

Thornton School – Consultation with Community

Rationale

This School has a commitment to making consultation with the community a realistic, satisfying, and sustainable process. It sees consultation as a major step in developing a collaborative relationship with the community.

Purpose

- To enhance learning by establishing a responsive and effective partnership with the community.
- To inform and seek involvement of the school's community in activities and practices within the school.
- To encourage community and staff commitment by building on existing networks and structures, and/or establish new groups and networks.

Guidelines

1. A welcoming, warm school atmosphere, acknowledging the value of parents' support and partnership should be developed.
2. Opportunities to encourage parents to visit and communicate with the school should be fostered.
3. Consultation should be an on-going part of school life rather than a series of unrelated additional tasks.
4. For effective consultation the school must:
 - a. Ensure the parties involved fully understand the consultation process.
 - b. Develop a commitment from those involved.
 - c. Select meaningful issues to work on.
 - d. Draw on people's strengths and interests.
 - e. Give people prompt feedback and well publicised and constructive action.
5. Efficient processes for gathering, collating, analysing and reporting information and opinions are prerequisite of efficient consultation.
6. Consideration should be given to using culturally appropriate styles and venues in the local community to meet with parents.
7. The school should be responsive to changing methods of communication.

Conclusion

Consultation is a continuous, long term process which should aim to establish a genuine level of communication between the school and the community, and a mutual sharing of view points on a two-way basis.