



Grange Drive

Birch Wood
Vale SchoolBirch Wood
Ashton House

Birch Wood School

Summer Term 1 Newsletter 2024

We are pleased to be able to share with you the activities that have been taking place at Birch Wood Vale and Ashton House this half term. It has been so nice to see all of the different opportunities our students have been accessing. 10CM went on a residential to Lea Green in Derbyshire where they showed amazing teamwork. JM Nurture went on a residential to Beaumanor where they showed such enthusiasm to try new skills and work as a team. We also celebrated PMLD Awareness Day across all sites. The Birch Wood Dance club were lucky enough to perform at Curve Theatre. The students have been representing the school in a range of different sports. It is inspiring to see the students accessing different clubs and to see them engaging in a variety of sports and activities at break and lunch time with their peers.

After half term we will be giving you more information about students transition to their next year group and new timetable for the academic year. We are keen to proactively help support our students to manage these changes and new opportunities in a positive way.

I hope you all have a lovely half term break. Please refer to the key dates within the newsletter so you are aware of what is coming after the break.

Tom Smith– Head of School Birch Wood Vale



In April, students from 10CM went on a residential trip to Lea Green in Derbyshire. All students had a turn on the high ropes and all were very brave and showed great supportive teamwork. The next day they went stream walking, which was challenging but they all did very well and encouraged each other.

They worked together on the team swing where they were a very determined group of young people and then went out for a walk navigating their own route.



Evenings were spent in the games room playing pool, table football and giant Connect 4. They also practiced developing their life skills by making their own beds, helping prepare meals, washing up and tidying up afterwards.



Grange Drive



Birch Wood
Vale School



Birch Wood
Ashton House



IT club started at Birch Wood Vale for all students from BWV and Ashton House. Students enjoy socialising with their peers and building their IT skills and confidence. Students will be learning how to use different programs as this is what they have asked to do. They all had great fun!



Birch Wood Vale students took part in a 3v3 basketball tournament at De Montfort University's Watershed Sports Hall. Our students comprised 2 teams; Birch Wood Blue and Birch Wood Red and competed against other KS3 students from different schools.

All pupils involved had a wonderful time playing basketball and shooting some hoops. Birch Wood Red walked away as tournament champions.





Grange Drive



Birch Wood
Vale School



Birch Wood
Ashton House



LEICESTER WHEELS FOR ALL! visited BWV and students had lots of fun exploring all of the different accessible bikes. Many thanks to Leicestershire Wheels For All, for another fabulous enrichment experience!



Good Luck to all our young people taking their exams this year.



“Shine like the stars you are!”





On Thursday 25th April, the School Games Paralympic Festival took place Birch Wood School was represented by a range of our students at 3 different events which took place at Loughborough University.

The nurture class qualified from the 10 district areas across Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland to compete against one another in the County Finals of, Boccia. The team proudly represented our school and the Melton and Belvoir area. The day resulted in them taking home the first place trophy for KS3-5 SLD Boccia. Further to this the group have also won the Secondary school team of the Year as part of the Let's Get Moving Melton Awards.

The day also included a Paralympic Festival which students from 9ES and the Lodge attended. One side of this festival included several activities targeting young people who are vision impaired. With support from British Blind Sport (BBS) and relevant National Governing Bodies (NGB's), these expertly adapted activities provided opportunities for young people to take part in activities such as Football, Goalball and Tennis, as well as potential talent ID/pathways to local community clubs and beyond.

The other side of the Paralympic event was a non-competitive carousel of activities including Wheelchair Sports, Multi-Sports, Cricket and Kin-ball as its activities.

We are so proud of all the achievements of the students involved in these sporting events – well done all!





PMLD Awareness Day on the 3rd of May, saw students from Birch Wood Vale and Ashton House celebrating their peers by coming to school dressed in their brightest clothing and by collecting signatures for the Changing Places petition! It was so inspiring to see our young people coming together to help make a positive change for everyone in our community!



