



investing in children

Evaluation for Investing in Children membership

Moorside Community Technology College

During my visit I met with several members of the school council who told me all about the school, what it's like to be on the school council, the decisions they make and the type of projects they are involved in.

I would like to say a special thanks to them for their involvement in the assessment process.

The council meets on a weekly basis and sets its own agenda.

How they are elected

Young people in year 7, every year have the opportunity to nominate themselves in their class to be members of the school council. Three out of each class have the opportunity and are interviewed by year 10 councillors who make the overall decision as to who becomes a member.

Evidence of Dialogue and Change

School Council Meetings

'We hold meetings on a weekly basis. We get to set our own agenda'

Non Uniform Day

The school council organised a non uniform day for the school to raise money for Ben Stirling. *'It was the most successful day we have done, we raised over £500'*

Role Swap

In January or February two members of the school council will be swapping roles with Mr Morris, Head teacher and Alex Watson leader of Derwentside District council, to raise money.

'I am going to be swapping roles with Alex Watson and spending the day as the leader of the council and Robert will be swapping and be acting as the head of our school'

Beach Theme

'To raise funds we had a month long event where we had to stick to the beach theme. It was really good'

Hat Day

'We came up with this idea to raise funds for the school and everyone had to wear hats backwards and inside out'

Water Aid

'People were getting thirsty during lessons etc... so we asked to get water coolers everywhere in the school, and now we have them in every building'

Bike Shed

This project was part of the school travel plan.

'One of us brought the idea of riding bikes to school, as there are already routes to and from the school. We wanted somewhere to store our bikes if we did bring them to school, so we asked, and got a bike shed put in the yard'

Dinner Hall/Toilets

'Pupils didn't like how the dinner hall and the toilets looked'

'Year 11 students had been nagging on about getting the hall improved because it was not young people friendly'

'We decided to refurbish them both and Mr Morris agreed that it needed to be funkier'

'We now have TV's and pictures etc in the hall and we got to decide on the colours of the toilets etc...'

Bus Parking Issue

'There was a problem with the buses parking outside the school entrance and it was not safe. We raised the issue at one of our meetings and it has now been resolved'

Recycling Boxes

'We asked that recycling boxes be put in the classrooms and now we have them in most classrooms'

Eddy Project

This project is run by the police and gives young people the opportunity to be involved and have their say.

'In January some pupils took part in the police consultation day'

'I am a mentor for the project and we are trying to make it, so that all young people can be involved in the project'

3rd Generation Project

'We have made a stained glass window and last year we made a mosaic'

'We have had lunch with the army'

School Food/Healthy food

The young people told me how the student council have a voice on what is served for dinner and how it is served.

'Pupils were complaining about the food and having hair in their dinners. We had a meeting to discuss it and spoke with the head. Within a fortnight the kitchen staff had a new uniform and now have to wear headgear'

Ofsted

'When the school was being assessed for OFSTED quite a few of our student council met with them to talk about what we have been doing etc... They were very happy with our work and very complimentary'

Staff Interviews

The young people told me how they have been involved in interviews for new teachers.

'It's fun and exciting'

'It makes you feel more responsible and important'

'We came up with our own set of questions we wanted to ask them'

Re-organisation of secondary schools

The group told me how they have been involved with the consultation around the re-organisation of secondary schools in Consett. They said they are in favour of this happening.

'We want a new building for Moorside so that it can become a school for the 21st century.'

'We would prefer to continue as a single school, but accept reluctantly that population decline might mean joining with Consett Community Sports College. Some of us fear that a big school would increase the risk of bullying and that it would be harder to make friends and get to know names. Having one school would also remove parent choice of schools. However some of us think that joining together would end the rivalry between the two schools and that together we could be a top stop school.'

'We would like to be fully involved in all stages of planning for the new school especially the design.'

'In designing the new school we will want to ensure that the good things about Moorside continue, such as, our friendly atmosphere and technology status.'

'We also got to make a school vision for the future.'

Residential Weekend

'We went away to Broomley Grange on a residential for team building etc... '

'We did work about what makes an ideal teacher and what makes a bad teacher, that is now used for interviews. We also did work that has now been put in our planners, like what students need to be doing and what to expect etc...'

Best Bits/What makes it special

We then went on to discuss the school council and how they feel about it, and I was told the following:

'The best bits are planning things and organising activities'

'It's special because we pull together as we want to do something for all the students'

'We all work together and are a good team'

'We are committed and have passion'

The Future

Finally we talked about the future and how they would like to see the school council progressing over the next few years. They said:

'We would like to be doing more projects and raising more money!'

'We would like to be involved in things outside of school as well'

'More work with the local community'

'Improve the school a lot more'

'Be involved in designing the new school'

Mr Morris, Head teacher said *'I would like the school council to be involved in shaping the school curriculum and have closer links between teachers and pupils'*

Conclusion

Following my visit, there is ample evidence of dialogue and change. The young people I spoke with were extremely positive about their involvement in the school and the council.

The school is excellent at involving children in decision making. I have no hesitation but to recommend that Moorside Community Technology College receive Investing in Children Membership.

This report has been endorsed by the young people on the school council.

Eleanor Seed
Investing in Children
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