

Before meeting the Lifeskills participants, I had heard of the group but never really asked about it. I was unsure about the program but over the first two days of meeting them my opinions have been completely turned on its head. On the first day of the program, we didn't really meet the participants, we were however privileged enough to quickly say hello on our way to lunch.

On Tuesday we had an introduction presentation by the Lifeskills staff, but I still had a slight uncertainty about the program, once lunch rolled around all of that changed. We arrived at the Lifeskills building ready for lunch and the whole area just had an aura of happiness, everyone was smiling and it was too hard not to smile with them. We chatted over sausages, I met Chris, Chloe and Scott and they were all so lovely and welcoming. After lunch was being wrapped up, we went straight into afternoon activities. I finished up my afternoon with Zumba, I could barely keep up with the intensity the participants gave and the speed of the Zumba demonstration. Once Zumba was finished, we said our goodbyes to the participants and made our way back to school, ready for more fun tomorrow.

Wednesday was a tiring but engaging days for both participants and students. In the morning we had a quick visit to the Agora and then off the start our morning sport circuit at the sports centre. Ivanhoe Students ran activities but I was on a team with Joe, Con, Lole and other students. We started off the morning with soccer, then to basketball which was very competitive our team ended up scoring around 300 points coming in to a close second with the other team. We then went to table tennis where I competed against Con but couldn't beat him because I was not the best in table tennis. We had a break halfway through and then went to a quiet lawn outside where there were laid back games of bean bag tossing and ring tossing. This was one of my favourite activities and really made me happy to be with the participants. After sport we went back to have yummy burgers for lunch where I had a lovely chat with Joe who I had played sports with earlier. Lunch was a breeze. After lunch had wrapped up we had a group photo with Sam Kerr masks in honour of the Matildas semi-final that night.

Thursday was one of my favourite days, we started off with some participants coming to the UC (Ivanhoe Grammar School) and I toured Ann, Andrew, and Chris around our school. We then had a Just Dance disco with around ten participants and David was a great dancer who was especially good in 'Hips Don't Lie' by Shakira. We had a break where we all headed outside like we would on a normal day at recess talking and chatting with participants. Biscuit decoration was a favourite where I partnered with George, and we made matching face cookies and matching star cookies together. Of course, icing the biscuits was fun but eating them was the best. The Lifeskills staff prepared us rolls for lunch where I sat with Vasi and Mia. We had chats about activities we all enjoy doing. After Lunch I did Jewellery Making with Ann where we created polymer clay jewellery and keyrings. Making the jewellery was my favourite activity of the week.

Friday, we started off the day with a trip to Keon Park Wyn City for a round of bowling. I was up against Alan, Murphy, Thomas, and Ella. I didn't do my best in the bowling coming 4th but Alan was brilliant at bowling beating nearly all of us and getting over 100 points. Once everyone finished their bowling rounds, we headed back to Lifeskills to have a final lunch of pizza and got presented a certificate of completion. The last lunch was very sad because we

had to say goodbye to the Lifeskills participants after having such a great week. It was all so bittersweet that we were saying our goodbyes but had made some lovely memories.

Entering Lifeskills was unknown and daunting for me but by the end of the week I didn't want to leave. All the participants are so welcoming, joyful, and pure. Everyone I talked to was awesome and I wish I could go back again and again. I would recommend this program to anyone who may have the opportunity to do it.

