

Wiltshire Healthy Schools

Case study focus: Pupil participation

Core theme: The Whole School Approach

Greentrees Primary School, Salisbury



School context

Greentrees Primary School serves a modern development of mixed private and social housing on the edge of the city of Salisbury. Proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups, or who speak a language other than English at home, are low. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average.

Why choose this project?

The most recent Health Related Behaviour Survey showed that only 52% of pupils felt that their views and opinions were asked for at school; this was significantly lower than the county average. Only 38% of children felt that their views and opinions made a difference to how their school is run.

What did the school want to achieve?

- To increase the number of pupils who think that their views and opinions are asked for at school
- To increase the number of pupils who believe their views make a difference to aspects of school life
- To decrease the number of pupils who feel that their views and opinions are not asked for and that they do not make a difference to aspects of school life.

What did the school do to achieve these aims?

Monthly opportunities were provided for Class Councils. A School Council representative from each class gathered views and opinions and also fed back on any changes implemented. Class teachers were actively involved, particularly helping younger children to chair meetings effectively. School Councillors met once a term with the Deputy Headteacher to share views and develop a list of 'next steps' to work on that term. The School Council ran an assembly to explain their role to the school and discuss how they could bring about change. A School Council page on the school website was created. Children wrote and carried out a survey to gain views and opinions from all children. The School Council ran events including coffee mornings and the school talent show; pupils were also given a monitoring role in the International Schools Award application.

Wiltshire Healthy Schools

Case study focus: Pupil participation



Core theme: The Whole School Approach

Greentrees Primary School, Salisbury

Pupils were involved in writing several child friendly policies including an anti-bullying policy, a whole school food policy and a PSHE Education policy. Golden Time activities started to be chosen by children, rather than the teacher, which resulted in a feeling of ownership by the children and improved behaviour. Children were involved in choosing the topics to be studied in the Think Great Ideas on Fridays, which have been favourably received by children.

Pupil focus groups were developed and asked their opinion on a range of topics from learning behaviours, behaviour in general and aspects of the Healthy Schools process. The children see this as a way of affecting real change and all involved have asked to remain on the groups for more than one year.

Pupil views are shared with the learning and teaching committee of the governing body.

Measuring success

From the pupil focus groups it is clear that pupils value being more included in the decision making process. One child said “You are able to have your say on how to improve the school”. Another said “You are able to say your opinion and I really like that. And it is acted upon by teachers”.

After 3 years the questions were again asked of pupils. The number of pupils who felt their opinions were asked for at school had risen from 52% to 79%. Those who said their opinions weren't asked for had declined from 16% to 9%.

The numbers of children who thought that their views make a difference to how the school is run had increased from 38% to 71% and those that thought not declined from 20% to 14%.

Lessons learned

The changes that the school has put in place have made a significant difference to pupils' perception of pupil voice, which will help strengthen the school community. The school has noticed that the most vulnerable pupils did not often put themselves forward for the School Council or receive enough votes from class elections to gain a place; class discussions, use of questionnaires and focus groups have provided opportunities to gain feedback from as many pupils as possible. The school is considering ways in which more can be done to ensure that the views of all pupils make a difference.