



**CALTHORPE  
ACADEMY**  
Skills for the life we want



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Autumn 2021

## Head Teachers Message

Dear Parents/carers,

After so much disruption over the past 18 months, the start of this academic year has been challenging but our staff and learners have been fantastic and have overcome all difficulties with hard work and resilience. The teaching and learning experiences we have provided this term were exciting and ambitious which has benefited our learners' progress greatly after a long period of instability. We understand that one of the key concerns for our parents and carers is linked to transport and we have worked with Travel Assist and NEAT to improve the situation and will continue to do so.

In this newsletter, we would like to share some of the work with our learners and celebrate this term with you. I would like to thank all staff here at Calthorpe for their commitment and parents and carers for their support.

I would like also to remind our families that the health and safety of our learners and staff are paramount and encourage you to read the next section on Covid updates.

I wish you all a fantastic break and wish you all the best for 2022.



Mounir Meghalsi

Head Teacher

Principal

## Covid important update

Cases of COVID 19 are increasing both nationally and locally and the alert level in the UK has been raised to level 4.

Further measures have been enforced in England as part of Plan B to try to control the spread of coronavirus including a requirement for people to wear face masks in a wider range of indoor spaces including in communal areas in schools.

We are working hard in school to protect our school community and we encourage everyone to remain vigilant to support us in protecting our vulnerable children and young people. In order to help protect everyone the following are important:

- Vaccinations – All adults and some children are being offered the vaccine.
  - Adults with Down's syndrome are more likely to get poorly from coronavirus than other people as well as those with health conditions such as heart conditions, some brain conditions and breathing problems such as asthma.
  - Vaccines don't completely stop everyone from getting coronavirus but they help to give good protection against your child getting seriously ill. Vaccinating children can also help stop the spread of COVID-19, including in schools.
  - Information on booking vaccines online or at a walk-in centre can be found here:
    - Book or manage a coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination - NHS ([www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk))
    - Find a walk-in coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination site - NHS ([www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk))
  - Testing - Testing remains important in reducing the risk of transmission of infection within schools.

- It is strongly encouraged that parents support children and young people to test twice weekly if they are in year 7 or above with an LFD.
- It is also strongly encouraged that parents (and other visitors) take an LFD test themselves before entering the school for appointments.
- Testing is particularly important when children and young people return in January following the break as some children and young people may have coronavirus but not show any symptoms or are unable to tell us if they feel unwell.
- Information on testing can be found here:
- Rapid lateral flow coronavirus (COVID-19) tests - NHS ([www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk))

## School News

### Calthorpe Christmas Countdown!

Over the last two weeks, we launched into our countdown to Christmas at Calthorpe!

Our Christmas Countdown has provided fantastic opportunities for all the learners to engage in exploring their children's rights to play, be creative and enjoy a range of musical activities.

As well as developing the learners understanding of cultural activities that take place at this time of year we aimed to develop learners' tolerance of others beliefs and the pupil's characters by exposing them to new experiences.

For the last two weeks of this term, it is always fun and the learners experience a range of enrichment activities from visits to a local church through Ladywood Interfaith Project, trips to see pantomimes at the local theatre, a visit from Father Christmas, Festive Lunches with friends and class parties!

To prepare the learners for the changes they may see around them during this time of year we encourage each class to take part in a creative project by decorating their classroom doors.

Pupils and staff have worked together to produce fantastic contributions to our annual Christmas Door Competition! We are lucky to have so many creatively talented people at Calthorpe and Belgravia who have brought the Christmas atmosphere alive in our corridors!

With so many marvellous displays (..and competitive people!) around school, we knew the competition would be difficult to judge, and this was the perfect job for our student council!

The winning classes as voted by members of our student council were L10 and FB3. These were the displays that the learners interacted with the most and both classes won a £100 classroom resources voucher each!



It was so difficult to choose runners up as there were so many amazing displays that the Senior Leadership Team also rewarded each of the following classes with a £50 classroom resources voucher too: 6E2, E3, L6, L3, F8, L8, 6L1, F5, L11, FB1!

The senior leadership team of Thrive Educational Partnership also chose their winner and awarded £75 classroom resources voucher to F10 as their winner for their exceptional effort!



