



CARPENTERS PRIMARY SCHOOL

July 2011

'Carpenters Creating Partnerships'

The School Context

Carpenters Primary School is a large inner city primary school and nursery in Newham on the boundary of the London 2012 Olympic site. It serves an area of high social deprivation with over half the pupils eligible for free school meals. There are over 63 languages spoken and 83% have English as an additional language. 81 pupils have refugee status, Newham having the highest percentage of refugees in the country. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, the largest being of Black African Origin. Within Stratford there is a high level of regeneration however this has substantially increased the rate of mobility especially as two large tower blocks serving our catchment area have been decanted.

At Carpenters we strive to ensure that children will become well rounded young people characterised by creativity, curiosity and empowering them to become independent learners and active young citizens. We aim to create an environment where all stakeholders are able to make a positive contribution to the school, local and wider community promoting personal development and lifelong learning.

Local Authority

Newham Borough Council

School /Centre

Carpenters Primary School

Having a Purpose

At Carpenters we have aimed to embed the Every Child Matters strands throughout our curriculum and extended services provision as it promotes community cohesion.

In 2007 Ofsted stated

The school has strong links with others, including parents and external agencies, which give particularly good support to pupils' personal development. The pupils' contribution to the wider community is outstanding especially in the work they are undertaking for the forthcoming Olympics. Pupils make a strong contribution to life in school and an

exceptionally strong contribution to the wider community. Pupils' preparation for their economic well-being is satisfactory overall ...

In the light of this report we re-evaluated the provision being offered to support pupils economic awareness. We wanted the children to have high aspirations and to leave school with the skills that would enable them to be ready for the world of work.

As well as making good progress we wanted pupils to develop the following qualities:

- * self confidence
- * independence
- * flexibility
- * creative thinking
- * risk-taking
- * Good communication
- * Financial awareness

We were committed to involving all stakeholders in the role of school improvement through the process of consultation. Parents completed questionnaires on aspects of the provision and informal discussions were conducted with the extended schools coordinator and inclusion team. The school council was encouraged to develop ideas and give feedback on their learning. Inset was delivered to all staff to review the provision offered and suggest improvements and governors were consulted at meetings. These actions led to new targets being developed and implemented into the school improvement plan to ensure economic awareness became a whole school priority.

The regeneration of Stratford and the Olympic site surrounding our school meant there was a wealth of partnership opportunities available but the dilemma we found, how were we able to access them?

Our initial objective was to establish links with the Olympic Delivery Authority as this was at the core of the regeneration within Stratford. However, we found that when we approached our local community there was many apprehensions and mixed feelings as communication in the past had been problematic due to plans constantly being changed causing uncertainty among the residents of our neighbourhood estate. The head teacher and extended schools coordinator attended various planning and development meetings provided by the ODA many of which were late nights and during school holidays. Through this continuous networking we were able to create a strong partnership where we were able to express the views of the local community. Collaboratively, it was decided that we would aim to address the issues concerning our community by holding residents meetings at the school as it was a location where local residents could access easily and felt comfortable.

Creating Business Partners

With decreasing school roll numbers due mainly to regeneration, it was imperative that we thought creatively about how we could ensure the provision offered met all strands of the

ECM agenda whilst at the same time ensuring we were using our resources effectively to meet school and community priorities.

In 2007 we were approached by the East London Business Alliance to participate in an adoption scheme to link organisations with the school community. The company we were linked with was Morgan Stanley. A meeting was held and a delivery plan created to ensure we were meeting the school and community targets. We stated our concern about the declining condition of our school and how it was in dire need of redecoration to create a stimulating environment where children could learn effectively. It was agreed that the organisation would redecorate classrooms as a team challenge therefore allowing them to develop teamwork, leadership skills in a different environment and raising staff morale while taking part in a valuable community project. The funds saved from redecoration has meant that we could place additional resources to support our extended services.

The success of this project was repeated when we were approached by the Financial Services Authority (FSA) however we wanted to combine the team challenge with classroom activities with a focus on economic awareness due to our Ofsted report.

In consultation we created a programme of projects including activities for an enterprise day where the pupils in year 5 & 6 had to create kites by buying, trading materials and then constructing them, a money quiz and an Olympic travel challenge. (see left photo below)



In 2010 we were invited to take part in the 'BEE Financial Literacy Project' led by the FSA where pupils would be able to gain an in depth knowledge of money including trading currencies, taking risks and making moral decisions. (see photo right above)

Through our networking at the Olympic meetings we were introduced to Bovis Lendlease the construction company creating the Athletes Village. We wanted to utilise their skills to support our curriculum and we suggested the idea of an Olympic Garden as we had a piece of derelict land which we wanted to redevelop especially as at the time we were surrounded by construction sites and a lack of green space. Our vision was to involve the whole school and all stakeholders to create the garden. Pupils were asked for ideas to support our overall vision which were formulated into one design in consultation with the school council. The safer neighborhood team approached the school in view to carry out two community days supporting the school in developing the garden. In July 2009 we had our Olympic garden day where we were aided by over 30 volunteers transforming our garden and supporting the pupils with class activities. (See photo below)



Through our relationship with ELBA we were introduced to Barclays which has resulted in a successful partnership where volunteers have led numerous money skills activities and supported underperforming pupils weekly in reading and maths.

At Carpenters we have been actively trying to involve local businesses to engage with the school community therefore using their knowledge and skills to provide opportunities to enhance our extended curriculum. This has been demonstrated by our partnership with Ardmore a construction company directly opposite our school. We approached them with a joint venture which has led to a classroom being built at the construction site where pupils have visited to participate in a programme of maths and design technology activities. (See below)



Other projects

- ODA Construction Crew – Pupils visit Olympic site and learn about history and archaeology, jobs and careers, sustainability. This has led to the pupils leading a whole school careers day.
- Local Stratford business – Created a stock exchange for year 6 pupils (6 weeks)

Impact

- At Carpenters we have strived to engage the community with our school. Our success has been demonstrated by the significant increased participation at community event such as the ODA meeting which is held in the hall which is fully

packed and facilitated by community members.

- Pupils taking part in the Barclays reading and maths partners project have made significant progress by improving by over 3 sublevels – children not having this support on average made two sublevels progress.
- Stimulating indoor and outdoor environment has been created providing opportunities for pupils to learn effectively.
- A significant increase in the amount of volunteers supporting class activities.
- Increased level of financial understanding and enterprise skills.
- Pupils able to make informed decisions about resources used.
- Visitors have observed and commented upon children's ability to communicate ideas articulately to a variety of audiences.
- Pupils given an invaluable insight into jobs and careers available, especially within the construction industry.
- Funding saved from building works has enhanced extended services provision – e.g. SEN children taken horse riding.

The school makes a strong contribution to the promotion of community cohesion, and responds well to the changing needs of the local community.....Links with the Olympic Delivery Authority are strong and pupils have signed the Olympic pledge. The close link with other agencies give good value as they bring in expertise and creative activities the school would not otherwise be able to provide.

Ofsted September 2010

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