



MAPLEWELL NEWSLETTER

Preparing for Adulthood

End Of Year Letter from the Head

It is great to see our pupils enjoying their end of term rewards, as we come to the end of a very busy term in lots of ways. Rewarding hard work and effort is vitally important and it is a vital component of what makes Maplewell so successful. There have been trips to Laser Quest, ten-pin bowling, Legoland Birmingham, Odeon cinema, snooker and Bradgate Park to name just a few. These trips and visits also give pupils an insight into the world of work and provides additional opportunities to develop their independence skills.

Our Christmas Fair was wonderfully supported, despite it being such a windy day. Thank you to everybody who supported the event and I want to give a special mention to all of those staff who gave up their time to set up, man the stalls and tidy up at the end of the day. I did notice that the 'pigs in blankets' were particularly popular with visitors and I hope that everybody enjoyed the Christmas-themed sing-a-long.

The kitchen staff have been working really hard across both sites in order to ensure that everybody in school has had the opportunity to have a proper Christmas dinner. This has entailed having 3 separate days at the Woodhouse Eaves site, in order that all staff and pupils can experience the Maplewell Christmas dinner. A special thank you goes to Nicky Goodwin for coordinating all of our school events. This follows on from another wonderful fireworks display in November, which has become a regular fixture in the Maplewell school calendar.

It has also been great to see so many people in their Christmas jumpers. I think that this year was the best turnout so far. We raised a total of £191:30 for Save the Children charity. Well done everyone!

During the Christmas break I am sure that many of our pupils will be getting new electronic devices and games, which can bring lots of happiness and joy. In this modern world that we live in, where technology is always being improved and enhanced, it can become hard to keep pace for all of us. Therefore, it is imperative we all take responsibility for keeping our children safe online. Over the years this has become an ever-increasing threat, especially for young people who have additional needs. It is not going to change any time soon and so please do take the time to check your child's phone on a regular basis.

It is also important to check what access children have to the various social media platforms that are currently trending. In school, we do lots to educate our pupils about how to keep safe online and, in my experience, having the same message from parents and carers is a powerful and impacting one. Please do keep an eye on your child's social media use and online activity. We are always happy to help and support in any way that we can.

Have a wonderful break and I would like to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Mr Brooks

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Christmas Fair 2024

We raised a total of £1377.12 at the Christmas Fair this year which will go towards the new Gym Equipment.



Christmas Jumper Day 2024

Thank you to everyone that donated to Christmas Jumper Day for Save the Children.
We raised £191.30 in total.



Pantomime Trip

Our Year 7's, 8's, 9's and 4JMC visited the Pantomime in Loughborough. All Students enjoyed this.



Term Dates

Spring Term 2025

Staff Training Day - Friday 3rd January 2025

School Opens - Monday 6th January 2025

Half Term Break - Monday 17th to Friday 21st
February 2025



Celebration Assembly

During our December assemblies across all key stages, we celebrated our students' hard work, dedication, and incredible progress this term. Each student has played a part in making our school a vibrant and successful community, and we are immensely proud of their achievements.

The assemblies highlighted the importance of progress—not just the major milestones, but also the small, steady steps that contribute to personal growth. Whether it's mastering a challenging topic, approaching lessons with enthusiasm, or offering support to friends, every effort makes a difference.

We also celebrated engagement—those moments when students showed curiosity, asked insightful questions, or embraced new challenges with determination and positivity.

In addition, we reflected on the exemplary behaviour displayed by our students. Their kindness, respect for others, and teamwork embody the values we cherish and strive to nurture.

Students were reminded that success is about much more than grades. It's about personal growth, resilience, and continuously striving to be the best version of themselves.

Thank you for your continued support in helping our students thrive.



Year 10 BTEC Home Cooking Students

Our year 10 Btec Home Cooking students have made their own mini Christmas cakes over the last few weeks, making a fruit cake, covering the cake in icing and making their own fondant decorations. As you can see, they have done a fantastic job!!



Animal Care

This week has been a scaly affair with Brenda the Bearded Dragon and Terry the Tortoise both being used in this week's care tasks!

Great fun was had by all.



Visitors at Maplewell

We are thrilled to announce that Maplewell Hall School has been recognised as an Exemplary Leadership Programme Host School!

On November 28th, we proudly welcomed eight school leaders from across the country to witness the incredible work we are doing to foster exemplary behaviour and a positive school culture. Our students truly made us proud, speaking with confidence and demonstrating to our visitors how much they value high-quality lessons.

The feedback we received was incredibly heart-warming. Kirsty Robinson, a headteacher from Nuneaton, shared:

"It was a pleasure to visit Maplewell Hall School and to meet your wonderful pupils and colleagues. I left feeling inspired by what can be achieved for SEND students."

We are excited to host more school leaders in the summer term, where the focus will shift to Enhancing Curriculum. This opportunity not only celebrates our achievements but also allows us to learn from others, ensuring we continue to enrich the experience for our students and staff.

Thank you for being part of our journey and success!



