Walsall’s 4th Anti-Bullying Conference

Equalities, Difference and Cohesion

Green Light for Building Schools for the Future

“My Walsall, my future”
Equalities, Difference and Cohesion

On Tuesday 24 November 2009, around 20 sixth form students from six Walsall schools met to discuss and improve their understanding of equalities and difference and to find ways of building greater social cohesion within and across Walsall schools. The meeting was organised by students from Queen Mary’s Grammar School (QMGS), which was also the venue. The six schools involved were: Queen Mary’s Grammar School; Queen Mary’s High School; Blue Coat Performing Arts College; Joseph Leckie Community Technology College; Aldridge School - A Science College and Alumwell Business and Enterprise College.

The meeting began with an introduction from Sam Dhesi, a year 13 student at Queen Mary’s Grammar School, who set out the aims of the day - “To establish an understanding of what community cohesion entails, devise an action plan on how it can be implemented into our school and communities and finally maintain a network between our schools to fuel these aims with fresh ideas and developments.” He also pointed out to the participating students that they would be pioneers of Walsall’s communal transformation and this meeting was the beginning of a journey. The participants were given reassurances that this would be a safe environment to discuss controversial and contentious issues and expressing opinions with honesty and candour was welcomed. He concluded by saying “we are all here to build and work towards societal equity.”

Matthew Turner, also a year 13 student at QMGS, referred to a national youth conference which he and four other students attended in March 2009 - as featured in School News, April 2009. At that conference a whole range of issues were explored - racism, Islamophobia, extremism and radicalisation as well as community cohesion. He then briefly defined the terms Islamophobia, extremism and radicalisation and also made a clear distinction between prejudice and discrimination for the benefit of the participants. Matthew finished by saying, “It’s the idea of community cohesion, the belief and hope that in the not so distant future, people of all races and religions will co-exist happily throughout the country.”

We were then introduced by Yusuf Tariq of QMGS to Robin Richardson, a director of Insted Consultancy who has immense knowledge and experience around equalities and Islamophobia. More recently he has worked with the Department for Children, Schools and Families in relation to equalities legislation and so we were extremely fortunate to have his expertise.

The platform had been set for what was going to be an interesting and stimulating day.

The first task for the students was to ensure that they got to know each other and to identify the commonalities that bind them as students, young people and citizens. Once the students began to feel more at ease with each other, more difficult issues around equalities and diversity were explored.

Video clips dealing with racism and Islamophobia from ‘Show Racism the Red Card’ were shown and students were asked to reflect on what they saw. They watched professional footballers – both Muslim and non-Muslim - talk about the uniting force of football and their experiences of racism and Islamophobia.

After a delightful lunch which was arranged by Ayushi Vyas, year 13 student at QMGS, the students progressed to look at reviewing community cohesion in their respective schools – a summative report will be sent to senior leaders of each participating school.

At the end of the day, the students were extremely fortunate to have his expertise. Matthew Turner, also a year 13 student at QMGS, referred to a national youth conference which he and four other students attended in March 2009 - as featured in School News, April 2009. At that conference a whole range of issues were explored - racism, Islamophobia, extremism and radicalisation as well as community cohesion. He then briefly defined the terms Islamophobia, extremism and radicalisation and also made a clear distinction between prejudice and discrimination for the benefit of the participants. Matthew finished by saying, “It’s the idea of community cohesion, the belief and hope that in the not so distant future, people of all races and religions will co-exist happily throughout the country.”

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At the end of the day, the students were very clear that this should not be a one-off event but part of a series of events and meetings that should take place on a regular basis to keep up the momentum and enthusiasm that had been developed during the day. The possibility of a ‘facebook group’ was aired and agreed as a way of keeping in touch.

All the students were grateful for being given the opportunity to attend such a meeting and found the day stimulating with increased knowledge and understanding around equalities, difference and cohesion.

Robin Richardson – the consultant – commented, following the meeting, that all the students were extremely impressive and that the future of the country was in good hands.
People

Martin Cain – BA Hons

Martin (pictured, right) commenced in post as headteacher at Frank F Harrison Engineering College in September 2003 having been in post as a deputy headteacher at Chellaston School in Derbyshire.

A family man, he brought with him a strong family ethos, whose main driver is to do what is in the best interests of the children.

The school was awarded School of the Year for 2004 and 2005 and in 2006, following a very successful Ofsted inspection, the school was graded as ‘good’ and leadership as ‘outstanding’.

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This led to the second and third key aims being changed to:

- be outstanding and promote engineering – to reflect the college’s engineering status.
- Martin has had a very successful six years at Frank F Harrison with pupil numbers increasing steadily throughout his tenure as headteacher. In 2009, the college achieved a record number of 5 A*-C with 61%. A marvellous achievement.

Martin is leaving to become principal designate at a brand new Academy in Nuneaton. We wish him good luck and good fortune but he will be greatly missed by staff, pupils, governors and parents alike.

Contact: Frank F Harrison Engineering College
Tel: 01922 710620
Email: postbox@ffhonline.com

News

Balloons powered buggies go the distance!

Pupils and relatives from the primary feeder schools Cooper and Jordan, Leighswood, Radleys and Whetstone Field took part in a balloon powered buggy race.

Pupils designed and built a lightweight buggy powered only by a balloon and competed to travel the greatest distance. Marks for design were also awarded and the constructions were extremely imaginative and creative.

Feedback from the competitors was amazing and it appeared that everyone had thoroughly enjoyed the evening and the fun atmosphere as well as the building of the buggy over several weeks beforehand.

The photograph shows the winners, although everyone went home with a small prize for taking part.

