



Aspire!

An Inspiring Programme Of Enrichment
At Oasis Academy Hobmoor

Aspire!

The Aspire programme and associated intellectual property is
copyright © Mercurial Dance Limited 2017. All rights reserved.

Text copyright © Oliver Scott 2017

Photography copyright © Mercurial Dance Limited 2017

All rights reserved.

First Edition

Publisher Mercurial Dance Limited

www.mercurialdance.co.uk

"We believe that real education should help us to live 'On Purpose'. Aspire provokes us all to think about two questions: Who am I? Where am I going? It is a range of experiences that plant seeds...

...Seeds that will flourish throughout our lives."

Paul Tarry, Principal





The Aspire Programme is a bespoke development programme, empowering school leaders, staff and children to go further and be more! The Aspire Programme is conceived and produced by Oliver Scott, Artistic Director and CEO of Mercurial Dance Limited with Paul Tarry, Principal Oasis Academy Hobmoor.

Our Mission

At Oasis Academy Hobmoor our mission is to deliver exceptional education at the heart of our community. We pride ourselves on working in partnership with families to help ensure that every pupil can fulfil their potential. At Hobmoor we aim for the highest academic standards whilst also growing in children a love of learning that will last a lifetime.

Our Ethos

Oasis Academy Hobmoor is driven by a powerful ethos which aspires to treat everyone equally and recognises the importance of a holistic approach to education. As well as continuing to build a strong school and deliver a first-class education, it is also our desire to build an interconnected community, recognising that educational needs do not exist in isolation from the needs of the whole person.



“Education is not
preparation for life;
education is life itself”
John Dewey



“The difference between ordinary and extraordinary is that little bit extra”

Jimmy Johnson

We know that it isn't just 'what you know' that determines how far you go in modern Britain. One of the key drivers behind Aspire has been Mick Waters' thinking around 'the rules of life game'. Aspire deliberately sets out to help pupils build their cultural knowledge and capital by guaranteeing them key experiences. It aims to help pupils build a know-how about networking and contacts, alongside an understanding of the 'etiquette and tactics for success'. It also aims to be great fun and provide unforgettable learning! This book captures a flavour of the amazing work that has come out of the collaboration between our company in residence, Mercurial Dance, the talented, hardworking teaching staff at the academy and our inspiring students. Every day we are striving to create opportunities for children, and staff, to surprise both themselves and others... to aspire towards a bigger vision!

Paul Tarry, Principal
Oasis Academy Hobmoor

Being a company in residence means we work in partnership, as part of the team alongside senior leaders, staff and children to build opportunities for innovation and creation. It is centred on a meeting point between the educational vision of the academy and Mercurial Dance's artistic process and production expertise. Working together enables us to develop distinctive, high quality arts provision within the Yardley community - the school, community centre and involving local and city arts institutions. With our sister charity Mercurial Arts, we leverage funding and establish projects that would be hard to achieve working separately. The partnership has enabled us to adapt and change together. It flourishes on our passion to make a difference; the need to expand children's imagination and creative cognition; and the power the arts have to unlock potential and transform communities.

Oliver Scott, CEO & Artistic Director
Mercurial Dance



Aspire!

The Aspire Programme has become an integral part of school life at Oasis Academy Hobmoor. Evolving year to year around key elements, our aim is to support and enrich the children's learning helping them to fulfil their ambitions and to become a better version of themselves.

Autonomy

We give time to staff to develop sessions about the things in their life they LOVE DOING for children who CHOOSE what they want to try.
We structure professional development time for staff to explore their own personal aspirations.

Difference

We create a collapsed timetable, so the school week feels really different from the normal routine. This includes times for different year groups to work together. Learning outcomes that are enquiry focused rather than subject driven, taking different approaches to how we learn; a chance for self directed learning.

Content

A clear structure to the week that links to the Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Development agendas of primary education. Themed around Identity, Faith, Behaviour and Taking Action.
Introducing the children to new experiences through: guest speakers, workshops, Go and Do! Visits; all led from the staff's and children's ideas.

Produced

Aspire is produced by Mercurial Dance. 'Coaching' style conversations with senior leadership develop clear goals which respond to school needs. They help with concept development, conceiving and realising a complex project. They connect the school with passionate and talented individuals and organisations in the city, relevant to the children's lives and learning.

Communication

Aspire launched Oasis Hobmoor s blog site, open to the world, with daily posts on www.oasishobmoorblogs.co.uk.
We make high quality video edits and photography to make learning visible.

Aspire! is underpinned by particular philosophies and approaches to education articulated by past and current writers and academics. Here are some of their thoughts...

"Creativity is as important now in education as literacy and we should treat it with the same status."

Sir Ken Robinson

"We like to think of our champions and idols as superheroes who were born different from us. We don't like to think of them as relatively ordinary people who made themselves extraordinary."

Carol S. Dweck

"Whether we coach, advise, counsel, facilitate, or mentor, the effectiveness of what we do depends in large measure on our beliefs about human potential. The expressions "to get the best out of someone" and "your hidden potential" imply that more lies within the person waiting to be released."

John Whitmore

"We should spend less time ranking children and more time helping them to identify their natural competencies and gifts and cultivate these. There are hundreds and hundreds of ways to succeed and many, many different abilities that will help you get there."

Howard Gardner

"Our chief want is someone to inspire us to be what we know we could be."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Our greatest danger in life is not that we aim too high and miss, but that we aim too low and hit our target."

Steve Chalke



“The fact is that given the challenges we face, education doesn't need to be reformed – it needs to be transformed. The key to this transformation is not to standardize education, but to personalize it, to build achievement on discovering the individual talents of each child, to put students in an environment where they want to learn and where they can naturally discover their true passions.”

