



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

Year 3

A guide for parents and carers

September 2026

Year 3 is the first year of Key Stage 2. Your child will read longer books with growing independence, write in paragraphs, learn the 3, 4 and 8 times tables, and work with numbers up to 1,000. This guide explains what your child will learn and gives you practical ways to help at home.

Reading every day, talking about books and practising times tables little and often make the biggest difference.

The year ahead

What to expect

Reading

Fluency and good questions

Spelling

Year 3 patterns and word list

Writing and grammar

Paragraphs, speech, handwriting

Maths

Times tables, number, measures

Useful websites

Including online safety

The year ahead

In Year 3, children study all the national curriculum subjects, now including a modern foreign language, with a strong daily focus on reading, writing and maths.

Children learn English, maths, science, history, geography, design and technology, art and design, music, physical education, computing and a modern foreign language, alongside relationships and health education and religious education.

Much of the English curriculum is set out for Years 3 and 4 together, so some of what your child starts this year will be completed in Year 4.

Looking ahead

There are no national tests in Year 3. Your child's end-of-year report will tell you how they are getting on. Learning the times tables this year is important preparation for the national **multiplication tables check**, which all children take in June of Year 4.

How you can help most

- **Keep reading together every day.** Listen to your child read, and keep reading to them too: longer chapter books they could not yet manage alone build vocabulary and a love of stories.
- **Talk about what they read.** Ask why characters act as they do and what might happen next.
- **Practise times tables little and often.** A few minutes a day on the 3, 4 and 8 times tables, as well as the 2, 5 and 10 they already know.
- **Tell the time together.** By the end of Year 3, children read the time to the nearest minute, including on clocks with Roman numerals.
- **Talk to us.** Your child's class teacher is always happy to help.

Reading

In Year 3, the focus moves from learning to read towards reading to learn. Children read a widening range of fiction, poetry, plays and information books, and learn to explain what they have read and why.

Read Write Inc. Phonics. Most children complete Read Write Inc. Phonics in Key Stage 1. Any child who has not yet done so continues with daily Read Write Inc. teaching in Year 3 until they are reading fluently, and their teacher will keep you informed.

What Year 3 readers learn to do

Reading the words

- Use what they know about root words, prefixes and suffixes to read and understand new words.
- Read the Year 3 and 4 words that have unusual spellings (see the Spelling section).
- Read aloud with growing fluency, expression and accuracy.

Enjoying a range of books

- Listen to and discuss fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books.
- Know a wider range of fairy stories, myths and legends, and retell some aloud.
- Prepare poems and play scripts to read aloud and perform.
- Use a dictionary to check the meaning of words.

Understanding what they read

- Check that the text makes sense and explain the meaning of words in context.
- Ask questions to improve their understanding.
- Infer characters' feelings, thoughts and motives, and back this up with evidence from the text.
- Predict what might happen from details in the text.
- Identify the main ideas across more than one paragraph and summarise them.
- Find and record information from non-fiction.

Building reading fluency

Fluent readers read accurately, at a comfortable pace and with expression. When reading is slow and halting, all the effort goes into the words and little is left for understanding. Two routines help.

Echo reading

1. Choose a short passage just above your child's current level. Poems and dialogue work well.
2. Read a sentence or two aloud with expression, following the text with your finger.
3. Your child reads the same section back, copying your phrasing, timing and tone.
4. Don't correct them; simply model the line again and let them echo it.
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 "make the question sound like a question".
3. Your child re-reads the passage, trying the improvement.
4. Praise the difference, then talk about the reading together.

Good questions to ask

- What do these words mean? Why do you think the author chose them?
- Which words give you the impression that...?
- How do you think this character is feeling? What makes you think that?
- Why did they make that choice, do you think?
- Which part tells you about...?
- If you're not sure what a word means, what could you do?
- Can you think of a story with a similar opening, ending or theme?
- Why did the author choose this setting?
- What message is this story trying to tell us?
- What genre is this? What kind of poem is this?
- Can you sum up this chapter in a sentence?
- Who else do you think would like this book? Why?

