

Annual Arts Day Festivities



Sandwell Virtual School

In December, Sandwell Virtual School hosted their annual Arts and Crafts Day at the Coneygre Family Centre in Tipton. More than 110 people attended and had a great time participating in various activities including; watching Snow White Pantomime, engaging in craft and art projects creating bracelets, designing T-shirts, crafting Christmas decorations as well as decorating cakes and biscuits. Attendees also had the opportunity to try out Bhangra drumming. Everyone who came enjoyed a delicious hot lunch.

According to one caregiver: 'Every year has been enjoyable for their family, and the children never want to leave at the end, a wonderful event!'



Sandwell Virtual School - Designated Teacher Training

This year's second face to face training day was attended by over 70 delegates and hosted at West Bromwich Albion Football ground and guests were treated to two workshops with two guest speakers.

The Power of Words – Safeguarding Fairly Scott King

Scott King returned to share his own care experiences, presenting some of his own files, reflecting on the way he was written about as a child. The workshop explored how children are portrayed on paper with a focus on the power of blanket statements and labels, encouraging caregivers and professionals to narrate a child's life positively rather than focussing on what a child has said or done wrong without context.

Feedback from Designated Teachers included: 'Scott sharing his personal journey was heart warming to listen to, something that will stick with me for years to come, this has provided me with the knowledge to support my team.'



Restorative Culture - Jenny Nock

Increasingly, educators are aware that 'behaviour management', with behaviourist principles of rules, rewards and punishments simply does not work for many children, and in fact, has the potential to exacerbate problems. Trauma-sensitive schools, restorative, relational practices should be at the centre of policy and practice. The workshop aimed to support educators to develop relational learning communities and create emotionally safe environments.

Feedback from Designated Teachers included: 'A very informative day, I will take pointers back so our school becomes Trauma Informed.'



As well as Designated Teacher and Designated Safeguarding Leads, we also offer ePEP training.

10 th April 24	3.30pm – 4.30pm
5 th June 24	3.30pm – 4.30pm

To ensure you are allocated a place on ePEP training, please email: michelle_geer1@sandwell.gov.uk

Feedback from recent ePEP training: 'I thought the training was very informative. I learnt so much and now know how to complete SMART targets and how to access SDQ guidance' (Designated Teacher from Sandwell).

Top Tips for a Setting PEP SMART Targets

Ideally, create three SMART targets, one based around pupil voice, one based on any area of concern from the SDQ score, and one around learning and development gaps.

Make these measurable, so that the child is able to achieve within the given timeframe.

Consider PP+ spend for it to have the greatest impact on both learning, development and emotional wellbeing.

Please refer to the very informative guidance at: <https://ace.sch.life/page/detail/pupil-premium>

Further Training Opportunities

Throughout the year, for Designated Teachers, Designated Safeguarding Leads, Social Workers and linked professionals, Sandwell Virtual School offers many training opportunities.

Jennifer Nock Training and Consultancy
Est. 2001

Sandwell Virtual School work in partnership with Dr Jenny Nock to ensure staff are knowledgeable and Trauma Informed. Workshops are free and held face to face or virtually.

To guarantee a place for any upcoming training events, please keep an eye on any announcements on the notice board when logged into your ePEP account.

01 May 2024	A world of distraction, successful inclusion of children and YP with ADHD	Webinar	3.30 to 6.00 pm
04 July 2024	Pathologic Demand Avoidance and school	Webinar	3.30 to 6.00 pm

Recommended Membership for further support



Sandwell Virtual school are beginning to approach schools to offer the opportunity and support to engage with the Attachment Research Community standards to become certified as a Bronze, Silver or Gold school which recognises the valuable work that is happening every day to support our most vulnerable learners.

A huge congratulations to Crocketts Primary School for being the first school in Sandwell to be accredited with the ARC Gold award for the outstanding trauma informed practice they demonstrate for all of their school community.

There will be more information to follow in information sessions (advertised separately) and at the next designated teacher conference.

Projects and Updates

Letterbox Club

Sandwell Virtual School continues to participate in the Letterbox club for our reception cohort. Carer/Parent voice shows that the children thoroughly enjoy the varied contents and are excited how personalised they are.

Thrive Success

A number of our team are now qualified Thrive Practitioners. This has enabled young people to benefit from one to one Thrive sessions that are personalised to individual needs. Work involves looking at emotions and understanding how and why we feel the way we do. This has supported creating strategies to help self regulate. This has proven useful for our Year 6 cohort leading up to SATS.

Drumming Workshop

A drumming workshop session was held over February half term. Our young people had the opportunity to learn from professional young musicians who have previously performed in productions such as 'School of Rock'. Our young children from Sandwell, thoroughly enjoyed the event and experienced different aspects of drumming including creating a beat, music making and performing to the group.

What's on in Sandwell

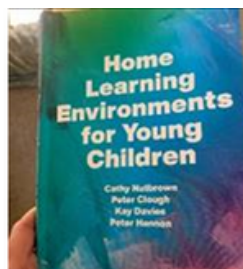


The SHAPE Programme uses a collaborative approach to engaging with children and young people through events and initiative. To find out more visit: <https://www.justyouth.org.uk/shape/>

Go Play sessions are continuing for children aged 5-12 and are free of charge, these take place in school holidays, after school and at weekends. Just Youth offers a range of free activities for 11 to 19-year-olds (up to 25 for those with SEND) throughout Sandwell. These activities include sports, arts, music, virtual reality experiences, and more. To find out more visit: www.goplaysandwell.co.uk.

A fond Farewell

We end this newsletter by saying goodbye to our friend and colleague Sharon Brazier, who has left her post as Education Development Officer to start a new chapter in her life. Can we take this opportunity to express Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council and Sandwell Virtual School's profound gratitude for her hard work and the great times we've had shared with her over the 17½ (nearly 24 for the local authority) working with us. Sharon has contributed to shaping the direction of the Virtual School with her support for the early years foundation stage, receiving national recognition.



She will be missed not only by her colleagues but the many children and families she worked with but her dedication and hard work will never be forgotten. We wish her good luck and all the best in the future.

Children and Education Directorate

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