

With God all things are possible.  
We are all God's Children.



# *The 'Key' Messages*

The fortnightly newsletter that keeps you up to date with what is going on at Birchills C of E Community Academy.

## **Greetings from Mr. Dean, Principal**

Dear Parents/Guardians,

This edition of the newsletter's introduction has come from Mrs. Hilary Hastings (MBE), Chair of the Local Academy Committee:

*'I wanted to write to thank you for your support and patience over this past term. The Autumn Term has been like no other term I have experienced in my time in education. Having said that, the children have shown such resilience and have settled well into the academy. They have adapted to the necessary changes we have had to make to keep all safe. You too have played your part by following the procedures set out, so thank you. By us working together it has meant that we have been able to successfully stay open to all.*

*As we draw the Autumn Term to a close there is some staffing news I would like to share with you. Following the resignation of Mrs. Williams in September, St. Chads Academies Trust invited Mr. James Dean to lead the academy on an interim basis.*

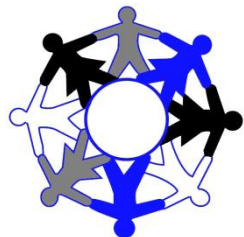
*I am now delighted to announce that following a rigorous recruitment process involving the Trust, the Local Academy Committee and children, we have offered the post of permanent principal to Mr Dean. During the interview he demonstrated that he has the experience, qualifications and skills to help us continue to improve and become an even better school than we are now.*

*I am sure you will all join me in welcoming Mr. Dean to our Birchills' family and wish him every success in his new role.*

*May I take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas, however you are choosing to spend it this year, and a Happy New Year. May you all stay safe and well over the festive period.*

*Merry Christmas and thank you.'*

*Mrs. Hilary Hastings (MBE), Chair of Local Academy Committee*



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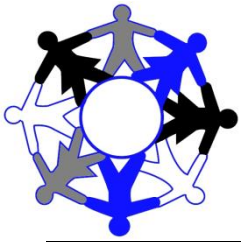
### Start and End times

Owing to the increase in cases of COVID-19 within Walsall and the surrounding areas, coupled with the local lockdowns occurring in nearby areas, the academy is introducing staggered starts and staggered home times. These timings will not reduce the amount of teaching time the children will receive.

New drop off and pick up arrangements are as follows:

DROP OFF TIMES	COLLECTION TIMES	YEAR GROUP	DROP OFF/COLLECTION
<i>Drop off from 8:20AM 8:35AM (Gates will be locked at 8:35AM)  No Parents on site</i>	<i>3:00PM to 3:10PM (Gates will be locked at 3:10PM) Parents to collect from playground</i>	Nursery Reception Year 1 Year 2	Nursery to bring children/collect from the gate near Main Entrance.  Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 from the gate on Birchills Street leading to Infants playground.
<b>IF YOU ARE LATE DROPPING OFF OR COLLECTING, YOU WILL NEED TO DROP OFF/COLLECT FROM THE MAIN RECEPTION AREA</b>			
<i>Drop off from 8:35AM 8:45AM  No Parents on site</i>	<i>3:10PM to 3:20PM Parents to collect from Junior playground</i>	Year 3 Year 4	Rear entrance of the school.
<b>FOR COLLECTING YOUR CHILD, YOU WILL NEED TO QUEUE ALONGSIDE THE FENCE LABELLED 'YEAR 3 &amp; 4'. KEEP 2 MTRS DISTANCE WHERE POSSIBLE. THE GATES WILL BE OPENED AT 3:10PM.</b>			
<b>IF AFTER 3:20PM YOUR CHILD HAS NOT BEEN COLLECTED, YOU WILL NEED TO COLLECT FROM THE MAIN OFFICE.</b>			

<i>Drop off from 8:35AM 8:55AM  No Parents on site</i>	<i>3:20PM to 3:30PM Parents to collect from Junior playground</i>	Year 5	Rear entrance of the school.
<b>FOR COLLECTING YOUR CHILD, YOU WILL NEED TO QUEUE ALONGSIDE THE FENCE LABELLED 'YEAR 5 &amp; 6'. KEEP 2 MTRS DISTANCE WHERE POSSIBLE. ALTHOUGH THE GATES WILL BE OPEN WE ASK THAT YOU DO NOT ENTER THE SITE UNTIL 3:20PM.</b>			
<b>MEMBERS OF STAFF WILL BE MONITORING.</b>			
<b>IF AFTER 3:30PM YOUR CHILD HAS NOT BEEN COLLECTED, YOU WILL NEED TO COLLECT FROM THE MAIN OFFICE.</b>			



