



Visit from World War II Veterans



On 1st March 2012, The Co-operative Academy of Leeds was visited by four World War II veterans and the son of a deceased veteran.

Our class, 9A1 interviewed our visitors as part of a European memory project. We talked to them about their experiences during the war. One of our visitors was Paddy Hopes, a navigator in the war. He was flying in a mosquito (a war aeroplane) when it was damaged. He showed bravery and quick thinking when he bailed from the aeroplane into the unknown night. It gave us personal insight into what it was like to fight during World War II.

We met relatives and veterans to hear their interesting stories and reminisce with them. It was a privilege to meet them and hear their stories first hand. They are stories that will stay with us forever, stories that bring history to life.

Article written by Danial Ward with contributions from Alex Rathbone in year 9.

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Message from the Principal

As we come to the end of another busy term, we are really pleased with the progress that our year 11 students have been making. We have put intensive work into Maths and English and recent examination results have been very encouraging, indicating that results this year will show a big improvement!

Year 11 students have also taken part in a major careers event – we had over 50 visitors from a range of firms and they all commented upon the fantastic attitude and contributions from our students. We are now preparing further events for year 10 and for parents. If you would like some support in applying for jobs, we will be working with local firms to hold a special event for parents in May.

Our big focus at the moment is on literacy. We have to improve standards of reading and writing to ensure that all students can both achieve good qualifications, but also manage effectively in the world after school! We have put into place a number of new initiatives which are designed to help literacy standards. These include Accelerated Reading to encourage students to read for fun, Guided Reading, which is a key element of English lessons, and for those who are struggling with basic skills, the Ruth Miskin Phonics programme. We have centred a lot of staff training around literacy and students across the Academy should find a lot of emphasis is placed on things like understanding and being able to spell key words, punctuation and grammar in all their subject areas. We are also introducing a number of competitions linked to literacy. After Easter, Mrs Coombes will be running an Adult Literacy course, so do look out for this if you are interested.

This half term, we've welcomed into the Academy a range of visitors from war veterans and speakers on climate change. The Army has worked with year 9 students on a "Build a Barracks" task, which relates Maths to real life. We've also had students involved in a number of visits out of the Academy. Our sixth form students have been exploring what local universities are like; other students have been looking at how to find jobs in the health and social care field, whilst History students have taken a trip back in time to the Middle Ages to visit Sandal Castle.

Finally, elections have now taken place for our new Student Parliament. We are currently planning leadership training for our new 'MPs' as well as a visit to the boardroom of The Co-operative Group in Manchester.

Mrs McCarthy

Principal

Attendance Update

Attendance across the Academy has recently begun to improve. We are still hopeful that we can reach our target (92%) by the end of the year. Congratulations to the 87 students who have had 100% attendance since September and to all of those who we know are working very hard to improve their attendance.

There are still a number of students who are not attending the Academy regularly – this is affecting their attainment and their relationships with their peers. Leeds City Council recently issued 17 fines to families where attendance was poor. Another 14 warnings have been sent out to give children time to improve their attendance before a possible fine may be issued.

We have had reports that some families are not sending their children to the Academy because of uniform concerns. The uniform policy has been clarified for you in this newsletter. We do have shoes that children can borrow if theirs are damaged. Please always try to send your child to school.

Recently, there has been a high proportion of late students. Many of these children say that they are late due to bus services. You could help your child to be on time by looking at bus timetables with them and planning the journey together to leave enough time for them to get to the Academy by 8:20am. This will also help them to be more independent later in life and know how to plan for different journeys.

Spotlight on... Principal and Vice Principals

What is your name? *Mrs McCarthy*

What is your job title? *Principal of the Academy*

Which guild are you in? *I'm not in a guild*

Where were you born? *I was born in Hull at the foot of the Humber Bridge, which wasn't there then.*

How long have you lived in Leeds? *34 years*

What is/are your favourite sporting team(s)? *Yorkshire cricket, Huddersfield Town football and Leeds Rhinos and of course any team representing The Co-operative Academy of Leeds.*

