



Welcome

Welcome to the latest Wakefield CU newsletter for schools.

This is intended to highlight the fantastic work going on in schools and the community at large. It seems a long time since we officially launched at The Hepworth in February 2012 and so much valuable collaborative work has taken place between schools, Learning Destinations and community partners, culminating in what can only be described as an 'amazing' graduation ceremony in June.

I have had so much positive feedback about the event and it was fantastic to see so many children, parents and family and school staff there to celebrate our children's achievements.

We are delighted to welcome four new schools to our Children's University: Scissett Middle School, St Peter's C of E JI & EY School, Normanton Junior School and St Michael's Academy.

I hope you enjoy the newsletter and I'd welcome stories about your school and your children's involvement to use in future editions which are planned for February and July 2014.

As always, thanks for your continued support and for making the Wakefield CU one of the fastest growing and most talked about members of the national CU family.

James Pennington
Wakefield CU Manager

Pop-Up Shop Proves a Winner

At Easter 2013, Wakefield CU took over a unit at the Ridings Shopping Centre and welcomed over 100 visitors.

The WCU pop-up shop saw pupils take part in a number of interactive activities including 'My Wakefield' – an art challenge run by Wakefield Cathedral; 'Intro to Karate' which was facilitated by GKR Karate; 'Beginners Golf' which was overseen by Steve Clancy from GolfXcel and a number of Wakefield College led activities including 'Maths and Darts Challenge' and 'Healthy Eating' activities.

One of the children who participated was Luke Whitehead (pictured) from Wheldon Infants School who took part in many of the validated activities and gained 4 hours of stamps in his passport.

Jane Fitzpatrick, CU Coordinator and organiser of the event, said:

"The pop-up shop was a huge success and another way of raising the profile of the Wakefield CU. We were delighted with the support we received from our Learning Destinations which helped us to offer a wide range of activities. It gave our members the chance to try some new things and collect additional stamps in their Passport to Learning. It also gave parents the option of doing something a little bit different during the school holidays! I am hoping we can make this a regular thing and run an annual pop-up shop every year during the Easter holidays."



WCU Ambassador Scheme

Wakefield Children's University are looking for young people to become WCU Ambassadors and to help us to make decisions that will make our Children's University the best in the country.

We'd like to have ambassadors aged between 9-14 from as many schools as possible, so if you know any children who would like to become a Wakefield CU ambassador, please let us know. Their role would be to help plan events including the annual Graduation Ceremony as well as promoting the Children's University to other school children.

Children should send us a review of a Learning Destination that they have visited, tell us why they would like to become an ambassador and what they would like to do to improve our Children's University.

Schools involved

Altofts Junior School
Fitzwilliam Primary School
Havercroft J & I School
Hemsworth Arts & Community College
Lee Brigg Infant School
Normanton All Saints Infant School
Normanton Junior School
Ryhill J, I & Nursery School
South Hiendley J I & EY School
St Helen's CE Primary School
Scissett Middle School
St Michael's Academy, Wakefield
St Peter's C of E JI & Early Years School
Wakefield Girls High School - Junior School
Wheldon Infant School & Nursery

Graduation Ceremony



Our first graduation ceremony on Wednesday 26th June was fantastic!

The event, which took place at the historic and beautiful Theatre Royal Wakefield, saw 70 children's achievements being celebrated by their families, school staff and local dignitaries.

The Gold Award winners celebrated reaching their 100 learning hours by donning their caps, gowns and stoles and taking to the stage to be presented with a scroll to mark their achievements by Wakefield CU Chancellor Sam Wright.

Silver Award winners also received a scroll and were encouraged to continue to collect learning hours and return for the next ceremony when it would be their turn to wear the traditional graduation garments.



The event mirrored an Undergraduate degree ceremony and featured a guest speaker, Lynne Upton, the Director of Learning for the national Children's University, who congratulated all of the children on their achievements and highlighted how they were now role models for their peers in school.

There was also a message of congratulations delivered by video-link from Ger Graus, the national Chief Executive of the Children's University.

We were also grateful for the attendance of three of our CU patrons, Sir Rodney Walker, Adeem Younis and Cllr Peter Box who, along with a number of other patrons including Clare Young, sent messages of congratulations and encouragement to our graduates which were featured in the event's programme.

Entertainment at the event was provided by Wakefield College Dance students who performed an extract from their hit show Dancing Daughters, and Cathedral Academy of Performing Arts who performed a piece from Les Miserables.

A lot of hard work went in behind the scenes to ensure it was a memorable day for the children, their families and all connected with our Children's University, and we are indebted to the support we received from schools and Murray Edwards and Rhiannon Ellis at the Theatre Royal Wakefield – the venue added a sense of grandeur and prestige to the occasion.

Here's to the next event and our next group of children achieving the Gold Award...



What's Cool about Wakefield CU ?

"I Like being a Wakefield CU Member because..."

"...I get stamps in my Passport for learning new things."

**Alexis Harrison (age 7)
St Helen's CE Primary School**

**"...it encourages me to go out and explore the world!"
Zoe Meredith (age 9)
Wakefield Girls HS - Junior School**

**"...it allows me and my family to go to places I might not have been before. I learn new things and it is a step forward in life."
Rebecca McKeegan (age 10)
St Helen's CE Primary School**

**"...it lets me enjoy myself and have fun outside of school."
Zara Mahmood (age 8)
Wakefield Girls HS - Junior School**

Wakefield CU on Facebook

We have launched a Wakefield Children's University Facebook page specifically aimed at parents and carers. The page features pictures from recent events such as the Graduation Ceremony and 'WCU Pop-Up Shop' and also allows Learning Destinations to update their activities and highlight anything they feel children might want to attend and gain a stamp in their passport. We're encouraging school staff who are involved and parents to 'like' us.



www.facebook.com/childrensuniversityatwakefieldcollege

Bronze Award Presentations

The 2012-13 academic year saw a number of in-school presentations at partner schools to celebrate pupils reaching their Bronze Award certificates for achieving 30 learning hours.

