



BIRCH HILL
PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

Learn, believe, achieve together

Year 6

A guide for parents and carers

September 2026

Year 6 is the final year of primary school: a year of growing independence, the Key Stage 2 national tests in May, and preparation for the move to secondary school. This guide explains what your child will learn, what to expect from the tests, and how you can help at home.

Calm routines, reading every day, good attendance and plenty of encouragement are the most powerful things you can offer this year.

The year ahead

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Passive, formal writing, punctuation

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The year ahead

In Year 6, children complete the Key Stage 2 curriculum in all subjects, 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.

Key dates

31 October 2026: the national closing date for secondary school applications. You apply through your local council.

1 March 2027: National Offer Day, when families find out which secondary school their child has been offered.

10 to 13 May 2027: the Key Stage 2 national tests (SATs). See the next section.

Summer term: transition to secondary school, and your child's report, which includes their test results and teacher assessments.

How you can help most

- **Keep reading together.** Ten minutes a day of reading and talking about books makes a real difference, even for confident readers.
- **Make every day count.** Good attendance matters throughout Year 6, especially in the weeks before the tests.
- **Keep things calm and positive.** Your encouragement and reassurance matter more than any revision guide.
- **Build independence.** Help your child organise homework, belongings and their journey to school, ready for secondary school.
- **Talk to us.** If you have any questions or worries, your child's teacher is always the best first point of contact.

Key Stage 2 SATs

In May, Year 6 children take national tests in English grammar, punctuation and spelling, English reading, and maths. They help show how your child is doing at the end of primary school and make sure they get the right support at secondary school. They are not a pass or fail.

The 2027 timetable

Date	Test	What it involves
Monday 10 May	Grammar, punctuation and spelling	Paper 1: grammar and punctuation questions. Paper 2: a spelling test of words read aloud by the teacher.
Tuesday 11 May	Reading	A reading booklet with several texts, and questions to answer about them.
Wednesday 12 May	Maths papers 1 and 2	Paper 1: arithmetic. Paper 2: reasoning (problem solving).
Thursday 13 May	Maths paper 3	A second reasoning paper.

Altogether, the tests last less than four hours. Writing and science are assessed by your child's teacher through their work across the year, rather than by a test.

Does my child need to revise?

The tests only cover what your child has already been taught through the national curriculum, so there is no need to put them under pressure to revise intensively. Their teachers will prepare them throughout the year. The most helpful thing you can do is keep things calm and positive at home.

How can I support my child at home?

- **Read together** for ten minutes a day, and talk about what you read.
- **Keep times tables sharp**, for example on the way to school.
- **Ask what they have been learning**, and let them explain it to you.
- **Protect sleep, breakfast and routines**, especially in the week of the tests.
- **Keep your child in school**. Every lesson counts, and missing school in the weeks before the tests means missing teaching, practice and support. If your child is finding it hard to attend, please talk to us as early as possible so we can help.

What if my child finds the tests difficult?

The tests are designed to stretch all children, including the most able, so some children will find them harder than others. That is normal and expected. One purpose of the tests is to identify where children need more support, so their secondary school can help them from day one.

Children with special educational needs or disabilities

Some children may take the tests with access arrangements, such as extra time or a reader, or may be assessed in a different way if that is more appropriate. The headteacher makes the final decision about how each child takes part. If you have any concerns, please speak to us early in the year.

Results

Schools receive results in early July. Before the end of the summer term, we will send you a report including your child's test results and teacher assessment judgements. Results are given as a **scaled score**: a score of **100 or above** means your child is working at or above the expected standard for their age.

Find out more. The Department for Education's [guide for parents](#) and the Standards and Testing Agency's [information for parents](#) explain the tests and results in more detail.

Reading

In Year 6, children read widely and critically, compare texts, and explain their views about what they read with well-chosen evidence. The reading test assesses these skills, but they are also the foundation for every secondary school subject.

What Year 6 readers learn to do

Reading widely

- Read and discuss a wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books.
- Read modern fiction, classic fiction, myths and legends, and books from other cultures and traditions.
- Identify and discuss themes and conventions, and make comparisons within and across books.
- Recommend books to others, giving reasons.
- Learn poems by heart and perform poems and plays with clear intonation, tone and volume.

