



Ash Lea
working together to be our best



Autumn Newsletter 2022

It's a magical time of the year!

Thank you to those of you who came to join us for our Christmas sing and sign event at the Cotgrave Welfare. We were incredibly proud of how well so many of our pupils, who often find things that are different, and large, loud gatherings really difficult to manage did. Careful preparation from class teams enabled all our pupils to really enjoy the event. Thank you so much for your wonderful participation which helped make it such a joyful gathering.

Not only were we incredibly impressed with how well our pupils did at the event, they have also conducted themselves exceptionally well throughout our Christmas and theatre visits that have been taking place this month.

At the end of this term we will be saying goodbye to some incredibly valued staff members who are moving on to new ventures. Alex Blanchard, teacher in Pine class, is relocating and Sophie Wakefield, TA in Elm is leaving to start her post-graduate studies, we wish them both the very best of luck. Claire Johnson, PCA in Birch, left earlier this term following a promotion opportunity. We wish them all the very best of luck.

We have recruited new staff too to increase our team; Hayley Norris will be teaching in Maple on Mondays and Tuesdays. Hayley comes to us with a background in secondary teaching, extensive educational post-graduate study and working with adults with learning difficulties. Luke Johnson is not a new member of staff, but will be moving from his TA role in Willow to becoming an early career teacher in Pine class. The office team will be expanding with a new receptionist joining the team. Kelly Ginley will be moving from an NHS receptionist post to join us. Rose Graham, Stacey Whittaker, Diane Lawlor and Reuben Gaude will be joining us as TAs. Jessica Payton, Nathalie Meek and Harriet Horn will be joining Rowan, Birch and Holly respectively as personal care assistants.

Huge congratulations to Jo Kench from Rowan. She and her husband welcomed their baby daughter Robin early this month.

Wishing you all a wonderful Christmas break with your families and see you all again on the 5th of January.

Kate Davies

School Development

This term we have continued to enhance our curricular offer by exploring the characteristics of effective learning with all our staff, ensuring that all staff have an improved understanding of early development and learning through play. This sits together with trialling of the use of a 'continuous provision' model in a few of our secondary classes.

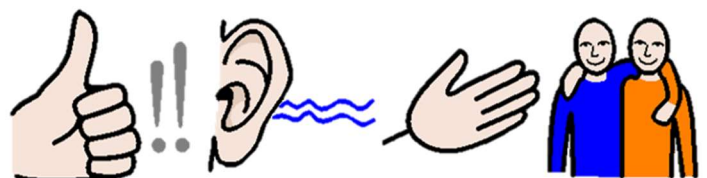
As part of ensuring that our curricular offer is broad and rich learning palette, we have commissioned a music therapist, Beth Brown, to work with some of our pupils, where it meets the needs outlined in their IEP outcomes. Our weekly forest school sessions continue to be great success and the pupils have amazed us in how they have risen to the challenge of learning new skills and shown increased levels of engagement, resilience and perseverance.

We have also introduced our new school swimming scheme this year, which has so far been a great success. Pupils are now swimming in half term blocks, this means smaller groups, and more focus on individual swimming skills. So far 8 of our pupils have received a certificate for completing a level in the Ash Lea Superstars Awards!

Given that there is an expectation that all schools will have to have joined a multi-academy trust by 2030 and the local authority's encouragement for schools to begin the search for 'MAT' partners, the school has been approached by and has approached several MATs to begin exploratory conversations and visits. Senior leaders and governors will be using this year and next to explore what is on offer, with a wide range of MATs, and carefully consider what might be best for pupils, staff and the school. Whilst 2030 is some time away, any decision to join a MAT needs to be incredibly well-considered and will take time.

Sadly, our Chair of Governors, Dr Mags Bailey, and long-standing governor Jane Cooper have not stood for re-election this year. They have worked diligently and incredibly hard on behalf of the school and its pupils and we thank them for their years of excellent service. Chris Hankinson has put himself forwards as Chair of Governors. We are busy recruiting for the governing body. We have one parent governor space available and will be sending further information out to all parents in the new year. Kate or Chris would be happy to talk to anyone interested in this position about the commitment needed.

Do the **best** that we can, all of the time
Listen carefully to what others have to say
Help others whenever we can
Always be polite and friendly





Ash Lea
working together to be our best

Christmas Singalong

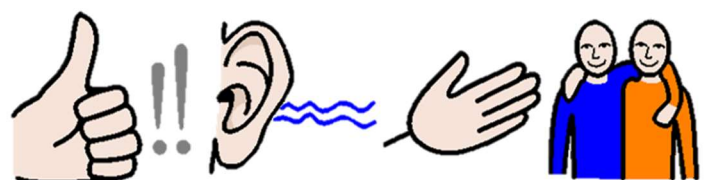
Last week was our Christmas Singalong at the welfare and it was great to see so many parents join us! Everyone was in good voice, and it was a brilliant end to a busy term. This is the first time we have done it at the Cotgrave Welfare as a whole school and after getting such good feedback from pupils, staff, and parents, it looks like we'll be doing it again next year! A big thanks to everyone who joined us and the staff who worked so hard to make it such a special occasion.



