

smart

WINTER TERM 2020 ■ ISSUE 16

BRISTNALL HALL ACADEMY MAGAZINE

SIMPLY THE BEST

WE ARE THE HIGHEST PERFORMING ACADEMY IN SANDWELL



ALSO INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**LIFE AFTER BRISTNALL
WE'RE BETTER TOGETHER
POLICE CADETS**





WELCOME

A Happy New Year to the entire Bristnall Hall community!

As we see the new year in, it's a perfect time to reflect on our successes of 2019 as well as look forward in 2020 with renewed optimism and positivity.

We must all take great pride in the fact that we are at the forefront of educational provision in the region and the highest performing academy in Sandwell. This has set the foundation for even further successes this year, where our students will continue to flourish and truly achieve their full potential. Such positivity isn't always evident when we reflect on society at this time, whether it be a so-called 'political crisis' on our horizon or excessive media coverage of us all having a problem with 'the youth of today'. For the latter, I take great faith from looking at our relationship, all as key stakeholders, determinedly working together to ensure the life opportunities of our great area are as amazing as can be. To supplement and support this vision, I'm pleased to inform you that we remain fully staffed with an outstanding team of teaching and support staff. Furthermore, we will again expect to be significantly oversubscribed again for our next Year 7 cohort who join us in September 2020. All of these factors support our community's view that Bristnall Hall Academy is a great place to learn in and work in.

Students have continued to perform amazingly in and out of the classroom and we look forward to enjoying our performances and sports fixtures this term. Our ongoing community work will also continue, with students involved in many initiatives, including supporting our vulnerable and less fortunate members of society through our charity work. This is what many individuals are now calling Character Education, learning the values of selflessness and care for others; for us, we can all call it 'The Bristnall Way', something which has always been ingrained in our outlook and ethos.

This year will see our site improvements continue and we excitedly await further news of our multi-million pound new additional building and overall expansion. Our plans are due to go through the local authority planning process and we hope to update you all further next term.

I wish all of us in our Bristnall community a happy and healthy 2020 as we continue to work together to achieve great outcomes for our young individuals, our community and our society as a whole.

Mr Uppal
Principal

Highest Performing Academy in Sandwell

Bristnall Hall Academy is “in a class of its own”

Bristnall Hall Academy is proud to announce that 2019 GCSE Progress 8 scores, released provisionally by the Department for Education, place Bristnall Hall Academy as the highest performing academy in Sandwell, as well as being nationally recognised as a high performing educational provider. Students and staff at Bristnall were delighted to hear the fantastic news that their academy is once again ‘the best’, and were particularly proud of how this success reflects on their effort and hard work. The latest GCSE results for 2019 demonstrate another year of outstanding achievement at Bristnall Hall Academy.

The continual improvements in outcomes over the last five years reinforce the impressive journey the academy has been on, raising standards in all areas of its provision.

Kully Uppal, Principal of Bristnall Hall Academy said, “We are extremely proud that Bristnall Hall Academy has achieved the highest Progress 8 score in Sandwell. The hard work put in by our students, supplemented superbly by staff, parents, carers, governors and our Academy Transformation Trust, has allowed Bristnall Hall to deliver a quality

of education we can all be proud of. This accolade further reinforces our commitment to continuously deliver outstanding educational provision for our young people.” With Progress 8 scores being positive in every area, including the core subjects of English, Mathematics and Science, students of all abilities at Bristnall Hall Academy have excelled and made transformational progress. This is testament to the Bristnall Hall belief that all learners receive the highest quality of education.

Vince Green, Executive Principal said, “Bristnall Hall Academy’s rise to becoming the highest performing school in Sandwell, as well as being recognised for our achievement by the Department for Education and SSAT at national level, reinforces the exceptionally high standards in place. We are proud of all of our key stakeholders, who along with our Academy Transformation Trust, continue to support our commitment to improving year after year.” “Due to the high standards and relentless focus on the quality of teaching and learning, coupled with exceptional care for young people, Bristnall Hall Academy is an exceptional institute to learn, work and develop in.”



LIFE AFTER BRISTNALL

We chat to past students about their time at the academy and life after Bristnall...

Briefly outline your time at Bristnall Hall. What do you remember?

