



Birch Wood
Vale School

Spring 1 Newsletter

Where a love of learning grows

We are very pleased to be able to share with you the different things that have been happening this half term. Some of our Year 11 and Post 16 students have been attending after school revision sessions to support them to further develop their subject knowledge and develop their exam technique.

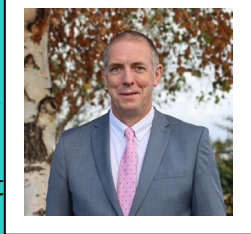
Week beginning the 30th January saw lots of opportunities for students to have a go at different reading and writing challenges during National Storytelling Week. I greatly enjoyed the opportunity to read to different classes and students responses when asking about the stories. We know that when students develop an interest and love of reading, this greatly supports them in accessing their curriculum.

We have also had employers come in to school and do mock interviews with our Year 11 students to build their confidence when completing college interviews or in applying for a job in the future. All these events really highlight the importance we place on helping prepare students for their life beyond Birch Wood as responsible, successful adults.

I hope that you and your family have a lovely half term and please be aware of the key dates in the Newsletter.

Tom Smith

Head of School- Birch Wood Vale



What's been happening this term?

National Story Telling Week

From Monday 30th January until Friday 3rd February, students across the whole school took part in National Storytelling Week. Pupils from The Yard, 8ES, 7DP and 7LC attended a live YouTube event with storyteller Wendy Shearer. Pupils listened to her storytelling skills and were then given her top tips for telling their own stories.





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We had two competitions running for our pupils which were reading and writing. In every lesson on the Wednesday pupils heard part of a story and then had to answer a quiz question about what they had heard. By the end of the day all pupils heard all of the story and then were able to hand in their completed quiz to be entered into the prize draw. Our reading winner was Harlow Fox.

During reading time pupils were also able to write their own story to be entered into a competition if they wanted too. We had so many entries it was hard to choose our winners for first, second and third place. A big thank you to all of the students for their entries and listed below are the winners.

First place (£10 Amazon voucher): Aanya Mistry (8ES) - 'The Girl with the Hidden Past'

Second (£5 book voucher): Bramroy Barker-Lowe (The Yard) - 'The Lonely Robot'

Third (£5 book voucher): Raahi Patel (The Yard) - 'Mr Invisible and his Many Adventures'

To round our week off, we spent Friday afternoon listening to a couple of different stories told by our staff. It was lovely for pupils to hear staff members reading, outside of their usual contexts. Pupils and staff loved this experience and left with a smile on their faces. Thank you to everyone who has been involved in this week.

A big thank you to Emily Saxby and Catherine Mitchell for organising all of the exciting activities to stimulate students interests in reading.





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Employability and transition Skills

Students in Year 11 had the opportunity to do mock interviews with employers who kindly came in to visit the school. We had a Quantity Surveyor, Project Development Officer and a Project Manager.



The visitors engaged so well with the students and it was so lovely to see our student confidently answering questions. They got the opportunity to talk about themselves, the subjects they enjoy, their strengths and how they would describe themselves. They were able to ask the employers questions and were given feedback about their interview responses which is also recorded for them. This was a great experience which will support the students as they apply for college or enter the world of work with people they have not previously met.





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Here are just some of the comments from the students that took part.

"Thomas made me feel more confident with new people and I learned not to be shy as much. I found it better than I expected and I feel like I could do it again in the future."

"I found it easier than expected. I enjoyed their company and I found out that I have more skills than I thought I did."

"I did better than I thought I would, she was easy to talk to. I feel like I would be able to do an interview in the future."

"I felt nervous going in to the interview, but once I started answering the questions, I started to feel more relaxed. Catalina made me feel safe talking to her and gave me time to answer questions."

"The flow of the interview went well. It has helped me and it was good to get experience of doing an interview."

Twilight Academies (After School Revision)

On Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday Evenings, students studying GCSE English, Maths or Science who are in Year 11 or KS5 have been invited to join us for extra sessions to support them in their preparation for their exams in May and June.

Some students who have struggled to access these due to transport have joined us remotely Using Microsoft Teams.

We have been so impressed to see so many of our students regularly joining us, and putting such a high level of effort into their studies. I know this will support them in their future success,

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Maths Revision 3.15-4.15pm Remote Maths Revision	English Revision 3.15-4.15pm	Remote English Revision 4.35-5.15pm	Science Revision 3.15-4.15pm



Key Dates next term

Monday 20 th – 24 th February	Half Term
Thursday 2 nd March	World Book Day
Thursday 16 th March	Key Stage 3 Parents Evening
Friday 17 th March	Red Nose Day
Tuesday 21 st March	World Down Syndrome Day
Sunday 26 th March	Bottesford Bike Easter Egg Run
Monday 27 th -31 st March	Autism Acceptance Week
Monday 3 rd -14 th April	Easter Holidays