

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF GOOD PRACTICE

Partnership: Knowsley North Cluster Gifted and Talented

School: Brookfield

Author: Sara Edwards

Email contact address: saedwards@merseymail.com

Reasons for investigating practice

To improve the communication between child-parent-school. Initially pupils would complete an IEP with the G&T co-ordinator on paper format. Through this project we wanted pupils to start taking ownership of their IEP and start to get more parents involved both celebrating successes and working on areas which individuals need to be developed. Highlighting the positive aspect was important for the pupils of Brookfield so that it is a good thing to be classed as gifted or talented from peers. We wanted to allow pupils to get an understanding of what their gift or talent is and to start to raise pupils' aspirations and attainment. The way in which pupils learn was identified again raising pupils' awareness of their own education needs and to plan the way forward for their learning.

Action

Pupils completed a questionnaire and there followed a small group interview & discussion session with peers of similar standard/ability and the school Gifted and Talented coordinator. Preferred learning styles where a key issue and a identifying the pupils preference to learning was an area we needed to investigate. Discussions were had about the pupils' future and we looked at what steps were needed to be taken in order to meet their dreams/aspirations. The IEPs were completed electronically in the City Learning Centre and then posted on the web. Parents were invited into the CLC to be introduced to IEPs/ Gifted and Talented and also to look at their child's individual needs and aspirations. Parents were given a password so that they could access the IEP from any PC whether it being at home or coming into the CLC and they were encourage to complete their section on the IEP.

Outcomes

The response from parents was extremely positive. They appreciated the input they were having and enjoyed the interaction they had in the CLC. At present we have come across a technical hitch so parents are unable to access the IEP's out of the CLC but this is being worked upon. Parents were very positive and excited by the support system that is in place and actively responded electronically to our requests with assistance from their child.

Pupils have responded well and are very keen to explore their preferred learning style. This has helped them in their lessons and has given them an insight into why they react to different learning situations within the school. The teachers have also gained a great deal from this experience, which has highlighted the need for flexibility towards teaching styles to ensure that all preferred learning styles are catered for within their classroom. Aspirations have been raised and the impact of G&T has developed across the whole school.

Next Steps

There needs to be minor technical development to ensure internet access from home PC's. We are actively training mentors to work regularly with pupils in updating IEP's and setting realistic targets for pupils. Once the technical query has been overcome we plan to share this across the cluster and then full Borough. Mentor training will be delivered during the summer term within the North Cluster to share the good practice across the Northern Cluster. This will then be developed across the authority. We will be continuing this process through the Junior Athlete in Education Programme (Youth Sports Trust) with the ideas that similar training will take place for all subject specific mentors.