



Re- Evaluation for Investing in Children membership:

Stanley Crook Primary School

Stanley Crook Primary is a friendly school which caters for boys and girls aged from 4 to 11. On my visits to the school I was made to feel very welcome by Mrs Oswald and all the children I spoke with. For the purpose of this evaluation I had the pleasure of meeting with Emma, Page, Eden, Amy, Jordan, Jake, Rebecca, Arran, Hannah, Ryan, Harry, Jake S and Samantha.

Evidence of Dialogue and Change

School Council

Children volunteer to be members of the School Council. All the children take part in a democratic vote and elect two children from each year to represent them. Amy explained, **“We all take votes in your class and whoever gets the most votes gets on.”** Jake added, **“There are two people from each year.”** The children are responsible for running their meetings. Amy explained, **“I’m the secretary and take the notes. I get to type on Mrs Oswald’s laptop.”** (See attached)

The display board in the main corridor is constantly updated with photographs of the current school council representatives to make it easier for the children to know who to talk to if they want to share opinions or concerns. The minutes from the most recent school council meeting are also put on the display board. This lets everyone in the school know what is happening so if there are any issues people feel strongly about, they can approach their Council Representative.

The School Council Mission Statement is also displayed on the board. This states, **“Our Mission: to give children a voice.” “To help children improve the school.”**

Samantha also told me about the suggestion boxes. She said, **“We have suggestion boxes that anyone can use. This is how we got lap tops.”** Amy added **“People tell you things in person as well. We have class discussions on a Monday morning where everyone talks.”**

Amy then proudly read a list **“of things that we have asked for and got.”** This included:

- A milk trolley to make milk shakes
- Play area equipment
- Laptops
- Interactive Boards which Arran told me **“makes learning more fun.”**
- Better uniform
- Tellies in every classroom
- DVD’s
- Books
- Healthy Tuck shop Amy informed me, **“The foods nice cheap and it’s healthy.”**

- Fruit
- Recycling Bins

The children told me why they enjoyed being part of the school council. Ryan said, **“You get to eat biscuits and get your dinner early,”** while Arran added, **“You get to help people and get to play.”** Jake S told me, **“You help to chose things that people want for the school. Mostly we get what we want.”** Importantly Amy added, **“But if we don’t get something or decide not to do something it gets explained in assembly so everyone knows.”**

Class Rooms

Everyone was keen to tell me how they help decide what goes into their class room. Samantha told me that all the class rooms have a water cooler. Eden said, **“We can get water when we just ask for it, when your waters empty.”** While Samantha added that they all have, **“tellies with DVDs.”** Amy told me about the new furniture in the class rooms. **“There’s lots of new furniture that we asked for. It’s more comfy and everything. And we got some new blinds that we wanted.”** Jake added, **“We have votes for what everyone wants. For things like the colour of the carpets and the walls. I like blue best, that’s what I voted for.”**

Hillary Armstrong

The local Member of Parliament recently visited the school. Jake proudly told me that, **“Hillary Armstrong came to see our school. She wanted to find out more because her dad came to this school.”** Jordan added, **“She met everyone. She talked about where we live, how old we are and stuff like that.”** Amy added, **“I asked for her autograph. We asked for a picture and we went in the paper again.”**

School Trips

The school has organised again a trip to Kingswood. This was in response to requests made through the School Council. (See Minutes 21st September 2006 attached)

Everyone from year 5 and 6 have the option to go. Hannah said, **“My mam is going as well. She’s a teacher in class two.”** Jordan informed me that, **“It’s really good there. I want to go back.”**

There has also been a trip to the pantomime at Darlington and an outing to see Horrible Histories. Class 4 have asked if they can go to see it next time.

Anti Bullying

Anti Bullying training was discussed in the school council meetings (see minutes attached). This included discussions about what was needed for teachers, mediator training for year 5 and 6 children and mini buddy training for year 1 and 2. At each school council meeting a report is given by the Mediators and Buddies. If any issues are raised, the Council discuss the best way to resolve any problems. For example, Councillors decided to go through the Anti Bullying Cards in assembly and also made sure everyone knew where advice leaflet were kept.

Jake told me that the school have recently received a special Anti Bullying Award. He said, **“We got this cos we invented a bully bench and then we learnt about being a mediator. We volunteer to be mediators. Me and Ashton went to County Hall and we met Esther Rantzen.”**

There are lots of activities, clubs and events happening at Stanley Crook Primary School. Everyone works hard at maintaining the After School Clubs that are very much wanted by the pupils.

Jake said, **“If we want to do something we put it in the Suggestion Box. We get to play football, do arts and crafts and there’s a computer club. I like the football.”**

Harry added, **“We pick what sports we want and just ask.”**

There is an openness and support network which is very strong between staff and pupils. The school tries to ensure the inclusion of all children in every aspect of its life and work. Everyone at Stanley Crook Primary School works hard together to care for and expand the opportunities that they have created and which allow everyone in the school to contribute.

When I asked the children if they agreed with this evaluation, there was a unanimous YES! I therefore have no hesitation in recommending once again that Stanley Crook Primary School receives Investing In Children membership. Well Done!

Glenys Newby
Investing in Children
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