Sir Ken Robinson





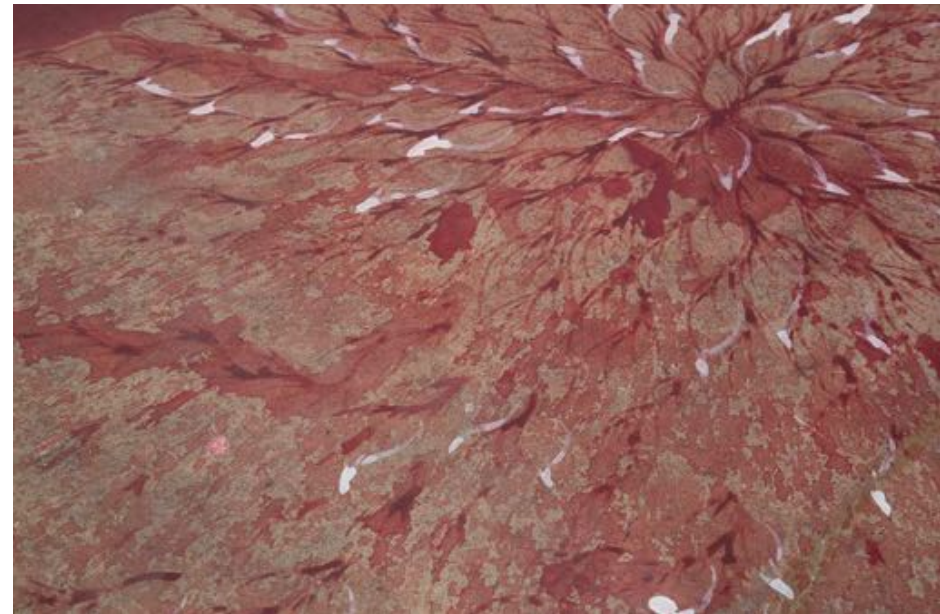
Each of the Aspire days are themed around the social, moral, spiritual and cultural aspects of life in modern Britain. (SMSC)

We are keen to create a range of experiences for children and staff which connect them to the cultural and political organisations in the city. We build a range of activities that unlocks creative potential and help raise aspirations.

Many of the children at Oasis Academy Hobmoor have socio-economic barriers that can limit their experiences. Aspire seeks to open doors.

"How do you know if something is for you, unless you have had a chance to try? To explore new things?"

Paul Tarry



Artwork: Imran Qureshi, Photographer: John Fallon

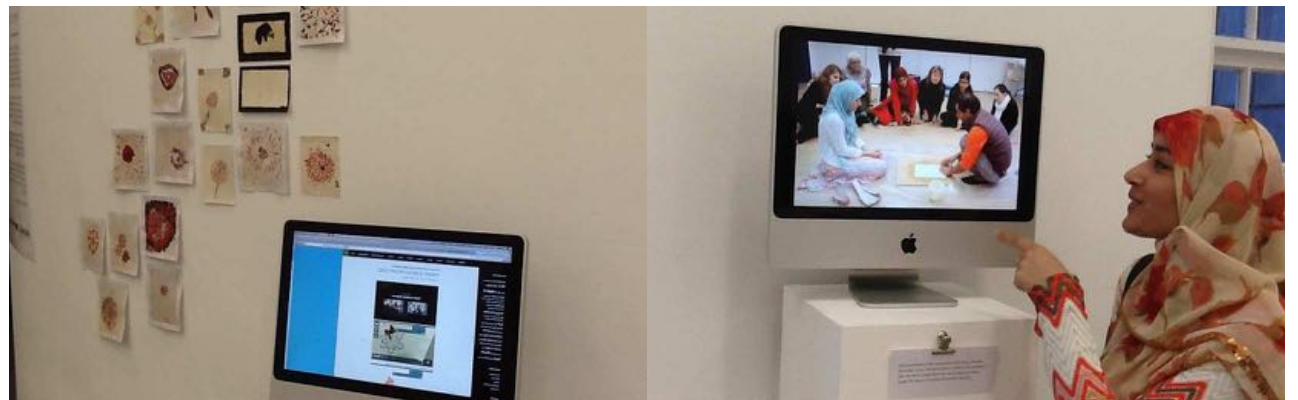
Exhibiting At Ikon Gallery.

Blood-red paint – and all the many ways in which he uses it – have become something of a trademark for artist Imran Qureshi. Born in Lahore in 1972, he has lived through decades of martial law, terrorism, uprisings and massacres. His medium is metaphorical demanding us to make sense of our complex world. Aysha, our Year 6 teacher attended a two day workshop led by Imran, and the children came to the gallery to explore his art. They then produced their own art using similar mediums and inspiration. The children's pieces were exhibited at Ikon, one of the UK's leading art galleries.

IDENTITY

Who am I?

Trips to cultural institutions like IKON, BMAG, Coventry Cathedral and the Library help us explore our identity and culture.





Children working with Emma Bowen, Head of Learning at Ikon, exploring Imran Qureshi's painting techniques



In 2015 Ikon's exhibition spaces were bathed in radiant light from Artist Dan Flavin's work. We made our own light art responses to his work.



Coventry Cathedral is known all over the world as an international centre for reconciliation. During our tour we learnt about the Cathedral story as a journey taken from a place of conflict to one of peace. We also looked at the artwork which shows the process of reconciliation.

Steve Stanier and Jenny Creasy from The Feast came as guests to run workshops with us. The Feast works to promote community cohesion between young people of different faiths and culture. We explored what faith means to us, what we have in common and how we celebrate our differences.

Left clockwise from bottom: Coventry Cathedral Baptistery Window. Our tour. Working with the Feast. The Font at Coventry Cathedral, a boulder from Bethlehem.



FAITH

What do I believe in?

Guest leaders such as Clive Fowle and The Feast help us to explore our beliefs and how these shape how we think, feel and act for today and in the future.





BEHAVIOUR

How should I behave?

The Oasis Nine Habits help us to think about the kind of person we want to become. Practicing the habits will enable us to achieve our ambitions and work together in a thriving, healthy community.

These are:

Compassionate, Patient, Humble,
Hopeful, Honest, Joyful, Considerate,
Self-controlled, Forgiving.

Compassionate

'To be compassionate and kind whilst acting justly.'

Compassion is the ability and willingness to place ourselves in the position of another and, as a result, be able to show kindness to them, without ignoring or dismissing the truth about their situation.

Joyful

'To be joyful and positive and help others to be the same.'

Real joy is not shallow or momentary but is rooted in a deep sense of contentment with life, free from grasping and striving. Such joy brings peace and calm to ourselves and others. It is liberating and life giving and builds resistance in our lives and the teams we are a part of.

Considerate

'To choose to love others like you love yourself.'

To be considerate is to see the intrinsic worth in others, to choose to care about them and treat them in the way that you would yourself. That is only truly possible when we understand our own self-worth and function from that place and belief. When we do this it changes the way we see, treat and respond to others.

Patient

‘To be patient and persevering.’

Patience is the ability not just to tolerate delay or something not happening as quickly as we might have hoped for. It is also about the way we wait and the attitude we adopt as we do so, delaying immediate gratification and being prepared to keep going for the long haul; not giving up when things don't work out but finding ways to develop work that is sustainable and grow relationships steadily. As we grow patience we gain a long-term perspective.

