

New Year 7 Base and Birch Wood Vale

This term we welcomed our new Year 7 students to Birch Wood Vale and the new Year 7 nurture base. The aim of the nurture base is to bridge the transition from primary to secondary; James Davidson-Adams is the specialist teacher leading this group with support from LSAs Poppy Marriot and Jo Battams. During our 'Moving Up' transition days students were keen and happy and showed they could work well together as a team.

Parental support for the day was excellent, with all our new parents in attendance for the first day, where they could dip in to a fun Science lesson and enjoy a complementary lunch with their children.

This is the first year we have had a full intake in to Year 7 at Birch Wood Vale, highlighting our growing popularity. We also now have waiting list for most years groups at both sites.

Birch Wood Vale offers a small, nurturing school combined with the opportunities available in a varied secondary model curriculum for students with multiple learning difficulties on the moderate learning difficulty spectrum. We have high aspirations for all our students with the chance to access accredited courses in Key Stage 4 including GCSEs, alongside support into employability and life long independence.

Our secondary high functioning Autism provision 'The Nook' at Birch Wood Vale provides yet another layer of support and specializes in meeting the needs of students who require an individualized package that is designed around their needs, skills and abilities.

Moving Together -Curve Performance

On Sunday 9th July 14 students from across Birch Wood took part in an amazing dance showcase at the Curve Theatre in Leicester as part of the Moving Together creative dance award which they have worked on all year. Laura Palmer, Caitlin Drinkwater, Emma-May Mason, Eve Maguire, Ryan Hornbuckle, Fields Taylor, Joshua Kennedy, Keneth Cooper, Kimberley Willday, Jess Wilson, Louis Barratt, Molly Batty, Olivia Tonks and Talula Robey all showed real team work, effort and determination, which was clearly in evidence on the stage. The students shared the stage with people from across the county including De Montfort University, mainstream schools and an over 55s group, making this a truly inclusive event. I was so impressed by the performance and incredibly proud, in fact I'm sure Birch Wood got the loudest cheer!

I must also mention the dedication of LSA Sharon Turner who led with the organisation and also staff Jo Battams, Nicky O'Dare, Lee Burrows, Tom Berridge and Molly Bell, all spent the whole day with the students helping them rehearse and perform. Also thank you to Claire Wood for helping transport staff and students and of course all the parents who came along to support. What a team you all made!



Progress and Aspiration Reports

This term we will be sending home our new end of term 'Progress and Aspiration Reports' or Tapestry Journeys. The aim is to provide a summary of the students progress against their mastery targets, in addition to overviewing EHCP Outcomes. We would be very grateful for any feedback you can give us on the questionnaire provided.

School Improvements and developments planned for 2017-18

- New additional SALT- starts September
- Introduction of Occupational Therapist
- Residential for all cohorts
- New Modular building for The Nook
- Family Learning Events
- New Performing Arts lessons at Birch Wood Vale.
- New Music curriculum provision
- New play equipment
- Balance bikes
- Further development of Post 16
- More therapy spaces
- And much, much more....

Students enjoy live music at Birch Wood!



On Friday 7th July students were treated to an amazing live performance from Monty's

Travelling Music Show who have performed a number of times for our students. I think their massive smiles tell us just how much they loved the music and of course the dancing!!!!



Birch Wood School Newsletter



>>> Full Summer Edition

One Year On...

I can't believe it has been a year since I joined Birch Wood School as Head teacher. From day one the community spirit at Birch Wood has been impressive, but the most amazing and inspirational people are our pupils! We have all worked so hard this year to continually improve and develop the school, but the children have remained a constant motivator in striving for the absolute best.

There are so many more things we want to do next term to keep bringing further opportunities in to the school for the pupils. I continue to welcome the support and feedback of parents and carers and am a firm believer that we can always improve – not because we aren't good enough, but because we can always be better!

Below I have outlined all the new improvements at Birch Wood this year; thank you to staff, governors and families for making it all possible. Overleaf are just some of the things we have planned for 2017-18.....!
*Rosalind Hopkins-
Headteacher*



- New Staff Welcome 2
- Complex Needs Day 2
- Lewis commended
- Local PCSOs 2
- Pride Corner 3
- A Fond Farewell
- Curve Performance Summer Fete 4
- Students Enjoy live music 4
- School Improvements 2017-18 4
- New Year 7 Base

School Improvements and Achievements 2016-17

- ⇒ New curriculum with increased subject options and qualifications for Birch Wood Vale including Food, DT and Spanish!
- ⇒ Upgraded internet and ICT resources across the school.
- ⇒ New DT room installed.
- ⇒ Introduction of the Family Home School Link Worker role.
- ⇒ Increase in therapeutic input including weekly Educational Psychologist and Pet Therapy.
- ⇒ Health and Wellbeing Officer role to build consistency of care and support.
- ⇒ Refurbished parent reception at Site 1.
- ⇒ Introduction of new mastery progress tracking and additional reports to parents.
- ⇒ Introduction of Moving Together Creative Dance Group.
- ⇒ Improved door security at both sites.
- ⇒ New high functioning Autism provision at site 1 and Nook Nurture Base at site 2.
- ⇒ Free breakfast club.
- ⇒ Improved signage.
- ⇒ Increase in school governors bringing more expertise to the school.
- ⇒ New more grown up School Uniform for Birch Wood Vale.
- ⇒ Achieved the E-Safety quality mark.
- ⇒ Positive Ofsted Inspection for safety.