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<i>Drop off from 8:35AM 8:55AM</i>  <i>No Parents on site</i>	<i>3:20PM to 3:30PM</i> <i>Parents to collect from the Year 6 entrance near the staff carpark</i>	<i>Year 6</i>	<i>Rear entrance of the school.</i>
<p><b>FOR COLLECTING YOUR CHILD, YOU WILL NEED TO QUEUE ALONGSIDE THE FENCE LABELLED 'YEAR 5 &amp; 6'. KEEP 2 MTRS DISTANCE WHERE POSSIBLE. ALTHOUGH THE GATES WILL BE OPEN WE ASK THAT YOU DO NOT ENTER THE SITE UNTIL 3:20PM. MEMBERS OF STAFF WILL BE MONITORING.</b></p> <p><b>IF AFTER 3:30PM YOUR CHILD HAS NOT BEEN COLLECTED, YOU WILL NEED TO COLLECT FROM THE MAIN OFFICE.</b></p>			

## Drop Off

Once your child is on the academy grounds, please leave so that others may drop their child/ren off. Please ensure your social distancing of 2mtrs, if this is not available, then please stand 1mtr away.

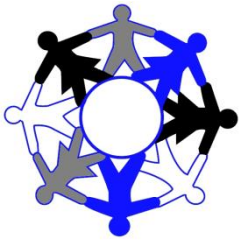
**NB – If you arrive earlier than your designated drop off time, you will be asked to kindly to move to one side until it is your child's time.**

**THE COLLEAGUES AT BIRCHILLS WILL NOT TOLERATE ANY RUDE OR ABUSE BEHAVIOUR.**

## **IMPORTANT UPDATE**

**Birchills has been advised by Walsall MBC that there will be COVID Marshalls and Police patrolling around schools in the coming weeks. These individuals will be there to support but, in some cases, will have the power to issue on the spot fines.**

**Please ensure we keep our distances when dropping off and collection children.**



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## COVID-19

Over the last few days I have spoken to a number of parents about children feeling ill with cold like symptoms, this is a very strange time and increased anxiety regarding coronavirus has obviously made the situation more difficult.

The main symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are:

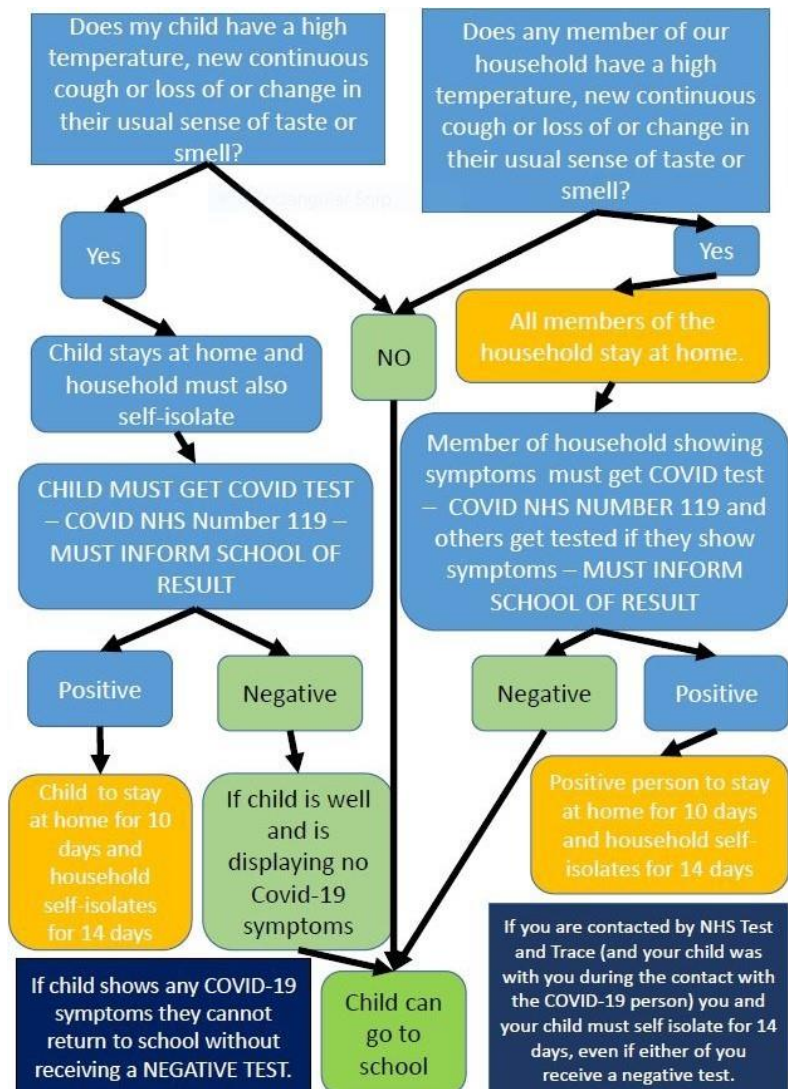
- A high temperature of 37.8 degrees or above – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- A new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- A loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

