



# 'BIRCHANGER BUZZ'

*'Learn to Love, Love to Learn'*

## Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March

On Tuesday this week we were visited by 'Chance To Shine' cricket coaches who worked with children in Ladybirds and Hedgehogs Class learning early cricket skills. The coaches will be back in the Summer Term to work with Key Stage 2 children. Children in Year 1 are working with our Uttlesford School Sports Co-Ordinator, Carron Parrish, to create a dance which they will share at the Key stage 1 dance festival next week. On Thursday our football team played a match against Newport Primary and played really well as a team to win 3-1. Well done to all our sporting stars!

### Class Assemblies

Parents are welcome to join us in our Friday assembly each week at 2.50pm when we celebrate the achievements of the children. Class assemblies will take place on the following dates, starting at 2.45pm

Friday 17<sup>th</sup> March – Ladybirds Class

Looking ahead, our Easter service will be held in church on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March at 9.30am

Our School Council have been busy this week finding out about favourite meals on our school lunch menus and ideas for new meals. We met with TCS to look at new Summer menus for after Easter and have been able to include the childrens favourites.

In assemblies this half term we are talking about bullying and how we can work together to make sure Birchanger is a safe bullying-free school. This week we focussed on similarities and differences, thinking about how everyone is unique and everyone has the right to be accepted as they are.

### Parking

Please can I remind you to park considerately when dropping off and collecting children. If you park in Birchwood please do not block our neighbours' driveways. If you are leaving your car in the hall carpark please be aware that both sets of doors are constantly in use so please do not obstruct them or park on the paved area which is not designed for cars. We are fortunate to be able to use this facility to ease parking around the school and do not want to risk losing it.

### Coffee Afternoon for parents of children with learning needs – Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March at 2.15pm

Following a suggestion from a parent we would like to host an informal meet-up for parents of children with learning difficulties and Special Educational Needs. The idea is for this to be an informal coffee meeting for parents to get together to share ideas and experiences. We know parents have a wealth of knowledge and information to share, or sometimes it's just good to meet like-minded parents who are facing similar issues. All parents are welcome, whether your child has a diagnosed special need or you are just concerned about difficulties they are having with learning. Mrs Cook and Mrs Coop will be available to welcome parents (and put the kettle on!) but this is intended to be an informal parent led coffee afternoon. The meeting is not for parents to discuss individual issues with school staff– if you have concerns about your child's learning then Mrs Cook, our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator will be happy to meet with you at parents consultation evenings next month.

## Essex Big weekend

You may be aware of this promotion with thousands of free tickets available to attractions around Essex on the weekend 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> April.

*Be part of the first Essex Big Weekend! There are 3,345 FREE entry tickets to 48 attractions throughout Essex up for grabs – to be in with a chance visit the [Essex Big Weekend](#) website. The ballot is open until Friday 17 March 2017.*

### Relief Mid-Day Assistant

We have a great team of Mid-day Assistants who look after the children at lunchtimes – supporting in the dining hall and supervising children’s play outside.

We would like to appoint a relief Mid-Day Assistant to cover for when lunchtime staff are absent or out of school and to provide an extra pair of hands when we’ve got special events. The role could lead to a permanent part-time position.

Hours of work are 11.45am – 1.15pm Days to be agreed on an ‘as-and-when’ basis initially.

If you are interested please pop in and see Carolyn or Mrs Coop.

*The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. As such, the post is subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check which the school would arrange.*

### Sainsbury’s Vouchers

We are collecting Sainsbury’s Active Kids vouchers again this year. Please bring vouchers into school and we are able to use them to buy PE equipment, playground games etc.

### Leave of Absence

Can I remind parents that Head Teachers can only grant a leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. In most cases, a family holiday or travelling abroad is not considered to be an exceptional reason. You are strongly urged to book family holidays during the 13 weeks of school holidays. Term dates can be found below and are published up to two years in advance. Term dates for 2017-18 can be found at <http://www.essex.gov.uk/Education-Schools/Schools/Dates/Pages/Term-Times-Holidays.aspx>

It is also a good idea to ensure grandparents and other family who may make travel arrangements are aware of school term dates as it seems sometimes a generous family member books a holiday but is unaware of term dates!

If you would like to apply for leave of absence, for a day or longer, an absence request form must be completed and returned to the Head Teachers who will arrange to meet with you to discuss the circumstances of the absence. In the event that a pupil is absent and it is believed to be unarranged leave of absence/ holiday it will be treated as an unauthorised absence. Unauthorised absence may result in a penalty notice issued by the local authority.

### Diary Dates – more details to follow

- Parents consultation meetings – Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 5 – 8pm and Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 3.30 – 5.30pm.
- Mothers Day Lunch – Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March
- Easter service in church – Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March at 9.30am

Have a lovely weekend

Helen Coop

# Essex County Council School Term and Holiday Dates for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools

Academic Year 2016 - 17

September 2016							October 2016							November 2016							December 2016						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30				26	27	28	29	30	31		
							31																				
January 2017							February 2017							March 2017							April 2017						
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9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
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30	31																										
May 2017							June 2017							July 2017							August 2017						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30	31			
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= Schooldays / Weekends

= School holidays

= Bank holidays

INSET days