This year we chose to celebrate 'Jolly Jumper Day' and support Birmingham Children's Hospital as a local charity that works consistently supporting the children at Calthorpe with their medical needs we raised £71.14. This has helped learners to take part in helping others within our local community and their understanding of how why it is important to help others. We saw some fantastic festive knits!



This celebration day provided a range of opportunities for the pupils to develop their social skills through play- the Foundations for Life Pathway enjoyed playing alongside their

friends on the inflatable fun run, ball pit and inside of the inflatable disco dome!



The Learning for Life learners celebrated in style dancing to music from a Jazz Swing Band! This was an interactive performance where they had to listen and respond to requests of the band and either move or sing along! The children explored different styles of music played and copied each other's dance moves!



The band created a great opportunity for the spiritual development of our learners at our primary autism site Belgravia School. They enjoyed an outdoor performance from the Jazz Swing Band- there was a fantastic festive atmosphere and the learners were in awe of the band and showed brilliant attention skills, watching, listening and moving to the music from the band. Some even helped and enjoyed exploring the instruments!

Loula performed Christmas Carols to our Engagement for Life learners and the learners gave wonderful responses to her voice through smiling, moving their body and some even moving towards her voice to enjoy the one to one interaction.



Laura Marsden  
Assistant Head Teacher

Learning for Life Foundation for Life Engagement for Life  
Post 16 School News

## Reading - Learning for Life

This autumn term has seen the opening of our new library hosting a range of books from our early phonics texts to our

popular author fiction books chosen by our very own school council! This group of learners, from across the pathway, got together to choose what books they would like to see in their library and came up with an extensive list including books by David Walliams, Jacqueline Wilson, Tom Fletcher, Roald Dahl and Dav Pilkey, along with non-fiction texts from the Little People Big Dreams collection.



From the library, our learners take books to read at the book band level they are working at in order to develop their reading and comprehension skills. In addition to this, our learners can also access the other books available to develop their enjoyment of reading through listening to stories with an adult, interacting with animated eBooks on the iPads or watching short film adaptations of some of our larger sharing books.



Lara Latham  
Quality of Education Co-ordinator

Learning for Life School News

## Engagement for Life - Autumn 2021

### The MOVE programme at Calthorpe

Learners have been working hard on their skills in sitting, standing, walking and transitioning between. It has been great to reflect back on the progress we have seen over the autumn term. A special mention to Hamza who has exceeded his target of sitting up independently, allowing him better access to the resources around him, well done Hamza!



## Foundations for Life - Autumn 2021

Learners in the Foundations for Life Pathway have been focusing on settling back into routines. This year, there is a drive on promoting functional skills amongst our learners. These include the vital skills that our learners can apply and generalise at home and in their wider community.



For example, each learner has a timetabled “life skill” lesson with a food preparation and cooking focus. The aim is for our learners to be able to safely make simple meals for themselves as independently as possible. Some of the older students have taken the responsibility of sorting and delivering the ingredients to the other classes.

Communication is probably one of the most important skills for our learners and we have used any and every opportunity to learn, practice, reinforce expressive and respective communication skills across our curriculum.

Have a lovely holiday!



Jila Chishimba

Extender Leader for Foundations for Life

Next term we will be working with even more learners to get them onto the MOVE programme to increase independent movement across the academy.

### Engagement for Life Pathway

This term we have been very lucky to have a range of visitors and experiences at school. In November the Animal Man came to visit bringing with him a python, bearded dragon, tarantula, owl and a skunk. The learners really enjoyed feeling the different textures of the animals and interacting with them. We have also enjoyed a concert by Live Music Now where we moseyed on down to some American country music with Chris and Seth.



Finally, we were able to celebrate all of our achievements this term so far with a visit from Loula singing familiar Christmas songs.



Aimee Prentice

Extended leader for Engagement for Life

## Belgravia - Autumn 2021

As part of Anti-bullying on Friday 19<sup>th</sup>, November Belgravia School learners and staff had great fun celebrating World Children’s Day. There was a range of exciting activities for everyone to take part in. Our Disney fancy dress competition saw some of our favourite characters brought to life including, Sully, Mickey Mouse and the Seven Dwarves. Alongside this we set up a slush drinks machine in our kitchen allowing learners to develop their sensory, requesting and independence skills.



We are looking forward to celebrating and raising awareness for more events in our Personal Development calendar in the Spring Term.



