

View from the classroom



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This month, in our regular View from the classroom feature, we speak to David Winn, Deputy Head Teacher at St. Jude's C of E primary school in south east London, about the school's participation in this year's Great African Welly Walk, an initiative from charity Farm Africa.

1. Tell us about your school

St Jude's C of E Primary School is a small and friendly one form entre school with 210 pupils, the majority of whom come from the surrounding areas of Brixton and Herne Hill in South London.

We are an inner city school servicing a diverse community which brings with it various challenges and but also opportunities. We are part of the Windmill Cluster of Schools, which brings together local schools and nurseries to share ideas, resources and expertise. The quality of support we get from our local authority is very good and there are many talented people, businesses and charities bursting to work with us.

St. Jude's has been graded 'Outstanding' by Ofsted and we believe in helping our children to achieve their full potential by providing education of the highest quality within a Christian framework of values and beliefs. We have a big focus on positivity and like to treat our students the way we would like to be treated - we believe in getting down to their level and understanding the individuals backgrounds of each child.

2. How did you get involved in the Great African Welly Walk?

One of our parents suggested doing the Great African Welly Walk to raise awareness and donations for Farm Africa. We thought it was a great fit with our Christian ethos so we decided to go for it.

3. Why was it important for you to take part?

These kinds of charity focused events are what we are all about as a school. We want to teach our pupils about doing the right thing and we think it's important that global issues are brought to their attention so they can develop an understanding of what life is like for children in other countries. Activities like the Welly Walk raise the profile of important issues and bring everyone together for a common goal. They are also lots of fun, which is a really important part of learning.

4. Did you tie the Walk into a broader learning opportunity for the children?

At St. Jude's we place a lot of emphasis on our children experiencing things rather than just hearing about them, and this is how we like to teach our curriculum. The Welly Walk was great because we found lots of ways to integrate it into broader learning opportunities throughout the school and there were lesson plans available to download from the Farm Africa website.

A key element involved tracking the distance covered by everyone and entering the total

number of miles into the Farm Africa online Welly Miles Tracker, which then gives you a personalised certificate to download. We devised a special maths lesson for Year Six, we asked them to work in groups to create a suggested route around the playground and they had to explain how they would record the number of meters covered. Each group then presented their ideas and we voted on the best ones. The students were really keen and loved doing it.





At the other end of the school, in our Reception class we plan cross-curricularly for our Early Years so everything they did on the day revolved around learning about the topic of Africa. For example, the children were able to make African prints in the art corner and the teacher focused activity involved pupils designing their own wellington boots.

5. How did the children respond?

We decided to use Farm Africa's fundraising suggestion of 'Fill Your Boots' and children were encouraged to bring in loose change. We liked the idea of leaving the amount of money to donate up to the families and children to decide rather than specifying an amount. For us, seven pence was as gratefully received as £7.

You could see by the way the children walked through gates that they were really excited and



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we were blown away by the generosity, with some children giving money from their piggy banks. We raised a total of £165.74 which is great for a small school like St.Jude's which has lots of siblings.

6. What did the staff feel about the Walk?

We discussed the idea of doing the Welly Walk in our staff meeting and because it fitted so well with the ethos of St. Jude's it slotted in easily with our curriculum. We encourage teachers in class to break up learning with an energizer or form of brain gym – there has been lots of research and it is scientifically proven that boys in particular can only do focused listening for short periods of time before switching off. As such, we try to get our children 'doing' as much as possible to ensure that they are engaged and enjoying their learning. The Welly Walk was a great opportunity to get the children into the bracing air, having fun while doing exercise, and when they got back into the classroom they were ready to learn.

7. How did the day go?

We set up a table at the front gates where parents and children could donate money into a pair of children's wellington boots. We covered the table with African cloth and toy animals, and had information about Farm Africa to give to the parents.

We held a morning assembly about Farm Africa which was presented by a speaker from the charity. I think it was crucial to start the day by explaining why we were doing the Welly Walk and the children really benefited from having thing put into a wider context. It provided a shared opportunity to visualise the problem and reflect on the solutions.

The children had lots of fun on the walk and some of our Year Three children enjoyed it so much that they decided to carry on around the course to clock up more miles during their lunch playtime. In total the school walked an impressive 179 miles!

8. Has the event prompted any other fund-raising initiatives?

We think it is really important that the school doesn't do too many charity days. For some families a couple of pounds is a lot and we don't feel comfortable asking for too much. But if it's done properly we feel confident that our families will get behind it.

9. Would you do it again?

The idea of a Welly Walk is great because it's both simple and fun. From a very early age Wellington boots represent a sense of freedom, that you can go outside regardless of the weather and enjoy yourself splashing in puddles. Plus they've become very popular in recent years and you can get beautiful designs. We've had lots of ideas about how we could do it again and we'd want to do a variety on the theme.

10. What do you feel the benefits were of taking part in the Walk?

The Welly Walk was a very relevant way of getting our children to think about how the distance we walked was only a small percentage of how far children in other countries have to go to get to school or getting drinking water.

► <http://st-judes.lambeth.sch.uk/>
► www.farmafrica.org

