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Birch Wood College Newsletter Autumn 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,



Welcome to our first Birch Wood College parent/carer newsletter! We are excited to keep you informed of upcoming events, share student successes, and provide resources to help keep students safe. I want to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for the fantastic work that our students have been demonstrating. It has been such a pleasure to see their resilience, teamwork, and maturity as they begin their journey at Birch Wood College.

Our staff members have been impressed with how well the students have settled in and are working hard to achieve their best. The Post 16 team, in particular, has been a great support system for our students. Their unwavering commitment is reflective of how well the Post 16 learners have responded thus far.

Thank you again for your continued support, and we look forward to seeing all the great things our students will accomplish throughout the rest of the year.

Best regards,

Julie Peattie

Head of Post 16, Birch Wood College.

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College life



Students have successfully settled into their new college base at MV16. It is impressive to see how quickly they have adapted to the new learning environment and how committed they are to their lessons. It has been great to see students getting to know new staff and peers and adjusting to college life with maturity and mutual respect. Swiping ID cards may have been a new and unfamiliar task, but it is great that they have relished the challenge and wear their new Birch Wood/ MV16 ID badges with pride. Keep up the great work!





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Social Canteen

It is wonderful to see that the canteen at MV16 has become a favourite spot for students to socialise and savour delicious food. Post 16 students have shown tremendous resilience and patience in adjusting to the busier atmosphere of the canteen, which is truly remarkable. It is inspiring to see how they have overcome their anxieties and made the most of the independent and welcoming space.



Student Union



All students in Post 16 can become a part of the student union within MV16. The student union is responsible for organising various social events and caters to a wide range of different hobbies and interests. We have two elected student union reps from Birch Wood College, Barnaby and Daniel, who are responsible for representing the views of our students. They also act as a friendly ear for students who want to have a chat.



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Barnaby and Daniel did an amazing job supporting the Macmillan cake sale as part of the student union. Their baking skills and hard work resulted in a successful fundraiser. Well done to both of them!



Some of the upcoming events organised by the student union include the Halloween Spooktacular and Children in Need, more information to follow soon.

Lunchtime Clubs

Birch Wood College and MV16 take pride in offering lunchtime clubs that enrich the lives of students. These clubs provide an opportunity for students to engage in activities beyond their coursework, allowing them to improve their skills, expand their interests, and socialise with like-minded individuals. With staff support, students can attend any of the clubs available. Through these clubs, students can have fun, learn new skills, and make new friends.

Here is an overview of the clubs available at Birch Wood College available 2023-23.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Maths club	Student Union	Team games	Creative Club	Table tennis
Debating	Knit and Natter	Gym club		Board games
		Women's group		Makaton



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Makaton Club and Choir



We are excited to announce the first-ever Makaton Club, open to all of Post 16 and MV16 students during Friday lunchtimes, led by Birch Wood College students. This lunchtime club has been very popular and attracted 16 student members from MV16, with many more waiting to join the next group. During Makaton Club, students learn a wide range of Makaton sign language in a fun and exciting way through songs, modelling, and conversation. The students also encourage and support their peers, share their knowledge, and demonstrate Makaton in these sessions. A special shout-out goes to Faye, George, Charlie, and Demi for their hard work and support of the club. As Makaton has gained such momentum at MV16, students attending the club will now be taking part in a Makaton choir to showcase all the songs that they have been learning in time for Christmas.





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Employability

As part of the curriculum, students have been participating in Employability and Careers sessions, where they explore career options and the necessary skills for different jobs. They have been thoroughly engaged in learning about the various skills they need to succeed in their chosen fields.

Students in BWCN have had the opportunity to complete work experience in areas such as waste management, food production, and gardening. They have shown great dedication and a strong work ethic, taking pride in their efforts.





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Rutland Farm Park

Recently, students in BWCA have begun their work experience at Rutland Farm Park, a charming 18-acre family-run farm located in Oakham. During their time at the farm, the students will learn how to care for both small and large animals, as well as gaining valuable experience of working in the farm shop and cafe.

This opportunity will allow the students to develop their customer service and hospitality skills while also learning about the conservation efforts associated with the farm. The experience gained at Rutland Farm Park will help the students to grow in confidence and self-esteem and develop important employability and independent skills.





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Enterprise

As part of our Enterprise lessons, we recently had a guest speaker, Benia Kuczynska, a teacher at MV16. During the talk, she shared some fascinating insights on the topic of "Amazing Apples".

The students were intrigued to learn about the numerous things that can be made or done with apples. To support the Macmillan Coffee Morning, the students put their newfound knowledge into practice. They spent hours picking, peeling, coring, and stewing a large quantity of apples from the garden at MV16.

The stewed apples were then assembled into Apple crumble kits, which were sold at the Coffee morning for £5 each. The students put in a tremendous amount of effort to make this initiative a success, and their hard work allowed them to produce 40 Apple crumble kits. The funds raised from the sale of these kits will contribute to the Macmillan Coffee Morning and help make a difference in the lives of those affected by cancer.





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East Midlands Airport and Aeropark visit



Our visit to East Midlands Airport and Aeropark was the first visit of the term. It was a great day for all and a new experience for many of our students who had never been to an airport before. Thanks to the education outreach team at EMA, our students had the opportunity to learn about the day-to-day operations of an airport that never sleeps.

Our tour began with a visit to the terminal, where the students had a chance to see what happens behind the scenes. After that, we headed back to the Aero zone to take part in a health and safety check on the airport vehicles.

We then made our way to the Aeropark, which not only serves as an aviation museum but also a viewing area where the students could watch modern airliners taking off and landing. The students were fascinated by the planes on display at the Aeropark and learned about the history of aviation. It was exciting for them to hear stories about where the preserved planes of yesteryear served. Overall, it was an educational and enjoyable experience for everyone involved.

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Key dates:

Friday 10 th November	Remembrance Day 11.11
Friday 17 th November	Children in Need Day
Sunday 26 th November	Bottesford Bike Christmas Toy Run
Thursday 30 th November	Christmas Bazaar
Monday 4 th – Friday 8 th December	Letters sent to Santa
Monday 4 th – Friday 8 th December	Grange Drive Christmas Production
Friday 8 th December	Christmas Jumper Day
Thursday 14 th and Friday 15 th December	Beauty and the Beast Melton Theatre
Friday 22 nd – Monday 8 th January	CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS