



We are very proud to share with you what has been happening at Grange Drive within the first half term of spring. The time has flown by during this busy period, which has been filled with so many exciting activities and celebrations.

Last week for example, we celebrated our love of reading by participating in National Storytelling Week which was a wonderful opportunity for the three sites of Birch Wood School to come together and share stories with each other.

I hope you and the children have a lovely half term break. Please refer to the key dates within the newsletter to prepare yourself for what is coming after the half term break.

Tom Bradley-Hewell- Head of School- Grange Drive



What has happened this half term?

Sinfonia Viva - Two members of the wonderful Sinfonia Viva have been coming into school over the past few weeks as a part of their Sensory Rooms project. These one-to-one, bespoke and child led workshops have been carried with some of our Engagement Pathway pupils to encourage musical free play and creative expression. We have been incredibly lucky to also have these musicians play beautiful live music to our pupils in the foyer as they enter school, as well as during our lunch break in the hall. A massive thank you to Sinfonia Viva!





Reading and Communication!

We view reading and communication as the foundation of our curriculum from which everything is built upon. We give reading and communication such high status as it helps our young people to communicate, strengthen relationships, deepen their knowledge of the world around them and also...have fun! This half term has been full of reading and communication opportunities for the Birch Wood community:

National Storytelling Week – This was celebrated across schools in the UK and is a period to celebrate the power of sharing stories. Sharing stories gives us opportunities to learn about the world around us and to step into other people’s shoes and feel empathy, it’s also fun! Our theme for National Storytelling week was “Once Upon a Time”, with students exploring a different fairy tale every day, such as ‘Pinocchio’, ‘The Three Billy Goats Gruff’ and ‘Goldilocks’. Each morning all classes participated in live story massage sessions via Microsoft Teams, which were read aloud by both students and staff. The week was topped off with a fancy dress day on Friday and everyone joining Hannah and Poppy in the hall for a large scale sensory story of ‘Jack and the Beanstalk’. We loved seeing everyone dressed as their favourite story characters and sharing their favourite books in class. Thank you to everyone who made it possible, particularly Poppy and Hannah who organised the Grange Drive events. We will have more opportunities to celebrate our favourite characters after half term when it is World Book Day.



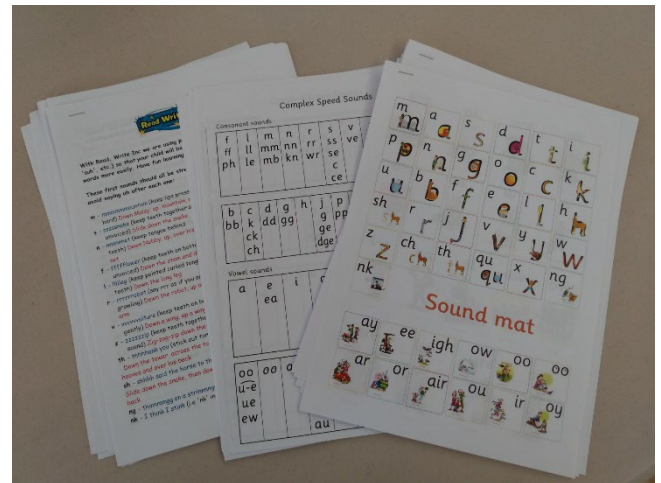


Phonics for parents – Our Grange Drive Reading Lead, Poppy Marriott, led a phonics session for our parents and carers, sharing Birch Wood School's approach to phonics and also providing ideas of how to support children at home with their reading.

We understand that each child has unique needs and that our young people will require a personalised approach to learning so our goal is to provide you with the tools and resources you need to help your child succeed with developing their reading skills and their awareness of phonics. Reading books linked to your child's reading age and communication outcomes are available to be shared with yourselves at home, this will help foster a love of reading. Please contact your class teacher if you would like any further support.

If you require any more information about our approach to reading and communication, please speak to your class teacher. You may also have a look on the website:

<https://birchwoodschool.co.uk/reading>





Key Dates ahead:

Monday 20 th – Friday 24 th February	HALF TERM
Thursday 2 nd March	World Book Day
Thursday 16 th March	KS3 Option Evening
Thursday 16 th March	GD Parents Evening
Friday 17 th March	Red Nose Day
Tuesday 21 st March	World Down Syndrome Day
Monday 27 th – 31 st March	Autism Acceptance Week
Sunday 26 th March	Bottesford Bike Easter Egg Run
Monday 3 rd – Friday 14 th April	EASTER HOLIDAYS