



# Birchensale Middle School

Weekly News

13th March 2026

## Online safety coffee morning

On Friday 27th March, from 9:00am to 10:00am, our Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mrs Pugh, will be hosting an Online Safety Coffee Morning.

Join us for practical guidance on:

- the potential dangers children may encounter online
- how to recognise signs of online concerns
- what steps to take if you think there may be an issue

We warmly invite all parents and carers to come along, enjoy a coffee, and learn how to help keep children safe online.



## Comic Relief

Friday March 20<sup>th</sup>



On Friday 20th March, pupils are invited to wear a red accessory with their usual school uniform for a small voluntary donation to Comic Relief. Please make any donations via the MCAS App Shop.

We are also inviting pupils to get creative and make cakes or tasty treats inspired by the Comic Relief red theme.

**PLEASE NO NUTS!**

There will be a prize for the winning entry!

Parents and carers are warmly welcomed into school between 3:30pm and 4:30pm to purchase some of the cakes. All funds raised will go directly to Comic Relief.

## *Army Cadet Force Visit Inspires Year 8 Pupils*

This week, we were delighted to welcome the Army Cadet Force (Churchill Troop) into school to deliver an engaging and hands-on experience for our Year 8 pupils. The team introduced students to the wide range of opportunities available to young people aged 12–18 who choose to join the Cadet Force.

Pupils took part in a practical first aid workshop, where they learned essential skills and had the chance to try out techniques.

They also explored a variety of kit and equipment during an interactive show-and-tell session, gaining insight into the activities and disciplines involved in the Cadet programme.

Throughout the sessions, pupils asked thoughtful questions and discovered the qualifications they can work towards as Cadets – including awards that build confidence, leadership, teamwork, and real-world skills. They were also excited to learn how these qualifications can support future pathways both within and beyond the military.

The visit sparked genuine interest and curiosity, giving students a valuable look at the personal development opportunities offered by the Army Cadet Force.

