

Timbold Drive, Kents Hill Park, Milton Keynes, MK7 6BZ

Headteacher: Mr. James Pilgrim

We were fortunate enough at Kents Hill Park School to take part in the aperiodic tiling exhibition in honour of Uwe Grimm on June 28th and 29th 2022. From the moment the pupils were introduced to the art activity in school, they were engaged. I had many students come up to me after working on their artwork to tell me how much they had enjoyed it.

The many amazing activities provided by the OU and the ability to interact with the art on display and indeed the artists were all amazing opportunities for our pupils. The words that kept coming from the children included but were not limited to: amazing, interesting, colourful, fantastic, creative, fun, teamwork, collaboration, inspiring, intriguing, mesmerising. Pupils who spotted their own artwork on display said that they felt proud and pleased that their work was on display for everyone to see. Everyone who attended the exhibition, pupils and staff alike, learnt something from the activities and artwork on display.

Many of our pupils were surprised to learn that the exhibition was all based around maths and this really opened their eyes to maths as a much broader subject than perhaps the curriculum currently allows for. They certainly were given the opportunity to see maths in a very different way. The links between maths and art/music were obvious in the exhibition which allowed the pupils to explore the links between the subjects.

Having attempted the puzzles and challenges and then succeeded, many pupils were delighted and rightly proud of what they had achieved in ‘solving’ the task. The sense of success was something that they were able to live through in an environment where studying and success go hand in hand so this was a great chance for the pupils to experience this. The art activities where the pupils had to concentrate and focus on the criteria given or the pattern to follow left the pupils in a relaxed and calm manner. Many commented on how enjoyable it was to just stop and focus on the task and how calm they felt whilst doing the activity. This has had such an effect on one pupil that they have set up a geometric art club in the library at lunchtime back in school.

It wasn’t just the exhibition that inspired the pupils but being on a university site was something that many commented on and were pleased to have had the opportunity to visit. When we told the pupils that this was a place of work and study and that the staff and students there were doing important research, many were surprised that this was on their doorstep.

The interactions with the artists gave the pupils inspiration and insight into the possibilities of their future. Many really enjoyed taking part in the geometric wall and I think would have liked more time to finish their pieces to include them in the display. Many of them commented on how calm they felt at this activity and felt very positive about the experience. Having the opportunity to ask the artist questions about their work really made the artwork come alive to the pupils. These interactions allowed them to exercise their curiosity and respond in the moment.

We all had a wonderful time and would like to say a special thank you to all that were involved in the organisation of the event. We really appreciate the opportunities you gave our pupils.