

January 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Happy New Year to you and all your families from everyone here at The Birley Academy. I hope you managed a restful break. At the Academy we are full of energy and excited for the New Year. It's great to see all the pupils back again.

Birley Learning

We were very busy in the run up to Christmas. As you know our Y11 Pupils sat their mock exams. They were a real credit to themselves and showed amazing resilience in their approach. Despite the fact that it is daunting to be sitting in the hall in such formal circumstances. We were also delighted that pupils from other year groups were so considerate of their older peers and ensured that the academy was a calm environment.

The new knowledge organisers for this term are being distributed over the next couple of days. These are an excellent opportunity for you to be involved with your child's learning. They contain key words and the essential knowledge for all units of learning for this term. Please support your child by looking through the organisers with them and talking about the content. If your child struggles with spelling then helping them to learn the key words will be invaluable.

This is also an important time for Year 9 as we move into that time where they consider what subjects they want to do for their options. There will be lots of information coming out about this as well as a parents' drop in session on the 2, February.

The Birley Way

It's been lovely to see so many of our pupils rewarded over the past term and we look forward to that continuing this term. Pupils' efforts and achievements have been recognised through praise postcards and phone calls, Headteacher Awards, Hot Chocolate Mornings, Reward Badges and Celebration evening. Our next reward event will be on the 6, February.

Attendance is a crucial element to the success of your child's education. This time of year there are, of course, plenty of colds about but where possible pupils should always attend school so that they do not miss out on vital learning. It's also excellent for building resilience for the workplace later in life where having time off for minor complaints is often not an option.

The Birley Promise

Many pupils have been taking part in the activities and opportunities available through The Birley Promise. Just before Christmas, pupils went to Bruges. Whilst there they visited the museum Yser Tower (Aan de Ijze) - The Yser Towers is a monument complex near the Yser river at Diksmuide, West Flanders in Belgium. The first tower was built in 1928–30 to commemorate the Belgian soldiers killed on the surrounding Yser Front during World War I and as a monument to Christian pacifism. Pupils were tired after the early start, but were very engaged in the history being told from the tour guides.

Later that evening Pupils on the Bruges trip visited the Christmas markets.

Following this the Pupils went to Langemark, seeing the graves of the German soldiers.

During the day Pupils also went to Vancouver Crossroads and the Brooding Soldier (A Canadian war memorial and small Commemorative Park located in the village of Saint-Julien, Langemark, Belgium). Pupils also had the opportunity to go to Tyne Cot Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery and Memorial to the Missing which is a Commonwealth War Graves Commission burial ground for the dead of the First World War in the Ypres Salient on the Western Front. It is the largest cemetery for Commonwealth forces in the world, for any war.

As part of the trip Pupils were fortunate enough to take part in the Last Post ceremony at Menin Gate. James and Rico along with Mr Mann laid the Birley Academy wreath and they were an absolute credit to the school.



The Duke of Edinburgh programme continues with a number of Year 11 students who have completed their award and a number of students very close to completing on their next outing. Year 10 students are signed up and about to start the scheme and the launch for Year 9 students will be in the Spring term. Meanwhile the Y7 Mountain Bike club meet each week and develop their skills with a training coach from British Cycling; the next step through the spring will include a visit to the Leeds Bike Park.

In addition, there have been many sporting events. Big congratulations to Bradley Marvin who won the Pauline Fidler Memorial Award this week for his contributions to Football. An outstanding achievement and well deserved. U13 girls took part in an indoor Cricket tournament at EIS, this is the first time this event has taken place. U15 boys took part in a Table Tennis competition at EIS. They didn't win but their effort and behaviour was impeccable. Football and Netball fixtures take place throughout the school year across schools in the city. In PE we are also running a trampoline competition. If your child is interested please ask them to contact Ms Denman-Molloy.

We pride ourselves on our excellent careers curriculum. So far this academic year we have ran our first Inspiration Day with Year 9 and the next one is on the 25th January for Year 8. This gives Pupils the opportunity to meet with people from various job sectors and participate in sessions which provide a wealth of knowledge around further and higher education. Year 7 will have theirs in March. Year 9 Pupils have had careers based sessions ahead of their GCSE options being chosen this month to support them in making an informed decision. Year 11 are in the process of finalising their post 16 applications with the support of Mrs Pemberton. Our Year 10 Pupils should now be looking into placements for their work experience at the end of July, should they need support with this Mrs Godbehere can help.

Charity fundraising and awareness

We have raised a fantastic £630.08 so far this year for the Children's Hospital Snowflake Appeal. Together with money raised in the Summer Term means that we were able to have our own Birley Academy Snowflake. A special mention to Jack Cummings in Year 8 who, along with his mum Sarah, raised money for the Children's Hospital and have their very own snowflake at Crystal Peaks.

We also raised an amazing £110.31 for Children in Need through Bake Sales and being 'Spotacular'!

Student council and student voice

A Student Council is a structure through which all students can have their say. This means that every student has the right to take part in electing their representatives. It is an important way of teaching our students about the British Values of democracy, individual liberty, tolerance, mutual respect and rule of law.

In the Autumn term, we held ballots in tutor groups and our new School Councillor's have been voted in. We have a Student Council for each year group that will meet once a month and then all the groups will meet together once per term as a Whole School Council. We look forward to working together this term and having a positive impact at Birley and in the community.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully

D. Casey

Diarmaid Casey
Deputy Headteacher