

An update on our Harbourside Schools Chaplaincy with Willow Park and Hotwells School 2022-2023.

Sally Martin.

With another year of lovely connections through the welcome of the schools, here are a few highlights.

Our Tuesdays in Willow Park continued through the year with Collective Worship and supporting mainly YR2 with children from Afghanistan and many other countries around the world with Maths and English.

As a team we shared Christmas in a Box with Year 3, and Easter in a Box with Year 6. We celebrated the Nowruz Festival which is a tradition from Afghanistan culture of welcoming Spring and New Life.

It is a privilege to be around and experience encounters with children and adults. Part of being a chaplain is *being with* a school in a very small way and sensing God's love, peace and joy in sharing weekly with the life of the school. Kat and I really enjoyed their Year 6 Shakespeare Play, Romeo and Juliet. It was so well acted and produced.

A highlight was the outdoor prayer spaces in the beautiful secret garden they have in the school grounds. It stayed dry and with a wonderful team: Kat, Chloe and Anna we were there for the day. *Kat encouraging the children to experience the quiet and listening under the Willow Tree. How did it make them feel?*

Making really muddy balls from soil in the outdoor kitchen area, which felt hard!!! BUT then enjoying decorating them with beautiful things brought by Chloe. A sense that out of hard times beautiful life can grow.

Creating an artwork for their class with Anna. Making their "mark" because they are each unique and precious.

Then an area of different choices: Walking with sticks on their turned down hands and as they balance them remembering two people who have helped them this year. Looking out through a frame onto the world and imagining how it could be better. Looking at faraway things with binoculars and close things with magnifying glasses. Watering plants and thinking about helping people we know to grow and be nurtured.

The whole of Key Stage 2 was able to take time out in small groups of 12. Thank you to the team and to Sue Williams for her work as a governor.

