



BIRCH HILL
PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY
Learn, believe, achieve together

Year 2

A guide for parents and carers

September 2026

Year 2 is the final year of Key Stage 1. Your child will become a more fluent, confident reader, write longer pieces with growing accuracy, and build the number skills they need for Key Stage 2. This guide explains what your child will learn and gives you practical ways to help at home.

Ten to fifteen minutes a day of reading together, talking about books and practising number facts makes a real difference.

The year ahead

What to expect

Phonics and spelling

Read Write Inc. and Year 2 spellings

Reading

Fluency and good questions

Writing and grammar

Handwriting, sentences, punctuation

Maths

Number, times tables, measures

Useful websites

Including online safety

The year ahead

In Year 2, children continue to study all the national curriculum subjects, with a strong daily focus on reading, writing and maths.

Children learn English, maths, science, design and technology, history, geography, art and design, music, physical education and computing, alongside relationships and health education and religious education. Each subject builds carefully on what your child learnt in Year 1.

Key dates and assessments

May 2027: the Key Stage 1 tests in reading, grammar, punctuation and spelling, and maths are now optional. Schools can choose whether to use them, and we will let you know if your child will take them.

Week beginning Monday 14 June 2027: children who did not meet the standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check take it again. We will tell you in advance if this applies to your child.

Summer term: your child's end-of-year report will tell you how they are getting on in reading, writing and maths.

How you can help most

- **Read to your child and with your child every day.** Listen to them read their school book, then share a longer story or chapter book that they cannot yet read alone.
- **Talk about words.** When you meet an interesting word, talk about what it means and use it again later in the day.
- **Practise number facts little and often.** Number bonds to 20 and the 2, 5 and 10 times tables are the big ones this year.
- **Tell the time together.** By the end of Year 2 children tell the time to five minutes on a clock with hands.
- **Talk to us.** Your child's class teacher is always happy to help with any question or worry.

Phonics and spelling

At Birch Hill we teach phonics using **Read Write Inc. Phonics**, developed by Ruth Miskin and validated by the Department for Education. In Year 2, children finish the programme and move on to learning the Year 2 spelling patterns.

Read Write Inc. in Year 2

Many children start Year 2 still in daily Read Write Inc. groups, matched to the sounds and books they are ready for. They work through the storybook colours (Red, Green, Purple, Pink, Orange, Yellow, Blue and Grey) and complete the programme when they can read the Grey storybooks accurately and fluently. Once they complete Read Write Inc. Phonics, children move on to daily spelling lessons that follow the Year 2 national curriculum.

Your child will still use the Read Write Inc. language they know: **Fred Talk** to sound out, **Fred in your head** to read silently, **Fred Fingers** to spell, **special friends** for sounds made by two or three letters, and **red words** for tricky words.

Set 3 Speed Sounds: a reminder

By Year 2, children should read these sounds quickly and use them in their spelling.

ea tea, sea, dream	oi spoil, coin, join	a-e cake, made, same	i-e smile, five, like	o-e home, phone, woke
u-e huge, June, rule	aw yawn, saw, draw	are care, share, bare	ur nurse, turn, hurt	er letter, better, under
ow brown, cow, now	ai snail, rain, wait	oa goat, boat, road	ew chew, new, grew	ire fire, wire, hired
ear hear, dear, near	ure pure, sure, cure			

The phonics screening check. If your child did not meet the standard in Year 1, they will keep having extra Read Write Inc. support and will take the check again in the week beginning 14 June 2027. The Department for Education's [guide for parents](#) explains how it works.

Year 2 spelling patterns

These are the spelling patterns in the national curriculum for Year 2, with example words.

Spelling	What it does	Examples
dge / ge	The /j/ sound at the end of a word	badge, edge, bridge, age, huge
g, j	The /j/ sound before e, i and y	gem, giant, energy, jacket, jog
c	The /s/ sound before e, i and y	race, ice, cell, city, fancy
kn, gn	The /n/ sound at the start of a word	knock, know, gnat, gnaw
wr	The /r/ sound at the start of a word	write, written, wrote, wrong

Spelling	What it does	Examples
le, el, al, il	The /l/ sound at the end of a word	table, little, camel, tunnel, metal, animal, pencil, fossil
y	The /igh/ sound at the end of a word	cry, fly, dry, try, July
ey	The /ee/ sound at the end of a word	key, donkey, monkey, valley
a after w, qu	The /o/ sound	want, watch, wander, squash
or after w	The /ur/ sound	word, work, worm, world
ar after w	The /or/ sound	war, warm, towards
a before l, ll	The /or/ sound	all, ball, call, walk, talk, always
o	The /u/ sound	other, mother, brother, nothing, Monday
s	The /zh/ sound	television, treasure, usual
tion	The /shun/ sound at the end of a word	station, fiction, motion, section

