

Corfe Castle Spring Term Report Jan - March 2024

2024 started well with everyone eager to return to youth club after the Christmas holidays. We now have a new staff member, Steven Dukes, who comes with wide experience in Youth Work, family liaison in the Prison Service, and work within Mental Health, and is a welcome addition to our staff team here in Corfe.

Sporting activities included Uni-hoc, dodgeball, pool, darts, table tennis, badminton coaching by Donna Derrick one of our volunteers, basketball & hoop shooting, foam footy, carpet racing (squares of carpet sat on and raced the length of the hall). Hula hoop challenge (a line of 4 or 5 young people have to join hands and pass the hoop from one end of the line to the other without letting go of hands!) & Sumo wrestling wearing inflatable suits.

Craft Activities: the most popular of these was mug decorating for Mother's Day. We ran out of mugs and I had bought 28! They decorated them with special waterproof pens and each one was different. We also made Chinese lanterns, and drew Dragons as it is the Year of the Dragon in China, and made Easter cards & Easter bonnets, and artwork to display on our noticeboard.

The Environment: Planet Purbeck came and delivered a session making birdfeeders from large fir cones coated with fat and bird seed - 8 young people took part.

Celebrating Diversity: We had quizzes to draw attention to Wales for St David's Day, - (who knew there were 3 million inhabitants but 11 million sheep!) - Also to Ireland for St Patrick's Day & and about China to celebrate The Chinese New Year.

A Taylor Swift quiz was requested by our young Swifties (Taylor Swift fans), so we had one, as I feel she is a good role model for young women, as she speaks out about racism & misogyny, and fought back to regain control of her creative material, by re-recording her albums, calling them T.S versions. I felt this was a good quiz for International Women's Day.

Food & Drink Every week we provide free fruit - a great favourite is watermelon, but we do vary it. When it was cold we made free special hot chocolate drinks with squirty cream and marshmallow toppings, and we also had free toast and butter or jam as a warm up.

For Chinese New Year we had Spring rolls, prawn crackers & fortune cookies, All our activities (or extra food above our sweetie chocolate tuck) are "free" or rather covered in their entrance subs, as it seems unfair to charge extra as some come with very little (or nothing at all) above their entrance fee.

At Easter we had our traditional Easter Egg Sticker hunt - 1 sticker each exchanged for an Easter Egg (some stickers may still be found stuck under village hall chairs, but we are right out of eggs now!)

Steve's Challenges Steve has been running a series challenges whereby members have to: guess his unusual pet (no I'm not telling), guess his heritage (ditto), and compete for furthest distance traveled inside or outside the u.k etc.

Issues arising We had to dissuade one of our older members from arriving early, as in before the senior session, as his more senior behaviour was not appropriate for the younger group. He was a bit too loud & energetic for the younger ones, who found him a bit frightening. We also had to ban the hide & seek game from inside the village hall, following 3 young men getting stuck in a cupboard (a variation on 3 old ladies got stuck in a lavatory!)

We have had to ensure that young people only run around the outside of the building, and DO NOT run into the car park - - health & safety. They have all been told this, but they sometimes forget. Now the evenings are lighter - and hopefully when the school field has dried out some more, they will take advantage of the field. It is great to see young people playing together rather than just playing on their phones.

An issue which I chose to speak to the senior group about, concerned anyone having indecent images on their phones. We had not heard or seen of any, but it came from an item in the news stating that it is illegal to have an indecent image of anyone under 18 on your phone, regardless of whether you took the picture or it was sent to you. I spoke about it to draw their attention to this, and advised them to report and delete any images they received. Of course no-one said they had taken or received any such images, but I'm sure some may have, and feel they should be aware that it is illegal.

Thanks Spot We could not have run some sessions when illness etc left us understaffed without support from P.Y.C.F trustees & volunteers, who came to fill the gaps, - so thank-you to Mark, Gill & Terry for stepping in this term. Also thanks to Donna Derrick who comes to run a badminton session & Emily who has volunteered throughout the term for the junior session.

Of course we could not run at all without financial support from Corfe Castle Parish Council, and significant input from P.Y.C.F, notably Mia & Joyce who provide extensive background support, line management, payroll - training etc. So thank-you both organizations for enabling us to run this much needed club in Corfe Castle. It is really appreciated by the young people here, and up to 30 of them arrive enthusiastically each week, and if we are closed for the holidays, they ask eagerly when we will return. Steve, myself, Emily and another Mum Steph, and a group of young people will attend the Parish Meeting on May 20th to answer any questions, to serve teas & sell some of our sweets.

Thank-you Donna Bickerstaff & Steve Dukes April 2024