Coffee Morning - Woodhouse Eaves

On Friday 13th December, we welcomed Claire and Caroline from the Leicestershire SEND Local Offer to our parents & carers coffee morning at the Woodhouse Eaves site. They took away some valuable information and feedback from our parents and carers, and hope to be able to make some changes from this feedback to make the Offer more accessible and user friendly to all.

The Leicestershire Local Offer gives children and young people with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) and their families information about help and services in Leicestershire.

The Local Offer brings together in one place information about health, education and social care for:

- Children and young people from birth to 25 years old who have a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND)
- Parents and carers of children with SEND
- Professionals working in health, care and education
- Providers of services for children and young people

For more information visit [What is the Local Offer | Leicestershire County Council](#)

Please keep an eye on Weduc for details of our next coffee mornings.





A Merry (and Slightly Healthier) Christmas Feast – From Trevor at Post 16

As Christmas is nearly upon us, I thought I'd sprinkle some culinary cheer (and maybe a dash of sarcasm) onto your holiday plates. If you were at the Maplewell Christmas Fayre, you might have spotted me in my little corner, with mince pies and Black Cherry Christmas puds, chatting with parents about the secrets behind these festive treats. All that talk about food got me thinking - Christmas is the perfect time to indulge, but maybe we can do it without feeling like we've eaten Santa's entire sleigh by Boxing day.

Christmas is brilliant, isn't it? But it can also be a bit of a food marathon. And by Boxing Day, some of us are feeling less "Merry and Bright" and more "Stued and Staggering." So, let me share a few tips to keep the feasting festive but a tad lighter this year. Think of it as eating smarter, not sadder.

Keep the Favourites, But Mix It Up

Christmas isn't the time to kick the mince pies off the table or exile Grandma's famous stung. Keep the classics—they're part of the joy. But why not throw in a few lighter, healthier options to balance things out? You know, so you can still fit in your festive jumper without bursting the seams.

Cheeky Swaps That No One Will Notice (Promise!)

- **Mince Pies:** Make your pastry with wholemeal flour and use a slightly less sugary mincemeat. (You can even sneak in some grated apple—it's practically a health food now.)
- **Roasties:** Skip the lake of goose fat and go for a light spray of oil. Leave the skins on for that "rustic vibe" (and bonus ber).
- **Stuffing:** Swap sausage meat for a chestnut and mushroom mix. Still tasty, but your arteries will thank you.
- **Gravy:** Skim the fat off your gravy—or, if you're feeling adventurous, try a veggiebased stock.
- **Desserts:** Add fresh fruit to your puddings or use Greek yogurt instead of heavy cream. It's fancy and lighter.

Portion Control, But Make It Festive

Here's the thing: you can have all the treats you want—just not all at once. Go for smaller portions, eat slowly, and maybe pause before round two (even if the pigs in blankets are calling your name). Your body will thank you, and you'll have room for seconds... or thirds.

Get Moving (Yes, Even on Christmas Day)

After the big feast, don't just collapse on the sofa surrounded by chocolate wrappers. Rally the troops for a family walk or a game in the garden. It's fun, burns off a bit of that pudding, and makes you feel a lot less like a stued turkey. The Kitchen is for Everyone Let's be honest—cooking a Christmas feast solo can feel like a military operation. So rope in the family! Kids can help stir, chop, or just taste-test (because quality control is key). It's chaos, but it's also quality time—and it might just get them excited to try something new.

Remember What Christmas is Really About

Yes, the food is amazing. Yes, the mince pies are non-negotiable. But the heart of Christmas is spending time with the people you love, sharing laughs, and making memories. If that includes a second helping of pudding, so be it—but let's keep the joy bigger than the portions.

So, there you have it—a festive feast with all the flavour, a touch of balance, and plenty of laughs along the way. Wishing you a Merry Christmas full of laughter, and delicious food (with just enough healthy swaps to strike the perfect balance). Stay healthy, Wishing you all a Very Merry Christmas And a Happy New Year



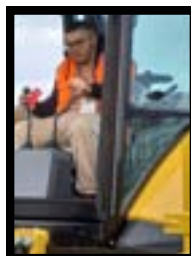
Space Centre Trip Post 16

5 students from Post 16 had a visit to the Space Centre on Thursday 28th November to look behind the scenes and learn a little bit more about the types of job roles available. We were met by 4 staff from different parts of the organisation, one from Education-Charlie, Zoe from marketing, Richard from artefacts and exhibitions and Sarah from the design department. They described what their roles were and what their day to day entailed. The group then got to try on an actual astronauts glove, and also handle a "space" wrench. There were then a couple of very interesting hands on tasks, one involving handling meteorites and the other, identifying smells from other planets! The discussion and information generated by the activities led to some big surprises and us learning some very interesting facts. During the first activity the students learnt they had handled dinosaur "poo" that was 66 million years old, and also that a large meteorite had landed in Barwell in 1965 and hit a car! As it was deemed to be an act of god the man couldn't claim on his insurance, neither did he get any money when he tried to sue the church.

The students were then set a challenge to create a "space" design for a box to contain sweets, that would be sold in the shop. The students excelled at the activity and there were some very good designs. Lastly we had a whistle stop tour around the centre and got to see the onsite rockets, space suits and learn how astronauts, eat in space, dress in space and carry out their daily basic functions.



