



# Birchfield News

## FSM vouchers

During this period of school closure, we are pleased to be able to offer eligible parents and students access to free school meals (FSM) by supplying supermarket eVouchers, that can be spent locally to you. [Birmingham City Council](#) have provided these initial voucher codes which can be redeemed online for a range of supermarkets including Sainsbury's, Asda, Morrisons and more.

If you are eligible for FSM and have received a text message from school with your digital eVoucher cheque, you can find guidance for how to use these in the 'latest news' section on our website.

## Message from Mrs Thewlis

The last few weeks have been extremely challenging for us all and I hope that you, your children and your families are all keeping safe and well during this time. All of the staff at Birchfield are missing seeing the children on a daily basis and are eagerly looking forward to welcoming you back as soon as it is safe for us to do so. Like you, I am facing the challenges of working from home as well as looking after my young children as they try to adjust to staying at home. They are certainly missing their friends and the freedoms we take for granted in our 'normal' lives but we are balancing and juggling as

best we can.

We have been in contact with a number of parents and would like to thank the many of you who have been so supportive during this time. School staff continue to work from home on our school priorities and this is being overseen and supported by the senior team. Equally we understand that staff are also caring for their own families and loved ones as the government guidance remains that where ever possible, children should be cared for at home where they are ultimately safest. Keep safe and in touch and we'll see you all soon.

Follow us on twitter to keep up to date with the latest Birchfield news.



[@Birchfield\\_Sch](#)  
[@thePA\\_CT](#)

While school is closed, please use [schoolclosure@birchfield.bham.sch.uk](mailto:schoolclosure@birchfield.bham.sch.uk) if you need to contact us. We will ensure that your enquiry is passed to the relevant person who can help you.

## Home Learning

As a school we recognise that 'home learning' is a challenge in itself and can add a lot of pressure onto parents and children. Parents should not feel under pressure to try and recreate school at home but we also know that we are well placed to offer ideas and support for those parents who find this useful. In the run up to initial school closure, we worked against a very tight timeline to put together home learning packs which were sent home with the children. These are by no means finite but were intended to provide initial ideas and resources for you and the children to draw on. Since then, we have added a section onto the school website—HOME LEARNING—that has a wealth of tasks, activities and projects for you and your children to access. We will continue to add to this as the time passes

but only with quality resources that we believe will be beneficial.

I would really encourage you to read with your children, either yourselves or with another adult, as frequently as you can. In addition to this, spending time talking, creating, baking, sharing family stories, playing board games etc. would also be invaluable, as well as reassuring your children, keeping them comfortable and making sure that they understand that this will pass and things will return to normal.

Please continue to check the website as we will endeavour to keep updating this and responding to the guidance we are given as schools.

## Coronavirus - the latest guidance

### Staying at home

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)
- If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home

Do not meet others, even friends or family.

You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms

Government Guidance for Schools:

*We have asked parents to keep their children at home wherever possible, and for schools to remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response who absolutely need to attend.*

*The fewer children making the journey to school, and the fewer children in educational settings, will protect the NHS and save lives by reducing the risks of spreading the virus.*

*Schools, and all childcare providers, are therefore being asked to continue to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and **cannot be safely cared for at home.***

### Twitter and learning online

It's hard to imagine being in the current situation without having the use of technology and social media isn't it?. If you're not currently on twitter, now is a great time to have a go! It's free and easy to join and then you can follow Birchfield School as well as other people and groups. It provides a lot of opportunities to learn and to keep up to date with the latest news. If your child has a particular interest you can use twitter to help them explore this further. Equally if they have particularly enjoyed doing something at home, we'd love to hear all about it. You can post a picture for us to see, or just write a description and then include @Birchfield\_Sch @thePA\_CT to show us your amazing talents and achievements. You can also follow your favourite interests and find new resources and ideas for fun things to

do at home.

When we are back at school, we will continue to use twitter to share the learning and events happening at Birchfield so it's a great way to keep up with school life and share all the good work that's happening. As ever, children using the internet will need supervision to ensure they are keeping safe online and they will also need regular breaks from screen time. We provide online safety updates on our website which may be useful at this time as we all know the importance of staying safe online.

Enjoy learning about new things together and finding new interests that you can share.

### And finally, we're all in this together...

The days can seem long when everyone is at home, especially when the weather isn't warm enough to spend hours outside. Here's some things I've found useful:

We've really made use of [www.oxfordowl.co.uk](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk)—there are a number of free eBooks and the children can also use the audio button to have the story read to them.

We've also used some of the resources on the RSPCA website—have a look <https://education.rspca.org.uk/home-resources>

I've also used [www.twinkl.co.uk](http://www.twinkl.co.uk) as there are lots of free resources on there for parents. You can choose resources

based on your children's ages e.g. for Reading but there are also crafts and games for when you've run out of ideas!.

Joe Wicks is also doing a daily exercise session each morning which is aimed at families and doesn't need any equipment. You can find this on youtube. My children don't manage the whole session but they will dip in and out and it's a great way to start the day.

We've also done quite a bit of cooking together. Banana bread and flapjacks are great as they don't require any special ingredients and there are many easy recipes online.

Take care everyone, stay safe and see you soon.