



Head Teachers Message

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we wrap up another busy and productive term, I'm pleased to share some key developments from across our school community.

We are delighted to report that our new Oakland offsite provision opened earlier this term. Learners from our Foundations for Life pathway have made a wonderful start, settling in well to their new environment. The space is already supporting positive engagement, personal development, and wellbeing. We're excited about future growth and are now planning to open additional classes at this site during the summer term.

At the same time, we are experiencing growing pressure around funding and support. The Exceptional Special Needs (ESN) process—designed to provide additional support for learners with complex needs beyond standard top-up funding—is currently under review by the Local Authority.

During this review period, all ESN funding requests must now be submitted through the Annual Review process. While this ensures alignment with statutory systems, it potentially creates delays in accessing critical support, placing further strain on our ability to respond swiftly to learners' changing needs. Please rest assured that we are actively advocating for our learners and working closely with the local authority to manage this impact.

These changes come at a time when schools nationally are facing increased complexity and demand. We are doing everything we can to sustain the high-quality provision our learners deserve, and your ongoing support is invaluable. As ever, our commitment to your children's progress, safety, and wellbeing remains our priority.

We wish you all a peaceful and safe Spring Holiday and look forward to welcoming everyone back for an exciting Summer Term ahead.

For further updates and information, please visit our school website.

Warm Regards,



Mounir Meghalsi

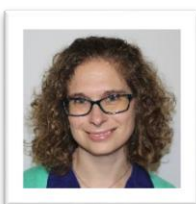
Head Teacher





Celebrating Shelley's National Contribution

We are incredibly proud of Shelley Soni, our amazing Speech and Language Therapist, whose work has been featured in the latest edition of The Bulletin magazine (Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists). Shelley, has played a key role in developing the Special School Speech Therapist Network (SSSTN) for independent SLTs. Their work has created a valuable professional space that fosters collaboration, support, and wellbeing for therapists working in special school settings. Shelley's leadership and commitment to inclusion and excellence are a real credit to our school and to the profession.



Shelley Soni

Speech and Language Therapist



World Book Day 2025

We had a great time celebrating World Book Day at Calthorpe Academy on Thursday 6th March.

It was wonderful to see so many of our learners embracing the day by coming to school in their pyjamas or dressed as their favourite book characters. From superheroes to classic storybook figures, the creativity on display was fantastic.

Throughout the day, learners took part in a range of exciting activities designed to bring books to life and promote a love for reading. One of the highlights was our Mobile Library Sessions, where learners had the chance to explore a wide selection of books and enjoy stories in a relaxed and engaging setting. We also hosted "Share a Story" sessions, where staff and learners read together, making stories more interactive and enjoyable.



Developing a Love for Reading at Home

At Calthorpe Academy, we know that reading is about more than just words on a page—it's about experiencing and engaging with stories in a way that suits each learner's needs. Here are some ideas to support reading at home over the Easter break, depending on your child's learning profile.



For Learners with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)

Sensory Storytelling – Use textures, scents, and sounds to bring a book to life. If reading *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*, use a spray bottle for "swishy swashy" grass or a soft blanket for the "snowstorm."

Rhythm and Rhyme – Many learners with PMLD respond well to music. Choose books with repetitive phrases or rhymes and sing parts of the story. Adding actions or gentle movement can enhance the experience.

Tactile Books – Explore books with different textures, flaps, or sensory elements. If you don't have one, make a simple story bag with objects related to the story (e.g., a feather for a bird in the story).

For Learners with Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)

Reading in Short Bursts – Keep reading sessions short and engaging, following your child's attention span. Even one or two pages of a favourite book can be a meaningful experience.

Use Puppets or Toys – Make books interactive by using soft toys or puppets to "act out" the story. Encourage your child to choose a toy that matches a character.

Create a Story Together – Help your child draw or collage a story, even if it's just matching pictures to events in a book you've read together.

Audiobooks with Actions – Listen to an audiobook while making actions to match the story. If a character jumps, encourage your child to jump too!

For Learners with Autism (ASD)

Match Books to Interests – If your child has a special interest, find books on that topic (e.g., trains, animals, space). This helps them engage more deeply.

