

Wide Horizons: *Margaret McMillan House*

Magic Moments



Creating Magic Moments:

The Opportunities for Leadership and Personal Development in Adventure Learning.

Below is a series of stories which we feel captures the essence of what we as an organisation are able to offer the children that our generous sponsors at Taylor Wessing make possible. This report is produced as an act of appreciation and recognition of that generosity by sharing moments which demonstrate the value added by our partnership,

the impact we can have working together and to document the values we hold as integral to our spirit de corps.

On behalf of Wide Horizons, the staff and management at Margaret Mcmillan House would like to thank Taylor Wessing for making this possible.

We hope you enjoy reading this as much as we did witnessing it.

Our thanks,

The Team

Wide Horizons, Margaret McMillan House

Report:

Thursday 16th March

Jeremiah, of Horn Park's group of 48 children, Jeremiah was one of two children identified as needing particular attention due to his challenging behaviour. On the Tyres Course, a series of obstacles in which teams of 4-6 children must use a plank as a bridge to navigate, Jeremiah was causing a series of disruptions, and was ignoring his team and acting in a manner which made him a liability to his team. Seeing an opportunity, our instructor Georgiana Irimia took Jeremiah aside and asked him to take on a new responsibility. He was to act as an observer of the two teams on the course, and to identify what he felt was good about their approach. Jeremiah took to this opportunity with great energy. With unusual focus, he quietly and diligently observed the groups. Twenty minutes later, he made a request to Georgiana, and asked to advise the teams after they had finished. Transforming what could have been bench time, into a job for himself in which he could play his strengths. At the end of the task, Jeremiah demonstrated his proactive and charismatic personality, acting as a mentor and coach to both teams by providing feedback and reflections on their efforts. Georgiana notes that his focus and engagement were vastly improved.

Friday March 17th

Despite difficulty, Jessica showed her resilience and determination on the afternoon of Friday, 17th of March. It was a cold snap day and she was without gloves. Despite being cold, she stayed with the task. Doing star jumps to keep warm, she persevered and supported her partner through the Low Ropes course, a challenging series of obstacles that cannot be completed alone.

On the Tyres Course, Chris, Hannah and their team had demonstrated their maturity, ability to work with conflict and capacity to adapt. Chris was the other of two children identified as needing our particular attention. The team faced challenging moments of conflict. At individual moments in tasks - if it is necessary - we will ask children to take a Time Out. The Time Out is a technique we use to encourage children to take a step back, have a breather and use that space to adjust their behaviour. Chris specifically was identified by the school as a child that needed special attention due to his behaviour. Chris is gifted with boundless energy and a great sense of enthusiasm and can struggle to focus. From the moment he arrived at the centre, it was obvious Chris was experiencing conflicts with many other children from his class. Especially the girls. On the Tyres Course, Chris was the only male in a team of six.

These young ladies themselves: Hannah, Asiana, Brook, Natalia and Shianna-Blu illustrated the importance of acting with courage and compassion. Presented with Chris's direct and, at first, domineering approach, they initially struggled to speak up and get the team moving. However, after a series of mistakes which set the team back, they began speaking up.

Initially outspoken and commandeering, after four Time Out's - due to pushing - Chris was beginning to show obvious frustration. At this opportunity I spoke with him individually, explaining to him that his enthusiasm was an asset, but that he needed to channel it into keeping his team members safe and on course. With tears in his eyes, he accepted the decision and came back to the team with renewed focus and self-discipline.

And at the end of the task, when I asked the teams to award a most valued player, every single one of the young women in Chris's team remarked on how he had adjusted his behaviour, describing him as a gentleman and praising his maturity and leadership style.

Expressing to Chris their frustrations with his behaviour and explaining to him in clear terms what was needed and expected of him, the team began to gel. Hannah in particular began to shine. Her communication strategy - expressing appreciation and respect for Chris's efforts and guiding him to take on risk assessments and team safety - proved highly effective. To balance this, Asiana approached the task like a fox, offering what teams too often need and don't have, a steady and quiet guide to the leadership. The value of her insights to team efforts as the calm voice in the storm, cannot be understated. The young women of this team were also quick to forgive each other, ready and willing to praise Chris, despite his mistakes.

This led to the team becoming highly effective. They learned how to tackle challenges and conflict, and to resolve these quickly and as a unit. The team went on to do an outstanding job completing the obstacle course in medal time. Finishing with their heads high and their confidence, communication and focus demonstrably improved.

Report Produced by Wide Horizons Staff on 17th March 2017

Authoring Instructors -

Christie Dunne-Murphy & Georgiana Irimia

Participating Instructors: Christie Dunne-Murphy, Georgiana Irimia, Caroline Keane, Sam Sparks & Jordan Snelgrove.

Leadership -

Adventure Learning Manager: *Jim Tarrant*

Deputy Adventure Learning Manager: *Rik Payne*