



Re-evaluation for Investing in Children membership

Education Welfare Service East Team

For the purpose of this re-evaluation I met with young people from Seaham Technology School and Shotton Secondary School. They were Liam, Jack, Adam, Lauren, Chris, Benson and Richard.

The Education Welfare Service aims to ensure that children and young people benefit from educational opportunities available to them. Education Welfare Officers in East Durham (EWOs) encourage regular attendance at school and help to resolve any problems, which may be affecting pupil's attendance. The team continues to encourage young people to get involved in decision-making and talk about how the service can better support them. Some developments have been made to the service they offer based on this dialogue and involvement.

Opportunities for Dialogue and Change.

School-Based Football Attendance League.

Clare Nicholls, who is the Education Welfare Officer, asked pupils at Seaham Technology School whether they had any ideas to improve attendance at the school. Benson and Richard came up with an idea to have a Football Attendance League. Benson explained, **“We thought a theme would be a bit better than just a boring league and decided that football would be a good idea”**. They told me that they decided on football because it is very popular at the school. Richard told me, **“When we spoke to other young people they liked the idea”**. Benson added, **“Football is a big thing in Seaham so we knew it would be a good idea to do football”**. Benson and Richard have now developed a new scoring system for the league and met with different tutor groups to discuss their idea. All of the tutor groups were given the opportunity to come up with their own name for their team. Benson and Richard also decided that at the end of each term there should be promotions and relegations. Benson told me, **“It's better doing it this way so everyone gets a chance at the beginning of each term”**. Richard told me, **“We wanted a Sunderland footballer to come to the school”**. Benson, with a big smile on his face, went on to tell me, **“Clare managed to arrange for us to meet with Niall Quinn at the Stadium of Light”**. Niall Quinn was filmed giving his response, which the school are going to use. Benson and Richard are also planning to meet with the Sunderland Echo and different members of staff from the service to further discuss their idea and how it could be used in other schools.

Attendance Away Day .

Young people who gained 100% attendance at Seaham Technology, with the support of Clare planned what they wanted to do as a reward. They identified that they wanted to be picked up by limousines at the school and driven away to take part in a Go-Karting activity. This has just happened and they also attended an Ice Hockey match.

Individual Support.

The Education Welfare Officers develop strategies and support based on the ideas of young people. Adam told me, **“They have helped me out with family problems and other stuff”**. Chris added, **“Moira listens to your ideas about how you think things can be better at school”**. Chris went on to tell me that, **“Moira will then try and make it better for you”**. Where possible the Education Welfare Officer will develop individual strategies to improve the situation for young people at school. Laura told me, **“I had a problem with someone at school and Moira has made things better for me”**.

Awareness Event.

Moira (EWO) for Horden School held a consultation event so that young people could be made aware of the service and the support they can offer. Chris told me, **“Moira listens to your ideas and then tries to sort things out for you”**. Lauren told me, **“I like the fact that she is available to speak to at any time”**. It might be worthwhile to incorporate these views of young people into future events and also to see if they could get involved in carrying them out.

School Questionnaire.

Moira developed a questionnaire to find out what the young people she works with really think about the school and how school life could be improved. The results of the questionnaire are to be passed on to the Head Teacher to use. When the next evaluation is due, it will be interesting to see what impact this has had.

Attendance Statistics.

Young people at Shotton School asked to access data on their attendance. Moira has now developed a programme and made the attendance data available on her computer for young people to access.

For these reasons I would like to recommend that the Education Welfare Service East Team once again receive Investing In Children membership for the positive methods they use in developing the service. I look forward to seeing further developments made by the young people working with the Team when coming to re-evaluate the team for membership next year.

The following young people have read and agreed with the report and recommend that the Education Welfare team continue to be an Investing In Children Member. They are: - Liam, Jack, Adam, Lauren, Chris, Benson and Richard.

I would like to thank the young people and the staff for their time and finish by saying well done.

Rob Johnson
Investing in Children
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