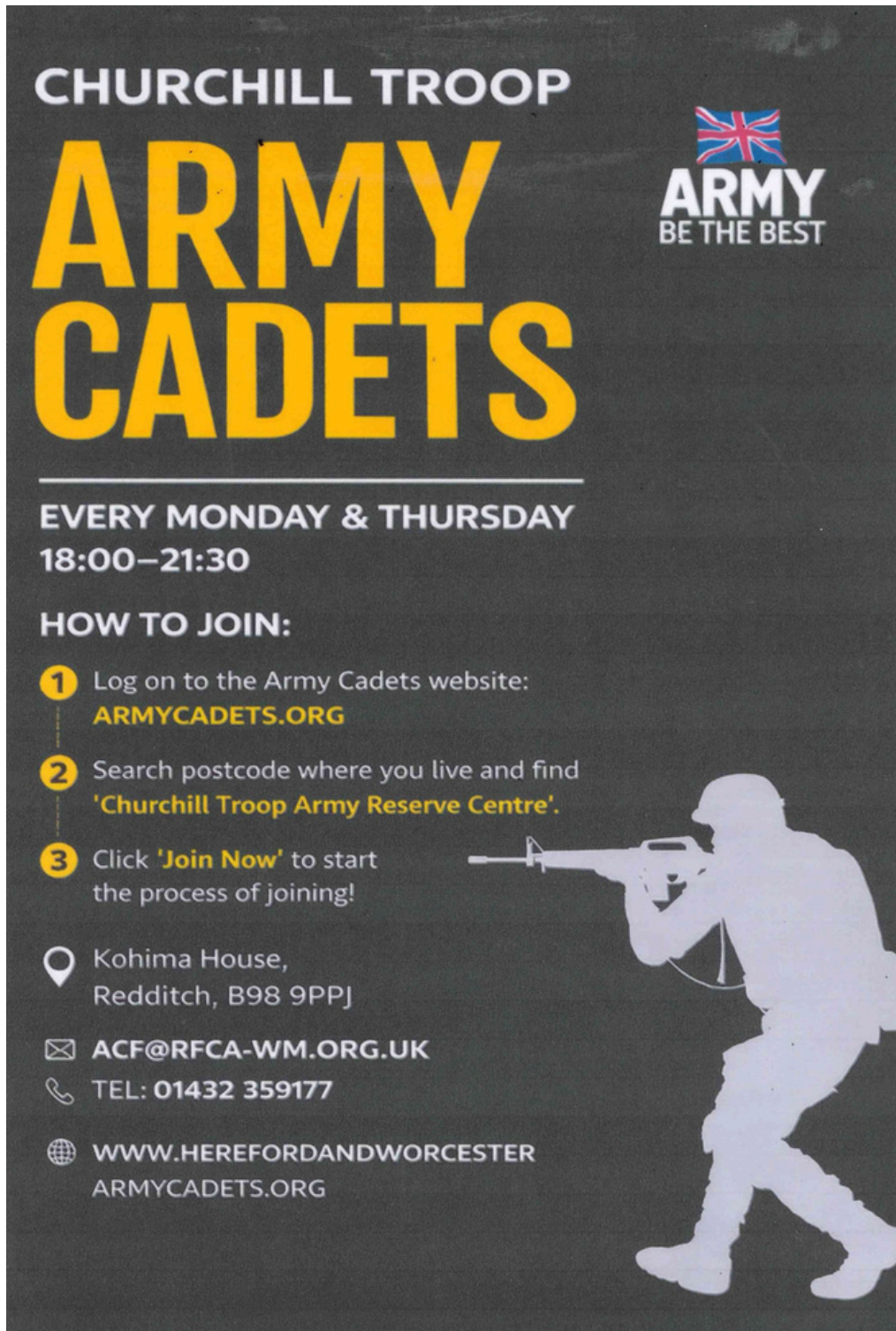


## **Army Cadets – Free to Join!**

Did you know the Army Cadets is completely free to join?


And even better – the uniform is free too!

A fantastic opportunity for young people to build confidence, make friends, learn new skills, and take part in amazing activities.



**CHURCHILL TROOP**


**ARMY CADETS**


  
**ARMY**  
BE THE BEST


**EVERY MONDAY & THURSDAY**  
**18:00–21:30**


**HOW TO JOIN:**

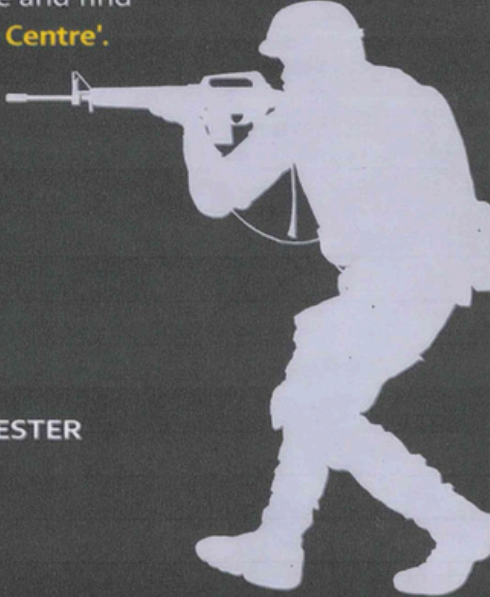
- 1** Log on to the Army Cadets website:  
**ARMYCADETS.ORG**
- 2** Search postcode where you live and find  
**'Churchill Troop Army Reserve Centre'**.
- 3** Click **'Join Now'** to start  
the process of joining!

 Kohima House,  
Redditch, B98 9PPJ

 **ACF@RFCA-WM.ORG.UK**

 **TEL: 01432 359177**

 **WWW.HEREFORDANDWORCESTER**  
**ARMYCADETS.ORG**



## *A letter from our Mrs Nelsey – Pupil Wellbeing Lead and Autism Mentor*

Dear Parents/Carer,

Every day, I see how important it is for children to have spaces they feel calm, safe, and able to explore the world in their own way. A sensory garden provides exactly that.

