

Isobel Mair School & Family Centre

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Dear Parents

I sent out evaluation forms to all parents in March asking for your views of the school. Thank you to all of you who sent in such positive replies and comments.

There was one question however that did not receive such a high number of positive replies. The question was, 'I have a say in how to improve the school.'

I am therefore formally writing to all parents asking them to take this opportunity to influence the ongoing improvements we try to make across the school.

Please use the attached form to send this information to me. All suggestions will be looked at and we will do our best to work towards achieving many of them. There are however limitations to what we can do, so if you write that you would like the school to be open 365 days a year, there would obviously be staffing and budgetary constraints which would make it impossible to do!

I look forward to receiving your suggestions on the attached forms.

Please remember however that we do operate an 'open door' policy and we are always receptive to suggestions from parents via reviews, parents' evenings, open days and telephone calls etc.

Thanking you in anticipation for your support in this matter.

Regards

Mari Wallace

Head Teacher

Please scroll down to see responses to all comments

Isobel Mair School
Self Evaluation

Improvement Planning Suggestions by Parents
May 2013

What we asked		What you said.	What we are going to do about it.	Timescale
<p>How can we make Isobel Mair School even better?</p>	1	In my opinion the school is an excellent school. It cannot be improved any more.	Many thanks for your comment. We will continue to try our very best to Get it Right for every child, all of the time, in everything we do.	Ongoing
	2	Continue educating students to the age of 21 with the addition of a college facility.	Thank you for the compliment but we only have the resources to educate our young people up to the end of 6 th year! We do however work hard, in collaboration with other agencies, to ensure that all our young people have a positive destination on leaving school.	Ongoing
	3	We feel we have a say in the school through the class teacher and Parents' Committee. We don't have any suggestions at this time but would put them forward if we did. Our son already uses outwith school hours i.e. Star Gaze, football and extended school year. As he gets bored easily this is already a great help to us.	We will continue to have an 'Open Door' policy where parents feel able to approach any member of the SMT regarding any matter pertaining to the education of their children.	Ongoing
	4	I personally think the school is superb and how great the staff are. I don't think it needs any improvements and I am sure if I did my views would be taken into consideration.	We welcome suggestions from parents at any time, not only as part of our formal evaluation process.	Ongoing

What we asked		What you said.	What we are going to do about it.	Timescale
<h1>How can we make Isobel Mair School even better?</h1>	5	<p>Significant increase in Speech and Language therapy and greater expertise on communication devices.</p>	<p>As a result of continually raising the concerns of parents with the Directorate we are delighted that in addition to our current SLT provision we now have an SLT assistant working in the school three days per week and also the SLT Team Leader is currently working in the school two half days per week.</p> <p>We are aware that although we have a range of communication devices in the school they are not all be used to their full potential. Last session we successfully applied for funding to allow us to further develop our use of communication devices by arranging more training for school staff, other agencies who support our pupils and also for parents and families.</p> <p>We are very much looking forward to starting this project very soon.</p>	From November 2013 - June 2015
	6	<p>Provide parents with future plans about how the school intends to support children in working on their targets so that parents and children can work together.</p>	<p>Targets for the following session are fully discussed with Parents at the Parents' Evening in June and parents have the opportunity to input into them as necessary. Thereafter progress towards achievement of targets is the focus of Parents' Evenings held in October and January and also the Annual Review. The Home School Diary provides a way for parents to have continued dialogue with parents about how well their child is doing. Our Open Door policy is in place for any parents wishing to meet with SMT and / or their child's teacher regarding any query or matter of concern.</p>	Ongoing

