

Linking to the Community

National Sustainable Schools Conference Workshops

Facilitator:	Camilla Baker
Organisation/School:	Gainsborough School
Conference:	London, 8 th July 2009
Name of workshop:	Community Engagement in Schools
Workshop description:	
<p>Schools in urban areas often struggle to get parents 'in' to school. Parents' evenings are poorly attended, or parents appear un-cooperative or negative. Using one embryonic project that began as a reaction to challenging behaviour, I will look at the many pitfalls and difficulties for schools working with 'hard to reach' parents. I will present the many attempts that we have tried, and some of the lessons learned so far. We will discuss how to 'sustain' ourselves, as we try to match what communities want, with what schools are expected to deliver. This session will be highly participatory.</p>	
Conference themes which the workshop covered:	
<p>Whole school approach – getting others on board; involving community into the curriculum. evaluating progress. and Linking to the community</p>	
Workshop audience:	
<p>Practitioners with responsibility for parental involvement, either trying to set up a new group, or maintain the momentum of an established organisation.</p>	
Workshop format:	
<p>Case study – using images of 'community engagement' Discussion Planning</p>	
Workshop outputs:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parents come with their own baggage, fears, experience of school. Parental involvement is a new thing – our parents weren't necessarily asked out help out in school... 2. We need to follow what interests + engage our community. Understand what motivates parents and what <u>they</u> want. 3. Communicate by text! Parents love it! 	
Related Resources:	
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Related Web Resources:	
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Extended Schools encourages all schools to forge links with their local community, offering local meeting space and encouraging pupils to contribute to, and interact with, the local community. More information can be found on Teachernet:

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/extendedschools/>