Unlike a traditional garden, the aim is to create a space where children can engage with nature through sensory experiences, encouraging curiosity, relaxation, and exploration. Although sensory gardens are particularly supportive for children with autism, every child benefits from access to nature and sensory play.

Creating this space is a community effort, and parental support can make a dramatic difference.

You may be able to help by:

- Donating plants such as lavender, rosemary, lemon balm, fluffy grasses, lambs' ear, bamboo, mint, and any plants of vibrant colours.
- Water elements – old funnels, small buckets, watering cans.
- Children's gardening tools.
- Wood off cuts especially MDF.
- Any left-over bags of gravel, compost, or wood chippings.
- Milk bottle tops and old CDs to make wind chimes and ornaments.
- Left over drainpipe pieces for creating a water feature.

We are looking forward to seeing the garden grow and sharing this special space with our pupils in the coming months.

Mrs Nelsey

Pupil Wellbeing Lead and Autism Mentor

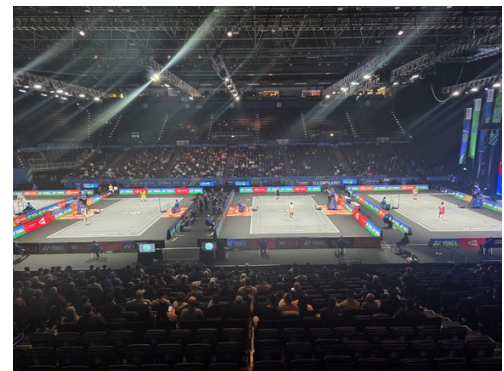
## Birchensale Trip to the Utilita Arena!



Birchensale students had an amazing day at the Yonex All England Badminton Championships at the Utilita Arena! They watched world-class badminton players compete from all around the globe and soaked up the incredible atmosphere.

Some of our students even got the chance to have a go at serving, game challenges, and return challenges – a fantastic experience for everyone involved!

A brilliant day of sport, inspiration and fun! 🌟



**CHANCE TO SHINE STREET** **FREE STREET CRICKET**  
AGE 8-15

FREE SOFTBALL COMMUNITY CRICKET SESSIONS  
ALL EQUIPMENT PROVIDED, NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY

WORCESTER	EVESHAM
MIXED SESSION MONDAYS 5:30 - 6:30PM BISHOP PEROWNE MERRIMANS HILL ROAD WR3 8LE	MIXED SESSION WEDNESDAYS 5 - 6:30PM WALLACE HOUSE COMMUNITY CENTRE, WR11 4PJ
<b>REDDITCH</b>	<b>MALVERN</b>
GIRLS ONLY SESSION THURSDAY 5-6PM TRINITY HIGH SCHOOL GROVE STREET B98 8DS	MIXED SESSION TUESDAYS 6 - 7PM MSJ SPORT AND FITNESS CENTRE, WR14 3LH

For more information contact:  
jamie.watson@worcestershirecricketfoundation.co.uk  
07376 534926

## Free Street Cricket Ages 8 - 15

☀️ Free Street Cricket for  
Girls! ☀️

🏏 Girls aged 8-15

📍 Trinity High School

🕒 Thursdays, 5pm – 6pm

Come along, have fun, make  
friends, and learn new skills.

All abilities welcome – just  
turn up and play! ❤️

## Hereford & Worcestershire Autism Team Webinars

The Hereford and  
Worcestershire Autism Team are  
running a series of free webinars  
for parents, carers, and  
professionals over the next few  
months.

📺 Interested but can't attend  
live?

No problem! All sessions are  
recorded so you can watch them  
in your own time.

👉 Important: To access the  
recording, you must be signed  
up for the webinar.

### Webinars Schedule

Can't attend live? Catch up with a recording available for two weeks following the event. This webinar is open to parents and carers in the Herefordshire and Worcestershire area with an extended invite to professionals. Webinars start 10am and run between 1.5 and 2 hours.