The Learning for Life Group had an amazing day at Caterpillar on Tuesday 3rd December. 11 students accompanied by 4 staff set off first thing in the morning for the Desford site and were met on site by 6 staff from Caterpillar. Students were then given a short presentation on the work of Caterpillar, a health and safety briefing and then had to put on their PPE, which consisted of steel cap work safety boots and high vis jackets. The group were then split into two and were engaged in a number of practical tasks. Students were asked to interact with a hazard perception online activity, and they managed this brilliantly, identifying all the potential hazards on the factory floor. Students were involved in a Decal activity, that involved each of them positioning one of the distinctive Caterpillar logo stickers on a board (as it's done to each machine leaving the Caterpillar site), quite a tricky activity but every student did the task perfectly. Probably most exciting of all every student had the opportunity of sitting in, and operating a Caterpillar Backhoe (an enormous digger) and once again every student managed the challenge brilliantly. Lastly students had a short tour of the Desford site which was a very exciting experience, and this allowed them to see various machines on the production line, being built from scratch to actually seeing the finished article being driven out of the building. The students were all amazing and had a wonderful day and were exhausted by a "full on" experience. Every student was presented with a certificate to go in their Record of Achievement.



Celebrating Work Experience Success at Giving World

We are thrilled to share the inspiring journey of our students Lilly-Sue, Joe H, and Harriet, who recently completed their work experience at Giving World in Leicester. Over the course of the last half term, these dedicated students spent every Wednesday contributing to the incredible work of this charitable organisation, making a real difference in the lives of others.

Giving World is a pioneering charity that redistributes surplus products from businesses to those in need, completely free of charge. By tackling both poverty and waste, the organisation embodies a perfect blend of social and environmental responsibility—a mission our students were proud to be part of.

During their placement, Lilly-Sue, Joe, and Harriet engaged in a range of hands-on tasks, learning valuable skills while witnessing the impact of their work. Their experience coincided with Green Careers Week, offering an excellent opportunity to explore how sustainability and charity intersect in the workplace.

Reflecting on his experience, Joe shared, “This is easy!” after independently completing a variety of tasks—a true testament to his confidence and growth.

We are immensely proud of their achievements and grateful to Giving World for providing such a supportive and enriching environment. This opportunity has not only boosted their employability skills but also deepened their understanding of teamwork, responsibility, and the importance of giving back.

You need to be over 18 for this placement and interested in exploring work opportunities at Giving World, please get in touch for more information.

Congratulations to Lilly-Sue, Joe, and Harriet on a fantastic achievement! We can’t wait to see what their futures holds.

For any inquiries about Giving World or future work experience opportunities, please contact: Carmen Blades at carmenblades@maplewell.leics.sch.uk



Visit From Leicester College

Explore Leicester College: A Pathway to Independence and Opportunity

Recently Sam and Fenella from Leicester College visited our school to showcase the fantastic opportunities available within their Supported and Inclusive Learning Department. Their presentation highlighted how Leicester College is dedicated to helping students grow in confidence, independence, and readiness for adulthood.

Here's what they offer:

Learning for Work: Develop skills for employment while building confidence and independence.

Preparing for Adulthood: Explore pathways in employment, independent living, community inclusion, and health.

Functional Skills: Tailored English and Maths lessons at a pace that suits each student.

Personal Development: Discover ways to embody the college's core values: Respect, Inclusion, Sustainability, Equality, and Excellence.

Transition into Education: Gain support for personal and social growth while meeting new friends and having fun.

Work Experience: Opportunities to work in the vibrant Skyline Café in Leicester City Centre and take part in supported work placements.

Supported Internships: A bridge to paid employment, helping students take their next big step.

Wellbeing and Mental Health Support: Access to in-house mentors and a caring, supportive environment.

Travel Training: Learn essential travel skills to gain independence.

With so much on offer, Leicester College is a fantastic place for students to thrive. Why not book an appointment and see it for yourself? Whether it's developing life skills, making new friends, or preparing for a career, Leicester College has something for everyone.

Take the first step towards your future—visit Leicester College and discover where it could take you by contacting them directly or refer to :

carmenblades@maplewell.leics.sch.uk



Developing Literacy Skills at Maplewell

We know that developing literacy skills is essential in order for our students to be successful at Maplewell and in their lives outside of school. It can be difficult to know how to support them with developing these skills at home, so to support with this, [here is a link to our monthly literacy newsletter](#). Once a month we will share what students have been focusing on in reading time, as well as suggestions for things you can do together at home.

If you have any suggestions or questions, please contact me via email:

k.durrands@maplewell.leics.sch.uk

Mrs Durrands
Head of English

Sparx Leaderboard

Sparx Reader		Sparx Maths	
1	Jenson K	1	Danyal M
2	Lily P	2	Cameron W
3	Lacey C	3	Aaron F
4	Shayan C	4	Estelle B
5	Amelie B	5	Izzy S
6	Summer W	6	Alfie S
7	Eve S	7	Samuel E
8	Izzy S	8	Ruby-Rose R
9	Max H	9	Luke C
10	Leo O-N	10	Jibraeel D