



Hollydale Primary School: Autumn 1 2025

Welcome back to the new academic year! We hope you have had a restful summer break and are ready to enjoy all the exciting opportunities that this year will offer. We begin this new term with lots of exciting topics for the children to become immersed in. Our Topic this half term is Black History. We will be focusing on Inspirational Women.

Please ensure you add the dates detailed in this newsletter to your calendar. If you have any questions about your child's learning or any other aspect of Birch Class life, please do not hesitate to see me before or after school or contact me via email (cmcgowan15.210@lgflmail.org) or ClassDojo <https://teach.classdojo.com/>.

Please note that on **Wednesdays** Birch class will be taught by Mr Long.

Thank you for your support and co-operation.

Regards, Ms McGowan

Class Teacher: Ms McGowan/Mr Long (Wednesdays)

Additional Support Staff: Ms Mustafa

Autumn 1 2025 - This half term Year 4 will be learning about the following topics:

English	We will begin by basing our English learning on 'Tar Beach' written by Faith Ringgold. This is a four-week planning sequence in which children will explore the devices of mystery and suspense. We will write a range of different texts-types including character descriptions, formal letters, book reviews, dialogue (direct speech). The children will also have an opportunity to retell the story. We will then read 'Granny Came Here On The Empire Windrush' written by Patrice Lawrence and Camilla Sucre. The will children explore the settings and themes within the text. The children will also go on to write about their personal heroes and why they admire certain people, including those figures who travelled on the Empire Windrush in 1948 or those descended from this heroic generation.
Spelling Scheme	We are working very hard in school to strengthen basic skills, but we need your help to boost spellings. We have created a spelling challenge to make this fun and engaging and we are offering a whole host of rewards to motivate and encourage the children to get on board! All that we ask is that you help your children learn to spell the words on their challenge card. Every time they have secured a section (bronze, silver or gold), staff will check that they have indeed secured the bronze, silver or gold block and the children will receive a certificate and they can begin learning the next set of spellings. We are hopeful that this will be more meaningful than testing spellings weekly and by basing it on high frequency words and words commonly used in their writing, it will be more purposeful as it is being embedded not only in Literacy but across the whole curriculum.
Reading Records	The children will bring home a book from the class book corner or the school library every week. Please read and discuss the books with your child and support them with recording a comment in their records and ensure that these books are brought to school every day. The children will visit the school library every Monday where they will have an opportunity to change their reading books.
Maths	In Numeracy pupils will continue to apply their learning about place value and recognising the value of each digit in 4-digit numbers. We will be ordering and comparing numbers, rounding them to the nearest 10, 100 or 1000 more/less than a given number, before introducing negative numbers. We will then move on to consolidating our knowledge of efficient written methods of addition and subtraction. Please ensure that your child knows number bonds to one hundred and all times tables and related division facts (x2, x3, x4, x5, x6, x7, x8, x9, x10, x11 and x12) —it is vital that children know these in order to progress in numeracy. <u>Year 4 Multiplication Check 2026</u> – The children will sit a National times tables test during the summer term. Please ensure that you are supporting and practicing all times tables (12x12) with your child/children. https://mathsframe.co.uk/en/resources/resource/477/Multiplication-Tables-Check https://play.ttrockstars.com/auth/school/student
Science	Our topic this half term is Living things and their habitats. The 'Big Question' we will be focussing on is: How can we group living thing? We will undertake a range of activities to:

