

The highlight of this month was definitely our trip to Daws Hall  
Nature Reserve

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## ACCESS MAY NEWSLETTER

### ACCESS NATURE SESSION

We decided at the beginning of May that due to the day centre being in the midst of wonderful grounds and surroundings it might make sense to start a nature session so that we can utilise everything the site has to offer. We have started with a smallish group of 4 students, and we have been devising session plans so the students get the best out of the 3 hours available.

In the first week we decided to spend the session just looking to see what wildlife we had on site - how many different insects, birds and mammals would we find? We took pictures and followed the exploration with some research on the computer.

In week 2 we decided that we would focus on the many different birds that visit the grounds and made some bird feeders using pine cones, seeds and lard. We also made feeders from Cheerios and pipe cleaners. The good news is on week 3 when we looked round everything had been eaten, so we replaced these and are now studying butterflies.

This looks like it is going to be a popular session and we will hopefully be able to introduce new students who show an interest in this area to be able to join the session!



# ORIENTEERING AT DAWS HALL NATURE RESERVE

We organised a trip to Daws Hall Nature Reserve on the 24th May after Clare had spent a day there one weekend before Christmas last year. Clare felt that the students would absolutely love what was on offer, but felt it wise to wait until the better weather - and we were lucky as it was a truly glorious day.

We were amazed at how many different activities were on offer when we arrived with students getting the opportunity to see how a bee hive works and learn about how honey is made. The students split in to groups for the orienteering with some groups taking the harder trail and some groups taking the easier trail, the students had to find certain landmarks that were then identified by a star so they knew they had found the right place. There was also time for a bit of pond dipping with students finding little fish, swimming beetles, diving beetles, pond snails, pond skaters and newts which they got to have a closer look at before returning them to the pond.

Students also made bird feeders and got to do some wood whittling with a potato peeler, their wood was then used to toast marshmallows and crumpets on the campfire.

**This is a trip that we will definitely be doing again next year!!**







## **FUNDAY JULY 21st 2017**

### **'A DAY AT THE RACES'**

Please ensure you buy your tickets for the Family Funday as soon as possible, we have lots planned and it should be a really lovely day!

## **GARDENING SESSIONS IN ACCESS**

### **'GROWING FOR LIFE'**

Here in Access we believe in the therapeutic value of horticulture and the students get to benefit from: fresh air, engaging with the natural elements, an increase in stamina and a sense of collective activity. One of our aims is to offer the students a restorative balance that diminishes anxiety and behaviour that challenges, and contributes to improved social interaction and respect for the natural world.

On this site we have two poly tunnels for propagation and growing, extensive

allotments for vegetables and flowers, woodlands that enable the students to experience conservation first hand, more formal gardens that help develop pride and an understanding of presentation. We also have numerous chickens that the students care for and look after.

We aim to keep the same staff team in the 'Growing for Life' department and Troy and Michele are both experts in the field of horticulture. They are both patient and have the best interests of the students at heart in everything they do. Motivating the students is key to a productive day and we regularly have different varieties of fruits and vegetables available to use in the cooking sessions.

Whilst not part of the 'Growing for Life' department, Oak group are all extremely keen gardeners, and led by Caroline Findlay they have some extremely good results from the small amount of time they spend on the allotment each week. Caroline works extremely hard to ensure the students enjoy their session ensuring that she plans everything that is required so that the students get the most of the time available.

They have been to the garden centre after choosing what they wanted to grow, they have then planted their seeds etc. and are now finally reaping the rewards from all the care and attention they have given them. Wayne even harvested his first radish the other week.





## **ACCESS DEVELOPMENT PLANS**

We are still hoping to develop a technology area and are pleased to announce as a result of our last newsletter a parent has very kindly donated a computer, for which we are extremely grateful. We are still discussing a fund raising activity as

we would really like at least one android tablet and one android phone. Last year the drumming group raised just over £70 in about 30 minutes for a chosen charity of Tesco, so we will be chatting with Tesco to return this year but to raise money for our own cause. If anyone is in the process of upgrading their computer/tablet/phone and have one that is in good working order that they would like to donate or sell to us it would be greatly appreciated. Please get in touch with [clarestalker@ecarec.co.uk](mailto:clarestalker@ecarec.co.uk) if there is anything you feel you could help with.

## **POP UP CAFE**

We will be announcing the first date of our pop up café at Funday - so we look forward to seeing as many people as possible on our launch date in August!

## **ACTIVITIES COMING UP IN ACCESS**

### **JUNE**

In June we are going to Pleasurewood Hills! A lot of the students have been here before, but our last visit was 2015. Students are keen to return and those that enjoy the scary rides will have a wonderful day out.

### **AUGUST**



A group of us have booked to go to Theatre to see Peter Pan one evening in August, we will be eating dinner at Access before going to have a lovely evening with the boy that never grew up.

## **OCTOBER**

On Monday 30th October we will be having a Halloween disco at Birch Village Hall in the evening - times to be confirmed and we look forward to seeing some amazing fancy dress costumes!!

## **DECEMBER**

Our Christmas disco will take place on Monday 18th December this year - times to be confirmed!

**PLEASE NOTE OUR NEXT CLOSURE WILL BE ON MONDAY  
3rd JULY for 1 day - re-opening Tuesday 4th July.**

## **ACCESS CLOSURES FOR 2017**

Closed Monday 3rd July 2017  
Re-opens Tuesday 4th July 2017

Closed Monday 28th August 2017  
Re-opens Tuesday 29th August 2017

Closed Monday 4th September 2017  
Re-opens Monday 18th September 2017

Closed Monday 25th December 2017  
Re-opens Wednesday 3rd January 2018



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