<b>JUN 17</b>	<b>Autism &amp; Anxiety</b> What is Anxiety?, Autism & Anxiety, the circle of Anxiety and managing Anxiety	
<b>JUN 24</b>	<b>Autism &amp; Communication</b> What is communication, Autism & communication differences and strategies that may help	
<b>JUL 1</b>	<b>Autism &amp; Sensory differences</b> Autism and sensory differences, children's differences, addressing sensory differences, and useful resources	
<b>JUL 8</b>	<b>Autism and Behaviour</b> What behaviour is & why it may happen, ways we can analyse behaviour and develop emotional understanding	
<b>JUL 15</b>	<b>Navigating the system</b> Educational issues, online safety, employment and further education, disclosure and benefits	
<b>JUL 22</b>	<b>Autism and the Teenage Brain</b> How the brain changes, how growing up and Autism interact, how to support your teen and useful resources	
<b>JUL 29</b>	<b>Supporting your Autistic Teen</b> How to support your teen and resources.	

For more information or to book a place:  
Email - [herefordworcs@autismwestmidlands.org.uk](mailto:herefordworcs@autismwestmidlands.org.uk)  
Scan the above QR codes or visit the Autism West Midlands Events page on our website to sign up.

## **Paracetamol in School – Important Information for Parents**

If you would like the school to be able to administer paracetamol to your child during the school day, please ensure that you do the following:

### **1. Provide a supply of paracetamol**

- The medication must be in its original box – not loose strips.
- It must be clearly labelled with your child's full name and date of birth.

### **2. Give consent on MCAS**

Please log in to MCAS and complete the consent section allowing school staff to administer paracetamol if needed.

We cannot give any medication without parental consent, and completing this on MCAS avoids the need for us to call home during the day.

### **3. Do not send medication in pupils' bags**

Pupils must not carry medication in their bags or self-administer it in school. For safety reasons, all medication must be stored securely and administered by staff.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping us keep all pupils safe.

### **Lunch & Tuck Money**

If your child buys tuck or lunch in school, please ensure their account has sufficient funds.

Keeping accounts topped up helps us avoid having to contact parents during the day and prevents accounts from going into a negative balance. Thank you for your support.

### **Ready, Set, Learn!**

Please remember to come into school with your planner, reading book, refillable water bottle, and all your equipment ready for the day

***How you start your morning sets the tone for the whole day—start strong!***

# *Introducing Our New Optional Summer Polo Tops*

As we look ahead to the (hopefully!) warmer weather of the summer term, we're pleased to share that we will be introducing an optional school polo top for pupils to wear from after the Easter break until the end of the academic year.

Over the last few years, we've experienced some very hot end-of-year weather. While we've sometimes relaxed expectations around ties to help pupils stay cool, we also want to keep everyone looking smart and feeling comfortable. The new polo tops offer a practical, cooler alternative while still maintaining a tidy, consistent school appearance.

## **Key Information**

- **Available from:** The start of the Easter break
- **Supplier:** Orchard Clothing
- **Price:** £9.95 each or 3 for £25
- **When they can be worn:** Throughout the summer term only
- **Optional:** Yes—completely optional

Pupils may continue wearing their usual white school shirt and tie if they prefer. However, unlike in previous hot spells, we won't be saying "no ties" this year. Children who choose to wear shirts will still be expected to wear their ties as normal. The summer polo top is simply an additional option designed to make everyone a little more comfortable on those warmer days.

## Looking Ahead

This is not a one-off—summer polo tops will be allowed every summer term going forward. From September, we will return to our standard uniform of white shirt and tie as usual.

We hope this small change helps pupils stay cool, comfortable and confident while continuing to represent our school with pride.