Pictured, left, are the winners of the balloon powered buggy race with their inventions.

Contact: Aldridge School
Tel: 01922 743988
Email: postbox@aldridge.walsall.sch.uk

Deadline dates for Schools News are 12 noon on:

8 January 2010
5 February 2010
5 March 2010
1 April 2010
7 May 2010
11 June 2010
9 July 2010

Send your entries to comms@walsallcs.serco.com

Contact: Jim Clarke, Headteacher, Pool Hayes Arts & Community School Tel: 01902 609501

Pool Hayes Student Ambassadors attend COP15

United Nations Climate Change Conference

Dec 7 – Dec 18 2009

On 4 December pupils from Pool Hayes Arts and Community School arrived at the Radio WM studios at 7:40 am as they were appearing live on the Phil Upton Breakfast Show. The pupils told Phil and WM listeners about the work they had been doing with Oxfam over the last six months to raise awareness about the environment and that as a result of this they would be attending and representing Oxfam at the COP15 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen.

They also stressed that climate change affects the world’s poorest people first. Their work has included meeting the Minister of State for the Environment and addressing the Oxfam Midlands Conference in Birmingham.

A grant from the Youth Opportunities Fund made this once in a lifetime trip possible and has given the students from Pool Hayes Arts and Community School the opportunity to meet and interview government delegates at COP15.

COP15

During the visit our Pool Hayes delegates also met with fellow students from their link school in Copenhagen and enjoyed attending workshops about how they see climate change, what they feel about this huge summit being held in their city and what Denmark is doing to combat climate change. They also took time out to see many of the fantastic cultural events happening all over the city.

Jim Clarke, headteacher at Pool Hayes says, “I am immensely proud of our students’ drive and commitment to raising awareness of climate change. I had no doubt that they would all be fine ambassadors for the school, Walsall and Oxfam at this major summate. The COP15 conference has been deemed as perhaps the most important meeting since the end of the Second World War. Our students have returned with material that can now be turned into a DVD and teaching pack for use in Walsall and beyond.”

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Council leaders are celebrating the official start of Walsall’s £100 million Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme to transform learning across the borough.

The final go-ahead to embark on the 10 year transformation programme came at a special remit meeting between Walsall Council officials and the Government at Walsall Town Hall on 17 November 2009. Representatives from Partnership for Schools (the body set up by the government to deliver BSF) and the Department for Children Schools and Families formally approved Walsall’s vision for transforming children and young people’s learning over future generations. The meeting also identified the objectives and actions needed to deliver this huge investment in Walsall.

Cabinet member for children’s services Councillor Rachel Walker said: “We are extremely pleased to have secured this investment which will enable us to transform learning in Walsall.”

“It is our once in a lifetime opportunity to change the face of education in Walsall.”

Deputy leader and cabinet member for regeneration Councillor Adrian Andrew said: “This announcement will provide us with the opportunity to link together all our exciting regeneration initiatives to ensure we maximise the investment into the borough and give existing youngsters - and future generations - a brighter future.”

Tim Byles, Chief Executive of Partnerships for Schools, the Government organisation responsible for delivering the national BSF programme, said: “The remit milestone marks the start of Walsall’s once-in-a-lifetime BSF journey. We look forward to following the progress of the project as it seeks to transform not only the lives of local school children but communities as a whole.”

The council’s BSF programme team has been working very hard across the borough to ensure Walsall was accepted into the programme. The BSF project in Walsall will see construction work starting in 2012 with the first new and remodelled schools expected to open in 2014. There will be many opportunities as the programme develops to get involved in consultation events. Results from previous events are currently being reviewed and will be fed back into Walsall’s transforming learning strategy to change the way children, young people and their families learn in the future.

Building Schools for the Future will bring:

• the biggest ever investment in schools
• a once in a lifetime opportunity to transform learning for the future
• world class learning and educational environments
• flexible, inspirational and innovative approaches to education design
• great facilities for our communities
• not just new buildings, this programme will create learning hubs for whole communities

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Six secondary schools are in line to be the first to benefit from the start of this investment:

• Alumwell Business and Enterprise College
• Frank F Harrison Engineering College
• Joseph Leckie Community Technology College
• Pool Hayes Arts and Community School
• Shire Oak School (A Science College)
• The Streetly School (A Specialist Sports College)

All schools in Walsall will benefit from the project through the use of cutting edge technology, greater collaboration between schools and by opening up facilities for greater community use. The programme will also link in with key regeneration initiatives planned across the borough and a major programme of consultation is already underway to capture ideas and suggestions from children and young people, parents, community and voluntary groups, council partners, other agencies, local residents and businesses.

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Arts week at Bentley West

During the week of 2 November all children at Bentley West primary school took part in Arts Week. Throughout the school, children studied a wide range of artists; Jackson Pollock, Henri Rousseau, Georgia O’Keeffe, LS Lowry, George Seurat, Salvador Dalí, David Hockney and Pablo Picasso. The whole school focus was to improve drawing and painting using an extensive range of materials. With help from the second year primary students at Wolverhampton University, children studied the skills their artist would have used. For the first two days of the week the school was fortunate enough to have an artist, Alex Fawson, who was visited by every class while he painted. He explained the skills required and demonstrated sketching and shading. This fascinated the children as, although they have worked along many artists in school, have never watched an artist at work. This inspired the whole school and the children worked hard at improving skills throughout the whole week. Cross curricular lessons were delivered, writing stories about the people and places in the pieces studied and biographies of the artists. Year 2, who were studying LS Lowry, took photographs of themselves in front of buildings to study movement in greater detail.

