



Zoë Fraser

‘I’m very proud to be part of such a great **KNITTING CLUB**’

Teacher Zoë Fraser tells Judy Darley all about how knitting has taken off in a big way at her primary school.

We’re always in favour of any efforts to spread a love of knitting to younger generations. Primary school teacher Zoë Fraser has done us proud by running a lunchtime knitting club.

“I started the knitting club at Weston All Saints Primary School in Bath a year ago and never dreamt of how popular it would become,” she says. “We now have approximately 25 children aged between seven and 11 in the club, with a waiting list of 10 more. Being able to pass the skill on to a new generation is fantastic and I’m very proud to be part of such a great club.”

Zoë has been teaching at the school for about seven years. “After working on a few sewing projects I realised how gifted the children were, and when they expressed an interest in knitting I got permission from the head teacher to start the knitting club.”

Initially Zoë sent out a letter to the children’s parents asking if any of them had spare needles or yarn they could donate. “I then arranged a time that would fit in with other clubs running at the school,” she says. “Although this is only once a week and only for half an hour, I encourage the children to bring their knitting out at playtimes if they need more help or are stuck on a particular pattern.”

In addition to the yarn donations from parents, the children each pay 50p a term to help cover the cost of needles and any specific colours of yarn required.

SEEING THE RESULTS

Zoë has been really pleased with how the children have responded. “The benefits from knitting are

tremendous,” she says. “They can work from patterns once they’ve mastered garter stitch. This helps them with reading and maths, not to mention coordination.”

The children start with simple, small patterns so that they get quick results and aren’t daunted. “I even have a few boys knitting Shreddies at the moment after seeing the advert on TV!” Zoë laughs. “When we started the

‘Working from patterns helps them with their reading, maths and coordination’

club, I cast on 10 stitches and the children made bookmarks for themselves. Once they completed this they could move on to knitting from patterns.”

The knitting club has produced a fantastic display that is proudly presented by the entrance to the school. “It features lots of cakes and biscuits as well as plates of burgers, chips, bacon, sausages and sushi!” says Zoë. “When one child knits something a trend seems to develop and suddenly everyone is knitting a doughnut or a fried egg. We also have seasonal displays at Easter, Halloween and Christmas – the children love knitting witches and pumpkins, as well as snowmen, penguins and tree decorations.”

The club is at its most hectic at the start of each term when new knitters join. “As the term progresses I’m always amazed at how fast the children progress and how much they’re able to help each other. It is a very sociable process with a lot of teamwork.”

Zoë is keen to recommend the knitting club experience to other schools. “The benefits are plain to see on their faces – they are amazed at what they can produce with just two needles and a bit of wool. It doesn’t have to be all about computer games and expensive phones!”



The children at Weston All Saints Primary School have created this yummy display in their knitting club.