

Thematic report title: Tackling poverty and disadvantage in schools: working with the community and other services, July 2011



The parent council

Context

Herbert Thompson Primary School is situated in a deprived area of Cardiff and approximately 58% of learners are eligible for free school meals.

Strategy

To encourage parents to play an active part in the life of the school and to take a close interest in their children's education. A particularly good feature is the parent council. The objectives of the council are to:

- work in partnership with the school to create a school which is inclusive for all parents;
- promote partnership between the school, its staff, its learners and all its parents;
- develop and engage in activities which support the education and welfare of its learners;
- identify and represent the views of parents on the education and welfare of the learners; and
- consider other matters affecting the education and welfare of the learners.

The council provides an effective way to ensure that the school engages effectively with its parents by listening to parents' views and ensuring that parents feel valued.

Action

The effective parental links and knowledge of learners' family backgrounds informs the learner tracking system so that the school is able to identify specific strategies to improve learners' achievement. The school collects and analyses data very well to provide evidence that strategies such as the parent council has an impact on learners' wellbeing and academic progress.

Outcomes

The key stage 2 outcomes for core subjects have improved significantly over the past four years and the core subject indicator is well above the average for similar schools. The gap between the achievement of learners eligible for free school meals and those who are not has narrowed over the past four years and is now smaller than the average for similar schools and the national average.