



PRIESTLEY SMITH SPECIALIST SCHOOL END OF TERM NEWSLETTER



Headteacher's Letter to Parents and Friends

15th December 2010

AN AMAZING, EVENT-FILLED HALF TERM

This half term has been a wonderful one for staff and students in so many ways.

We started the half term with the news that the value added progress of our students in both Primary and Secondary Departments placed us within the top 5% of special schools across the country. Our students made greater academic progress than would be expected nationally.

On 30th November we also held a celebration to recognise the award of specialist status to the school. This award identifies the school as a centre of excellence in the education of children with visual impairments and recognises our work locally, regionally, nationally and even internationally. It also paves the way for further developments in the future, including our new Sixth Form from September 2011.

During December we saw a wonderful performance from our Primary students in **Enrico, The Boy Who Wanted to Sing** and tomorrow our Secondary students will be performing **Around the World in Eighty Minutes**. The Secondary concert starts at 10.00 a.m. and will showcase the talents of the students through action, song, and dance. I look forward to seeing you there.

More information is provided below about these events, together with details of many other activities in which the children have taken part.

SPECIALIST STATUS CELEBRATION

Our specialist status celebration was a wonderful event. We were joined by parents, guides, governors, former students and staff, Councillor Jon Hunt, Chrissie Garrett (Senior LA Officer),

friends of the school and sponsors from Vision Charity and National Blind Children's Society. During the afternoon students of all ages sang, danced, performed poetry, gave a judo display, played the trombone, clarinet, guitar, piano and drums. The performances were superb and we were all incredibly proud of our very talented and enthusiastic students. We have received so many complimentary comments, cards, emails and phone messages about the event and the performances of our students. In the words of one of the sponsors from Vision Charity, **'The children were truly inspiring and showed incredible talent'**.

Here are just a few of the highlights .





PRIMARY CHRISTMAS CONCERT

On Tuesday 7th December we were treated to a performance of **'Enrico, The Boy who Wanted to Sing'** by Primary students.

This show again reflected the amazing talents of the children as they sang and danced their way through the production. Enormous thanks go to the students who learned and performed their parts so well and to the Primary staff who supported them.



DANCE FESTIVAL



On 10th December all Primary and Secondary students took part in a dance festival. They were

joined by children from other mainstream and special schools and by a dancing robot! Both Primary and Secondary students performed dance routines which they have learned over the past half term and gained certificates for their work. They were then taught new dance routines by the robot and thoroughly enjoyed this experience. Great fun was had by all!

MOOR HALL END OF TERM PARTY

Primary and Year 7 students had a wonderful time on Wednesday 8th December when they were invited to the Moor Hall Hotel for lunch and a party. The hotel puts on this event each year for Priestley Smith students completely free of charge and all the hotel staff join in, clearly enjoying the event nearly as much as the children. Even Father Christmas turned up for the occasion!

Our thanks go to all the staff of the hotel for making this such a wonderful occasion for the children.



OTHER END OF TERM CELEBRATIONS

In addition to the events shown above, the Infants have also been to the Snowdome, the Juniors are going to see the Secret Garden at the Birmingham Rep, the Secondary students have been to the German market in Birmingham and Years 7 to 10 have also been to the theatre. A very busy end of term!

TRAINING DAYS

Can I remind everyone that the first two days of next term are training days. Please note that staff will attend on January 4th and January 5th 2011 but the children will not return until **Thursday 6th January 2011.**

END OF TERM: FRIDAY 17TH DECEMBER

**The term ends for students at 1.30 p.m. on
Friday 17th December 2010.**

The staff of Priestley Smith wish you a relaxing
and enjoyable break and a happy and healthy
New Year.

With best wishes,

Helen Porter