

# Wyre Forest School



## Half Termly Update

# Russell House Report, October 2016 update:

**The start of the new academic year welcomed new pupils to Russell House and it was great to see all our pupils returning with smiles, looking forward to spending time in our provision!**

Our new external pupil gradually increased to be a full time boarder during the first half of the Autumn term and she appears to have settled well! In addition, other transitions that started prior to the summer break, saw two further pupils extending their visits to become 3-4 night boarders. Unfortunately, we said a farewell to one of our younger pupils, who left us to start a transition into a 52 week provision that is smaller and better suits his needs.



Our focus for this term has been to settle new boarders and our new staff, all of whom are experienced and have worked in similar roles at local Children's' homes and schools. We are working hard to complete our new care curriculum which is hoped to be fully in use by all pupils in the spring term.

Further updates and achievements include:

- The Head of Care has completed a mid-year review of our National Minimum Standards, the Ofsted Criteria and the latest changes to our government guidance and policy. This has also included a visit to two other "outstanding" residential special schools alongside the Head of Care at the Vale of Evesham. Many new systems and structures are slowly being introduced to enhance the way that we monitor and log the progress that we make with our young people.
- Off-site trips are now all planned by our young people as a part of our new Student Forum Meetings, which take place at the start of each term. Although this was piloted prior to the summer break, we now have a robust system in place and will be keeping the meeting minutes (in various communication forms) for our young people to refer to.
- Our new Common Room, which was formed with funds raised through our sponsored event in July, is now complete and well loved by some of our more independent pupils. In addition, we have managed to further enhance a chill-out relaxing calm space for some of our other pupils and we now have a large 13ft trampoline in our garden which is enjoyed by all our pupils! We still have a small amount of money left from the sponsored event and we hope to use this to further enhance our activity room.
- The Autumn saw some new activities taking place and preparations for our Halloween event which will take place after half term!



Tim Matthews - Head of Care

# EYFS Report – October 2016 update:

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It has been brilliant to welcome 23 children into our two new Reception classes in the Early Years Hub. The children have a diverse range of needs, but have settled in very happily. They are learning the school routines, beginning to form friendships, and we can already see the progress they are making.

- The Nursery Assessment Class already have 19 children attending the unit, in preparation for their EHC plans. All the staff are working very closely with the families so that they feel fully involved in the process. The children are attending for two sessions per week, and the majority are also attending a mainstream nursery.
- The Year One children have transitioned over to the main building exceptionally well. They use the building confidently and are enjoying using the main dinner hall at lunchtime.
- The children have been learning about the weather, celebrations, and nursery rhymes since the start of term.
- As a phase we are going to be working together to look at how we can continue to create an enabling learning environment, both indoors and outdoors. We are really excited about the all weather canopy that has been ordered to encourage the children to learn outside in all weathers.



Alison Hopkins - Assistant Headteacher

# Lower School Phase Report – October 2016 update:

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The new academic year has got off to a ‘flying start’ in lower phase. The children have coped exceptionally well with class moves and changes. It is a credit to them just how well and quickly they have settled into the new term.

During the 1st half term Lower Key Stage 2 classes focus was ‘It’s All Greek To Me’. The children participated in many activities relating to the topic, including designing their own Greek buildings and exploring the Greek islands by placing the boats in the water and cars on the land.



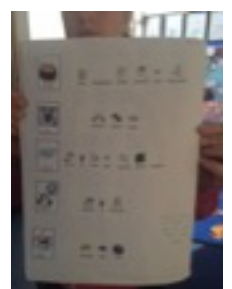
A variety of Greek snacks were made and enjoyed in the primary food technology room, accompanied by Greek dancing, and dressing in traditional Greek costumes.

Beech class have been learning about their bodies. They have participated in many practical activities, including painting hands and feet and drawing around their bodies. They have enjoyed celebrating Halloween and Bonfire night through sensory stories.



This term Upper Key Stage 2 classes are focusing on narrative writing and poetry in literacy lessons. The Thrive classroom have written their own poems relating to Halloween and enjoyed role play when immersing themselves in these activities.

At the time writing this report we are in the midst of the first MAD weeks (monitoring & Development Weeks). I am very proud of the way that lower phase staff have conducted themselves, and the positive approach they have had during all activities including observations, moderation meetings and learning walks. Feedback for the staff is very positive. Most viewed the MAD weeks as a favourable experience, and a time to reflect and build upon skills and feedback - enabling the team make their practise even better!



Su Weston - Lower School Phase Leader

# Middle School Phase Report – October 2016 update:

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We began the new academic year with a bang!