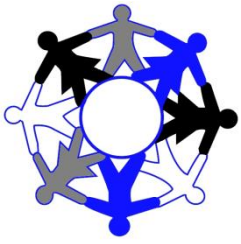
If you or your child is displaying any of these symptoms we ask that you do not attend school and ARE tested for coronavirus, on most occasions test results come back with 24 hours and children can return to school straight away following a negative test. I am unable to provide medical advice as to whether you should send your child to school, and if you are in any doubt or worried please use the [NHS 111 online coronavirus service](https://www.nhs.uk/111).

### PLEASE NOTE:

THE ACADEMY IS WORKING ALONGSIDE THE PUBLIC HEALTH ENGLAND DEPARTMENT AND WALSALL PUBLIC HEALTH ENGLAND TO ENSURE THAT OUR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND COLLEAGUES OF BIRCHILLS IS KEPT SAFE.

ALL STAFF ARE FOLLOWING THE LATEST GUIDANCE SET.





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## TIER 3 RESTRICTIONS

HM Government

**TIER 3**  
**VERY HIGH ALERT**  
FROM 2 DEC

<b>MEETING FRIENDS AND FAMILY</b>  <p>No mixing of households indoors, or most outdoor places, apart from support bubbles. Maximum of six in some outdoor public spaces (e.g. parks, public gardens).</p>	<b>BARS, PUBS AND RESTAURANTS</b>  <p>Hospitality is closed, with the exception of sales by takeaway, drive-through or delivery.</p>	<b>RETAIL</b>  <p>Open.</p>	<b>WORK AND BUSINESS</b>  <p>Everyone who can work from home should do so.</p>
<b>EDUCATION</b>  <p>Early years settings, schools, colleges and universities open. Childcare, other supervised activities for children, and childcare bubbles permitted.</p>	<b>INDOOR LEISURE</b>  <p>Open. Group activities and classes should not take place.</p>	<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>  <p>Closed (with limited exceptions)</p>	<b>PERSONAL CARE</b>  <p>Open.</p>
<b>OVERNIGHT STAYS</b>  <p>We advise against overnight stays other than with household or support bubble.</p>	<b>WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS</b>  <p>15 guests for weddings, civil partnerships and wakes; 30 for funerals. Wedding receptions not permitted.</p>	<b>ENTERTAINMENT</b>  <p>Indoor venues closed.</p>	<b>PLACES OF WORSHIP</b>  <p>Open, but cannot interact with anyone outside household or support bubble.</p>
<b>TRAVELLING</b>  <p>Avoid travelling outside your area, other than where necessary such as for work or education. Further exemptions apply. Reduce the number of journeys where possible. Plan ahead and avoid busy times and routes on public transport. Avoid car sharing with those outside of your household or support bubble.</p>	<b>EXERCISE</b>  <p>Classes and organised adult sport can take place outdoors, but people should avoid higher-risk contact activity. Group exercise activities and sports indoors should not take place, unless with your household or bubble. Organised activities for elite athletes, under-18s and disabled people can continue.</p>	<b>RESIDENTIAL CARE</b>  <p>COVID-secure arrangements such as substantial screens, visiting pods, and window visits. Outdoor/airtight visits only (rollout of rapid testing will enable indoor visits including contact).</p>	<b>LARGE EVENTS</b>  <p>Events should not take place. Drive-in events permitted.</p>

**Find out what support you can get**

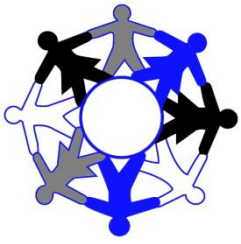
For example, if you're out of work, need to get food, or want to take care of your mental health.  
[gov.uk/coronavirus](https://gov.uk/coronavirus)

**If you have any coronavirus symptoms:**

A high temperature • A new, continuous cough  
A loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste  
**Get a test and stay at home**

For more information and detailed guidance visit:  
[gov.uk/coronavirus](https://gov.uk/coronavirus)

  
HANDS FACE SPACE



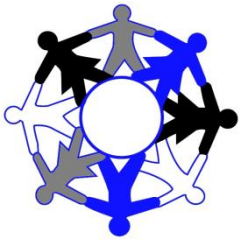
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### The Festive Season

The elves have been busy at Birchills and have decorated the academy from top to bottom. Please see a selection of pictures from around our academy.





