

## Appendix 2

### October Half Term activity week, 23<sup>rd</sup>- 26<sup>th</sup> October 2017

The week started with a **sports session** held in Ealing, at the Haven Green church hall. This facility offers a lovely wooden floored hall, with room for sports such as basketball, hockey, soft ball, table tennis and football. Our teachers were well supported by the team of lovely volunteers, including two teachers from Ealing schools!

19 children took part, ages ranged from 6-5 years. Several came from out of borough. This was a great opportunity for us all to get to know our children and see them in a fun environment!

The next day was a **workshop run by the Old Vic Theatre** outreach team and was to prepare the group for the following visit to see **The Lorax**. 13 children attended this and their ages were from 6-15 years. The group enjoyed hearing about the play, learning about the plot and content of the play. We started with warm ups and ways of bonding as a group. Then there were some drama exercises and acting out the characters' roles. There were many learning outcomes, especially linked to the environmental messages in the play. I was very impressed by the knowledge and concern the children showed with these issues.

The session ended with a wonderful time, making paper puppets and moving them around in an interactive way. Some children took theirs home and named their puppets!

**Wednesday**, following the workshop we went to a performance of The Lorax – one of the popular Dr Seuss children's books. This was at the Old Vic Theatre in South London. This is a most impressive theatre and bound to attract those who have not been to a show before!

The Lorax is a popular “hero” character, who is represented as a furry animal, like a beaver. He protects the trees in the paradise that he lives in, until “the bad people” move in and attempt to cut them all down.

The production was beautifully staged, with music and creative lighting. Both actors and puppets played the characters and it was interesting to relate our puppetry the day before, with the play.

33 tickets were obtained for this, as part of the Old Vic outreach programme and the group were a wide age range, again, with children aged from 5-16 years attending. Some came from South London and we were able to meet them with their foster carers at the theatre.

The next day was focused on those in KS4, studying for GCSEs and was to support their studies on **Macbeth** – always on the curriculum!

We met up at Ealing Broadway with the larger part of the group and met one young person, who lives out of borough, with his foster carer at the venue. The group consisted of 13 young people, all eager to get to grips with the Shakespearian text! One young person was a “first timer” – so we were delighted to welcome her on board.

The **workshop** took place in the **studio of the National Theatre** and was led by one of the company directors. Following on with a warm up and discussion, we then focused on an important speech in the play, where Lady Macbeth is summoning up spirits to support her ambition. The session ended with an interesting slant, putting the play in a modern context and considering issues of today such as war and terrorism. This really put the play in context!

It was good to see the students gaining understanding of the play and should help them with their studies and eventual exams.

This half term represented a good range of educational activities and attracted a wide age group and cohort, well supported by Alison O'Connor, our primary virtual school teacher and Zainab Idris, virtual school Lead Mentor . The children living outside of Ealing were invited and many came. The wider learning was addressed in the play and workshop, whereas the Macbeth session was part of the virtual school intervention strategy to support a specific group.

**53 children** attended overall, some attending several sessions and there were some who came to more than one session.

The barriers were in the initial stages of inviting and following up with this. Some were not committed and did not turn up missing out on some enriching opportunities. It is here where the support of the wider service and of course, the foster carers is key.

Future ideas include: **a theatre outing over Christmas** –a pantomime trip, which is always very popular, so let's see how much money is left in the pot!

Most exciting news! We have 16 tickets to see **A Christmas Carol**, now on at the **Old Vic Theatre**. This is on the GCSE curriculum and would really help those currently studying this text. This play would really resonate with our children as the message of love and redemption is dealt with in such a very clear way! We will go to a matinee performance, in January, just after Christmas and as usual the group will be composed of our local children as well as those living outside of Ealing.

Looking ahead to **February half term**, as well as the music theme, which we are now making the initial plans for, there is a production of **Macbeth at the National Theatre**. This is on the GCSE curriculum and many of our students are not only studying this play at the moment, but doing their “mocks”. I am booking the tickets now, as they will go fast. This theatre visit will develop the themes learnt in the workshop held at the National Theatre, during the October half term and this will help with some of the intervention strategy work which is in place with our KS4 students in the virtual school by consolidating understanding of the play.

Also planned is a launch at the **Ealing Children’s Christmas party** of a musical themed project for the February half term.

More on this later!

Account by Sue Tarry

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