

Art at Wyburns

By Dr L Maloy - Nottingham University

Wyburns: 'You can hear the life in the school.'

The school's extensive arts-richness has been driven by Head teacher Kath Sansom over the last nine years or so. Her passion for the arts and her considerable background in music and the visual arts have informed not only the curriculum, but also the colourful open-plan layout of the classrooms, and these large canvas collages Kath created with some of the students



'You can hear the life in the school. It creates a community. We all feel like we're in it together and we're part of a team'.

We heard about cross curricular literacy-based projects. One of them focussed on a book about a polar bear. The students had chosen to recreate one of the pages by layering tissue paper by sticking it with PVC glue so that when the pages dried and were put up on the window, the light shone through and brought them to life. On the subject of cross-curricular arts work, Jessica said that staff were always 'looking for where that sparkle is going to come out.'

Students were not only learning about composition and editing, and creating high-contrast black and white photos, but also 'getting outside, getting a bit active and really using their imagination to think - "how am I going to tell this story"'.



Their arts-rich creative curriculum was clearly central to their provision. Lisa gave us an example of one of her dyslexic students who despite struggling elsewhere was thriving in arts sessions. **'Students can produce something that they can be proud of'** Lisa said. **'They shine somewhere else it gives them that boost'.**



With all of the colour and buzz of the interior, Wyburns' extensive playing field, oak tree-centred playground, pond and Forest School area provide a restorative balance.

The school has a strong focus on mental health and wellbeing on which Assistant Head, Jo Wood, leads. Like other schools in our project, Wyburns is a Unicef Right Respecting School. They are also making good use of Edward De Bono's Six Thinking Hats.



We hope that the combination of colour, art, music and green space continues to nurture and inspire all who pass through Wyburns.

In the background of our interview recordings, you will hear children practicing songs for the upcoming Queen's Jubilee performances. The rehearsals of 'God Save the Queen', a Queen medley, 'Tomorrow' from Annie, and other selections.

'The school is always singing'