Humble

‘To be honouring of others through serving with humility.’

To be humble is to recognise that all people are created equal and are therefore of equal value. Because of this, a humble person will not laud it over others or use power to coerce, or pursue position and status but instead will choose to serve others, seeing their intrinsic worth and giving them honour and encouragement.

Honest

‘To be honest and have integrity.’

Honesty is about being truthful. Being honest includes acknowledging when we have got things wrong and taking responsibility for our actions. As we do this, we become a person of integrity - there is an alignment between what we say we are and how we behave.

Hopeful

‘To be hopeful in seeking transformation.’

Hope is not wishful thinking. It is a belief that causes us to find the light when everything around us feels hard or dark or challenging or without hope. Someone once said that 'you have to kick at darkness until it bleeds daylight.' So hope is about holding on and working for a better tomorrow, despite what the conditions and circumstances say today.

Forgiving

‘To be forgiving and committed to healthy relationships.’

To forgive another is to choose not to allow their actions and behaviour in the past, which may have hurt or offended us, to determine our behaviour towards them in the future. Forgiveness is never easy but it is always transforming.....it always changes things.

Self-controlled

‘To be self-controlled.’

Self-control is having the ability to manage our own emotions and actions. When we have self-control we are not controlled by our own emotions but are able to maintain a right perspective on our life, our work and our relationships. It is a key part of emotional intelligence.

Aspire To Be A Rare Manuscripts Conservator



Inspired by the fact that the University of Birmingham holds a Qur'an manuscript dated to be among the oldest in the world, we set up a visit to the Cadbury Research Library to explore what it takes to look after these rare and precious manuscripts. We also went to visit this Qur'an where it is on display at the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. Sharing our Aspire programme with Oasis Short Heath gave us a chance to make some new friends in the Oasis Family.



Above: what an exciting day! Right: identifying book eating bugs. Below: turning the 400 year old pages of a manuscript





ACTION

What action do I take
to achieve my goals?

Blessing Maragere, Young Entrepreneur and Serena Arthur, Young Poet Laureate for Birmingham are two of the people who've worked with us. They are role models who have achieved their aspirations at a young age. They help us to see what is possible by talking about the steps they took to succeed.



Young Poet Laureate
for Birmingham

"Let your passion be your alarm clock"

Blessing Maregere
Entrepreneur & UK Young Ambassador To Europe

When Blessing Maregere gave a keynote talk to launch our first Aspire week he was 21 years old. He spoke about what led him to be an entrepreneur and his motivation. In 2009, at the age of 16, he started his own contract cleaning company called "Essential Cleaning Company". He is the author of the book "Who Said You Can't Be Young and Successful?" and started Bright Futures Enterprise to support his mission to inspire, educate and motivate young people to become successful entrepreneurs. He worked with the children on start up workshops to create a healthy tuck shop.



The Action part of Aspire Week is all about making a resolution for our next steps to achieve what we are passionate about doing. This could be connecting with the community, raising money for a cause or giving ourselves a challenge to succeed at.



Pupil Parliament meeting Jess Philips MP for Yardley at Westminster



Creating cakes to give out at the local care home for the elderly.



Book sale and cake sale as part of our community open day, to raise money for Oasis Zimbabwe.



Oasis Zimbabwe's work is focused on a community called Epworth, in Harare. They provide many different projects: education, youth health, skills training and care for street children.

The Aspire Programme Evolves Each Year

Aspire has developed each year. In 2014 we held a single week. This Aspire week was about developing our aspirations for modern Britain. Focusing on enrichment and experience to help unlock the power the children have to shape theirs and everyone's future. Each of the guests during Aspire week came because they are passionate about what they do. We invited them to talk about their lives and how they got to where they are today. They also are all making a difference to society, whether it's an entrepreneur running a social enterprise, a politician or an artist, they are connecting with communities and people and provide a really positive role model for the children.

In 2015-16 we developed Aspire week, clarifying the framework and integrating it further with the Oasis Philosophy 'A story worth believing in' to include the Oasis Nine Habits and an outward looking focus on taking action.

Developing the philosophy further in 2016-17 to include Carol Dweck's 'Growth approach. A 'Growth Mindset' Day to help the children to understand the concept and the staff to develop and use learning mechanisms for the children in lessons, such as ways to select their levels of challenge. Aspire took place over the whole year with collapsed timetable days, trips culminating in an Aspire week. Adding to our themes of experiences we introduced learning labs, an opportunity for children to select a skill they would like to develop and practice it for the whole week. A place to explore the growth mindset approaches to learning new skills and trying different things.

“True self-confidence is the courage to be open—to welcome change and new ideas regardless of their source. Real self-confidence is not reflected in a title, an expensive suit, a fancy car, or a series of acquisitions. It is reflected in your mindset: your readiness to grow.”

Carol S. Dweck, Mindset



Guests included Jo Roberts, Visual Artist; Steve Chalke, Founder Oasis; Anna Begum, Christian Aid; Ursula Westwood, Felt Artist; Judith Haliday and Clive Fowle, Touch of Hope; Serena Arthur, Young Poet Laureate For Birmingham (2016); Ashley Jordan, Dance Artist; Jill Rowe, Oasis Ethos Director; Adam Holder, Roots to Shoots; Steve Stanier and Jenni Creasy, The Feast; Peter Thomas, Friends Of Oaklands; Blessing Maregere, Entrepreneur; Mr Bollywood, DJ & Entertainer; Friends Of Oasis; Richard Kidd, Actor; Oliver Scott, Mercurial Dance. (Left to right, top left first)

