



Wicklow Educate Together

Vision Evening

Wednesday 11th October 2017, 7:30pm to 9:30pm

Notes from feedback

**Group 1: Sense of achievement, consolidation
Showcasing student work in 12 subjects**

How there could be more communication between parent and teacher about what's happening in the classroom on a regular basis, on things outside the box (e.g. Harvest Week, etc.), giving information to the parents, then if they can help, or add things, they'll know that it's coming up.

Could use plans already in place, one or two objectives each week

Look at use of IT, whatever's most effective for all

**Group 2: Change in Homework Policy
No homework at all?**

Start on benefits of homework, can be positive interaction between parents and children, can be a nice time to check out what was done in school during the day, consolidate learning done in school during the day; benefits of routine (for some children);

Taitneamh started in 4th class, children get to decide what they want to do for homework (e.g. tidy a room, cooking, visit someone, etc.)

Looked at format of homework in other classes

Policies can be changed!

Possibility of looking at Homework Policy

**Group 3: Outdoor facilities
Softer external environment, softer welcome to building
Connection with nature**

Outdoor facilities: discussed playground equipment (e.g. climbing frames, etc.), could be accessed by small groups on a rota basis, alleviate boredom

Buddy benches, painting for games (e.g. hopscotch), problem with tarmac, possibility that it'll be re-surfaced, supposed to get marking as part of re-surfacing;

Some fundraising ref sports day to raise money for playground equipment, perhaps more fundraising to fund extra in future

Taking institutional look off fences, look ideas for cross-stitching, incorporating designs, murals, etc.

Planted seed-bombs last year, could do again (didn't work last year due to lack of rain)

Connection with nature: outdoor class day coming up, also stepping up programme to do gardening classes, nature walks, coming into the summer, outdoor classes (already done)

Welcome/access: side gates bone of contention (doors open, gates locked, shut both)

Group 4: Discussion Forums Communication

Communication – very broad

Two-way process:

From school to parents is very good, compared to other schools (newsletter, website, homework diary, etc.)

Channels for parents to communicate back to school: class meetings, teacher always available, sub-committees: how work done is communicated, in newsletter, how to parents communicate with sub-committees (e.g. Mobility Sub-committee); perhaps have an email address for the various sub-committees for all of the sub-committees currently in use;

Discussion forum is good, but perhaps needs a wider audience, what other options would there be for parents who aren't here this evening

Diverse community, different languages, might be challenging for some members of the school community

Build ethos of Educate Together into school communication

Getting to know other parents when you join the school, how to do that, especially with parents who don't bring their children to the school every day (part of Parent Liaison role?): has to come from whole group

Group 5 Parental involvement Car Park Parent community

Car park is perhaps a bigger issue than can be dealt with this evening

Parent involvement: hope to roll out Aladdin parent portal, with a section where parents with skills could add them, which would allow everyone to know who can offer what

Parents' Association set up in November has built up well, is very new, has received training

PA is umbrella body, will be sub-committees, are areas where parents can be involved;

There is an onus on parents to keep an eye on the website to see what current needs are

Garda Vetting: can get a form from office

Group 6: Arts, Music, Drama and PE

Is an opportunity there to harness parent skills (e.g. Comhaltas, Seachtain na Gaeilge), improving the field, improving equipment, parents have positive feedback on trip to National Gallery, developing field trips a bit more for art, etc.
Sub-committee look at art trips, harnessing wider community
Whole school production: would necessitate a stage, good PA system, maybe this year, we could shake a bucket for a stage at the concert

**Group 7: Ethos
Nurture room**

Nurture room: full size classroom, fully kitted out appropriately, e.g. soft lighting, etc. Staffed by a resource teacher, who would remain in that class. Access for those with particular need at the point of need; could be a range of students at any time, but not more than 8 or 9 at any one time.

Ethos: section of parent body who would be concerned as to whether democratic aspect is being fulfilled

PA meetings: suggest alternate between morning and evening, to access parents; would it be possible to have a committee meeting, but have it open so that other parents who aren't on the committee be there to see what's going on

Group 8: Community building: International (within school), external, internal

Get to know parents in classroom, have two classroom liaisons, volunteering in classroom, clear expectations on how many parents, role, etc. Language might be difficult, think about language support

Cultural Week coming up in school, to link in and build on that, through recognition of various nationalities in the school, look at various aspects through parental involvement

Library link, invite parents in to look at aspect, come and read a story in their own language, have books in that language in the library

Irish: build culture of Irish, through language etc.

Implement mentor programme

Group 9: IT Capacity

What sort of hardware the school needs

Can be very beneficial, but if overused, can be to the detriment of the children

5 years: every class fully operational whiteboard, look at iPads or similar rather than computers, to facilitate learning in small groups