



**THE
SKY'S
THE
LIMIT**

NORTH BIRMINGHAM ACADEMY
NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2012

The New Academy Building

Work on our new £23.6 million building is on target for us to open in February 2013. Students, staff and visitors to the Academy have noticed an amazing change to the landscape since returning after the Christmas break as the steel frame has risen out of the ground at a rapid pace.

The steel frame will be completed by the end of March along with the internal concrete slab flooring and roof. The external cladding work will start shortly to make the building water tight ahead of the internal fit out leading to completion in February next year.



The progress has created a sense of great excitement amongst students and staff as the reality that they will be working in our new purpose built Academy in just over 12 months time hits home. This is also fantastic news for our local community and its primary aged pupils. They will have opportunity to attend a purpose built high specification academy at a time when we are making rapid progress academically, sitting in the top 5% of schools nationally for progress and being oversubscribed in the current Year 7. The community will have access to top class facilities which include a four court sports hall, dance, activity and rehearsal studios, fully equipped gym, theatre space as well as a full range of educational facilities.

Want to know more? Contact the Academy directly on 0121 373 1647 or see our web site for more details and pictures at www.nbacademy.org.uk - This is truly a great time to be attending NBA where The Sky's The Limit.

FROM THE PRINCIPAL



Welcome to the January edition of North Birmingham Academy's newsletter. I am pleased to share with you some of the latest news from the Academy, combined with the most recent accomplishments of both students and staff. Yet again, talent has been revealed, and some great school spirit has been displayed. I am

immensely proud of all the students here at NBA and hope to see them continue with their achievements in the upcoming months.

Our first annual 'Reading Week' was held in the week beginning 16th January. The theme for the week was 'supernatural' and involved all departments across the Academy. The aim of the week was to encourage

students to engage with reading in different subject areas and to develop their reading skills, allowing them to use and develop different reading strategies. Literacy comprises a number of fundamental skills and is always a key focus at NBA; the week shows our commitment to consistently raise standards among our students.

As always, the term will be filled with a host of other educational initiatives and activities designed to inspire and motivate our students to reach their full potential. We hope you enjoy reading about all the exciting things happening at our Academy and about the many accomplishments of our students.

Mrs K L Popratnjak
Principal

CELEBRATING SUCCESS ACROSS THE ACADEMY

A record breaking 410 students, staff, parents and guests joined us in



celebrating NBA's Annual Awards Evening last term. The ceremony was the perfect opportunity to recognise and congratulate our students who work so hard and achieve such great results in their academic studies. A number of categories were included and the awards demonstrated students' commitment to giving their

best. Many students received awards for 100% attendance and punctuality, a faultless effort. The ceremony also presented our Year 11s with their examination certificates, and congratulated our Year 13s on their achievements.

Special awards sponsored by E-ACT, FONBA, Hawthorn Road Traders Association, Aspens and the families of former students and members of staff were also given out. Aspens kindly donated bursaries of £750 each, to two of our lucky students. Guests on the evening were kept entertained by a brilliant performance of 'Price Tag' by Year 9 student Patryk Sikora, a fine example of our talented students here at the Academy, there was also a speech from special guest



'Blind Dave' Heeley. A special well done goes to Aleksandra Lubas who gained awards for Art and Design, Photography, BTEC Art, BTEC Science and Geography, who is an excellent role model to our younger students and currently studying in Year 12.

The evening was a great success yet again. To those who won awards, well done, we are extremely proud of you. To all of those who attended, thank you for coming and we hope you enjoyed your evening.



SPOTLIGHT ON THE ARTS

A SHOWCASE OF TALENT



Our Christmas Extravaganza showcased a fabulous array of performing arts from our Academy students who entertained a packed hall.

Our creative Year 9 students gave the room a professional look with centre pieces and decorations. Stalls were run by Academy staff, along with guests from Hawthorn Traders. All proceeds from the event went to Macmillan Cancer Research; a fantastic cause.

Entertainment was provided in the form of drama and music, with our students showcasing their skills. A comical spin on the Nativity play was narrated, directed and performed by Year 10 BTEC Drama students, with the supportive help of the Round Midnight Theatre Company. This was an assessed piece of work which they had worked hard on throughout the autumn term. We also enjoyed a display of dance from our Year 10 GCSE Dance and KS5 Dance groups who had been working with a contemporary dance artist to choreograph and perfect their routines. These



performances were also assessed and we have already seen a dramatic improvement in their grades.