The Learning Labs

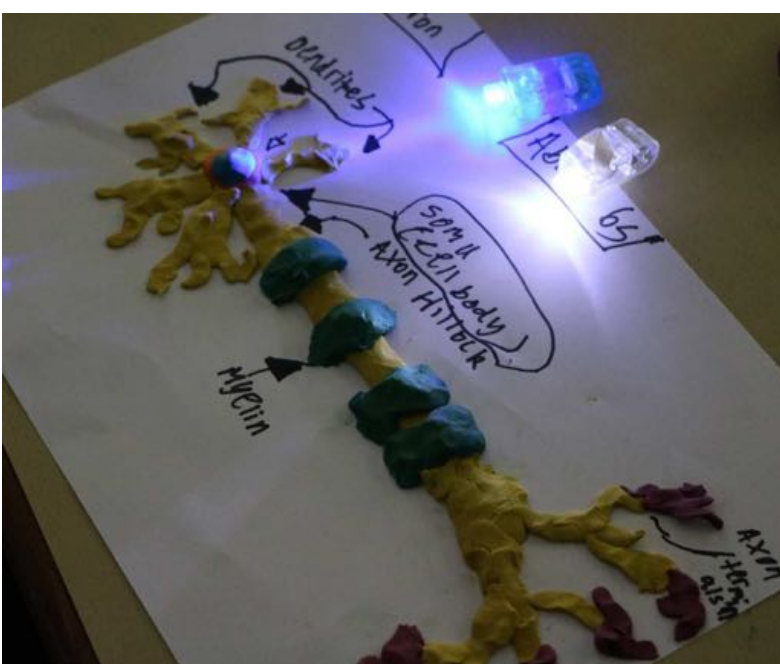
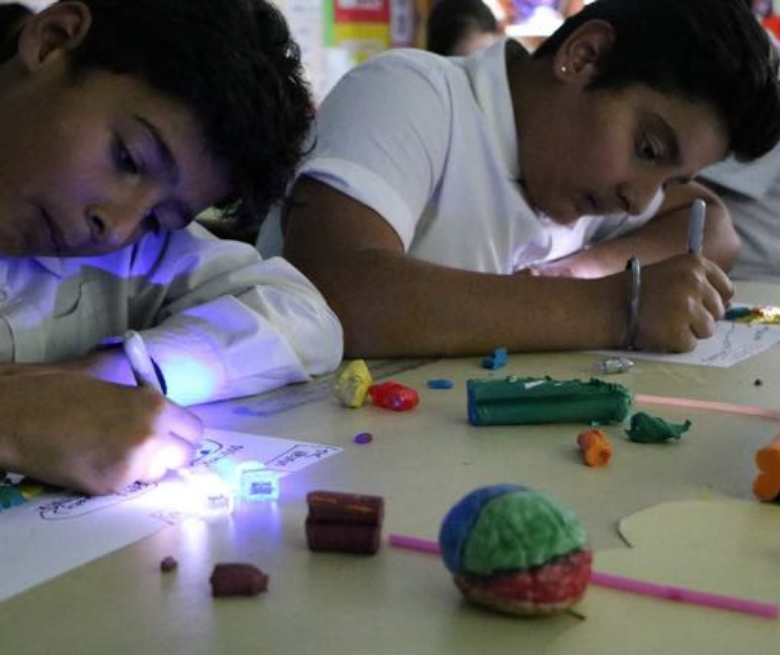
We introduced learning labs, an afternoon session, every day during Aspire Week. Everybody was encouraged to take and apply a growth mindset to these sessions. The children chose one activity from a range, developed from their suggestions, to stick with through the week learning a new skill

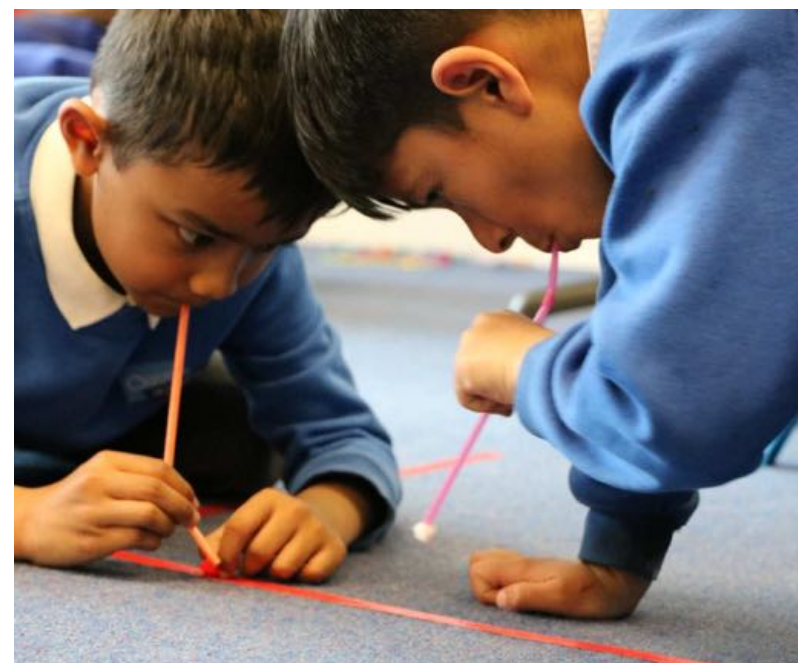
The passion for stretching yourself and sticking to it, even (or especially) when it's not going well, is the hallmark of the growth mindset.

Carol S. Dweck.

Activities included: Baking, Art, Craft, Cricket, Neurological Art, Gardening, Dance, Theatrical Skills, Sport, Theatrical Masks, Communication, Recorders, Meditation and Relaxation, Tennis and more...











Aspire To Be A Scientist

We took a trip to meet Dr Nick Baker at the University of Warwick. We learnt about the chemistry in our every day products and what university is about.

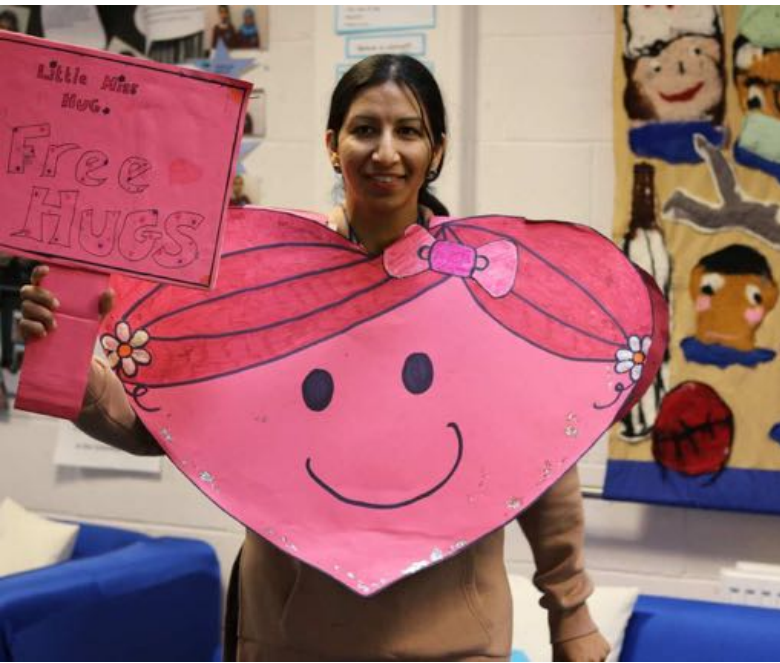






Love Language Day and Oasis Academy Hobmoor Writing Competition.