Understanding and evaluating

- Explain the meaning of words in context.
- Infer characters' feelings, thoughts and motives, justifying views with evidence.
- Predict from details stated and implied.
- Summarise main ideas across several paragraphs.
- Discuss and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language.
- Distinguish between fact and opinion.
- Retrieve, record and present information from non-fiction.
- Take part in discussions and debates, and give reasoned justifications for their views.

Building reading stamina and fluency

The reading test asks children to read several texts carefully in one sitting. Reading every day, at length, builds the stamina they need. Echo reading and paired reading still help with tricky texts.

Echo reading

1. Choose a challenging passage, such as a speech, a poem or a gripping extract.
2. Read it aloud, showing how pauses and emphasis reveal meaning.
3. Your child reads it back, matching your phrasing.
4. Discuss what the writer was trying to achieve.

Read, then retell

1. Your child reads a chapter or article independently.
2. They summarise it for you in three or four sentences.
3. You ask one "why" question and one "how do you know" question.
4. They find the evidence in the text.

Good questions to ask

- What is your opinion of...? What evidence supports it?
- Why do you think the author chose that word or phrase?
- What does this word mean here? How can you tell?
- How does the writer create tension, humour or sadness here?
- Is that a fact or an opinion?
- What themes run through this book? Do you know other books with similar themes?
- How does this book compare with the last one you read?
- Can you summarise what you have just read?
- Why do you think... acted in that way?
- Would you recommend this book? Who to, and why?

Looking for book ideas? Our separate Year 6 Reading List has stories to get lost in and more books to try, chosen by our teachers.

Spelling

Year 6 completes the Year 5–6 spelling curriculum. The grammar, punctuation and spelling test includes a spelling paper, so secure spelling of these patterns and words really helps.

Year 5 and 6 spelling patterns

Pattern	What it means	Examples
-cious, -tious	Endings that sound like /shus/	vicious, precious, delicious, suspicious; ambitious, cautious, nutritious
-cial, -tial	Endings that sound like /shul/	official, special, artificial; partial, confidential, essential
-ant, -ance, -ancy	Related word endings	observant, observance; hesitant, hesitancy; tolerant, tolerance
-ent, -ence, -ency	Related word endings	innocent, innocence; decent, decency; confident, confidence
-able, -ably	Often added to complete root words	adorable, adorably; changeable, noticeable, dependable, comfortable, reasonable
-ible, -ibly	Often used when the root is not a complete word	possible, possibly; horrible, terrible, visible, incredible, sensible
Words ending in -fer	Double the r if the -fer is still stressed	referring, referred, preferring, transferring; but reference, preference
Hyphens	Joining a prefix ending in a vowel to a root starting with one	co-ordinate, re-enter, co-operate, co-own
ei after c	i before e except after c (when the sound is /ee/)	deceive, receive, perceive, ceiling (exceptions: protein, seize)
ough	One of the trickiest spellings, with several sounds	ought, bought, rough, enough, cough, though, through, thorough, plough
Silent letters	Letters that are written but not heard	doubt, island, lamb, solemn, thistle, knight
Homophones and near-homophones	Words that sound alike but are spelt differently	advice/advise, practice/practise, affect/effect, past/passed, principal/principle, stationary/stationery, desert/dessert, who's/whose

The Year 5 and 6 word list

These are the 100 words children are expected to spell by the end of Year 6. How many can your child already spell?

accommodate

accompany

according

achieve

aggressive	amateur	ancient	apparent
appreciate	attached	available	average
awkward	bargain	bruise	category
cemetery	committee	communicate	community
competition	conscience	conscious	controversy
convenience	correspond	criticise	curiosity
definite	desperate	determined	develop
dictionary	disastrous	embarrass	environment
equip(-ped,-ment)	especially	exaggerate	excellent
existence	explanation	familiar	foreign
forty	frequently	government	guarantee
harass	hindrance	identity	immediately
interfere	interrupt	language	leisure
lightning	marvellous	mischievous	muscle
necessary	neighbour	nuisance	occupy
occur	opportunity	parliament	persuade
physical	prejudice	privilege	profession
programme	pronunciation	queue	recognise
recommend	restaurant	rhyme	rhythm
sacrifice	secretary	shoulder	signature
sincere(ly)	soldier	stomach	sufficient
suggest	symbol	system	temperature
thorough	twelfth	variety	vegetable
vehicle	yacht		

Check the Year 3 and 4 words too. Make sure your child can confidently spell the Year 3 and 4 word list, such as *separate*, *February*, *occasionally*, *particular* and *surprise*.