I was at Bristnall Hall High School (before it became an academy) from 1986 - 1991. I was nervous, but also excited about starting high school. Although Langley High School was nearer to my home, I chose to go to Bristnall Hall because of their good reputation. I remember good times and good teachers who offered support and guidance. Staff encouraged pupils to always do their very best. To dream big. I remember Mr Dyson our head teacher. I remember Miss Baker my English teacher and Mr Venross who taught PE and we had two teachers with the same surname - Mr Hall.

Destination after Bristnall and subjects studied:

I went to Sandwell College, Pound Road campus (no longer there) and studied BTEC Business & Finance. After college I went to the University of Salford and studied BA (Hons) in Business Administration. After leaving university, my first full-time job was working for the children's charity Barnardo's.



Donna Mighty

After being made redundant, I started a new role working for the Benefits Agency (now known as JobCentre Plus) and was a civil servant for 7 years working in a variety of departments. In 2004 took some time out after having my daughter. I did a few jobs in the private sector then joined the NHS in 2008. I left in 2013 to try something new, working in a local primary school as an office manager for a few years. I returned to the NHS in 2015, initially at Sandwell & West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group and since 2016 at Sandwell & West Birmingham NHS Trust as Assistant Primary Care Liaison Manager.

Give a memorable achievement or experience since leaving school and working: (academic or personal)

I have many memorable achievements and my current role has afforded me many development opportunities for which I am grateful. I am chair of the Black, Minority & Ethnic (BME) Staff Network at my organisation. In 2018, in celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Windrush generation, I organised a Windrush tea party in June and commissioned photographs to create a lasting legacy. The photographs became an exhibition "Here to Stay" and since August 2018 has toured at a number of venues in London, Birmingham, Warwick and the Black Country. The exhibition is on permanent display at our Education Centre at Sandwell Hospital. I am proud of my heritage and it is great to see a wall of black excellence and role models to inspire future generations at my work place. I'm proud to have played my part in making that happen. The exhibition is currently on display until Saturday 21st December at the GAP Centre for Arts & Cultural Action.



Name: Lauren Houghton

Briefly outline your time at Bristnall Hall. What do you remember?

I had an amazing 5 years at Bristnall Hall. I soon became quite a confident student and got along with a lot of the students and staff members. I was a Senior Prefect during Year 11 and performed in all of the dance shows held by the school.

Destination after Bristnall and subjects studied:

I went on to complete 2 years of A Levels at Sandwell Academy Sixth Form. I studied: IT, Double Additional Science and Sport. After this, I went on to complete a 3 year Mechanical Maintenance apprenticeship with Severn Trent Water. I am now a fully qualified Mechanical Maintenance Technician for STW with a NVQ Level 3. Currently, I am undertaking a NVQ Level 3 in electrics to become a Multi-skilled Mechanical/Electrical Technician.

Future career path?

One of my standout achievements is being awarded Apprentice of the Year for Severn Trent Water, showing my hard work throughout my apprenticeship had been noticed. Also, I have attended open days to talk to future potential apprentices about my job and what I do day-to-day. I have also presented in-front of other huge companies such as Jaguar-Land Rover, Volvo, HSBC and numerous Universities and explained to them about my End-Point assessments, exams and what it all entailed.

In the future, I hope to go on to complete a HNC and potentially a degree in Mechanical Engineering through Severn Trent. I don't see myself leaving this company any time soon as I love my job!



Name: Tyler Johnson-Thomas

Briefly outline your time at Bristnall Hall. What do you remember?

I attended Bristnall from 2012-2017. I was a largely unproblematic student although in certain subjects, I tended to have a lot of unrelated things to talk about. My favourite subjects were P.E and History (although I tended to do more geography in History) and my least favourite times of the week were anything that involved numbers or speaking Spanish (S/O Mrs Bassi for the Grade 7 :)). To summarise my time at Bristnall, it was effectively spending 99.9% of my time laughing, working and being late to my after lunch Maths lesson.

Destination after Bristnall and subjects studied:

I studied A-level Politics, English Lang/lit and History at Sandwell Central Sixth Form College. During my first two years since leaving the academy, I secured my first-part time job, won my first boxing match, and cooked my first meal (I still can't actually cook). On September 22nd, I moved away to attend the University of Warwick to study Politics and sociology.

Future career path?

There are so many things I would like to do that I cannot pin-point one career path. My primary motivation for my future is to make sure whatever I choose to do, it improves lives and inspires people to be the best that they can possibly be.

Restart a Heart Day

On October 16th Year 7 students at Bristnall Hall Academy had an amazing opportunity to take part in a national project organised and led by West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS), Fast Aid and the British Heart Foundation to deliver vital lifesaving CPR skills to children in schools.

