



Re-evaluation for Investing in Children membership

Dene House Primary School

Dene House Primary is situated in Peterlee and caters for children aged between four and eleven years old.

During my visit I had the pleasure of meeting with 16 members of the school council. The children were all keen to tell me about their council and how they are involved in having a say in the school. I would like to say a special thanks to Danielle, Ben, Jill, Kieran, Jake, Louise, Mia, Jordann, Taiya, Daniel, Lewis, Jordann, Ellie, Stevie, Hannah and Natalie for all their help in enabling me to write this report.

Opportunities for Dialogue and Change

The children told me they are elected onto the school council *'for the whole year'*. The council is made up of *'2 children from each year group starting from reception to year 4 and 4 children in years 5 and 6'*. *We usually meet weekly'*

'Two from year 6 write down things from the meeting'

When I asked them how they were picked to be on the school council they replied:

'People voted for us to be on it'

'You had to be a good person'

'The other children in the class picked me!'

'I was chosen by the teacher'

'We had a writing competition'

The children all felt they are on the school council for two reasons:

'To make the school better and choose what the school needs'

Other children at the school are given the opportunity to have a say in what the school council talks about *'People can suggest things to us and we are getting suggestion boxes for every class'*.

School Dinners

'A questionnaire went out to everyone to decide about the school meals we wanted when it got took over'

Dressing Rooms

'Years 5 and 6 were complaining that there was nowhere for them to get changed and asked for some curtains around the dressing rooms. We now have them'

School Pet

'We have been asking for a school pet and now we are getting one'

Apple Tree

'We are getting an apple tree'

Discos

'Last year everyone was asking for discos to be run at school. We've now got them and are run at Christmas, Easter and Halloween'

'The infants usually have theirs first then the juniors'

Play Equipment

'Last Year we got new play equipment'

Soap

In last year's report it was highlighted that the children said they did not like the orange soap in the year 5 and 6's toilets. Following their request that it should be changed to pink soap, like the infants, this has now happened and all the children are happy.

Good Points

When asked what they think is good about the school council they replied saying:

'We listen to each others comments'

'You get to think of ideas'

'It lets other people have their say'

'When we ask for things Pam takes our ideas to the headteacher'

Improvements

Overall the young people felt happy with the way in which the school council is run however they did have some suggestions on improving the school. These being:

'It would be really good if we had a bike shed so that we could cycle to school and leave our bikes somewhere'

'We still need longer at lunch time to fill our water bottles up from the fountain' This was also a recommendation from last years report.

'We should have more time in our meetings so we can talk about more things'

'Two French teachers instead of one and a German teacher'

Conclusion

Dene House Primary continues to involve children in active dialogue and change. The school council offers the mechanism for this to happen and all the teachers at the school seem to support this.

The children I spoke with were very happy with the way in which they are involved and how the school council is run. They feel they are able to make decisions and influence change. When asked if they felt they are listened to they all replied saying 'Yes' and I wholeheartedly agree. It is evident in this report that young people are at the front on shaping school life.

It is on their recommendation that I feel Dene House Community School has it's Investing in Children Membership renewed.

Well Done!!

**Eleanor Seed
Project Worker
Investing in Children
August 2008**

