

FFWPU UK: Days Full Of Joy At Children's Summer Camp at Livingstone House

Michael Balcomb
August 21, 2024



Read and see all that happened at this summer's children's camp 'Spirit Station: My Inner World'.

'We recently wrapped up an incredible Children Summer Camp at Livingstone House for our 8-12 year olds. This year's theme "Spirit Station: My Inner World," inspired by "Inside Out", focused on helping the kids explore the First Blessing - Be Fruitful. With a mix of study sessions, outdoor games, evening activities and a creative project, the camp gave everyone a chance to learn about spiritual growth, deepen their understanding of faith and their identity as God's children, build on existing or new friendships and have fun.



Arrival Day and Day 1: Settling In and Kicking Off

The camp kicked off with a sunny arrival day - perfect for getting everyone settled into Livingstone House and setting up for the week ahead. The kids arrived full of energy and excitement. After everyone got settled and received an orientation by our coordinator Achan M., we had an evening packed with dancing, icebreakers, and a game of "Predator", led by our awesome games coordinators Ollie A. and Paulo S., where the kids had to escape from their team leaders trying to steal their orbs. The night ended with the big team reveal. Everyone was pumped to meet their teammates and get ready for the days ahead! The next morning, we started bright and early with some exercises and stretches to wake everyone up. Our first morning service, by our coordinator Saoirse M., introduced the theme "Next Stop: Islands of Personality." The kids reflected on their favourite holiday memories and what made them special. We then created our own "Islands of Personality," connecting with others who shared similar interests. By the end, we had drawn a whole summer camp world filled with islands of everyone's favourite things!

After that, we jumped into our first study session, led by our superb teachers Dawn P. and David S., on "Who am I?". We explored who we are as Heavenly Parent's children and what makes up our physical and spiritual selves. The kids did a fun activity where they drew a team member's body outline and stuck post-its on the parts of the body that can spread Vitality Elements. For example, you can use your voice to make others laugh, or you can use your hand to help with cleaning!

We also had some fun team activities, where the kids came up with their team names by combining their two favourite things, and played pictionary and charades. Our four teams this year were: Voshi (volleyball + sushi) led by Hannah L. and Bobby R., Splleepercraft (sports + sleep + Minecraft) led by Amy C. and William R., Golden Ramittens (Golden Retrievers + ramen + kittens) led by Hanul R. and Kai G., and Rango (ramen + mango) led by Violet W. and Taishi T.. The weather was perfect, so we cooled off with a swim during lunch break.

The afternoon study session was all about understanding our Original Mind and how we can make its voice louder through good actions, prayer, and Hoon Dok Hae. We even made compasses as a metaphor for our Original Mind as our guide. We then had some outdoor sports at Chislehurst Recreation Ground - including an exciting relay race, bacon, and other fun activities. To wind down, we watched "Inside Out", which tied perfectly into our theme about how our personality is shaped by our values.



Day 2: New Tracks and Prayer Night

Day two was another full day! We kicked off with the theme "Laying Down New Tracks" with a morning inspiration by our coordinator Miwa S.. Some of the kids volunteered to do some acting to illustrate how emotions influence our decisions when we are faced in new challenging situations and the importance of following our Original Mind.

The study sessions focused on doing good for others and learning about True Father's life of love and selflessness. One child said that we feel warm when we do things for others, and that this warmth is from God, which we all thought was beautiful. We learned about True Father's deep connection to God and his mastery in the "School of Love," loving in all relational realms. Stories of his childhood highlighted his

study of nature to understand love. We emphasised that God, the strongest and cleverest being, helps us solve problems and desires to know us deeply, guiding us through our Original Mind to always choose right over selfishness. The children learned about True Parents' tough course, the foundation being created for all humankind to reach Cheon Il Guk, the world Heavenly Parent envisions for us all. They thought about their own talents and how they can connect their unique abilities to what True Parents have already built.

For sports, we had a blast playing Capture the Flag. And of course, when lunch came along, we couldn't miss another chance to cool off in the pool! In the afternoon, the kids got super creative with the craft project where they made their own trains out of toilet rolls and egg cartons - messy but so much fun!

The evening was really special. We started our prayer night in the York Room, where True Parents once dined. The kids learned about prayer from our Camp Father, Elliot Y., and even practised praying out loud in their teams. We then headed outside for a campfire, made possible under the pouring rain by our exceptional house managers Uncle Clive and Aunty Maria P., and sang some songs which created a warm and reflective atmosphere. After singing a few rounds of "You Are My Sunshine", the rain let up just in time for us to enjoy the campfire with hot chocolate and toasting marshmallows!



Day 3: Hobbledown Adventure and Family Night

Day three was all about adventure! We opened the day with a morning inspiration by our games coordinators. The theme was "Bing Bong's Rocket", and it was about encouraging the kids to use their talents and skills to better each other's days. We also emphasised how we can direct our energy for good and how we can have a fun time, especially during our outing. We can use music, friendship and creativity to create an extra fun day together.

We spent most of the day at Hobbledown, an adventure farm park and zoo. The kids had a blast exploring, meeting animals, and playing on the playgrounds. Big thanks to Pastor Adza M. for driving us there in a double-decker bus, which for some was the highlight! After getting back, we cooled off with some water games and a summer camp favourite, the water fight! Then it was time for Family Night, which is always a camp highlight. Each team put on a skit, and they were hilarious and super creative! We also had individual and group performances, from singing and playing instruments to magic tricks. The talent this year was amazing!

Day 4: Wrapping Up and Graduation

The last day was all about reflecting on our time together. The children participated in a recap quiz to review what they had learned during the study sessions, followed by a time of personal reflection on their experiences. Then it was time for the graduation ceremony. Parents and families joined us to celebrate as the kids received their certificates. Individual awards were given to those who stood out in sports, study sessions, and the craft project. And the winning team was Golden Ramittens!



This camp was a joyful success, and we're super grateful to everyone who made it happen! A huge thank you to all the staff volunteers who gave their time (including our kitchen staff Minju L., Hwayeon H. and Taniko H., our Camp Mother Aunty Lela P.S. and our Staff Helper Alvit B.), the team leaders who took such great care of the kids, and of course, the kids themselves for being such a joy to be around. And to the parents - thank you for trusting us with your amazing children. We can't wait to do it all again next year!

Thanks for all your support, and until next time!

Children Summer Camp Team



Children's Reflections:

"From the study sessions... I remember the story of True Father. The boy and the bully and when he climbed trees and met birds. I also remember the play-dough and our compasses." "I liked the stories about True Parents journeys in North Korea. They were sad but good as in the end it turned out good."

"Games night... I really enjoyed it, it was really fun and had good predators." "Prayer night... I really liked the smores and hot chocolate and learning new songs and I did a short prayer." "Food... it was AMAZING!" "The craft project... making them were super fun and many things to use" "The outing was good. I especially liked going on the jump pillow, going into the soft play and going into the small underground maze." "I loved playing games with my team. Teams are like big families to help you."