Adding endings, apostrophes and homophones

Rule	What it means	Examples
y → ies, ied	Change y to i before adding -es, -ed, -er, -est	fly → flies, cry → cried, happy → happier, happiest
...but keep y for -ing	Keep the y when adding -ing	copying, crying, replying
Drop the e	Drop the final e before -ing, -ed, -er, -est, -y	hike → hiking, hiked; nice → nicer, nicest; shine → shiny
Double the letter	Double a single consonant after a short vowel	pat → patting, patted; hum → humming; sad → sadder, saddest; run → runner
-ment, -ness, -ful, -less, -ly	Adding a suffix to make a new word	enjoyment, sadness, careful, playful, hopeless, badly
Contractions	An apostrophe shows where letters are missing	can't, didn't, hasn't, couldn't, it's, I'll
Possessive apostrophe	An apostrophe shows who something belongs to	Megan's, the girl's, the child's, the man's
Homophones	Words that sound the same but are spelt differently	there/their/they're, here/hear, see/sea, to/too/two, one/won, night/knight

Common exception words for Year 2

These words have unusual spellings. Children learn to read and spell them by the end of Year 2, as well as the Year 1 words (*the, said, was, they, friend, school* and others) which they should now spell confidently.

door	floor	poor	because	find	kind
mind	behind	child	children	wild	climb
most	only	both	old	cold	gold

hold	told	every	everybody	even	great
break	steak	pretty	beautiful	after	fast
last	past	father	class	grass	pass
plant	path	bath	hour	move	prove
improve	sure	sugar	eye	could	should
would	who	whole	any	many	clothes
busy	people	water	again	half	money
Mr	Mrs	parents	Christmas		

Helping with phonics and spelling at home

- **If your child is still in Read Write Inc. groups**, read their Read Write Inc. book with them every day: the green and red words first, then the story, then read it again for speed.
- **Practise a few spellings at a time**. Say the word, use Fred Fingers to count the sounds, write it, then check it together.
- **Look, say, cover, write, check** works well for red words and common exception words.
- **Go on a spelling hunt**. Look for words with this week's pattern in books, on signs and on packets.
- **Play with endings**. Can your child add -ful, -less or -ness to make new words? Care, careful, careless.

Read Write Inc. links for families

Ruth Miskin Literacy: Learning to read at home – films for parents, Fred Games, handwriting phrases and answers to common questions.

ruthmiskin.com/parentsandcarers

Read Write Inc. parent films on YouTube – including how to listen to your child read a Read Write Inc. storybook.

[Ruth Miskin Training parent playlist](#)

Read Write Inc. free eBooks (Oxford Owl for Home) – free eBooks and Speed Sound practice sheets. You will need to create a free account.

oxfordowl.co.uk/read-write-inc-home

Reading

In Year 2, children move from working words out to reading fluently, so they can think about what the text means. By the end of the year, most children read familiar words quickly without sounding them out, and talk about books with growing confidence.

What Year 2 readers learn to do

Reading the words

- Keep using phonics until decoding is automatic and reading is fluent.
- Read words with two or more syllables, and words with common endings such as -ment, -ness, -ful, -less and -ly.
- Read the Year 2 common exception words.
- Read most familiar words quickly and accurately, without sounding them out.
- Re-read books to build speed, fluency and confidence.

Understanding what they read

- Listen to, talk about and give opinions on poems, stories and information books.
- Know a wider range of fairy stories and traditional tales, and retell them.
- Talk about the order of events, and about favourite words and phrases.
- Learn some poems by heart and recite them with expression.
- Work out what characters think and feel, ask questions and make predictions.
- Check that what they read makes sense, and correct themselves when it doesn't.

Building reading fluency

Fluent readers read accurately, at a comfortable pace and with expression. Fluency matters because a child who reads slowly, word by word, uses all their effort on the words and has little left for understanding. Two simple routines help.

Echo reading

1. Choose a short passage just above your child's current level. Poems work well.
2. Read a sentence aloud with expression, pointing to each word.
3. Your child reads the same sentence back, copying your phrasing and tone.
4. If they stumble, don't correct them; read the line again and let them echo it once more.
5. Finish by talking about what the passage meant.