For Aspire in the school year 2016-7 we had subject specific days that allowed us to delve into a particular theme in more depth. Love language day was about getting enthusiastic about writing! We coincided this with World Book Day: we dressed up as book characters; read to each other; took lots of inventive ways to start writing poetry and stories and launched a writing competition with real prizes. Bringing the entries together we professionally published two books called Just Write with all the children's entries. You can read them at www.oasishobmoorblogs.co.uk/JustWrite2017







Natural Science

Working with Adam Holder from Roots To Fruits, an award winning local social enterprise, we have set up our garden. We've restored an allotment area and have been growing our own food and flowers and much more. Next year we are working with the Royal Horticultural Society to earn an RHS Gold Award!

Natural Science is all about experiential learning in the outdoors. Helping us to understand the world around us and feel the excitement of seeds growing to plants and flowers. We've learned about pollinators, played team building games and developed the space with Adam into an outdoor classroom.



"The best thing about the gardening club is growing pollinator flowers to help the bees and pond dipping" Hawwa Yr5







Every Child Is An Artist

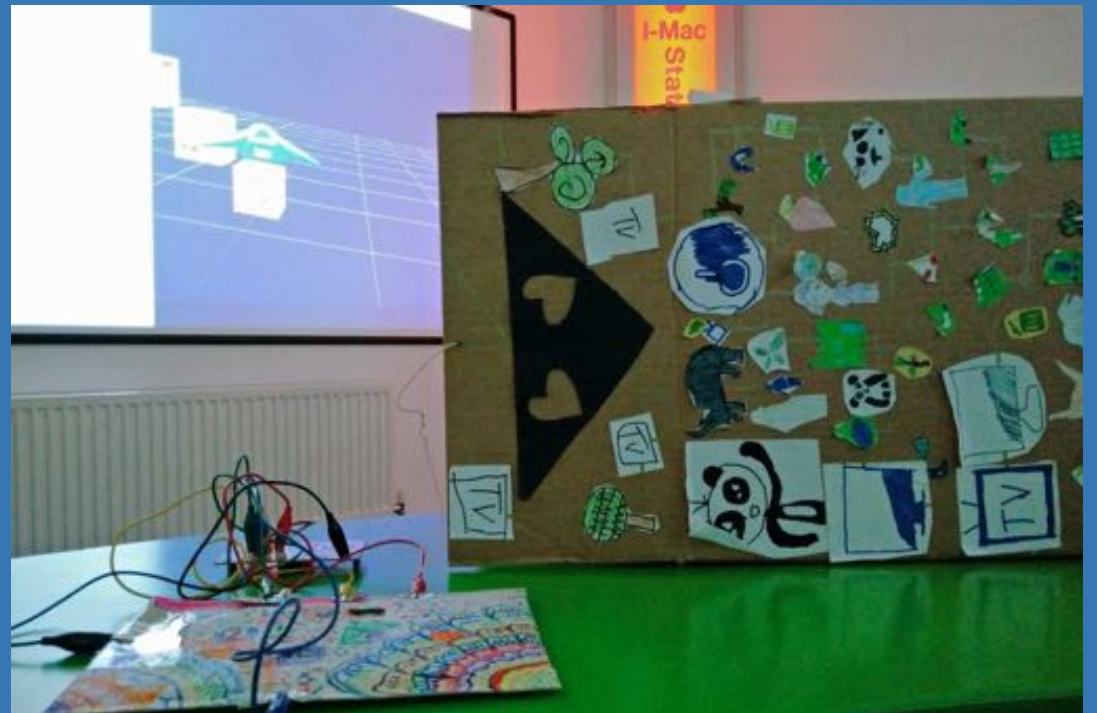
Every Child Is An Artist is a nationally ground breaking programme to develop the skills and innate artistic ability of every child in Oasis Academy Hobmoor. Developed with our company in residence Mercurial Dance and written into the curriculum for the school, our aim is to develop the people, skills, ability, opportunities and space needed for art & creativity to flourish.

"The arts aren't some sectional or elitist activity that appeal to a few, they speak to the very nature of humanity, to our imaginative capacities, to our compassion, to our desire and compunction for aesthetic experiences and for communing with other people."

Sir Ken Robinson, Keynote address Children's Arts,
Children's Lives Conference

The children are Led by Artists, who are making work, performing or exhibiting professionally in their own fields. Each term is themed around different artistic disciplines. It is drawn together into a performance or exhibition by the pupils for parents and community to celebrate their work.





"Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once they grow up."
Pablo Picasso

In the tradition of every great art movement we have written a manifesto.

1. We believe that every child IS an artist
2. We believe high quality arts teaching and arts experiences are a cultural entitlement for every child, which is enshrined in Article 31 UN Rights of a Child.
3. We believe that arts for children has to give them something they can't find anywhere else in their lives
4. We will create a safe and free space for every child to develop their ability to imagine, play, create and communicate their artistry
5. We reject a separation of the arts into distinct disciplines, we believe we can make art with and about what ever we want
6. We believe that being an artist is about developing a state of mind and a matter of approach, rather than a mastery of materials
7. We reject the notion that creativity is a 'gift' but know it is a skill that is developed through exceptional teaching, practice and use
8. We reject a concept of Art and creativity in school that uses glue, tissue paper and collage
9. We believe that Art and creativity in school can involve glue tissue paper and collage when majestic in its imagination and influential in its execution.
10. Every Child Is An Artist will strive to make works of high quality that communicate to their community about the issues that matter to them



