



## Message from the Head

As we reach the end of the half term the Summer holidays and the accompanying heat wave seem a distant memory !

As ever the new school year has started at pace with nearly a third of the children on the Shenstone Lodge site new to the school. Moreover, as we get closer to installing 2 new classrooms at The Brades Lodge, three times a week the numbers on that site increase as we have students on transitional timetables attending lessons, in preparation for their permanent move .

Although the installation of the new classrooms hasn't started yet we have been assured by the contractors that the building will be ready to move in to before the Christmas break... we have got everything crossed !

Phase 2 of The Brades expansion project is progressing well behind the scenes. We are working closely with Sandwell MBC who are managing the project on behalf of the school. As a reminder, we are building an 8 classroom block with large 'fit for purpose' specialist and generic classrooms. We are working toward an opening date in September 2023.

As you are no doubt aware, the Covid infection rates are again increasing locally and Nationally. Whilst there is no legal framework that requires individuals to remain at home if they have tested positive for Covid, our school risk assessment (supported by the Trust ) requires staff and children to stay off school for a minimum of 5 days and only return following a negative test from day 6. We thank you for your support.

### ANOTHER AMAZING SAILING TRIP !



On the 12th-16th of September a number of our most adventurous students from across the sites took part in what is becoming a regular opportunity of a life time, sailing around the Solent on a 42 foot clipper, The Pegasus. Ethan, Lucas, Rio, Jayden, Omar and Kai, supported by Mr Maull, Mr Lewis and Ms Millward quickly found their sea legs and were actively keeping the decks scrubbed, 'manning' the sails and navigating the choppy waters off the Cornish coast! Despite the 'cosy' living arrangements all those present had an amazing time and particularly enjoyed dropping in to some of the picturesque bays that dot this beautiful part of the world. Of note Ethan turned out each day dressed as a pirate and was ready for action if the team were to come across anyone who dared to board! He said " It was a brilliant week and I would love to do it all again !" Well done all and thanks to the very brave staff that went with them !





## SPORTS NEWS

Students at the Brades Lodge were unfortunate to lose their first game as the West Midlands SEN League got underway on 27th September. The team played local rivals Lindsworth from Birmingham at the GOALS centre in Rowley Regis. Despite the heavy 9-2 loss the positivity and work ethic of The Brades team was tremendous!

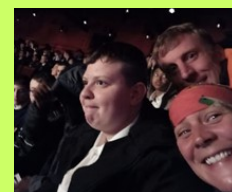
Managers from both schools commented on the sportsmanship displayed by both teams and congratulated all the boys on how well they worked for each other regardless of the score. We look forward to the next fixture and hopefully a win!



## BLOOD BROTHERS THEATRE TRIP

One of the selected texts for our Secondary English Curriculum is the fantastic musical by Willy Russell, Blood Brothers. The opportunity to see it at The Grand Theatre in Birmingham was far too good to miss. On arrival we were greeted by coaches of students from other schools all waiting to be seated too. The Grand is an awe inspiring theatre which elicited suitable responses from our students. The play started and silence descended, except for the school behind us who felt it was OK to talk! All students from The Brades Lodge behaved impeccably, laughed out loud at certain scenes and jumped out of their seats at the end!

The play, tells the story of twins Mickey and Eddie who are separated at birth and are brought up in very different environments. It follows their lives, demonstrating how they negotiate difficulties including relationships and friendships.



Conversations on the way home showed that most of the students had understood the nuances of the play as they talked about the subtleties of the relationships and the performances of the actors. A superb experience for students and staff alike. Sarah Yates (English Lead)



## Shenstone Lodge 'Life Skills' Week

Students on the Shenstone site have

spent a week enjoying activities and lessons that have been specifically designed to link their learning to real world scenarios. Students have enjoyed learning how to make an emergency phone call, making hot chocolates, sandwiches and toasties. Our older students, have also learned how to budget for meals, read complex recipes and calculated how many tea spoons of sugar are in a fizzy drink! A great week and for some students a real opportunity to develop their self-esteem and independence. Hopefully this is the stepping stone for some of our young people to be more proactive at home!!



