



Christmas Newsletter

Where a love of learning grows

Merry Christmas everyone! Everybody has been getting in to the festive spirit at Birch Wood Grange Drive and as always, I feel truly privileged to work with such amazing staff and students. It has been a very busy term with lots of class trips and community experiences which have provided both learning opportunities and fun for all! Some students have been able to go on their very first trip out into the community with Birch Wood School and we look forward to future trips and visits, so that we can provide our students with varied experiences. We have lots of new and exciting developments planned for the new term and look forward to 2023 with excitement! Soon we will be opening up a new soft play and multisensory room which all of the students will be able to enjoy. The Grange Drive staff team have been working hard on putting together Christmas shows which I hope you will enjoy. A huge thank you to Hannah O'Mara, Becky Spence and Kate Hallam-Jones who have organised the shows. Thank you for your ongoing support and I wish you a wonderful Christmas break!

Tom Bradley-Hewell- Head of School- Grange Drive



What has happened this term?

Christmas Bazaar - Expertly organised by teacher Charlotte Adu and Anita Lees, class teams showcased their entrepreneurial skills and got the opportunity to develop their creative and numeracy skills as we transformed the main hall into a bustling Christmas Bazaar. Again our raffle was very successful thanks to the amazing donations from the community – thank you! The students were very impressive this year as we had a variety of products that were sold, from sweets, Christmas stockings, to personalised baubles and wood craft. There are no limits to the talents of our young people and the wonderful staff they work with. Thanks to the parents, carers and members of the local community for supporting our wonderful yearly event, this year we raised £486

June's Christmas Bus - It only truly feels like the Christmas period has begun when June Massey, the Bus Driver of route 37 decorates the bus! June illustrates the true spirit of Christmas every year with her fantastic festive revamp. June dedicates her own time to decorating the bus with beautiful Christmas decorations and lights for the pleasure of our students. Students Aimee Hutchinson and Claudia Bishop 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 her wonderful efforts!

Grange Drive attendance - 90% – 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.

(Students with very complex medical conditions are not included as their circumstances are very different)



Motorcycle Club

Thank you so much to the Bikers who joined the Nottingham Triumph Owners Motorcycle Club Toy Run! It was an incredible experience for all involved. The amazing toy donations were greatly appreciated and had been wrapped up by Santa's elves so that Santa could deliver them to our students during his special visit to school in the last week of term. They also donated a huge £643! Also, a huge thanks to all of our staff volunteers for organising refreshments for the bikers!



Students at Birch Wood Vale, Ashton House and in the provision at Grange Drive took part in the annual Rickshaw Enterprise Challenge event. Two weeks prior to Children in Need Day, students began to plan their stalls in their Maths lessons, coming up with numerous ideas and working as a team to choose an idea and put it into action.

On the day it was great to see our young people enjoying the day and practicing their money handling skills. All students had the opportunity to be a stall holder and go around the stalls as customers. There was a wide range of stalls across the school sites including nerf gun target practice, ping pong, ten pin bowling, sensory toy raffle and even a Karaoke and disco over. Students raised over £400 from their stalls that morning to support Children in need. The non-uniform day added further funds. Well done to all involved!

Head teacher's Christmas card competition

Congratulations to Noah R- 7LC and The Kingfisher's class- these entries for the Head teacher's Christmas card competition were successful in coming joint first! The designs will be sent via an E-card to all Birch Wood families and the community this Christmas. Noah has also won a £10 Amazon voucher and the Kingfisher's will have a special reward for their excellent work.

Well done to everyone who entered, there were some lovely designs.



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Monty's Travelling Band

Monty's Travelling Band attending Grange Drive is always a very popular event, this time they were accompanied by our very own Music Therapist, Neil Eaves. The children thoroughly loved the experience and danced the afternoon away, some even joining in with the music through playing their own percussion instruments! It is always such a positive and fun experience and has really put everybody in the Christmas spirit. Thank you very much to the wonderful band!





Student Voice at Grange Drive

Student Voice has always been a huge part of the curriculum at Grange Drive and this year has been no different. All of the Student Voice representatives were voted in democratically by their peers, some of whom are on this page. The representatives will meet at least once every half term and they will have the opportunity to discuss and implement ideas that could help make the school even better! Previous feedback from the council was to improve the soft play and the multisensory room and we will be opening up new facilities very soon so watch this space!

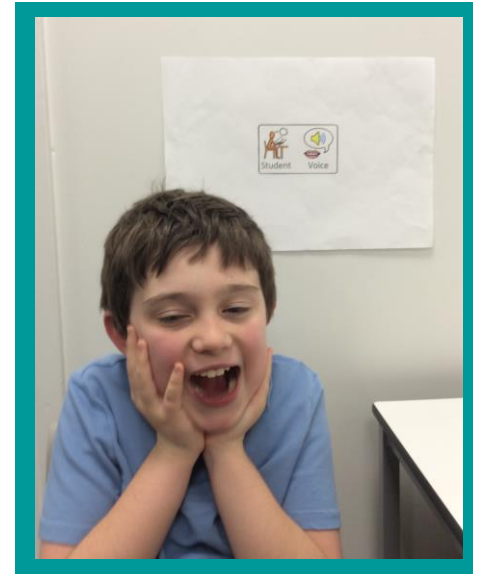
It is a really important opportunity for us to understand how children feel about the school and feedback so far is that they feel safe and happy at Grange Drive, commenting that the learning environments are calm. One area that the students really benefit from is the outside area and some commented they would like some new resources outside to make it even better so we will be working with the students to make the outside environment an area that we can all be proud of. Some of the positive comments that we have had so far:

"I liked the trips out to the cinema and the theatre."

"I enjoy the outdoor space near the class for quick fun."

"My favourites are the basket swing and the assault course."

"I really like the swings and the roundabout. "





Key Dates ahead:

Tuesday 3 rd January	Staff Inset Day – School Closed
Wednesday 4 th January	School reopens
Monday 30 th Jan – Friday 3 rd February	National Storytelling week
Monday 6 th – Friday 10 th February	National Tube Feeding Awareness week
Wednesday 15 th February	International Angelman Syndrome day
Thursday 16 th February	Yr 11 Parents Evening

Celebration of Ellis

Ellis Page has attended Birch Wood School since joining us in 2012. Sadly, Ellis passed away during the autumn term. All that have known Ellis since he came to Birch Wood School know how wonderfully resilient and determined he was, whilst also having a calming presence on everyone around him. He was an immensely popular young man!

Ellis and his family will always have a special place in the Birch Wood community and we are currently making plans to ensure that we will always be able to remember the special moments that we all shared with Ellis.

Ellis's family have requested that any donations in memory of Ellis should go to Rainbows Hospice to thank them for their incredible support during and after Ellis's life.

