



Re-evaluation for Investing in Children membership

Bowburn Junior School

Bowburn Junior School has been a member of the Investing in Children membership scheme for the past four years. The head teacher Mrs Lyons is very proud of all of the awards and certificates the school has received and is very keen that the school is recognised for their work towards Investing in Children membership.

For this evaluation I had the pleasure of meeting with Rachel, Shannon, Liam, Rahul, Georgie, Martin, Amy, Lauren, Callum, Kieran, Tayler, Zoe, Cara and Charlotte who are part of the school council.

Evidence of Dialogue & Change

School Council

The school council continues to be an integral part of school life. The election process is democratic as Rahul told me, **“The children in each class vote, and the person with the most votes gets in.”**

Amy added, **“There’s a girl and boy from each class.”**

Liam is the chair of the council and Amy is the vice chair and she takes notes, and Rahul is the secretary and he helps the chair and vice chair.

The school council meets weekly, during the time when the rest of the school are in assembly. Rachel told me that the members of the school council wear badges so other children know who they are. There is also a large display in the hall with the photographs of all of the council members **“so people can find us”**, Rahul told me. Georgie went on to say, **“People come and talk to us with suggestions, and the teachers remind the class who the council reps are.”**

Liam said, **“After every council meeting we always report back to the class.”**

The children were very pleased to talk about the things that as a school council they had achieved. Rahul told me that they have done a lot of fund raising both for the school and for charity. **“We’ve had charity days like Children in Need; we made biscuits for 10 or 20 pence.”** Amy added, **“We’ve had toy sales as well.”**

Some of the things that the school council achieved for the rest of the pupils have been non-uniform days, trips out, and a climbing. Rahul said, **“We want to get astro-turf, so we’re saving up for that.”**

Out in the playground are a number of things that the school council have asked for. **“There’s a shelter with seats, a bench with games, it’s somewhere to go if it’s raining.”**

There is also a fitness trail called the Heart Trail which is painted on the ground and a lot of older pupils like to show the younger ones what to do.

There is also a Fun Trail with things to climb on. Georgie told me, **“It’s like an obstacle course.”** Shannon added, **“It’s good, it’s got a criss-cross bit.”**

The current school councillors clearly understand the power of the school council as they recounted the success that a previous school council had in ensuring that doors on their classrooms were put on after pupils reported that they were necessary as the classes were too loud. They also remembered that at pupils’ request they were given water fountains.

Suggestion Box & Worry Box

There is a suggestion box in the hall in front of the school council display, where children can put any ideas or suggestions forward for the school council to look at. Georgie told me about some of the suggestions. **“People ask for different things, we’ve been asked for new football pitches and trips.”** Liam told me, **“We look at the ideas and take them to Mrs Lyons.”**

Rahul told me about the worry box. **“If you’re worried about something you put it in the worry box and Mr Mann and Mrs Lyons get them and sort them out.”**

Playground Friends, Mediators & Friendship Stop

The children told me about the Playground Friends. They wear blue bands, or blue fleeces in the winter so everyone knows who they are. Playground Friends look for anyone who has fallen over, or lonely, or has no-one to play with. Lauren told me about the Friendship Stop, **“If someone’s lonely or upset they go there.”** The Playground Friends go and help anyone there and get them involved with playing with others.

Some of the children are Mediators and they wear yellow bands for everyone to know who they are. Georgie told me that mediators **“sort out problems between people.”**

Cyber Team

This group of children wear green bands to be recognised as being in the Cyber team, and they have a responsibility for reminding everyone in school that they need to recycle, save electricity and generally try to be kinder to the environment. Some of the duties they carry out are making sure lights are switched off, going to the ICT room and turning off the computers and collecting any paper for recycling. This group also have to ring up the environmental offices to arrange for them to come and collect their recycling materials.

Play Boxes

The school has three large storage boxes around the playground and they are full of equipment for playtimes. Lauren told me, **“There’s games, tennis racquets, stilts, all sorts of things.”** Some of the children wear red bands and they are on play box duty, and they make sure the equipment gets put away properly. After hearing about these roles for the pupils I commented that there were lots of jobs for the children to do. Liam told me, **“Everyone has a job at the beginning of year 6. In the last two weeks of term we are passing on our responsibilities to year 5.”**

All of the children I met with were happy with their jobs and enjoyed the responsibilities that they have. It was very clear that they feel very much that the school is theirs and that they must take responsibility for the way it is run. They told me of the many opportunities they get at school to do lots of activities and visits. They were very enthusiastic about a recent trip to Richmond and it appears they thoroughly enjoyed their time there, having an X Factor night, and a murder mystery night, as well as visiting museums and quizzes.

The children also told me of some initiatives that the school had to encourage good behaviour and success at school. Georgie told me, **“We have PE parties to encourage pupils to bring in their PE kit. The parties have things like a giant inflatable football net, and another time we had mini trampolines.”**

Attendance is rewarded at Bowburn Juniors, for a full term at school pupils get a special prize. Lauren told me the prizes can be, **“things like a mug or rulers and pencils.”**

Pupils with 100% attendance get to go for lunch at Bowburn Hall with Mrs Lyons and Mr Mann and the children I met with thought this was great reward.

When I asked the children if they felt that Bowburn Junior School should receive Investing in Children membership once again, there was a resounding **“Yes!”** Georgie said, **“We always get listened to, the teachers always put the children first.”** And so along with Rachel, Shannon, Liam, Rahul, Georgie, Martin, Amy, Lauren, Callum, Kieran, Tayler, Zoe, Cara and Charlotte I would like to recommend that Bowburn Junior School receive Investing in Children membership for another year. Well done!

Lisa Lines
Investing in Children
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