



'DIGGING DEEP TO AIM HIGH'

23RD JUNE 2023

NEWSLETTER

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Dates for your Diary

Saturday, 24th June

Link Association Summer Fair at
the Primary Site
12.00pm - 3.00pm

Tuesday, 27th June

SIDE BY SIDE COFFEE TIME
2.00pm - Primary Site

Thursday, 29th June

Secondary Site Sports Day

Wednesday, 5th July

Secondary Site Parents' Evening -
details to follow

Thursday, 13th July

Transition Day

Friday, 14th July

Secondary Site Prom

Tuesday, 18th July

Secondary Site Leavers BBQ

Monday, 17th July

Primary Site Sports Day

Wednesday, 19th July

Primary Site Leavers' Assembly -
invitations to follow

Thursday, 20th July

Last day of academic year
Early finish for students:
Satellite Site - 1.00pm
Secondary Site - 1.00pm
Primary Site - 1.15pm

The primary site has been a hive of activity today with a band of parents led by Claire Hartland, preparing for tomorrow's Link Association Summer Fair.

During these difficult financial times, it has been wonderful to witness the support that parents, staff and friends of the school have given - be it donating goods or giving of their time.

With school budgets getting tighter and tighter, fundraising like this really does make a difference.

We hope to see you at the fair tomorrow for what promises to be a lovely social event.

Don't forget that we have our 'Side by Side' coffee time at 2.00pm next Tuesday, 27th July. So do pop in for a coffee or a cold drink before picking up your child and get to meet other parents on an informal basis.

As promised we are holding these sessions at different times, to reach as many parents as possible. Do try and pop in.

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING AT THE SECONDARY SITE?

This week in Weir we have been looking at Life Skills and how to follow direction and instruction from a variety of different people. We then linked this with Link Priority 4 - *able to accept and apply different strategies in their learning*, and Link Priority 13 - *theory of mind - able to see a situation from another person's perspective and adjust their behaviour to support others*.

We went to South Norwood Lakes where a student in Weir class took some lovely pictures.



The young people negotiated following instructions from their

peer, and were highly aware of the general public's needs in allowing them room to walk past, even if this meant pausing what they were doing.



They made The Link very proud with their kindness, caring nature, and ability to listen to each other.



WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING AT THE PRIMARY SITE?

Focus on Willow class

This week Emily Price gives us some insight into Willow Class and the kind of things they get up to.

This term in Willow class we have been enjoying our outdoor space

and accessing activities on the patio to help with emotional regulation, learning through play and developing our social communication skills.

Emotional regulation

There are pieces of equipment and activities available on the patio everyday which can help the pupils in Willow class to regulate. All of our pupils need regular movement breaks to help them stay calm and ready to learn.



Learning through play

Pupils in Willow class are able to choose which activity or piece of equipment they want to use on the patio. Staff engage with the pupils during these times to scaffold learning and work on generalizing the skills which have been learnt in the classroom.

Some pupils in Willow class find it difficult to engage with table top work, so embedding learning into the outdoor provision can be an alternative way to work on targets. Many areas of the curriculum can be addressed during this time, such as:

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Topic
- IEPs
- Speech and communication targets
- Occupational therapy targets





Social communication skills

The patio area can be a great space for intensive interaction. Intensive interaction helps the pupils in Willow class to develop the key aspects of communication. Some examples of these are:

- Giving eye contact
- Using facial expressions
- Sharing personal space with others
- Enjoying being in the presence of another person
- Using non-verbal cues
- Vocalising with intended meaning

The staff working in Willow class will follow the pupil's lead and interact with them in a space where the pupil feels comfortable and secure. These sessions are often spontaneous and can last as long as the pupil wants to interact.



Communication grids are placed around the patio to aid the pupils in making their needs known and commenting on what is happening.



These grids are modelled by staff. The vocabulary and visuals on the grids are specific to each piece of equipment or activity.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

As a staff body, we always love to hear how our ex pupils are getting on and we thought that parents might like to learn how they progress too. It was really good to hear from Pamela Mucci recently, who gave us an update on Jesse, who attended the primary school many years ago.



Jesse is now 17 years of age and is over 6ft tall. He attends Treehouse School and aims to move onto college at 19. His interests include playing the drums, sailing and birdwatching. He loves nothing more than going out to search for birds and recognizes their bird call without even seeing them. He recently attended a Scout Camp.

Jesse and Mum still have fond memories of The Link.

Pamela says she honestly doesn't think he would have made such tremendous progress in all areas of

life without the incredible academic and pastoral support he received at The Link.

Mum said she cried after first visiting The Link, whilst battling for a special school and cried again when he won a place at Tribunal. She also cried when the time came for Jesse to move on.

She wanted to send her thanks to the staff, who were all incredible and said it is truly an outstanding school, special in every way. She will never stop appreciating the groundwork The Link put him into making him the young person he is today.

Those words sum up what our aim is for every child who passes through the doors of our school - "We dig deep to aim high" helping children overcome their barriers, providing a firm foundation for them to build on, as they move through life.

AND FINALLY

1 MORE SLEEP UNTIL
THE SUMMER FAIR

AS SOME OF THE
STUDENTS ARE CHANTING

"BE THERE OR BE SQUARE"