Work was displayed in the school hall and exhibitions took place for parents and children to see their work the following week. Both the parents and children were amazed at the quality of the work and felt that a week of working on particular skills was important to improve the children’s artwork. The parents at Bentley West are looking forward to the next arts week, to which they are hoping to be invited to improve their own artistic skills, alongside their children. Not only have the pupils developed their skills in drawing and painting but the teaching staff now feel a lot more confident in teaching and modelling art skills.

Walsall Sailability Awards

Councillor Barry Sanders presented over 40 sailing certificates at Walsall Council’s Sport & LeisureOutdoor Pursuit Team Sailability Awards on Thursday 3 December 2009. The awards evening took place at the Aldridge Airport Outdoor Activity Centre for pupils and adults with special needs.

Pupils from Walsall’s Mary Elliot, Old Hall and Sutton’s Oscott Manor special schools participated with Chase Community Homes and Select Lifeways care homes for adults who suffer from autism, in a Royal Yachting Association Sailability sailing programme for people with a disability. All those taking part in the programme have gained sailing skills, independence and a wide range of experiences that they would not have otherwise been able to enjoy. Also, many achieved RYA Sailability bronze, silver and gold sailing awards.

Mary Elliot special school took the majority of the awards with 12 taster awards, 4 bronze, 14 silver, 1 gold and a pupil gaining the RYA Level 1 award.

Councillor Sanders also awarded the Rotary Club of Darlaston Sailability Trophy to Chase Community Homes. Linda Cooper the manager of the centre said "We are overwhelmed to receive the trophy."

Contact: Rob Sherlock, Bentley West Primary
Tel: 01922 720792 Email: postbox@bentley-west.walsall.sch.uk

Holocaust Memorial Day 2010: The Legacy of Hope

“Hope without memory is like memory without hope...”

As part of ‘We are Walsall’, Walsall Multi Faith Forum, Walsall Children’s Services – Serco and Walsall Council will be hosting a commemorative event at Walsall New Art Gallery on 27 January 2010 at 11:00 am. Schools can join in this event by contacting Liz Allsop, Access, Entitlements and Special Projects Manager at Walsall Children’s Services – Serco on telephone 01922 686218, mobile 0771 819 5961 or email liz.allsop@walsalls.serco.com.

On or around 27 January 2010, thousands of people across the UK will be commemorating the 65th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau in their communities and schools. On this date, the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust (HMDT) is asking everyone to become part of ‘The Legacy of Hope’. There is still time for organisers to plan events for their communities and students and HMDT are there to help.

HMDT has put together some tips for organisers and educators wishing to commemorate HMD:

- Order the free HMD 2010 Campaign Pack - this includes display material, an example of the handout material we can supply and advice on planning your event www.hmd.org.uk/campaignpack.php
- Download Local Activity Guidance for community event organisers - www.hmd.org.uk/resources/cat/11/
- Visit the HMDT education website http://education.hmd.org.uk where you will find free resources for all age levels across all curriculum subjects
- Pre order the HMD 2010 film for use in your events - call HMDT on 0845 838 1883 to request your free copy
- Read the theme paper for HMD 2010 and find out how you can become part of ‘The Legacy of Hope’ www.hmd.org.uk/resources/item/277/

The HMD Team are always happy to hear from you, and to offer support and advice on organising your HMD events. You can call any member of the team on 0845 838 1883.

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Children In Need...

...AT THE SHEPWELL CENTRE...

Year 11 pupils at the Shepwell Centre held an afternoon tea for teachers, friends and family to raise money for Children In Need. As part of their ASDAN CoPE Award they planned and prepared the whole event. To the delight of everyone present, Rudsey Bear also made an appearance and huge fun was had by all. Thank you to everyone who supported us and helped us to raise the grand sum of £250.

Contact: The Shepwell Centre
Tel: 01902 632719 Email: shepwell@walsallcs.serco.com

...and St Francis Catholic Primary

The children and staff of St Francis Catholic primary school in Shelfield recently put on a production of Cinderella Rockefella to support the BBC Children In Need appeal. Parents and friends of the school were entertained by the antics of the staff and children, who performed to a full house for two performances which had been produced under the watchful eye of Mrs Jane Keeling. BBC Radio WM also interviewed children and staff for Phil Upton’s Breakfast show.

After two days of dressing up and performing, four members of the cast (Mr Alex Turner, Mrs Emma Hayes, Mrs Nicola Mackenzie and headteacher Mr John Murray (pictured, right)) were invited to appear on BBC Birmingham at the IMAX centre. For the journey to the studio they wore full dress and subsequently gained some admiring glances from other motorists!

The event raised over £700 for Children In Need and as it was the school’s second major fundraising event since September, a cheque for £1,319.50 was also presented to Mr Paul Walmsley of the BCPP for the Building Schools in Rwanda Appeal.

The school would like to send a big thank you to everyone who supported these events.

Contact: Headteacher, Mr John Murray, St Francis Catholic Primary
Tel: 01922 682583 Email: postbox@st-francis-p.walsall.sch.uk

Language for Learning - The WELLI Project

If you are interested in ‘Learning to Learn’ skills, then this is the project for you! Do you want to take part in a project that involves developing a shared language for learning from pre-school to adulthood? Are you interested in your school taking part in an action based research project involving gifted and talented children and their parents?

ELLl Effective Lifelong Learning Inventory is an exciting idea in learning that has captured the imagination of many teachers, parents and children. The ELLl project was initiated by Professors Broadfoot and Claxton and led by Dr Ruth Deakin Crick at the Graduate School of Education, University of Bristol and set out to identify the characteristics and dispositions of effective lifelong learners. Seven dimensions of learning power emerged - each of which is now represented by a specific animal. ELLl is a well researched set of ideas about how people learn most effectively and views learners as on a learning journey, not defining or ‘fixing’ them for the sake of analysis or assessment.

