

# ULLESTHORPE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

**BIRCH CLASS FOCUS**

**FRIDAY 7TH MARCH 2025**

[WWW.ULLESTHORPE.LEICS.SCH.UK](http://WWW.ULLESTHORPE.LEICS.SCH.UK)

## HEAD OF SCHOOL

**MRS J. ALLEN**



## UPCOMING DATES

### Author Visit

**by Hannah Shaw:**

Friday 14th March

**Red Nose Day:**

Friday 21st March

**Marie Curie Cake Sale:**

Friday 28th March

### PTA events

**Flip & Dippy Clown Show:**

Fri. 7th March 6:30-8pm at  
Ullesthorpe Village Hall.

Ullesthorpe School children continue to shine their light on all in our community by putting our Christian school values into action:

**Respect, Perseverance, Forgiveness, Compassion, Friendship, Thankfulness and Community.**

Collective Worship has most recently focused on Lent and its meaning for Christians; we have explored the story of Jesus' time in the desert for forty days and nights. We have also been exploring the value of Forgiveness and have reflected on the parable of the Unforgiving Servant and its message to show forgiveness to others just as we wish to be forgiven for our own misdeeds or errors.

This week has also been an exciting one for our Book Worms as we have enjoyed a colourful World Book Day and a fabulously well-stocked Book Fair.

Congratulations go to the following children who were awarded 'star of the week' certificates at recent Celebration Assemblies: Molly, Arlo, Finn, Toby, Evelyn, Lottie, Charlie, Jacob, Hector, Eddie, Suki, Hunter, Oliver, Phoebe and Sam.

Well done to them all!

Please do feel free to come and speak with me at the school gates, or make an appointment through the school office.

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## **BIRCH CLASS**

**MRS MCMURRAN & MRS MAYS**

### **Art, Design & Technology, Science & More!**

It has been busy, busy times in Birch this term. We have had a visit from Lutterworth College supporting our year 3's in creative dance. Our children were a credit to us and a creative group for the students to work with.

For science we have been learning all about Forces. The whole class enjoyed investigating magnetic and non-magnetic materials; it was especially interesting to find out that not all metals are magnetic. There was also the opportunity to be creative with the magnets, using them to make something. We had games and race tracks and even dancing worms!

Art has been so interesting. We studied the work of Alma Thomas and Faith Ringgold. The title of the block was Textiles and Collage: we investigated patterns made by separating inks (a link with science); making mixed media print blocks; Madalas and painting on fabric. It all took real concentration to develop the skills and we can't wait to see the finished products.

Mrs Mays



**Inspiring Primaries  
Academy Trust**  
Inspiring all to flourish and succeed



**Diocese of  
Leicester**  
Board of Education

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## BIRCH CLASS PHOTOS



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## WORLD BOOK DAY 2025



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## WORLD BOOK DAY 2025

Many thanks to Mrs Leese for organising our World Book Day events again this year. We saw a wide variety of characters represented in the children's wonderful costumes yesterday: from Matildas to Marios; from Harrys and Hermiones; from Disney Villains to Princesses - we saw them all (nearly)!

The children enjoyed a range of exciting reading tasks and book-based fun in their classrooms and they all took a turn in visiting the library bus and book fair. Mrs Leese also set up a lunchtime book swap which was very well attended.

At Ullesthorpe CE Primary School, we know that we can **Read More to Achieve More!**

Mrs Allen



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## STOMP ROUND LEICESTER

**Fantastic news:**

**Ullesthorpe CE Primary School have been chosen to decorate a STOMP elephant in support of LOROS!**

Ullesthorpe pupils and the School Council are helping with designing and decorating the baby elephant sculpture; every child in our school community will leave their mark somewhere on the finished design which will perhaps include our school logo, our Christian values and our four class trees (more details to follow!)

**We still need a name for our STOMP elephant: the School Council are looking forward to deciding on their favourite. So keep thinking!**

Many thanks to Mrs Pettigrew and the PTA for suggesting this project to us, and for leading with the fundraising for LOROS.

