

A Frosty Half Term At The Barlow



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HEADTEACHER'S MESSAGE

A focus on pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development



Welcome to the latest edition of our newsletter, which I hope will give you a taste of some of the things that have been happening in our school community over the last five weeks. In this issue we have decided to focus on SMSC, that is, how The Barlow develops our pupils' spiritually, morally, socially and culturally.

So, from the visit to Iceland to our fabulous LAMDA results; from the celebrations for British Science Week to the Sacrament of Reconciliation, pupils have once again had a real depth and breadth of opportunities

to grow as young people. I am proud to lead such a vibrant, happy community.

I have noticed this week that lighter evenings are upon us and I am mindful that the season of Lent is drawing to a close. In his Lenten message for 2023, Pope Francis tells us how through the journey of Lent, we should look to 'transform' ourselves and he explains that we can do this by listening to Jesus as he speaks to us through the scriptures. In our beautiful Easter Liturgies, we were given the opportunity to listen to the journey of Jesus in the final days of his life. We were reminded of his service and sacrifice and how we should follow his example in the way we live our lives.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank pupils, staff, parents and governors for all your support of our school this half-term. I wish you a peaceful and restful Easter holiday and we look forward to welcoming pupils back to school on Monday 17th April.

**Ms Wallace
Headteacher**



International Women's Day 2023

International Women's Day is celebrated on 8th March. At The Barlow, in pupils' collective worship, they were given the opportunity to reflect on this year's theme of 'embrace equity'.

Pupils were challenged to think about their role in society and how we can continue to make the world more equitable for all women and girls. Pupils were also asked to design a piece of artwork to reflect on their 'shero': someone who has inspired them to strive for a more equal world. Our winning competition entry was designed by Zahra in Year 7. Congratulations Zahra !



GCSE ICELAND GEOGRAPHY TRIP

Making Memories

Our GCSE geography trip to Iceland was arranged to give pupils the opportunity to visit one of the most outstandingly beautiful volcanic landscapes in the world. During the visit pupils investigated the sustainable approach the country takes to energy production by harnessing geothermal energy and being one of the world leaders in carbon capture technology. This all links to the GCSE unit on tectonic landscapes and hazards. Our budding geographers spent four days developing their geographical skills and knowledge, which will not only help them in securing their qualification, but allowed them to develop their social and independence skills.

Whilst we were in this stunning country the pupils engaged in a number of different activities that we are sure they will remember forever. First, they explored the 'Golden Circle'. Here they encountered a range of unique volcanic landforms including the mighty Gullfoss Falls, Geysers and Thingvellir National Park. Pupils were overwhelmed with the amazing natural beauty of each of these.

Next, we visited a Geothermal Power Station and The National Museum of Iceland, both of which brought to life parts of the GCSE course that pupils often find challenging. Iceland is a country famous for its natural pools. We had the opportunity to swim in The Secret Lagoon, which is the oldest of the natural pools in Iceland. This very special place takes its water source from local hot springs and is so warm, clean and rich in sulphur that it provided an outdoor swimming experience like no other. Amongst all this we experienced the pupils enjoying boiling their own eggs in the volcanic pools at a geothermal park. They even ate them afterwards. The best eggs they'd ever tasted.

The trip was a huge success. Feedback from pupils was extremely positive and this was reiterated by

parents in the days that followed.

Caoimhe, Year 11, commented 'Thank you, Mr Wall, for giving us such an awesome experience, I'll never forget it!'

Mast, Year 11, said 'This was literally the most amazing experience of my entire life!'

And finally, *'A huge thank you to all the staff that looked after the young people that went on the trip to Iceland. Joe had an amazing time and it is an experience that I'm sure will stay with him for a long time to come.'* Miss Somers, Mother of Joe, Year 11.

We all had an amazing time and we hope everyone involved will remember the trip for years to come. We are looking forward to planning our next geography trip to Italy next year.



