



Birch Wood Newsletter

Christmas Edition



December 2016

ISSUE 2

In this issue at a glance

Parents Subject

Meetings

Congratulations to Matthew for his cake!

Christmas Bazaar

Autism Provision

Attendance

Re-design of Parent and Carers waiting area

New Mini- bus

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There have been so many exciting things happening at Birch Wood over the last term. I'm sure anybody that has visited the school would agree that it is a vibrant and happy place to learn. It has been wonderful to see the range of activities across all Year groups and phases. Last Thursday & Friday saw the primary Christmas production of 'Grandpas's Christmas Memories'. The performance was a wonderful testament to the tremendous efforts of the pupils and staff. Every child played a special role in making the show a delight to watch and demonstrated the commitment to inclusiveness and high aspirations for all children.

I must also congratulate Matthew Trigg (Yr 9 Birch Wood Vale) who made an amazing chocolate Christmas cake in his Food for Life session. Matthew volunteered for the cake to be raffled at the end of the primary show, raising nearly £80 for the BWPA! From January all Key Stage 3 students at Birch Wood Vale will have Food for Life lessons as part of their new curriculum. Our aim is to continue to create more opportunities for students to grow in independence in preparation for adulthood.



There has been a range of trips out in to Melton and beyond to take part on local festivities. Key Stage 4 and 5 students

have even managed to build this in to their ASDAN accreditations, by planning a shopping trip to buy a gift for a family member. Birch Wood Vale students also cleverly designed



Christmas tree decorations using the new Birch Wood Vale school logo, these were then used to decorate a tree as part of the Christmas tree festival at St Mary's Church.

I had the pleasure of joining the Moving Together Arts award group at 'The Curve' to watch a performance of *Grease*. Through our collaboration with 'Moving Together' we were able to offer the trip free of charge; students were also able to meet a member of the cast afterwards and perform their own dance routine in the mezzanine area.

Birch Wood students were also treated to a visit from a very special person, when Santa came to Birch Wood last Thursday and every child received a small gift.

This has been another amazing term at Birch Wood; we haven't stopped in our pursuit to continuously improve and create more opportunities for our pupils across both sites. I look forward to more collaboration with families and carers and welcome your feedback in order that we can work in partnership to offer more. Thank you for your continued support. Have a happy and healthy Christmas, with best wishes for 2017.

Have a great Christmas holiday everyone!

Autism Provision

We are thrilled to announce that we have opened 'The Nook', an Autism specific provision based at Birch Wood Vale. The Nook provides a low arousal, person centred approach to learning and it has already had a positive and significant impact on the young people accessing it. This has also been a very busy term for the Primary Autism Provision. We have welcomed our 4th student and we are pleased to report that Raahi is already making fabulous progress and thoroughly enjoying his time at school.

Christmas Bazaar

The Christmas Bazaar held on 1st December was a great success again this year with many parents/carers and friends of Birch Wood attending. Students



from both sites worked extremely hard to create a vast range of beautiful craft ware, Christmas decorations, gifts and treats for all occasions to sell at the bazaar. Over £400 was raised which will be used to buy additional classroom resources.

The Birch Wood Parents Association (BWPA) kindly helped by serving refreshments to visitors at the bazaar. The BWPA meet on the first Monday of every month in the conference room at site 1. If you would like to come along please contact the school office.



Working with Families

We had a good turn out for Parents Evening on November 28th. The parental feedback surveys showed great support for what we are doing. However we also want to hear how we can do better. In response to feedback we also would like to offer another subject review parents evening for Key Stage 4 students at Birch Wood Vale in order to offer more specific subject feedback in relation to up and coming exams and qualifications. I will send a date for this to you early in the new term

Parent Pay

Some parents have also requested that we provide a facility to allow them to pay for dinner money and trips online. We have now signed up to the 'Parent Pay' and will let you have more details in the new year.

We hope this will make managing payments to school easier.

New Minibus

Unfortunately our old white minibus is no longer road worthy. We will be leasing a new bus in early February to enable us to continue accessing the community and educational trips and visits.

Goodbye

Birch Wood says farewell at the end of this term to Andrea Hook and Lesley Canton who will be leaving us we wish them all well for the future

Welcome

Tom Smith will be joining us as Deputy Head. Tom will work across both sites and will also teach Year 8 Maths and Post 16 at Birch Wood Vale School.

Transport Scheme

To apply for the Personal Transport Budget (PTB) payment and further information and guidance please email TO@leics.gov.uk or telephone 0116 3050002

Birch Wood Vale New Uniform

New uniform will be available at www.yourschooluniform.com type in Birch Wood in the 'find your official school uniform' box. There is no need to get all uniform straight away. We have the next 2 terms to transition to the new uniform in order to help parents and students manage the change. Any problems please let Ros know.

Healthy Start Breakfast Club

From January Birch Wood Vale will run a free breakfast club from 8.15; for more

Attendance

Our whole school attendance is..

92.7%

Well done everyone

Re-design of Parent and Carers waiting area

As part of our improvement to the physical space at Birch Wood we will be having the old marble water feature which does not work and would be expensive to repair removed. In this area we intend to create a pleasant and attractive waiting and information area for parents and carers.

Thank you to the Rotary Club who spent the morning planting Crocus's with students at Birch Wood.