# LOROS

Hospice Care for Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland

**WE NEED TO  
RAISE £1000 FOR  
LOROS BY  
SEPTEMBER AND  
WOULD VERY  
MUCH  
APPRECIATE ANY  
HELP FROM  
BUSINESSES OR  
INDIVIDUALS  
WITH THIS -  
PLEASE GET IN  
TOUCH IF YOU  
ARE ABLE TO  
HELP!**

**Get ready  
to Stomp  
Round  
Leicester  
with us...**



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**MOMENTS  
MATTER,  
ATTENDANCE  
COUNTS.**

## ENCOURAGING ATTENDANCE

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE CHECK-IN

LET'S ALL KEEP AIMING HIGH FOR  
**100% ATTENDANCE!**

<b>Class:</b>	<b>Last Week: %</b>	<b>This Week: %</b>
<b>Willow</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Maple</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>Birch</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>Oak</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>EYFS</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>Year 2</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>Year 3</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>Year 4</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>Year 5</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>Year 6</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>School Overall (this year):</b>	<b>National Average:</b>	
<b>94.4%</b>	<b>94.6%</b>	

# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators USING TECHNOLOGY TO BOOST READING SKILLS

The way we engage with text has changed dramatically over the years. Whether reading captions on social media, instructions in a video game or an e-book on a digital device, technology plays a major role in modern literacy. While traditional books remain invaluable, digital tools can enhance reading skills by making text more accessible, interactive and engaging.

## 1 CHOOSING THE RIGHT TYPE OF TEXT

Before integrating technology, consider the types of text that a child engages with. If they need help on occasion, digital reading pens can assist by scanning and reciting words or sentences. These tools are especially useful for students with reading difficulties, and can even be used in exams if they're part of their routine learning process. Proper training and practice are required, but they can be a great help when tackling printed text.

## 2 READING ON SCREEN

Many devices now allow users to customise text for better readability. Adjusting font type, size and background colour can significantly enhance comprehension. For many readers, white text on a black background is the easiest to see, whereas other styles – such as dyslexia-friendly fonts – are designed to help those who are struggling. Teaching children how to personalise text settings on their devices empowers them to read more comfortably and with greater confidence.

## 3 ACCESSIBILITY TOOLS

Most modern devices include built-in tools designed to support readers. These features can be found in Settings under Accessibility and may include text-to-speech, speech-to-text and screen magnification functions. Enabling these tools can make digital reading more user friendly, especially for children with learning difficulties or visual impairments, who might have an easier time with spoken language than the written word, or who might simply require a closer look at the text.

## 4 INTERACTIVE READING PROGRAMMES

Many digital reading devices, such as Kindle and other e-readers, offer features like word highlighting, adjustable text speed and built-in dictionaries. These tools help learners to break down complex words and phrases while maintaining an appropriate reading pace. Some programmes even allow users to track their progress, making reading a more structured and motivating experience.

## 5 VIDEO GAMES AND READING SKILLS

Many video games require players to read instructions, character dialogues and mission objectives, making them an unexpected but effective literacy tool. Games that involve storytelling, puzzles or problem-solving often include large amounts of text – encouraging children to read these texts aloud or discuss them can improve their comprehension and vocabulary in a fun, engaging way.

## 6 SUBTITLES AND CLOSED CAPTIONS

Watching videos with subtitles or closed captions is an effective way to enhance reading skills. As children watch their favourite shows or online videos, they can follow along with the text, gaining a better understanding of how written words sound when spoken aloud. This is particularly beneficial for reluctant readers, as it exposes them to words in a familiar, engaging context. Repeatedly watching content with subtitles reinforces word recognition and comprehension.

## 7 USING AUDIOBOOKS

Audiobooks are an excellent way to develop listening and reading skills simultaneously. Children can follow along with the text while listening to a narrator, reinforcing word recognition and fluency. For struggling readers, listening to an audiobook before attempting to read the text independently can boost their confidence and comprehension.

## 9 TEXT-TO-VOICE TECHNOLOGY

Text-to-voice software reads digital text aloud, making it easier for learners to follow along. Most smartphones, tablets and computers come with this function built in. When enabled, users can highlight a passage or sentence and press Play to hear it read aloud. This tool is particularly helpful for auditory learners and those who struggle with decoding written words.

## 8 VOICE-TO-TEXT FOR WRITING AND READING

Voice-to-text tools allow users to dictate words, which are then transcribed into text. This feature helps children see the connection between spoken and written language. By using text-to-voice to have their dictated words read back to them, learners can identify mistakes and improve their reading and writing skills simultaneously.

## 10 SOCIAL MEDIA AND PARENTAL CONTROLS

While social media provides opportunities for reading, most platforms have age restrictions of 13–16 years old, making parental guidance essential. Many social media videos include captions and comments that can encourage reading. However, it's important to use the platform's parental controls (such as time limits and content filters) to create a safe and educational online environment for children. Encouraging responsible social media use can ensure a balanced and productive approach to digital literacy.

## Meet Our Expert

Catrina Lowri is a qualified special needs teacher and experienced SENCO. She recently launched her own site, Neuroteachers, which offers a library of short, 'how-to' and explanation videos for educators. Catrina also writes and delivers online training and events for multi-academy trusts, businesses, schools and training organisations.



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