



investing in children

Evaluation for Investing in Children membership

PSS Fun Club

The Fun Club project is funded through various bodies, which include Liverpool City Council and Liverpool's Children's Fund, along with other small grants which contribute to the running of the project. Personal Service Society (P.S.S) Family Support Centre manages the Fun Club. The Fun Club is open to all young people from across Liverpool. The club provides an after school session Monday to Friday, a Saturday morning session and other various projects and activities that take place throughout the year. The staff team work in partnership with children, young people and families to provide an inclusive and friendly environment. Many children and young people who have different needs and abilities can access the club from across Liverpool.

For this evaluation I spoke with Carina Evans, who is the Family centre coordinator, and I had the pleasure of talking to Daniel, Mathew, Rees, Crosby, Olivia and Jose.

This report will identify opportunities that exist for young people to engage in dialogue with staff and highlight the changes that have taken place.

Evidence of Dialogue & Change. Questionnaires and Focus Groups.

The club produces questionnaires and conducts focus group sessions, speaking to the children and young people about what they want to do. The summer holiday programme was based on these findings.

When I visited the club all the children and young people seemed to be enjoying themselves, participating in many different activities and games. Rees was playing cricket with his friends when he told me, "**We do loads of stuff and they always listen to us about what we want to do**". All the children are encouraged to evaluate the sessions and activities that take place. Carina and other staff members monitor and evaluate the information they receive to make further developments to the club. Rees added, "**We just tell the staff what we want to do and then we do it**".

During a trip to Camelot Theme Park in the summer holiday staff met children and young people to talk about 'Every Child Matters' outcomes. The information has been used to help develop different sessions at the centre.

Suggestion Box.

This provides children and young people with the opportunity to put their views and opinions across in a confidential way. The children and young people use the box and generate lots of new ideas for the club. I asked if I could have a look in the suggestion box. One of the comments read, "**I would like some Lego Space Troopers**". The staff respond to all the suggestions and positively involve children and young people in discussion and then make decisions about what has been put forward.

Planning Sessions.

Children and young people are at the heart of the planning and development. An example of this is how a group of young people who originally attended the Fun Club were supported in setting up their own Teenage Friendship Club and they now meet every other Saturday.

The sessions run after school for the younger age groups and later for older groups. There are regular sessions during the school holidays as well. The content of the sessions varies depending on what the children and young people ask for. The session I attended was held at the Family Centre. The children were playing football and cricket, doing art, playing with toys and watching videos. They were using the multi-sensory room and, most of all, just having fun.

Children often request different equipment and toys to be brought along and they can choose to do different activities. Daniel told me, “**I like coming here because of the multi**”. This is a large multi sensory room. Connor, who had only been coming to the club for a few weeks when I met with him, informed me, “**We look at the board to see what group we are in and what things we can do**”. Connor went on to add, “**If you do not like the group you are in and want to change it, you can change**”.

School Holidays.

During the school holidays the children are asked what they would like to do. Some activities are arranged through the staff and other sessions are held at the centre. The trips are based on the suggestions from the children. Mathew told me, “**They always ask where you want to go**”. Some of the activities were: - Sports Day, Parachute Games, Trip to Camelot, Cinema, DJ Workshop, Multi-Sensory Room, Mask Making and many more.

He went on to tell me about a trip, which had been asked for, “**We all went to The Jungle**”, which is an adventure play area in Liverpool. Olivia told me about some of the things she likes at the club, “**I like doing face painting and going outside to see the flowers**”.

Equipment.

Whenever the club buys new equipment the staff spend time with the children and young people deciding on what to buy and also discuss with them how much money is available for new toys and equipment for the club.

It is clear from visiting the club that children and young people are at the heart of all of the planning and decisions, and that is due to the commitment of the staff team to work in this way. The children I met with were very happy with the project and clearly enjoyed being part of it. When I asked if they felt that they had a say in the project all of the children agreed that they did. Rees said, “**We get to say what we want and choose**”. Olivia told me, “**It’s beautiful here because the staff are just good and you get snacks and stuff**”.

The young people I met fully endorsed that the project should get Investing in Children Membership.

Rob Johnson
Investing in Children
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