



Evaluation for Investing in Children membership

Dawdon Youth and Community Centre Adventure Club

For the purpose of Dawdon Community Centre's evaluation for membership I visited the adventure club runs every night of the week except a Tuesday. I visited the club during a youth club session on a Thursday evening which runs from 5pm till 7pm.

The adventure club was set up approximately 5 years ago and is funded through the Children's Fund and the NRF. There are two full time workers, three part time workers and six volunteers. The club was initially known as the after school club until a new name was chosen by the young people and it was renamed the Adventure Club.

There are several parts/activities that take place at the Club:

Play Pals

This is a project that was set up to promote play. Workers go into schools during lunch times. It is currently being commissioned to go into a further primary school.

SNAP

The project links up with other clubs to link young people into sports. *'Two members of the adventure club got onto the county cricket team and came first in a competition'*.

Mentoring Scheme

Young people over the age of 13 years have the opportunity to mentor at the club. Over the summer holidays five school leavers took part in the mentoring play scheme and achieved play worker and young life saver award status. Funding was received from Connexions in order to make this possible.

Swim Gym

Through funding from the lottery a Swim Gym was set up to enable young people aged between 5 – 14 years who are weak or non swimmers the opportunity to learn to swim. The club employs 2 swimming instructors and offers one session a week.

Interviews

Children and young people were involved in selecting their own play workers for the club. *'Sometimes we get to do interviews'*

Peer Led Educators

Young people took part in a six week long peer educator project around Drug Intervention with the Out there Project and undertook a positive relationship course run by Durham Positive Inclusion Partnership.

Partnerships

The club works in partnership with various organisations inc. The Sports Development Team, Get Active Easington, PCT and the 5 a day team etc...They also operate a referral system to the Out of Shadows project based in Easington.

Boost

This project was initially set up by a request from a young person. The project is open to all young people who are on the 'at risk' register and offers activities on a weekend.

DJ and Dec Project

Children at the club requested that they would like some DJ equipment for the club. A group was set up and they applied for funding from the Youth Opportunities Fund and where successful. The equipment is extremely well used at the centre.

'Young people asked for them and we raised the money. You get to Mc!!' Jade

Opportunities for Dialogue and Change – Young Peoples Views

During my visit I met with lots of young people who where keen to tell me all about the centre and the club.

Their views are as follows:

Firstly I met Jordan who is 6 he told me. *'I have been coming for six months, I like it because you can play pool, go on the computers, make things and go in the art room. Me and my sister go on some of the trips. We went to Lightwater Valley and Camelot World of Adventure'*.

I then spoke with Glen (11) and Bryan (10) who have been coming for approximately a year.

'You get to play pool; I like it because you get to go on trips' Brian

'It keeps you out of trouble, I like coming because it's somewhere to go. Last year we were planning on going to Flamingo land but we decided in the end to go to Lightwater Valley instead as we didn't have enough money' Glen

'For the summer activities programme, they asked us what trips we wanted to go on'.

'We pay 50p subs a week and save it up. We raised £4500 for the adventure club'.

'We are definitely listened to' Brian and Glen

I then spoke to Chantelle (13), Jade (12) and Jodie (14) who have all been coming since it opened.

'Its fun you meet new friends, get to draw, do gymnastics and make stuff. Sometimes we play bingo! All the places that we go to are really good at the end of the summer we got to go to Wet n Wild'

I then met with Peighton (11) who said *'I've been coming for about four years because you get to meet new friends.'*

'We get to do arts and cooking, play pool, use the computers, and we can do gymnastics and dance sometimes'.

'You get to choose activities and the trips we go on. In training room 2 there are arts and crafts and in training room 1 you get to go on the x box'.

'At Christmas we got lots of money and had to decide what we wanted. They bought an x box and lots of presents'.

'Every year we do a play scheme for three weeks of the holidays and we get to have a summer camp. This year we went to Lightwater Valley, Camelot Theme Park and scuba diving. It was really good because it was fun and you get to meet lots of new people'

Finally I spoke with Demi (9) and Hayley (10). They have both been coming to the adventure club for 3 years.

'The workers are fun and there is loads of things to do' Demi

'I like everything the workers are nice they deal with people who are bullies and they don't raise their voice either. The workers are good to be with they are caring if something is going wrong or you are upset you can just talk to them' Hayley

'If I was judging the workers I would give them 10 out of 10' Hayley

'In the summer holidays we have a play scheme you get to go on loads of trips' Demi

'We had a vote about the trips. Lightwater Valley, Camelot World of Adventure, Digger land and the cinemas were all chosen.' Hayley

'For the pictures we got to choose between the following films; The Simpson's Movie, Bratz, Transformers and Bourne Ultimatum. In the half term holidays we got to go see Ratatouille as we asked to go see it' Demi

'I like coming because we have sleep overs and Halloween parties etc... .' Demi

'I come everytime it's on. If we could I'd make the park bigger and have swings etc... and have the club open on a night aswell as during the day when the playscheme is on'

'We are listened to; I think we should definitely get the award'

Recommendations

I recommend that the centre look at structures in which children and young people might contribute to the governance of the club.

Conclusion

All the children I talked with spoke very highly of the club. They have a good relaxed relationship with the staff so therefore there is ongoing dialogue. It was very obvious that the children are very involved and valued at Dawdon Community Centre and within the Adventure Club.

This report has been endorsed by children involved in the Centre. Therefore I recommend that Dawdon Community Centre receive Investing in Children Membership.

Eleanor Seed
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