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### **CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY**

On Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December it will be Christmas Jumper Day. Come into school in your best Christmas outfit!



### **FRIDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2020**

A reminder that on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December, the academy will be finishing earlier than normal. Both the academy and the Local Academy Committee recognise how hard this term has been on all, how important family time is during the festive period and helping to contribute to the wellbeing of the children, families and colleagues at Birchills.

Below are the timings of dismissal for Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December:

**EYFS + Key Stage 1 (Reception, Year 1 & Year 2) at 1:00pm**

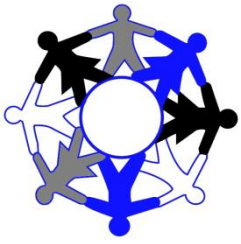
**Years 3 and 4 at 1:10pm**

**Years 5 and 6 at 1:15pm**

Please collect your child/ren from their usual collection points.

Lunch will still be provided in the academy and please use SchoolMoney to check menu, book and pay online.

Thank you for your continued support.



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## **SAFEGUARDING**

All the staff at Birchills are Safeguarded trained. Please familiarise yourselves with Birchills Designated Safeguarding Team. If you have any concerns regarding a child, then please speak to a member of staff or a member from the team below. Thank you.

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING TEAM AT  
BIRCHILLS C OF E PRIMARY ACADEMY

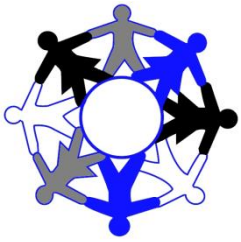
 © Tempest			
<b>Mr. J. Dean</b> Designated Safeguarding Lead	<b>Mrs. K. Partridge</b> Designated Safeguarding Lead	<b>Mrs. E. Solomon</b> Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	<b>Miss. E. Partridge</b> Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

## **Reminder**

Please note that the only types of earrings that can be worn in school are stud earrings. Bracelets and necklaces should not be worn in school. If your child/ren cannot take out their earrings, please provide plasters to cover. Thank you.

## **Dietary Requirements**

If your child is not having school dinners due to specific dietary requirements, Birchills catering team are more than happy to discuss this and how they may be able to help so your child can enjoy school dinners as well. Birchills has a policy where no nuts are used in producing any dishes to give parents the peace of mind that nut allergy sufferers will not come into contact with nuts from school meals. Moreover, if your child has other dietary needs, this can be catered for as well.



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### SchoolMoney

To log into **SchoolMoney**, visit the website [www.eduspot.co.uk](http://www.eduspot.co.uk) and click on the sign in button in the top right-hand corner. In the drop down, select the **SchoolMoney Parent Login** option and this will send you through to a page where you need to enter your mobile number, email address, the password we have sent to you, and your child's first name.



**schoolmoney**

If for any reason you are struggling to log in, it may be because you have not provided us with the correct contact details. Please let us know immediately if either your mobile number or email address changes.

**We no longer will be accepting cash for any payments due in school, including dinner money, from Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020. Please sign up to SchoolMoney as soon as possible.**

We appreciate your cooperation in the early stages of rolling this system out to you.

### Home time Arrangements

It is vitally important that parents notify the school of any alterations to home time arrangements for their child. Under Child Protection procedures, we are unable to allow children to go home with friends/relatives other than the usual person unless we have parental permission to do so. Parents should send a note or telephone the school office, if appropriate.

### IMPORTANT MESSAGE

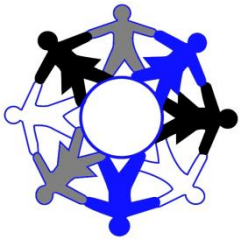
Please be advised that although Mr. Dean is present on all of the classes for ClassDojo, any messages sent to him directly may not be picked up. Therefore, any queries regarding your child/children, please message the class teacher directly. If it is a query/concern regarding absence, collection for a medical appointment etc. then please contact the Office either by email/telephone. Thank you.

### Key Dates

The academy will be closing on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October at the end of the school day for half term.

**Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020 – Academy closed for INSET**

**Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2020 – Academy open to all**



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**Friday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2020 – Children in Need Dress Up**



**Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2020 – Christmas Jumper Day**



**Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020 – Academy closes for Christmas break – early finish**

**Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021 – Academy open to all**

Next newsletter released on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. James Dean

Principal