The animals and the seven dimensions of learning that they represent are:

- bee: learning relationships
- cat: curiosity
- chameleon: changing and learning
- owl: strategic awareness
- snail: resilience
- spider: making connections
- unicorn: creativity

Walsall’s Effective Lifelong Learning Inventory (WELLI) project summarises the approach taken by a small cluster of schools in Walsall to utilise the seven dimensions of learning in their own language for learning projects. When taking up her new post as deputy headteacher at Leamore primary school, Michelle Hill, who had previously worked in Bristol, was keen to introduce the concept of ELLl to Walsall schools.

All Walsall schools were invited to come to an initial meeting to find out about WELLI. The following schools and colleagues signed up:

- Lynne Emery, deputy headteacher at Valley nursery school
- Helen Bartlett, deputy headteacher at St John Church Of England primary school
- Gary Edmunds, assistant headteacher at Meadow View primary school
- Sally Moorman a member of the senior leadership team at Lower Farm primary school

Each of the schools identified two children from each year group to represent the school at WELLI project days.

The schools involved kick-started the WELLI project by holding a dimensions of learning day at Lower Farm primary school. Steve Smallman, the children’s author and illustrator, led the day and helped children and their parents to think about each of the ELLl characters by drawing each of the animals and then generating appropriate vocabulary to describe each animal’s characteristic. With Steve’s help, the children and parents wrote incredibly creative stories based on the ELLl animals. Other exciting projects are in the pipeline.

To join the WELLI project, all you need to do is identify two children from each year group who are considered as ‘gifted and talented’ at literacy; they should be literate children as well as having enthusiastic parents. Staff will meet once every half term to plan the project. Communication between meetings is via email and a dedicated website. Schools will meet up to take part in activity days developed during the project.

Below is a sneak preview screenshot of the WELLI website which is due to go live by the end of term. It is expected that the website’s address will be www.welli.co.uk but all schools will be notified of the final URL via their postbox emails.

For further information please contact: Michelle Hill, Deputy Headteacher
Tel: 01922 710514
Email: mhill@leamore.walsall.sch.uk
After months of hard work and dedication Aldridge School has received a prestigious award recognising the steps it has taken with peer mentoring. At Walsall’s 4th Anti-Bullying Conference representatives of the school council and the permanent Anti-Bullying Committee were presented with the 2009 ‘Tell Us What You Do Award’ trophy and a cheque for £200. The award highlights the best practice that exists at Aldridge in supporting all youngsters to remove barriers to learning. Over the past year a group of year 7 ambassadors have been trained to help with our transition arrangements. Year 10, 12 and 13 buddies have been created and trained by the NSPCC to help fellow pupils deal with any social or emotional issues. All year groups now have academic peer mentors to aid them with any work based issues.

Friday the 13th was far from an unlucky day for Aldridge as we were also presented with a second certificate marking our progress towards Walsall Safeguarding Children’s Board Anti-Bullying Standards. Significant developments over the past year in relation to anti-bullying have taken place such as new reporting measures, new dedicated website page, new displays around school, formation of the anti-bullying committee, to mention but a few. Many congratulations to all the staff, parents, governors and pupils involved.

Pictured below with their award are: Amrit Atkinson-Delay, Jack Brookes, Jamie Clark, Annie Fletcher-Hall, Josh Ford, Amy Jones, Karen Kaur, Josh Ibrahim, Callum Levy, Bhakti Purohit, Victoria Waite and Tom Ward.

Y et again we had a fantastic time at this year’s conference. The young people on the committee excelled in arranging the event. The Buddies at New Invention Junior performed this year for the first time and all were very nervous but once up on the stage did an excellent job and I was very proud of them. Our ‘Wake N Shake’ routine was brilliant and well done all those people in the audience who gave it a go!

Miles Lesny from year 5 won second prize in the ‘design a screen saver’ competition and is very excited to be going to the Walsall match on 5 December. He will be taking his Dad.

Well done again to all involved in this year’s conference and we will be looking forward to next year!

Marie Sharratt, Learning Mentor

Walsall’s Anti-bullying Annual Conference commenced for a fourth time running this November and was yet again a delightful success. With the theme being ‘stay safe in Cyberspace’ children and young people from across the borough of Walsall attended in their masses and packed out the Bescot Stadium, united in tackling bullying.

The children and young people’s anti-bullying committee took centre stage and led the invitees through a fantastic day which including performances from Willenhall School Sports College, Blue Coat CE Performing Arts Specialist College and New Invention Junior, exciting workshops and even our own prestigious award ceremony for the many schools that achieved our Anti Bullying Standard Awards. The day ended with our annual balloon launch (as pictured on the front cover) and closing events from Adrienne Katz, regional coordinator for Anti Bullying Alliance, as well as a beautiful singing performance from committee member April Bent.

Chairperson Spiros Georgiou (pictured, left) said, “The day was an absolute success once again and everyone on the committee made a tremendous effort into planning the day. I think each year we send many young people back to their schools with vital information that could just be their next step to helping someone who is a victim, bystander or indeed the bully. As technology increases in society year on year, the importance of advice for anti-bullying in these circumstances is critical and we as a committee are working on this year on year and one of the ways is by signing up for our unique Standard Awards.”

The anti-bullying committee is now hoping many other schools and youth clubs will follow the footsteps of those who received the standard awards during the conference. To apply for a standard, visit www.wlscb.org.uk.