Looking for book ideas? Our separate Year 3 Reading List has books linked to every topic this year, plus new recommendations from BookTrust.

Spelling

In Years 3 and 4, children learn more prefixes and suffixes, new ways of spelling familiar sounds, and 100 words that are often misspelt. The national curriculum sets these out for Years 3 and 4 together.

Year 3 and 4 spelling patterns

Pattern	What it means	Examples
Doubling before a suffix	In longer words, double the last letter if the last syllable is stressed	forgetting, forgotten, beginning, beginner, preferred (but gardening, limited)
y for the /i/ sound	The short /i/ sound spelt y in the middle of a word	myth, gym, Egypt, pyramid, mystery
ou for the /u/ sound	The short /u/ sound spelt ou	young, touch, double, trouble, country
Prefixes	dis-, mis-, in-, il-, im-, ir-, re-, sub-, inter-, super-, anti-, auto-	disappear, misbehave, incorrect, illegal, impossible, irregular, redo, submarine, international, supermarket, antiseptic, autograph
-ation	Adding -ation to verbs to make nouns	information, sensation, preparation, admiration
-ly	Adding -ly to make adverbs, with some spelling changes	sadly, usually, gently, happily, basically
-sure, -ture	Endings that sound like /zhuh/ and /chuh/	measure, treasure, pleasure; creature, picture, nature, adventure
-sion	The /zhun/ ending	division, invasion, confusion, decision, television
-ous	Adding -ous to make adjectives	poisonous, dangerous, famous, enormous, jealous, serious, curious
-tion, -sion, -ssion, -cian	Different spellings of the /shun/ ending	invention, action; tension, extension; discussion, permission; musician, magician
ch	The /k/ sound (from Greek) and /sh/ sound (from French)	scheme, chorus, echo, character; chef, machine, brochure
-gue, -que	Endings from French	league, tongue, antique, unique
sc	The /s/ sound spelt sc	science, scene, fascinate, crescent
ei, eigh, ey	The /ay/ sound	vein, weigh, eight, neighbour, they, obey
Plural possession	Apostrophes with plural words	the girls' coats, the boys' football, the children's toys, the men's shirts
Homophones	Words that sound the same but have different spellings and meanings	accept/except, brake/break, grate/great, here/hear, knot/not, meat/meet, peace/piece, scene/seen, weather/whether, whose/who's

The Year 3 and 4 word list

These are the 100 words that children are expected to spell by the end of Year 4. We will focus on some of them this year, and the rest in Year 4.

accident(ally)	actual(ly)	address	answer
appear	arrive	believe	bicycle
breath	breathe	build	busy/business
calendar	caught	centre	century
certain	circle	complete	consider
continue	decide	describe	different
difficult	disappear	early	earth
eight/eighth	enough	exercise	experience
experiment	extreme	famous	favourite
February	forward(s)	fruit	grammar
group	guard	guide	heard
heart	height	history	imagine
increase	important	interest	island
knowledge	learn	length	library
material	medicine	mention	minute
natural	naughty	notice	occasion(ally)
often	opposite	ordinary	particular
peculiar	perhaps	popular	position
possess(ion)	possible	potatoes	pressure
probably	promise	purpose	quarter
question	recent	regular	reign
remember	sentence	separate	special
straight	strange	strength	suppose
surprise	therefore	though/although	thought
through	various	weight	woman/women

Check the Year 2 words too. Make sure your child can confidently spell the Year 2 common exception words, such as *because, could, would, people, water, again, money* and *Christmas*, as these are used in almost everything they write.

Helping with spelling at home

- **Little and often.** Practise five words a few times a week rather than all of them at once.
- **Look, say, cover, write, check.** A simple routine that works well for tricky words.
- **Spot the tricky part.** Ask your child which bit of a word catches them out, such as the *s* in *island* or the *ei* in *reign*.
- **Build word families.** Once your child can spell *sign*, try *signal, signature* and *design*.
- **Use a dictionary.** Show your child how to use the first two or three letters to find a word and check the spelling.

