

# Play Expert Brings the Magic of Childhood to Wellington Primaries

**Greg Bottrill author and play expert was invited to Wellington Primaries last week to support and help staff improving their understanding of the importance of play within the Early Years setting.**

Greg has written many books about early education and spent 2 days working with children and staff in the Primaries.

Staff were keen to take on Greg's vision that education should be an immersive adventure done with children not to them.

A self-titled advocate of childhood, Greg believes that, "Real play emanates from and is led by children, rooted in their imagination, their

dreams, their wonder and this can easily be lost in the adult world which demands progress, measurability and outcomes." He continued, " 'Can I go and play now..?' all too quickly becomes something young children say in our Early Years settings. It's a phrase that reflects their disconnection from their learning. Often they are removed from their own play to participate in group work, worksheets or adult-led interventions."

Greg Bottrill is very passionate about the need for children to be allowed to be part of their education experience with class adults being their companions on this journey. Greg explained, "My aim is to create a learning landscape in which you can have an adventure; everything in the room and outside has to be an ally for that to happen." He went on to say, "These children are people and what we're doing is forming who they are in the future, all of us as adults carry a child with us, all the good stuff and we carry the trauma as well."



A lot of Greg's work involves using secret passwords and codes to unlock the adventure of imagination, "When children use these codes something magical happens. Simply put, if a child believes they can turn into a pig as a child, they can believe they can change the world as an adult."

Early Years Lead, Rebecca Murphy explains why they invited Greg Bottrill to work with the Primaries, "In the last year we've been on a real journey with the environment we provide, and we have spoken to lots of

different advisors, but as a team across both schools we like what Greg is about, his ethos and the idea of childhood; that's why we're committed to changing and introducing the joy of learning."

Claire Addis Executive Head of the Primaries concluded, "We are delighted to have had the opportunity to work with Greg Bottrill, as his ideas complement and enhance our primaries own visions and beliefs around the magic of childhood. We have based our curriculum around 'The Curious Child' and we have dedicated staff who are passionate about providing our children with enriching and exciting experiences so that they can all achieve success in their learning journey.

We actively encourage our children to be enthusiastic, resilient, collaborative and aspirational."

Greg Bottrill has written two education books: 'Can I go and play now?' and 'School and the magic of children', which have attracted much attention with their call for education to embrace childhood and the importance of play. Visit <https://www.canigoandplaytnow.com/> for more information.

To find out more about Wellington Primary Academies visit:

<https://wellingtonprimary.org.uk/> There are Open mornings planned for both schools on 21 November 9.30-10.30am

The school is proud to be part of Ascend Learning Trust (ALT). For more information about ALT go to <https://ascendlearningtrust.org.uk>