New Invention Juniors ‘Wake N Shake’

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We arrived at Banks’s Stadium for Walsall’s 4th Annual Anti-bullying Conference full of excitement because we had recently submitted our application for the Bronze Standard. If we were successful then we would receive our award on stage, so we had our fingers crossed all morning!

The conference started with a brilliant performance from Willenhall School Sports College, followed by a fantastic singer who sang ‘something inside so strong’. The committee introduced us to the 4th anti-bullying conference and to themselves one by one in a line in front of a huge screen that said they liked being a committee member.

New Invention Junior primary school performed a lovely song and their ‘wake and shake’ routine - it was excellent. They got everybody up and got them to do some dancing to get everyone to wake up. After that we all had a short break. The committee members handed out some drinks and popcorn to enjoy whilst watching the DVD. It was called ‘Let’s fight it together’. It was about a boy called Joe who was being cyber bullied by mobile phone and computer. The key message was to tell someone if anything like this was to happen to you! PC Brian and two of the committee members performed a short story to tell how easily bullying happens, even when people are messing about. Now this was the part that we had been waiting for – the awards! The first prize awarded was the best computer screen saver to Jessica Hartland – Barr Beacon (won a goody bag), Myles Lesny – New Invention Junior (won 2 tickets to a Walsall football game) and Khaleesa Hussain – Greenfields (won an iPod). St Thomas More won the best DVD on anti-bullying and they received a tour round Beacon Radio Station.

Spiros then began to announce the schools that have achieved standards awards. When it was our turn we went up to receive the award and had a picture taken with Frank Barnes and Adrienne Katz. We are really proud of our school achievement! (See picture, top right.)

We then had time to go and look at all the information and meet the lovely people on the stands before lunch. During our lunch break we went outside and looked at the activities available. We really loved the ‘reach up’ - you had to get through all the balls and climb through the tiny holes that stretch and Mitchell was like a cheetah because he climbed to the top first!

Walsall young reporters at the anti-bullying conference:

Written by Kevin Taylor, year 6 and Shannon Moore, year 5, Harden Primary

On 13 November we went to Walsall Football Stadium to take part in the anti-bullying conference. Myself and other councillors enjoyed meeting other children seeking ideas to add to our great anti-bullying ideas we already have in school.

My favourite part of the day was the award giving ceremony as I liked hearing about things that other schools have done well.
Aldridge School book week
by Ursula Langley 7.76B

From 19-23 October, year 7 pupils at Aldridge School took part in book week 2009. This involved lots of fun and exciting activities for us during the week. There was a book week quiz to do in all of our subjects.

To mark this special occasion the librarian, Mrs Kaur, organised an assembly where year 7 and 8 pupils had the chance to meet the author Pete Johnson. He gave us an amazing performance and told us about his new book ‘The TV Time Travellers’.

For the Awards ceremony Richard Shepherd MP presented prizes to the winners of the competitions. Over 100 of us had won a signed copy of Pete Johnson’s latest book. I won a prize for the PE competition. The ceremony was brilliant, as I managed to shake hands and have a photo taken with my local MP (pictured below)!

In the shape of a book and was absolutely delicious!

News - Well Done

Ofsted Success: Joseph Leckie Community Technology College is a ‘Good’ school

Staff at Joseph Leckie Community Technology College are celebrating the publication of their recent Ofsted inspection which has praised the college for improving in key areas since its last inspection and is now officially recognised as a ‘good’ school.

Five inspectors visited the college last month and found that “The school is led very well by an experienced and highly respected headteacher whose vision, for a school at the hub of the community it serves, is reflected in its work. The school is outward-looking and innovative. Teamwork is strong and focused on raising standards for all students.”

Inspectors found that teaching was at least good in over 80% of the lessons with some outstanding practice on which the school can build. There are strengths in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and in several other subject areas students also progress well.

The gap in attainment between boys and girls at GCSE is closing, although girls did better in 2009. Those students who are at an early stage of learning English are provided with effective support from trained assistants, both in lessons and in a dedicated centre. Those who have learning difficulties or who have statements of special educational needs also progress well and are very well supported.

The school’s hard work and success in encouraging students to adopt healthy lifestyles was another positive feature of the report. Inspectors reported on the very good take-up of sports and other activities, enhanced by the extended services that the school provides to its local community. A good range of healthy food options are available and trained students mentor and guide others about issues such as smoking, drinking and health. This clearly demonstrates how the school encourages students to take responsibility to support and help each other. Their pride and involvement in the school and the local community is consequently strong.

Students are well informed of how to stay safe and they acquire well-developed moral and social codes which are seen in their very good relationships. Cultural understanding is a very strong feature. Good opportunities to reflect on ethical issues and students’ willingness to learn about their world promotes their spiritual development well. Students acquire good workplace skills from the many opportunities provided and are well prepared for their future lives. Inspectors also praised the students and their relationships with each other and with staff and were delighted with the “calm and harmonious learning environment”.

Students’ progress to their targets is reviewed regularly and targeted students receive mentoring in years 10 and 11 if they are at risk of underachieving.

The school also rigorously analyses trends among different ethnic groups and by gender, and acts on the findings. In this and other ways, it is successfully closing gaps in the achievement of such groups.

One factor contributing to the improving picture of achievement is the breadth of the curriculum, where the school has used its partnerships to provide a more diverse range of courses and training for 14 to 19 year olds. This has resulted in a considerable drop in those leaving Year 11 who are not in education, employment or training.

There is very good provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education, enhanced by the extended services offered to the community. Standards of care, guidance and support are high.

