

SPRING 2026 NEWSLETTER



0121 773 4637



calthorpe.thrive.ac



enquiry@calthorpe.thrive.ac

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Head Teacher Update

Dear Parents/Carers,

As we reach the end of the Spring term, I am pleased to share through our newsletter how much our school community has achieved. Our learners continue to make excellent progress, and our staff are working tirelessly to provide a supportive, engaging, and inclusive environment for every child.

The Government's recent White Paper on education sets out new expectations for SEND provision. At Calthorpe Academy, we are already ahead in meeting these standards, ensuring that every learner receives personalised support and that our curriculum reflects evidence-based practice. We will continue to keep you informed about these developments and the ways you can be involved in your child's learning.

This term, we have also focused on strengthening communication with parents, streamlining progress reporting, and providing clear updates so that you can see the difference your child is making every day. Your involvement remains vital in helping us shape the best possible provision for all learners.

The latest NFER report makes clear that schools across the country are struggling to recruit and retain both teaching and support staff, a challenge that can directly affect consistency and quality of provision. At Calthorpe, we are fortunate that our inclusive culture, professional development opportunities, and strong community ethos help us maintain a stable, highly skilled team, ensuring our learners continue to receive the consistent, high-quality support they need to thrive.

Finally, we celebrate the many achievements of this term. From individual milestones to whole-school initiatives, the dedication and creativity of our learners and staff have been outstanding. The rest of this newsletter highlights the fantastic work and successes across the school.

Wishing all our families and staff a restful and enjoyable break, while encouraging you to keep routines steady so our learners return refreshed and ready for the term ahead.

Mounir Meghalsi



World Autism Acceptance Month – April 2026

April is World Autism Acceptance Month, a global campaign which promotes greater understanding, acceptance and inclusion of autistic people. It is recognised internationally and provides an opportunity for schools, families and communities to celebrate differences and promote a more inclusive society.

The campaign, supported by organisations such as the National Autistic Society in the UK, highlights how small, everyday actions can make a meaningful difference to autistic individuals and their families. It is not just about awareness, but about acceptance and ensuring that everyone feels valued and supported.

At Calthorpe Academy, we will be recognising World Autism Acceptance Month by sharing information and encouraging positive conversations about autism across the school community. We will also be sending home a range of simple activities for learners and families to complete over the Easter holidays, giving everyone the opportunity to take part and reflect together.

Across the UK and beyond, thousands of people take part each year through school activities, fundraising events and community initiatives, helping to build a society that works for autistic people. If you would like to find out more or get involved, please visit:

<https://waam.autism.org.uk/>

Laura Lee



World Book Day

We celebrated World Book Day this term, with a range of engaging activities designed to promote a love of reading for all our learners.

Learners enjoyed a variety of reading experiences adapted to their needs, including sensory stories, shared reading sessions and opportunities to explore a wide range of books and texts.

Our classrooms and outdoor areas provided rich, language-focused spaces where learners could engage with stories through communication, interaction and play. Staff worked hard to ensure that learners could access and enjoy the day in a meaningful way, whether through choosing their own books, engaging with familiar stories, or exploring new and exciting texts.

It was great to see our learners responding to the day by dressing up in pyjamas or as their favourite book characters.

We would like to thank parents and carers for their continued support in promoting reading at home, sharing stories, talking about books and encouraging a love of reading.

Teresa Ward



Sustainability at Calthorpe

Did you know?

- More than 600 million batteries are thrown away in the UK every year.
- Batteries contain valuable metals that are energy-intensive to mine.

Recycling batteries helps recover these important materials so they can be reused to make new batteries and other useful products, reducing the need to extract more resources from the earth.

This year, our school has signed up to the Recycle to Read scheme to support this effort. By recycling the batteries used in school, we can earn book vouchers that help us provide exciting new books for our learners to enjoy.

From the 9th to the 15th March, we also marked National Waste Week, a time dedicated to raising awareness about waste reduction, sustainability, and encouraging positive environmental action within our school community.

Our School Council created posters that are now displayed around the school on the TV monitors, reminding everyone about the importance of recycling and reusing materials whenever possible to help protect our environment. In addition, learners in our Learning for Life pathway have enjoyed a series of inspiring workshops delivered by Wilmot Dixon, focusing on sustainable energy and the environment.

