



BIRCH COPSE PRIMARY SCHOOL

“At Birch Copse, we provide an outstanding curriculum, which is challenging, progressive and inspiring.” (Curriculum Intent Statement)

At Birch Copse we passionately believe that all children deserve a well-rounded, culturally rich education, one that inspires, challenges and supports the development of their self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-belief.

Cultural capital is the essential knowledge that children need to prepare them for their future success as educated citizens. It is about giving children the best possible start to their education. We use the curriculum to enhance the experiences and opportunities available to children, including the most disadvantaged.

Enrichment is the experience provided by skilled practitioners who know their children well and have high aspirations for their learning and development.

Cultural capital and **enrichment** are not necessarily given or taught, rather, they are a key principle of our curriculum, culture and ethos

Our Curriculum

We have identified some of the key opportunities we want our children to experience whilst at Birch Copse. These cover a range of experiences and curriculum areas and make up the Birch Copse Offer.



The Birch Copse offer

It is the role of the school to ensure that children experience the awe and wonder of the world in which they live. To support this, we ensure that every child has the opportunity to:

- Take part in a School Production every year
- Take part in at least one educational visit, experience or school visitor per term
- Learn to play the recorder, steel pans and ukulele
- Recite a poem from memory
- Learn to cook something each year that can also be made at home
- Study the work of 21 artists and 7 craft-maker, designer or architect
- Compete in the annual sports days
- Represent the school in a sporting event
- Learn to swim
- Visit London during a walking tour
- Visit the Houses of Parliament
- Attend a West End Show
- Build a shelter and sleep in it overnight in school
- Take part in a three-day adventurous Activities residential
- Participate in a five-night residential visit to Cornwall



Curriculum Enrichment and Cultural Capital



Our curriculum extends well beyond the National Curriculum and includes three elements:

Core Curriculum	Additional curriculum	Enrichment opportunities
This is the main body of our curriculum and covers the knowledge we teach children and the sequence of learning for all subjects.	We offer a wide range of additional experiences and opportunities both within and beyond the school day. Our additional curriculum is for every child in school and includes such things as educational visits, themed days and external visitors.	These are either open to all children or specific groups of children may be invited. This includes a healthy range of before and after-school clubs, opportunities to represent the school in sports, performances and competitions as well as a wide range of leadership positions.

Our Core Curriculum

We are very proud of our **bespoke school curriculum**. Designed and written in-house by Senior and Subject Leaders to ensure it includes the fundamental **substantive and disciplinary knowledge** our children need to be informed citizens. It matches and exceeds the Early Years Foundation Stage and National Curriculum and at its core are our **three curriculum drivers**:

- Challenging
- Progressive
- Inspiring

Our Additional Curriculum

School Productions

Every child at Birch Copse **participates in a production every year** they are in the school, regardless of their needs. The children take on different roles from acting to dance, lighting and computer technicians to solo singers – there is role for everyone.

Recent Productions have included:

- Reception – Sleepy Shepherd (2025) and Shine Star Shine (2024)
- Year 1 and 2 - Whiz Wham Alakazam (2026) and Pirates vs Mermaids (2025)
- Year 3 and 4 –Go for Gold (2026) and Matilda (2025)
- Year 5 and 6 – Let the Games Begin (2026) and Porridge! (2025)

Our children gain a great deal from the annual productions; they are given the opportunity to build and develop a plethora of **skills and** they play a **pivotal** role in **improving the confidence** of so many children. Infant ructions take place during the school day for adults and junior productions are performed in the evening. Every child sees the dress rehearsals of all productions.

Assemblies

A rounded programme of assemblies helps to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and provide clear guidance on what is right and what is wrong. We promote our school's values and celebrate effort, attitude and success. Our programme includes assemblies about different religious festivals, the nine protected characteristics, British values and developing a growth mind-set.



Educational Visits, experiences and visitors

Embedded in our Curriculum offer is **at least one educational visit**, experience or school visitor per term (with the exception of spring term in year 5 and 6 as they have a residential in the summer term). We believe well-chosen experiences can really bring the curriculum **alive for children**.