Paired reading: Ready Reader and Lovely Listener

1. Your child (the Ready Reader) reads aloud for about a minute.
2. You (the Lovely Listener) say what went well, then give one thing to improve, such as "pause at the full stops".
3. Your child re-reads the passage, trying the improvement.
4. Praise the difference, then talk about the story together.

Good questions to ask

- Can you find a word that ends in -ful or -less? What does it mean?
- Did that sentence make sense? Shall we try it again?
- What happened after that? Can you tell me the story so far?
- Which part tells me about...? Can you find it?
- How do you think the character feels now? What makes you say that?
- What do you think will happen next? What clues helped you?
- Is this story set in the past, present or future? How do you know?
- What could the author have used instead of the word "happy"?
- If I wanted to find out about..., would this book help me? Why?
- Does this story remind you of another one you know?

Looking for book ideas? Our separate Year 2 Reading List has books linked to every topic this year, plus favourite stories and new recommendations from BookTrust.

Writing and grammar

In Year 2, children write for different purposes: stories, recounts of real events, poems and information. They learn to plan, check and improve their writing, and to use a wider range of grammar and punctuation.

Handwriting

By the end of Year 2, your child should:

- form lower-case letters of the correct size in relation to one another
- begin to use the strokes needed to join letters, and know which letters are best left unjoined
- write capital letters and digits of the correct size and orientation
- leave spaces between words that match the size of the letters

Composing: plan it, write it, check it

1. **Plan it.** Talk about the idea, say sentences out loud, and jot down key words or new vocabulary.
2. **Write it.** Write sentence by sentence, keeping the tense consistent.
3. **Check it.** Re-read to check it makes sense, then proofread for spelling, capital letters and punctuation. Read it aloud with expression.

Grammar and punctuation in Year 2

This is what the national curriculum sets out for Year 2.

Area	What your child learns	Example
Words	Making nouns with -ness and -er, and by joining words (compounding)	happiness, teacher, whiteboard, football
Words	Making adjectives with -ful and -less, and comparing with -er and -est	careful, helpless, bigger, biggest
Words	Turning adjectives into adverbs with -ly	quick → quickly, slow → slowly
Sentences	Joining ideas with <i>and, or, but</i> (co-ordination)	I wanted to play but it was raining.
Sentences	Adding more detail with <i>when, if, that, because</i> (subordination)	We stayed inside because it was raining.
Sentences	Expanded noun phrases to describe and specify	the blue butterfly, the man in the moon
Sentences	Four types of sentence: statement, question, exclamation, command	Plants need water. Do plants need water? What a tall sunflower! Water the plants.
Tense	Using the past and present tense correctly and consistently	I walk to school. I walked to school.
Tense	The progressive form, for actions still going on	She is drumming. He was shouting.
Punctuation	Capital letters, full stops, question marks and exclamation marks	Where is my coat? It's freezing!
Punctuation	Commas to separate items in a list	I packed a hat, a coat and some gloves.

Area	What your child learns	Example
Punctuation	Apostrophes for contractions and for singular possession	don't, won't; Tom's football, the dog's bone

Words your child will learn to use: noun, noun phrase, statement, question, exclamation, command, compound, suffix, adjective, adverb, verb, tense (past and present), apostrophe, comma.

Helping with writing at home

- Give writing a real purpose: a postcard, a recipe, a thank-you letter, a diary of a day out.
- Play “add the detail”: start with “the dog” and take turns making it longer: “the scruffy dog”, “the scruffy dog with muddy paws”.
- Ask “because...?” to help your child explain their ideas in longer sentences.
- Praise what they did well before pointing out one thing to fix.



Maths

In Year 2, children work with numbers to 100, become fluent with addition and subtraction facts, learn the 2, 5 and 10 times tables, and explore fractions, measures, money, time, shape and data.

Our year at a glance

Autumn 1

- Place value
- Addition and subtraction

Autumn 2

- Money
- Multiplication and division

Spring 1

- Multiplication and division
- Statistics
- Properties of shape

Spring 2

- Fractions

Summer 1

- Length and height
- Position and direction
- Problem solving

Summer 2

- Time
- Mass, capacity and temperature

By the end of Year 2, your child should be able to...

Number and place value

- Count in 2s, 3s and 5s from 0, and in 10s from any number, forwards and backwards.
- Know the value of each digit in a two-digit number (tens and ones).
- Read and write numbers to at least 100 in numerals and words, and compare them using $<$, $>$ and $=$.

