

MEADOWPARK – NEWSLETTER – WEEK 7 – 28.09.18

Mail for Meadowpark often goes AWOL, sometimes it arrives at Knox Academy, sometimes John Muir House, often at Haddington Infants or King's Meadow and on occasion it actually makes its way to us. The addressee can be anything from Mr. Charli Prime, The Manager or even Head Teacher (I like that one) but not often is it addressed to a member of the Knox Academy administration team. However, such was the case on Monday when the letter intended for Meadowpark eventually made its way to me. I was amazed and delighted to open the letter and inside spied a cheque. I am so glad that we still use cheques – there is something special about seeing the pale blue background. I read the accompanying letter and looked again at the cheque which was for £198.47. The kind parishioners of St Mary's Kirk had decided to choose Meadowpark for a fund raiser tea and coffee after church one Sunday and the resulting amount sent our way. We haven't decided exactly how best to utilise this windfall but it will be earmarked to be put towards playground equipment.

On the subject of play we had another exhilarating session with Kelly and Max from Loose Parts Play on Tuesday, constructing and deconstructing. I particularly liked the wrecking ball (a buoy) set up to knock down a tower of crates, wooden bricks and boxes. There were Frisbees made from pizza trays, skittles and balls. We have requested that the cymbals are hidden next week as the noise was excruciating when they hit the ground after being thrown like a Frisbee.

Social Media has its downside but also its upside and it was lovely to see a Tweet from @ELoosepartsplay to say that @EastLothianplay were given the Nancy Ovens <http://www.nancyovenstrust.org.uk/> Positive Support for Play Award. What is gratifying for us is that the awarding team had come to look at our Tyre Island as an example of how we can utilise recycled resources for serious play.

I was teaching in Forth class again this week and one of the topics we covered was Stereotype and Prejudice. The 'Apprentice-type' task was to hire an engineer who could project manage an initiative to develop living on the moon. We began with a list of 7 forenames and pupils were asked to take one name away. Surnames were added and again pupils had to remove a candidate with no other information. Gradually more information was added about the candidates e.g. image, wears glasses, heterosexual, lesbian, disabled, suffers anxiety until the final selection indicated their current profession. We all recognised that we had assumed Jamie was male, but was in fact a female fire-fighter; Ali was male and the most suitable candidate was an older woman who was an engineer and project manager. It was a fascinating exercise and more than anything highlighted to me, again how perceptive our young people can be given the right environment and teaching approach..

The team work this week has been outstanding when one of our pupils took ill at the swimming pool on Tuesday. We had all received training to support this young person's needs and so were able to employ a well-planned scripted approach to aid their recovery. Furthermore due to staff being unwell we have all had to pitch in and support each other this week. I wish our absentees well and hope for a full recovery and on Monday we welcome a new member to the team.

The weekend's forecast is excellent and hopefully no return of the high winds that have beset us the last two weeks. Have a good one.

C. Prime 28.09.19