

MEADOWPARK – NEWSLETTER – WEEK 28 – 23.02.18

Staff and pupils across Knox Academy and Meadowpark are preparing for the return visit of the HMIE Inspectors week beginning 19th March and to assist us with this it has been arranged that David Watt retired HMIE Inspector for Inclusion and according to his Twitter Tag, '*Educator, promoter of diversity and equality, and aspiring footballer*' will be coming to meet with Meadowpark staff and pupils in order that he can offer his sanguine approach to getting it right for every child through experiential learning, challenge, pace and a broad and balanced curriculum. I am excited by this opportunity and know that as a school support from such an area of experience and expertise is fantastically welcomed.

Today there was collaboration between Knox Academy learning assistants and the whole Meadowpark team as Lynne Grant, Education Support officer ASN, delivered an invaluable session on De-Escalation. Not only did Lynne's presentation throw up some challenging questions, for example: How do we break the cycle of challenging behaviour? How effective can we be when we only see pupil for x amount of hours a day? How do we know what buttons have been pushed if we don't have the full picture? This generated lively discussion and was an opportunity for staff to share anecdotes and experiences. I will be ordering Paul Dix's book *When the Adults Change Everything Changes*. When the opening Chapter in a book about behaviour is this leads you into believing that by making a few adjustments, having three clear rules and being consistent then it is a must-buy. Young people with Autism are young people with Autism. Young people with Autism and bad behaviours have learned these behaviours and we can help them to unlearn them by modelling good practice, treating each other with respect and offering consistency across the school. Paul Dix, '*..why crush behaviours with punishment when you can grow them with love? Visible consistency with visible kindness allows exceptional behaviour to flourish*'.

We were delighted that Steven Gilmour our new teacher joined us today. Steven will be commencing his post as Class 1 teacher here on 21st March, slap bang in the middle of inspection week, but this didn't seem to faze him. He has already made a very good impression on staff and pupils and he assured me that he will be back.

Rory and William form Class 3 did us proud on Thursday when they attended the Boccia festival at Jack Kane Centre in Edinburgh it was busy and frenetic but they had fun. Class 1 are gearing up to participate in East Lothian's Boccia festival at Sanderson's Wynd on Friday March 9th.

The focus for Assembly this week was Respect and we will be continuing this theme as we build our Class Charters and work closely with Knox Academy towards Level 2 Rights Respecting Schools.

Thoughts turn towards Spring and we will be seeking further opportunities to engage our young people with outdoor learning and activities, in spite of the cold weather. We will be collaborating with Morrison Construction for a mini construction site in the grounds and creating sustainable bird boxes with support from David Wilson homes. Now that the warmth is in the air – these two projects are at the top of my 'To Do' list.

Charli Prime DHT 23.02.18.