



Bywell Junior School November 2018



Suzanne's Report of her visit to the School

I attended Bywell Junior School on the 8th and 9th November where I was given a warm welcome by staff and pupils. There are three classes of Year 6 children, with nearly 100 children in the year group. I worked with half the children on the first day and the other half on the second day, which meant that we had a large group on both days.

The pupils were very interested and engaged and enjoyed learning about life in the trenches. They didn't have much knowledge about WW1 before my visit. When it came to learning about some of the local soldiers, they were fascinated and they found it interesting to hear about the processes that the researchers had gone through to find out the information.

Bywell Junior School has close links with their local church (St Paul's, Hanging Heaton) and they had recently visited it. They were familiar with the WW1 memorial and some children who live near to the church said that they would go and find the soldiers' names on it. We looked at the profile of John Bailey Dixon and the children were very impressed that he had won the Military Medal. Some of the children live on Leeds Road so they were excited to discover that he lived there. The fact that John was 'missing presumed killed' also prompted some good discussion. It was wonderful to be able to share cuttings from the local paper as part of the profiles as the children found these particularly interesting.

We also looked at the profile of Robert Hagger and the pupils found it to be a fascinating story. It was amazing to be able to share the quite lengthy cutting from the paper which included actual quotes from Robert and explained that he could have applied for exemption from the war as he was a father of nine children (but he chose not to). Some of the pupils said that they lived near Earlsheaton Park War Memorial and would go to find Robert's name on it. They were also familiar with the area where Robert lived before the war.

The pupils asked some excellent questions and I was impressed by their thoughtful comments and responses. They produced some wonderful booklets and postcards and seemed to have got a lot out of the workshops. There was a stunning remembrance display in the school hall, as each class had produced some work to do with poppies to commemorate the end of WW1. It was agreed that the work from our sessions could be added to this display. The timing of the workshops was perfect as it was just before Remembrance Sunday.

The School's letter of satisfaction

Having taken part in the *Dewsbury Sacrifices Project*, led by Suzanne Hudson, over the course of the 8th-9th November, I am delighted to report that the children gained a huge amount from learning more about those local residents who fought in WW1.

Our Year 6 children were able to gain a mature and meaningful insight into some of the harsh realities of war-time and engaged well with the process of researching the lives of individuals. It was a pleasure to welcome Suzanne into our school, who led the sessions over the two days. The activities that the children were involved in were interesting and encouraged hands-on involvement. It was particularly nice to see the quality of the work the children produced; many were able to talk at great length about what they had learnt and some had even discussed the project in more detail with family members at home, conducting their own subsequent research.

Having completed the two days, we invited the Reverend from our local church to see the booklets that the children created, and although we were a little late to showcase these in the church's remembrance service, we did use some of the booklets as part of our remembrance display at school.

I can speak on behalf of the Year 6 team when I say that the children really benefited from the workshops.

A Meakin (Year 6 Teacher – Bywell Junior School)



My dearest Henry,
I am so sorry I have not written to you.
The hospital has been quite busy these few weeks. The hospital has been filled with wounded men but in a weeks time they will be well enough to fight again. Thank you very much for the chocolates.
Until next time,
Your dear wife, Kate. xox

My darling Grace
I'm so sorry my dearest for not writing in a vast amount of time. I've been on watch for 36 hours straight, however I loved the letters you had sent me a while back. Being here has made me realise how important you and our daughter are to me. I hope you and our little one are both OK and don't worry about me.
With love from John xxx

Dearest Tom,
It's very tough down here many soldiers are being injured. Please send more letters, it's so tiring in this hospital. Thank you for the chocolates I shared them with my new pals Lily and Elizabeth. Could you send me more ink in France
M.T. Poring
421 Swan Lane
Dewsbury
Yorkshire
England
Love Florence
xxx