

Family Engagement
at
Tylorstown Primary School

Prior to visit to New York:

- Relationships between staff and parents were poor
- Staff did not feel respected and parents did not feel valued
- Staff were reluctant to try to improve the situation
- I felt that we were in desperate need for a family engagement officer but had no money in the budget to fund one

During the visit to New York:

- I was blown away by the community model
- I recognised that early intervention and the multi-agency approach would be beneficial for us
- The message I took away was that we need to be more creative in our thinking with regards to funding to afford a Family Engagement Officer

On my return:

- Determined to find a way to fund a Family Engagement Officer
- Looked at staffing structure - moved staff around to release a teaching assistant to become Family Engagement Officer
- Sell my vision to Governing Body (FEO post arranged as a secondment)
- Sell my vision to staff (some resistance)
- Apply for funding to set up a family room

Role of Family Engagement Officer:

- Meet and greet parent/a trusted adult
- Attendance
- Provide workshops - Family Thrive/Families Connect
- Supporting parents with external agencies
- Safeguarding
- Develop pre-school links - Flying Start, home visits, weekly baby group

Creative Collaboration project (Arts Council for Wales)

- Applied for £10,000 funding to work with another school with the focus of family engagement
- FEOs from both schools worked together with class teachers and creative practitioners
- Aim to engage parents and empower them to actively participate in planning sessions with the children
- Parental engagement was excellent with some parents leading sessions with the whole class

Impact to date:

- Relationships with parents are greatly improved with all staff
- All parents are engaging with school and signed up to Class Dojo to support remote learning
- Created a fundraising group looking at skillsets of parents
- Grandfather on board who has a wealth of experience in community projects
- Currently making links with the local scouts group to apply for joint funding to improve the school yard and local community

Impact to date (continued):

- FEO supported families through lockdown (food parcels, referrals to agencies, wellbeing support)
- All staff have supported parents and pupils through lockdown
- Parents have appreciated the support they have been given
- Staff feel valued by parents
- Staff are now very supportive of the role of FEO