Visual Arts

Ceramics, up cycled art, textiles, sculpture, painting and drawing



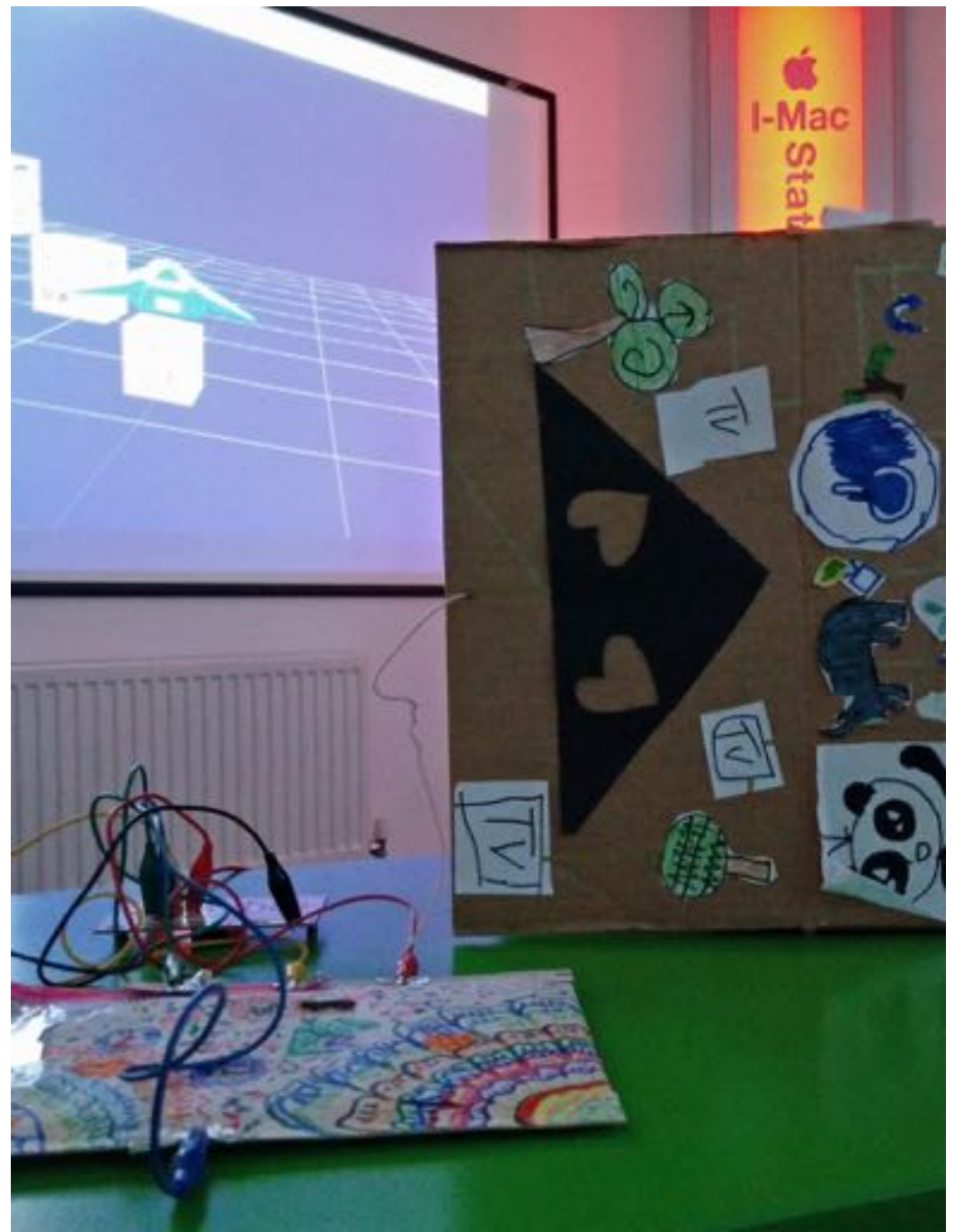
Each term is themed: For the visual arts exhibition we created a ceramic installation that involved many classes, leaving a permanent work of art at the school



Our totem sculptures were created with Ceramic Artist Elaine Lim-Newton. We drew on ideas from Islamic architecture with decorations inspired by local historical stories. We created a new sculpture for the school grounds.





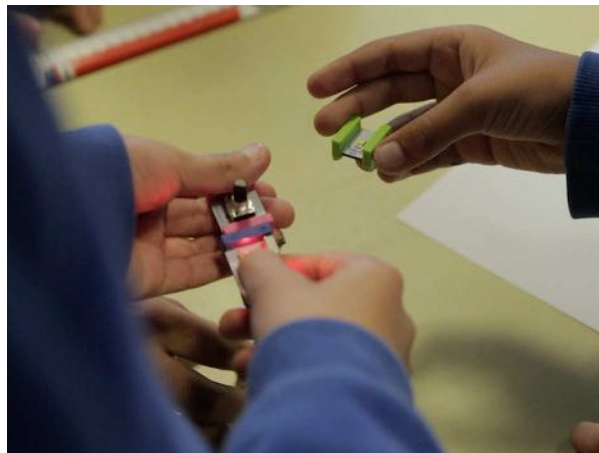


Digital Arts Installation

We created augmented reality world, put ourselves inside it using 3D scanning as well as projection mapping and designing game controllers!



