



Birch Wood Vale and Ashton House

Newsletter Autumn 2023

It has been great to welcome your child back to school and also getting to meet all of the students that are new to Birch Wood Vale & Ashton House. It is difficult to believe that half term has come around so quickly. Students have adjusted really well to the new timings and routines of the school day. Birch Wood Vale students in Year 7, 8 and 9 plus students from the Yard and the Den are enjoying new curriculum experiences with music lessons and food for life lessons. Reading for 30 minutes a day has been a change that students have adapted quickly too and they are really enjoying it. You will also see students reading first thing when they come in to school. Seeing the work that students are producing in lessons is so nice to observe and there is a clear sense of pride in their efforts. The students at Birch Wood Vale and Ashton House have nominated their student voice representative and have had their first meeting putting some great suggestions forward.

The positive interactions of the young people at break and lunch time playing basketball, tennis, cricket, on the swing, using the fitness equipment or just socialising with old friends and making new friends is so nice to observe.

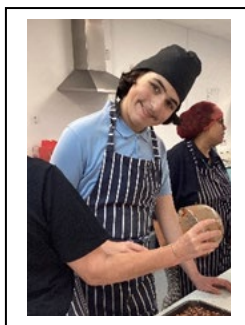
There are some key dates coming up that we have shared within the newsletter

I hope you all have a wonderful half term.

Tom Smith– Head of School

Jeans for Genes

The students and staff at Birch Wood Vale and Ashton House enjoyed taking part in the activities to help raise money for this worthy cause. Classes across BWV and AH all took part in planning and baking sweet treats in their food technology lessons. On Wednesday 20th September, these treats were then sold across the school to all staff and students to help raise money for this cause. On Friday 22nd September, student and staff enjoyed coming into school wearing non-uniform for a small donation. Our assembly helped the children understand what 'genes' are and how the money they raise helps improve the quality of life for children affected by genetic disorders. Your generosity meant that we were able to raise £154! Thank you to everyone who was able to donate. To find out more a please visit the website at jeansforgenes.org.





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7 students from 8BO & 9ES represented Birch Wood at KS3 Pan Disability 7v7 football tournament in Leicester.

They performed really well, playing out 6 close games, and coming away winners on two occasions. The event was thoroughly enjoyed by the pupils, with staff from the event and other schools complementing the fair-play and sportsmanship shown by our pupils.



Sports Club

We have been excited to welcome back Sports club! We have had a fantastic start to the new academic year kicking off our sessions with a firm student favourite, dodgeball! This was followed by some basketball skill work. Students have since been doing some fun games using our kinballs. It has been great to welcome back so many new and old faces to our sports club!

Sportsability Festival

On the 10th October Birch Wood School hosted the Sportsability Festival which included six special schools and Birch Wood Vale were represented by our Year 9 students from 9ES. The students from 9ES did an excellent job in representing the school and the sporting way they approached the event. They all completed a range of different sporting challenges and all of the students were really enjoying the opportunity. It was also great that the students from Birch Wood Vale and Ashton House were sports leaders for the day demonstrating and encouraging all of the young people taking part. There was a lovely atmosphere and the sports leaders did an amazing job in supporting the students.



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New Careers Adviser

Jen Kneafsey



We have a new careers adviser called Jen Kneafsey from the LEBC who is working closely with Jo Winterbourne who previously did the role to transition her over. They have started Careers interviews with students in Birch Wood College and with Birch Wood Vale students in Year 10 and 11. After half term they will be working with the Year 10 and 11 students in the Nook.

Transition Evening October 12th

We are hosting a transition evening which will be well attended by the local colleges, the transition team from the local authority and an expert able to talk about the apprenticeships programme. Even if your child is not likely to leave Birch Wood in the near future it is important that you have an understanding what the next steps look like. Please contact me if you need any support with transition for your child.

Tom Smith Head of School Birch Wood Vale

Ashton House

Please have a little look at how our classes at Ashton House have been settling in. We are looking forward to the year ahead.

The Yard

In the Yard this term we have been exploring our new curriculum and settling into Ashton House.

In Cooking we have been developing our cooking skills by making different sandwiches "My sandwich was filled with an abundance of food such as sausage, scrambled egg and bacon - it was delicious. I've been using these skills at home. " Odin H

We have been focusing hard on our reading session each day. "I have really enjoyed the focus days in reading - like poetry day where we got to read and learn about different poems" - Oliver A

In PSHE we have been focusing on road safety - "I can now independently cross a road on my way to school" - Leo C



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The Den

The Den have settled in well this term. We are really proud to witness that our students are taking real ownership with their personal EHCP targets this year and pushing themselves to achieve their personal best. We are excited to share that we have introduced two new subjects into the young people's timetable: Food for Life and Music. Both of these new subjects have been greatly received by our learners and they are enjoying learning whilst having fun! Food for Life offers our students an opportunity to learn about how to grow, cook, shop and eat healthier. They are developing a greater understanding of our natural environment and the impact we have had on planet Earth. In music, our learners have been learning how to create their own music with the programme BandLab. We are extremely lucky to have a very experienced external music specialist join us every Friday morning to teach our young people. It has been truly remarkable to see the creativeness of our students.





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The Nook

It has been great to welcome all the students together to form 'The Nook' classroom, and engage within their curriculum. The class have formed new friendships as they have created a KS4 group, and the class team are really proud of how the students have engaged within their core lessons, showing how much they value making progress and are working hard to achieve their Entry Levels/GCSEs.

Key dates

October 1 st to October 31 st	Black History Month
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