

The BAC

Blackfriars Academy Chronicle

Signs and Symbols



Shaw
Education
Trust

Blackfriars Academy - "an environment where students feel safe and supported".

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Blackfriars Academy Chronicle

Signs and Symbols



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Foreword

Welcome to Our Spring Edition of the BAC where we explore with you this term's anchor: "Signs and Symbols" exploring the significance in our students' lives, their education, and beyond. We hope that you enjoy reading about and seeing all of the different activities that the classes have been engaged in.

Within these pages, you'll discover the insights our students have gained as they delved into the world of signs and symbols. From the symbolism found in literature to the practical importance of road signs in our daily commutes, each class has immersed themselves in understanding the rich tapestry of signs and symbols that surround us. You will gain an insight into how we joined in with World Book Day, what signs and symbols students have looked for whilst out and about in the community and how the gardening bug has spread around the school.

We chose our anchors very carefully - ensuring that they have relevance to each of our students, no matter what Pathway they are in. This edition really illustrates the breadth of the educational experiences that we make available to our students and serves as a testament to the collaborative efforts of our dedicated staff and the enthusiastic participation of our students. Through interactive lessons, engaging activities, and thought-provoking discussions, our classes have truly embraced the theme of signs and symbols, enriching their learning experience in the process.

For parents and carers, this edition provides a unique opportunity to glimpse into the educational journey of our students and the invaluable lessons they've absorbed. It's a testament to the holistic approach we adopt here at Blackfriars where every aspect of learning is infused with meaning and relevance.

So, join us as we celebrate the culmination of our exploration into the world of signs and symbols. May this edition inspire you to see the world with new eyes. Please do point out signs as you travel around during this holiday period. Ask your child what it means - we hope (with fingers crossed) that they will know what it means.

Sending all of our families our very best wishes for the holidays and looking forward to seeing your offspring on Monday 8th April,

Alison Parr

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'Alison Parr', located at the bottom left of the page.

The Blackfriars' Song

We're the believers
 We're the achievers
 We don't let anything stand in our way.
 We are the dreamers.
 We're the truth seekers
 Strong enough to say 'Come What May'

There may be rocks ahead that we have to dodge
 There may be mountains high that we have to climb
 There may be rivers wide that we have to swim
 But we'll take it all in our stride
 'Cause we've got PRIDE.

We are strong
 We're where we belong
 We're determined to take it all on.
 There may be rocks ahead that we have to dodge
 There may be mountains high that we have to climb
 There may be rivers wide that we have to swim
 But we'll take it all in our stride
 'Cause we've got PRIDE.

Sometimes our path
 Takes us far and wide
 But we travel on with hope and PRIDE.
 There may be rocks ahead that we have to dodge
 There may be mountains high that we have to climb
 There may be rivers wide that we have to swim
 But we'll take it all in our stride
 'Cause we've got PRIDE.

We hope you enjoy our BAC



**Blackfriars
 Academy**



**Shaw
 Education
 Trust**

Signs Of

Spring



Digging And Growing With Dudson



In Dudson, we've been exploring our PSHE Day 'Changing and Growing' by getting green-fingered and planting some bee-friendly flowers and sunflowers in our outdoor area. Over the upcoming weeks, we will be tending to our plants making sure they get enough water and sunlight so that we can see how they 'change and grow'.





Springtime Splendor: Planting Daffodils With Clarice



Clarice has also caught the gardening bug!

We've thoroughly enjoyed tending to our garden bed, providing students with a rich sensory experience. They're immersed in the earthy scents of plants, exploring various textures like the soft leaves and hard pebbles, fostering a deeper connection with nature.





Moorcroft's Green Thumb



Moorcroft have been getting their garden ready for growing. They have had to prepare the bed which needed to be cleared of nettles and dead plants. Some sensory decorations have not kept their colour through the winter so we are going shopping for outside garden decorations. We are siding the garden over and



adding some pallets to break up the clay in our patch. We will feed the soil to make it rich to feed our plants when they are planted out. At the moment they are seeds inside the polly tunnel but they will be planted out into our weed free garden as the





frost disappears. Pupils have explored appropriate tools to use and safety around the tools that are being used. We also selected plants to grow which will awaken our senses.