FOALS Christmas Fair

A **HUGE** thank you to FOALS (Friends Of Ash Lea School) who made a whopping £2000 at the Christmas fair this year. There were games, stalls, food, and even a visit from the big man himself, Santa! It was great to see everyone who came to support the event and congratulations to those who won the great prizes on the Raffle! **FOALS** do brilliant work supporting the school with funds for activities and resources in classes. They are kindly funding the transport for the whole school to go to the Pantomime this year. Without them, activities like this would not be possible.

Do the **best** that we can, all of the time
Listen carefully to what others have to say
Help others whenever we can
Always be polite and **friendly**





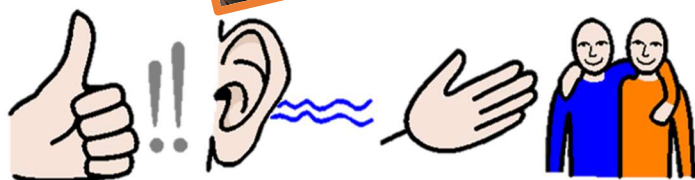
Ash Lea
working together to be our best

Enterprise Week

As part of our Careers and Life After Ash Lea programme we had the school's first enterprise week. Each class were given £20 investment to design, make and sell a product of their choice that would sell well as Christmas gifts. Every class took part and there were some incredible creations. Throughout the week the classes researched, shopped, created, made and sold their products. On Thursday we had a Dragons Den panel of leaders from local business. The pupils presented their products to the panel and received questions and feedback on what they had made. This year we were also supported by pupils from South Nottingham Academy. The week ended with an enterprise Market where each class sold their products to pupils, staff and parents. We're so proud of what the pupils have achieved, and how creative they have been.



Do the **best** that we can, all of the time
Listen carefully to what others have to say
Help others whenever we can
Always be polite and **friendly**





Ash Lea

working together to be our best



Artsmark



This term we have continued with our push to gain Artsmark Gold accreditation. We have worked hard in performing arts, story, music, dance and art to provide a depth of learning for all. In **performing arts** with Willow and Post 16 we have worked on creating a character, giving their emotions and creating a scene. We have also recreated iconic scenes from films. In **music** we have worked on the technical aspects to create compositions. We have looked at the pulse (the heartbeat) of music and how it makes the piece of music fast or slow. We have worked on our conducting skills to get louder and quieter as well as fast and slow. Finally, we have also worked on creating simple compositions with a rhythm and counter rhythm. In **Art** we have looked at environmental art and emulated pieces similar to their themes. We also have had inspiration from Michael Morpurgo's book 'War Horse' to create art inspired by the First World War. We were also lucky enough to have funding from the 'Artist in Schools' organisation linked with the Gallipoli Society to have a mosaic piece of art created for school. This will be put up in the memorial area of the Lea so that pupils and staff can have time for reflection during the school day in this area. Our stories in Primary this term have based around 'Rain and Snow'. The students got used to working in the hall to be part of an immersive story where they got to splash in puddles and play in the rain. In Secondary, we have worked on the story of Rainbow Grey by Laura Ellen Anderson. We have followed the story of how Rey Grey got her magical rainbow powers. Jo Brown has started up a dance group in school on a Wednesday afternoon, currently learning tap dancing all students have really enjoyed getting to learn the basics of this style of dance. Finally, classes have enjoyed going out and about engaging with the arts offer in Nottinghamshire. Post 16 had a fantastic day at Lakeside looking at their current art installation whilst Pine, Beech and Birch have been the audience in Julia Donaldson's adaptation of 'The Singing Mermaid.' Next term look out for more visits into Nottingham (and perhaps further afield) as we continue on our Artsmark journey.



📅 Important Dates 📅

Please see our **live** online diary for all important dates [Online Calendar - Ash Lea School](#)

Wednesday 4th January – **Closed for INSET**

[Characteristics of Effective Learning](#)

Thursday 5th January – **School opens to pupils**

Tuesday 10th/Wednesday 11th – **Trip to Pantomime at The Nottingham Playhouse**

Monday 6th – Friday 10th February – **Children's Mental Health Week**

[This week we will be taking time out in class to focus on wellbeing, and children's mental health. We are also hoping to arrange some sessions with MHST for pupils, parents and carers.](#)

Friday 10th February – **Last day of half term 1**

Monday 6th – Friday 10th March – **National Careers Week (Life After Ash Lea)**

[The school will be running a careers fair for pupils to meet with employers and explore different jobs, have visits to experience workplaces and taster sessions for our P16 vocational courses.](#)

Friday 31st March – **Last day of spring term**

Do the **best** that we can, all of the time
Listen carefully to what others have to say
Help others whenever we can
Always be polite and **friendly**