	- To be able to gather, record, classify and present data in a variety of ways to help in answering questions. - To use a classification key - To make predictions and carry out simple investigations
History/ Geography	Our Topic this half term is Black History. Across the school, we will be focusing on Inspirational Women . We will be learning about the lives, actions and impact of community activists Mavis Best and Angela Davis.
Art/Design & Technology	Craft and design: Fabric of nature We will be using the beauty of the natural world to create stunning visual art inspired by the striking colours, pattern and textures of bird and insect life. (Cross curricular with Science – Living things and their Habitats) Additional Black History Art Project: Black History Artist: Alma Woodsey Thomas (1891 – 1978).
P.E.	Birch will have PE on a Monday afternoon and a Wednesday afternoon. Your child/children will need to wear their PE kit and school jumper to school on this day Please ensure your child/children are wearing the following kit for PE: Black tracksuit bottoms, a white t-shirt and black trainers or plimsolls.
Music	Birch Class will continue to have weekly ukulele lessons delivered by Mr Thorpe our peripatetic teacher.
Computing	Our topic this half term is We are software developers. In this unit, pupils will create their own animation in Scratch. In: - Session 1 they analyse existing games and identify what makes them effective - Session 2 they create a working prototype of their game - Session 3 they develop the functionality of their game - Session 4 they improve the interface of their game - Session 5 they develop progression within their game - Session 6 they test and improve their game.
Spanish	Our topic this half term is My Town. In this unit, pupils will: - name some of the major Spanish-speaking cities - identify and say typical amenities to be found in towns - say and order multiples of ten - ask and give a simple address in Spanish - locate the correct part of a bilingual dictionary to translate from Spanish-English or vice versa
R.E.	Throughout the year we will be investigating the question: What is special to me and the people in my community? This term our topic will be ‘Religion in our Neighbourhood’ , focusing on the religions and world views that are represented in our neighbourhood.
P.S.H.E. & Citizenship	Our focus this half term will be ‘Being Me in My World’ in which we will explore our role in our families, our school and the wider community. We will also be focusing on our mental health and emotional wellbeing this term.
Homework	We view homework as an integral part of the school experience. Active and successful pupil participation in homework supports our belief in how children learn best. Homework benefits pupils not only by promoting academic success, but also by providing valuable opportunities for parents and carers to become involved in their child’s learning. Through regular homework, children develop responsibility, perseverance, self-discipline and time management. Most importantly, pupils build independence by completing school-related tasks with minimal direct help. Homework for KS1 and KS2 will continue to be completed in homework books. <u>Reading Homework</u> Parents and carers are expected to record and sign their child’s reading log each evening. <u>Spelling Homework</u> Children will be given spellings to learn based on the spelling challenges and these will be tested every three weeks. Scores will be recorded and tracked using the tracking grid and the number of spellings that are tested will vary based on children’s individual needs. <u>Homework Projects</u> Homework projects are set half-termly and will often link with whole-school curriculum focus events. <u>Year 4 Homework:</u> - Reading - Spelling - Times tables - Whole-school and class-based home learning projects
Key dates	September 2025 Wednesday 3rd September – Children Return to School

	○ Start time: 8:55am ○ <i>Please ensure your child arrives on time each morning.</i> ● Friday 5th September – Curriculum Newsletters Sent Home ○ <i>To help parents/carers understand what is being taught in school.</i> ● Monday 15th September – Enrichment Clubs Resume ● Tuesday 16th September – Meet the Teacher ○ Time: 3:40pm ○ <i>An opportunity for parents/carers to learn more about the new academic year and ask questions. Please meet in Birch Class.</i> ● Friday 19th September – Jeans for Genes Day ○ <i>Children may wear their own clothes.</i> ○ Donation: £1 per child ● Friday 26th September – Macmillan Coffee Morning ○ Time: 9:00am ○ <i>Fundraising Cake Sale in support of Macmillan Cancer Support.</i> ○ <i>Children may wear green clothes or accessories.</i> ● Monday 22nd September – Trip to Southwark Playhouse ● Monday 29th September – National Poetry Week & Black History Month Celebrations Begin October 2025 ● Wednesday 1st October – Black History Month Celebrations begin ● Friday 3rd October – Poetry Recital Assembly at 9.20am. Parents and carers welcome to attend. ● Thursday 9th October – Multiplication Table Challenge ● Tuesday 14th & Wednesday 15th October – Parent-Teacher Consultation Meetings ○ <i>Appointment times to be confirmed.</i> ● Tuesday 21st October - Parent workshop on child mental health delivered by The Nest Peckham 9:00-9:30 ● Friday 24th October – Harvest Festival Assembly ○ <i>All donations will be delivered by our pupils to our local foodbank</i>
Additional Information Including Summer/a Uniform	Please ensure that your child attends school with a fresh water bottle every day and is wearing the correct school uniform. Our uniform encourages a sense of belonging and is compulsory for all children from Reception Class to Year 6. <u>Summer/ Early Autumn Uniforms</u> Girls Uniform ● Summer Dresses - Red & White or Green & White Gingham ● Cardigan/ Sweatshirt/V neck sweater - Dark green ● Footwear - Black Shoes ● Hijabs – White/Dark Green/Black only Boys Uniform ● Polo shirt – Dark green, bright red or white ● Cardigan/ Sweatshirt/V neck sweater - Dark green ● Trousers/ shorts (knee length) – Grey ● Footwear - Black shoes 