



## Re-evaluation for Investing in Children membership

### St Joseph's RCVA Primary School

St Joseph's school in Coundon has had Investing in Children membership for a number of years and are very proud of this, along with many other awards and achievements the school has earned.

Most recently the school has been awarded North East School of the Year Award overall School of the Year, along with Mrs McManners being awarded Head Teacher of the Year. For this evaluation I had the pleasure of meeting with Curtis, Molly, Alice, Ashley, Kieran F, Aliah, Michael, Jack, Chloe, Aaliyah, Isaac, Kieran O, Sophie, Eve and Nieve.

### **Evidence of Dialogue & Change**

#### School Council

Each class in the school has two representatives for the school council. Ashley told me, **"Everyone voted on which person they wanted."** Alice added, **"They wrote it on a little piece of paper."**

The pupils meet as a council **"every two weeks,"** Ashley told me. Michael told me that the children work together, **"we can organise meetings ourselves."** Michael went on to tell me that the pupils in year six who are on the school council, have the roles of chairperson, vice chairperson and secretary. **"We've got Kieran, Sophie and Niamh, the rest of the school council voted for them."**

The school council have a display near the office; it has all their photos and names so anyone in the school can find them and talk to them about anything they want the school council to do. Michael and Alice showed it to me on my way out.

Ashley told me how the school council find out what is important to the rest of the pupils, **"We ask the class what they want."**

Once the school council have met, Aliah told me **"it goes to Miss Hutchinson."**

#### Worry Box

The school has a worry box for pupils to use. Kieran told me, **"If you're worried about anything Miss Hutchinson looks at them, she comes and gets you and you talk to her."** Alice added, **"It's near the entrance."**

All of the children talked about the fact that the box was locked, they had felt that this was important, because that kept things private.

#### Bike Rack & Parents Shelter

Last year when I visited the school, the school council told me they had requested a bike rack and also a shelter for their parents if it is raining when they come to collect them. These have now been built in the playground and are almost ready to be used. **"It just needs the screws tightening on it and it's ready,"** Michael told me.

The children all agreed it was great that this has happened, they are all very pleased.

## New Playground Equipment

Now that the bike rack and shelter are in place the children are planning for new equipment outside. Alice told me, **“We asked people and they want goal posts for football.”** She went on to tell me that there is also now an area for children in reception class. **“There are some bikes and scooters for them, and there are big tyres around the area to keep them in.”**

Michael told me that the school council have asked for the new equipment but they aren't sure yet what the outcome will be. He told me, **“We think it will happen.”**

Kieran O, Sophie, Eve and Nieve told me about plans for an outdoor play area. Nieve told me, **“There's a board in the hall with different ideas for an obstacle course for the older pupils. We'll be able to vote for which one we get.”**

Kieran O said, **“We're going to take it round each class and everyone can vote for which one they want.”**

Eve told me, **“Everyone will get a say to decide what we get.”**

## Playtime Boxes

Aliah told me about the new playtime boxes, **“People said that they were bored so they asked for things to do.”** The idea for boxes with different play equipment came from the children. Aliah went on to tell me, **“Every class has got one, it's got things in like skipping ropes, games and balls. We keep them in the class and take them out at play time.”**

The school also runs a number of playground initiatives like the buddy bus stop, with buddies and mini-buds, and playground friends. Some of the children I spoke to have one of these roles and they are very proud to be part of it and enjoy helping people. Curtis told me, **“I'm a buddy and on school council, it's good.”**

The children were also keen to tell me about the rewards they get for good work and good behaviour. I also found out about the work the children are doing for Save the Soldier. A statue in the village was damaged a long time ago and there was money raised to replace it, and now that it has, the children from the school have been planting bulbs at the memorial to make it look nice.

The pupils I met with at St Joseph's all seem very happy to be part of a school that works and plays together, as play times seem to be the most affected by the pupils. They all told me they felt that they were able to change things in their school and very much felt part of this. Alice told me, **“You help people,”** and Michael added, **“You feel important, and the teachers are nice they listen.”** Curtis, Molly, Alice, Ashley, Kieran, Aliah, Jack, Chloe and Aaliyah agreed with Michael, and that their school deserved to receive Investing in Children membership, and so along with their endorsement I would like to recommend membership once again.

**Lisa Lines  
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