



investing in children

Re-evaluation for Investing in Children membership

Escomb Primary School

Escomb Primary School is situated just outside the town of Bishop Auckland in County Durham. The school serves the villages of Escomb, Witton Park, Low Etherley and Etherley Grange.

On my visit to the school I was made to feel extremely welcome by the staff and the children. As well as meeting with Mr Taylor the head teacher I also had the pleasure of meeting with Nicole, Paul, Kailum, Jake, Jasmine, Emily, Jack and Devon who are all members of the school council.

Evidence of Dialogue and Change

School Council

The school council continues to give the children at the school the opportunity to have a say and be involved in decisions on how the school is run. They told me how they got onto the school council:

'The teacher asks the boys to nominate a girl and the girls to nominate a boy for election. There has to be 5 boys and 5 girls. Then everyone in the class gets to choose who they want to be on it!!'

'You get to be on it for a full year and are chosen in September'

'Everyone in the class talks about the school council and suggest things'

The group then told me how the school council works: *'We meet on a Thursday dinner time at 12.30pm every week or whenever we need to. The longest we have been without a meeting is 3 – 4 weeks but sometimes we end up having 2 meetings a week!'*

Suggestion Box/Worry Box

'We still have our suggestion/worry box at the school. Every week it gets checked. Anyone from any class can put things in'

'Some people put silly things in!'

'We got new basket balls and nets as someone asked'

'We are getting new suggestion boxes for each class'

Budget

The school council informed me that they were given a budget of £201 to spend.

'We thought it would be a good idea to have more money as people were asking for bigger things so we organised a valentines fair. We sold cakes and books and designed posters etc..'

Lunch Box Makeovers

The children told me that a group of them got together to look at what could be done to make a packed lunch box healthier.

'We decided to get a typical pack lunch box that had crisps, chocolate, cake and fizzy pop in and give it a makeover to be healthy. Instead we filled it with low fat crisps, yogurts and fruit instead. We did it so that everyone would know what a healthy packed lunch box was and could bring one to school.'

Devon said *'All the year 6's made a healthy packed lunch and took them to an event in Weardale'*

Walking Bus

The group were keen to tell me all about the walking bus that had been developed at the school.

'We have a walk in bus with workers and parents who help sometimes'

'I have walked every Wednesday since it started' Jasmine

Breakfast Club

'The dinner nannies came round the classes with a questionnaire to ask us if we would want a breakfast club at the school. Lots of people said Yes so now we have one.'

'It costs 75p a person'

Litter

'There was lots of litter on the black path and everyone was always complaining about it so we did slogans for the bins etc... to stop littering. We took them home and put up posters to encourage people to take their rubbish home with them instead of dropping it on the floor.'

'We also spoke to the wardens and asked for them to come out more so they would fine people for littering. They now come out more and they go around the park once a week or every two weeks.'

Attendance

'When you won the highest attendance you used to be able to go on the Play station but it stopped for some reason so we think this should happen again!'

Buddies

The children at Escomb Primary School still find the buddy system helpful.

'If you sit on a seat the buddies will talk to you. We have a sign in the quiet yard. The Buddies have bibs on so that everyone knows who they are!'

Toilets

I was told that the pupils did not like the toilets at the school and everyone was complaining so it was decided by the school council that they needed to be refurbished.

'We did them out as they were not very nice! We got hand driers instead of paper towels, colours on the walls and air fresheners etc..'

'Everyone in the school voted on what they wanted'

Surveys and Questionnaires

'We sometimes do questionnaires to find out what people think!'

School Changes

There continues to be several changes happening at the school.

Emily told me ***'We asked for a water dispenser in every class'***

'We got a green storage container to put all our equipment in. We got drawings put on it so it looks like a snake!'

'We got benches in the quiet yard'

'We have got lots of new equipment'

'We have asked for new blinds for the class rooms'

'This week we are doing a banner about how you shouldn't park outside the school as we fell it's not safe and a problem at the school'

Graffiti Wall

'We recently asked for a graffiti wall so that everyone can put their views down.'

Bad Points

'Sometimes its hard being on the school council because everyone thinks you can do things straight away. They don't realise how much money we actually have'.

Good Points

The children wanted to tell me what they thought were the best bits about being on the school council.

They told me the following:

'We all have little jobs. Jesmine is the Secretary, Devon is the Chair, Jake is the Treasurer and Kailum is the Vice Chair.'

‘You have more responsibility. You get to decide what the school needs etc... and of course you get to miss some lessons!!’

Conclusion

On my visit to Escomb Primary School I was made to feel very welcome. I would like to thank everyone for giving up their time to help me write this evaluation.

I was extremely pleased to witness how all the children and staff work hard together to take forward young peoples views and make change.

The school council is involved in several aspects of the way in which the school is run and I am sure this will continue.

When I asked the children if they feel they are listened to and can influence change they all replied saying:

‘Yes we are definitely listened to and should get the award renewed because: ‘We don’t just do what we want to do we ask the whole school and they decide’ Emily

It is on their recommendation that Escomb Primary School should have its Investing in Children Membership renewed.

This report has been endorsed by members of the school council

Well Done!!

**Eleanor Seed
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Investing in Children
July 2008**