Musically, we enjoyed entertainment from our choir and guitar students, as well as vocals by a group of students who had worked with a specialist artist.

Pupils from Hawthorn Primary School came along to enjoy our extravaganza. Their work with resident dance teacher Hayley Wenlock was showcased in a group street dance 'mash up'.

The evening was a great success and it was wonderful to see so many of our talented students performing on stage. Well done to everyone who took part, it was a pleasure to watch and really got us into the Christmas spirit!

HAWTHORN PRIMARY SCHOOL



FOCUS ON THE COMMUNITY

NBA CELEBRATES WITH THE COMMUNITY

In December, NBA held their Creative Christmas Event which saw them welcome parents and staff from Hawthorn, Storywood and Kings Rise Primary Schools as well as parents from North Birmingham Academy for a day of food, fun and festivities.

To ensure parents with young children didn't miss out, HomeStart provided crèche

facilities and Hawthorn Primary school provided toys to entertain the little ones. Lakeside Children's Centre also came along for the day and spoke to parents about the support they can offer to young families in the local area. There was a real sense of community spirit throughout the day.

The event included a variety of creative stalls for parents, an impressive Christmas dinner which went down a treat and a surprise visit from

Santa and his helper elf to keep the children entertained!

Dawn Avery, a parent of one of our students here at the Academy, told staff 'this has been so enjoyable, I can't wait until next year!' This is what we like to hear – we can't wait either!

A massive thank you to Joanne's Florist, Alkami Arts Academy, HomeStart, Lakeside Children's Centre, Khass Community Arts and to Kim Jones Card Making for joining us and making the day such a great success.



Creative Parents

'This has been so enjoyable, I can't wait until next year!'

Dawn Avery - Parent

A SPECIAL INVITATION

Talented musicians Steven Clarke (Year 13), Blu Ratchford (Year 11), Katie Dean (Year 11) and Nicola Brauns (Year 9) performed in the New Oscott Village Christmas concert. Invited by Nightingales Choir, a testament to how good they are and an absolute honour, our talented musicians spent the evening performing Christmas classics which the village residents thoroughly enjoyed.



CHARITY BALL

Members of the choir in Years 9, 10 and 11 were invited to Ernst and Young offices in Birmingham City Centre to sing Christmas carols at a charity ball. The ball was organised to raise money through the sales of art work and the students were a credit to the Academy.

Senior partners of the global organisation commented; *'The NBA students' were fantastic, they sang extremely well, looked smart and brought Christmas spirit to our Ernst and Young offices. Many thanks and well done.'*

REJOICE FOR REWARDS

To thank and reward members of the choir in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 for all their hard work last term we organised a trip to watch the concert 'Black Voices – Christmas ancient and modern'.

Black Voices are the UK's leading female unaccompanied group who are renowned for entertaining with their fantastic renditions of gospel spirituals, Caribbean and African genres as well as jazz and blues. This time they were joined by special guests; The Town Hall Gospel Choir and sang with them an uplifting selection of Christmas songs to an awe struck audience.

As we'd hoped, students marvelled at the performance claiming it was 'great to be able to watch a professional choir' and it has inspired them further.

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

A TASTE OF AFRICA

Sixty of our Year 8 and 9 students were lucky enough to take part in two days worth of workshops run by 'Skins and Feet', an African Drumming and Dance Company. Led by Andy Mason, an African Drumming specialist, activities were structured around percussion performances. Students learnt various rhythms and broadened their knowledge on the diverse genres of music from across the globe. Different techniques from Africa were carefully studied and mastered; and ended



with a performance in front of their peers. Both days were a success and the students had great fun as a result of being given the opportunity to try something new. Well done

NBA MAKE OTHER ACADEMIES 'GREEN' WITH ENVY WITH AWARD

NBA has recently been awarded the Soil Associations Food for Life Silver Award in recognition of our commitment to using local suppliers. We are the only Academy in the West Midlands and the only E-ACT sponsored Academy with this award.

STUDENTS GET INSPIRED

Our Year 11 Design and Technology students had the opportunity to attend the Clothes Show Live at Birmingham NEC Arena. The fantastic day out to the UK's largest and most talked about fashion & beauty event of the year gave our students a chance to attend design and trend seminars, fashion clinics and visit the fashion theatre. Students also had the opportunity to speak with universities about possible courses for further education and also people within the fashion industry to see what career options were available to them. The event inspired many of our students to pursue further education in fashion, and they had lots of their queries answered. We hope it has generated some ideas for their own designs and creations in their GCSE projects.