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Reception	- Home visits	- A winter walk in the local area	- Wellington Country Park - Rushells Farm
Year 1	- Marwell Zoo - Walk in the local area (road safety and Geography)	- Brooklands Museum	- RHS Wisley Gardens
Year 2	- Visit from Ranger Stu (live exotic animals)	- Visit to London (a walking tour and St Paul's Cathedral)	- Windsor Castle
Year 3	- Visit Ufton Court (Stone Age) - The Hexagon Theatre (Pantomime)	- West End Show - Egyptian Day – Ufton Court in school - Visit to the local Church - Easter	- Greek Day in School
Year 4	- The Hexagon Theatre (Pantomime)	- West End Show	- Visit Ufton Court (Vikings)
Year 5	- Bear Dog Survival Experience - Survival Night		- PGL 3-day Residential
Year 6	- Houses of Parliament		- Cornwall 6-day Residential - Baylab Science Laboratory

School Visitors

Visitors have a valuable role to play and can contribute to many aspects of the life and work of the school. They deliver talks, workshops and full day activities across a wide range of subjects, giving pupils access to outside experiences and expertise. Visitors provide a link with the wider community – children have the opportunity to work alongside artists, musicians, authors, health professions and others. We ensure that visitors come from a broad-spectrum of society. Some recent example include:

Visitor	Purpose of visit
Reception's 'Jobs in our Community' Week.*	Reception were learning all about jobs which help our community and had lots of volunteers come in and talk to the children. The jobs included: Train Signalers, Paramedics, Physiotherapists, Sign Language Interpreters, Dance Teachers, Pharmacy Workers, Dental Nurses, Children's Nurses and Emotional Support Workers.
Mr Dinsey	A paramedic, Mr Dinsey brought his ambulance onto the school playground and spent the morning with some of our children sharing what his job entails.
Swimming instructors*	A local swimming instructor came in and gave a whole-school assembly on water safety.
Satty Gill	A teacher of RE at a local private school who came in to speak to our children about the Sikh faith and some of their traditions.
Stuart Pearce	Stuart is blind and brought in his guide dog, Olivia to share with the children how she helps him to manage many things such as walking around and crossing the road.
Berkshire Music Trust*	Gave an assembly on woodwind instruments, where they showed several instruments and gave demonstrations.



Rosie Ginn*	A visitor from West Berkshire Food Bank who came and told the children about the foodbank at what it does. It was around the time of the Harvest collection so she told the children how their donations would be used.
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'Inspire Me' Visitors

Our 'Inspire Me' visitors deliver an assembly to the children and sometimes work with classes or groups of children as well. We ask them to share their journey to the profession they have chosen. We always ask them to link their story to our school values of trying our best, persevering and challenging ourselves. We have had some very interesting visitors and the aim is to inspire our children to link positive careers with our school values. Many of these visitors are ex-pupils. Some recent examples of 'Inspire Me' visitors include:

Visitor	Purpose of visit
Aaron Phipps	A gold-medal winning Paralympian.
Safi Bolton	An ex-pupil who has recently been signed by Chelsea Women's Football Club.
Dan Brookings	A former parent and school Governor, Dan spoke to the children about his job as a pharmaceutical scientist.
Amelia Beddow	A past pupil in her second year of university, studying to be a doctor.
Adam Goodwin	A former pupil who now works at Sky Sports as a news journalist.
Jaqueline Hughes	A West End performer.
Genevieve Finnie*	A past pupil, studying to become a doctor.

Themed Days

Throughout the year, themed days are woven into the curriculum to extend the breadth and balance of opportunities we offer our pupils. Our themed days are designed to enhance the core curriculum. Throughout the year, our children experience the following themed days:

School Values Day	E-Safety Day	British Values Day	Takeover Day
World Book Day	Environment Day	French Day	

On top of this, themed days are organised to celebrate major events such as royal weddings, jubilees or coronations.

Themed Week

Every year, we have a dedicated Themed Week that sits outside of our core curriculum. They are a fundamental part of learning that compliments the broad and balanced curriculum offered at Birch Copse, giving the opportunity for the whole school to immerse themselves into the same exciting topic and share some of the same learning experiences.

All children from Reception to Year 6 participate and it always culminates in an assembly or event at the end of the week to share what we have learnt. Throughout the week, children are taught by different teachers from around the school and there are many different experiences on offer for them. For example, during 'In the Dark' week, children had the opportunity to hold an owl, play blind football, visit a planetarium, create glow art, hear from a visitor and his guide dog and take part in a glow dance session.

