

1. Introduction

A school self-evaluation of Partnership with Parents was undertaken during the period September 2017 to May 2018. The purpose was to assess the effectiveness of our approach to improving our partnership with parents as set out in our DEIS plan. At the beginning of the school year a questionnaire was given to parents to assess what their interests were in order for the school to accommodate their needs and interests. During the school year another questionnaire was given to parents to determine if they thought that methods of communication used by the school were effective.

2.School Context:

James's St. CBS is an inner city DEIS secondary school – boys and girls-operating under the trusteeship of ERST. There are currently 116 students in total, 87 boys and 29 girls enrolled. The school offers a varied curriculum, including a Transition Year Programme.

In CBS James's St, a whole-School approach to working with parents and guardians is recognised as an essential part of the teaching and learning process. We recognise the importance of working with parents in the school environment, in wider society and in ensuring the personal growth of individual students. We are committed to the development of a whole-school approach to working with parents to improve learning and to raise standards within our school.

3. The following targets were agreed under the DEIS plan.

1. To increase attendance and participation at Parent Council Meetings, parents courses and PTMs.
2. To improve communications from school to home and that they be made more 'parent friendly' specifically for ESL risk students.
3. To increase parental involvement in more aspects of school life with a focus on parents of ESL risk students.

4. Audit of existing Provision for Partnership with Parents

Existing Partnership with Parents Interventions 2017-18

- Parents Book club
- Book in every home scheme-Books are given as a Christmas gift to families who have very little or no literature in the home.
- Parents are responsible for holding an annual book fair in the Primary school.
- Coffee mornings
- Art Workshop
- Bokwa
- Healthy eating cooking class
- An LCVP information evening for parents
- A TY information evening for parents
- Home visits by HSCL

- Christmas lunch
- Zumba
- Flower arranging
- Makeup masterclass
- ESOL
- VSWare text messaging service
- One extra parent teacher meeting for exam classes
- Facebook page
- Twitter account

5. Findings

Courses for parents

- 11 courses were attended by 10+ parents
- 8 coffee mornings were held every term
- These were attended by 10-15 parents
- 5 home visits per week were carried out by HSCL
- Active Aging Christmas lunch was attended by 60 grandparents
- Parent Plus Programme was attended by 5 parents
- Numeracy and Literacy programmes were attended by 8 parents.
- Zumba/Bowka and Kettlebell classes were attended by 10-12 parents.
- Baking classes were attended by 10+ people.
- Healthy eating classes were attended by 10-20 people
- Craft workshops were attended by 6 people.
- 6 people participated in the weekly walk
- School Transfer programme was attended by 30 parents
- The TY and LCVF information meeting was attended by 19 parents

Parent teacher meetings

- | | | |
|------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| • 1st year | In attendance 19 | Non Attendance 7 |
| • 2 nd year | In attendance 14 | Non Attendance 9 |
| • 3 rd year | In attendance 13 | Non Attendance 17 |
| • 4 th year | In attendance 8 | Non Attendance 9 |
| • 5 th year | In attendance 11 | Non Attendance 10 |

Findings from questionnaires:

Parents were given a questionnaire to find out what their areas of interest were. Classes were organised based on the results of this questionnaire.

42 parents completed the questionnaire.

- 20 parents had an interest in cookery
- 13 parents had an interest in computers
- 37 parents had an interest in Book Club
- 2 parents had an interest in crochet

- 6 parents had an interest in film
- 5 parents had an interest in yoga
- 4 parents had an interest in couch to 5k
- 42 parents had an interest in Parenting classes
- 39 parents had an interest in Zumba

At the 1st year parent teacher meeting parents were given a questionnaire to complete. 16 parents completed the questionnaire.

- A majority of parents agreed that reports on their child's learning are written in a clear and accessible language.
- All parents strongly agreed that reports on their child's learning give them a clear insight on how he/she is progressing in their learning.
- A majority of parents checked their son/daughter's journal weekly.
- All parents said that text messaging is an effective form of communication from the school.
- A majority of parents said the school is open to a two-way communication about their child's learning.

Our school has strengths in the following areas:

- A full time HSCL who is prepared to innovate/initiate new courses and programmes in the interest of students and parents.
- A Whole school staff approach to working in partnership with parents
- A culture of good relationships between staff and parents
- A range of courses available that parents can participate in
- An effective communication system between the school and parents

6. The following areas are prioritised for improvement

- Increased parental participation at Parent Council meetings
- Increase in parental attendance at Parent teacher meetings
- Increase in parental attendance at courses and events organised by HSCL
- Communications between the school and the home to be made more 'parent friendly'.

January 11th 2018

School Self-Evaluation Questionnaire for Parents

Dear parents and guardians,

We are undertaking a self-evaluation of *Partnership with Parents* in our school. To help us in that evaluation, we would be very grateful for your views and opinions on the matters in the questionnaire below. We would be very grateful if you would complete it and return it to the school before Monday 15th January. Please note that you may complete the questionnaire anonymously and that all individual responses will be treated confidentially.

Thank you very much.

Paul Mac Entee

| | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Don't know | Agree | Strongly agree |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Reports on my child's learning are written in clear and accessible language | | | | | |
| Reports on my child's learning give me a clear insight on how he / she is progressing in their learning | | | | | |
| I check my son/daughter's journal Weekly | | | | | |
| Text messaging is an effective form of communication from the school | | | | | |
| The school is open to two-way communication about my child's learning | | | | | |

Any additional comments or suggestions about how communication about learning between the school and students' parents / guardians could be improved.