



Re-evaluation for Investing in Children membership

Sir Charles Parson School

For the purpose of this evaluation I met with Billy, Steven, Chris, Keith, Andrew, and Samina.

Over the last year the school has seen many changes and developments. John Preston, the previous head teacher, has retired and Nick Sharing is now the Head Teacher. The school's new swimming and therapy pool also opened in February.

The school was runner up in the Journal's Sustainable Schools Award, for the work the students and staff did to develop the school garden area. They achieved this award by growing flowers, fruit, vegetables and then selling them, raising money to maintain the garden project. The school has also been awarded Science College status by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust.

The school continues to create opportunities for young people to enter into dialogue. This report will highlight these opportunities and look at things that have changed at the school.

Opportunities for Dialogue and Change

Drumming Club

A drumming club has been set up as this is what some young people have asked for. Christopher and Sean met with panel members from the 'Kids Decide Fund' to discuss their ideas. After their hard work and commitment they received £1700 to buy equipment for the club. Christopher told me, "I had an interview with two adults about my ideas for the drumming club". They also made a film which was shown at the 'Kids Decide Fund' event held at St James Park.

Interviews for Staff

Billy, Chris, Steven, Keith, Andrew and Samina were involved in the interviews. The group told me that they wrote their own set of questions and developed their own marking system for the interviewees. Below is the marking system the young people used.

- Red – no.
- Amber – ok interview.
- Green – Would be good to work at the school.

Billy explained "One of the people we interviewed told us that she did not know how to use makaton".

Samina added, "One person would not listen to us and kept turning away when we were talking".

Keith told me “One person we interviewed had a frosty face and kept looking uninterested and did not know that much”.

Steven mentioned, “We had time after the interviews to talk with staff about your scores”

The school listened to the ideas the group had for the interviews and decided that if any of the candidates scored red, then that person would not get the job. The young people interviewed for the post of head teacher, five teachers and six learning support assistants.

Annual Reviews

Students in Key stage 3 have been talking with staff about annual reviews. The staff asked students how they contribute to their annual reviews and if they can be improved.

Students suggested they would like more time to talk about things that are important to them and have more time preparing for the review. The school has made some changes by creating a new personal statement with symbols so all students can use it. Each student now meets one week before the reviews to plan what they want to say. I met some of the students from key stage 3 who told me about the things they talk about at their reviews.

Andrew proudly told me about his great achievements and enjoyed time out of his wheelchair, “I told everyone I can now swim on my back and do a full length in the pool” he went on to add, “I still need help with my reading”.

Billy told me, “I talk about the things I like at school and what things can make me happy at school”.

The new form is to be introduced to the whole school in September.

School Activities

The school continues to encourage students to come up with different ideas for school activities. The students now have a Science Club and Maths Club

Fund Raising

Steven and Sean have been involved in fund raising for the school. Steven proudly told me, “**We decided to raise money for Water Aid**”. Sean explained how the school has been raising money, “We have planned raffles and coffee mornings”. Sean went on to add, “For every ton of cans we collect we get a tree for the school and a tree for Africa”.

Transition Plan Day

Year ten students attended an event run by Newcastle City Learning Partnership. The event helped students to identify what they wanted to do when leaving school. It also gave students an opportunity to identify barriers that might stop them achieving their goals and how these can be overcome.

Keith said, “I told them that more work experience would be better”

Chris told me, “I told them that someone coming into the school and talking about jobs more often would be good”

The school is waiting for a report to be written by Newcastle City Learning Partnership. The school have received £10000 to develop an independent travel programme as this was one of the issues that was identified by year ten students at this event.

Through the involvement of some of the pupils at the school many things changed and it is was good to see the positive steps the school have taken to involve pupils in other decisions regarding school policies and procedures. For these reasons I would like to recommend that Sir Charles Parson School continues to be an Investing in Children Member and look forward to more changes being made through the active involvement of the children and young people at the school.

The following young people have read and agreed with the report and recommend that the school continue to be an Investing in Children Member. They are: - Samina, Andrew, Billy, Sean, Steven and Chris.

I would like to thank the young people and the staff for their time and finish by saying well done.

Rob Johnson
Investing in Children
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