We feel it is vital that all of our children experience shared learning experiences that combine several subjects to promote a sense of community, belonging and wider their horizons and aspirations beyond what they already know. Other successful themed weeks have included:

- Around the World 2026
- Challenge Accepted 2025
- In the Dark 2024
- Mind Matters 2023



Enrichment Opportunities

Leadership and volunteering

At Birch Copse, we are committed to ensuring that our pupils go on to become **global citizens** and leaders who have a **positive impact** on the world around them. We teach the importance of giving back to the school and community and develop opportunities for children to do so. They enjoy making a **positive contribution** to our community in school and there are many and varied leadership and volunteering opportunities for them at Birch Copse. These include:

Opportunity	Detail
Eco-Council	These are a group of children from across the school who work hard to make our school more environmentally friendly . Their successes include recycling bins throughout the school; a poster competition to remind people to switch off lights – these are in every classroom; new trees on the school field and a recent energy audit supported by a professional energy consultant.
Mini-masters.	Children in the upper juniors plan and deliver a ‘lesson’ on an area of their own interest or expertise to other children during lunchtimes. These have ranged from writing poetry to football skills and from drama workshops to learning the capital cities of Europe
Reading Buddies	We have a special group of Year 6 children and children from the local secondary school – often past pupils – who come into school half an hour early to read with some of our younger children who find it difficult or are reluctant readers.
School Council	Children are voted onto the School Council by their peers on British Values day as part of their learning around democracy. Our chair, vice-chairs and secretary roles come from Year 6 children who deliver a speech in assembly. The School Council plays an important part in school life - setting up events for children in the school, raising money for charity and ensuring that pupils have a voice.
Community Wellbeing club	This club gives children the chance to have an immediate impact on the school and local community by carrying out activities such as litter picking in the local area, making cards for vulnerable local residents and improving our school playground.
Child-led Lunchtime clubs	These clubs are led, planned and delivered by Year 6 children. They include sports, arts and crafts, singing, computing, reading, dance and a puzzle club. Children from Year 1 to 5 can take part with 119 children participating last term and 135 in the spring.
Birch Copse Buddies	Our playground mediators volunteer in Year 5 and then undertake 6 weeks of training with our ELSA. They help mediate on the junior playground when children have had a falling out.

Clubs

Our extra-curricular activities offer include many different opportunities for children to **explore** their talents and **widen** their interests. Every child, including those with SEND, has the opportunity to attend extra-curricular activities. We offer a variety of clubs that reflect and build on the **broad and balanced** nature of our curriculum, ensuring a range of opportunities to the children. These include a variety of sports, gymnastics, street dance, drama, languages, singing and community wellbeing. Take-up for the clubs on offer is extremely high. Spring term 2026, we have had 14 before or after school clubs with 314 places taken up. Some children attend more than one club but over This year, we have had 18 before or after school clubs with 359 places taken up.



Curriculum Enrichment and Cultural Capital



Representing the school

We believe that it is important for children to have the chance to represent the school in some way if they wish to and we provide a wide-range of opportunities to do so through participation in competitions and events. This includes:

Event/ Competition	Details
Turn Tilehurst Red	An annual art competition to create a display that can be seen from the road Remembrance Day. Birch Copse won the award for schools in 2023
Hexagon performance	An annual event where members of our Glee singing club perform alongside other local schools at the Hexagon theatre in front of a large audience.
Football competitions	Birch Copse takes part in lots of football. This year we have taken part in 17 competitions and had over 35 matches and tournaments with boys and girls from Year 3- 6. We have had many successes and are current holders of the West Berkshire Cup and Year 4 indoor 5-a-side and Outdoor 7-a-side champions.
Cricket Competitions	In the summer, we play many cricket matches against other schools. We are the current Berkshire Champions.
Tilehurst Olympics	Annually, Birch Copse organise an athletics competition at a local athletics stadium. Over 100 children from local primary schools took part. It was a great success and will take place this year as well.
National Quiz competitions	Our quiz teams compete in several competitions – all of which finish at a national level. This year we have reached the semi-finals of the general knowledge and science quizzes.
Visit to Wind Turbine	Our Eco – Council had the opportunity to visit the local wind turbine to learn all about renewable energy.
Swimming gala	New to 2026, Birch Copse organised a swimming gala with several local schools participating. It was organised in conjunction with the local leisure centre.
Maths events	A range of children from across the school, take part in maths challenge events. One of which has included an ‘all girls’ competition at The Abbey School.