On the 13th September Middle School joined with the rest of WFS to celebrate Roald Dahl's 100th birthday. We all dressed up as characters from his books and the pupils participated in class activities linked to the author and his stories. It was a fabulous day with all involved.

On the 30th September we invited parents to join us for a Macmillan Mocktail Morning. The pupils all made sweet and savoury nibbles in their Food Technology lessons as their contribution to the mornings enterprise. Parents donated generously towards this highly worthy cause and it was a well attended event.

We had a highly successful Superheroes Disco on the 20th October with many famous characters attending, including Spiderman, Catwoman and Batman. There was opportunity to participate in seasonal games, buy spooky lollies and just generally have a good time together - Strictly Come Dancing had better watch out!

Sian Ireson - Teacher of Harry Cheshire class, attended a Lego Therapy course at Chads Grove on the 6th October.

## **Middle School September 2016**

**Thomas Brock:** The new pupils have settled well and are enjoying their new class. They all went up to the Science Lab and achieved their bunsen burner licences - so big congratulations to all of Brock class.

This term they are also having weekly visits to Bishops Wood Outdoor Centre where they are busy making dens and making decorations from natural materials.

**William Roden:** The new pupils have settled well and are enjoying their learning. We have fully participated in all the activities open to us and enjoyed making cheese straws for Macmillan Cocktail Morning. Hopefully we will be gaining our Bunsen burner licences this term.

**Walter Nash:** Pupils have enjoyed participating in activities in our own Forest School at WFS. It is now accessible for pupils in wheelchairs and the class team would like me to pass on thanks to Richard Liggett who has worked tirelessly to make the grounds inclusive. They have also enjoyed working with Robert Plant class for dance, art, music and P.E. On Roald Dahl Day the class made sumptuous boxes of chocolates to celebrate the event.

**William Brinton:** In October the class visited a Buddhist Temple in Cradley Heath. They did some meditation and made an offering to Buddha. They participated in Macmillan Mocktail Morning and enjoy their weekly bell boating sessions with Mr Liggitt at Cookley.

**Harry Cheshire:** As part of their Literacy work on 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory' we were all very envious when, on the 17th October, the class visited Cadbury World. They assured us they didn't see any Oompah-Lumpas.

**Rowland Hill:** The new pupils have settled well and the class have participated fully in all the activities open to them. They are all enjoying their learning.

**Loree Napier:** Napier class have done their Entry Level 1 English assessments and we await the certificates. We hope to progress to Entry Level 2 later in the year. 6 members of the class have been going to Blakedown Golf Course and working under the tuition of Angus Hoare, a professional golf coach. At half term he told Gareth that these students have been the group who have improved the most of all of his previous school groups and has welcomed them back this half term for another 6 weeks of tuition.

Debbie Hawkesworth – Middle School Phase Leader

# Upper School Phase Report - October 2016 update:

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## Changes to Nigel Kennedy class

Following a half term of teaching our year 10 SLD class ( Nigel Kennedy class) we have made some changes to their time table to support their learning experience:

1. The group have been split into two smaller groups based on their academic ability. This means that some pupils will be able to access higher accreditation courses and make more progress.
2. Mel Phipps has been appointed as a temporary teacher to deliver teaching to the lower ability group in more classroom based setting.
3. The group are now following the ASDAN personal progress course. This is a qualification that staff can deliver in subject specialist areas ( where the groups being taught together still) as well as in a classroom setting. The aim is that pupils will receive a certificate or Diploma in Personal Progress ( depending on number of units covered ) or an award or certificate in personal progress alongside any entry-level qualifications that they achieve by the end of year 11.

## Maths Day

We celebrated World Maths Day as a whole school on 17th October. Pupils and staff could come to school wearing a top with a mathematical shape, number, stripes or symbol and prizes were given out to the best ones. The school was decorated with some bunting using mathematical shapes.

Around the school there were differentiated maths trails for classes to take part in. The Thrive class set up a shop for classes to use as some interactive role play. Outside there were lots of games such as a giant Connect 4, Jenga, Ludo and other games which the pupils played with throughout the day. There were boxes of puzzles loaned out to different classes.

We started the day with an assembly for middle and upper school to set the tone for the day. We found maths in everyday places, solved a maths puzzle and watched a funny Mr. Bean film. Each class were given some prizes to use with their groups.

The day was a lot of fun and the pupils enjoyed themselves.

## Art trip to Walsall



Students from the year 11 Art group have been to Walsall Art Gallery to take part in a workshop with an artist and find out about contemporary art works for there accredited work.

They had a fantastic time!



## Year 10 PSHE lessons

Two of our TAs have been supporting some of our year 10 pupils in their PSHE lessons. They have been focussing on healthy living and emotional wellbeing.

