

# Buzzing about bees

Schools are doing their bit to help bees thrive and explain their importance to life on earth to pupils through hands-on opportunities, as initiatives from these two schools illustrate...

Dauntsey's School, Wiltshire, has revived its Bee Club, which ran originally in the early 1970s, and has received planning consent to build an ambitious new ecologically designed Apiary which will be the heart of the Club.

The timber Apiary, to be powered by solar panels, will provide a covered observation area for pupils to view the beehives. The hives will be in an undercover area, allowing the Club to run, regardless of the weather.

The building, due to be completed this month (September), will include a classroom, workshop and storage facilities. The Apiary is part of a larger initiative from the School which will also see the expansion of wildflower meadows.

Barry Roberts, member of staff at Dauntsey's who has spearheaded

the Bee Club, said: "Bees perform a vital role in agriculture through pollination and, living in rural Wiltshire, we felt it was important for the School to learn more about them.

"We plan to start our colony with two hives to house honeybees. There has been a lot of interest from the pupils in the Club and we are busy investigating what to expect when the hives arrive and getting to know the equipment.

"It will be amazing to get up close, safely, to the hives from the viewing area, see the bees at work and understand how they operate within the colony."

Over in Dorset, Bryanston School has reintroduced honeybee colonies at the School to provide pupils with a fascinating insight into the world



of beekeeping. The move has been overseen by Ben Pullan, Resident Teacher of Classics at the School and an experienced apiarist, and has benefitted from a special grant provided by the Bryanston Parents' Association.

"When I joined the School last year, I quickly discovered that Bryanston had a long history of beekeeping," says Pullan. "However, established colonies that were lost a few years ago weren't replaced and our hives fell into disuse. As this has been a personal passion of mine since I was a youngster, there was an opportunity for me to use my skills to reintroduce beekeeping into our co-curricular programme. I am delighted the move has prompted a

very enthusiastic response from so many pupils who are keen to see for themselves the fascinating and extraordinary lives of honeybees. Indeed, they know from their studies that these amazing insects play such an important role in local ecosystems but are under immense threat from pesticides, loss of habitat, parasites and fungal diseases."

Two new and locally sourced bee colonies are now in hives positioned on a peaceful site in the School's grounds near the river. Fifteen pupils are already taking part in the beekeeping activity on Friday afternoons as part of the Pioneering section of Bryanston's broad co-curricular programme.

## Parts of the world are in crisis, be part of the solution!

How many of us had the opportunity, as a child, to have our long term expectations challenged in Primary school, by an individual who has also addressed the UN, US Congress, the Carter Centre and the very highest level of several governments?

Emmanuel Jal promotes a strong message of reconciliation and peace, and during National Refugee Week he was invited by Education Development Trust's Head of UK Schools, Deborah Leek Bailey, to create a live event for their year 5 & 6 pupils.

Little could the pupils of Danesfield Manor, Oakfield Prep, St. Andrew's School and Ashley C of E Primary School know what to expect when the energetic peace envoy and musician joined them live for an afternoon of reflection, dancing and learning about the plight of refugees. They were in



the company of a former Child Soldier and humanitarian.

The pupils engaged on every level and enquired as to how Emmanuel felt when losing his home, what the living conditions were like as a child soldier and whether the eclectic eating rituals of his youth, such as consuming tree bark, was still something he participated in today!

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