What is/are your favourite food(s)? *Duck in orange sauce*

Who is/are your favourite recording artist(s)? *Lindi Ortega (at the moment)*

What are your responsibilities in your job? *I am responsible for both the business running of the Academy, including all financial matters and the education that is provided. On a day to day basis I could be dealing with a wide range of matters. For example, a day could include: Meeting with the Vice Principals to look at our plans to improve standards of literacy, Taking staff briefing – giving out announcements and reminders of what we expect, A meeting with a parent, Visit to classrooms monitoring standards, Meeting with Primary Headteachers in the local area, Lunch duty, Phone calls to The Co-operative about our next governors' meeting, Discussion with the Finance Manager about a bid to get more money, Answering emails, Reviewing the latest data on attendance, And if it's a Wednesday, teaching!*



What is your name? *Mrs Needham*

What is your job title? *Vice Principal*

Which guild are you in? *I'm in Da Vinci, which works well for me because I like red!*

Where were you born? *I was born in Cambridge*

How long have you lived in Leeds? *I came to Leeds 19 years ago to study at Leeds University and have stayed ever since!*

What is/are your favourite sporting team(s)? *My favourite team is Leeds United but really only because my husband is a lifelong supporter and my children are also big fans and my life would not be worth living if I said otherwise!*

What is/are your favourite food(s)? *I love food full stop but if you had to press me I like Thai food and scampi and chips but not together obviously!*

Who is/are your favourite recording artist(s)? *Editors, The Killers and Mozart (odd combination I know!)*

What are your responsibilities in your job? *My title is Vice Principal Learning and Specialism. The 'Learning' bit is to do with the quality of teaching and learning that takes place in the classroom. I check that it is good quality and work to make it even better. It also involves behaviour and attitude to learning in and around the Academy. For the 'Specialism' bit I am working hard to make sure Enterprise is central to everything that we do and arranged Guild Days and many other activities where we develop Enterprise skills and improve the chances of people leaving and getting jobs/becoming self-employed. The Specialism is developing to include Communication in the next year too.*



What is your name? *Mr Browning*

What is your job title? *Vice Principal*

Which guild are you in? *I'm in Luther King*

Where were you born? *I was born in Margate, Kent*

How long have you lived in Leeds? *20 years*

What is/are your favourite sporting team(s)? *My favourite football team is West Ham United*

What is/are your favourite food(s)? *My favourite food is chicken madras with garlic naan*

Who is/are your favourite recording artist(s)? *My favourites include Billy Bragg, Muse, Elbow, Everclear, Dave Brubeck, The Killers and 5 Live podcasts*

What are your responsibilities in your job? *My job is to ensure that all our learners leave the Academy with the qualifications and skills that they need to be successful. To do this, I look at what we teach (the curriculum) and how well our learners are doing through their reports. I also work with the leadership team to ensure that teaching and learning in the Academy are excellent and that our learners get the best experiences in the Academy. Also, as a few 'lucky' students know, I also teach Geography!*



Fairtrade Fortnight

Even though many people now have some awareness of 'Fairtrade', the majority of the people were not aware that there is a specific fortnight from February-March (this year it has been 27th February to 11th March 2012), which is dedicated to the Fairtrade movement. However, this soon changed when we were familiarised with the Fairtrade Fortnight in our Business Studies lessons. Firstly, we were briefed on the details of Fairtrade and what its aim and main purpose is and then our knowledge of how Fairtrade is celebrated and encouraged was developed further as we were told about the Fairtrade Fortnight. We did various tasks and watched a couple of videos of the changes that Fairtrade has made possible and how it has had a profound impact on the way that people in the third world countries live. Also, we delved into deeper detail of how Fairtrade is making things better for those that produce our raw materials and crops. For example, cocoa beans for chocolate, coffee beans and many other crops and fruits.



In the Enterprise Club, we then decided to contribute towards Fairtrade this year by helping to raise the brand awareness of Fairtrade. Along with the help of our teacher, we decided to open up a Fairtrade café in the Business Studies department during the morning break times; this sold only products that adhere to the Fairtrade set up and are part of the increasing list of Fairtrade foods. This included two types of Cadbury's Dairy Milk chocolate, Kit Kats, coffee and hot chocolate. Business was going so well that we decided to set up a mobile store going around the Academy during break and lunch times. We hoped that by opening up the café, it would raise awareness of Fairtrade Fortnight to those pupils that previously did not have knowledge of the event.

