

Craigroyston Primary School went to camp

When around 30 people from Craigroyston Primary School had to travel to the west coast to go to school camp, the first thought was to do the same thing as they had always done before and go by coach, and so a coach was duly booked.

Then the pupils found out that head teacher, Rebecca Favier, (who had to come back to Edinburgh mid-week for duties at school) was planning on travelling to and from Benmore using her electric car. This made them think of their own journey and how they would travel.

The council's Benmore centre is near Dunoon and offers city children the chance to try all sorts of outdoor activities such as abseiling, canoeing hillwalking and sailing. Set in Argyll Forest the centre is near Loch Eck on the Cowal Peninsula and it is 120 miles away or 2 hours 41 minutes by car.

On the council's Outdoor Learning website instructions on how to get to the outdoor learning centre include advice to use sat nav. It is a remote location eventually entered through the Botanical Gardens.

After investigation and a lot of discussion the pupils and staff then decided that to go by train and ferry would be a more environmentally friendly journey.

The 29 pupils and four members of staff then booked and travelled to Benmore by train and ferry. (Sadly the return journey had to be by coach as timings just did not work). For some pupils it was the first time they had been on a train and for others it was their first experience of a boat. They all enjoyed the journey for different reasons, but the main one was to do something about climate change which they have been learning about.

Head teacher Rebecca said: "The pupils plan to feed back to the government about how easy the travel was and also recommend any improvements to the infrastructure as part of real action to make real change based on their real experiences)...

"Staff and pupils are increasingly aware of their impact on the environment when travelling for learning experiences. Some of the pupils became very interested in my using an electric car and this led to them asking about using an electric bus to get to camp.

"We got really good support from our outdoor learning service. And they offered us a tool where we could input different methods of travel, and work out how many emissions we could potentially save.

"I would say it was really worthwhile for two main reasons. One of the reasons was just that the children loved being on the train and the ferry – it didn't take us any longer to get there. We went a completely different way, and what an amazing experience. The second reason is that, actually it brought the learning in the classroom into the real world. And it's about saying actually we don't just learn about these things in books or on iPads, and that actually we can all do something that makes a big difference."

The itinerary:

- pupils and accompanying staff caught the 9:57 train, changing at Glasgow Central and arriving at Gourock Train Station/ Ferry Terminal at 12:26pm
- pupils and accompanying staff then took the 1.20pm passenger ferry from Gourock to Dunoon
- the pupils and accompanying staff were met by Benmore staff at Dunoon Ferry Terminal

Joshua said: “our work could trigger a chain reaction and we hope other schools will follow our example”

Wasif said : “it’s a good idea because its less pollution and we need to act now to save our planet”

Charlotte said : “this is a small action for big problem”

Anmol said : “if we don’t take these types of actions our planet won’t be the same. We studied the pollution that we are causing to our planet”

Ruth said : “we are setting an example to younger pupils to inspire them to be climate warriors”

Taylor said: “I was excited to travel by train and ferry because its different – no one really does this for school trips- it was a great experience”



Rebecca Favier, Headteacher at Craigroyston Primary School with some of the P7 pupils who went to Benmore PHOTO ©2024 The Edinburgh Reporter