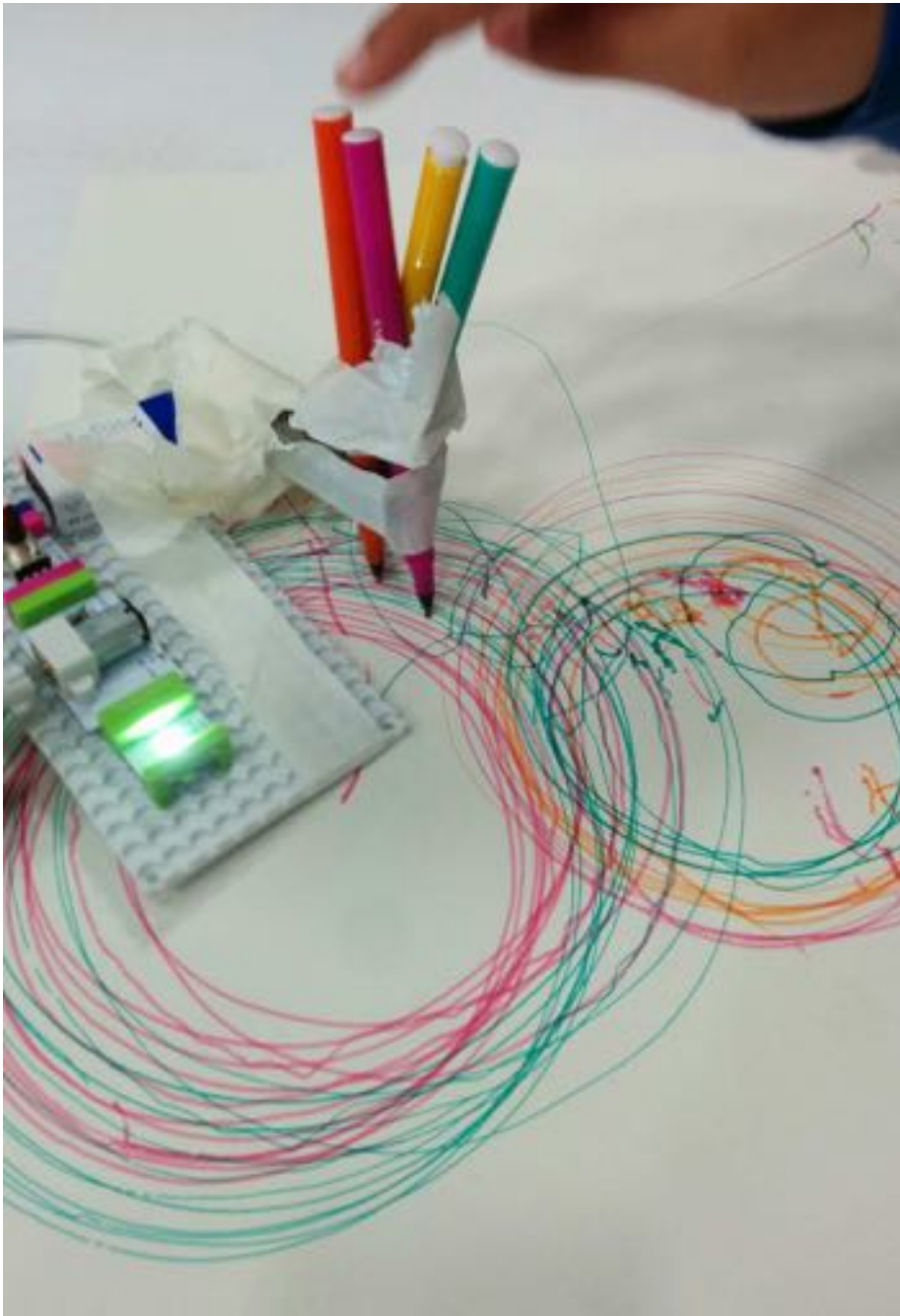
Filming a scary movie with lo-fi
special effects



Working with Littlebits digital
technology



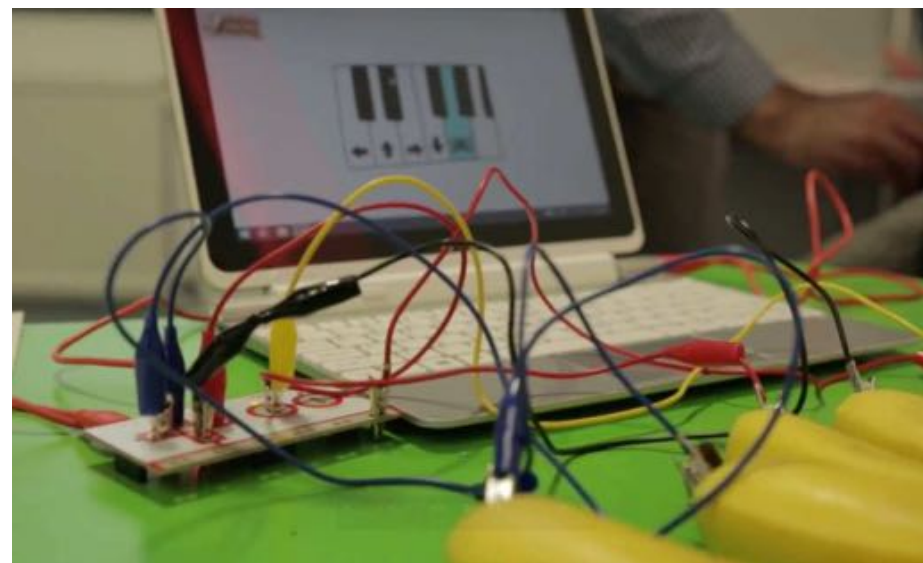
Exploring the augmented reality world



Robotic Art With A DrawBot



AR City: Where a digital world is super imposed as a layer on the real world.



Banana Piano: play the bananas to make a tune



Performing Arts

Dance, Voice Work, Beat Boxing, creating our own music to DJ and VJ creating live coding based projections





Left: Dance workshops developing our ability and physical risk taking. Above: Mixing music and layering beats in Ableton. Live coding VJ projections.





Oasis Hub Hobmoor

Bringing a new community centre and resource into being.

From an empty building to a space full of activity and life the summer of 2017 celebrates opening Hobmoor Community Centre throughout the summer for the first time ever.

In 2007 when the new school buildings were built by the local authority, the community tirelessly and tenaciously lobbied council and developers to include changing rooms, space and a much needed facilities for the community make use of. Unfortunately due to many reasons at the time, this space was never resourced or made accessible to the community so it stayed closed until Oasis Academy took on Hobmoor school and buildings.

Our journey bringing this empty space back to life started with a collaboration with Mercurial Dance called the Chaotic Liquid Network. Creating a digital dance performance about the neuro-science behind our ideas children visited the University of Birmingham to talk to neuroscientists about how our brain works. They worked with the Mercurial Dance team on skills and creative activities, transforming the space into a performance venue and opening it for the first time to the public. This helped us to kick start bringing the community centre into use and start after school clubs and adult learning courses during the day.

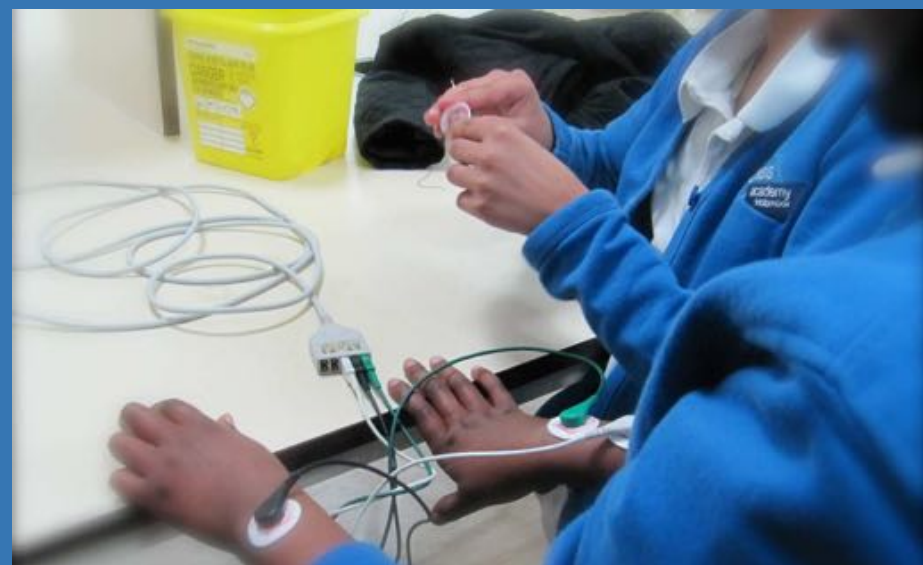




Neuroscience session on how our brain works



The Chaotic Liquid Network started with some high level science engagement work



Learning about how our body works and physiology all contributed to the performance



Live light painting in the Chaotic Liquid Network created in the performance, representing the connections neural networks make when a new idea happens.