Use Visuals and Symbols – If your child uses PECS or visual supports, introduce storyboards or Now and Next symbols to structure the story.

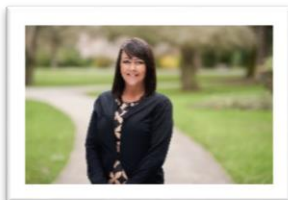
Encourage Predictability – Some children with autism enjoy reading the same book repeatedly. This builds confidence and familiarity with language.

Retelling with Visuals – After reading, help your child sequence events using pictures or symbols to reinforce understanding.

Make Reading an Experience – If reading a book about animals, visit a petting zoo; if reading about the sea, play with water and sand. Linking stories to real-world experiences deepens understanding.

No matter how your child engages with stories, the most important thing is to make reading enjoyable and pressure-free.

Have fun exploring books together over Easter!



Teresa Ward

Assistant Head Teacher



Website:

www.calthorpe.thrive.ac

Email:

enquiry@calthorpe.thrive.ac

Phone:

0121 773 4637



Exciting New Partnership with Leonardo Hotel

We are excited to announce our new partnership with Leonardo Hotel, which promises to offer invaluable opportunities for our learners to explore and develop their knowledge of the hospitality industry. This exciting collaboration will provide learners with unique insights into the inner workings of a leading hotel through a combination of educational visits to Leonardo Hotel and in-school workshops delivered by their expert staff.

Recently, we had the pleasure of welcoming members of the Leonardo team to our school. During their visit, they shared fascinating details about their roles and responsibilities, giving our learners a glimpse into the diverse career opportunities within the hospitality sector.

This partnership represents an excellent chance for our students to enhance their skills, gain real-world experience, and consider future pathways within the industry. We are immensely grateful to Leonardo Hotel for their commitment to supporting our learners and look forward to the many enriching experiences this partnership will bring.



Andrew Blakeley

Assistant Head Teacher



Website:
www.calthorpe.thrive.ac

Email:
enquiry@calthorpe.thrive.ac

Phone:
0121 773 4637

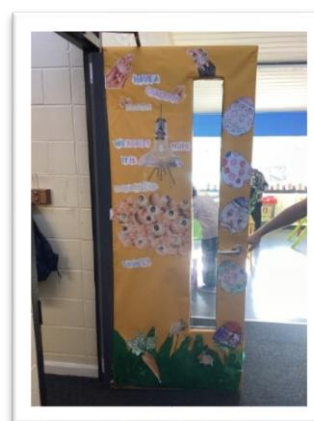


Easter Doors competition

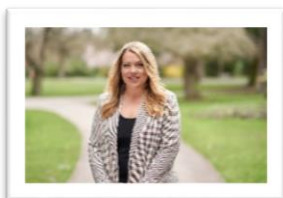
Our school has been bursting with colour, creativity, and a sprinkle of Easter magic as classes across all pathways took part in our much-anticipated Easter Door Decorating Competition!

From blooming springtime meadows and pastel-painted eggs to egg-celent bunny displays and joyful chicks, classroom doors have been lovingly transformed into a creative masterpiece. The variety of textures, colours, and interactive elements made each door unique, capturing the joyful spirit of Easter in ways that were both inclusive and imaginative.

A huge well done to all the learners and staff who collaborated so beautifully to bring their designs to life. Whether it was through painting, crafting, sticking, or sensory exploration, the process highlighted the power of teamwork, creativity, and shared celebration. Your hard work and thoughtful ideas have truly brightened our corridors and lifted everyone's spirits!

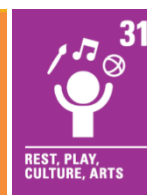


This enriching activity has supported learners' SMSC development by encouraging creativity and self-expression, fostering teamwork and mutual respect, and celebrating cultural traditions in an inclusive way. It also upholds key Children's Rights, including the right to express themselves through art (Article 13), to have their talents developed through education (Article 29), and to participate in cultural and artistic activities (Article 31).