Together, small actions can make a big difference for our planet!

Aimee Prentice



Post 16 News

Learners in 6L4 have been visiting Morrison's as part of their community engagement learning.

During these visits, learners have developed key life skills such as following a shopping list, locating items with support, asking for help from staff in uniform, self-scanning items, and paying for their shopping.

The items purchased are then used during weekly cooking sessions, helping learners make meaningful links between community activities and classroom learning. Learners have also extended their community skills by visiting the café, where they practise choosing items, placing an order, and paying with support. In addition, learners have been working on road safety, including crossing roads safely while out in the community.

Learners from Learning for Life have been working towards a range of AQA awards to celebrate their hard work alongside their RARPA targets.

Pupils have achieved, or are currently working towards, awards in PE, bakery, car washing, and salon activities, developing both practical skills and independence. We are extremely pleased with the progress learners have made and will continue working closely with our Foundations for Life pathway to ensure a wide range of suitable AQA awards are available for all learners to achieve.

Suraj Singh



Engagement for Life Pathway News

This term we have introduced two new areas to our curriculum. These additions further support the development of our learners' communication skills and help them build a greater understanding of the world around them. They also create more opportunities for learners to develop social relationships and work alongside their peers.

During these sessions, learners have taken part in a range of engaging activities that support both their learning and enjoyment. These experiences help us continue to provide a full, rich and meaningful curriculum for everyone.

Within Social Routines, Environments and Relationships, learners are supported to notice, recognise and respond to other people, helping them to gradually develop secure and meaningful social connections.

Gaining Information focuses on helping learners notice, process and respond to information from their environment. It supports the development of sensory awareness, attention, anticipation, cause and effect, and early understanding of meaning, building important foundations for communication, thinking and learning.

Teachers have also taken part in a dedicated training day to develop their understanding of these new curriculum areas. They have already begun planning exciting and engaging opportunities for learners to experience these sessions throughout the term.

Aimee Prentice



Foundation for Life Pathway News

Learners in the Foundations for Life Pathway enjoyed a truly engaging immersive performance opportunity brought to us by Open Theatre; Search for the **Second Star: Reimagined**. Through a collaboration of music, props and non-verbal physical theatre, all learners were captivated by a calm, structured and sensory-rich experience that encouraged them to connect, interact and think creatively.

Each performance session was playful, inclusive, and responsive, creating a safe space where learners were able to thrive. While the core principles remained the same, they were appropriately adapted to meet the needs of each individual and context.

It was wonderful to see such positive engagement, with high levels of enjoyment, and genuine development of confidence and curiosity throughout.

This approach supports learners to explore who they are, what they can do, and how they connect with others, building confidence, independence, and communication skills along the way. It encourages creativity and collaboration while helping to reshape how their abilities are understood and valued.

Jila Chimbisha



Belgravia School Round-Up

This half term at Belgravia has been filled with a rich range of engaging experiences beyond the classroom, offering our learners valuable opportunities to explore, communicate and grow in different environments.

We were delighted to welcome the Open Theatre Company into school, who delivered a series of non-verbal drama sessions. These sessions provided a highly inclusive and creative space where learners could express themselves through movement, gesture and shared interaction. It was wonderful to see learners engaging with confidence, developing their awareness of others, and finding new ways to communicate without the need for words.

Animal therapy has been another very special part of this half term. Learners have had the opportunity to interact with lambs, chickens and ponies, creating meaningful connections with animals in a calm and nurturing environment. These experiences have supported the development of empathy, gentle communication and emotional regulation, as well as encouraging curiosity and engagement.

We have also enjoyed outings to the Berzerk indoor play area, where learners have had the chance to explore, climb and play in a fun and stimulating setting. These trips have supported the development of physical skills, social interaction and confidence in new environments, as well as providing lots of shared enjoyment and fun.

Across all of these experiences, it has been fantastic to see our learners growing in confidence, developing their communication in a variety of ways, and building positive relationships with both peers and adults. We are incredibly proud of how they have embraced each opportunity with curiosity and enthusiasm.

Leanne Maguire



Oakland School Round-Up

Our learners have been making the most of opportunities to be out and about, building on the learning experiences from the autumn term, when many classes explored and connected with the local community. It has been wonderful to see this continue to develop as we move through the year.