JM Nurture had their residential experience at Beaumanor Hall. Activities included a nature bird walk where students listened to birds and matched the sounds to the bird, a scavenger wildlife hunt followed by students creating their own pictures from things that they found and then they went off to find different insects! The first day finished with a play in the park, a blindfolded walk in the woods and a hot chocolate, before getting ready for bed. Day 2 started with den-building - making group shelters by finding sticks, ropes and sheets, working together to build the den. Afterwards they had hot chocolate and lunch before a look in the gift shop. All students were real role models throughout and had a thoroughly amazing time.





Grange Drive



Birch Wood
Vale School



Birch Wood
Ashton House



BWV Dance Club had a brilliant time performing at Curve Theatre as part of the Icons Performance (Leicester and Leicestershire Special Schools). What an incredible experience for everyone involved!



Nurture class went on a Geocaching adventure to the lovely Rutland water. The class enjoyed following clues and spotting points of interests on their maps. Afterwards we explored Normanton church, before having a hot drink in the Waterfront café.





Grange Drive



Birch Wood
Vale School



Birch Wood
Ashton House

On Wednesday 15th May, the Initiate Theatre Company came to put on a performance of the Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde in the Grange Drive Hall. Students from 11KJ, The Nook, 10CM and Birch Wood College attended the performance and gave the actors some rave reviews. Some of them stayed behind to talk to them about the play and say what they enjoyed about it. Others have written letters and reviews that I will hopefully be sharing with the theatre company soon.

Some of their comments include:

"It's like they are not themselves but rather the character that they're in. To me, they're real people escaped from fantasy."

"The acting was on point and it was a fabulous show. A big thank you to the performance team!"



Students in the Moving Together dance options group travelled to Leicester City centre to explore a variety of arts organisations, including Curve Theatre, The Y Theatre, Newarke Houses and Museum, LCB Depot, and Phoenix Arts Centre. In each building, students were able to learn facts about the organisation from a variety of different people working there. This helped to broaden their knowledge of the arts industry for their Arts Award work. Students also prepared their own choreography, inspired by the words they would use to describe each organisation and this was filmed in order to be showcased in the Moving Together show at Curve Theatre in July.





Grange Drive



Birch Wood
Vale School



Birch Wood
Ashton House

Key dates:

Monday 27 th May – Friday 31 st May	Half Term Break
Monday 3 rd June	School re-opens
Monday 3 rd June – Monday 17 th June	GCSE Exams taking place
Thursday 6 th June	8BO & 9ES Curve Theatre visit "The Boy at the Back of the Classroom"
Thursday 4 th July	Moving Up Day- Transition preparation
Monday 1 st July – Tuesday 2 nd July	7DP Residential at Beaumanor Hall
Tuesday 2 nd July – Wednesday 3 rd July	9ES Residential at Beaumanor Hall
Friday 5 th July	Yard & Den visit to Retro Computer Museum
Tuesday 9 th July	BWV, Ashton House & College Sports Day
Wednesday 10 th July	KS4 and P16 PROM at Grange Drive Site 7-9pm
Thursday 11 th July	End of Term
SATURDAY 31ST AUGUST 2024 BIRCH WOOD-STOCK FESTIVAL – CELEBRATING OUR 20TH BIRTHDAY!	

Residential Visits

Residential visits promote personal growth, life skills, and resilience among our students. Below is a list of residential visits that will take place for students across Birch Wood School. We continually assess our trips and visits to ensure that they are safe and this may mean that closer to the time, plans need to be changed or cancelled based on the needs of the group or changes to the accommodation.

Residential	Date	Class
Lea Green Outdoor Adventure Centre	3 rd – 4 th June 2024	The Owls
Glamping at Lea Green Outdoor Adventure Centre	24 th – 26 th June 2024	BW College
Beaumanor Hall	1 st – 2 nd July 2024	7DP
Beaumanor Hall	2 nd – 3 rd July 2024	9ES
Lea Green Outdoor Adventure Centre	8 th – 10 th July 2024	The Goldfinches
Bendrigg Trust, Lake District	7 th – 11 th October 2024	The Merlins
PGL Chateau de Grande Romaine, Paris	30 th June – 4 th July 2025	8BO, 9ES, 10CM, The Den, The Nook