



News Release

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Weaver Words – inspiring the next generation

Hundreds of North Cheshire schoolchildren are benefiting from an inspirational series of creative writing workshops as part of the Weaver Words Literature Festival.

Thanks to funding from the Marshes Community Benefit Fund and Arts Council England, the Frodsham festival organisers have arranged for award-winning poet Mandy Coe to visit nine schools giving free poetry workshops.



Poet Mandy Coe with Year 5 pupils from St Lukes RC primary school in Frodsham

Over two weeks in February she worked with classes at Helsby High School and Manor House, Hillside, Ashton Hayes, St Lukes, Aston, Weavervale, Hornsmill and Kingsley CP primary schools.

Each school looked at a different poetry form and children were encouraged to write their own poems, responding to the festival theme of 'A sense of place'. Many of these poems will be entered into the festival's Great Weaver Words Writing Prize for children, which will be judged by festival patron Tim Firth.

The main Weaver Words Literature Festival will take place on Wednesday 25 – Sunday 29 April, 2018, offering five days of talks, events and workshops, including headline acts from TV writer/broadcaster Gyles Brandreth and poet Ian McMillan.



Poet Mandy Coe and Weaver Words school liaison manager Steven Capstick with Year 7 pupils from Helsby High School

Festival manager Lynn Pegler said: "This will be the fourth literature festival we have staged in Frodsham and each year we go from strength to strength. We are delighted the extra funding has enabled us to organise the fabulous poet Mandy Coe to visit and inspire a new generation of local writers.

"Visits by experts like Mandy can be life-changing for pupils. Sometimes they can open doors in the mind which lead children to explore completely new pathways. Being introduced to poetry by an expert, perhaps winning a

competition, is just the boost youngsters need to start them on a life-long journey into literature, perhaps even later writing a best-seller themselves.”

Mandy Coe said she had thoroughly enjoyed her visits. She explained: “Through a series of poetry workshops we looked at identity, community and global issues and the pupils’ enthusiasm shows us how welcome this initiative was. It has been a privilege to work alongside such talented and creative young writers and meet so many supportive teachers. Well done Weaver Words.”

For adult writers, there are three creative writing workshops on offer during the festival as well as a flash fiction competition, offering £500 worth of prizes for the best 300 word stories.

A free 28 page Weaver Words brochure is available to collect from Frodsham Community Centre, Dandelion Gifts, Castle Park and other publicity points around the town.

For more details, visit the festival website www.weaverwords.org.uk. Tickets can be purchased online, through the box office 0333 666 3366 and in person at Frodsham Community Centre or Dandelion Gifts.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

For more information about Weaver Words, Frodsham Literature Festival, please contact Festival Manager, Lynn Pegler, on 01928 789042/07783 686246. pm@weaverwords.org.uk