This also means that we were abiding by and practicing our Co-operative ethos, which is 'equality and community'. This meant that this was a perfect example of these values in practice. This also helped portray and set an example for the younger students of what is expected of them. This made this café a morally strong thing to do as we are doing it for more than making a profit; but more for the benefit of the people who have worked hard to push this programme to limitless heights. For everyone that was involved, this was a good learning experience and one that taught us more about the value of contributing back to the community.

The participants of the Enterprise Club included: Shadreck Sachikonye, Paul Mann, James Smart, Chloe Lacey, Rhodiah Daud and Makda Biniam.

Article written by Shadreck Sachikonye in year 11.

Below is the poster designed by Business Studies students to advertise their Fairtrade café:

The Co-Operative Academy of Leeds Fairtrade week 2012
8th February to 2nd March 2012

Coffee	BLZ	Chocolate
		
Cakes	AI	Bananas
	BREAKTIME	

To celebrate the upcoming Fairtrade fortnight, the business department will be selling a variety of tasty Fairtrade goods to help promote Fairtrade awareness.



Trip to The Royal Armouries

Today I went on a trip to the Royal Armouries with my class and teachers. The first part of the trip we had a tour around the museum looking at weapons, armour and how war all started. We also had a handling session where we were holding fascinating exhibits and clothing from the past. We all had a discussion and group work activities where we were looking at items from soldiers who fought in the war. The whole trip was very exciting and interesting and it really gave great detail about the past. It has also changed the way I find history now.

Article written by Nicole Matthews in year 9.



Pictured from left to right: Mahmud Ali, Kellan Midgeley, Nicole Matthews

Make the Grade with Leeds Ahead

This academic year, The Co-operative Academy of Leeds is working with a wide range of businesses to enhance the curriculum and support the Academy's Enterprise specialism.

Managed by social enterprise Leeds Ahead, a programme of business engagement activities are already underway. These include teachers/staff as well as a number of activities with students. Make the Grade goals include raising student aspirations, broadening exposure to the world of work and enhancing their ability to gain a job having successfully completed their education. To meet these goals, activities such as a Careers Event (held 24.02.12), guest speakers, Live Enterprise Challenge and Interview Practice are all to be held this year. Additionally, businesses and the Academy will be working with feeder primary schools and the local community to build strong relationships for the future.

The Make the Grade partnership is sponsored by the Co-operative Group (the Academy's sponsor) and Mill Asset Management (the Academy's PFI contractor). Law firm Eversheds and Health & Safety experts OHS have taken an anchor role, ensuring consistent business representation and building relationships for the future. In addition to this, a range of pool businesses from different sectors and industries are coming in to support the partnership and work with the Academy this year and for at least another two.



Pictured right: Mrs Needham, Andrew Jackson from Leeds Ahead and Craig Looker from Eversheds.

Accelerated Reading (AR)

Reading Success is as Easy as 1-2-3 with AR

You may have heard your child talking about Accelerated Reading (AR) and wondered what it was all about... We are re-launching the programme in Key Stage 3 this month, with some exciting new additions.

Here's how it works:

1. **Student reads a book.** Students choose books at their appropriate reading levels and read them at their own pace. Visit www.arbookfind.co.uk to search for available titles.
2. **Student takes a quiz.** Accelerated Reader Enterprise offers more than 140,000 quizzes to help motivate and monitor students' reading performance and vocabulary growth.
3. **We get information.** Teachers can get immediate feedback on the reading and vocabulary progress of each student.

Home Contact

Parents/carers can get involved with AR too. Through Home Connect, you can log into the programme at home to review your child's progress. By logging on from a home computer, students and parents will be able to:

- See progress towards reading goals
- Conduct book searches using AR bookfinder
- Review results on AR quizzes
- View number of books read, words read and quizzes passed
- And much, much more!

We will be sending letters home to explain how you can log on as soon as we go live – watch this space!

Still to come:

- Inter-guild and inter-school competitions – starting soon!
- Weekly updates on reading achievement across the school on monitors around the Academy
- 'Reading Celebration' assemblies
- Reading certificates and prizes across Key Stage 3
- Visits and workshops with popular authors.

Second-hand Uniform Shop

We are hoping to open up a second-hand shop within the Academy for uniform. This would mean that parents/carers can purchase second hand items of the Academy uniform at a discount price. In order to get this up and running, we need donations! If your child is leaving the Academy or has grown out of their uniform, please would you consider donating the items back to us to be sold to other families?