STIMULATING THE MIND AND GOING 'PLAICES' FAST!

Our Gifted and Talented students had the opportunity to attend a workshop in November that aimed to encourage high level thinking skills and our students did not disappoint. With the support of their parents they had a great time testing their brains with some very thought provoking questions. The idea was to get everyone

to 'think outside the box' and to reinforce that sometimes there are no right and wrong answers, and it can be imagination that takes precedence.

Students Conrad Dobie and Nathan Pringle won awards for their very intelligent and ingenious responses to the question "what do you call a fish on a bicycle?" Conrad replied "fast food" and Nathan's answer was "going plaices fast". Well deserved boys!

INTERACTIVE EXAM PREPARATION

As part of helping our Gifted and Talented GCSE history students and Year 13 BTEC Drama students with their examination revision, a 'mock trial' was re-enacted, providing an alternative technique for helping students understand their topic of study. NBA joined three other schools at the event organised by the North Birmingham Gifted & Talented Network.



Feedback was great; students at NBA commented that the day was 'challenging and useful', whilst students from other schools said it 'made learning fun and enjoyable'. We hope this unique approach will be a memorable experience and help them all to prepare for their important examinations this

month. We wish them all the best!

SPOTLIGHT ON PHYSICAL EDUCATION

JUMPING FOR GOLD

A huge well done to Heather Arnold in Year 11 who came 2nd in the U19's Birmingham Schools Gymnastic Association Trampoline competition – a brilliant achievement!

Being a newcomer to the age category didn't stop her from performing so fantastically. She was a credit to the Academy and her success means that she will now go on to compete in the National Zonal Finals, which is a prestigious

competition for Great Britain's young talents. We wish her the best of luck and will keep you updated on her progress.



RFU Pilot scheme: Inspiring a love for rugby

A new scheme has been set up by the England Rugby Football Union (RFU) aimed towards encouraging and improving students' understanding of how to play rugby as well as increasing participation at grass roots level.

NBA is one of only 10 schools across the UK lucky enough to be selected to take part in the new project. As a result we have received some fantastic and extremely beneficial rugby coaching and support directly from the RFU.

It has been a pleasure to welcome local professional players from Moseley, along with fully qualified coaches to the Academy. Their involvement has been embedded within the Academy curriculum, as well as in after school clubs, allowing greater opportunities for our students.

For many it has sparked an interest in the game and it has been great to see students improving their rugby skills.

The RFU hope to reach their target of getting 75% of all schools in the country to eventually play some sort of rugby in preparation for the next Rugby World Cup due to be held in England in 2015.



Rugby Success

Congratulation to Julius Hunt who following superb performances at the emerging schools rugby tournaments and two successful trials has been selected to play for the U-15 Greater Birmingham Rugby Squad. Julius will now go on to play in this years Midlands counties fixture list.

A fantastic achievement!!



FOOTBALL VICTORY

Year 10, along with two Year 9 students, represented NBA at the third round of the District Cup Football Championships. The students competed against Arthur Terry School and came out with a triumphant 2 - 1 victory.

Congratulations to the whole team and a special mention goes to the goal scorers of the match, Norton Massamba and Shaquille Leachman Whittingham.

The team are now through to the semi finals of the

district cup and face Kingsbury Sports College in the next round.

The Year 7 football squad represented NBA in the Erdington and Salfley Under 12 Indoor Football Tournament.

The team showed great effort and determination. Their attitude and sportsmanship were a credit to the Academy and they should be proud of how they performed throughout the tournament.

Despite winning three out of their five games, they didn't quite qualify for the semi finals, missing out by just one goal.

DODGEBALL CHAMPIONS

The PE department organised an inter-form dodgeball tournament for Year 8. All Forms were involved, and the games were held every Thursday after school during November and December. A mini league was set up before the

semi-finals and finals were played.

Well done to 8PF who were crowned champions, beating the rest of their peers. We saw some great play and were extremely impressed with their sportsmanship and teamwork. Well done to everyone who took part.

FORTHCOMING SPORTS EVENTS

SPORT RELIEF WEEK

March 9th to 23rd - more information to follow

INTER FORM SWIMMING GALA

Every Thursday commencing 26th January

E-ACT OLYMPIC GAMES

March 28th - Table Tennis in Sheffield

May 2nd - Badminton in Birmingham

July 18th - Multi Skills Tournament in Sheffield

North Birmingham Academy Primary Athletics Championships - May 24th - more information to follow