



Springwell Leeds

December 2020



Dear Parents / Carers,

Welcome to the Christmas 2020 edition of the Springwell Leeds Newsletter!

I hope you will enjoy reading about all the wonderful things that have been going on in the run up to the festive season across our sites. As we reach the end of any year it is usually nice to look back and reflect on the months gone by. In the case of 2020, many will want to forget the year and put it behind us. The challenge that the global pandemic brought to the normal operation of the academy as well as the functioning of our regular day to day lives has been something that none of us have experienced before and hopefully is something that will soon be drawing to an end. It has meant long periods without our children in school and disruption to learning in the usual way. Despite all this, I think there are many positives to take from 2020 - it is always a true test of a team to see how they perform in the tough times and not just when things are going well.

In the months of the first lockdown, I was proud of the way in which our team changed it's way of operating from face to face in school to carrying out literally thousands of video calls, home visits, phone calls, home learning pack drops, welfare pack drops and I was equally proud of how well our children responded to this very different way of working. Since the full reopening of the academy in September there have been many positives too. Firstly, our children have settled back into school really well and have quickly adapted and been able to cope with the new systems and routines that covid has meant we have had to introduce. Secondly, after our graduated return in September our attendance has been the best it has ever been in the Autumn term and we have seen some of our sites reach up into the 90%+ range which is really wonderful. Thank you for supporting your children to attend regularly and please keep doing it !

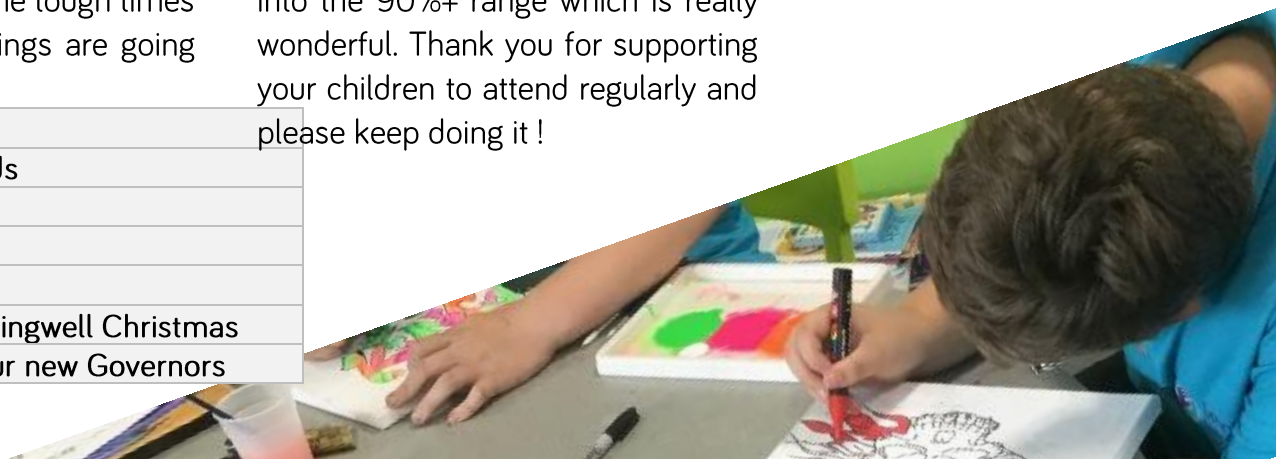
Finally a reminder that the academy closes for the Christmas holiday at the usual time on Friday 18th December. We reopen after the Christmas break with staff training days across all three Springwell Leeds sites on the 4th and 5th of January, meaning it will be closed to all pupils on these days. The first day back for children on all sites is therefore Wednesday 6th January.

With best wishes for a very merry Christmas and peace and happiness for 2021 !

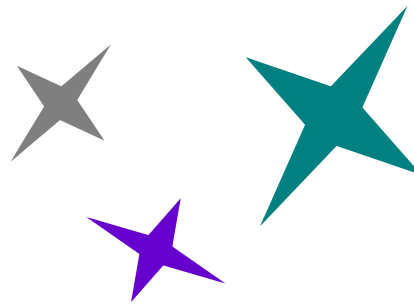
Scott Jacques

Executive Principal

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Primary



This half term at East, pupils have been learning all about democracy and different cultures. Here is “Nidd Air” (having final safety checks) an interactive roleplay area made by the wonderful Miss Charlie. The children absolutely love it and are enjoying flying to different countries and learning about them.