The items we are interested in are the ones with the Academy logo and in guild colours, which include blazers, ties, Academy schoolbags, hoodies and polo shirts for PE. Items need to be in a good, wearable condition with no graffiti.

This shop might be particularly helpful for those families who cannot afford to purchase the items new so you would be helping us to help our local community if you would be so kind as to donate your child's uniform when they've finished with it. If you have any uniform to donate, please hand it in at main reception. Thank you.

Angus, Thongs and even more Snogging

You may already be aware that this play has been shown at the West Yorkshire Playhouse this month. Well, the names of the students at our Academy taking part in the Leeds Book Awards during their Monday afternoon Enrichment activity were entered into a prize draw in February and guess what? Our very own Leanne Dobson won!

Her prize was two tickets to watch a performance of Angus, Thongs and even more Snogging, a production based on the books by Louise Rennison about the trials and tribulations of a teenage girl and her friends. She also had the opportunity to attend a question and answer session before the performance. Leanne took her best friend with her and they had a lovely treat in the February half term holidays!

Changes for Members of Staff

After the Easter break, Mrs Ruggles will be leaving to have a baby and will be on maternity leave for a while. During this time, Mr Jones will step into her role and become an Assistant Vice Principal in charge of Specialist Provision. This will leave Tomlinson guild without a Guild Director so switching guilds to take up this position will be Mrs Riches. Once Mrs Ruggles returns, they will all swap back to their old jobs. We'd like to wish Mrs Ruggles the best of luck with her birth and we look forward to seeing a picture of her baby boy!

Visit from Kenyan Tea Farmer

On Monday 5th March 2012, Joseph Cheruiyot from the FinTea Growers Co-operative Union came to speak to Mr Ward's year 11 Geography class.

Background of FinTea

FinTea is a ground-breaking Fairtrade project to support 11,000 Kenyan farmers, which has almost reached its completion. It is one of the biggest Fairtrade projects of its kind, which worked from the grassroots upwards with farmers and has received its Fairtrade certification to allow it to sell Fairtrade tea. Following inspection from the Fairtrade Labelling Organisation, the tea will eventually make its way onto the shelves to become the Co-operative Group's '99 Fairtrade Tea' in the UK.

FinTea has also applied for Rain Forest Alliance Certification and is awaiting the outcome of this.

Visit from Kenyan Tea Farmer – article written by Zahed Salimi and Zahid Hussain

When Joseph came to visit the students, he told us about the conditions of the workers and how Fairtrade had made people's lives better. Endrit [another student] asked him about how Fairtrade could be expanded and his opinion.

We would like to thank Mrs Philpott for organising the visit and thanks for the extra detail that might help our GCSE exam in June!



Adult Literacy

As part of the drive to improve literacy across the Academy, we intend to offer a weekly literacy class for parents. Classes will be starting after Easter (details to follow).

The first classes (6 sessions) will include:

- Filling in forms
- Reading and following advice or instructions
- Writing letters
- Using formal English (meetings/interviews)
- Communicating over the telephone
- Presenting opinions clearly

If you are interested in attending, or think you may be, please contact Ms Coombes in the English department at the Academy. You can telephone 0113 336 8320 ext. 60609 or email her on coombecm01@leedslearning.net and let her know if you are interested, whether you are able to come for all 6 sessions and what you would like help with (e.g. reading, basic conversation etc.)

Commendation for Student

On Thursday 1st March as students were finishing school for the day, a group of students gathered outside. When members of staff went outside to see what was happening, they found that a member of the public had collapsed across the road after having an epileptic fit. He was not conscious or moving so this had drawn a crowd of students who wondered what was happening. In the middle of the crowd was Carina Gardiner (pictured below), who had put the man into the recovery position and had taken his pulse. An ambulance came and the crowd was dispersed without worry.

We are so proud of Carina for taking the initiative to help this man. Well done!



Homework Club

There is a homework club at The Bangladeshi Centre on Roundhay Road, Leeds. This takes place on Mondays and Wednesdays between 4:00pm and 5:00pm. If you would like further information about this, please contact Mr Ali at the Academy.

The Co-operative Academy of Leeds

Stoney Rock Lane, Leeds, LS9 7HD

0113 336 8320

cooperativeacademy@leedslearning.net

www.co-operativeacademy.org.uk