PI DAY

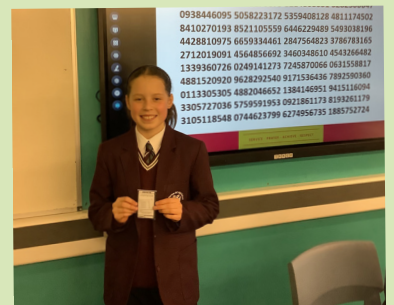
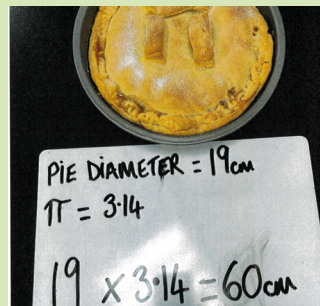
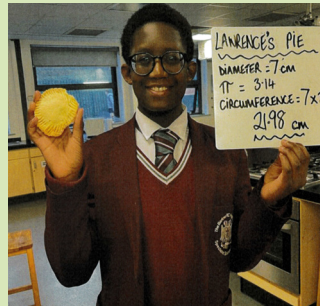
Making Mathematics Fun !

On 14th March 2023 we celebrated Pi Day. Pupils learned about the superior relationship between a circle and its diameter, whilst completing fun activities throughout the day.

In Family Time, pupils took part in a π 'dingbats' as well as discovering the relations of Pi. Pupils also competed in Pi-problem relay races and activities as well as 'Grade 9' problem solving π puzzles in their mathematics lessons. In English and Art lessons, Pi related activities took place including creating poems with the syllables matching with Pi.

Pupils in Hive 3 did an excellent job in baking different sized pies and measuring the diameters to find the circumference. Around school pupils ate pie for lunch, attempted to decode the Pi Day Treasure Hunt and also enjoyed 'Pi'ing' the teacher. Many thanks to the teachers that were involved! Congratulations to Milosz (Year 7) who won our Pi competition and managed to memorise a whopping 200 digits!

Once again, it was a fantastic day to remember at The Barlow.



Duke of Edinburgh

Twenty-one of our bold, daring and adventurous pupils have been working towards their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award over the past year. Their expeditions took them to Marple and Rivington, where they planned and orienteered their own overnight stay and hike.

Working in groups of 7, pupils had to take responsibility for their own survival both overnight and throughout the day. They had to navigate themselves through unknown and isolated areas safely back home.

In addition to surviving in the wild independently, our pupils have spent up to the last six months learning new skills, volunteering in the local

community and taking part in a number of physically demanding activities.

All of our dedicated and courageous young people have already, or are soon to be, rewarded with their Bronze Award.

This year, we had 60 pupils apply to take part. Unfortunately, only 28 of those who applied will be able to be in this year's cohort. The applications were all excellent and because of this we have promised those who were unsuccessful a place next year. We look forward to witnessing the achievements of this year's team.



LAMDA

Stars in the Making

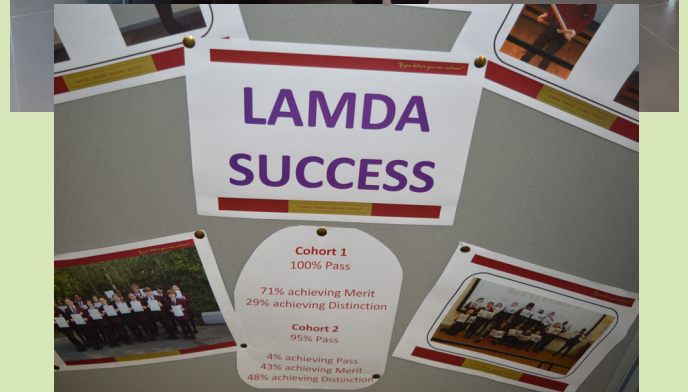
On the 9th February 2023, our exceptionally talented drama pupils took their LAMDA (London Academy of Musical Dramatic Art) Examination in Acting.

During the externally assessed task, pupils had to perform two extracts from a script that they had been rehearsing in their own time since before Christmas. The second part of the examination was a probing interview about the performance choices and the character they played. The confidence and dedication of each and every pupil was commendable. We are incredibly proud of our budding actors and their outstanding talent.

We are delighted to report that the results were amazing once again, with a raft of Merit and Distinction grades. Since the outset of offering LAMDA to our pupils, 100% of candidates have passed. This is a significant achievement as LAMDA is a prestigious qualification which is recognised and accredited by the Department of Education.

Amongst our fabulous pupils was Caoimhe, who sat the Level 3 Grade 6 Bronze Award qualifying with

Distinction; she has been awarded an impressive 12 UCAS points. **Our congratulations to all candidates.**



Reconciliation Day

‘Therefore, confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.’ - James 5:16

Reconciliation is an important part of Lenten preparation in the Catholic faith. The Church teaches that this period leading up to Easter, is a wonderful time to celebrate the reconciling love and the healing graces that Jesus offers us. As such, The Barlow holds an annual ‘Reconciliation Day’, offering pupils the opportunity to confess their sins to a priest.