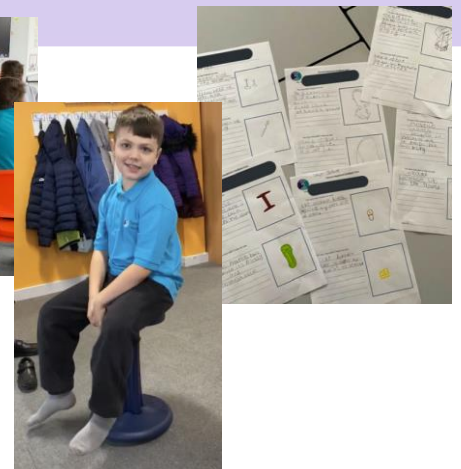


South Primary have recently made community links with Victoria Residential Home on Belle Isle Road - just a short walk from our school.

During #CreateToBeKind week, a Wellspring Trust wide event - it was an ideal opportunity to drop off some Christmas crafts including this lovely wooden house made by a KS3 pupil during woodwork with Mr Khaliq. Victoria House residents made Christmas cards in return with their Activities Coordinator. We hope in the future to be able to make regular visits to the residents when life returns to normal. As part of our continuous school improvement we aim to strengthen links with our parents, carers and community. If you know of any other local community groups that would like to link with our school please contact Deborah Richardson, Primary Leader.

At North, we tried out lots of different types of sensory equipment to support the learning and sensory needs of our students. Trent class did a fantastic job helping us to determine what they felt worked best to help them regulate and engage in learning. Ms. Warr our SENCO loaned the class a number of items to try for a few weeks and present their findings. They had video reviews and written reviews. As a result of their hard work Ms Warr has purchased equipment to use in class all the time. In the new year we will be working with an Occupational Therapist to help us use sensory circuits with our primary students.

Malakye was our winner of the “Kindness Advent Kalendar” for “looking after Miss



North Site



KS4 Photography

In Photography, pupils are looking at signs of Autumn and capturing tones and forms associated with the season. They have been developing skills in focus and depth-of-field where they can focus on a subject and make the back ground out of focus. They have also been looking at shape, pattern and contrast.



Now that our School Dogs are nearly 2 they have been busy working on their new timetables! Students come regularly to our Dog Therapy area of school and work alongside staff for mentoring sessions. Josie and Cooper support students to reduce anxiety, re-regulate, and to communicate effectively with others. Everyone seems to have a lot of fun at the same time! This term we welcomed a new dog to the pack, Murphy! Murphy works with Miss Wason in our Yellow Pod to work specifically with a number of students in KS3. Betty will be joining us again soon when she recovers from surgery on her leg.

Animal assisted therapy



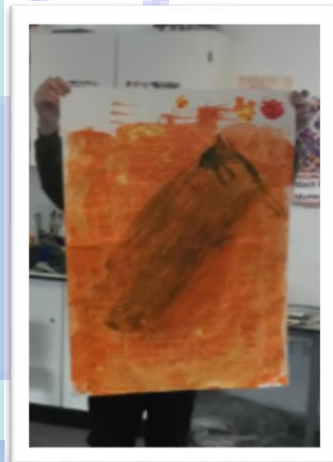
Art as therapy is offered by our visiting Artist, Miam Laville who is very popular with our pupils.

Our Art Specialist, Emma Cartledge, offers art as therapy during intervention sessions alongside the regular art lessons pupils receive.

“When young people are given the opportunity to be creative they often find new and positive ways to express themselves, often without words.”

“Art as therapy allow a calm and supportive environment where a young person can find understanding and support. “

Sessions are pre-arranged by referral or invitation. Please get in touch to find out more.



East Site



Creative Writing

This term, two Year 11 boys had the privilege of attending an online creative writing workshop in collaboration with Dundee University and arranged by Professor Kirsty Gunn (author of several novels and other notable works), and Dr Gail Low (Senior Lecturer of English within the university's School of Humanities). It was entitled 'Imagined Spaces' and attendees were encouraged to write creatively about 'where they would like to be right now'. The boys were the youngest delegates yet created some very interesting responses, which was read to the group. Following the reading, we received the extremely encouraging feedback on Hayden's work below:

'Hayden, your piece is really powerful. This is by far the most powerful place we've had'

'We loved having them and they will be really strong writers...Hayden's piece is vivid and strong... - Dr Gail Low

Here at East...**WE LOVE WRITING!**

The **Christmas present project** has also expanded, with what was at first a box of chocolates morphing into a Santa's sack full of presents for every student ranging from speakers to stunt cars to home pamper kits. Staff have collaborated with businesses through staff family members to create an online wish list of presents which have been generously donated by employees. This combined with donations from external agencies including Brownies and Guides has meant that children who may be unaccustomed to a morning of present opening on Christmas day will be able to enjoy the treats they deserve.



DT at East

Year 9's made Key Store Holders/Racks using plywood, MDF and acrylic and Year 8's made Bird Feeders from recycled wood and Bird Houses this term.