Laura Williams

Assistant Head Teacher



Website:
www.calthorpe.thrive.ac

Email:
enquiry@calthorpe.thrive.ac

Phone:
0121 773 4637



Spring Term Highlights in the Engagement for Life Pathway

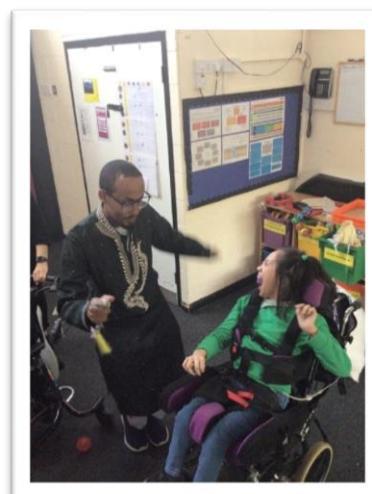
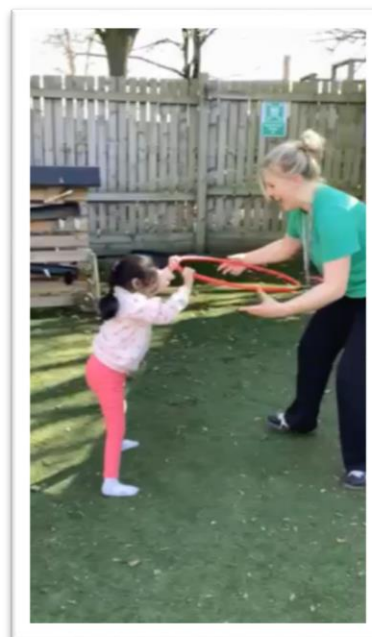
We've had a busy and exciting Spring term in the Engagement for Life pathway! One of the highlights has been our weekly sessions with Free Wheelin', an inclusive dance company. These sessions have allowed our learners to develop valuable skills and confidence in movement, with a special focus on exploring the dynamic and expressive qualities of dance as part of the Creative Movement strand of the curriculum.

Our learners recently had the opportunity to showcase their moves in a fun and energetic dance-off for Red Nose Day, where learners from different pathways came together to celebrate and share their best dance moves. It was a wonderful demonstration of how much our learners have grown in their confidence and ability to express themselves through movement.

Movement is such an important part of our curriculum, and we know that the more we move, the more we learn. We've seen tremendous progress this term, including one learner who achieved a major milestone by taking her first independent steps! We are incredibly proud of the progress all of our learners have made in their movement skills.

In addition, staff members from the Engagement for Life pathway had the opportunity to attend a two-day hydrotherapy course. This course focused on supporting learners with physical and sensory impairments in the water. We are excited to bring these new skills back and look forward to supporting even more learners in the pool next term.

We are proud of all the growth and achievements our learners have made this term and can't wait to see what's next!



Aimee Prentice

Extended Leader for Engagement for Life



Website:
www.calthorpe.thrive.ac

Email:
enquiry@calthorpe.thrive.ac

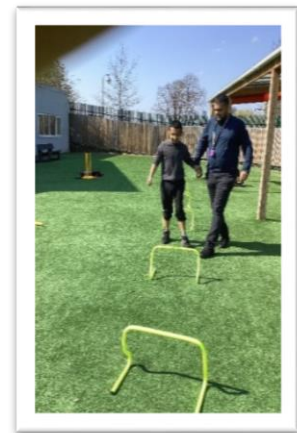
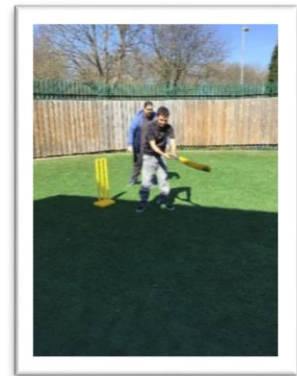
Phone:
0121 773 4637



Post 16 Spring Update

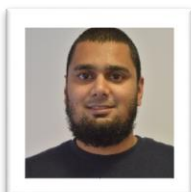
Sixth Form learners have been diligently working at the allotment throughout the spring term, preparing the grounds for planting vegetation and maintaining the area. They have successfully applied and adapted the skills acquired in school to a practical, hands-on project, demonstrating their ability to transfer learning into real-world contexts.