Helping with spelling at home

- **Find the root.** Knowing *muscle* links to *muscular*, and *sign* to *signature*, helps with silent letters.
- **Make a memory hook.** *Necessary* has “one collar, two sleeves”; *separate* has “a rat” in it.

- **Test in sentences.** Read a sentence aloud and ask your child to write it, as in the spelling test.
- **Use a dictionary and thesaurus** to check spellings, meanings and word origins.

Writing and grammar

In Year 6, children write confidently for a wide range of audiences and purposes, choosing the right level of formality and using grammar and punctuation precisely. Writing is assessed by your child's teacher across the year.

Handwriting

Children write legibly, fluently and at speed, choosing whether or not to join and selecting the right writing tool for the task.

Plan, draft, evaluate, edit

1. **Plan.** Identify the audience and purpose, choose the form, and use similar writing as a model.
2. **Draft.** Select vocabulary and grammar deliberately; build characters, settings and atmosphere; use dialogue to show character and move the action on; summarise longer passages.
3. **Evaluate and edit.** Improve vocabulary, grammar and punctuation; keep tenses consistent; check subject-verb agreement; choose the right register.
4. **Proofread and perform.** Check spelling and punctuation, then read the work aloud with expression.

Grammar and punctuation in Year 6

This is what the national curriculum sets out for Year 6. Children continue to use everything they learnt in earlier years, including relative clauses, parenthesis, fronted adverbials and speech punctuation. The grammar and punctuation test covers content from across Key Stage 2.

Area	What your child learns	Example
Words	Formal and informal vocabulary	find out → discover; ask for → request; go in → enter
Words	Synonyms and antonyms	big, large, huge; big / little
Sentences	The passive voice to change the focus of a sentence	I broke the window. → The window was broken (by me).
Sentences	Formal and informal structures, including question tags and the subjunctive	He's your friend, isn't he? (informal) / If I were you... (formal)
Texts	Linking paragraphs with a wide range of cohesive devices	repetition, on the other hand, in contrast, as a consequence, ellipsis
Texts	Layout devices to structure writing	headings, sub-headings, columns, bullet points, tables
Punctuation	Semi-colons, colons and dashes between independent clauses	It's raining; I'm fed up. / It's raining: I'm fed up.
Punctuation	Colons to introduce a list, and semi-colons within lists	You will need: a torch, spare batteries and a map.
Punctuation	Punctuating bullet points consistently	A list with a colon before it and matching bullet points
Punctuation	Hyphens to avoid ambiguity	man-eating shark / man eating shark; re-cover / recover

Words your child will learn to use: subject, object, active, passive, synonym, antonym, ellipsis, hyphen, colon, semi-colon, bullet points.

Helping with writing at home

- Encourage purposeful writing: letters, reviews, persuasive speeches, blogs, or a diary of the transition to secondary school.
- Play “formal or informal?”: say a sentence one way, and ask your child to say it the other.
- Turn active sentences into passive ones: “The dog ate the homework” becomes “The homework was eaten by the dog.”
- Praise precise, ambitious vocabulary and careful punctuation.

Maths

In Year 6, children bring together everything they have learnt in primary maths, and are introduced to ratio, proportion and algebra.

Key facts to know

Children should know all their times tables to 12×12 instantly, and use them to work with fractions, decimals, percentages and larger numbers. These facts are especially useful.

Fractions, decimals and percentages

- $\frac{1}{2} = 0.5 = 50\%$
- $\frac{1}{4} = 0.25 = 25\%$
- $\frac{3}{4} = 0.75 = 75\%$
- $\frac{1}{5} = 0.2 = 20\%$
- $\frac{1}{10} = 0.1 = 10\%$
- $\frac{1}{8} = 0.125 = 12.5\%$
- $\frac{1}{3} \approx 0.333 \approx 33\frac{1}{3}\%$

Order of operations

- Brackets first
- Then multiplication and division
- Then addition and subtraction
- $2 + 3 \times 4 = 14$, but $(2 + 3) \times 4 = 20$

Circles and angles

- Diameter = $2 \times$ radius
- Angles on a straight line = 180°
- Angles around a point = 360°
- Angles in a triangle = 180°
- Vertically opposite angles are equal

By the end of Year 6, your child should be able to...