The benefits of improving bystander Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) rates are evidenced around the world where the highest bystander CPR rates are linked to the highest survival rates from sudden cardiac arrest.

We were fortunate to have a representative from WMAS and Fast Aid deliver the sessions to our students and appreciate their time volunteering to share their expertise. Our students enjoyed learning this vital skill which could one day potentially save a life. We are proud that all our young people at Bristnall are equipped with CPR skills.

The Mathematics department took it one step further and incorporated the day into their curriculum. Students learnt how to calculate their own and of their peer's heart rate before and after a little exercise. They then collated the data from their class to calculate averages of their heart rate using, mean, mode, median and range and finally transferring all the data to produce graphical diagrams to represent how their groups' heart rate fluctuated.

Oxford University

As part of the Aim higher programme, Year 7 had the opportunity to experience a day at Oxford University.

It included a tour of the university and accommodation. The students were thrilled to have lunch in the Great Hall which was the setting for some of the iconic scenes in Harry Potter. It was a very informative day, raising the aspirations of all involved. Who knows what the future holds, they could be the next generation to attend Oxbridge!





Black Friday

The day after Thanksgiving has been the unofficial beginning of the Christmas season since the late 19th century.

The idea of Black Friday has been running in the United Kingdom since 2018, so Bristnall Hall Academy has had their own 'Black Friday' market place activity with Year 8. The market place was run to give our Year 8 students an idea of percentage decrease in sales and making profit. The six students made the most profit in the activity for their forms. Well done and congratulations to them all.

Financial Capability

Financial Capability Week, is the annual celebration that takes place in November that showcases the work thousands of organisations carry out to improve money management across the UK.

Its aim is to get more people talking about money. Bristnall Hall Academy introduced the concept of compound and simple interest to Year 8. Students participated in various classroom activities to understand the difference between compound and simple interest in the terms of banking and real-life money matters. All students in Year 8 were able to gain a better understanding or which type of interest they would benefit from in future life when they are looking for a mortgage or a bank account for savings.



JLR Trip

A group of 30 Year 8 students had the opportunity of visiting the engine factory of Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) based in Wolverhampton.

The main aim of the trip was to educate and widen the horizons of our students on possible career opportunities in engineering and learning pathways available for those who wish to work for JLR in the future. During the day, students had a tour of the factory and were able to observe how the robot machines are controlled and operated. They also received a careers seminar about possible career choices in engineering and the future of JLR as a company. Our young people also had ample opportunity to have a question and answer session with current employees in the engine factory from team leaders to apprentices. A lot of questions were asked, Year 8 were very keen to find out about shift patterns and salaries. The final session of the day included students having to complete a challenging where they worked as a team to rebuild an engine. Students got stuck straight into the task as they were against the clock and all groups worked well as a team. Students really enjoyed the day as they got to see first-hand what goes on in an engineering factory. They impressed the JLR tutors with their interest of engineering and JLR as a company.

Bringing home the Gold



Year 9 student brings home Silver and Gold medals in Greater London Indoor Special Olympics Athletic Championships.

Lewis represented Sandwell at the Greater London Indoor Special Olympics Athletic Championships at Lea Valley, London. He was very successful in winning two gold medals in the 60 metres sprint and the Shot Putt. He also gained a silver in the relay. An excellent performance. Well done Lewis and good luck for future events!

Forensic investigators for the day

A group of forty Year 10 students were able to become forensic investigators for the day at Newman University.

The day involved various activities and students were shown skills that current forensic students are learning at university. Year 10 learnt how to make shoe impressions, identify insects, and make fingerprint key rings. They were also able to analyse their own hair samples using mini microscopes.

Their final task was to solve a mock crime scene using the skills they had acquired during the earlier sessions. Their forensic skills were put to the test to find the culprit! A thoroughly enjoyable, informative and engaging day for all involved. Hopefully, it may inspire some of our students to become the next generation of Forensic Scientists!





We're better together!

On Tuesday 26th November we had the Royal Navy Outreach Team deliver a Leadership and Teamwork skills workshop to some of our Year 9 and 10 students.

Our young people learnt that a great team is not just a great group of individuals: to see first-hand how a team works together is the most important, rather than who's on the team. The workshop involved a number of facilitated discussions and practical activities to explore topics and challenges to build their teamwork and leadership skills. It also taught our young people to bond and integrate, and how everyone is an integral part of the team. Students completed various teamwork tasks and rounded the day off making missiles to launch.

