

MEADOWPARK – NEWSLETTER – WEEK 17 - 08.12.17

Christmas decorations have begun to appear in Meadowpark as excitement slowly begins to build, not only for Christmas Day itself but for the holiday season. Pupils and staff have worked so hard this term and have shown incredible resilience, determination and cooperation during class and whole school activities: kayaking, swimming, assemblies, Pantomime. I have been in Classes 1 and 2 a lot this week as we have had the Meadowpark Lurgy afflict staff and it has been invigorating to be involved in supporting our pupils with their curriculum as well as Festive activities.

On Monday after school, Chris Morrison and I attended an excellent workshop given by Kathy Allan from Adoption UK. The workshop was about raising awareness of supporting young people who have had an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE). The approach Kathy Allan recommended is based on sound research from Dan Hughes who has spent over 20 years working with traumatised children <https://ddpnetwork.org/about-ddp/meant-pace/>. This is not to suggest for a moment that pupils at Meadowpark have had a traumatised childhood – far from it, but there is recognition that approaches for young people with Autism are effectively used to support mainstream pupils who have an additional support need and so it is that there are approaches that we can adopt to support our young people who often become overwhelmed while trying to make sense of their place in the world.

Jenn Davis has been attending the Movement Support Programme at King's Meadow Primary School which focuses on supporting pupils who have delayed development with movement and core stability. Jenn will work with groups from all classes to disseminate her knowledge and skills.

The teenage years are challenging enough for most of us – I for one would not want to have to negotiate that particular minefield again especially in today's fast-paced technological world. However, what we now have is increased awareness, research and support through excellent books such as Nicola Morgan's 'Blame My Teenage Brain' -<https://www.nicolamorgan.com/books/blame-my-brain/> .

Furthermore there will be opportunities for staff training in Team Teach <http://www.teamteach.co.uk/about-training/benefits-and-results>; Restorative Practices to be delivered by Marie Prior from Knox Academy and De-Escalation Techniques which will be delivered by Education Support Officer ASN, Lynne Grant before the February break. With this in mind I am going to set aside reading time weekly as I don't always find time to read as much as I could and am definitely putting that down as my one major New Year resolution.

The weather is set to get much colder this weekend which suits me as I love getting cosy at this time of year and wrapping up in warm layers. Many of our young people don't feel the cold and so have to be reminded to put on warm clothes but nothing will deter us from getting fresh air and exercise to clear the mind and stimulate the capacity for learning.

We said 'Happy Birthday' and 'Good-bye' to one of pupils today and we all wish her the very best in her new mainstream school.

Charli Prime

08.12.17