



Re- Evaluation for Investing in Children membership:

St. John's Primary School

St. John's Primary School achieved Investing in Children status in February 2006. In order to re evaluate the school for Investing in Children membership I visited St. John's on 19th March 2007.

I met with the Head Teacher, Nigel Bennett. We talked about the ethos of the school. It was obvious from the conversation, and later on my 'tour' of the school, that there is great importance placed on the relationship between staff and children in the school in order for them to work in partnership and continue to work in a way set down in their mission statement.

Mr Bennett mentioned some of the issues which have been raised by the school council over the last year and how they have been acted upon. Following this meeting, I met with a large group of children from reception class through to year 7, as some of the children are now at secondary school, in order to find out the changes which have been made as a result of the dialogue between the children and the staff in the school.

Issues raised through dialogue between children and staff and changes as a result.

Thomas *'Some pupils asked for a basketball club'.*

Equipment was bought by the school and because of its popularity there are two sessions, one for year 5 and another for year 6.

Steve *'Last year for anti bullying week Year 6 organised an activity based on the X Factor TV programme. The final will be judged by people outside of the school., One of the judges owns a recording studio and the winner will get a 'recording deal', which means they will get the chance to cut a CD or DVD.'*

As I walked around the school, children were practising their acts.

James *'Wet dinnertimes have changed. Before you had to stay in the wet area and you couldn't move. There's not much space and you kept treading on each other and could get into trouble. Now instead of doing drawing, games or TV, you have a choice and can go on computers. If you misbehave you have to go back in the wet area. Only 2 children have had to do this since the change took place'.*

Jaime *'The courtyard is boring now. It's going to be redesigned and everyone will have the chance to put forward their ideas. The best idea will be used'.*

Anton *'There's now football for key stage 2.'*

We talked about Key Stage 1 being able to do football as well. Some thought it would be a good idea but would have to be separate. They said that they would find out if children in Key Stage 1 would like to do this.

Katie *'We've changed lunches. Now we have the salad bar, there's been a massive increase in pupils staying for lunch. Before the salad bar there were just three pupils from year 6 now there're loads'*.

'There is a credit card system, which was suggested by a pupil and then changed a little bit so that now if you've been good for a week you get a credit card in assembly and can get something at the tuck shop.'

Lauren *'If you get 5 credit cards in a term you can ask the school council for a prize'*.

Nancy *'We can now get a turn on the netball courts and the nannies bring out equipment for us to play with at playtimes'*.

Millie *'We had a greenhouse which we'd asked for to keep stuff in but it kept blowing over in the wind. We've now bought a poly tunnel which is better'*.

Emily *'The way we line up now has changed. Everyone hated lines! Now when the first bell goes we just carry on playing - it's for the teachers and to let us know it's nearly time to come in. When the second bell goes we all go into class''*.

Mailley *'The school council asked for a day at the NSC (National Sports Centre) and so we're all going there for the day'*.

There still hasn't been any move on the newsletter because the school council has been too busy, but they might look at it at the next meeting.

In the mornings, CD's of their own choice are played in assembly.

The library system has also changed. There are now comfy chairs, paintings, a radio and tape for audio books. There are also monitors working in the library. Since the changes the library has been tidier.

One of the school council heard a teacher saying that it is hard work, having the children choose and influence things, but things are better because of it.

The school council has a budget. Last year they bought a poly tunnel, cherry trees and equipment. They were going to buy basketball equipment but the school paid for this.

In order to raise money for 'Oscars Dreams' the children had a 'Pyjama Day', which was a success.

From the above evidence, it is clear that the children who attend St. John's school are able to influence, not only, their physical environment and resources, but also policy and practice, which is quite an achievement.

Conclusion

The children I spoke with all said that they think the school should get liC membership for another year because the adults in the school listen to what the children in the school have to say and help to change things. Dialogue between the children in the school and the staff has continued to be a central part of school life. I therefore have no hesitation in recommending that St. John's Primary School achieves liC status for another year.

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Investing in Children
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