During our gardening time, we made a new friend - an earthworm! Worms are super important because they help our plants stay healthy and make our soil really good for growing things. They work hard to make sure plants grow strong and bright.



Sprout Squad: Blackfriars Gardening Club



Now that spring is officially here, the real work for the gardening club can begin. Over the winter, during Friday dinner times, students from the questioning pathway have been out in force tidying the garden area, preparing the raised beds, and pulling up weeds. It has been heart-warming to see our students so eager, engaged



in their set jobs and immersing themselves in their joy of gardening and making their mark on our school grounds. Some students have brought in their own seeds that have been lying around at home and planted these themselves. Some students





have come down to gardening club to get creative by making pieces of art using what they can find in the area.



With spring here, the students are now looking to begin growing vegetables and colourful flowers then in the next coming months we will see the results of our students' hard work.





Recognising



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Outside School

Stepping Safely: Aynsley's Journey In Learning Road Safety



This term, linking to the school anchor of 'Signs and Symbols', Aynsley Class have been working on the knowledge and skills needed to cross the road safely. We started this sequence in school to begin with, identifying the steps of 'Stop, Look, Listen' through song, actions and corresponding Makaton signs.

We have also explored various road signs we might see out in the community – stop, go, red man, green man, zebra crossing and traffic lights! To begin our community trips out, students had the opportunity to go on the minibus and look for these road signs around the local area.

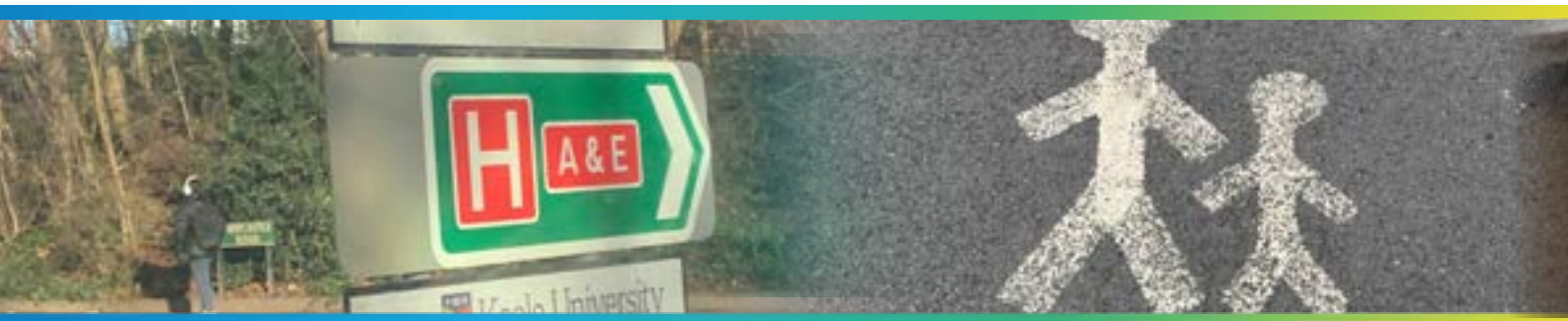




Our main aim has been for students to develop independence in recognising a safe place to cross the road, identifying key symbols around road safety and eventually crossing the road themselves! The zebra crossing on the school yard was the perfect place to start practising these skills in a safe environment. As our confidence developed, the class visited a quiet area on Keele University's Campus to put our learning into practise in a real-life scenario. Everyone worked extremely hard, sensibly following the steps and signs for 'Stop, Look, Listen' and developed good levels of independence!



Spotting Signs And Symbols



Bridgewater's focus this term has been underpinned by the whole school anchor 'signs and symbols'. Over the course of the term, Bridgewater class have participated in weekly community visits, where students have had the opportunity to explore different signs and symbols outside of the familiar school environment.



The students have accessed a variety of locations including: The Royal Stoke University Hospital, supermarkets, café's, Gandey's circus, Bridgemere garden centre and Peak Wildlife Park. In each of the locations, the students have been able to build upon their cultural capital, whilst discovering both familiar and unfamiliar signs and symbols.



