



Christmas 2017

# Birch Wood Newsletter

## Christmas edition



The Autumn Term has passed by very quickly, which I feel is always a good sign as it reflects a busy yet productive community. We have achieved so much together this term.

### Eye Gaze

The funds raised through the raffle this year will go towards a second eye gaze. We have been immensely fortunate thanks to the fantastic Anne Cowan who has facilitated a charitable donation from the Boshier Hinton Foundation. Therefore all the money raised from the Bazaar door raffle will go towards raising the £2000 needed to add to the total donation of £4000 from Boshier Hinton Foundation this will give us the total funds required of £6500 for a second eye gaze.

**Father Christmas** made a surprise appearance at Birch Wood site 1 on Monday morning. Our Chair of Governors husband also disappears for the day around this time, maybe we could ask Father Christmas where he goes! All the pupils received a small gift and were very happy to meet the main man.



### Christmas Performances

As always, our primary classes have prepared a wonderful event for the children and their parents. It is always so lovely to see the youngest members of our community working together, developing their confidence and communication skills. It is quite something to produce and direct a production which includes so many pupils. Thanks to all staff involved, especially Hannah O'Mara for pulling it together so beautifully. The pupils have adored being part of something so special. An extra thanks also goes to Neal, Site Manager for crafting the set including our own Tardis! **Birch Wood Vale Showcase**-This is the first year our performing arts classes at Birch Wood Vale put on their own performance for fellow pupils, staff & parents which was led by staff member Matt Ormerod who has pioneered the delivery of this new subject at Birch Wood Vale. Matt, with the help of LSA Helen Humphreys has put together an amazing opportunity for pupils to perform and share their new found talents. This was an awesome event highlighting the amazing abilities of so many of our pupils.

### Sporting Achievements

Our sports teams continue to perform with great skill and determination with a number of excellent victories over local opposition. Birch Wood Vale were crowned Leicestershire Key Stage 4/5 indoor disability athletics Level 3 county area champions. As well as coming 1st, other highlights include Bradley Flint, Josh Whitfield and Tyler Radford, achieving the UK Athletics Silver Award for their individual scores. The team also came second in the Level 2 schools event with Savvy Davis and Josh Whitfield coming 3rd, and Nicole Clayton and Tyler Radford coming 2nd. We look forward to having further success in the new year with competitions in sportsability, boccia, cross country, football and many more.



The end of this term marks my first full calendar year as Headteacher of Birch Wood School (16 months in total.) I would like to say a heartfelt thank you to all the pupils, staff, governors and families for your unstinting support of the School, it is a total privilege to work with you all. I trust that you will be able to enjoy precious time with your families and friends over the holiday and rest a little. I wish you and your families a happy and blessed Christmas and I look forward to welcoming everyone back on January 9th 2018!

**Rosalind Hopkins- Headteacher**

### Birch Wood TV Channel!

We have recently procured Anomaly, a creative platform to display messages, celebrate pupil achievement, promote development and improve parent engagement. This is now a live stream on our school website and some students have already enjoyed broadcasting their own filmmaking.

### Amazing Student Achievements

Congratulations to Thomas Cordon (Year 10) who passed his Grade 5 ABRSM Music Theory exam - he got 87 points out of 100 - which is a 'Merit' - only 3 points away from a Distinction! Well done Thomas!

Congratulations to Sam Newman in Year 7 who achieved a Silver medal for Trampolining in the Rutland County Championship.

Also a big well done to Olivia Tonks who took part in Queniborough Dance Company show and received a medal for her contribution to the performance.

**New EHCP Annual Review Format:** In order to make sure that during our EHCP review process we provide parents and pupils with a full review of their child's progress towards the outcomes we have redesigned the format of the report sent home. The new report provides a written review of your child's progress towards each of the school objectives relating to the outcomes in the EHCP and provides both parents and pupils where appropriate with a chance to comment. KS2 Parents upwards will also receive a Progress and Aspiration Report in October and June which looks in detail at subject progress and gives a further progress overview of EHCP objectives. We are very keen for parents to feel well informed about how their child is progressing, so please feel free to contact us if you would like to know more.



### Family School Link Worker – Sarah Aldridge-Family Learning

I have been appointed to the position of Home School Link Worker to support you and your child as a link between home and school. I'm happy to offer you the advice and support that your family may require whilst being able to signpost you to relevant agencies. I also plan to support some family learning activities such as cooking sessions for parents and carers in the new year!

**MAPP2 Assessment** is here for PMLD and SLD students and will show the wonderful progress our students are making within the areas of communication, cognition and personal development. A parent guide will be sent out soon to further update you.

**New Assistant Head:** We are very happy to announce that **Amy Dunstan** our Autism lead was successful in her application to join the Senior Leadership Team as Assistant Head. Amy will continue with her current responsibility in championing best practice for ASD and take on wider responsibilities within SLT.

**Welcome !** Congratulations also to EYFS/KS1 Teacher Pia who gave birth to baby Rocco on 15th November 2017 weighing 6lb 8oz and LSA Sophie who gave birth to her first child Elizabeth weighing 7lb 8oz on 6th December 2017. Birch Wood Vale recently welcomed two new Learning Support Assistants Emily and Sharon to the team who have a wealth of experience and have joined class 5PC. At the end of this term we say our farewells and good luck for the future to Denise and Tom who are moving on to pastures new.

**Christmas Tree:** Thank you to Melton B&Q who gave us a 50% discount on an artificial tree and decorations for Birch Wood Site 1. I'm sure the tree will give us plenty of joy for many Christmas's to come. Also thank you to the staff elves who donated the rest of the cost of the tree themselves-so much Christmas cheer!

**Christmas Bazaar:** Class Teams showcased their entrepreneurial skills and got the opportunity to develop their creative and numeracy skills as we transformed the gym into a bustling Christmas Bazaar. Thank you to all the families who supported by coming along, we had a bumper turn out this year, which allowed class teams to raise funds for their own mini projects and community activities. Our door raffle was the also the best ever thanks to the amazing donations from the community which our wonderful new receptionist Kirsten organised. A big thanks goes to the following local businesses *The Melton Cheeseboard, Perces the Jewellers, Dickinson & Morris, Pizza Express, The Flying Childers, Jump Revolution Grantham, Wilkos and Mars Petcare*

### Whole school attendance

90.74

### Good attendance is important because...

it can have a huge impact on students in both academic and social development. Good attendance helps students to fully engage in all that school life has to offer, such as making new friends, learning and enjoying new experiences, developing skills needed in later life, feeling safe and listened to. All evidence suggests that students who have low attendance won't progress as well as those who don't. (pupils with very complex medical conditions are not included in this, as their circumstances are very different)

**Have a Wonderful Christmas!**