What we asked		What you said.	What we are going to do about it.	Timescale
<h1>How can we make Isobel Mair School even better?</h1>	7	Make snack menu more diverse so that children can experience a variety of foods and include soup in lunchtime menu.	Soup is already on the menu but very few children choose it as an option. Fruit and toast are always available as an option for morning snacks and parents are asked to supply a healthy snack for the afternoons.	Ongoing
	8	Community / out of school access to pool.	This subject was discussed at the Parent Council meeting in August which was attended by our Active School's Co-ordinator and Warrior's Co-ordinator. Warriors have submitted an application to Awards for All for funding to enable out of hours use of our pool.	As funding allows
	9	Improved communication from SLT and physio to home.	<p>Please see response to comment 5.</p> <p>Discussions have been held to discuss ways to improve our Speech and Language Therapy service. Letters have been sent out to parents regarding input at Stages 1 and 2 and SLTs will be sending out info to parents of children at Stage 2 detailing their input.</p> <p>Our SLTs have also organised a comprehensive training schedule for parents and staff.</p> <p>We plan to evaluate these changes to our SLT service but in the meantime please do not hesitate to let us know if you feel if there has been an improvement to our service or if there are more improvements we should be making.</p>	From November 2013

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<h1>How can we make Isobel Mair School even better?</h1>	10	Let parents know what children are having for lunch.	This matter has been discussed with our catering staff. We are unable to put our planned menus on our website as many mainstream schools do as our catering staff provide so many specialised diets for our children. Parents should liaise with teachers through home / school diaries if they wish info regarding what their child has had for lunch.	Ongoing
	11	Circulate reports prior to reviews. - All agencies.	As we are an ECO friendly school we try to keep our photocopying to a minimum by only circulating reports at meetings and circulating them as with the minutes of the meetings. However we can respond to particular requests by parents if they feel that is useful for them to have education reports prior to the review meeting.	Ongoing
	12	More usable transport to and from school.	New buses with internal chairlifts have now been introduced. This should help with the challenges of freezing chairlifts in very cold weather! We would also like to remind parents that the length of bus journeys to and from school depend largely on minimising waiting time at all pick ups / drop offs.	Ongoing

What we asked		What you said.	What we are going to do about it.	Timescale
<h1>How can we make Isobel Mair School even better?</h1>	13	<p>Communication with class teacher is variable - home school diary not always used effectively. - Any improvements in behaviour / mood/ progress/ interventions/ strategies.</p>	<p>While diaries are a very good way of promoting communication between home and school and vice versa parents should be aware of time constraints on staff and that time spent writing diaries means less time teaching children!</p> <p>If parents need further info about any aspect of their child's education / behaviour they should make an appointment to meet with class teacher / Depute Head Teacher.</p>	Ongoing
	14	<p>Children being able to access soft play / sensory rooms during weekend / evening school fairs</p>	<p>When organising an out of hours event an application for a school let has to be made stating exactly which rooms are required. It is not possible to use any area of the school unless it has been stated on the application form and the more rooms used the more the let costs!</p> <p>Health and Safety would also have to be taken into consideration to ensure adequate supervision was in place. The sensory room also requires specialist training in working the equipment.</p> <p>When children are attending school fairs etc it should be made clear to them that is the reason they are going to school and they cannot take it for granted that they will be able to access all areas of the school that they do during a normal school day.</p>	-
	15	<p>After school care provision during the extended summer term.</p>	<p>Our after school day is staffed by school staff the majority of whom are undertaking voluntary overtime. During the two weeks in the summer we do not have enough staff willing to work extra hours to enable a programme to be in place.</p>	

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<h1>How can we make Isobel Mair School even better?</h1>	16	More time in pool.	Our pool is fully timetabled across all classes.	
	17	Music for children inside spa.	We are looking into this and hope to find a workable solution without major installation works	Hopefully by January.
	18	At present, we are more than content that we can offer suggestions for improvement through many different channels and that our suggestions would be given due consideration.	Thank you for your comment.	-
	19	Improved communication - I have a child with limited speech and information from the teaching staff is essential. The new diary is great but could we have a class timetable so we can prepare our children for their day ahead?	We do try to ensure that there is effective communication between school and home. I am sorry that you feel we do not have it right for you or your child. Please ask your child's teacher, via school diary, for a copy of the class timetable if you feel it would be helpful.	-
	20	Could we have a progression chart to advise what stage our child is at throughout the year?	Please see response to Comment no. 6	-
	21	Could we have a list of trips or outings scheduled for the school year and a list of dates of swimming and other sporting activities?	This is difficult to do for the whole year but teachers have been asked to try to send out details of special events for the month / term ahead. We do however have to be responsive to opportunities that arise if we think they are beneficial to the education of our pupils.	From August 2013