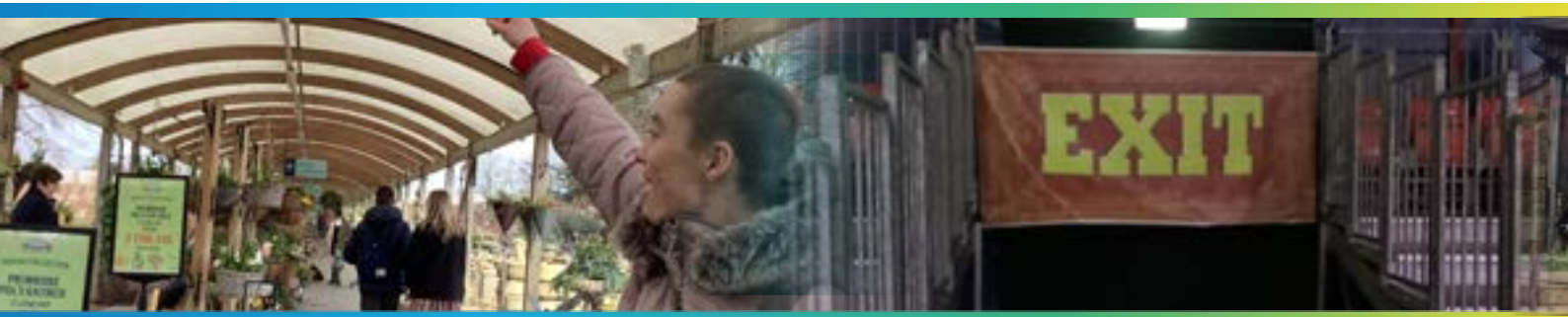


Students were able to learn all about the different signs and symbols that can be found around the hospital site. Some of the signs the students found include the signs for the entrance, A&E and parking.



Students visited Morrisons and Tesco to look for signs and symbols that are helpful to use when shopping.





Students used signs and symbols around the café to help them when purchasing food and drink items. The students also spotted other important signs to be aware of when visiting the café, including the toilets and the fire exit.



Students were able to find a selection of different signs and symbols around the circus tent, and they were lucky enough to be treated to a look inside the tent too, where they discovered lots of new signs and symbols!





When visiting the garden centre, students used signs and symbols to successfully navigate their way around. The students demonstrated that they were able to recognise and follow signs around the centre to find and then purchase seeds to plant in our garden.



The students enjoyed exploring the zoo and finding all of the different signs and symbols along the way.



Exploring Healthy Food Choices



As the anchor this term is Signs and Symbols, Churchill have been learning about healthy eating and beginning to understand food labels. For this they needed to understand the food groups and the Eat-well Guide. After learning about this and following a recipe to make different types of healthy soups, they went to Morrisons Supermarket to use their knowledge. While walking to Morrisons, they were quizzed



and asked to answer questions about crossing the road, what types of crossings they could see and how would they use them. Students had to use the signs above

