

## Integrated Arts Project 2020

The Integrated Arts Project 2020 took place on Thursday and Friday last week. This year it was St Faith's turn to host. This amazing event takes fifteen Year 7s from St Faith's and joins them together with children from Castle and Granta schools. Children with many differences coming together to create a movement piece, performed and shared with an invited audience. This year we took the theme of 'Confidence'. As always, it was a very moving couple of days, best described by the Year 7 students who took part. Here are just a few of their comments:



*Sam: At the start when they all came in it was a bit awkward but we then warmed up and made friends. My favourite part of the day was a break when we all got to play together in a big game of football. It was really fun because I didn't feel as self-conscious and could do what I wouldn't usually do.*

*Evan: At first I was worried and anxious but throughout the day I started relaxing more and more. It was kind of hard dancing all day but it was fun and worth it. I also made a new friend from Granta. It was kind of difficult working with him because he kept on forgetting what dance moves to do but I helped him remember by mouthing the moves just before we did them.*

*Eve: Overall this day started quite awkward but by the end was not at all. I'm really happy to be part of this experience. I think it really helped my communication skills, and a better understanding of disability as a whole as some are less obvious than others.*

*Hermione: It was phenomenal! The final performance was so moving for everyone, including us, who were performing. I enjoyed watching different people growing with confidence through dance. I made so many new friends.*

*Flora: I enjoyed this project so much and the atmosphere at the end of the performance was insanely great, so I probably will never forget how much fun I've had! Thank you!*

*Archie: I liked how you really got to know your partner and understand how they were feeling. One time I was talking to my partner and he mentioned he was worried. It was nice to help him to feel a bit more relaxed; he had a very eager, but gentle character. At the start it was challenging to dance because I felt self-conscious and nervous but by the end I felt happy and relaxed.*

*Flora: Normally when I meet new people, I'm the shy one, but today having to make conversation with complete new people was good for me.*

*At the end of the day it was heart-warming to hear that a lot of the visiting children felt that they have made new friends. There was one girl who started hugging you and holding your hand once you got to know her. I think the other children went home feeling comfortable, happy and welcomed.*

*Alice: It was a great experience, which I really enjoyed. I thought the children would be more different to us, but actually they weren't. The moment the children entered the hall everything was a bit awkward, but my new friend was so fun and bubbly; she had no time to be shy.*

*Eddie: I thought today was different and exciting at the same time. At the beginning, I was nervous and eager to meet as children from Castle and Granta School and I got to know people lots of the children. Dancing is not something I would do in front of people but today I did. At first I was a little bit self-conscious and embarrassed, but I was feeling more comfortable when everyone else was doing it. It felt weird to be out of my comfort zone but I settled in with the other kids. Tomorrow I'm looking forward to seeing the children again and working with them but I'm slightly worried about the performance. Lunch was a good opportunity to bond and get to know them. At break we played football and played with the children seeing saw their abilities and disabilities.*

*Ella: On the second day it was an amazing feeling to see all the smiling faces excited to see you. We had a great time practicing the performance and it was nice to perform in front of a small crowd. Having a second date to get to know everyone all over again was really nice!*

*Oscar: The day went really fast doing dances and acting. By the time it was the performance I was a bit nervous but everyone else wasn't so it calmed me down. I found the performance went really well and when they had to go there was lots of sad faces. I will miss them a lot.*

*Eve: I felt blessed to be part of it.*

The project, in its seventeenth year, is organised by Filipa Pereira-Stubbs, from Barefoot Dance, whose expertise, enthusiasm and commitment brings this all together. She was joined by Amy Holly, a dance practitioner, who skilfully choreographed the movement piece. Each special school brought with them a team of teaching assistants whose tireless kindness and dedication was humbling to behold. Miss Kennerley and Mr Rusted supported all the children and helped with hosting this wonderful event. Thank you all.



I understand from Revd Johnson that it is not only our parents who think this project is something extraordinary. She wrote, "I was visiting another school yesterday and spoke with someone who is a parent at Granta. She was full of praise for the St Faith's link. She also made the point that a number of Old Fidelians had returned years later to work again at Granta when the time comes to do Duke of Edinburgh awards."



It's lovely to note that this short special time has such a wide and long-lasting effect.

Ms Allen  
Head of Drama

