

A Brew with



David Edward Siddon, Senior Science Technician

Welcome to A Brew with...! Each month, we catch up with an Outwood Family colleague to learn more about them and their career. This month, we caught up with David Edward Siddon, Senior Science Technician (and Poet) at Outwood Academy Hasland Hall.

First up, what are you drinking?

Tea with milk, please!

When did you first join the Outwood Family?

About three years ago when I was the Lead Science Technician for the Southern schools. However, during that time I took the decision to take my pension from my years at Chesterfield College which allowed for other candidates, who were just as good as me, to step up to the opportunity as they were younger and I felt the pay would make a big difference to their lives.

What were your initial thoughts when you began working at Outwood?

I'll be honest, I was apprehensive as there was a certain amount of "here comes the bogey man!" prior to actually meeting the team. However, two of the first people I met were Aalok Kanwar and Louise Turner, who are probably two of the most pleasant people you could meet.

"You make an impression that will live a lifetime."

What do you love most about your job?

I love Science and the act of teaching Science to hungry young minds. If done properly, you make an impression that will live a lifetime. After a demonstration of alkali metals, one Year 7 student exclaimed: "That was the best thing I've ever seen!"

What is your favourite memory working at Outwood so far?

Hasland Hall went through hell! Prior to that, it was a serene school with an excellent student body that regularly placed us in the top 5% nationally in exam results. I slowly see, through the efforts of Outwood, that the ship is returning

back to course. The corridors are quiet again except for the hum of cogitation and birdsong from the gardens.

"The team I work with now is by far the best; dedicated and true exemplars of their professions."

Is there a particular colleague who you enjoy working with who you'd like to give a shout-out to?

A hard one to answer as mentioning one person slights everyone else. I've worked in education for 43 years and the team I work with now is by far the best; dedicated and true exemplars of their professions. But I would particularly like to mention Ian Cooper, our Principal. A more decent, hard-working, principled and caring individual would be hard to find.

What do you think has been the biggest change since you began working at Outwood?

In a word, consistency. To use a nautical metaphor again, we were a rudderless ship cast adrift in the doldrums but with the purple pennon flying from the top-mast, we found direction and are steering a course to sunnier climes.

When you're not at work, how do you like to spend your time?

I am, among other things, a poet and spend a lot of my time either writing or performing at various events - most recently at the Wirksworth Festival. I also help with workshop events for various charities and often donate work towards anthologies or compile collections to raise money. I've also been in bands since I was 14 and still enjoy pretending I'm a rock star whilst performing live.



Which three people, dead or alive, would you want to have a brew with?

Collectively as one, The Beatles, because their music has become so iconic the question of loathe or like has become immaterial. Take all their singles and discard them and they'd still have a body of work superior to any of their rivals.

Lord Byron as I also have ambitions to be 'mad, bad and dangerous to know'. He also penned the lines I envy the most as a poet: "She walks in beauty like the night, of cloudless climes and starry skies. And all that's fair in dark and light, meet in her aspect and her eyes."

Finally, Mary Beard. I love history, especially local history and I really like her slightly left-field slant to everything she presents. It's that magic that some teachers have of taking a dry subject and sprinkling a little magic onto it.