Whilst the sacrament is only for Catholics, all pupils, no matter what their faith or beliefs, could choose to speak to a priest should they wish. This year the day was kindly coordinated by Father John Hitchen from St Catherine’s, who arranged for a number of his fellow priests from within the diocese to visit school.

Their generosity with their time, allowed for a large number of our community to receive the sacrament. The running of the day was supported by some of our GIFT Team, who did an amazing job in ensuring that the process was both respectful and well organised. The day was very successful and the feedback extremely positive.



SCIENCE WEEK 'Connections'

A Celebration of STEM

This month the Science Faculty, and indeed the school, have had a wonderful time celebrating British Science Week. This annual festivity allows the country to celebrate all of the superb things happening in the world of science, and how we continue as a nation to contribute and lead in this field.

Pupils have celebrated in a number of ways; focusing on past and present contributions to science. The first activity saw all pupils start lessons by debating the greatest ever contribution to science from these shores. Tasked with five choices, pupils had to put forward their case, and then explain the impact upon society. The conversations around these varied enormously, and it was wonderful to hear so much passion around why their choice was the most significant. Interestingly, it appeared to be a close-run thing between Tim Berners Lee inventing the World Wide Web, and the discovery of Penicillin by Alexander Fleming. However, many pupils were keen to stress that perhaps we haven't seen the full impact of the work of Franklin, Crick and Watson and their discovery of DNA. It was superb to listen to how pupils have applied the topics within the curriculum, for example, genetic engineering and future medicines to this breakthrough.

Following on from this, pupils had an opportunity to 'Wow us with Science'. This involved all Year 7 and 8 visiting our Science Library, and spending an hour exploring a topic of science of their choice. Pupils then produced a fact file about what they were looking into, and these were absolutely superb. The topics ranged from the expansion of the universe, the evolution of birds from dinosaurs, and the crazy world of slime. It was really evident that pupils enjoyed having the chance to go 'off-piste' from their usual curriculum, and explore things that really intrigue them. Science is all about curiosity, and Mr Sirett, Head of Science, explained that he hopes that this has been a chance to really explore.

Finally, the Science Team wanted to give pupils the chance to explore science in a different format, and dovetail in the contributions of the wider world. As part of this pupils in Year 9 and 10 had the opportunity to watch 'Hidden Figures' in the Lecture Theatre; an Academy Award winning film which promotes science, and contributions from scientists and in particular celebrates the contribution of a group of black female mathematicians as they helped to get the USA into space in the 1960s. This was selected to tie in with our recent celebration of International Women's Day, and to also highlight the importance of all STEM subjects.



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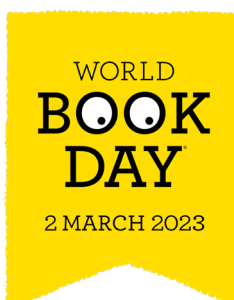
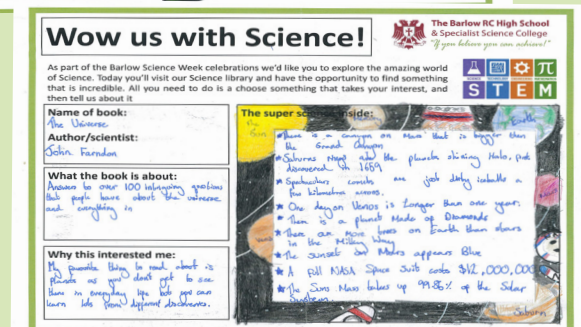
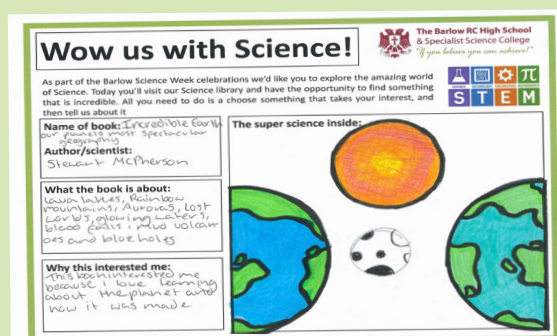
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10-19 March
British
Science
Week
2023

Pupils were given the opportunity to watch the first episode of the new Wild Isles Series on the BBC. This series, four years in the making, highlights the wonderful nature within the United Kingdom, and the BBC Earth Team do a phenomenal job in capturing that in all its glory. This was selected to promote an awareness of Ecology within the UK, and also highlight the importance of protecting our precious environments.

