

Astrokids 23rd November 2012

The third week of November was one of the wettest, windiest weeks of the year, yet we managed the one evening, the eye of the storm, to embark on our first Astrokids evening of the year.

At 5.00 after school, our Astrokids congregated in our makeshift cinema to watch some video footage of man's exploits on the moon. First up was a montage of Apollo launches, Apollo 11, 15 and 17.



Watching Apollo 11 launch

Next was footage of the legendary moment that Neil Armstrong stepped onto the moon for the first time, followed by a spin in the Lunar Rover, and finally Alan Shepard playing a spot of lunar golf. Then, to cap it all, a glimpse at the best spaceship ever:



Next we distributed the Astropacks - individual diaries with moon facts, pictures and drawing templates and to have a look at the moon for ourselves. As is often the case after a front has passed over, the conditions were excellent and we were able to use our 7mm eyepiece for really close up views at 214x magnification. It was easy to spot the general vicinity of Tranquillity Base. Our Astrokids, replete with their clipboards, pencils and a moon template quickly got to work recording their views.



Jaimee recording her observations and George at the eyepiece

There was some excellent aligning of the telescope from George, super description of the craters and "mare" from Jaimee, and fantastic observation persistence from Sophie.

Following our observations and sausages, it was time for our eclipse experiment, comprising a bright light, football and a tennis ball.



Our eclipse experiment

The adults went on to have a look at a couple of planetary nebula, the Blue Snowball Nebula in Andromeda and the Ring Nebula in Lyra, followed by a lovely view of the blue and gold double star Alberio in Cygnus and Jupiter. On the latter, at least 4 cloud belts visible in a very crisp view.

This was an excellent start to our Astrokids season, the next planned evening is 27th December where we shall be studying planets.