



## **Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year**

Merry Christmas one and all and welcome to our last blog of 2022! It's been a difficult year for everyone involved with NSAT and around the country and we've had to face a variety of challenges in all areas of life that have affected our schools and our homes. However, our wonderful students have had so many successes and it is so important that we celebrate these achievements and strive to continue to work hard and work together so we can create more moments like these.

### **The Highlights of 2022**

There have been countless amazing moments across NSAT in 2022; so much so that we'd be reading all day if they were all included, but it's so hard to pick out some of the highlights. The careers programme at both schools has been amazing and led to so many cool experiences for our young people. We've had journalists working with a new school magazine, the local Viking Vets come in to talk about all things pets, and even The British Army to help inspire our students to aim high and pursue a variety of careers. Our enrichment timetable has also been a massive success and introduced activities such as judo, African drumming and boxing to the school day so our young people can try out new things and spend some time away from the classroom. North Star has also been lucky enough to host a variety of guests that have come into our schools for a variety of reasons. We've had the Regional Schools Director come to see how we learn at our primary school; we've hosted authors who have spoken to our students about their books and what we can all learn from them; we've even hosted a theatre company who put on one hell of a show at our primary school that included some of our brilliant actors and actresses in it!

However, the real stand out highlights from this year have to be the Queen's Platinum Jubilee parties that our schools hosted last summer which, in light of recent events, have become even more meaningful than they were at the time. With the help of some of our amazing sponsors, our parties had bouncy castles, ice cream vans and two massive feasts that we all sat down together to eat in celebration of Her Majesty The Queen.

### **A North Star Christmas**

As ever, it's been a wonderful build up to Christmas across our schools and, despite the miserable weather, the festive atmosphere has powered through every day. Both schools had special Christmas trips this week - NS240° went to see Cinderella at the Hippodrome and NS82° all went to Noah's Ark Zoo Farm to see the animals they have living there and play in their wicked indoor play area.

The Christmas presentations were brilliant (like every year) and gave our students a chance to show off their talents and be recognised for their hard work. It's also an opportunity for parents and carers to come into school and see what we've been doing and it makes it a really nice occasion for us as staff and our students. Christmas dinner was faultless; our

kitchen staff at both schools put an incredible amount of effort in to give our students a lovely Christmas dinner with all the trimmings, complete with crackers and cheesy Christmas tunes.

This year, we ran some Christmas competitions to get our students excited for the festivities. Both schools were asked to design Christmas cards to be judged by our headteachers and the winning design from each school has been put on our official Christmas card. We also had classroom decoration competitions which were perfect for getting the schools draped in festive decorations. The classrooms looked amazing!

North Star 82° were even lucky enough to have a visit from a special Christmas guest but we're not allowed to share any more information about that particular day...

### **Support Over the Christmas Period**

Although it is lovely to tell the amazing stories that come out of North Star Academy Trust and get into the festive spirit, it is important we consider the severe challenges that we might have to face over the Christmas period and beyond into 2023. The most important thing to remember is that we are all in this together. As school staff, we will endeavour to support our students and their families as much as we can and we are always on the end of the phone. A full list of supportive websites, schemes and charities is on our website on the parents and carers page of our website so please head online and have a look. The page includes financial advice, mental health support and help for families with SEND children. Citizens Advice Bristol and Bristol Mind are two of the brilliant websites that have tonnes of supportive information and advice for everyone living in and around Bristol, and Bristol City Council have some great tips on how to save on your energy bills and they have set up a network of Welcoming Spaces which is a great scheme and well worth checking out. Please head over to our website to get some more information or give us a phone call if you would rather and we can help you access the right support.

We would like to thank everyone involved with NSAT for helping to make 2022 a massive success. Whether you are parents or carers of our young people, staff agencies or sponsoring companies, staff or students, everyone has contributed to North Star Academy Trust this year and without everyone working as a team, we would not be able to celebrate so many successes. Let's keep the momentum going into 2023 and be even better next year.