Inspectors came across some striking examples of excellent provision made for a number of vulnerable students who have diverse and challenging needs.

Safeguarding arrangements are rigorous and staff are well trained in child protection. A very good range of extended services places the school in the heart of the community. Well developed links with local business and the range of ethnic groups locally promote community cohesion.

In the sixth form provision is good and attainment at GCSE A-Level has risen to be close to the national average. Students enjoy sixth form life and act as mentors to younger students and as sports leaders.

Inspectors found that the school attaches great importance to its communication with parents and employs several ways in which staff meet and consult parents and listen to their concerns. A very large majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaires report that their child enjoys school, they are happy with their child’s experience and that their child is well prepared for the future and is making enough progress. Inspectors also investigated how well the school responds to parents’ views and to concerns which a few parents also raised.

Looking to the future the inspectors said that the school’s potential to improve was considered to be good. The school should raise students’ attainment further so that the proportion in year 11 gaining five or more good GCSEs including English and mathematics meets or exceeds the national average over the next two years. Secondly, build on the school’s partnerships to extend the range of vocational courses for 14 to 19 year olds through diplomas and other pathways. Thirdly, extend the monitoring role of sixth form leadership, particularly in evaluating teaching quality and using assessment information, so that uneven standards across subjects are tackled very promptly and improvement is accelerated.

Headteacher, Keith Whittlestone said: “We are delighted with the findings of the inspection team and the outcomes are the result of a lot of hard work and effort from the staff, students and the parents over a period of time. The new inspection framework gives heads and senior leaders in schools an opportunity to influence the direction of the inspection and to work more closely with the inspectors than ever before. The next step in the development of this process is to enable headteachers to become full members of the inspection team.”
Joseph Leckie Community Technology College is Walsall’s Secondary School of the Year

Joseph Leckie CTC, a full service extended school, was awarded the winner’s trophy in the Annual School of the Year (Secondary) category in Walsall’s Celebrating Achievements Annual Teams Awards 2009 on Friday 20 September 2009 at Banks’ Stadium (pictured, right).

The award celebrated the impact that the college has had in raising standards and in improving attainment for its students. The college has successfully shown that there are no barriers to learning and academic success. In 2008 the college was the most improved secondary school in Walsall with a 17% increase to 53% in GCSE 5+ A* to C Grades. There was also a 17% increase to 46% in GCSE 5+ A* to C Grades including English and Maths. At A Level in 2008 the college achieved a 93% pass rate from which 29% of grades were A or B.

Progress of students from Key Stage 2 (KS2) to Key Stage 3 (KS3) has always been a strength of the college which has consistently been identified as one of the highest achieving non selective schools in the authority. The college employs 35 teaching assistants. They provide excellent support for students with special educational needs. Of these, 17 are employed within faculties supporting the learning of all students. This level of support is exceptional within Walsall. EAL students are very well supported by a dedicated team of eight bilingual teachers and support workers. This is recognised as excellent practice within the local authority.

The college offers a range of extended services which has had a real impact on students and their families. The school offer the following:

- Breakfast Club - free breakfasts for students enabling them to be ready to learn.
- After school classes - supported study every week night until 5.30 pm.
- Holiday activities - a wide range of activities each day across 9 weeks of holidays.
- Engaging other agencies - eg partnerships with police, charities, Walsall Football Club.
- Mentoring Academy - increasing the skills and employability of students and parents.
- Healthy School status - ensuring standards in student health and wellness.
- School Travel Plan - supporting healthy and safe travel arrangements.

Joseph Leckie said “The college has an excellent record with regard to student progress. In 2008 the achievement gap between boys and girls was narrowed to only 2% at GCSE. The progress of students from key stage 2 to key stage 3 has been a strength of the college which has consistently been identified as one of the highest achieving non selective schools in the authority. In 2007 the college was second in the whole of the Black Country for CVA from KS2 to KS3 and was within the top 3% nationally.

With regard to extended services, the range and quality of extended services has had a real impact on students and their families. The school offers the following:

- Breakfast Club - free breakfasts for students enabling them to be ready to learn.
- After school classes - supported study every week night until 5.30 pm.
- Holiday activities - a wide range of activities each day across 9 weeks of holidays.
- Engaging other agencies - eg partnerships with police, charities, Walsall Football Club.
- Mentoring Academy - increasing the skills and employability of students and parents.
- Healthy School status - ensuring standards in student health and wellness.
- School Travel Plan - supporting healthy and safe travel arrangements.

- Adult Learning - a range of classes in evenings and at weekends.
- Community Access - accommodation and sporting facilities available for booking.
- Lead in extended schools cluster - key role in promoting extended services.

Finally, the college is inclusive at all levels.

The college successfully provides mainstream education for a number of physically disabled, visually and hearing impaired students.

The college employs 35 teaching assistants. They provide excellent support for students with special educational needs. Of these, 17 are employed within faculties supporting the learning of all students. This level of support is exceptional within Walsall. EAL students are very well supported by a dedicated team of eight bilingual teachers and support workers. This is recognised as excellent practice within the local authority.

Everyone is delighted with this award which is a result of a great deal of hard work by the students, their parents and families in a partnership with the teachers and associate staff of the college.”

Contact: Joseph Leckie Community Technology College Tel: 01922 721071 Email: postbox@j-leckie.walsall.sch.uk

Elmwood goes international

Congratulations go to Elmwood School who have recently been awarded the foundational level international school award by the British Council.

The school has been forging links with two partner schools - one near Krakow in Poland and the other in Kokoja, Nigeria. Staff and pupils over the last few months have been communicating with their partner schools using ICT skills through digital media and emails as well as forwarding letters and cards.

