

# Newsletter

Winter Term: December 2020



**Dear Parents and Carers,**

It doesn't seem possible that we have already arrived at our last week of term of 2020. It has been an unusual term, with our students having to cope with disrupted routines and staffing as Covid-19 restrictions have continued to impact on school life. This is our last newsletter of the year. We would like to thank for your ongoing support as our school community grows and thrives.

We break up for Christmas on Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> December at 3.00pm. Christmas lunch will be cooked for all by our catering staff on Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> December. A menu is being worked through with our students to ensure they fully enjoy the meal. I am sure that we are all looking forward to a well-deserved Christmas break and hope that changes to national restrictions allow you all to spend quality time with family and friends.

This term we have welcomed 3 new students into our Brantwood Community. They are making smooth and gradual transitions into our school. We look forward to them joining us full time in January.

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## Advent Spiral

It is a tradition at Brantwood and all Ruskin Mill Trust and Steiner Schools for the students to have the opportunity to take part in an Advent Spiral.



On Thursday morning the classes at Tintagel gathered around the Advent Spiral in the Arnold Freeman Hall. Each student had their own moment to walk into the spiral, in reverence, to kindle their light from the central candle, and to spiral out again – the grown light symbolising us carrying the light within us through the darkest nights of winter.

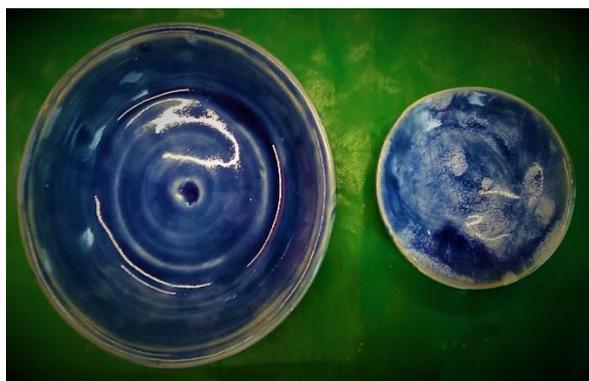


We host a second Advent Spiral at the main Brantwood site on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December.

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In Clay and Pottery some of our students have been busy creating thrown bowls created on the wheel and glazed beautifully in blue and patterned beakers. Many of our students have been working on “shrink pots” in green woodwork and are very proud of their creations.



## Our Beautiful New School Hall!

After a long wait, this week the students were finally given the use of a new, spacious school hall. It has been wonderful to see and hear the students playing games together during their breaks and lunch times. This generous gift, funded by the Ruskin Mill Trust at the request of Aonghus Gordon (founder), gives us a very welcome large space for playing, gathering and assembling together safely. We are so very grateful!

On this note, in order to protect the wooden floor, we would request that students bring in a pair of clean, light rubber soled trainers for hall use. Thank you for co-operation in this.



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## Eyam News

It has been a very foggy and wet week at Eyam but students have been making beautiful decorations using willow and wool. Some students are making great use of the pyrography machine to burn intricate designs into wooden disks to hang on the Christmas tree. We have also been keeping the animals happy by keeping them on dry straw so they are comfortable during the cold nights.

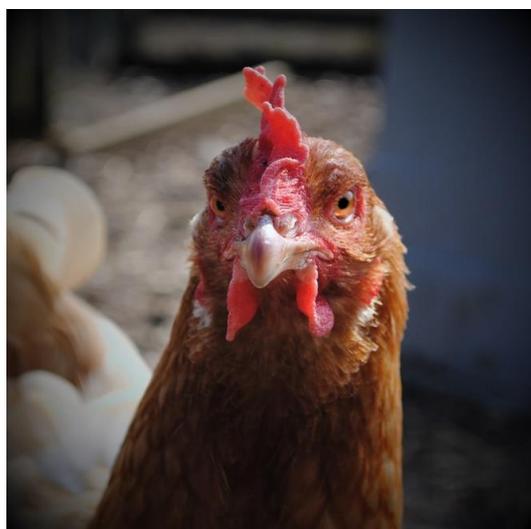
Students continue to enjoy the forge and are making superb items for use on the farm under the tutelage of our Blacksmith Tutor Steve.

## School Christmas Concert

This Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> December we will be hosting (virtually) a musical concert, with some of our students performing pieces they have been practicing in music sessions with Andrew. We are planning to film the performance and hope to be able to live stream or record the concert for parents to view (authorisation, consent and technical issues addressed accordingly). Please look out for further information on this next week.

## Student Photography at Eyam

We would like to share the following photographs taken by one of our students whilst at Eyam. We feel the characters of our animals have been captured brilliantly! We are commissioning a painter to re-create these for artwork in the school - more on this in the New Year.



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## Staff News

- We welcome Rae Stevenson, Assistant Head Teacher and Ben Simpson, Residential Care Manager to Brantwood starting on Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> January
- We congratulate Jess O'Connell, who for a large portion of the week takes up a new role as Preparation for Adulthood Co-ordinator
- We also welcome the following staff who have started with us this term:
  - Ross Kelly - driver and TA
  - Sarah Esmailpour - TA
  - Rebecca Brownett - Class Teacher at Tintagel
  - Jenny Blackett - already announced as a class teacher but joins the Safeguarding Team
  - Steve Dawes - already announced as a blacksmith teacher, also joining Safeguarding

On behalf of all staff, students and animals we would like to wish everyone a peaceful and healthy Christmas and offer our good wishes for the New Year.

Julie Neale, Eric Knutsen, Rob Grice, Digby Brown, Dawn Mirfin, Jim Hildyard and Tara Gratton