Number and place value

- Read, write, order and compare numbers up to 10,000,000.
- Round any whole number to a required degree of accuracy.
- Use negative numbers in context, and calculate intervals across zero.

Calculation

- Multiply numbers up to 4 digits by a two-digit number using long multiplication.
- Divide numbers up to 4 digits by a two-digit number using long division, and interpret remainders.
- Carry out mental calculations, including mixed operations and large numbers.
- Identify common factors, common multiples and prime numbers.
- Use the order of operations, and estimate to check answers.

Fractions, decimals and percentages

- Simplify fractions, and compare and order fractions, including those greater than 1.
- Add and subtract fractions with different denominators and mixed numbers.
- Multiply pairs of proper fractions, and divide proper fractions by whole numbers.
- Convert between fractions, decimals and percentages, such as $\frac{3}{8} = 0.375$.
- Multiply and divide decimals, giving answers up to three decimal places.

Ratio, proportion and algebra

- Solve problems involving ratio, scale factors, and percentages of amounts (such as 15% of 360).
- Use simple formulae, describe number sequences, and express missing number problems using letters.
- Find pairs of numbers that satisfy an equation with two unknowns.

Measurement

- Convert between units of measure using decimals to three places, and between miles and kilometres.
- Know that shapes with the same area can have different perimeters.
- Calculate the area of parallelograms and triangles.
- Calculate and compare the volume of cubes and cuboids in cm^3 and m^3 .

Geometry

- Draw 2-D shapes accurately, and build 3-D shapes including making nets.
- Find unknown angles in triangles, quadrilaterals and regular polygons.
- Name parts of a circle: radius, diameter and circumference.
- Find missing angles on a straight line, around a point and vertically opposite.
- Use coordinates in all four quadrants, and translate and reflect shapes.

Statistics

- Read and draw pie charts and line graphs, and use them to solve problems.
- Calculate and interpret the mean as an average.

Maths at home

Deals and discounts

Which is the better deal: 3 for £2 or 75p each?
What is 15% off £60? Compare price-per-100g on supermarket labels.

Recipe ratios

A recipe serves 4; how much of each ingredient do you need for 6? Convert grams to kilograms and millilitres to litres as you go.

Journey planning

Use a map or timetable to work out distances in miles and kilometres, journey times and arrival times.

Data detectives

Collect data, such as family screen time or weekly rainfall, then find the mean and draw a line graph or pie chart.

Budget a day out

Plan a family day out with a set budget: tickets, travel and food. How much is left over?

Quick-fire arithmetic

Five minutes of mental maths a day, including times tables, doubling and halving, and multiplying by 10, 100 and 1,000, builds fluency for the arithmetic paper.

Useful websites

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

The Education Hub: KS2 SATs – what parents need to know – the Department for Education's guide for parents.

educationhub.blog.gov.uk

GOV.UK: Key stage 2 tests and results – information for parents – leaflets from the Standards and Testing Agency.

gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-national-curriculum-tests-and-results-information-for-parents

GOV.UK: Apply for a secondary school place – how applications work and key deadlines.

gov.uk/apply-for-secondary-school-place

PiXL Times Tables and PiXL Unlock apps – times tables fluency and vocabulary building. Your child has a school username and password that works for both apps.

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

Staying safe online

Many children get their first phone around the move to secondary school. Most social media and messaging apps, including WhatsApp in the UK, have a minimum age of 13. Agree clear family rules, use parental controls, keep devices out of bedrooms at night, and talk regularly about what your child does online and what to do if something worries them.

UK Safer Internet Centre – advice for parents and carers.

saferinternet.org.uk

Internet Matters – guides to parental controls, first phones and popular apps.

internetmatters.org

Learn, believe, achieve together

Thank you for your support in your child's final year with us. 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.