In addition, pupils have been researching both countries during lessons in humanities and technology and are developing an understanding of the different cultures that exist.

Contact: Mrs Hilary Short, Headteacher, Elmwood Tel: 01922 721081 Email: postbox@elmwood.walsall.sch.uk

Pupil Support

Report on Fixed Term, Permanent & Reintegration Figures November 2009

DCSF reporting criteria means that exclusions of 5 days or less do not have to be reported to the LA until the end of term.

**Fixed Term Exclusions**

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**Permanent Exclusions**

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Walsall Children’s Services - SLT Health Supplement

Director of Operations – Trish Skitt
Tel: 01922 444098 Mob: 0779 969 6005 Email: trish.skitt@walsall.nhs.uk

- Overall responsibility for strategic leadership and provision of a range of Children and Young People’s Community Services including Health Visiting and School Health Nursing
- Lead responsibility for Community Provider Services in safeguarding children
- To work closely with partner agencies to develop services that meet the needs of service users
- To develop services that improve life chances, reduce inequalities in health and prevent ill health

Head of Adolescent and Families Partnership Commissioning – Adrian Roche
Tel: 01922 618378 Mob: 07986 418293 Email: adrian.roche@walsall.nhs.uk

- Lead commissioner for Walsall NHS and MBC DCSF adolescent and families partnership service
- Lead partnership commissioner for the Borough’s drug and alcohol strategy and associated services
- Key responsibility to develop and deliver a young person and adolescent health strategy

Substance Misuse Commissioner – Dave Neale
Tel: 01922 709189 Email: nealed@walsall.gov.uk

- Commissioner of young people’s drug and alcohol services
- Coordinator of DCSF adolescent and families services

Head of Children & Young People’s Partnership Commissioning – Cath Boneham
Tel: 01922 619964 Mob: 0777 098 0729 Email: catherine.boneham@walsall.nhs.uk

- Provide strategic leadership for the annual operating plan and partnership plan for the Children and Young People’s Plan (CYP) refresh
- Lead strategic commissioning developments via matrix working with other directorates
- Jointly commission services ensuring that they work within the World Class Commissioning framework
- Provide strategic commissioning input as contracts are developed for new initiatives

Senior Joint commissioning Manager: CAMHS & Universal Services – Jasbant Mann
Tel: 01922 618327 Mob: 0779 091 1531 Email: jasbant.mann@walsall.nhs.uk

- Lead for commissioning mental health and well being services for children and young people
- Lead for commissioning specialist health placements for children and young people
- Contribute to developments within NSF Standards 1-4
- Contribute to contract, performance and financial development and management

Commissioning Manager: Continuing Care and Disabilities - Ranjit Khular
Tel: 01922 618331 Mob: 0779 091 1530 Email: ranjit.khular@walsall.nhs.uk

- Lead for Continuing Care for children and young people: ensuring health, social care and education join commission services in line with the national framework
- Responsible for the commissioning of short breaks under the Aiming High for Disabled Children programme
- Lead for services for children with life limiting and life threatening conditions, including respite and palliative care

Teenage Pregnancy Programme Manager – Diane Osborne
Tel: 01922 443940 Mob: 0781 442 7065 Email: diane.osborne@walsall.nhs.uk

- Lead commissioner for Walsall’s 10 year strategy to reduce teen conceptions
- Provide leadership and promote the development of integrated services and ensure prioritisation for vulnerable young people
- Develop partnership working and support joint planning/ commissioning processes within the local health and social care economy
- Local champion for action and development to prevent unplanned teenage pregnancies

Teenage Pregnancy Team Leader – Carol Williams
Tel: 01922 443940 Mob: 0797 606 8674 Email: carol.williams@walsall.nhs.uk

- To support the long term strategic planning and commissioning of services for teenage parents
- To support the work of the Teenage Pregnancy Programme Lead on the preventative agenda
- Work with allied health professionals and support commissioning for related health issues that impact on teenage parents
- Play a key role in enhancing and reviewing existing services to meet the needs of young parents in line with emerging strategies

When a person is described as a chameleon, the reference to the animal is generally a commentary on the person’s ability to blend into various social situations and to adapt and respond to the needs of others. A recent visit to the Chameleons programme offered by family support advisers working out of schools in the Short Heath Federation was exactly that - a fascinating insight into a distinctive and highly specialised way of working which is proving an interesting challenge for the staff whilst certainly being a big hit with the parents!

“Our Chameleons programme is about dealing with the changes in life that make a positive difference,” enthralled programme coordinator and family support adviser, Justine Jones.

Chameleons offers drop-in sessions, parenting courses, relaxation classes, advice and family support sessions, feeling good workshops, healthy eating programmes and fun activities for the family. The chameleon space is a quiet part of the school. It’s a private space with no interruptions and a permanent resource to help children, parents and families feel safe and secure. The programme is a new opportunity for parents and carers to see how Short Heath Junior, Lane Head Nursery and Rosedaie C of E Infants schools deliver education in the community and provide a wide variety of support “signposting”.

Like chameleons, Justine and fellow family support adviser, Liz Moseley, seem uniquely adapted for meeting the needs of their community – enrolling adults on courses, strategies to overcome problems with children at home and one-to-one family learning support are all part of their very busy agenda. Helping people with difficult forms, accessing agency support and being ‘on-call’ when people need them seemed part and parcel of their busy day but they are keen to stress that being reactive in a crisis is only part of their role.