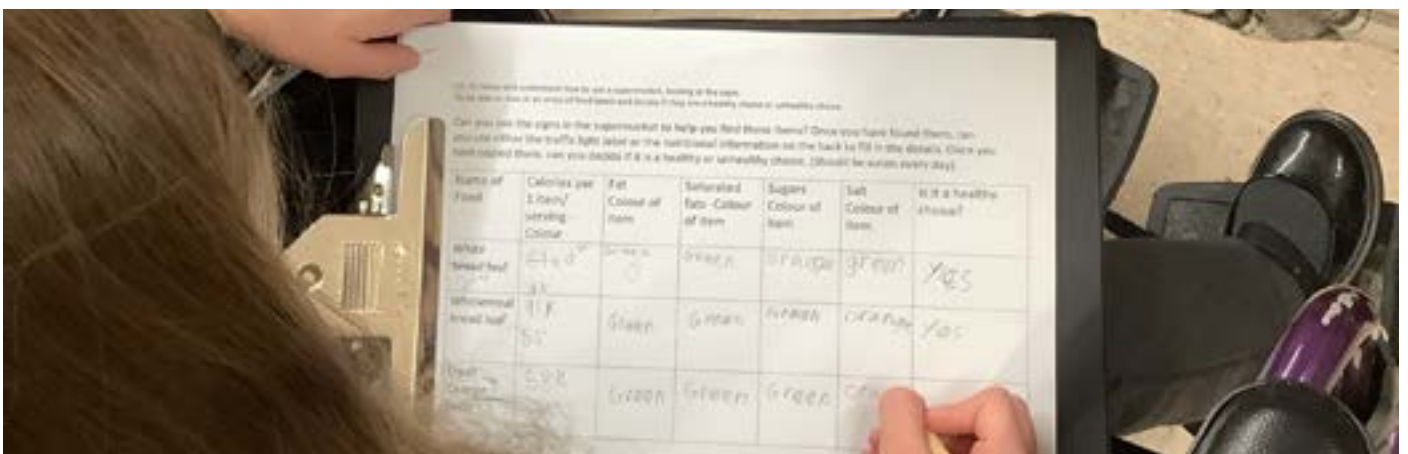




the aisles to find different foods. Once they found them, they had to use either the traffic light label or the nutritional information label to look at the amounts of Calories, Fats, Saturated Fats, Sugars and Salt. Using their knowledge of these, they then had to decide if they were healthy, which meant they could eat it every



day, unhealthy, which meant they could only eat it once or twice a week or in the middle and could have it three times a week. Students were amazing at using the signs to find each item and really enjoyed their treasure hunt. They the were able to use their money knowledge to go to the cafe, and buy items. Students really enjoyed this trip and made them think about their favourite foods and how healthy they are.





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Around School

Empowering Accessibility: Moon & Braille Signs In Our School



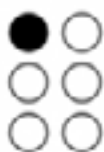
At our school, we prioritise inclusivity and accessibility for all our students, including those with visual impairments. Utilising tools such as Moon and Braille, our visually impaired students are fully integrated into the learning environment.

These tactile systems serve as invaluable aids, allowing students to access educational materials and navigate the school with confidence. Moreover, our commitment to inclusivity extends to the physical environment, where tactile signs are strategically placed to promote independence and familiarity with surroundings.

By providing these resources, we empower our visually impaired students to thrive academically and socially, fostering their confidence and ensuring equal opportunities for all.

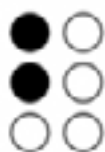
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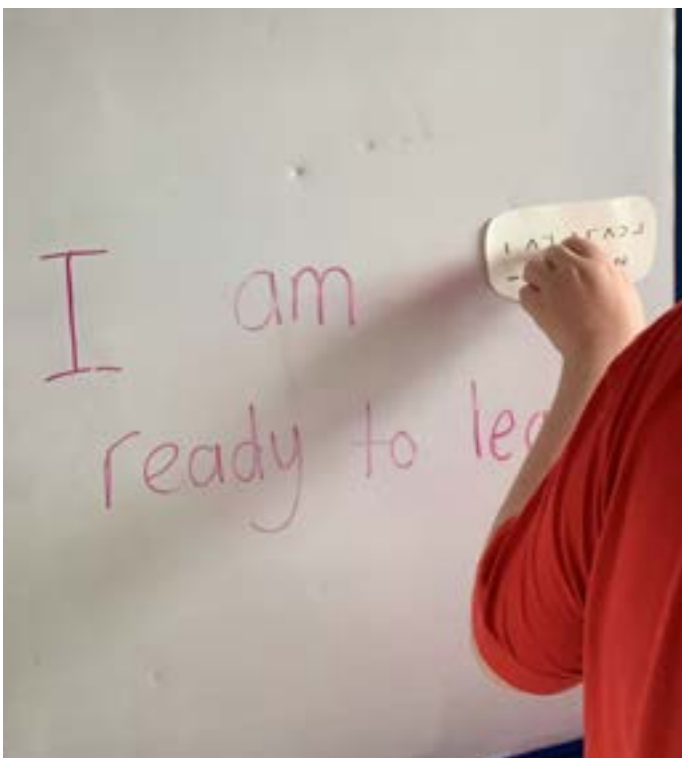
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Lunchtime Support: Student Mentors In Dudson Class