Hobmoor Community Champions

One year on from the Chaotic Liquid Network and working with our companies in residence, Mercurial Dance and sister charity Mercurial Arts launched opening the community centre in the evenings on 2 November 2015. Their team led a community consultation and ran a series of pilot arts activities. Members of the community were invited to discuss the future direction of the community centre and these views were translated into a piece of art using Batik Silk Painting. The group chose to incorporate symbolic elements in the piece that hangs in our entrance. (above). (Right, the launch event.)



Oasis Hub Hobmoor

Oasis has a radical and genuinely distinctive vision of community, seeking to reconnect people to each other and to the services they need. That vision is built around the concept of community hubs: the joining together of all the ways in which Oasis exists and acts within a community – the academy, Hobmoor Community Centre, the church, and projects.

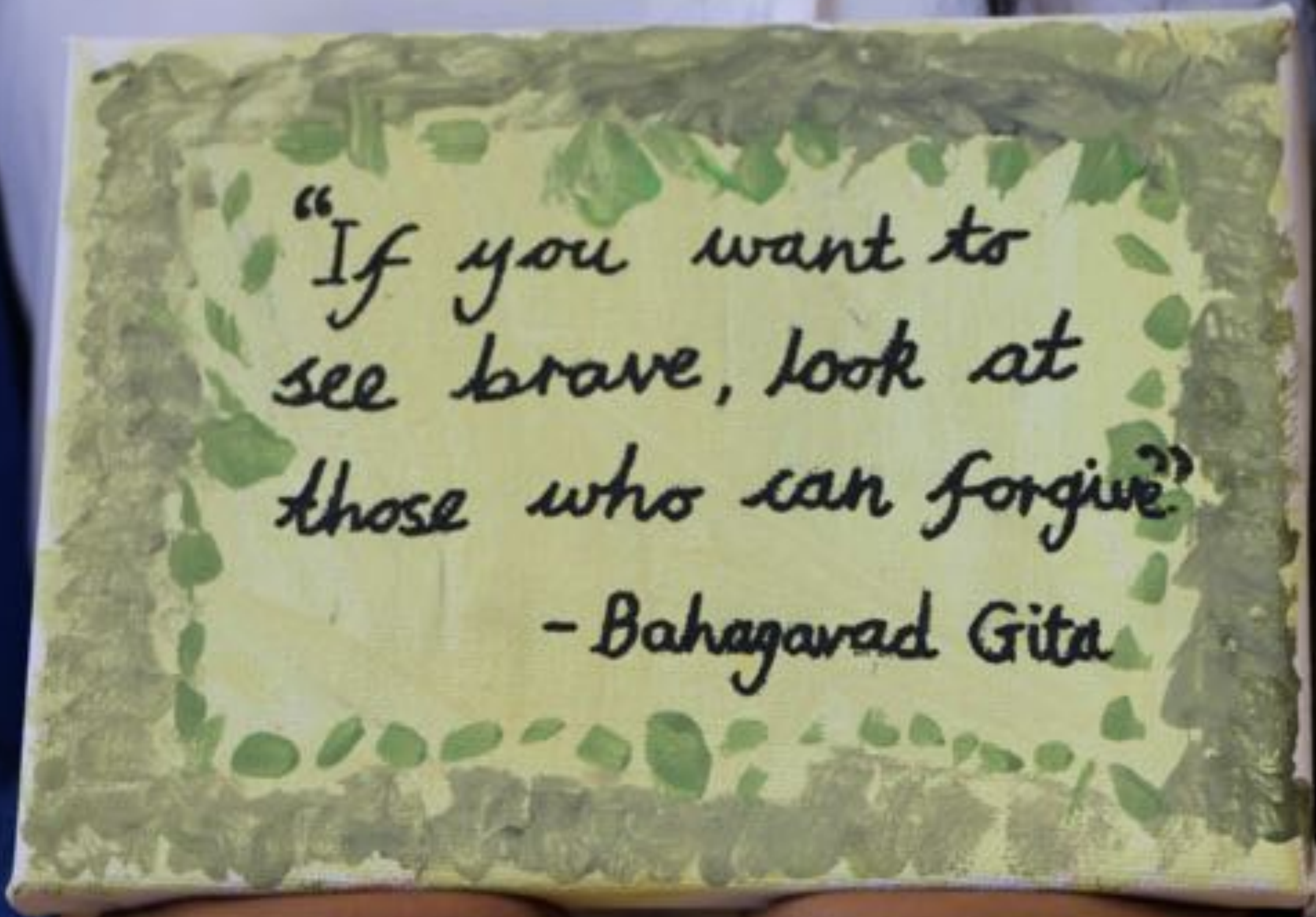
At Oasis Hub Hobmoor our priorities are summed up by Empowering, Equipping and Enjoying.

Empowering - the community through working with them to develop its strengths and help the community to meet, share together and build relationships. Asian ladies have run their own events as well as fund raising.

Equipping - people to move closer to the job market to relieve child poverty through employment by providing Adult Education. 256 ladies took courses in ESOL, English, Maths and Teaching Assistant last year. We run a weekly job club. We also support Young People providing opportunities for Islamic Studies and Maths and English tutoring.

Enjoying - helping the community to use its facilities for physical activities addressing health and well-being including weekly classes a circuit class, Bollywood Fitness, Karate and Football, Street Dance as well as Uniformed Organisations and our own Youth Groups.

From an empty space to
over 1000 people using
Oasis Hub Hobmoor
every week in two
years, this is just the start
of our journey and our
commitment to the
community.

A decorative border made of hand-drawn green leaves and foliage surrounds the text on a light-colored card.

"If you want to
see brave, look at
those who can forgive"

- Bahagavad Gita

