



INVESTING IN CHILDREN

Membership Evaluation

Date May 2006

PROJECT NAME Hadrian School

PROJECT LOCATION Bertram Crescent
Newcastle upon Tyne NE15 6PY

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SUMMARY OF EVALUATION

Sector Specialist School
Ages 2-11 years
Area West
Ward Benwell & Scotswood

Number of beneficiaries 120



investing in children

Evaluation for Investing in Children membership:

Hadrian School

Hadrian School is situated in Benwell, Newcastle. The school has 120 students who attend a school for children and young people with disabilities. The staff team is very thoughtful in their approach to dialogue with the children. They are constantly challenged to promote positive change and independent thinking in a variety of communication forms depending on each child.

Opportunities for Dialogue and Change

The School Council is well established at Hadrian School. When the School Council was first established children were elected in Year 5, ready to be on the School Council in Year 6.

The children in each class choose who they want to represent them.

The system has now changed - ***There is one child from each class in KS2 and one child from each Year group in KS1. This ensures a wider representation of the student voice.***

The agenda for the School Council meetings is developed from a questionnaire from each class that highlights questions and comments from the children. Please see attached minutes from the School Council meetings on October 4th 2005 and March 23rd 2006. The minutes clearly highlight the discussions during the meetings and the changes and developments that are made as a result.

- Following on from the School Council, Mr Rollings, the deputy head, takes School Council suggestions to the appropriate committees and then feeds back to the School Council.

I met one of the current School Council members Matthew. He said they had talked about having some tablecloths on the tables at lunchtime, but after much discussion they realized that some of the little ones might pull them off.

He also told me that the children chose some new toys for the 'kids', and some new swings.

- Some of the School Council members attend the Senior Management Team meetings every half term. Children also attend Governors meetings to share their news and inform the Governors of what activities they have been involved in.

One of the students – Gemma - after her first meeting was asked if she had enjoyed the meeting. Gemma said ***'No, they didn't tell us who they were.'*** ***Now at the start of each meeting there is a round of introductions.***

'Friends of the Hadrian School' is a parent, teacher group. The group organises and plans various fundraising events. ***Friends of Hadrian School give money direct to the School Council and the children make decisions on how to spend it.***

Recent changes include:

- ***The development of the Out of School Club***
- ***School Council Badges***
- ***More swings being purchased – special ones for the children in wheelchairs***
- ***Calming music in the hall at lunchtime*** –after the trial children will be able to choose from a selection of calming music to see what they want to listen too.
- ***After Schools Club*** – depending on what funding is obtained the children are involved in choosing what they would like to do in the After Schools Club.

More dialogue includes many events and activities that involve the children and young people making decisions about what they want to do.

The Garden - Hadrian School hope to develop a garden patch, where children can plant vegetables, tend to them and watch them grow.

- Andy the site manager has taken photographs of areas of the garden where it would be suitable for a vegetable patch. The children will then be involved in choosing what part of the garden they want.
- The children will then choose what vegetables they want to grow.
- Funding has come from Asda to have your own garden, healthy schools and PHSE.

I talked with the children about their garden –

The children said they needed water, sun and soil to help make things grow. They shared with me what they might grow – for example, cabbage, turnip, potatoes, strawberries.

Rewards and Incentives for success are part of the children's lives at school. In year 6 the young people visit Newcastle every Tuesday morning. They visit the library and the Grainger Market and generally explore the City Centre.

The Year 6 reward initiative is a star system. If the young people achieve 4 stars they receive a certificate. If the young people achieve 8 stars then they receive £1. *The young people used to choose a 'prize' but now they have their own money and can buy something at Poundland in Newcastle when they visit on a Tuesday.* Jordan said ***'I like going out, I like to buy cars.'***

Transition Work – starts for the young people in Year 6 before their move to Sir Charles Parsons. Although this work has been ongoing for many years it changes and develops each year. The young people ask for changes in the set-up in order to make their transition easier. Hadrian School begins this work quite early in Year 6 to enable the young people to visualize the change. Parents also have the opportunity to meet staff in Sir Charles parsons School. Please see

attached 'Transfer Programme' notes that clearly highlight the thoughts and feelings of the children involved. These notes highlight:

- *The young people visited Sir Charles Parson two times before they moved up, however a third visit has been introduced, **following a suggestion by the young people.***
- *The Year 6's asked to see the young people moving around from class so they could visualise what it would be like.*
- *The Year 6's also asked to meet with Year 7's on a visit so they could chat and catch up with some of their old friends and ask what it was **really** like when they moved schools.*
- *The children also told me that they are going on a visit to join in a cookery lesson.*
- A DVD has been produced about transition to senior school. The young people work through and talk over this in class and take it home over the summer.

Reviews –The staff team have introduced a new format for children and young people's reviews. Each child is encouraged to make their voice heard by being involved in the creation of their 'Pupil Response Form'. Please see attached, an example of a form.

