

Curriculum Advisor for Wales Sandra Jones reflects on her visit to All Saints Church in Wales Primary School to present their Cornerstones Curriculum Award. Sandra takes a closer look at their award-winning curriculum work using a project from Curriculum Maestro, which formed a lasting impression on the children and led to community action.

Journeying to Wales

A last-minute entry into the Cornerstones Curriculum Awards paid off for All Saints Church in Wales School, Barry, South Wales; they were selected to be a winner of the award plus £1,000 prize money. As one of the Curriculum Advisers for Wales, I was tasked with the delightful role of visiting them to deliver their award in person.

Headteacher Aled Williams proudly welcomed me to the school and introduced me to Sue Thomas, the Year 1 teacher he gives all credit to for the activities deserving of the award. Sue explained it was the work they had done through the Cardiff Tales project on *Cwricwlwm Maestro* that led to them applying.

‘I love the way it offers a springboard’, she said. ‘The resource pack was excellent. I loved using the resources about Cardiff Bay and seeing how it linked to previous work we had done on Grace Darling, which opened up a whole wealth of learning more about the RNLI.’

Customising the curriculum

After using the Maestro resources to establish what they already knew about Cardiff Bay, the class developed some background knowledge about the history of the local area and thought about things they would like to learn more about. As part of this, they took a trip out of school, enjoyed a cruise of the bay and even interviewed the captain of the boat! Back in class, the children made posters advertising Cardiff Bay and developed their mapping skills, even putting this into practice in their PE lessons by mapping routes around the apparatus. Through talking about the life rings and safety aspects down on the Bay, the class went on to learn about the RNLI. Sue described how 'when they realised it was just volunteer work, one of the little ones said, "can't we give them money?", which was the springboard into the fundraising event that we did, involving the whole school.' Their Mayday Mile raised £163.53 for the RNLI, which was later presented to an RNLI volunteer visiting the school.

Sue described how the project had supported the children's knowledge and skills within the Welsh curriculum. 'In order to advertise the Mayday Mile, they made posters using their writing skills, and the language work that came from using the correct wording on the posters was great. In terms of the Four Core Purposes of the Welsh Curriculum, they were hitting every target – all Areas of Learning, the LNF and DCF – just tick, tick, tick!' She also explained how she

used the Lesson Builder in Maestro to add lessons that were ‘predominantly led by the children. It was very much a child-centred approach.’

Meeting the children

Following my chat with Sue, I had the pleasure of meeting the class, a delightful group of children with plenty to say about their learning. After posing for presentation photos, we sat in a quiet area, and I asked them some questions.

‘What was your favourite part of the project?’ I asked. Hands shot up everywhere, and we went around them as they enthusiastically shared their learning:

‘When we went on the trip.’

‘Learning about the RNLI.’

‘Going on the cruise.’

‘Lunch outside the Senedd.’

‘Exploring the bay.’

‘Making the posters.’

‘Learning about Tiger Bay before it was Cardiff Bay.’

‘Visiting the RNLI.’

‘When we did the mile.’

‘Learning about safety.’ (The little girl told me about the different flag colours and what they meant).

‘Wearing all the clothes.’ (They had tried on the RNLI gear!)

‘Saw fossils in Cardiff Bay.’

It was clear this project had made an impact on the children. Although Sue said it was ‘all inspired by the Tiger Bay PowerPoint resource in Cardiff Tales’, it was clear that her interpretation of the resources and the incorporation of Pupil Voice had taken these children along a learning journey that was inspiring, long-lasting and had even led to community action.

Most importantly, when I asked, ‘did you enjoy your learning?’, the resounding chorus of ‘YES’ was undeniable!

Clear winners

The ways in which All Saints used Cwricwlwm Maestro to support their curriculum gave our judging panel clear reasons for selecting them as a winner:

- Shows customisation of the curriculum

- Use of locality in children's learning and good range of first-hand experiences
- Shows the skill of the teacher in ensuring learning flows whilst maintaining teaching of knowledge
- Application of learning for good through raising money for RNLI
- Good example of Pupil Voice as children were very involved in making decisions throughout their project

My visit to the school and discussions with both Sue and the children echoed how deserving they were. When I asked Sue what their plans were for the prize money, she told me that she had discussed it with the children. 'They decided that they wanted to share it with the rest of the school,' she said proudly, 'because the rest of the school helped them raise the RNLI money.' They were still deciding what this would be at the time I spoke to them, but Sue added that there would also be another donation to the RNLI.

It was an absolute pleasure to visit All Saints and to meet Aled, Sue, and the children. I look forward to hearing about their ongoing learning journey using Cwricwlwm Maestro.