



Re-evaluation for Investing in Children membership

Belmont Library

Since Belmont Library's last Investing in Children membership evaluation children and young people have continued to be involved in dialogue and change as follows:

Chatterbooks: The Chatterbook group continue to meet during term time. Children and young people are able to join in, to talk about books, review books, plan activities and make suggestions.

I had the pleasure of meeting the Chatterbooks group: **Jennifer, Hannah, Megan and Max.**

Minutes from previous meetings highlight some of the changes introduced by the Chatterbooks group:

Chatterbooks Display: Children and young people asked if they could design their own display. They chose their own books and came up with their own ideas of wrapping various books in Christmas paper. The young people decided to call their display "Christmas Gift Surprise."

Book Requests: Children and young people chose what books they would like to see within their library. The Chatterbooks group told me they requested some 'Jane Blonde' books; they now have a whole shelf of them.

Suggestion Box: A suggestion box is displayed within the library, children and young people, parents/carers and the general public can comment or make suggestions for change. Staff look at the comments on a regular basis and take on board suggestions. The suggestion box has proven to be a success as change has come about as a result from the box: Children and young people requested that board games should be available within the library. This has now happened.

Colouring in Sheets: This was another request from young people:

" We asked if we could have colouring in sheets, now we have them dotted about on tables with coloured pencils."

" We colour in when we want."

I asked the members of the Chatterbooks group why they enjoyed coming to the library, and if they felt their views and opinions were listened to:

Megan:

" I come to the library coz it's a fun place to hang out and get interesting books."

Hannah:

‘ I come here to get away from everyone, I wasn’t able to read until I came here and now my Mum has started reading with me.’

‘ In this library they do listen to you, they help you find books; they even order books for you. They don’t shout at you they talk to you like an adult.’

Max:

‘ A couple of months ago I was getting bullied, I came to the library to feel safe.’

The young people told me about their suggestion box:

‘ I put suggestions in all the time, a few of my suggestions have happened, like the one about ordering a certain book.’

‘ I have put one in about having jigsaws on the tables, we now have jigsaws!’

Hannah and Max told me about their opportunity to create their own displays within the library:

‘ We asked if we could make our own Christmas display, we came up with our own ideas and our own name.’

‘ At Christmas the staff and us wrapped books in Christmas paper and put bar codes on everyone of them. No one knew what book they were getting so it was a surprise!’

Playstation: The library has its own playstation. This was another request from the children and young people.

Max told me:

‘ It’s good that we have a playstation, we can bring our own games in or borrow them from the library.’

As I was talking to the young people I got the impression they classed Belmont library as a safe, comfortable and fun place to be.

‘ We are made to feel safe, Val makes me feel safe. One time some boys were picking on me and Val made sure I was ok.’

Other Children’s Involvement:

Tiny Tots: This group of children meet in the library with their parents on a Monday from 2.30p.m till 3p.m. This time has changed, in negotiation with parents. It was earlier, but parents asked for it to be later to fit in with picking other children up from school.

The children within the Tiny Tots group enjoy a wide range of activities: crafts, story telling, rhymes and games.

School Groups: During term time both local primary schools enjoy weekly visits into the library to hear stories. Val told me: **‘ A few of the displays the young people create**

within school are displayed within the library. This gives parent/carers and young people a chance to see their work outside of school.’’

Megan added:

‘‘ It’s nice to see your work on the wall, it lets people see what we have been doing.’’

Belmont Library is a warm and welcoming environment. Children and young people are free to come in and hang out, use the computers and join in activities. With the endorsement of the young people and continued commitment to dialogue and change I would very much like to recommend that Belmont Library remain an Investing in Children member.

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