This spring term has been full of meaningful and celebratory moments. Learners have had the opportunity to recognise the start of Ramadan, an important time for many in our community, and to enjoy the vibrant festival of Holi. We have also begun preparations for Easter, with exciting activities ahead, including our much-anticipated egg hunt. More recently, we came together to celebrate Red Nose Day, with learners taking part in a range of fun activities while raising money for charity.

During this term, we have also welcomed Open Theatre into our school. Learners took part in non-verbal drama sessions, where they were challenged to explore their creativity, express themselves in new ways, and build confidence through performance.

Looking ahead to the summer term, we are excited to expand our outdoor learning even further. More classes will be visiting Oakland Park to enjoy picnics, make use of the playground, and take part in games with their peers.

We are also delighted to be welcoming parents and carers back into school at the start of the term. Staff are very much looking forward to seeing everyone again, and our learners will be excited to have parents and carers back in school after their enjoyment of our autumn term coffee morning. We are sure it will be a fantastic opportunity to come together as a community.

Antonio Ferraz



Parental Engagement

Earlier this half term, parents took part in a Meditation Workshop, exploring practical techniques for relaxation, stress management, and emotional wellbeing. The session was well-received, and we hope the strategies can continue to support you in daily life.

Upcoming Parent Workshops

We are looking forward to welcoming parents and carers to the following sessions:

- *Painting – a creative and relaxing opportunity to explore art activities, unwind, and connect with other parents*
- *RSE/PSHE Workshop – Within the workshop you shall get to meet the PSHE Lead for the school who shall explain what PSHE looks like for your child's curriculum pathway and how we work with our families to support our children's understanding of Relationships, Health, Developing their understanding of acceptable Public & Private behaviours and environments*
- *Communication Workshop – strategies to support with communication to better understand your child's individual needs*

These workshops are designed to provide practical support, useful ideas, and a chance to connect with staff and other families.

Working in Partnership – CitiSEN4u

We are pleased to be working alongside CitiSEN4u, a service led by individuals with lived experience of autism and ADHD. Their insight provides a deep understanding of the challenges faced by neurodiverse children and their families. They work with schools to offer signposting opportunities and engage directly with families to ensure you can access the right support when needed.

Invitation letters for the CitiSEN4u session will go out nearer the time.

Bring it on Brum!

Bring it on Brum! Is running FREE activity clubs in Birmingham for those aged 4-16 who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals, they can join the Bring it on Brum!

Dates: Monday 30th March 2026 (excluding weekends and Bank Holidays). · Bookings at www.bringitonbrum.co.uk

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

Thank you for your continued support and partnership.

Have a lovely holiday!!!!



Masuma Rajwani



Attendance Update

Every child has a right to education and to thrive.

We would like to thank all parents and carers for your continued support in making sure your child comes to school every day and arrives on time.

For our learners a clear and consistent daily routine helps them feel safe, supports their wellbeing and overall development, and enables them to build maintain friendships and promotes steady progress in their learning

We understand that some children may find it harder to come to school. This may be due to worries, health needs, anxiety or changes in routine. Please remember that we are here to support you and your child. We will work closely with you to find the best way to help.

Our school expectation is that your child's attendance should be above 88% we know this can sometimes be difficult. We are here to listen, understand and support. Our goal is to ensure that every child regardless of their needs can access education in a way that works for them.

If you need any support please contact the school we are here to help.

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.

Please be reminded that if a learner is absent for more than 3 days medical evidence will be required to support your child's absence from school.

Reminder to booking 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 to Pupil Leave of absence (Holidays in Term Time)

The 2 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.

Once parents/ carers are submitting a leave of absence request can you please contact school to ensure you have received an outcome.

For this academic year so far 22 parents have been fined from the council for holidays taken during term and a parent has been taken to court 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**.

Term Dates

Summer Term 2026

- Term Starts: Monday 13th April 2026
- Half-term: Monday 25th May 2026 to Friday 29th May 2026
- Term ends: Monday 20th July 2026

Teacher Training Days:

- Friday 1st May 2026 (Thrive Trust Training Day)
- Friday 17th July 2026
- Monday 20th July 2026

Rabia Hassan