Writing and grammar

In Year 3, children write longer pieces organised into paragraphs, with a richer vocabulary and a wider range of sentence structures. They learn to plan, draft, edit and proofread their own work.

Handwriting

Children use joined handwriting, knowing which letters are best left unjoined, and work on making their writing legible, consistent and neat, with downstrokes parallel and letters evenly spaced.

Plan, draft, edit, proofread

1. **Plan.** Read and talk about examples of the kind of writing they are going to do, and note down ideas.
2. **Draft.** Say sentences out loud before writing them, organise ideas into paragraphs, and create settings, characters and plot in stories, or use headings in information writing.
3. **Edit.** Read the writing back and suggest improvements to vocabulary and grammar.
4. **Proofread.** Check spelling and punctuation, then read the writing aloud with expression.

Grammar and punctuation in Year 3

This is what the national curriculum sets out for Year 3. Children also keep using everything they learnt in Key Stage 1, such as commas in lists, apostrophes and expanded noun phrases.

Area	What your child learns	Example
Words	Making words with prefixes such as super-, anti- and auto-	supermarket, antisocial, autopilot
Words	Choosing <i>a</i> or <i>an</i> depending on the next sound	a rock, an open box, an hour
Words	Word families: how words are related in form and meaning	solve, solution, solver, dissolve, insoluble
Sentences	Showing time, place and cause with conjunctions (when, before, after, while, so, because)	We went inside because it started to rain.
Sentences	... with adverbs (then, next, soon, therefore)	Soon, the rain stopped.
Sentences	... with prepositions (before, after, during, in, because of)	During the storm, we stayed indoors.
Texts	Paragraphs to group related ideas	A new paragraph for each part of a story or each new fact
Texts	Headings and sub-headings in information writing	How Volcanoes Form / What Happens in an Eruption
Texts	The present perfect tense	He has gone out to play (compared with: He went out to play)
Punctuation	Inverted commas (speech marks) for direct speech	"Where are you going?" asked Mum.

Words your child will learn to use: preposition, conjunction, word family, prefix, clause, subordinate clause, direct speech, consonant, consonant letter, vowel, vowel letter, inverted commas (or speech marks).

Helping with writing at home

- Encourage real writing: a diary, a letter to a relative, a review of a film or book, instructions for a game.
- Play “because, so, when”: take a simple sentence and see how many ways you can extend it.
- Look at speech in the books you read together and notice where the speech marks go.
- Praise what works before pointing out one thing to improve.

Maths

In Year 3, children work with numbers up to 1,000, use written methods for addition and subtraction, learn the 3, 4 and 8 times tables, and develop their understanding of fractions, measures, time, shape and data.

Our year at a glance

Autumn

- Place value
- Addition and subtraction
- Multiplication and division

Spring

- Multiplication and division
- Length and perimeter
- Fractions
- Mass and capacity

Summer

- Fractions
- Money
- Time
- Shape
- Statistics

Times tables

By Year 3, children should already know the 2, 5 and 10 times tables. This year they learn the **3, 4 and 8 times tables**, with the matching division facts. They should be able to say them in order and answer quick-fire questions when they are mixed up.

The 3 times table

- $1 \times 3 = 3$
- $2 \times 3 = 6$
- $3 \times 3 = 9$
- $4 \times 3 = 12$
- $5 \times 3 = 15$
- $6 \times 3 = 18$
- $7 \times 3 = 21$
- $8 \times 3 = 24$
- $9 \times 3 = 27$
- $10 \times 3 = 30$
- $11 \times 3 = 33$
- $12 \times 3 = 36$

The 4 times table

- $1 \times 4 = 4$
- $2 \times 4 = 8$
- $3 \times 4 = 12$
- $4 \times 4 = 16$
- $5 \times 4 = 20$
- $6 \times 4 = 24$
- $7 \times 4 = 28$
- $8 \times 4 = 32$
- $9 \times 4 = 36$
- $10 \times 4 = 40$
- $11 \times 4 = 44$
- $12 \times 4 = 48$

The 8 times table

- $1 \times 8 = 8$
- $2 \times 8 = 16$
- $3 \times 8 = 24$
- $4 \times 8 = 32$
- $5 \times 8 = 40$
- $6 \times 8 = 48$
- $7 \times 8 = 56$
- $8 \times 8 = 64$
- $9 \times 8 = 72$
- $10 \times 8 = 80$
- $11 \times 8 = 88$
- $12 \times 8 = 96$

Spot the links. The 4 times table is double the 2 times table, and the 8 times table is double the 4. If your child knows $6 \times 4 = 24$, they can work out $6 \times 8 = 48$.