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<h1>How can we make Isobel Mair School even better?</h1>	22	More music therapy.	<p>For the last nine years the Education Department has given the school additional money in the budget to pay for one day's music therapy. In 2010 / 2011, the year we moved into the new school, we had some extra money which we used to buy a second day's music therapy.</p> <p>In 2011 / 2012 the Parent Council applied to Awards for All for funding of a second day and paid the difference in costs from Parent Council Funds.</p> <p>This year we have been lucky to have been given some extra money by our former Director of Education before he retired, and we are using this money to pay for a second day's therapy. Any good ideas about how we can continue to fund the second day in the future would be welcomed.</p> <p>If we only have our therapist one day per week those children who benefit from music therapy will receive it in blocks.</p>	
	23	Improve communication. Parents of non verbal children can struggle with getting info about daily activities.	Please see response to comment 19	
	24	Don't wait until two days before an activity to tell parents the child needs a certain item sent in. Parents who work cannot always get things at short notice.	Please see response to comment 21	

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<h1>How can we make Isobel Mair School even better?</h1>	25	Less holidays as my son gets bored easily.	<p>The school is open 41 weeks per year which is two more weeks than mainstream schools!</p> <p>East Renfrewshire runs holiday programme and the Inclusive Support Team also runs activities which children can access during the holidays.</p> <p>Please contact the school if you would like information about these programmes.</p> <p>We have also put details on our website regarding some out of school activities that are regularly used by our pupils.</p>	
	26	You are all working very hard. Just keep it up.	Thank you for your comment.	
	27	More after school activities / clubs / groups (exercise.) Always easy to suggest but may be more difficult to fund / provide resource. It would however be good to have something outwith hours where children can socialise.	There are already quite a few opportunities for out of school activities open to our pupils. Please see response to comment 25.	
	28	IMS to accept child care vouchers.	<p>We are sorry but we are unable to accept child care vouchers to pay for afterschool. The reason for this is that our service is run by the school staff, the majority of whom are working extra hours as voluntary overtime.</p> <p>As a school we are not registered with SCSWIS (Social Care and Social Work in Scotland) and therefore not able to accept vouchers. If you wish to use vouchers to pay for after school care you should contact MACs 0141 887 0002 about accessing one of their out of school facilities.</p>	

What we asked		What you said.	What we are going to do about it.	Timescale
How can we make Isobel Mair School even better?	29	I don't think there is anything that could make IMS better. It's already a really great school and all the staff do a brilliant job.	Thank you for your comment.	-
	30	I would like more notice for event dates and invitations as working parents can find it hard to re-arrange commitments at short notice.	Please see response to comment 21	-
	31	My child would like more regular swimming. There were numerous occasions last term when her swimming was cancelled.	<p>There are very strict procedures in place to ensure that our pool complies with all aspects of Health and Safety. Unfortunately contamination occurs from time to time and our pool requires to be closed to preserve the Health and Safety of our pupils.</p> <p>Parents can assist us in trying to keep our pool safe by letting us know if their child has had an upset stomach and is therefore unable to enter the pool for 48 hours after last sign of infection.</p>	Ongoing
	32	I would like it if events can be staggered over the week as many events tend to take place on a Thursday.	We have asked classes to organise events such as Open mornings on different days of the week. We have also changed our monthly Thursday Coffee and Chat sessions to alternate Tuesday afternoons and Thursday mornings.	From August 2013

Thank you to all parents for your suggestions.

Please remember that you are able to make suggestions at any time throughout the year and not only as part of formal evaluations.