



# Birch Wood Newsletter

## Christmas 2019 edition



**Merry Christmas!** Everybody has been getting in to the festive spirit at Birch Wood and again I feel truly privileged to work with such amazing staff and pupils. It has been a busy term with lots of class trips and community experiences which have provided both learning opportunities and fun for all! Once again support from parents and carers has been phenomenal so I would like to thank you all for helping us to work together to ensure Birch Wood continues to develop and grow to be the best school possible and somewhere we are all proud to be part of. We have lots of new and exciting developments planned for the new term and look forward to 2019 with anticipation and excitement!

**BBC Radio Leicester** contacted us this term to find out more about our Lego Therapy which was initiated at Birch Wood by LSA Katie Bedder who completed the 'Lego for Autism' training this year. Katie and I were invited in to the station to be interviewed live by presenter Ben Jackson who was keen to share with his listeners information about the therapeutic curriculum available to pupils at Birch Wood School. The interview is available on our website.

**Christmas Bazaar** – Expertly organised by teacher Charlotte Adu, 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 and a special thank you to Daniel Partridge's parents who raised £238 on their stall through selling Daniel's dad's fantastic photographic art work and crafts. Again our door raffle was very successful thanks to the amazing donations from the community. A big thanks goes to the following local businesses & organisations; Tesco, Gates Garden Centre, Regal Cinema, Wilko, Leicester Tigers and De Montfort Hall who all gave us vouchers and free tickets to put towards the raffle. In total a massive £1025.63 was raised by the event

**Birch Wood Vale Post 16 Enterprise (5PW)** As part of our ongoing program of Preparation for Adulthood our post 16 pupils developed their own 'pop up Christmas card shop' enterprise. Pupils created their own cards whilst learning and practising key business and life skills.

**Christmas Performances** As always, our primary classes prepared a wonderful event for the children and their parents – it was such a treat! **Birch Wood Vale Showcase**– This is the second year our performing arts classes at Birch Wood Vale have put on their own performance for fellow pupils, staff & parents – I can't wait to share the photos and reviews in the new year. A huge well done to Matt, Emma, Hannah and Jen AKA 'The Grinch'!!!



**June's Christmas Bus**– Bus Driver June Massey of route 37 illustrates the true spirit of Christmas year on year with her fantastic festive revamp of the school bus. June dedicates her own time to decorating the bus with beautiful Christmas decorations and lights for the pleasure of our pupils. Pupil Euan Andrews and I were delighted to take part in the grand opening. We'd like to say a huge THANK YOU to June for getting us in the festive mood with your wonderful efforts!

**Headteacher Christmas Card Competition:** This year I ran a competition for pupil's to design the cards I would send home to all Birch Wood families

and community partners and I'm delighted to announce Corwin Meynell and Alexander George's designs were the winning entries. The cards they designed have been turned in to over 200 professionally produced cards which will be sent out all over Leicestershire with their names on. Thank you and well done! **'The Grinch Strikes:'** Watch out for our Christmas Makaton– athon on Facebook and I promise I'm getting help with my signing from pupils Michael and Fields in the new year! Until then have a healthy and happy break and all the very best for 2019. **Rosalind Hopkins- Headteacher**

**Lego Donation :** A big thank you to Sam from Brownlow Primary School, who with his friends at the 'Marvels'- (part of a local church group) organised a cream tea to raise money for Lego to be used as part of our Lego Therapy sessions. Sam and his friends helped raise £184.44p– well done and Thank you!

### **Student Portal:**

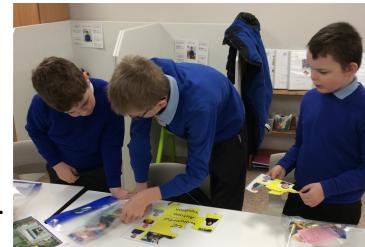
In the new year all pupils will be able to access their very own 'student portal' which we plan to fill with useful information and resources. The portal will enable and encourage our pupils to become independent learners and will be accessed through a tab on our website in the new year.



**Look at our fabulous new soft play equipment which was installed this term!**

### **Autism Provision Day -**

On Thursday 22nd November, our 3 Autism specific classes came together to celebrate our wonderful provision. The day included a range of activities which used special interests to bring all our students together. In the afternoon we hosted a provision coffee afternoon, where students, staff and parents spent quality time together, celebrating how wonderful our provision is.



Year 7 students following the Moving Together Explorer Arts Award programme and KS4 students following the Bronze/Silver Arts Award programme had a fantastic time watching the hilarious Cat in the Hat at Curve Theatre last week. All the students enjoyed it and their behaviour was exemplary as always.



**Transition** Starting in January 2019 5PC will be starting their transition visits to various local colleges to help our students to make informed choices towards where they would like to study after BW.

**Father Christmas** made another surprise appearance at Birch Wood site 1 last week, all the pupils received a small gift and were very happy to meet the main man. We would like to thank **Mars** for their donation towards the pupils gifts.

### **Welcome!**

Birch Wood recently welcomed three new Learning Support Assistants; Zoe Carvell- 3AD, Courtney Glover 5PC and Hannah Dalby 5PC .

Welcome to the following new pupils: Euan Andrews and Dion Budwell who have joined 2 LC

**School Facebook Page:** Check out our brilliant Facebook page for updates on our fab fundraisers like Hannah O'Mara (left), Lee Burrows, Poppy Marriot, Katie Bedder, and Andrew Hopkins. We have been so grateful this year for the immense efforts of staff and community groups for their support of Birch Wood– they have raised £1000's between them. It all makes such a difference to our pupils! **Thank you!**



### **Whole school attendance**

**92% – Well Done!**

**Good attendance is important because...**

**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!**