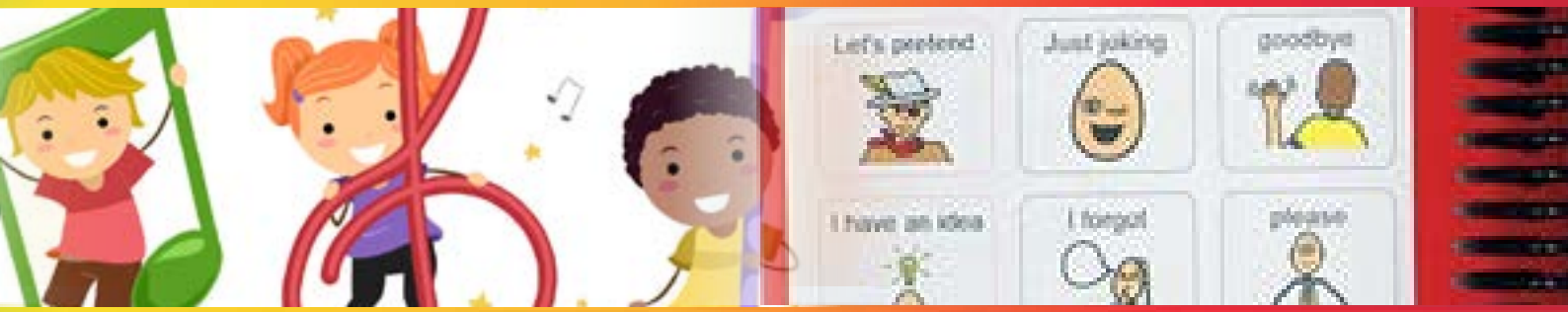
Two of our Student Mentors tell us what they have been getting up to over lunch times:

“Me and a class-mate go to Dudson class every lunchtime where we help out. We do this because we like helping the staff in Dudson and it feels like we are doing



work experience. We would like to be TAs when we are older. The students love having us there, we make them happy, and we keep them entertained. We like to encourage them to join in with songs and actions. We like being silly and making them laugh.”





“I am a Peer mentor and I help with people’s emotions and people can come to me for a chat.”

“I’m an equality and inclusion mentor and this means that I can help people and help with conversations and sort things out if something goes wrong.”

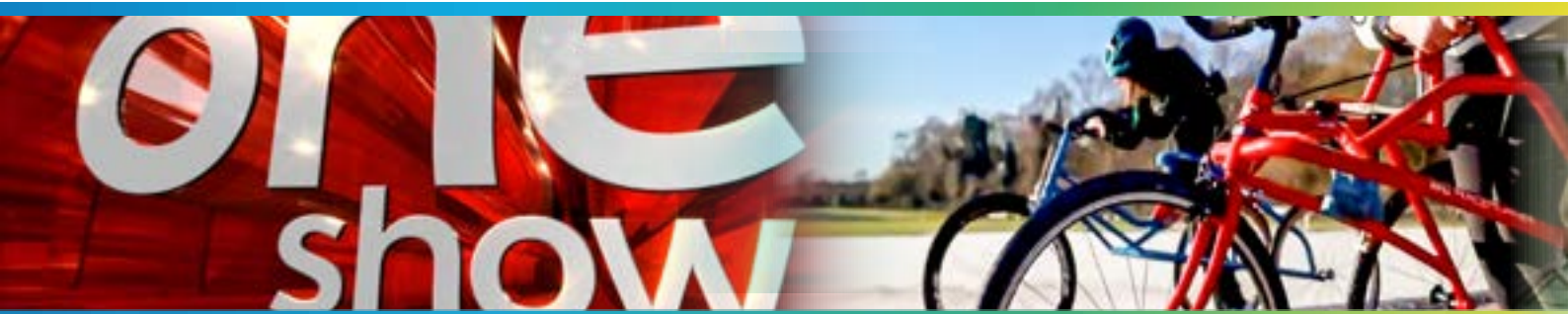


Symbolising

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Inspiring Strides: Caitlyn's Frame Running Journey On TV



How it came to be?

Tulley had an email from the 'One Show', and they asked if she would be able to do a video about frame-running (Tulley is promoting the sport to include it in the Paralympics for 2028). They asked if she could get someone to do the video along side her so she asked me. They had emailed the questions previously, so we knew what was going to be asked.

How was I feeling?

I, was, super, excited and felt privileged to be included. We arrived at the venue, which was Sutton Park, and they were setting up the cameras. We unloaded the frames out of the van; we had to re-build them. Tulley then completed her interview.





What happened?

After the interview we got on our frames and they started to video us, while we were running - it was funny because, it had snowed, and we couldn't get our grip. Luckily, One part of the track had been melted by the sun. The part where I was being interviewed with Tulley was filmed.