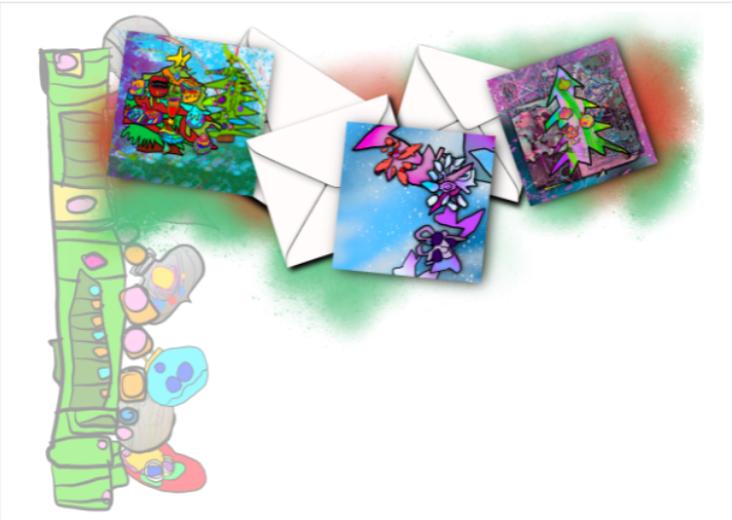
Laura Lee  
Belgravia School Head of Centre

Belgravia School News

## Art - Autumn 2021

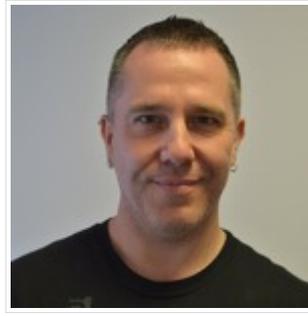
Throughout this term, Students' from both the Learning and Foundation for life pathways have been creating

artwork inspired by winter and the festivals which are celebrated around this time of year.



With the use of the Procreate app for the iPad, Learners' work was combined together to create a card for all to give to a friend or loved one.

As you can see from the examples, every class created a unique, colourful and vibrant artwork using skills cross-curriculum (Art, IT, Communication and Social Interaction / Literacy).



Craig Earp  
Art Instructor

Learning for Life Foundation for Life Post 16 School News

## The Inspire for Higher Event

This month, we co-hosted alongside the Birmingham Careers Hub and Birmingham Education Partnership, 'The Inspire for Higher Employer Networking Group'. Our staff and employers shared our model of practice whilst our learners shared their thoughts on their journey to employment and adulthood.



The Academy facilitated the afternoon session, where we explored with a range of stakeholders how to overcome barriers and provide inclusive career opportunities for young people with SEND in order to improve outcomes. In addition, how to increase knowledge base through sharing best practices in order to not only meet business but learners needs.



This event demonstrated our Academy's commitment towards the Gatsby Benchmarks, raising aspirations as well as widening the participation agenda. A big thank you to all involved especially our learners who participated in the event!



Bebe Woo

## Parental Engagement - Autumn 2021

We have had a busy term with lots of very successful workshops including, "SLEEP workshop" by Cerebra, "NSPCC Online Safety workshop", "Autism West Midlands Behaviour workshop" & "Makaton workshop".

The turnout was amazing and I would like to thank all the parents who attended these workshops.



We have had some very positive reviews such as:

- "The workshop was an eye-opener"
- "This workshop was helpful, very well explained"
- "Very useful signs, I can use it at home"

We are looking forward to 2022 and we'll be bringing once again some very exciting and useful workshops for you.

Have a lovely break!



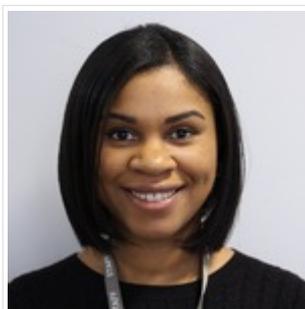
Masuma Rajwani

Family Support Coordinator

A reminder to all parents, please ensure you contact the school on the first day of absence if your child is not going to be in school for any reason. You can do this by ringing 0121 773 4637.

Education is really important and we encourage all parents to send their children into school as often as they're able to attend.

If you have any attendance issues that you wish to discuss, you're welcome to contact Simone Studley on 0121 773 4637.



Simone Studley

Attendance Officer