

TOWER HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL | GOVERNORS NEWSLETTER – 2023

EDITION 5 | SPRING | 2023



Outdoor Learning

Earlier this month, a few of the governors experienced a thoroughly enjoyable morning at Tower Hill. The visit was to learn about and observe the new outdoor learning programme that is being offered to all of Tower Hill's KS2 children for the first time this year. The programme is led by Mrs Probert, an outdoor learning specialist teacher.

Every KS2 class enjoys one outdoor learning session each week. Governors met with several pupils and asked them about their experiences and were bowled over by their obvious enthusiasm. All the children said they definitely preferred outdoor learning to indoor learning and even when it is really cold, they can "just whack on a jacket!"

This term the children have been focusing on working as a team, building on important teamwork and social skills that will help them long after they leave Tower Hill and both things that were particularly difficult to learn during the lonely Covid period.

The children have already enjoyed building paper helicopters and snowmen this year as well as an escape room session in Foxes Hollow. During our visit, we were lucky enough to see them get stuck into some den-building – quite a challenge given the gusty

windy conditions!



In earlier weeks the children had attempted more basic shelters (giving them somewhere cosy to read their books on World Book Day!), but this new challenge saw them trying to build much taller structures using a new range of equipment and needing to use the knots that they had been taught in previous sessions too.

In order to promote team and social skills, the children worked in small groups. Some of the building equipment provided was deliberately limited in number to encourage compromise and communication between the groups. It was lovely to see the children working so well together and waiting patiently – they identified "compromise," "sharing," "fairness" and "kindness" as key to good teamwork! It was also lovely to see the concentration on the children's faces as they carefully sought to hammer in the pegs and poles in just the way they had been taught – not a single squashed tiny finger or toe! As we were told by the children, they were "tools and not toys!"

Watching the children construct their dens outside was a real pleasure. They were focussed and enthusiastic throughout and there was a real buzz as they sought to share ideas between them, trying to figure out the best solutions to the puzzle before them. The outdoor learning session really gave the children the opportunity to explore and experiment. The huge variety of dens at the end of the lesson certainly showed that there was no one right answer!

On the same day, I was at a cross-country event at Velmead Junior School where a team from Tower Hill were taking part. During the afternoon, I heard one Tower Hill pupil say to another, "I'll always support Tower Hill. They are my team. It's the best school ever!" Having seen the camaraderie, joy and enthusiasm that morning, I'm sure very many would agree!

Mrs Gemma McDermid, Co-Opted Governor

Who are we?

Miss Camilla Collins
(Vice Chair of Governors)



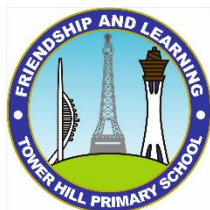
My name is Camilla Collins, a proud Tower Hill governor for 5 years now. I've served as the Development & Training Governor as well as current Vice-Chair of both the Finance & Personnel committee and the Full Governing Body; where I bring my background in business consulting to compliment the skills of other governors.

I moved to Fleet seven years ago after working in London and spending a few years in Houston, Texas – I have some great cowboy boots! My love of singing has me part of my workplace choir as well as an active member of the West End Musical Choir – a highlight being singing with Mickey Mouse. I am very much looking forward to exploring how music is embedded within the curriculum as part of this year's governor visits.

One of my favourite parts of the year is attending the end of term celebrations and singing carols with the children in the playground. The passion and enthusiasm at the end of year performances is an absolute joy to experience (who doesn't enjoy dressing up?) and I feel honoured to be part of this incredible school.



Last week, we visited school to find out about the new reading program Accelerated Reader; we met with Miss Dinsdale and Miss Penman. We discussed the roll out of the program and the impact it is having on the children's learning. We had the privilege of meeting with some KS2 children where they shared their views on reading and AR, it was an absolute delight to hear how positive they were about their own reading journey. During the discussions with both the children and staff, it was clear that AR has had a hugely positive impact on the pupils reading attainment by not only ensuring books that the children are reading provide an achievable challenge but checking their understanding through engaging online quizzes (we even had the opportunity to take a quiz ourselves).



At Tower Hill Primary School our core vision is that ALL children will be equipped with the skills, knowledge, understanding and empathy that will lead to them being able to make their own choices in life, successfully. We strive for all to be actively engaged in their own learning, to be motivated and eager, to achieve and attain to their own full potential – thus making them proud of themselves and of being a member of the 'Tower Hill Team'. Our relationships between all members of Tower Hill are held as key to our success. We value each member of the school community as an individual and interact with them honestly, respectfully and politely.

