

## ESOL Meeting - Wednesday February 4th

The classes at Chesterton are developing well. We now have 40 members over 5 classes per week. We offer tuition for beginners to intermediate level of English- ESOL café, then for the advanced speakers we have arranged discussion and debating groups - Just Talk!, and on Friday afternoons we have Spoken English for Work leading to an external exam with Trinity College, London for those looking for a job.

We have a mixed cohort including: parents, au pairs, local residents, people looking for work and new arrivals to the UK. We are very fortunate to have 8 volunteer native speakers who support these groups. Their backgrounds include an ex teacher, three Celta qualified ladies, an ex-Chesterton student, businesswoman, parents and a local lady who will be 70 this Friday!

We are keen to track progress for our learners and offer a short test at the beginning of the ESOL course and then again at the end. The ESOL programme is based on skills needed to improve the test mark by the end of the course - this term it's all about living in Cambridge: shopping, where to find advice, places to visit, famous people from Cambridge and what to see and do.

We are keen to encourage our learners and volunteers to take an active role in local life and we are pleased that 3 now have jobs, some have left and gone on to more advanced courses or language schools, and some have arranged volunteering opportunities themselves. Our volunteers have attended the Burns Night at Chesterton Community College, a course about how to develop a website, Word Power Point courses as well as going out for our meal in half term! They also take an active role in producing resources, working with groups, giving presentations and attending meetings. We have welcomed some of our local partners this year including the Job Centre, Cambridge University Newcomers group, The Old Spring, Cambridge Volunteer Agency, the Mayor of Cambridge, CAB and the Careers Service. We plan to take our learners out to the Folk Museum or Kettles Yard at the end of term.

Our future plans are to continue to improve our classes with new and innovative ideas, monitor progress more closely, include further use of technology and celebrate successes with our learners and volunteers.