How great do these DT projects look?

South Site



Christmas Pantomime at South Site

Maths Teacher of the Year Shortlist

In November, our Maths Lead, Tim Hilling-Smith attended a glittering virtual award ceremony to celebrate being shortlisted in the annual TES Teaching Awards. Tim was nominated by our Vice Principal, Mrs Reader, for his ongoing commitment to providing the very best maths teaching to our children at Springwell. He works tirelessly to secure the best resources and provision for our students, ensuring they achieve Maths qualifications that set them up for their next steps, be that college, employment or further training. He fosters strong relationships with the children he teaches and his good humour and clear explanations mean he is a winner with our students. I am sure you'll join us in congratulating Tim on his achievement.

At South this term, we have experienced the generosity and kindness of the wider community with several donations from trees to selection boxes to Christmas hampers for families. Christmas will be a difficult time for many this year due to the impact of COVID and thanks to everyone's contributions, we have been able to spread some Christmas cheer. Thank you to:

Methley Estate

Belle Isle Tenant Management Association

Vision Education

Broom Sandwich Shop

Little Angels Playzone and Cafe

White Rose Shopping Centre

Morrisons

The inner South community committee on behalf of councillors

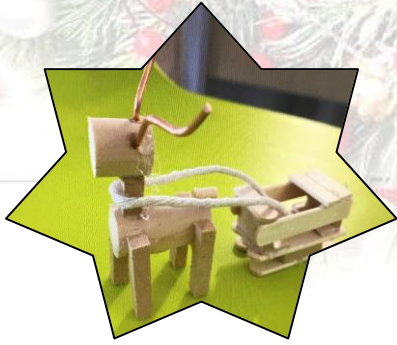
Ginetta racing car company

Asda

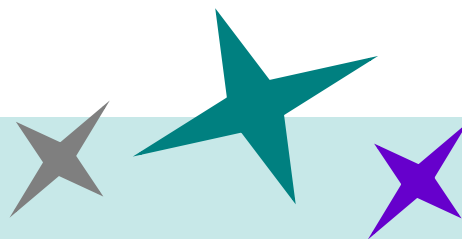


Here at Springwell South, we certainly are revelling in festive cheer! Way back in January, our senior leadership team committed to a school panto - starring...them! Covid hit and our performing arts skills took a back seat, until Miss Halkyard came to the rescue. Our new resident music teacher and tech expert has gone to prove that despite all of the uncertainty and change around us, the show will go on. We know the children will have a good giggle at the hilarious, pre-recorded pantomime, watching Aladdin win the princess and Ebanazar fail in his plan to become rich. A huge thank you to all of the performers involved and especially to Miss Halkyard for her editing skills and creativity.

Over in primary, Miss Halkyard struck again, with the help of Miss Preston. Our newest teachers certainly feel at home after recreating and filming a mini nativity play with Blue 4. We are thrilled to have them on board, helping to make such special memories as these for our children.



Meet our new Link Governor



Yvonne Hare lives in Horsforth and she is mum to one son, aged 25, and three daughters aged 23, 21 and 14.

Yvonne works at the White Rose Academies Trust in Leeds (which includes three secondary schools; Leeds City Academy, Leeds East Academy, Leeds West Academy and one primary school, Mill Field Primary Academy) as Head of Communications and Projects. Prior to working in Education, Yvonne spent most of her career working as a Media Planner Buyer in a full service advertising agency and also, in between having her third and fourth child, she also set up and ran a 52 cover health food and juice bar in Horsforth.

Outside of work, Yvonne is the voluntary Appeals Director for a charity set up by her daughter Bethany in 2012 called Bethany's Smile, a charity which supports the care of children with life limiting, life threatening and terminal illnesses.

Since commencing work in Education in November 2014 and working closely with the governors at the White Rose Academies Trust, Yvonne has always had an interest in becoming a governor herself and on hearing of the Springwell opportunity, she quickly applied for the role and looks forward to bringing challenge as expected by all governors but also to supporting the schools in as many ways as possible. Yvonne is also excited to have been appointed as Link Governor for the South site and is looking forward to meeting all the students and staff in the new year.

Message from our new Chair of Governors – Ian Hague-Brown

Hello. I'm Ian and I have supported Wellspring Academy Trust as a Chair for several years in Leeds and Grimsby. I am a National Leader of Governance and Chair at Victoria Primary/Ebor Garden Primary; also Wellspring Academies. I am an educator myself where I work in a secondary school in Bradford in which I am a Curriculum Leader in charge of Humanities subjects. I enjoy Governance and this is my first stint in a Special School to which I am very much looking forward to the new learning and new challenges (of understanding all the legislation, funding etc) this will bring.



From all at Springwell Leeds Academy,
we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year