

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

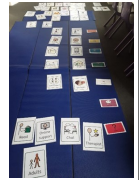
What we've been up to this month.....

At Excel and Exceed, **Time to Talk Day** was held on February 1st in collaboration with Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT), Cat.

Students were invited to take part in the "nation's biggest mental health conversation" in school, whereby they were offered a range of activities in order to encourage them to talk about how they really feel and engage in conversations that matter.

Activities included making characters for stories, engaging in a quiz answering whether statements relating to mental health are true or false and creating stories for characters such as Bob and Sarah.

The day was met with enthusiasm, as students shared experiences through storytelling and raised awareness of mental health, meanwhile offering insightful advice as to how help can be sought when a person is struggling.



Take part in Summit School's February Faces Challenge



Do one activity a day and gain points for rewards.

Put together to look at the challenge. You can find a challenge for each day of the month of the year - Full! Put simply, you'll be challenged to draw create a different face every day, allowing you to practice capturing emotion and expression. To find out the details, visit [www.summit-school.co.uk](#)

This month at Summit we have been **challenging the young people both physically and artistically as a way to re-engage**. Every day the young people have begun education with a range of physical challenges such as bouncing a ball on a book or hula-hooping. The artistic challenge has been based on 'February Faces' - the young people have designed and created a range of faces from the use of paper quilling, icing a face on a biscuit to 'wicked Wednesday' faces! For each challenge they complete they get a star on their chart- a complete card will result in an Amazon voucher!

Jayne from Excel and Exceed delivered a **lecture to trainee primary school teacher students at Manchester Metropolitan University**. The lecture was part of the inclusion week, some of the key points being:-



- What we know currently about Children Looked After (CLA) and what it means to be CLA student, along with some statistics.
- The comorbid existence of mental health and attachment.
- How we need to consider these students are not homogenous and the need to consider intersectionality.
- What the term 'mental health' and the often negative connotation of this—Jayne talked about the different weight given to mental and physical health.
- Explored the most common mental health diagnoses with a focus on what might be seen in primary aged children.
- The impact of trauma on the brain and how this reduces capacity to learn.
- Ways in which we could support students who were both CLA and experiencing attachment and mental illness.
- Challenging fixed mind-sets and personal bias was considered along with the use of language and how this may be a barrier if not considered carefully.

Following the session, Jayne received some great feedback from the programme lead:- *Your input was excellent and it would be great if you could come back next year.*



Monica, the new science teacher at the Phoenix School, has hit the ground running – bringing her 25+ years of experience to our learning environment. She held her **first science practical**, ensuring that our young people followed strict health and safety protocols throughout.

Our young people were able to learn in a practical and meaningful way, whilst having lots of fun (and sweets) in the process! They learned about osmosis and diffusion using Skittles and Jelly Babies before writing it up in their books using the correct scientific terminology.



Excel and Exceed are proud that they welcomed back Dennis, 'the Godfather of **mobile planetariums**,' in February 9th.

Once again, Dennis pulled out all the stops to take both students and staff on a tour of the Milky Way. A trip to the moon and a ride on Space Park lead to some perceptive questions being asked, poems and artwork being created and smiles all around.

Additionally, Dennis later contacted Excel and Exceed to thank the students and staff and noted that 'the welfare and progress of the students is obviously at the forefront of what everyone does.' A big thanks goes out to Dennis also, who has set himself the task of providing Excel and Exceed with a copy of his book for our library!

The Phoenix School was fortunate to be visited by Molly from the **Lived Experience Network** this month. Her key focus was around how the school supports students to gain confidence in their learning and feel comfortable in the school environment. During her visit, Molly spoke with various members of school staff as well as four of our students.



Molly was impressed by the efforts made at the Phoenix School to support young people in a calm and pleasant environment. She sent us over a glowing report following her visit, two of the quotes are included on the [school website](#).