



Re-Evaluation for Investing in Children membership:

Sedgefield Primary

The re-evaluation for Sedgefield Primary has been on hold while the building has been re-wired, causing chaos and disruption to everyone in school. However during this time the children have continued to be involved in their own agenda, making decisions, supporting each other and taking part in activities and events both in school and within the wider community. For this year's evaluation I visited the school on the 1st February, where I was warmly welcomed by some of the children I have met for previous evaluations, as well as some new children. I met with Jemimah, Lily, Rebecca W, Rhiannon, Megan, Joseph, Joe, Rory, Madeline, Abbigail, Lee, JT, Charlotte, Sadie, Zoe, Rebecca C, Jay, Adam, Calem, Robert, Oliver, Alex, Millie, Sophie, Joseph, Adam, Tom, Craig, Michael, Jordan, Natya. I also revisited the group on the 7th March to read through my evaluation and as you can imagine both my meetings were quite lively!

All of the children I met with are part of one group or another, a fair representation of the children in the school, all eager to tell me they get up to.

Continued evidence of dialogue and change was provided by the children:-

Following on from last year's evaluation –

“JT said ‘the boys toilets have been refurbished, as the boys kept asking’. Mr. Irvine changed them. Now the girls are looking forward to theirs being changed.” – Evaluation June 2005

Changes made: The girls' toilets are in the process of being refurbished. Rebecca, JT, Sophie and Abbi told me that they chose the colours for the doors, the tiles, the walls and they asked for hand driers, which they know are to be included.

The School Council

Megan is the current chair of the school council, with Lee as the secretary. The group highlighted some of the things they have achieved since my last evaluation.

- ❖ Play area for reception – the children chose the pieces of equipment to go into the yard for the reception children.
- ❖ The children have chosen the equipment for the junior yard and are just waiting for it to be put in.
- ❖ The children asked for basketball classes – they now have them.
- ❖ The School Council also had the opportunity to take part in a ‘Free to Talk’ day. Please see attached flyer for the session.

Mini-Buds

Mini Buds are little buddies, children in the infants who have to “**stop people from fighting**” Rory told me. He also said that “**everyone in year 2 is a mini bud and two children are on duty every day**”. I asked the mini buds how they knew which child was on duty and they said that there is a rota.

The Buddies

The Buddies continue to be trained by Co. Durham's Anti-bullying service and provide support to each other in the playground.

In my last evaluation I introduced the ‘**Mediators**’ – a development from the buddies. Continuing to work with Co. Durham's Anti-Bullying Service the school hope to introduce Mediators. Abbie said, ‘the mediators are for children to sort stuff out with each other, we know what to do’. Mediators will resolve disputes that happen in the playground’. Evaluation June 2005.

The Peer Mediators are now having regular meetings to deal with the mediation they give in the playground on a daily basis. They sort out meetings for children who are having problems in the playground and if they can't sort it out they tell the teacher. The peer mediators have created a play to inform all the children in the school about the issues of racism and bullying. Lee and Lily wrote the script.

The children told me how they performed their drama in assembly and everyone thought it was great. On my first visit the children performed some of their dance routine for me – a dance taken from Disney's High School Musical, Mr. Irvine told me that when they performed it in assembly it was 'absolutely fantastic.' Lily told me that they have been asked to perform their play and dance somewhere else, I later found out that this might be in the 'Happier in School week' organised by Co. Durham's Anti-Bullying Service.

Sedgefield Primary has also achieved its Anti-Bullying Accreditation. Well done. This is another accreditation for the school, which entails producing real evidence of children and young people's involvement in the agenda. Children must participate in resolving issues around bullying. I think from the plans of the peer mediators, this is clearly demonstrated.

The Conservation Group

The conservation group continue to "**dig holes and plant things**". The children said they enjoy planting and they definitely enjoy eating the food they grow. They recently enjoyed apple pie. JT also said that she thought they "**should grow more vegetables**" - now there's a challenge! The group continues to be responsible for recycling in the school and making all children aware of environmental issues.

The children also told me of a couple of other things that happen in school that are important to them:

- ❖ After Schools – the clubs continue on a regular basis and include activities that the children are interested in, such as – The Fun Club, Dance Club and the Computer club. Brownies, Guides and Rainbows, also using the school for their meetings.
- ❖ Lily told me she is a librarian and that they – help tidy up, issue books and answer the phones.
- ❖ **Road Safety Campaign** – Craig told me about Walk to School agenda. This is bigger than the walk to school week because there are real problems for the children at Sedgefield Primary because of the limited parking outside of school. **The children have decided to lobby parents to help make the school a safer place for the children in the morning and at hometime.**
 - The children are running a competition to design new signs – which will be made and put up outside of school. **Please see the leaflet that has been put up around school designed by Joe.**
 - The children have made leaflets to send home. The leaflets that were sent home had the logo the group created for their road safety campaign. **This was Percy Penguin, designed by Jay.**
 - Craig created a Rap to perform in assembly, to help get their message across to all of the children in the school. Alex, Jay, Millie, Joe, Adam and Calem were all part of the performing group.
 - The Huff & Puff – the children were keen to tell me about this new development. The Huff & Puff (held in the 'Horsa' aka the art room) is run by some of the children at playtimes. The monitors are Adam, Alex, Craig and Millie and they told me that they give out games and toys for the children to play with during playtime.

I asked the children if they wanted to say anything else and I gave them all the opportunity to have a say. Some of their comments were as follows:

Abbie – **I think there is lots of friendly people around school.**

Rebecca – **I really like this school because of all the groups, like the buddies.**

Alex – **Our school is very active and has lots of after school clubs**

Joey – **It's the best school ever.**

Rhannion – **I think Mr. Irvine has brought the school up well**

Lee – **I think our school raises lots of money**

Jemimah – **I think Mr. Irvine is the best head teacher in the world and our school rocks. He has brought the school up very well. I think we should have a little bit unhealthy food.**

Lee – **This school is very pretty. The school has a lot of good groups but we should do more drama.**

Lily – **I think the school council should be changed every year, because they get lots of opportunities.**

Rebecca – **I think we have a lot of good people.**

Some of the children have requests, which I suggested they take to the school council.

Alex - I would like school cheerleaders and a school reading club.

James – A chess club.

Oliver, Craig, Adam Calem said – the school needs a warhammer club.

Madeline – could we have hymn books instead of the projector.

Abbie – I think we should have cooking lessons.

One of the children told me that they do lots of things for other countries and they told me Miss Teesdale has just been to Sri Lanka, Miss Teesdale has shared her adventures by giving a presentation in assembly to the children.

I will give the final comment to JT, **“I think Mr. Irvine has put a lot of effort into this school because he has improved the yard (putting fun equipment in for the infants and they love it) and even raised money for charity.”**

I think one thing that is clear from comments the children have made is that they have a lot of respect and admiration for Mr. Irvine and they ‘love’ their school, their enthusiasm and energy clearly reflects this. I know that Mr. Irvine is committed to the children participating in school, in what happens and what changes. As I said in my last evaluation ‘I believe that once again the children in Sedgfield Primary do feel part of what happens in school, very definitely are listened to and enjoy the changes that come about as a result of their discussions and hard work’. As this remains the case I have no hesitation in recommending that Sedgfield Primary receives its renewed Investing in Children membership.

**Helen Mulhearn
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