They used a drone to film the overhead shots as well as being asked how both myself and Tulley had met; Tulley commented that I was her "guinea pig". I was the first person that she had trained for this sport.

They day arrived when it was being shown and I had told all my family and friends as well as the whole school, but 5 minutes before it was about to air it was canceled. I was, extremely, frustrated and sad because I knew it could have promoted sports for people with disabilities. Also it would show that anybody can do anything if you put your mind to it!

- Caitlyn

You can watch the video of Caitlyn and Tulley here:

https://youtu.be/zGJTgbsTT0?si=MfnNxLg3gktRHL_U



Exploring Emotions With The Colour Monster



Our sensory story in Dudson this term is 'The Colour Monster'. We explore sensory stimuli linked to the story, using the immersive 4D room. This story supports students' recognition of signs and symbols linked to emotions, each one linking to a different colour.



We have been working on developing our ability to communicate and engage through an immersive story-telling session offering a range of learning opportunities that will support them in their development of expressions and receptive communication skills.





Celebrating World Book Day



This year our students and staff entered into the spirit that defines World Book Day and celebrated all things books. Linking to the anchor that has underpinned our learning this term, Signs and Symbols, as a school embraced the symbols that books have come to represent through the ages; symbols of: learning, knowledge, insight and enjoyment.



The pathways focused bespoke celebrations for individual classes to mark the day the way they wanted to.

Celebrations included:

Fancy dress – come as your favourite book character

Bedtime story theme with student and staff in their coming in PJ's

Caught reading – students photographed reading across the school

We hope you have enjoyed the book token, which is always such a key part of the day.





Wishing you all happy reading ...

Below is a montage of photographs that captured the spirit of WBD



Sirens And Smiles: Fire Engine Visit To Clarice



This term in Clarice, we have particularly concentrated on Real World Play and Employment.

Students have been immersed into their learning through real life experience. We have explored being a builder, a vet, but the most exciting profession we have explored this term has most definitely been 'a FIREFIGHTER'. In addition to all the resources and props we have encountered in class, we had a visit from local firefighters.

This day was exciting and enabled us to have positive interactions and provided multi-sensory opportunities, from a range of stimulating visuals, loud sounds of the





sirens, horn and engine, different feels and textures of equipment on board and also the toasted smell of their uniforms.

We explored the huge engine from the outside and in. We tried on firefighter outfits, we handled equipment on board and exchanged lots of positive interactions.

We simply cannot wait to see what the next term brings for our 'Real World Play-Employment.



Exploring Change And Growth In PSHE



During the Spring term, the schools focus for PSHE was Changing and Growing. We started the day with a whole school assembly, where we thought about what had changed about us. Students in Middleport expressed that they had recently changed school, their bodies have got bigger, and their personalities are different from when they were younger.



Middleport then went back to their class to begin to recall the names of the body parts, we learned the scientific names for some of our body parts.

Middleport moved on to look at puberty and what might begin to happen to our bodies as they change from being a child to an adult. We first thought about the changes that happen to different people, completing a sorting activity with changes that happen to boys, changes that happen to girls and changes that will





happen to both. We discussed that our skin would become more oily, we would grow pubic hair and we would become more sweaty. Middleport students then had a discussion about what we might need to do to help when we go through puberty. Students' suggested, "we will need to shower more, wash our faces and wear deodorant".

Middleport finished the day thinking about our families, what it means to belong to a family and who is in our family. Each student created a family poster whereby they thought about the family that live with them at home and the family who don't live in their house.

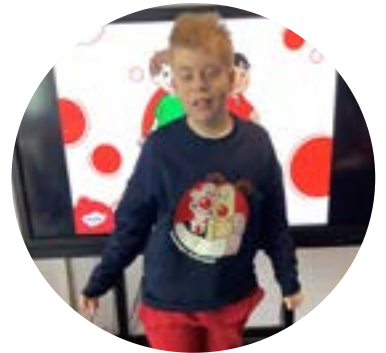


Crazy Hair For Red Nose Day

**RED
NOSE
DAY**



The school supported 'Red Nose Day' by raising awareness and partaking in a fundraising event by wearing red clothing and/or having wacky hair! Aynsley Class looked very wacky from their brightly coloured clothing to some crazy hairstyles - we enjoyed having a photo-shoot to show off our styles. We discussed what 'Red Nose Day' is in aid of and the importance of helping others.