If you have any questions, please just let us know





# BMS Chatty Families



**SUPPORTING PUPILS & PARENTS WITH ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE**

## WHAT IS CHATTY FAMILIES?

BMS Chatty Families is a welcoming group for pupils and parents at Birchensale whose first language is not English. Led by Mrs Okonska, our EAL Lead, the club helps pupils build their English language skills and supports parents in feeling more confident using English at home and with school work.

## JOIN US!

Come along for a cuppa, biscuit and friendly conversation. Meet other families from around the world and enjoy sharing:  
Cultures Languages Experiences  
The journey of becoming part of life in the UK



## OUR DIVERSE COMMUNITY

This year we are proud to have 20 families from 10 different countries taking part! Represented countries include:



 Latvia  Romania  Pakistan  Albania  Poland

## EVERYONE BELONGS HERE

Come along, get involved and be part of our warm and supportive community



**If you would like attend Chatty Families then please email us and someone will contact you with more information.**

**[enquiries@birchensale.bmat.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@birchensale.bmat.co.uk)**



# Want to make a real difference at



## Birchensale?

We are looking for parents to join our PTA and help us create amazing experiences for our pupils!

From helping to run exciting events like our Christmas Fair to fundraising and building strong links with the local community, there are so many ways you can get involved.

We're looking for enthusiastic parents who want to help Birchensale become even better.

### **Why should you join?**

- Meet parents from other year groups.
- Meet the teachers in a less formal setting.
- See the school from a different angle.
- Make new friends by working alongside members of the local community.
- Learn new skills.
- The satisfaction of knowing you have made a contribution.
- The knowledge that you have helped make the school you chose an even better place

If you would like to join or would like anymore information please email us [\*\*enquiries@birchensale.bmat.co.uk\*\*](mailto:enquiries@birchensale.bmat.co.uk)

Your ideas, energy, and support can make a big impact—  
**so come and join us today!**



## Birchensale Safeguarding Team



Designated Safeguarding  
Lead (DSL)  
**Mrs Pugh**



Deputy Designated  
Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)  
**Miss Dawson**



Deputy Designated  
Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)  
**Mrs James**



Deputy Designated  
Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)  
**Mr Clifton**

## Keeping Your Child Safe: Key Safeguarding

**Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility. If you have any concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing, here are key contacts that can help:**

**School** - Your first point of contact. Speak to the designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Mrs Pugh, if you have any concerns.

**CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection)** - For concerns about online safety, grooming, or exploitation. Report at [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)

**NSPCC** - Provides confidential support and advice on all safeguarding issues. Call 0808 800 5000 or visit <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

**Kooth** - Free, anonymous online mental health support for young people. Visit [www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)

**Police** - If a child is in immediate danger, call 999. For non-emergencies, call 101.

*me, you, us*  
safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

## **Dates for your diary**

**Friday 27th March -**

Online safety coffee morning 9am to 10am

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March -**

School closes for the Easter holidays

**Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March to Friday 10<sup>th</sup> April -**

Easter holiday

**Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April -**

Pupils return to school

**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April -**

Parents evening for year's 5, 6 and 7

**Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May -**

School closed for May Day Bank Holiday

**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May -**

SEND coffee morning 9.30am to 10am

**Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May -**

School closes for half term

**Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May -**

Wembley trip

**Monday 25<sup>th</sup> May to Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May -**

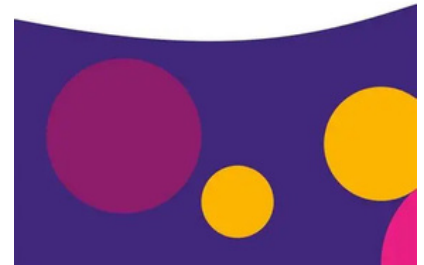
Half term

**Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June -**

Year 8 trip to Stratford

**Click on the images below to find help and information**

WORCESTERSHIRE  
**FAMILY HUBS** 



 Information, Advice and Support Service  
**Herefordshire & Worcestershire**

**BEST START**   
WORCESTERSHIRE



**HOME START**  
North East  
Worcestershire