



Tavernspite Teacher Takes Wales And Fairtrade to Murcia

by Sharron Hardwick

Tavernspite Class 4 Teacher, Julie Houghton, recently visited a school in Murcia as part of the Lifelong Learning Programme.

Shadowing a teacher in Murcia, the aim was to improve language skills, learn more about Spanish: culture, education system and language, in order to enhance the modern foreign language provision back in Tavernspite School.

Julie, prepared with lessons epitomising Welsh culture, had one more thing in mind: Fairtrade.

Tavernspite School and PTA are keen Fairtrade supporters, also showing excellent support of Stokieshazer's Fair Trade in Football Campaign. Julie was not only armed with her intense Spanish language preparation, but also with a Fairtrade Football!

During the visit Julie shadowed an English language teacher, who worked with children aged between three and thirteen, teaching a number of activities in different classes through the week.

On St Davids day the children received a short lesson about the celebrations which take place here, seeing images of children celebrating in Tavernspite School. The cultural significance of the tradition of the Eisteddfod was also taught:

"My own class had drawn Welsh dragons as part of an Eisteddfod competition to be judged by the Spanish children. I invited the Spanish children to draw Welsh dragons which I would take back to be judged by my class." shared Julie.

Further lessons, taught using a mix of English Spanish and Welsh, included using a Welsh flag, costume and map, Welsh cakes, a dragon mascot, simplified folk story, and a video presentation of traditional dances and song.

The Spanish children were introduced to Pembrokeshire pupils, and Tavernspite School's daily routines, through a series of films made by Tavernspite's class 4; who also created fact files to introduce themselves. In return, the Spanish children composed sentences about themselves, their responses were filmed.

One thing that Julie particularly enjoyed was the teacher and children's reaction to Fairtrade and the Fairtrade Football donated by Sharron Hardwick via Fair Trade Wales:

"No one had heard of Fairtrade! With Elena's help I explained the principles of Fairtrade. I invited the children to take part in a competition to design a logo for Sharron's Fairtrade football campaign. The children took part with enthusiasm and produced some imaginative designs. The children loved the Fairtrade football and were keen to use it at break times." Shared Julie.

Tavernspite School look forward to learning from Julie's experiences through a series of lessons, during an assembly and slide show.

During Summer term Tavernspite will start an Modern Foreign Languages after school club for the junior children. Julie and Spanish host teacher have registered on the British Council E Twinning site, planning to further the work already begun on fact files, mascot exchange, celebrations, culture boxes and Fairtrade.

"I feel that there was an excellent match between work planned and the actual activities, and great links were formed. This was a worthwhile experience for me and has benefited both myself and my partner school." concludes Julie.