To bring the theme of helping others to life, we joined up with Moorcroft Class and Middleport Class for the afternoon for some team games. This involved interacting with students and staff members who we may not have socialised with before, and working together in four teams, but most of all having fun! This was a great experience for all three of the classes and a wonderful opportunity for activities across two of our Pathways – Immersive and Exploratory.

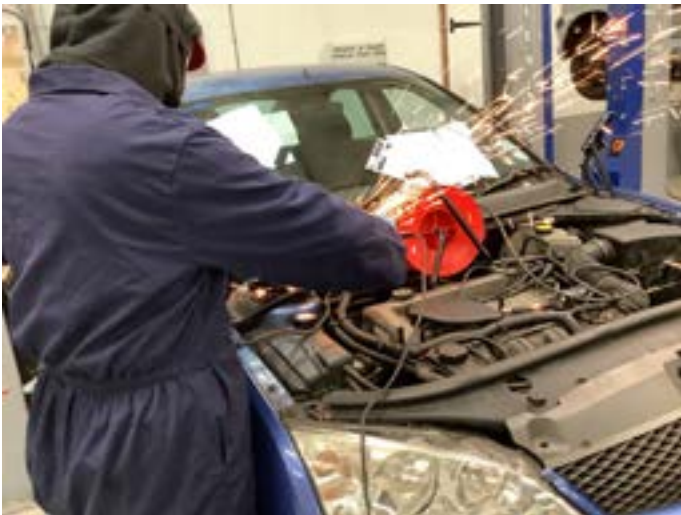


Stay Safe, Stay Aware



Gladstone students are working hard during their work experience. They're learning about staying safe by paying attention to signs and symbols at their placements. At the mechanics, they've seen signs telling them to wear protective gear.

They've also noticed signs we might not think about much, like those for automatic doors and reminders to wash hands. It's all about understanding how signs help keep us safe at work.





Footnote

Whilst we were delighted to receive our 'Outstanding' judgement from Ofsted, we know that many of you as parents and carers of young people with SEND will have very strong views about whether Ofsted are the agents for change that they could be.

I would urge everybody to take part in the consultation by going on-line
Ofsted The Big Listen:

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/ofstedbiglisten/>





Our new holiday sessions are designed to provide SEND children aged 7-11 with a fun and holistic play experience! We have combined indoor and outdoor play with music and craft experiences which have been put together by our expert tutors.

We have two dates available in our Easter block – the **28th of March** and the **4th of April**. The sessions will run for two hours from **10:30-12:30**, and will be held in the Willow Room at Brampton Museum. The address for the museum is Brampton Park, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Newcastle ST5 0QP.

<https://staffordshiresciencetutor.co.uk/send-easter-holiday-sessions/>



Join us for arts and crafts, sport sessions, music, playing in our sensory garden, and more, topped off with a delicious hot meal!

Our Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Sessions provide an amazing opportunity for any child, aged 8-16 with a registered disability, to make new friends and gain confidence within a supportive environment.

March 25th - 28th & April 2nd - 5th
9:30 am - 3:00 pm
Caudwell International Children's Centre,
Newcastle-Under-Lyme, ST5 5NT

Secure your child's place now before they run out! Email short.breaks@caudwellchildren.com or visit our website:

<https://www.caudwellchildren.com/changing-lives/how-we-can-help/short-breaks/easter-haf/>



Apedale Valley Light Railway

For our first event of the 2024, we welcome the Easter Bunny and the Easter Egg Hunt. Easter Saturday, Sunday & Monday. Steam trains 11:30-4pm. Standard fares apply and no need to book – just turn up and ride. Can you spot the Easter Eggs down the railway? Prizes for kids who get them all!

LEISURE CENTRE

TOGETHER SWIM

Thursday 4 April
13.30 - 14.30

A fun swim session designed for disabled guests from 6 to 16 yrs, their families and friends.

Adult supervision required
Pre-book on 01538 373603

LeisureCentre.com



Blackfriars Academy Term Dates 2023-2024 (Pupils)_{v1}

September 2023						
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April 2024						
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School Open
 School Closed