



Evaluation for Investing in Children membership

Prince Bishop's Community Primary School

Prince Bishop's Community Primary is a newly built school in Coundon Grange with a new head teacher, Mrs George. The new school is a result of two primary schools merging; they were Dene Valley Primary School, and Eldon Primary School, both of which had Investing in Children membership. It has been an exciting time for everyone involved in the school, with lots of plans and decisions to be made.

For the purpose of this evaluation, I had the pleasure of meeting with Mrs George and a number of pupils at the school – Zac, Kristian, Matthew, Emma, Bethany H, Natalie, Samantha, David, Talitha and Bethany S, who were all very keen to tell me about their school.

Evidence of Dialogue and Change

Name of the New School

All of the children from both schools were involved in choosing a name for the new school.

Suggestions were made for different names, and eventually through voting it was narrowed down to two options, Auckland Way or Prince Bishop's. Samantha told me how the children decided. **“We had a vote, the names were at different sides of the hall and you had to go to the side with the name you wanted. Then we got counted and the one with the most votes won. It happened in both schools.”**

New School Uniform

The children got to decide on their uniform. They looked at the different colours available for sweatshirts and it was decided that it should be a different colour to the two old schools, which were red and blue. Samantha told me that parents also got to fill in a slip with their suggestions. Emma told me, **“We went through the colours and it came to green and grey.”**

The children voted in the same way they had for the name and the eventual winner was green.

New School Badge

The new school needed a logo so the school council were involved in choosing something appropriate. Emma said, **“The school council got to choose the shapes and colours. It's got green for the new school, and blue and red for the old schools.”**

Bethany S showed me her sweatshirt with the badge on and pointed out, **“The writing for the name of the school is in red and blue for the old schools.”**

Plans for the New School Building

When the new school was being planned the children were asked what they thought was important for the new school. David told me, **“We got to say how the school should be.”** Emma said, **“We drew how it should look.”** And David added, **“Things like the fences to keep us safe.”**

School Council & School Captains

The new school has a new school council. Zac told me, **“We chose a boy and a girl out of each class, we had to put a vote in a box.”**

Each class has a meeting once a week to decide what the school council should discuss and take to the staff and governors. David told me, **“We make a list of things, then pick three important things to take to the meeting; otherwise the meeting would take too long.”**

The school captains are all pupils in year 6. Emma said, **“The whole school decided, except reception class. We had to make a speech and posters, then elect someone you wanted. You put a tick for a girl and a boy and put it in a box.”**

Plans for the School Yard

Samantha and Emma said, **“Before we broke up for half term we all got a piece of A3 paper, everybody in the school, to give ideas for the school yard.”**

Matthew added, **“We took the paper home to draw what you’d like to improve in the park.”**

Everyone I met with was in agreement that everyone in the school will have their ideas looked at and considered.

At the moment some plans are being made by the school council. Emma said, **“We need equipment on the yard so we told Mrs George. She gave us £200 and a catalogue to choose from. We’ll take it back to our classes to decide.”**

Buddies & Mini Buddies

This is a way for everyone in the school to feel happier at play times. Emma said, **“Mrs Edwards, one of the teachers asked us to write about 50 words about why you should be a buddy.”** Zac added, **“The little ones just had to write a line or so. They’re the mini buddies in key stage one.”**

Samantha said, **“The buddies wear a yellow hat, people can come and ask questions, like can I play with you, can you find me a friend. Or we can go to them if they look like they’re feeling sad.”**

David said, **“There are five buddies in each class.”**

Matthew added, **“Everyone will get a turn, the first term there are buddies, then the second term there’ll be more buddies.”**

Dinner Time

Bethany S told me about suggestions the children had made about dinner time. **“We get to take our coats in the dinner hall, and then when we go outside we’ve got coats. Everyone was going through the school; we go through the door now. It’s easier going outside.”**

MUGA (Multi Use Games Area)

This was another part of the school that the children had ideas about, and got the use of it changed. Emma told me, **“The children said it was too crowded in the mornings.”** Zac went on to tell me, **“So we needed to separate the teams.”**

The children now have different times that they can make best use of the MUGA, and they are all happier with that.

Bullying

The children I met with felt very strongly about bullying and the importance of dealing with it in a fair way. Emma told me, **“If someone’s bullied, Mrs George, she talks to you, she listens to you and sorts it out.”**

Kristian added, **“She listens to both sides.”**

When I spoke to Mrs George, she told me about talking to the children about bullying. She is very keen to continue the dialogue she has begun with the children, and to find out

how they want issues like bullying dealt with. For example, she has asked how things change once a teacher is involved, does it make the situation better or worse for the child being bullied? She has asked the children if they would continue to help her by talking to her and they have all agreed.

The children I met with had lots to tell me about how they enjoy their new school, including the fun activities they get to take part in, and the opportunities they have to try out being librarians, monitors and receptionists for the school. The children are also very proud of winning competitions such as a recent ICT games competition which won the school £600 of computer software. There is clearly a lot going on at Prince Bishop's Community Primary with children at the heart of dialogue. When I asked the children: "Do you think you're listened to?", and it was a resounding "**Yes!**" from everyone. Samantha added, "**Definitely at our school, yes.**"

Emma added, "**If people have ideas you see Mrs George.**"

Kristian said, "**She listens to you.**"

And Emma ended with, "**All the teachers do.**"

The children whole-heartedly felt that their new school should receive Investing in Children membership and I fully agree with them. Well done and good luck with the future developments in the school.

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