I think the latter task was enjoyed the most by all. The whole day was an exciting insight into the Royal Navy and the different career pathways available. The workshop equipped our young people with astute transferable life skills that they will be able to apply whilst at the academy and beyond the gates of BHA. We look forward to welcoming the Royal Navy back to deliver further workshops to our young people.



Junior Chefs

Congratulations to Doreen, Marnie and Sophie who graduated from University College Birmingham (UCB), having completed the Junior chef's course and Junior Waiter/Waitressing course.

The course entailed the Junior Chefs attending the UCB on a Saturday over a period of seven weeks, where they acquired valuable skills to plan and cook a 2 course meal. All the families of the graduates were invited to attend during the final session to be served the mouth watering dishes the Junior Chefs had cooked by the Junior Waiters/Waitresses.

If any future budding chefs in Year 10 and 11 are interested in completing the course, please see Mrs Pocknell or Ms Aldridge.



Unison Stars

Friday 29th November was Unison's annual celebration of 'Stars in our Schools' – the one day in the year when school support staff, who work so hard, are celebrated.

It takes a whole team to ensure Bristnall Hall Academy runs smoothly and is the best it can be. Alongside our superb teaching staff there is a whole team of superb support staff whether it be teaching assistants, ICT Technicians, admin staff, the cleaners, estates team, finance officers, subject technicians, and many more that are the unsung heroes of our academy. They are also a huge part of our success story and the transformative journey that we are on and what better way to thank them all! This year six of our staff were successful in being awarded 'Star in our schools' by Sandwell Unison. We welcomed Unison branch staff to surprise our support staff and present them with a certificate and goodie bag.

Congratulations and thank you to all our support staff at BHA!

POLICE Cadets

A school in Oldbury has celebrated their pupils' success after a group of them were sworn in as police cadets.

Bristnall Hall Academy ended the first school term in December with a ceremony for students who'd volunteered two hours of their time every Thursday since September to learn about policing, team building and leadership.

The pupils have joined police patrols, saw how the Birmingham Christmas Markets are policed and had a visit from West Midlands Police's Dog Unit.

Each student read out an oath as part of the ceremony which encompasses both elements of the oath police officers take and recognition for being part of the community and school.

They were all handed a framed copy of their oath and had their photos taken with their Principal and Superintendent Martin Hurcomb from Sandwell Police.

Principal Kully Uppal, said: "At a time where we often hear there are issues with 'the youth of today', I'm proud to see our students serving as role models as part of the extended police family within our local community.

"I'd like to thank West Midlands Police for the time, effort and commitment it has shown in establishing the Police Cadets here at Bristnall Hall Academy; we look forward to working with you in this exciting and highly rewarding new venture."

Supt Martin Hurcomb said: "It's been a real privilege to spend some time with the Bristnall Hall police cadets over the past few months and see how they have each embraced the cadet scheme.

"It's clear that they are both enjoying it and growing as young people, which is wonderful to see. I would to thank the Cadet Commander & leaders, who work tirelessly, with endless energy and positivity, to ensure the experience is a positive one.

Finally, I must also thank Mr Uppal and his team at Bristnall Hall School, they have been welcoming and truly inclusive, which has helped us start to build the foundations of a very healthy and successful relationship."

WMP Cadets are provided with a uniform, are organised into groups of up to 30 members, and are expected to attend unit meetings every week during school term time. There is no charge in being a cadet - everything is supplied for free, including the uniform and any trips. The WMP scheme recruits 13-17 year olds, from a diverse range of backgrounds and provides them with unique opportunities to gain experience and insights into the force.

The cadet scheme which has been held at the school is open to all students in the local area and anyone who wishes to join or learn more can email: cadets@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk.

More information on the scheme can be found here: <https://www.west-midlands.police.uk/your-options/wmp-cadets>



LEST WE FORGET

Bristnall Hall Academy came together to remember the fallen in past wars and current conflicts.

On Sunday 10th November we were honoured to be invited to be part of the Remembrance Service at the Oldbury Cenotaph, and to lay a wreath. A former student, Isabel, gave an exceptional and very moving performance of 'White cliffs of Dover', causing many to shed a tear during the service.

Bristnall cadets had the honour of laying a wreath on behalf of the Police, alongside Sandwell Superintendent, Martin Hurcomb and Sargent, Gary Capewell at the Oldbury Cenotaph. Bristnall Hall Academy also had the honour of laying a wreath with two students during the Remembrance service.