By the end of Year 3, your child should be able to...

Number and place value

- Count from 0 in 4s, 8s, 50s and 100s, and find 10 or 100 more or less than a number.
- Know the value of each digit in a three-digit number (hundreds, tens and ones).
- Read, write, compare and order numbers up to 1,000.

Addition and subtraction

- Add and subtract mentally: a three-digit number and ones, tens or hundreds.
- Add and subtract numbers with up to three digits using column methods.
- Estimate answers and use the inverse to check.

Multiplication and division

- Recall multiplication and division facts for the 3, 4 and 8 times tables.
- Multiply a two-digit number by a one-digit number, moving towards written methods.
- Solve problems, including missing number and scaling problems.

Fractions

- Count up and down in tenths.
- Find fractions of amounts, and recognise equivalent fractions with small denominators.
- Add and subtract fractions with the same denominator within one whole (such as $\frac{5}{7} + \frac{1}{7} = \frac{6}{7}$).
- Compare and order unit fractions, and fractions with the same denominator.

Measurement

- Measure, compare, add and subtract lengths (m, cm, mm), mass (kg, g) and capacity (l, ml).
- Measure the perimeter of simple 2-D shapes.
- Add and subtract amounts of money and give change, using £ and p.
- Tell the time to the nearest minute on analogue clocks, including Roman numerals I to XII, and on 12-hour and 24-hour clocks.
- Use a.m., p.m., noon and midnight; know the number of seconds in a minute and the number of days in each month, a year and a leap year.

Shape

- Draw 2-D shapes and make 3-D shapes, and describe them.
- Recognise right angles, and angles greater or less than a right angle.
- Identify horizontal, vertical, perpendicular and parallel lines.

Statistics

- Read and make bar charts, pictograms and tables, and answer one- and two-step questions about them.

Maths at home

Shape walk

Look at buildings for right angles, parallel lines and symmetrical shapes. Can your child spot an irregular shape and count its sides?

Money and shopping

Use pocket money and shopping trips to total amounts up to £10, write them using £ and p, and work out change.

Human alarm clock

Ask your child to tell you when it's 20 past 6 and time to turn off the oven. Try time problems: "This programme starts at 12:20 and lasts 50 minutes. When does it finish?" A watch makes a great present.

Kitchen maths

Cooking is perfect for reading scales accurately and measuring in grams, kilograms, millilitres and litres.

Times tables on the go

Practise on car journeys or in any spare five minutes: in order, backwards, then mixed up. Your child can also use the PiXL Times Tables app with their school login.

Everyday questions

"I need 20 envelopes and have 13. How many more?" "3 sweets in each of 9 party bags: how many sweets?" "This pizza has 8 slices. You can have $\frac{1}{4}$. How many slices is that?"

Board games are a great way to practise number skills, and children often enjoy inventing their own.

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.

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](https://www.topmarks.co.uk)

White Rose Education – short home maths practice, including the free 1-Minute Maths app.
[whiteroseeducation.com](https://www.whiteroseeducation.com)

BookTrust – book recommendations by age and interest.
booktrust.org.uk

BooksForTopics: Year 3 recommended reads – 50 books chosen for 7 and 8 year olds.
booksfortopics.com

Read Write Inc. Phonics (Ruth Miskin Literacy) – for children still completing the programme: films, games and free eBooks for families.
ruthmiskin.com/parentsandcarers

GOV.UK: The national curriculum – what children learn at each key stage.
gov.uk/national-curriculum

Staying safe online

As children start to use devices more independently, keep them in shared spaces with parental controls switched on. Talk regularly about what they do online and what to do if something 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.