Achievement assemblies took place at Wheldon Infant and Nursery School, South Hiendley, Normanton All Saints, Hemsworth ACC and St Helen's CE Primary School.



Pictured are children from Normanton All Saints receiving their certificates from Wakefield CU Manager James Pennington who said: "It was fantastic to go into school and present the children with their Bronze Awards and see their achievements celebrated in assembly by all of their peers. It will hopefully encourage the other children to continue their CU activities and I look forward to returning in the near future for another celebration event."



School Focus on... Normanton All Saints

There's always an interesting after-school club going on at Normanton All Saints Infant School. When we dropped in to speak with the school's CU Coordinator Danielle Edwards, it was a Thursday night and Pet Club, where 15 children were engrossed in the after-school activity and were listening intently to 7 year old Cayden Attack holding and talking about his polecats.

Cayden, pictured with his mum and Danielle Edwards, explained to the class how to care for the animal's, what they eat and how much pleasure he derives from looking after his pets. Other 'guests' at Pet Club have included dogs, cats and even a tarantula!



The school offers a range of after-school clubs which run every Tuesday to Friday on a termly basis and range from traditional activities such as sports classes to art and crafts to the new Pets Club – all of which are driven by the children.

Danielle Edwards said: "We are proud to be associated with the CU as it helps us to reinforce the school's philosophy of learning outside the classroom. We offer our children lots of after-school clubs and have noticed that since joining the CU, lots of children and families have been inspired to attend the sessions, so much so that many are over-subscribed. We had 90 children wanting to attend Pet Club! Being part of the CU and the passports have helped us raise the profile of our after-school provision. Our children are always asking about activities and suggesting new clubs, and we find their eagerness to learn new things also comes out in their school studies."

Wakefield CU Learning Destinations

We are delighted that an increasing number of organisations are becoming Learning Destinations across the district. If you have visited a Learning Destination or know of somewhere that would like to become involved, please let us know.

We are also very keen to team new Learning Destinations with our partner schools. If you have a gap in your after-school offer, or would like one of our Learning Destinations to come into school and deliver an interesting and fun session for your children, please contact Jane Fitzpatrick on 01924 789743.

- 23rd Wakefield Sandal Methodist Scout Group
- Anglers Country Park
- Bagshaw Museum
- Barnsley Premier Gymnastics Club
- Castleford Heritage Trust
- Castleford Tigers
- Dance Fusion
- Engaging Education
- Fairburn Ings (RSPB)
- Farmer Copley's Farm Shop Ltd
- Featherstone Rovers RLFC
- Fired Art Designs
- GKR Karate (Crofton and South Kirkby Centres)
- GolfXcel @ Waterton Park Golf Centre
- Havercroft & Ryhill Learning Centre
- Havercroft & Ryhill Sports and Youth Centre
- Hemsworth Sports Centre
- Hemsworth Terriers Junior FC
- National Coal Mining Museum
- NEEMAF Karate
- Next - Gen Sports
- Normanton Knights RLFC
- Normanton Town Council
- Nostell Priory
- Pisces Swimming Club
- Pontefract Castle
- Pontefract Museum
- Pontefract Swimming Pool
- Provision Sports
- Sandal Castle
- Snozone
- South Kirkby Knights Junior FC
- St Giles with St Mary Pantomime Theatre Society
- St. Helen's Church, Hemsworth Stagecoach
- The Hart of Theatre Dance
- The Hepworth, Wakefield
- The Melissa Radway School of Dance
- The Rock School
- Theatre Royal Wakefield
- Wakefield Cathedral & Chantry Chapel
- Wakefield Harriers Junior Jets
- Wakefield Library Services
- Wakefield Museum
- Wakefield Trinity Wildcats
- Warburtons Ltd
- Yew Tree Theatre Company
- Yorkshire Live Music Project
- Yorkshire School of Baking
- Yorkshire Sculpture Park
- Zest Dance

Welcome Andrea

Andrea Rockett joined the Wakefield CU team in May as a part-time CU Coordinator with specific responsibility for working with Learning Destinations.

This role is essential to ensure the places that your students are visiting in their own time are validated and able to reward and stamp children's passports.

Please continue to ask your children what activities they are doing and let Andrea know so we can make the validation arrangements.



QiSS Recognition Achieved



Good news for Wakefield Children's University came in early 2013 when we achieved the Emerged status as part of our QiSS (Quality in Study Support) portfolio submission.

All Children's Universities are required to complete the rigorous process to ensure that our systems and the activities that we and our learning destinations offer local children are fit for purpose and to the standards set by the National Children's University.

Having achieved the Emerged status we are now compiling more data (and lots of press cuttings and photographs of our members in action) to include in our next submission in 2015-16.

Website Update

The Wakefield CU website:

www.wakefield.ac.uk/childrens-university

has been updated and refreshed for the forthcoming year.

The website lists all of our partner Learning Destinations and children and parents are encouraged to visit the site to see what is going on locally.

If you have any comments or ideas for how we can improve the website, please do let us know.



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