## Back to the Front

To enhance Minotaurs learning about WW2 we recently visited Whittington Barracks, near Lichfield. The students experienced what it would have been like for children evacuating cities, families sheltering in bomb shelters and for soldiers fighting at the front. The boys really enjoyed interacting with all of the activities the barracks had to offer and couldn't believe what some of the artefacts and exhibits looked like!



## Student returns to work in the school !

Every year the year 11 students leave the school and we hope that we have done enough for them to achieve their educational or employment ambitions.

Amongst our many success stories we are particularly proud to be supporting former student Andre who is in the process of completing a level 2 Teaching Assistant qualification with Halesowen College. As part of the course he is undertaking work experience, at The Brades Lodge... the school he left only two years ago !

Andre is working successfully alongside students across yr 7 and 11 and is acting as a fantastic role model for the students who look up to him.

## Quiz Corner

1. Which football teams have the following nick names .. The Saddlers, The Hatters and The Baggies ?
2. Can you name 5 sports played that do not use a ball ?
3. What is the longest word you can think of that has no letter 'A' ?
4. What do the letters in RSPCA stand for ?
5. What is a 'Natterjack' ?

## Good to Know...

### Help for Households

The Government has launched the <https://helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk/> scheme.

The homepage brings together over 40 support schemes that you can access, depending on eligibility, including help with: Household costs, Energy Bills, Childcare costs, Income support, Transport costs.

Additionally, a range of online tools will help you quickly and efficiently check the support you might be eligible for and how to access it.

I CAN's enquiry service is great for signposting to parents or carers with a concern about their **child's skills in speaking and understanding language**, or for practitioners who have a concern. This free service includes a confidential phone call lasting up to 30 minutes with one of I CAN's speech and language therapists.

<https://ican.org.uk/i-can-s-enquiry-service/>

FREE training opportunity with Citizens Advice on **Budgeting and Saving** is being held on 28th September 2022 10am - 1:00pm. This includes an indepth look at Budgeting and savings to cover Priority Bills, Budgeting, Banking, Savvy Shopping and Energy Saving . The session will focus on practical ways of helping service users/families, looking at the current issues (cost of living crisis) that are affecting people at present 3 hours.

The training will be held at the training room at Smethwick Citizens Advice, Unit 6, Tollgate Shopping Centre, High St, Smethwick B67 7RA

To book contact

[cheryl.s@citizensadviceandwell-walsall.org](mailto:cheryl.s@citizensadviceandwell-walsall.org)





## Thinking about Next Steps

In order to better inform pupils of options available to them as they transition from the Brades, the ASK apprenticeship team, and

Sandwell College came to the school to deliver presentations about

their offers. The sessions were very well attended and Dan will now be working with any pupils on a 1:1 basis who would like to consider an apprenticeship.

Sandwell College gave the pupils further information about A-Levels and Vocational courses / pathways to ensure the pupils have a well balanced view of alternative options. The school will be arranging visits to the college and ASK before Christmas. Scott Worton (AHT)



## A.O.B.

- Parents and carers of students receiving Free School Meals will be pleased to know that the holiday voucher scheme will be continued over the half term. The usual processes will be followed.
- We would like to welcome Morna Lockie (Art teacher at Brades), Amber Patterson (Exams and Data Manager) and Lou Schwartz (Teacher at Shenstone) to the school.
- Dee Hart has a new position as the school Mental Health Lead
- In the next half term we will be seeking your feedback on our annual parent survey. We will be gathering the information electronically, so please look out for it arriving in your 'inbox'. The more feedback we get the better we can be.

### Diary Dates...

Half Term 24th-28th Oct

**INSET DAY school closed to students**

**11th Nov**

Xmas break (1.30pm finish) 16th

Dec / Students return Jan 3rd 2023

### School Data Box 2020/21

Whole School Attendance for 2021 /22 school year : **82.7%**

Attendance for 2022/23 Yr To Date **87.6%**

Days lost to Exclusion

2021/22 Yr To Date : **25**

2022/23 Yr To Date : **15.5**

## STAY SAFE ONLINE

O2 have partnered with the NSPCC to provide a hub which contains information about a number of issues including online bullying and a guide to what 'apps' children are using. This site is designed to help adults understand what kids really do on their mobiles and the internet. And it's also to help you talk to your kids openly about the risks, so they know how to protect themselves.

<https://www.o2.co.uk/help/online-safety>

### Tools and tips

Learn about the tools available to help with online safety for kids.