We have invested £2,000 in outdoor equipment to provide learners with the opportunity to engage in a diverse range of physical activities this term. The new equipment has been well received, with learners enjoying its use both individually and in team-based activities.



Suraj Singh

Extended Leader for Post 16



Suhail Bhat

Class Teacher

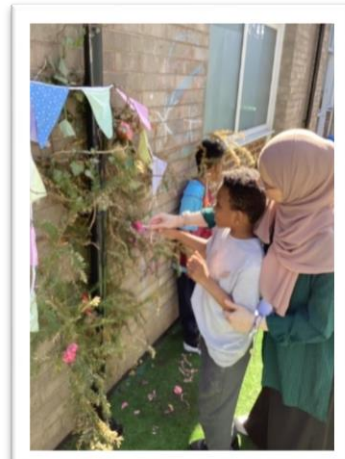




Belgravia Spring Update

This term at Belgravia, we have embraced the great outdoors, where creativity, fun, and hands-on learning have been at the heart of our activities.

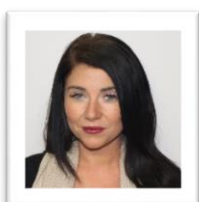
Our students have had the opportunity to explore the world around them, engaging in exciting outdoor activities that foster a love of learning. With the support of Laura Wilson, who has been instrumental in helping deliver lessons in the outdoor environment, the children have been developing a wide range of skills in a truly enjoyable and creative way. Through imaginative play, exploration, and sensory activities, the children have been learning about the environment and enhancing their social skills.



Alongside the joy and creativity, these activities have been integral in developing key life skills. Our learners have been practicing exploration, imitation, and requesting skills. The outdoor area has encouraged curiosity, critical thinking, and problem-solving, providing the perfect setting for imaginative and sensory experiences that have been both educational and exciting.

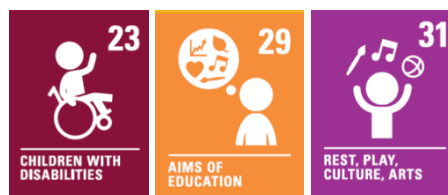


It's been a truly rewarding term seeing our students connect with nature, express their creativity, and grow in confidence. We are thrilled to continue these outdoor learning experiences next term and can't wait to see how much more our learners will achieve.



Leanne Maguire

Belgravia Head of Centre



Website:
www.calthorpe.thrive.ac

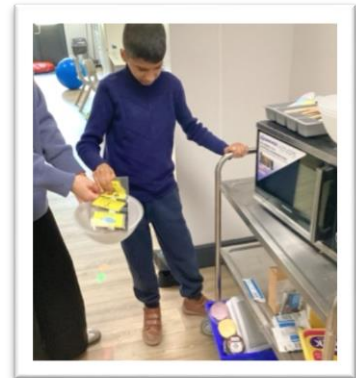
Email:
enquiry@calthorpe.thrive.ac

Phone:
0121 773 4637

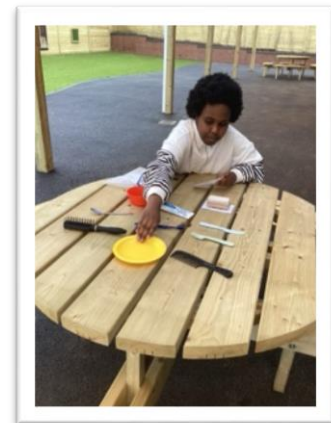
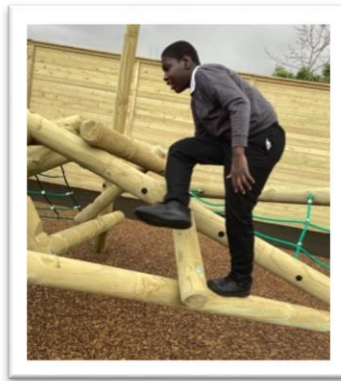


Oakland Spring Update

We have been very excited to welcome learners from our Foundations for Life classes to our new Oakland School site this half term, as well a meeting several new faces! It has been wonderful to see learners exploring their new school environment with both curiosity and joy. The energy around the school is truly uplifting.