Club President, Mr D Williams of Oldbury British Legion delivered a very moving and emotional annual Remembrance service at the academy the following morning to remember the fallen and reflect on our war heroes and the sacrifices made by them for future generations to come. He led the exhortation, including the Kohima Epitaph, followed by one of our students, Molly, playing the Last Post. The service was very moving and emotional for all involved.

**'At the going down of the sun
and in the morning, we will
remember them.'**





Aim Higher

We are very fortunate to be part of this programme, raising the aspirations of our young people at BHA with a wide and varied pool of opportunities from AimHigher.

The programme supports young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to have access to experiences which enhances their aspirations and inspires them for future careers.

For BHA students, it's been an exciting time with a multitude of visits to various institutes of higher education which has given them an insight of choices they need to make for possible career paths. Opportunities have included: visits to top universities and CSI workshops.

Debate Mate

We are proud of our young people being involved in the Debate Mate initiative which was launched at the University of Birmingham where they were introduced to professional debating.

Team BHA will now be trained to national standards and will have the opportunity to compete against other schools nationally. It will be interesting to see how Team BHA evolve their debating skills and progress for the duration of the programme.



Manchester Marathon

Mr Browne will pound the streets of Manchester in May in aid of the academy's chosen charity Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospital's Your Trust Charity.



Mr Browne is aiming to raise funds for Your Trust Charity, which is run by Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust (SWBH). He trains all year round, rain or shine to be at his very best for the various runs he competes throughout the year.

His day begins at 4.30am starting with a training session, then onto work to teach at the academy. He completed his ultimate goal a couple of years ago when he completed the London Marathon. Mr Browne is a good role model for our young people and may even inspire some of our young people to take up running.

The whole Bristnall Hall Academy community prides itself on championing local causes, and is especially proud to have this amazing opportunity to support all the children of Sandwell and Birmingham who may have to use provisions provided by the Trust. The school is extremely fortunate to have both staff and students who are deeply passionate about making a positive contribution and a difference in the community they live and work in. Various fundraising activities are arranged throughout the academic year.

You can donate at <https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/BristnallHallAcademy> to help us reach our target of £2000.

Charity of the Year

This academic year Bristnall Hall Academy continues in its efforts to fundraise for Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS (SWBH) Your Trust Charity.

We are passionate about fundraising for a local cause that the Bristnall Hall community can make a positive contribution in supporting our local and wider community. Students and staff will be organising various fundraising activities throughout the academic year to reach our whole academy target of £2000.

Happy Birthday Dexter

Whilst many of the academies celebrated the end of term on 20th December 2019, Bristnall Hall Academy celebrated Dexter the Nurture Dog's first birthday.

Dexter has been with the academy since February, and over the time has become an essential part of the welfare of several of our students. As well as his 7:30am dog walk, which now includes up to 15 students, Dexter is visited daily by students who may just need a doggy cuddle to help them through the day. Dexter has become the highlight of the students' day, and is an incentive for students to work hard during lessons, so that they can spend time with him. We asked the students of Bristnall Hall what they loved about Dexter, their responses alone reflect the positive impact Dexter has in their daily school life.



Junior SLT

We have great pleasure in introducing you to our Student Leadership Team.

Their role encompasses being involved in various decision making to develop and further improve the academy and being the voice of the young people. We know that when young people are given the opportunity they can have a positive impact on their academy for their peers and themselves. Involvement with the student leadership can improve their learning as well as helping students to develop key life-skills needed for success whilst at BHA and beyond.



Accessibility Games

We had an excellent day at the Accessibility Games.

The students tried Powerchair football, wrestling, boxing, wheelchair basketball, cycling, cricket, orienteering, dance, archery, taekwondo and football. All students had a fantastic time and were a credit to the academy.



Table tennis tournament

We took two teams of boys to compete in a table tennis tournament at Wood Green Academy.

The key stage three team consisted of Lucas, Leo, Kim and Musadiq, and the key stage four team was made up of Mubashir, Joshua, Manjot and Jason. The boys conducted themselves perfectly throughout and were a credit to the academy. The key stage 3 team narrowly lost to Wood Green, whilst the key stage 4 team finished second in a triangular tournament recording some impressive victories against Hydesville Tower School. Mubashir was the standout performer, recording two victories against the Hydesville number one and two ranked players, whilst narrowly losing two close fought games with the Wood Green representatives. Well done boys!

