professionals won't mind explaining things if you ask. Here are some abbreviations you may hear:

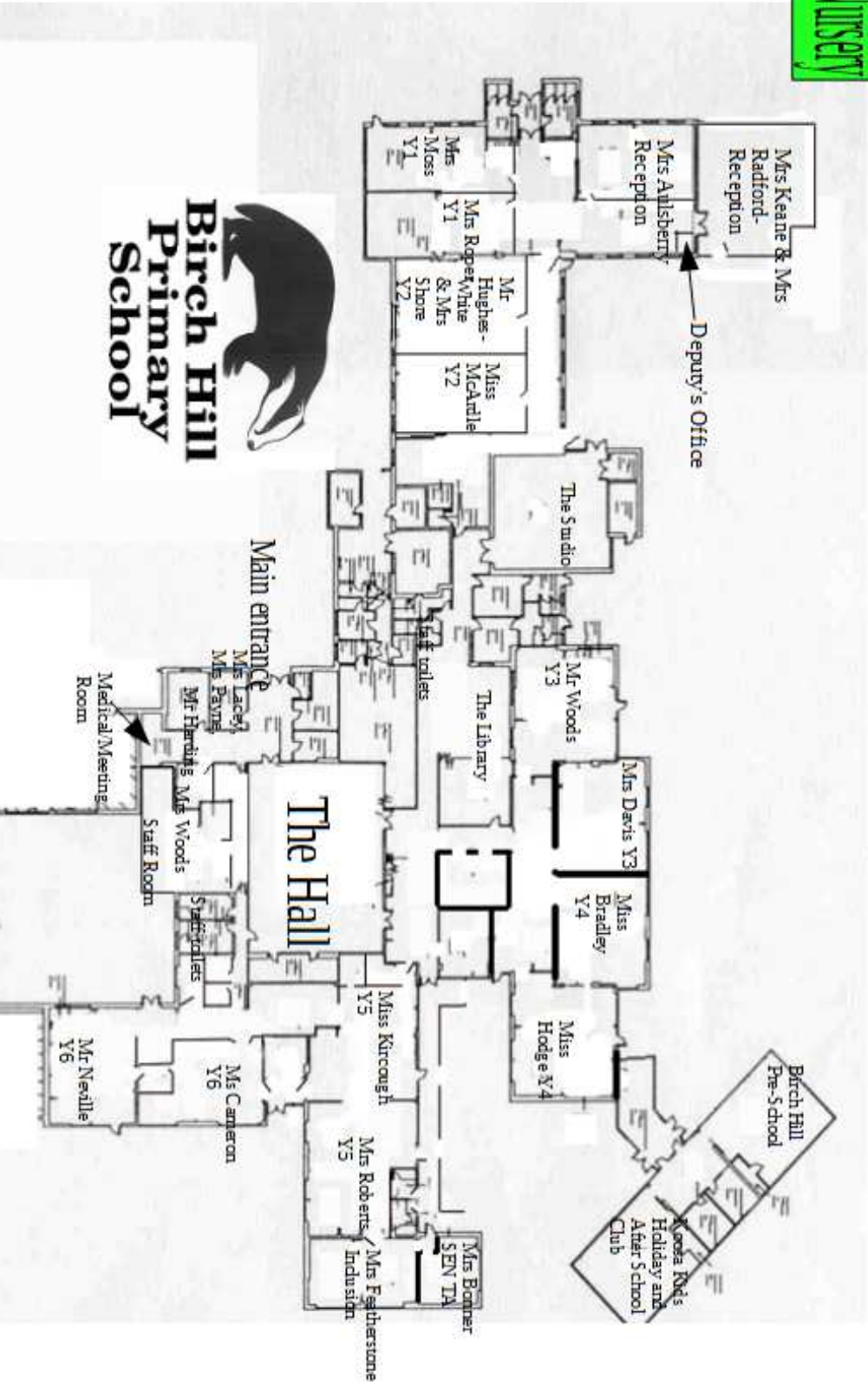
CCP	Consultant Community Paediatrician
EBD	Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties
HI	Hearing Impairment
MLD	Moderate Learning Difficulties
MPA	Multi-Professional Assessment (another name for the statutory assessment)
OT	Occupational Therapist
PD	Physical Disability
PT	Physiotherapist
S.A.L.T	Speech and Language Therapist/Therapy
SLD	Severe Learning Difficulties
SplD	Specific Learning Difficulties, e.g. dyslexia and dyspraxia
VI	Visual Impairment

Definitions

- **Special educational provision** – This means provision that is additional to, or different from, the educational provision generally available for children of the same age. For preschool children please see the Bracknell Parent Partnership leaflet, "Your Guide to Special Educational Needs in Pre-school settings".
- **Special Educational Needs** – A child has special educational needs if she/he has learning difficulties, which call for special educational provision to be made.
- **Local Education Authority (LEA)** – The local government body responsible for providing education and for making statutory assessments and maintaining statements of special educational needs.
- **Statutory Assessment** – A very detailed investigation of a child's special educational needs by various specialists. It may lead to a statement.
- **Statement of special educational needs** – A document that sets out a child's needs and all the extra help he/she should get.
- **Note in lieu of a statement** – A document that sets out your child's difficulties and how the educational provision available within schools will meet these needs. The LEA will give the reason for its decision not to make a statement.
- **Maintained school** – A school that is funded by the LEA or Central Government.
- **Special school** – A school specially organised to help children with special educational needs.
- **Non-maintained special school** – A special school, which charges fees, usually run by a charitable body.

- **Independent special school** – A special school which charges fees, run by a private individual or company.

Nursery



Birch Hill Primary School-September 2014