They have taken the pupils on a range of afternoon trips including a coffee shop, Bodenham Arboretum and Springfield park.

The aim of these trips is to support pupils to broaden the range of activities that experience and to develop social and relationship skills for them all.

The feedback from these trips from both pupils and staff has been extremely positive.



## Wyre Forest/ Baxter dance collaboration

Pupils from year 9 and 10 started a dance project at Baxter college dance studio.

They are creating a Contemporary dance piece for P.E accreditation and performance next year at Kidderminster Dance festival.

They are being taught by Amie Kidd (dance teacher at Baxter College) and Rosie Hopkins with support from Michaela Griffin.

Students are embracing the opportunity to learn a new dance style!



## Year 11 Prom fundraising

Our year 11 pupils ( supported by Lotte Tvede) have been fundraising for their end of year Prom. They decide to hold a Halloween disco for the school on the last day of term .

They worked really hard decorating the hall, arranging music, refreshments and activities for all pupils to enjoy. The afternoon was a real success. They raised £136.00 of which they gave a donation to the astro turf fund.

They are going to be running a craft stall during the last week of term with support from the DT staff and members of year 10.

Rachel Wright - Upper School Phase Leader

# Sixth Form Report – October 2016 update:

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The Autumn term continues to be busy. Exciting developments and opportunities seem to be made on an almost daily basis.

- Pupils are responding well to our Learning for Living Curriculum. We are pleased with the way that the learning opportunities are planned to meet the needs of each pupil's personalised IPP targets.
- 6th Form have successfully been awarded £500 from the BIG Local Unlimited Star Award Fund to help towards the set up and running of a Pop up Cafe in Springfield Park. OPENING JAN 2017.
- Positive feedback was received after our first Sixth Form Coffee morning. Parents participated in gardening and clay work activities led by our young people. They were also served refreshments and had a good opportunity to chat to staff and other parents.



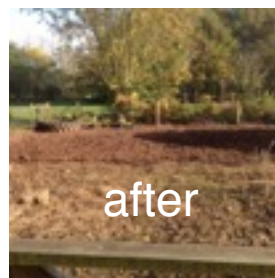
9 of the students in 6th Form successfully took part in a 3 week National Citizen Service Programme with Regency High School, Worcester. The first week was a residential visit to a PGL centre in Swindon. Pupils participated in high rope activities and team work challenges. It was an enjoyable and rewarding experience for all involved. During the second week, voluntary sector organisations ran workshops in school. The third week involved each school planning and running a community project. Our young people decided to build a sensory trail in WFS outdoor learning area using up-cycled materials. The project is on-going and is currently being enjoyed by younger members the school.



- As part of life and employability skills Sixth Form are taking part in the nationally run Young Enterprise Scheme. They are currently in the process of setting up their bank account and producing goods for local Christmas Events. They have already raised £132 from selling donated jewellery.



- Students have been working hard clearing undergrowth and vegetation at our allotment.



- Two pupils now attend Worcester College every Wednesday. This is to support a gentle transition into college. They will start full time next September.
- Visits have also begun to other adult education providers including Derwen College, Victoria College, Nineveh Ridge, Ourway and Sociables. We want our pupils to be as fully informed as possible so that they may make informed choices about their future
- One of our pupils is joining lessons with her peers in year 11 so that she can gain her Maths Cambridge Progression qualification. She is also enjoying participating in Work Experience in the Early Years Hub.
- We had a constructive meeting with 2 representatives from Kidderminster College. We were able to communicate our concerns regarding the opportunities available to our students after they leave WFS. They have pledged to work with us to provide smoother transition packages, starting with a visit planned for later this term.
- Professional development of Sixth Form staff is important to us. This term ED & JP have taken part in OCR webinar training and have gained clear awareness of the assessment procedures. RT attended a PfA event in Birmingham which has helped to clarify the vision for our Learning for Living curriculum.

#### **Report from Andy Train class:**

We have created an amazing new timetable to target the needs of our pupils. It promotes independence, communication, self-worth and self-confidence.

As well as our outdoor curriculum, our timetable now includes a session a week each with Sophie OT and music with Jo Powell. Each session has been extremely beneficial to all children.

Sophie has been focussing on vestibular sensory input promoting the children's emotional wellbeing. We have used rocking motions to calm children whilst supporting others to be uplifted by spinning on swings, using bikes and deep pressure body socks.

Music has been a very positive experience. The boys have tapped rhythms on their bodies or drums and have become so familiar with basic instruction that they can now start, stop, go fast and slow on request. Each musical session is completed with a yoga and an art activity that fits to story and music. All boys have become mesmerised and focused.



