

Report



Homework Club June 2013

As the school term comes to an end, it is time to reflect on how our homework club and the youth team have benefited the children of the area. Over all the term has been a success seeing some old faces return and new faces attending regularly as well. It has also seen changes to your core youth staff with Rowan heading off to Brazil and new addition Toni starting with us. This term has seen a rise in the number of kids that attend both the home work club and the youth club. The age demographic is still varied through the primary school range, the number of secondary school kids attending has

dropped as we mainly focus on the younger age group.

Abilities

This terms attendees abilities have also changed, bringing new challenges and perspectives not only for the youth staff but for the other children also. We have two young boys with particular needs who now regularly attend our home work club. R who presents with behaviour from the autistic spectrum has brought laughter understanding and acceptance to the club. This is because he is a bubbly character, who enjoys interacting with everyone, entering conversations with his ideas. As

he is sometimes unaware of how to read or process social situations, his reactions are seen by the other children to “not be normal” as they put it. This reaction can be seen as inquisitive, used as a learning experience and developed into understanding and acceptance. The other kids have accepted R as part of their peer group, and treat him as they would any other child. R’s family and school are seeing the benefits of the homework club through his academic progression. R had previously refused to complete homework exercises at home, but in the home work club he is always eager to start.

C is a child who also presented in the homework club with needing extra assistance. Although this was not disclosed to us, we welcomed him, and accommodate him as best we could. It did take a few weeks before he recognised the pattern of events in the home work club and on the park. Academic learning or revision was strenuous, so our focus changed to his interpersonal skills. Steady progression can be seen in both his interpersonal skills and confidence levels since joining the club. He is no longer clinging to his brother and sister, but is branching off to interact with other children. Also his skill level on the park has increased from no balance at all, to going up and down ramps. His ability to interact, process social situations and respond appropriately to his peer has improved.

New kids

As with every new term some regular kids do not return as they move on to more age appropriate activities, but this leaves spaces for new younger kids to take part and take advantage of the opportunities we can offer. This was the case for B and C, twin sisters who regularly attend home work club. They have developed both academically and interpersonally through coming to our club. Both parents and teachers have recognised a positive and visible change in their behaviour, as they are more confident and less attached to each other. They also have attained a higher reading grade since attending the club, as they receive one to one attention with their reading.

Regulars

Our regular kids of all ages still attend the homework club; their confidence can visibly be seen as being raised. As they are willing to advise and help others with exercises they have previously completed. This not only promotes peer learning, but also frees up the youth workers to help other kids. As the kids become regulars they develop their confidence levels as they feel more comfortable to chat and ask for help.

J a regular at the club has developed his interpersonal skills as he is learning to deal with new situations, learning to share the adult's attention and also work on his own. Academically his mental maths skills have improved as he is a grade above his peers.



Positive points of the this term

This term saw numbers of new member joining, and attending weekly. It brought a new sense of fun and excitement to the homework club. This was because there were new friends to be made, new social situation for the kids in to learn and interact in. The range in abilities and intellectual levels also changed, this is a major positive because it taught the kids who could understand acceptance. The younger ones although in some situations were nervous, accepted quirks, and then carried on as usual.

Negative points of this term

Negative points of this term, although not many would include,

Some of the sessions were challenging both for the youth workers and the kids who attended because of the number of kids who attended. As the kids do bring home work from school, they may need one to one attention for reading or explaining a concept. When all resources i.e. the youth staff are busy it can be frustrating for the kids who need help. We do try to combat this and have learned from past experiences by preparing the room, and work sheets, also pairing older kids with younger ones.

Overall we have had a very good term with lots of fun and real progress with many of the young people who come along.

