Reducing barriers to Family learning in our School

Curriculum for Excellence (2011) emphasises that parents play a key role in supporting their child’s learning. The Scottish Government (2017) recognise the need to have high quality, easily accessible information for parents about their child’s education and ensure that everyone is included in their child’s learning and achievement.

In response to new government policies and research I decided to explore family learning in our school. In past years parents have been reluctant to visit our school and become involved in family activities. In recent years we are delighted that more parents have become involved in our school however we aim to include all families in learning in our school. Therefore my practitioner enquiry will explore barriers in Family Learning and through research I aim to implement new practice to ensure all families are given the opportunity to benefit from Family Learning in our school. I began my enquiry by using questionnaires and focus groups.

Questionnaires

Questionnaires were made available online and 300 parents were invited via twitter, school app, texts and school blog to complete questionnaires.

15 parents completed the questionnaire.

Therefore after a 3 week period I sent 126 paper copies to each family via pupils. Questionnaire was translated in Arabic and Urdu as required.

26 people completed and returned paper copies.

Results are recorded in attached excel chart.

Focus Group

I arranged two focus groups in the morning and afternoon to accommodate parents. I had an Arabic and Urdu translator available if required. My focus was to develop health and wellbeing in Family Learning.

Meeting 1 Attendance – 15 females and 3 males

Meeting 2 Attendance – 8 females and 1 male

I explained the purpose of the focus group.

* To discuss how our school could help families become more involved in family learning
* Suggest activities families would like to be involved in

Barriers to Family Learning

Most parents agreed with information from the questionnaires that work commitments/study and child care were the main barriers in Family learning.

Some stated that the school didn’t provide activities that interested them.

Parents said that some other parents didn’t feel involved in school activities because they were never asked personally.

What can we do?

* Provide child care provisions
* Offer varied times to suit all families
* Offer activities relevant to our families
* Invite parents to activities in person as well as through media

What activities do you wish?

Findings from Focus Group

From the data I established that most parents were interested in

* Learning IT skills
* Café Connect
* Family trips
* Relaxation
* First Aid Course
* Volunteering in school

Suggested activities to include more families in Family Learning.

* Allocate time for Mr Stewart to teach IT skills to parents
* Continue to develop Café Connect
* Organise Family summer trip
* A parent has offered to provide yoga sessions once a week
* Contact First Aid instructor to provide education
* Pass details of volunteers to volunteer coordinator for allocation
* Other interests will be developed further in the future.

Thank you to all our families who took part in my study and I look forward to developing these areas with you further in the near future.

Karen Mc Fadden