

INVESTORS IN PUPILS CASE STUDY
St Paul's JHS, Lurgan, Co. Armagh
Investors in Pupils Coordinator Fionnuala McCann

Rationale for introducing the Investors in Pupils award

The rationale for introducing the Investors in Pupils award was taken following an ETI (Education and Training Inspectorate) report in which the school's pastoral care was evaluated as 'satisfactory.' In order to improve on this the school identified the need to increase pupil voice and participation within the school. The five key areas within Investors in Pupils provided a medium for pupil voice and participation to be increased. A form teacher programme was developed which addressed all 14 areas of Investors in Pupils throughout the school year. Accelerated learning mornings were also organised to allow classes time to complete anti-bullying presentations/induction booklets etc. It was the strong focus and commitment to the Investors in Pupils Award and the 5 key areas which resulted in a greater collaboration between pastoral and curricular teams. As a result the ETI report at the end of 2013 highlighted that



"the quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is now very good"

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"Schools are first and foremost about pupils. Schools exist only because of the pupils in them. It is therefore wholly right and appropriate that the school strives to achieve an award that situates the pupils at the centre."

Board of Governors

How the award has been implemented

The Investors in Pupils award was introduced into the Pastoral section of the SDP in 2012. It has taken until June 2014 to fully embed Investors in Pupils within the school so that it is not 'contrived' or viewed as an 'add on'. Rather Investors in Pupils is integral to the school's ethos and practice and pupils are at the heart of the initiative.

The award was introduced at a whole school level involving pupils, staff, parents, non-teaching and canteen staff. A whole school target was also set within PRSD (Professional Review of Staff Development); Staff training took place every 6-8 weeks. Investors in Pupils Head Boy and Deputy Head Boy were appointed within the school. Their role was to support teachers and form classes with vision statements, assemblies and ensuring rewards etc. were arranged. The following was implemented to help pupils in each of the five areas:



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Learning: Study Skills sessions were organised for all pupils, learning styles discussed with every pupil, staff roles fully explained to pupils and notice boards identifying staff and their roles displayed in the main corridor, Investors in Pupils was explained within student planners, SMART targets were explained and there were high expectation that pupils would set and meet these. Focus groups established for Literacy in which pupils suggested areas for improvements e.g. monthly literacy targets, pupils analysed PASS survey results and prepared power point on strengths of their class and areas for development, focus groups established within each form class to discuss what was going well or not with Investors

initiative, major focus on assessment for learning through implementation of '2 stars and a wish' by every teachers and pupils also encouraged to use this when completing peer assessment. Increase in personalised learning through IEPs which reflected specific needs and subject pathways increased through active collaboration with neighbouring schools, increase in the number of pupil roles allocated within the school, classroom assistants helped pupils focus not only on IEP targets but also Investors in Pupils targets.

"Investors in Pupils really has been the perfect addition to an absolutely brilliant school. It has guided us in the right direction and helped us in our daily learning. IIP has taught us along with our school staff, parents and senior management team how we can take one step further into a brighter school life!" Student

Behaviour: Form booklet comprised that focussed on behavioural targets (address negative behaviour or increase positive behaviour). Pupils analysed behavioural data twice monthly, pupils involved in changing the behaviour coding system within the school so that merits outweighed sanctions, merit awards changed to reflect student interests, increased link with local Behaviour Support Team to provide proactive and supportive strategies before intervention was required e.g. teachers trained in the delivery of Circle Time.

"We have worked hard all year and received many merits form our teachers and we have tried to be on our best behaviour at all times. We also try to keep up our attendance and only take days off if we really need to or we will let our class down with our attendance target." Student

Attendance: Form booklet required pupils to set attendance targets (group and individual). Increased link and presence with EWS within the school e.g. at school assemblies. Attendance tracked on daily basis and monitored robustly – this resulted in a significant increase in the school's overall attendance.

Classroom/school management: Representative from the Board of Governors responsible for finance delivered power point presentation to pupils outlining school's budget and cost. The role of the Board of Governors was also explained. PE dept. discussed the cost of PE and form teachers highlighted the cost of a classroom by getting pupils to cost every item in the room. Pupils involved in school assembly. Pupils involved in linking with local primary schools for football blitz and anti-bullying presentations. A Student Council was established and a budget of

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money was allocated. Pupils applied for all roles and were elected. Head Boy and Deputy Head Boy also participated in interview. The Student Council was chaired by the Head/Deputy Head Boy and an agenda was completed with Investors in Pupils co-ordinator before meetings to ensure that pupil voice was being heard. Student Council minutes e-mailed to all form teachers to share with form classes and notice board compiled Day theme and this connected with menus/food served in canteen. Chef invited to Student Council meeting and more theme days organised within the school year as a result. This connected with the Healthy Schools philosophy which was already in place. Staff/pupil relationships were developed through the organisation and delivery of rewards in which the form teacher also participated. This may have been a DVD /Play station/Bowling afternoon and sometimes individual and group rewards were combined so pupils could choose a more significant award.

“We have worked non-stop for Investors in Pupils and our teachers have worked 10 times harder than any other teacher in the country. I like it because it relates to everything we do in school and we get loads of really good rewards for meeting targets.” Student

This was integral in helping them meet their targets School secretary and caretaker also helped staff organise and supervise trips to Paris and Barcelona. Pupils also involved in reviewing the mobile phone and anti-bullying policies. Form classes wrote letters to form teachers inviting them for an interview so they could learn more about their roles. Classes also developed interview questions for teachers taking on after school classes to ensure they were suitable for the post. Pupils involved in online surveys to measure pupil opinion in after school clubs offered, the anti-bullying culture, the child-centred approach and their overall views on the effectiveness of Investors in Pupils.

“I like completing our Investors in Pupils booklets and our vision statement has helped to keep us focused. Investors in Pupils has helped me understand SMART targets.” Student

Induction: All form classes completed an induction booklet, staff induction booklet compiled, focus group established with Newcomer co-ordinator to ensure pupils from various countries felt included within the school.

Impact of Investors in Pupils within the school:

Assessment has risen by just 2% overall and **Attendance** for each year group has increased by 2% overall.

The positive **behaviour** within the school has resulted in positive behaviour outweighing negative behaviour. Negative behaviour has reduced by 50% in years 8-10 and 20% in years 11-12.



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The use of form teacher booklet which addresses the 14 key areas of Investors in Pupils had resulted in consistency across form period (20min) with each class covering the same key areas at the same time. Pupils are fully involved in all areas of their learning and give regular feedback through the established focus groups and student council.

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The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) report in 2013 highlighted the following:

- The development of a more coherent pupil-centred approach has enabled the pupils to have a greater say in life and the work of the school
- Increased collaboration with other schools enabled the pupils to access additional subjects
- The positive working relationships between the pupils and the teachers
- The opportunities for the pupils to take greater responsibility for their learning