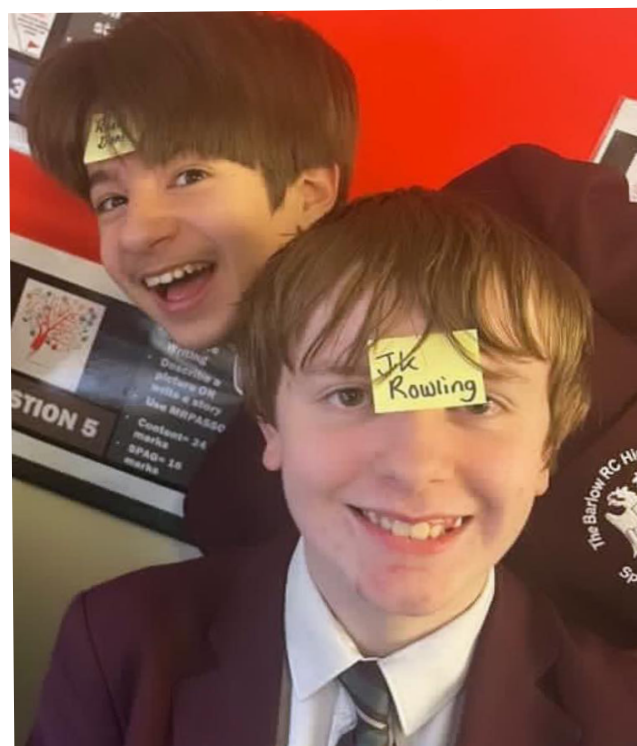
The Science Team would like to thank all pupils for embracing Science Week, and for once again reminding us of how wonderfully curious they can be.



World Book Day

Last week, pupils celebrated World Book Day and all things reading. In Family Time, pupils discussed their favourite books, and have all contributed to a display in the English suite by designing a bunting flag with a recommended read.

In English lessons, pupils took part in discussions, games and creating resources for our library, which is due to re-open to pupils after Easter following our building work.



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THE FRIENDS OF DOROTHY CLUB

Recognition of our LGBT+ Community

In September, The Barlow established its very first official LGBT+ Club, named by its members as The Friends of Dorothy Club. The pupils in the group meet with Mrs Wilcox and Mx Roberts every Friday lunchtime and this provides a safe and inclusive space for everyone who attends.

There is a mix of pupils, some who are LGBT+ and some who are supporters of these pupils, who come together to explore different themes and their views on a range of different topics. Mrs Wilcox, founder of the group, and our PSCE Co-ordinator said: ***'This group of pupils have, since September, created some wonderful and meaningful discussion points. They have listened to and respected each other and I am very proud of them all.'***

Pupils have been determined to ensure that the club is a warm and welcoming place, which has

formed one part of our ongoing commitment to inclusivity for all of our pupils.



Pupils, who are part of the group are full of praise for it and made the following comments when asked what the Friends of Dorothy Club meant to them:

***'It is my favourite time of the week'
'I feel like I have finally found my people'
'The support is awesome.'
'It is just so great to be me'***

Equality Works

Pupils' voices have been heard this half-term to help our community identify our new 'Equality Objectives' that we will work towards over the next three years.

Pupils in Years 7 to 10 had a dedicated Personal Development lesson that allowed them to have their say on what they believe we need to focus on in terms of making our school an even more equal and equitable place. Pupils learned all about The Equality Act of 2010, what protected characteristics are and our duties, as a school, to ensure we fully include all members of our community so that everyone feels like they truly belong.

Pupils had the option to choose from three areas and these were focused on: equality for our LGBT+ pupils, equality for our pupils from ethnic minority groups and equality for our pupils with hidden disabilities.

Every Family Group held their own vote and their choice went through to be counted as one vote in our whole-school democratic process in a 'First Past the Post System'.

Following the collation of votes, we are excited to announce that our new 'Equality Objective' will, as



voted for by our pupils, focus on equality for our pupils from ethnic minority groups.

Work will now be completed with our Student Council to decide in more detail what this will look like and how it will impact on our school so that we can really make a difference.

Mrs Seddon, Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion said:

'We are very excited at the prospect of working together to ensure all of our pupils from ethnic minority groups feel that they are truly represented in our school, through our curriculum offer, the way we understand and celebrate different cultural experiences across our school and how we 'give a voice' to all of the pupils in our care.'