Addition and subtraction

- Recall addition and subtraction facts to 20 fluently, and use them to work out facts to 100 ($7 + 3 = 10$, so $70 + 30 = 100$).
- Add and subtract a two-digit number and ones, a two-digit number and tens, two two-digit numbers, and three one-digit numbers.
- Know that addition can be done in any order but subtraction cannot, and use the inverse to check answers.

Multiplication and division

- Recall multiplication and division facts for the 2, 5 and 10 times tables, and recognise odd and even numbers.
- Write calculations using $\times$, $\div$ and $=$, and solve problems using arrays, repeated addition and known facts.

Fractions

- Find $\frac{1}{3}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ of a shape, length, set of objects or quantity, and know that $\frac{3}{4}$ is the same as $\frac{1}{2}$.

Measurement

- Measure length (m, cm), mass (kg, g), temperature ($^{\circ}\text{C}$) and capacity (litres, ml) using rulers, scales, thermometers and jugs.
- Recognise £ and p, combine coins to make an amount, and work out change.
- Tell and write the time to five minutes, including quarter past and quarter to, and draw the hands on a clock.
- Know there are 60 minutes in an hour and 24 hours in a day.

Shape, position and direction

- Describe 2-D shapes by their sides and vertical line of symmetry, and 3-D shapes by their faces, edges and vertices.
- Describe turns as quarter, half and three-quarter turns, clockwise and anti-clockwise, and link quarter turns to right angles.

Statistics

- Read and make pictograms, tally charts, block diagrams and simple tables, and answer questions about them.

Facts worth knowing by heart

Number bonds to 20 (such as $13 + 7 = 20$) and the related subtraction facts; the 2, 5 and 10 times tables, in order and when mixed up, with the matching division facts (such as $30 \div 5 = 6$). Quick recall frees up your child's thinking for harder problems.

Maths at home

Shape walk

Hunt for shapes around the supermarket or on a walk. As well as the familiar ones, can your child spot a pentagon (5 sides), hexagon (6 sides) or octagon (8 sides)? Which 3-D shapes can they name?

Money and shopping

Pocket money and shopping trips are perfect practice. Can your child recognise every coin, total amounts over £1 and work out the change?

What's the time?

Keep a clock with hands where your child can see it. Ask them to read the time to the nearest five minutes, and to work out when things will finish: "Swimming lasts half an hour. What time will it end?"

Times tables

Chant the 2, 5 and 10 times tables in order, then ask quick-fire questions in a mixed-up order. Your child can also practise on the PiXL Times Tables app with their school login.

Kitchen maths

Cooking is a great way to practise weighing in grams and kilograms and measuring in millilitres and litres.

Everyday questions

"If I eat 3 grapes, how many are left?" "We've got 15 conkers. If we find 5 more, how many will we have?" "If we share these between 3 of us, how many do we each get?"

Board games are also a great way to build confidence with counting, adding and subtracting.

Useful websites

A small number of free, reliable sites and the apps we provide. Screen time is best kept short and shared, and nothing replaces reading and talking together.

Read Write Inc. Phonics (Ruth Miskin Literacy) – our phonics programme. Films, games and free eBooks for families are listed in the Phonics section.

ruthmiskin.com/parentsandcarers

PiXL Times Tables and PiXL Unlock apps – times tables practice and vocabulary building. Your child has a school username and password that works for both apps; download them from the Apple App Store or Google Play.

Topmarks – maths games sorted by age and topic.

topmarks.co.uk

White Rose Education – short home maths practice, including the free 1-Minute Maths app.

whiteroseeducation.com

BookTrust – book recommendations by age and interest.

booktrust.org.uk

BooksForTopics: Year 2 recommended reads – 50 books chosen for 6 and 7 year olds.

booksfortopics.com

GOV.UK: Phonics screening check information for parents – for children retaking the check in Year 2.

gov.uk/government/publications/phonics-screening-check-information-for-parents

GOV.UK: The national curriculum – what children learn at each key stage.

gov.uk/national-curriculum

Staying safe online

Young children should use devices where an adult can see them, with parental controls switched on. Talk with your child about what to do if they see something that worries them: stop, and tell a grown-up.

UK Safer Internet Centre – advice for parents and carers.

saferinternet.org.uk

Internet Matters – step-by-step guides to setting up parental controls.

internetmatters.org

Learn, believe, achieve together

Thank you for your support this year. If you have any questions about your child's learning, please speak to their class teacher.

Birch Hill Primary School and Nursery, part of Maiden Erlegh Trust. September 2026.