



investing in children

## Evaluation for Investing in Children membership

### Copeland Road Primary School

Copeland Road Primary is in West Auckland, County Durham. The School has undergone numerous changes in the past year. Mr Nodding is the new head teacher taking over from Mrs Lumley in September 2007. On my first visit to the school I met with Mr Nodding who gave me lots of background information about the school. However for the purpose of this report I also had the pleasure of meeting Ellie, Josh, William, Ellie, Micha, Emmy, Katie, Maisie, Katie and Milly who are all members of the school council.

The children told me that the idea behind the school council is so that the children come up with ideas to improve the school. Maisie informed me of how they are voted onto the council. **“Every year we vote in class for who we want on the school council.”** William added **“After every school council meeting we tell our classes what has been decided to make school better.”** The school council informed me that they were on the interview panels for both Mr Nodding the head teacher and also to appoint the deputy head.

The importance of the suggestion box to the children on the school council is clear. Katie said **“I like the suggestion box, because we don’t always have a lot of meetings and I would forget what people said to me. But now I write everything down.”** The process of dialogue the children have set up works effectively for them. They have put mechanisms in place whereby as many children as possible can be included in improving the school.

The school tries to promote a sense of caring and security for all its pupils. Mr Nodding and the teaching staff encourage the children to have respect for others and themselves. All pupils are encouraged to have a sense of belonging to the wider community as well as the school community. The school often participates in events outside of school and links into other agencies in order to ensure that the children have a say in issues affecting them outside of school. The school recently linked with another local primary school and members of year six went to France for the week. William informed me **“It was really good, we went to Disneyland and the war museums and we meet people who we will go to camp with.”**

### **Evidence of dialogue and change**

#### School Toilets

Milly informed me **“the suggestion boxes told us that children were unhappy about the toilets, they wanted mirrors”** Maisie added “we have now got the new mirrors coming for the toilets. The children were very happy about this development **“We had been asking for ages, when Mr Nodding took over we asked him we are getting them now.”**

## Healthy Eating – SNAG

The SCHOOL NUTRITION ACTION GROUP meets regularly to discuss and improve the education and provision for Healthy Eating in the school. Children work alongside staff, governors and Health Professionals to help co-ordinate and organise events and clubs to improve Nutrition. So far we have:

- Set up a FRUIT BAR – this has now been altered to a healthy snack at playtime.
- Set up a BREAKFAST CLUB – at present this is held every morning, serving cereal, toast and a drink. Parents, staff and pupils help out.
- Set up provision of free milk for Under-5s and milk for other pupils at a subsidised cost.
- Set up a system where pupils have free access to WATER. Pupils can bring a sports bottle of water to keep on their tables during lessons and have whenever they are thirsty.
- Improved the recipes that the Cookery Club use, so they are making healthier snacks and biscuits.
- Children can choose to have a packed lunch prepared by the kitchen staff instead of having a hot meal.

## Benches

The children informed me that they had been planning for a while to do something with the area under the big tree in the school playground. Milly informed me **“a lot of people just sit around on the grass and talk at break time, so we have decided to put benches and put them under the tree so people can sit on them.”** William added **“We don’t want to put them too close to the fence though as people could climb over the fence and damage them.”**

## Class Pets

Some of the younger children informed the school council that they would like pets in their class rooms. **“We thought it was a really good idea, so class two now have their class pet, that everyone look after.”**

All the children who I spoke to were happy with the way they are included in a dialogue with staff at Copeland Road; however they would like to work on a few changes which they recommend they work on with the staff team over the next year;

- **“We should change the horrible plastic trays we have our dinners on and get real bowls, plates, knives and forks. But maybe keep some plastic trays for the little ones.”**
- **“Get better posters in the school, they have been up for years.”**

- **“We used to get cheesy nibbles and crisps at snack time. We know that we need to have healthy stuff but a treat once a month would be good.”**
- **“We would like new suggestion boxes because the ones we have are getting all ripped.”**

During my visits to Copeland Road Primary I was made to feel welcome. I would like to thank everyone for helping me write this evaluation. The children and staff at Copeland Road Primary work well together ensuring that everyone feels safe and comfortable to express their valued ideas and opinions. Members of the school council are involved in running their school and make real decisions about issues that affect them.

There is no doubt that Copeland Road Primary provides the opportunity for all children to have a say and bring about meaningful change. When I asked the children if they agreed with this evaluation, there was a resounding YES. I therefore have no hesitation in recommending Copeland Road Primary School receives Investing in Children membership. Well done!

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