

Case Study: Using Parents' Meetings to Evaluate Parent Partnership

(Norfolk Community Primary School, Sheffield)

Norfolk Community Primary School is in the heart of Sheffield and serves a large housing estate. Cultural diversity has increased greatly during the past two years, in what was once and almost entirely White British school. The school was recently judged by Ofsted as being good with outstanding features, particularly in terms of inclusion and leadership and management.

What are we doing and why?

As we have over 450 children from nursery to year 6, we are working to develop a structured and sustainable approach in building relationships with our parents and the local community.

The key reason for this is that many of our parents have not had a positive experience in their own education and are reluctant to come into school.

Although we gather the views of parents and carers in a number of ways, parents' evenings provide us with a golden opportunity to gauge their opinions.

The views of the less vocal majority of parents are actively sought at parents' evenings when we sit alongside them and collect their views on a range of issues via questionnaires and discussion.

This process provides parents with the opportunity to contribute to changing practice in school.

Parent feedback has led to us providing speakers and setting up meetings about relevant issues, such as ADHD, and what it means for parents and their children.



A credit union is held weekly as a result of parents' interest. This contributes to them achieving better economic well-being and staying safe. For the children and parents who save, it encourages good financial management and helps them to avoid the numerous high-interest lenders that operate in the school catchment area.

The most recent development has been the installation of playground equipment which has also contributed to children staying safe and being healthy.

Pedestrian shelters for parents have been provided as part of the school travel plan. These improvements were made following consultation with parents through a questionnaire.

In addition, parents' groups have been set up and are now well established in school. Among other things, they help us determine a discussion focus and plan a questionnaire for each parents' meeting. The extra pairs of hands they provide help us to talk to as many parents as we can and to evaluate our progress against all the LPPA Objectives.

Through the questionnaires parents/carers have told us that:

- They are kept much better informed about their children's progress
- They are supported by staff to help their children to learn at home
- They know who to approach at school if their children are experiencing difficulties
- They are confident if they wish to speak to someone in school and trust that they will be dealt with promptly and effectively
- They are given the opportunity to comment on their child's attainment and well being, and feel that staff are approachable

What has happened as a result?

- Parent questionnaires have provided evidence of significant parental confidence in the school, and pinpointed progress
- There is a constructive relationship with parents and carers, focussed on their children's learning and the five outcomes of Every Child Matters
- We have established a systematic way of gathering information and responding to our parents and carers, and it is a way that suits them
- More parents are actively involved in improving their children's learning, behaviour, attendance and achievement
- The stronger links we have made with parents have enabled us to gain a wider appreciation of the community and its needs
- More families are handling their finances better because of the credit union



TOP TIP



Parents and carers are invaluable: show them that they are appreciated!