First page – Introduces the child to the reader. It shares information about which class they are in, who their friends are at school and which teaching staff they work with.

Page 2 – highlights the objectives of the child's statement. *The young person and the teacher work through how they feel these objectives are being achieved and this is recorded with photographic evidence.*

Page 3 – *Highlights some of the child's other achievements made in school throughout the year. It shows how much fun the young person has had and what they have enjoyed doing.*

The young people have two record files in school, files which are accessible in their classrooms. One for academic achievement tied in with their statement and another for everything else they achieve and are involved in school.

'All About Me' – is another record file, but used on a daily basis. This is a working document and is used for children who have limited verbal communication skills. It is attached to the child's IEP and tells all staff about the child in question. **The document is put together with the child involved and is a crucial piece of information to ensure inclusion and allow the child to participate in what is happening.**

It shares with the reader, from the child:

- Things I don't like
- Things I do like

- Medical needs
- Equipment – etc.

The Buddies – Year 6 students are buddies. Charlotte, Jade, Laura and Jordan told me how they *'help the little ones on a Friday, we go to the library and help them choose new books or playing games'*.

Other activities – the children enjoy many alternative learning opportunities during their time at school. These include:-

- A trip to London – every year the children in year 6 go to London. All of the children I met with were really looking forward to going. They go to see a big show, this time its Billy Elliot. They visit the London Eye and Legoland, the Zoo as well as a visit to the Rainforest Café. The group pick from the menu before they go. When I first visited the children all knew what they would eat....mmh!
- Every Child Matters – some of the children in the school are involved in a wider debate about the Every Child Matters agenda. Kenny, Jordan, Jason and Charlotte are working with other children and young people from Sir Charles Parson's and Thomas Bewick schools. This is also being addressed in school and the children are being given another opportunity to affect change with their views and opinions. Please see attached examples.
- The Fashion Show – Every couple of years the school organises a fashion show with local businesses, to promote children's fashion and give the children a unique opportunity, to be involved in a fashion show. My second visit was the day after the most recent fashion show and the whole school was buzzing with excitement.
- Fundraising and sponsored events play a big part in the life of the school. The group told me about other fundraisers and sponsored events other than the fashion show, such as Disco's, Pie & Pea Suppers, Raffles, Cake stalls, Karaoke nights etc.

I met with Jack, Jordan, Laura, Jason, Matthew, Catherine and Jade and we had a very long discussion about what happens in Hadrian School. Here are just some of the things the children told me:

'I like cookery and I like going out' - Jordan

'I like coming to school, I like playing, doing art and I like cookery and P.E.'
– Jason

'I love P.E., I liked going to St. James Park, we go to the ICT place and I like swimming we go to Byker baths' – Laura

'I like everything' – Jack

'I like art, playtime, snacktime and dinners' – Matthew

'We like dancing, we have been practicing every day, we are doing Shrek, the Twist and Grease'. – Charlotte and Jade

'I like P.E. and swimming' – Charlotte

'I like playing outside and doing work, I like sums' – Kenny

Policies - I also spent time in the classroom with Mrs. Gee and her students. I joined the children in year 6 for their PHSCE lesson, a lesson the two classes have together. Mrs. Gee is using this as an opportunity to look at all of the school policies and talk through them with the children. I joined them to talk about the Smoking Policy. The children's input will be included in the rewording of the new policies.

Within this set up the children are also given the opportunity to address other issues, i.e. as part of the National Healthy School Standard the children need to look at Healthy Eating. This will include the children looking at the menus at Hadrian School.

I also spent some time in the yard at playtime chatting with some of the children. I met Jordan who told me that he is on the school council and he has lots of ideas and makes lots of suggestions but didn't quite get why they couldn't have laptops for all of the children! He introduced me to Vanessa, Rebecca, Mark, Lewis and Tracey who were all very busy playing.

Hadrian School is a very active school with lots of busy children and teaching staff. Busy people working together to learn, have fun and enjoy new experiences. The children's artwork from lessons covers the walls and photographs from activities create beautiful displays on other walls. All in all a very bright, colourful and friendly school.

All of the children I met with were very positive about what they do and what they get to do. The children are actively involved and encouraged to play a role in the way forward for the school, however big or however small that change might be. The staff team are creative in offering different opportunities for participation in the school and clearly recognise that all children have the right to be involved.

Some of the children have recently attended an Agenda day with Investing in Children to join in the debate about accessibility for children and young people into sporting facilities in Newcastle and to begin to find out what the barriers are.

On behalf of the children I met with and definitely with their approval I would like to recommend that Hadrian School become an Investing in Children member. I would also like to thank Jack, Jordan, Laura, Jason, Matthew, Charlotte, Jade, Kenny and Mrs Gee for all of the time they spent with me helping me get to know their school, as well as Michaela, Kay, Alex, Chloe, Connor, Jack and Jordan who let me join their class. **A big huge thank you to you all.**

Helen Mulhearn
Membership Co-ordinator
Investing in Children
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