Our staff have been working hard to continue to build strong connections with learners, making sure every learner is supported and ready to thrive at Oakland School. Our four classes FO1, FO2, FO3 and FO4 have been making the most of their new environment including their My Outdoor School Area and purpose designed playground to develop their physical abilities and wellbeing.



During the spring term, we've been celebrating key events such as Red Nose Day and Autism Awareness Day, while focusing on each learner's individualised targets taken from our Foundation for Life curriculum.



Antonio Ferraz

Oakland Head of Centre





Parental Engagement



We have had a lovely term with very successful workshops these include, Communication workshop with our Speech and Language therapist & a series of life skills workshop with our Occupational therapist

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

Here are some very positive feedbacks:

- *"Relevant to what we need, really helpful as it's exactly what we have been working towards."*
- *"Very interesting session, hope to learn more"*
- *"Very informative and helpful"*

Bring it on Brum! holiday club

Bring it on Brum! Is once again running FREE holiday clubs in Birmingham throughout the Easter school holidays for young people aged 4-16 who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals.

Holiday clubs will run from Monday, 14 April to Friday, 25 April 2025 (excluding weekends and Bank Holidays).

We hope you will take advantage of these fantastic FREE holiday clubs across Birmingham so your child/children can have a fun-filled and safe holiday!

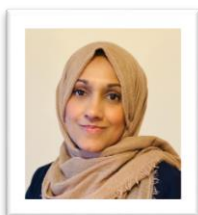
To book your activities and to find out more information go to <https://www.bringitonbrum.co.uk>

Your Bring it on Brum! (FSM) code is: «3307013»

For more information visit our school website:

[Calthorpe Academy - Bring it on Brum! Holiday club](#)

Have a lovely Easter break!!!



Masuma Rajwani

Family Support Coordinator



Website:

www.calthorpe.thrive.ac

Email:

enquiry@calthorpe.thrive.ac

Phone:

0121 773 4637



Attendance update

Good attendance fosters positive outcomes for children and young people. It supports their academic growth, social development and their overall well-being.

Attendance Rewards

Well done to all the learners who have received certificates for good Attendance, Thank you all to the parents/carers who have supported with sending their children to school every day and on time.



Pupil Leave of absence (Holidays in Term Time)

The two weeks school holidays are nearly here and many parents wonder about whether they can go on holiday early or during term time. We are really clear that going on holiday in term time is unlawful unless you have the advance permission of the head teacher to do so.

By law, Pupil leave of absence (holidays) can only be granted in exceptional circumstances and because of this, almost all holiday requests are denied and parents will be issued with a fixed penalty notice or court fine by the Council.

For this academic year so far 8 parents have been fined from the council for holidays taken during term so we encourage parents to not book holidays in term time. Every day in school is precious and Attendance matters. Birmingham Education intervention Legal team have shared for parents/ carers penalty Notices are issued per parent per child.

If you are struggling with your child's attendance and would like support please contact us on

0121 773 4637



Reporting absences

If your child is absent for an unavoidable reason such as illness, please contact school on **0121 773 4637** to speak to us, or leave a voicemail.

Medical appointments

To reduce avoidable absence, please book routine appointments like dental check-ups outside of school hours. Where this is not possible, we encourage people to book appointments at the start or the end of the day to minimise disruption and maximise your child's time at school.

Reminder of Term Dates:

Summer Term 2025

Term Starts: Monday 28th April 2025

Half-term: Monday 26th May 2025 to Friday 30th May 2025

Term ends: Thursday 17th July 2025

Teacher Training Days

Friday 2nd May 2025 – Thrive Trust Training Day

Friday 18th July 2025

Monday 21st July 2025



Rabia Hassan

Attendance Officer



Website:

www.calthorpe.thrive.ac

Email:

enquiry@calthorpe.thrive.ac

Phone:

0121 773 4637