“We are keen to be proactive and implement strategies whereby parents are prepared for what life has to throw at them” said Liz. “Our coffee mornings are a ‘bridge’ into our communities and a way of developing relationships. Many families now feel involved and ask for support when they need it. We are slowly finding out what people need as well as what they want!”

“Wherever possible, we like to plan for all eventualities but, like many parent support advisers and family support workers, we share the same difficulty of getting parents into the school building in order to develop their knowledge and build their parenting skills. Many people only call upon us when a crisis occurs. Parents know we are always here for them. We are constantly trying new ideas and we do know it is an immense responsibility – and privilege – to be an advocate for the parents in our community” commented Justine.

“We are lucky. We have great support. We know we are needed and the job satisfaction of helping a family far outweighs the difficulties of any potential crisis!”

Chameleons can and do change in order to cope with tricky situations – just like the chameleon project at the Short Heath Federation. These chameleons know how to do much more than just survive and it is clear that the chameleons are here to stay!

Liz Moseley and Justine Jones (pictured, above) can be contacted on 01902 368499.

For further information on the Parent Support Adviser programme please contact Barbara on Tel: 07703 741218 or Email: barbara@learningbeyond.co.uk

www.walsallcs.com
Partnerships

Aldridge Running Club, pictured below, who are providing support for the Turkey Trot

Contact: Rachel Ridler for more details on Tel: 01922 423578 or Email: rachel.ridler@walsall.nhs.uk

Start the new year the way you mean to go on

Run, walk or jog that Christmas dinner off on a 5k route at Barr Beacon by taking part in the ‘Turkey Trot’. The event will take place on 3 January 2010, starting at 10:00 am and all proceeds will go to help equip the new Walsall Hospice.

To register, please visit www.walsallhospice.org.uk and either complete the online registration form, or download a paper version to send in with your registration fee of £5 per adult and £3 per child (under 16). Once registered you will be sent a fundraising information pack containing full details of the run, training suggestions and a sponsorship form so that you can get all your friends and family involved in supporting Walsall Hospice.

The run is being supported by local businesses Aqua Direct, Adventure Mini Golf, Tesco, Go Ape and Harguns Sweet Centre. Prizes will be awarded on the day for best fancy dress and after the event for the biggest fundraiser.

Thanks also to everyone who supported the Christmas decoration campaign last month, which was a huge success.

Walsall’s biggest fundraiser.

Thanks also to everyone who supported the Christmas decoration campaign last month, which was a huge success.

For further information please contact: Samantha Hazlehurst, School Partnerships Coordinator
Tel: 0771 819 5114 Email: samantha.hazlehurst@walsallcs.serco.com

MIND Training - Training in MIND for better mental health

For further information or details of any forthcoming events please book your attendance via the link: http://courses.walsallflg.org.uk/booking

Walsall Retired Teachers’ Association

The association of retired teachers meet every second Monday of the month (except July and August) at Broadway United Reformed Church, Broadway North, Walsall at 2:00 pm.

Their purpose is to:

• foster and promote the fellowship and well-being of members and associate members
• provide advice and guidance on matters relating to retirement
• support the Teacher Support Network and other charities
• organise speakers and outings relevant to members’ interests
• provide a programme of social and cultural activities

New members are always welcome

For further information or details of any forthcoming events

Contact: Dave Caswell, Membership Secretary Tel: 01922 627095

Headteacher Breakfast Briefings

8:30 am – 10:30 am in the large hall, Education Development Centre

12 February 2010
18 June 2010
1 October 2010
### Diary Overview - January 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wed 6</td>
<td>HLTA Taster Day</td>
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<td>Fri 8</td>
<td>Accident Reporting and Investigation</td>
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<td>Mon 11</td>
<td>Leadership skills - First Steps (3)</td>
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<td>Wed 13</td>
<td>Strategic CPD Leadership (1) Headteacher Focus Group meeting</td>
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<td>Thu 14</td>
<td>Leading from the Middle – cohort 13 (4)</td>
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<td>Fri 15</td>
<td>IOSH Managing Safely in Schools (1) Paediatric First Aid (1)</td>
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<td>Educational Visits Coordinator training – Darlaston cluster only</td>
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<td>Mon 18</td>
<td>Parent Support Adviser training (1) CIEH L2 Award principles of COSHH</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 19</td>
<td>Educational Visits Coordinator training</td>
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<td>Primary Essential Science enquiry – part 2</td>
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<td>Parent Support Adviser training (2)</td>
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<td>Secondary Gifted and Talented subject leaders development meeting</td>
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<td>Leading from the Middle – cohort 12 (7)</td>
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<td>Thu 21</td>
<td>IOSH Managing Safely in Schools (2) Paediatric First Aid (2)</td>
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<td>Fri 22</td>
<td>National Programme for Specialist Leaders of Behaviour and Attendance (2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 25</td>
<td>Parent Support Adviser training (3) CIEH L3 Award Principles and Practice in Risk Assessment</td>
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<td>Emergency First Aid</td>
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<td>NPQH Graduates – coaching day</td>
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<td>Tue 26</td>
<td>Leadership competencies – enhancing your knowledge (2)</td>
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<td>Parent Support Adviser Training (4)</td>
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<td>Wed 27</td>
<td>Introduction to Mentoring (1)</td>
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<td>Thu 28</td>
<td>CIEH L3 Award Principles and Practice in Risk Assessment</td>
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<td>Fri 29</td>
<td>English Coordinators meeting</td>
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<td>IOSH Managing Safely in schools</td>
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<td>Maths Coordinators network meeting (primary)</td>
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We would like to take this opportunity to wish all of our readers a very happy Christmas and 2010.