Birch Wood Welcomes Melton's local PCSOs

Key Stage 3 students have been finding out about the police force in their history topic this year. They made two of Melton's local PCSOs feel very welcome during a visit to school. The students prepared a variety of questions about our modern day police force. They listened well before trying on parts of the PCSOs uniform and exploring some of the equipment they carry. The students were very keen to sit in the driving seat of a police car, watch the flashing lights and make the siren sound. Some students have taken to solving 'mysteries' around school and making citizens' arrests - all in good humour of course!



Birch Wood Vale student recognised as being a great employee!

Lewis Smith has been going to Tesco on a Wednesday for work experience for the past 2 years and has been working really hard. His efforts were recognised by a customer who had written in, stating his name as a particularly helpful staff member who showed great customer service skills. Lewis received a certificate from Tesco for his hard work; they said they were very sad to see him go and that it had been a pleasure working with him. His supervisor even said she would be pleased to give him a glowing reference for college or work in the future. This is brilliant Lewis— well done!



5H Trip to The Spinney in Little Bytham

Students in 5H had great fun at The Spinney, Little Bytham. We explored the woods to find hidden play equipment and sensory adventure activities. We challenged ourselves on swing ropes, the zip wire, wobbly bridge and large slides. We sat next to the sensory garden to have a picnic with the beautiful fragrances around us. Students were impeccably behaved and had a thoroughly enjoyable day.



Complex Needs Day Students attended a complex needs day hosted by Ashmount this half term. The day involved lots of sensory and interactive work themed around the story of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. We joined in with a sensory cinema session, music and dance therapy session and a play dough therapy session making giant gob stoppers. Our students and staff had a great time.

Warm Welcome- New staff

Emma Coley will be joining us at Birch Wood Site 1 to teach Key Stage 2 students from next term. Emma is an experienced primary SEND teacher who is very excited to join the Birch Wood Team. Emma has been in school for the whole of the final week of term getting to know her new pupils, staff and parents.



Emily Saxby will be joining Birch Wood Vale as English lead teacher next term. Emily has said she is looking forward to working with our amazing students. Emily also has a passion for dancing and creative arts, which will no doubt lead to some inspiring lessons. Emily has been in school over the last 2 weeks getting to know students.

Steph Shuttlewood - Is an experienced Speech and Language Therapist who has been commissioned by Birch Wood one day a week to work with students and complete assessments as part of our increased therapeutic offer. Steph will be completing this work in addition to our regular NHS SALT Claire Neaves,



Empowering students for independent lives
Nurturing
Achieve and aspire
Belonging
Love of learning grows
Engage and interact
Safe and happy
ENABLES!

Pride Corner-Dur Amazing Achievements! All our students have made brilliant progress this year, but there have been some exceptional successes and we felt they deserved a special mention: **Corwin Meynell** - writing his first and last name independently. **Demi Moore** - tolerating the noises of others in the room incredibly well and making fantastic decisions about her behaviour. **Evie Poole** - amazing standing up in the Hydro pool; really working hard this year to stretch her legs out and relax her hands in the water. **Faye Kealy** - growing more confident in using signs, alongside her spoken language. Also helping others with their signs too. **Ryan Hornbuckle** - developed his independence skills so much, in particular when using his cane to move about new environments and his pen friend to find out new information and communicate. **Laura Palmer** - representing her class on student voice, making new students feel very welcome and completing an amazing showcase performance at the Curve Theatre with other students. **Freddie Metcalfe** - developing his interaction skills, being more outgoing and adventurous and improving his writing skills significantly! **Evelyn Keely** started EYFS last September; she arrived with a walker and was just beginning to weight bear and take small steps. With lots of determination, enthusiasm and zest for life, she is now not only walking, but running independently. She has also started to climb the adventure playground as she doesn't like to miss a thing! **Leon Howe & Ben Lawes** - have addressed their exams in a very relaxed and confident manner, fully committing to the programme of revision, working hard and setting an excellent example to their peers. **Lewis Speakman** - has really matured, focused on his learning and completed all of his exams to the very best of his ability. He has become more engaged in all aspects of his school life.

A Swimming Success- It's been a very successful term at swimming for all of our pupils but Michael Isaac and Garrat Garner have made outstanding progress. From being too nervous to get into the pool, Michael now floats on his own with a noodle. Garrat started EYFS as a very nervous non swimmer. He now swims independently with a noodle and he holds his breath under water. Amazing!

Birch Wood Vale New Uniform
New uniform will be available at:
www.yourschooluniform.com.schools/find?name=birch+wood

By September 2017 most students at Birch Wood Vale (site2) will have transitioned to the new uniform.

Any problems please let Ros know, we will be happy to help in any way.

Summer Fete

A huge thank you to all those who donated, helped out, had stalls or came along to our Summer Fete. The sun came out and a lovely day was had by all, we raised a fantastic £650 to spend on resources for our students.

A Fond Farewell

We bid goodbye to 2 teachers this term. Alysha Cooper is moving to a primary SEND school and Deputy Head Richard Doyle will be setting up a new Post 16 Transition Provision for young people with SEMH. We have no doubt our loss will be their new school's gain and thank them for all their hard work over the years.

LSAs Kate Mullinger and Lidia Aldred are leaving us to complete their teacher training- we are sure they will be brilliant.

Silvia Guy, Mid-day supervisor will also be retiring, we thank her for all her hard work and effort with the children.

Good luck everyone with your new adventures!

Healthy Start Breakfast Club

Don't forget we run a **free** breakfast club at Birch Wood Vale from 8.15

