



# Pupils showcase care for God's creation

AS pupils filed into our cathedral for their Leavers' Services, there were squeals of delight as they spotted the animal they had created hanging from the wall.

The Year 6 children from church schools across our diocese had created colourful two-dimensional animals as part of a project created by our diocese's education team.

Each pupil had then written a prayer on their creature. Their creations were then placed on wires and dangled from the walls and balconies in our cathedral's nave to create an impressive art installation.

Wynter Richardson, aged 11, from **St Columba CofE Academy in Fareham**, had created a dragonfly which was proudly displayed above the magnificent west doors of our cathedral. Her classmate Ariana Deeley, also 11, had painted a bird which was hanging nearby.

"It makes me feel happy that people will see my bird in the cathedral," said Ariana. "I've loved the experience of coming here to discover more about the building, and seeing the decorations hanging



**Top: Ariana Deeley (left) and Wynter Richardson, with their creations in our cathedral; above: Bishop Jonathan with Bonnie, his labrador**

here. I did have to search for a while to find mine."

Our cathedral hosted four consecutive days of workshops and Leavers' Services for hundreds of Year 6 pupils from 33 of our diocese's church schools.

Those children were marking their departure from their CofE school in July before they start at secondary

school this September. On each of the four days, a different set of pupils was welcomed for a series of workshops in the morning, followed by an hour-long service in the afternoon.

Bishop Jonathan spoke at two of the four Leavers' Services, bringing his labrador dog Bonnie both times, to illustrate the importance of caring for nature.

The services also involved the bishop blessing the pupils' artwork, and each school being presented with a commemorative candle that can be lit in school each time they engage in collective worship.

Our diocesan education team's project for 2024-25 was named 'Triwonder' to reflect an emphasis on creation care, outdoor learning and mental and emotional wellbeing. It's just one of the ways in which our diocese is linking together children's wellbeing with care for God's creation.

The project included a focus on creatures from the land, sea and air, and resources were provided so that our church schools could create artwork that would be placed in our cathedral for the Leavers' Services. Similar services had already taken place in Winchester Cathedral.

On each of the four days in Portsmouth Cathedral, a different set of Year 6 pupils was invited to take part in a series of morning workshops.

## Bishop Jonathan brought his dog Bonnie to show care for creation

They included creating dragonflies from wire, playing the photo card game Ouisi, and making a prayer pyramid, onto which the children can write specific prayers.

There was also a self-guided tour of the cathedral's heritage, a singing workshop, and a Lego-based activity. They then took part in an afternoon Leavers' Service



**Top: Year 6 pupils from Oakfield CofE Primary in Ryde in a workshop; above: pupils in a Lego workshop; right: Bishop Jonathan speaks to pupils during the Leavers' Service**

which included songs, prayers led by the children, a procession of school banners, and a talk. Bishop Jonathan spoke at the services on Tuesday and Wednesday, with his dog Bonnie, while retired Bishop Geoff Annas spoke at the Thursday and Friday services.

Tilly Cooper, aged 11, from **Oakfield CofE Primary School in Ryde**, enjoyed discovering more about the cathedral's pulpit and stained-glass windows as part of the self-guided tour.

She said: "I was excited to find out more about the cathedral. I liked creating the wire dragonfly and following the trail around the



cathedral on the map. And I liked it when I got here and I could see the butterfly that I had made hanging there. I've really enjoyed my time at Oakfield School. The teachers have made it really good."

Classmate Theo Davey, also 11, was involved in the process to create a brand new school banner, which was carried up the central aisle at the start of the service and out of the west doors afterwards.

That project involved parents and children looking at possible designs