

October 2015

Catherine Coburn - The 'Sensation Activation' project is well and truly underway and has managed to create a buzz of excitement amongst children and staff – what a great way to start the academic year! In a whole school assembly the children were introduced to the plans for the project. All the children were inspired by the idea of taking ownership of the project, becoming the leaders who will make all of the important decisions and tell the teachers how they want to improve their outdoor environment!

The first STEM day was tremendously successful. The children (even reception who are still very new to school, let alone small!), became real Scientists! They enthusiastically investigated materials and considered the durability of materials which will be needed to replace the impractical stones in the Sensory Square. We spent just over £75 of the RR funding to buy the resources needed for the activities. The differentiated learning was perfectly pitched to ensure that all children were involved and suitable challenged. This was coincidentally the day we had our first visit from Sam Pink our Rolls-Royce mentor. It was fair to say that she left feeling impressed at how children from different years could all contribute towards the same project.

I have been busy organising a forthcoming visit from the Mayor where the children will be showcasing their sensational plans and developing their presenting and communication skills. They will be showing him around and will tell him all about their recent learning and the future aims for the project. The team and I have also been planning for our first parent/carer 'Dig and Chip' event. Parents/carers have been invited to help afterschool to remove the stones and, for all their hard work, will be rewarded with chips and a hot drink.

Claire Gray - Miss Coburn and I have shared the project vision with our governors and have been filming the content for our first video entry. We've been working with our children to create an exciting and informative first glance at our school that shares our school ethos. This is a huge project for Miss Coburn to lead and is undoubtedly providing her with new leadership and management skills. I have also been supporting the other members of our STEM project team who are taking a lead on the different aspects within the project. These tasks are providing them with challenging new opportunities, which is beyond their usual role in school, generating valuable professional development opportunities.

Kim Harford - Being new to the role of Maths Leader, it has been an overwhelming experience to take a front seat in witnessing children develop into real life Mathematicians through the 'Sensation Activation' project. During STEM Day 1 our year 1 children worked hard to conduct data analysis to find out which materials were the most popular and our year 2 children were given the challenge of measuring the pathways in order to calculate the costs for the different materials we would need. What a brilliant opportunity to make Maths come alive and prove to be relevant and meaningful to our children! 😊

Lauren Doyle – The year 2 children have been busy taking ownership of designing how they want the new materials to be laid in the sensory pathways. They proved to be skilful designers and there were some very creative and interesting designs to choose from! I have been working alongside the school council to collect all of the ideas from each class in school. Given the important job of making the final decisions for the project, the council representatives have considered everyone's views and have managed to make their final decisions. They have designed the final plan for the location of the materials and have shared the decisions, as well as the exciting Mayor Visit and 'Dig and Chip' event, with the rest of the school in an assembly.

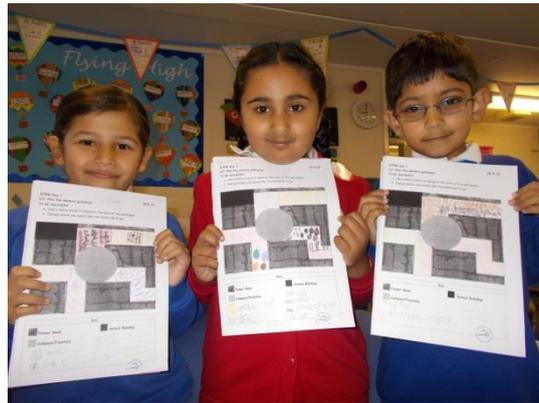
Chris Morris - I have begun to set up various links on the schools website ready to showcase the children's hard work and achievements with parents, carers and visitors. I also helped to set up the STEM day activities, ensuring the health and safety of the children was paramount and I even investigated with the children myself!

Tim Cremin - With my agricultural experience my main role with the project this half term has been advising the team about suitable materials for the children to explore and have put staff in contact with outside agencies. The team discussed at length the ideas around the canopy and seating area and as a team have decided that combining the two areas to build an outside classroom would provide a much more meaningful space for the children. To keep in line with the 'senses' theme of the project we aim to encourage the children to design and transform the walls of each side of the outdoor classroom to reflect a different sense.

Over the next few weeks our priority is to remove the stones in the Sensory Square and to buy the children's chosen materials, so that we can lay them as soon as possible. These exciting barefoot sensory pathways will provide the children with an enriched area where they can explore safely using all 5 senses. We are also planning on opening up this area for other schools to enjoy! Another priority is to put together a bid for National Lottery funding in order to start planning for the sensory outdoor classroom.



Our Scientists really enjoyed using their feet to explore a range of materials that could potentially be used to replace the impractical stones in their Sensory Square. The rice pudding was a favourite with the children but they soon realised that it would be very unsafe, let alone messy!



After considering the durability and deciding on the final materials, the children designed how they want the new barefoot sensory pathways to look. There were lots of very creative, inventive designs!



The year 2 Scientists and Mathematicians had the important task of measuring the areas of the pathways. They then worked hard in teams to calculate the costs for the new materials.