Research Article

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Understanding the direct involvement of parents in policy development and school activities in a primary school

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Abstract: It is acknowledged that parental engagement with children's learning and education is of vital importance. But, there is a tendency to confuse engagement with learning with engagement with the school. While all types of parents' involvement can have a positive effect, it is actually what parents do with their child at home that has the greatest impact. However, unless parental involvement in learning is embedded in whole-school processes it is unlikely to as effective as possible. This paper documents an action research study that explores the inclusion of parents and home values in the construction of the teaching and learning environment. This was a small step towards positive parent-teacher collaboration, which allowed an exchange of knowledge, values and cultural background experiences. In acknowledging the ways in which the parents already engaged with their children's learning, it began to enhance self-efficacy in their ability to directly affect this learning. This work has also provoked reflexive engagement of my influence and understanding of involving parents of children with additional and diverse learning needs. But, it also details the transformative journey that influenced my thinking about how we as a school could begin to develop whole-school processes to directly involve parents in policy development and school activities.

Keywords: Parental involvement; Parental engagement with learning; Action research; Policy development

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1 Introduction

It is acknowledged that parental engagement with children's learning and education is of vital importance. Research finds that differences "in parental involvement have a much bigger impact on achievement than differences associated with the effects of school in the primary age range" (Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003, p. 86). But, there is a tendency to confuse engagement with learning with engagement with the school. Goodall & Montgomery (2013) present a model for the progression from parental involvement with schools, where the school is in control of the relationship and the flow of information, to parental involvement with schooling in which genuine interaction happens between parents and schools, through to parental engagement with children's learning, where the parent chooses to be involved. This non-linear continuum charts "a change in relational agency, with the relationship being between parents and schools, and the object of the relationship being children's learning" (ibid, p. 399). While all types of parents' involvement can have a positive effect, it is actually what parents do with their child at home that has the greatest impact. However, Goodall (2015, p.174) explains that if "the engagement of parents in learning is not at the heart of the teaching and learning policy … [it] is unlikely to be either as effective as possible or as deeply embedded in the life and thinking of the school as it needs to be in order to be effective". Furthermore, this holistic understanding of parental engagement requires "a knowledge of the parents and families who form part of the school community", in forming a "relationship of trust and respect between families and the school" (ibid, p. 175).

I am engaged in doctoral research, which seeks to investigate educational influences in my own learning, in the learning of our staff, students and parents, and in the learning of wider social formations as we work towards building a school community. Reflecting on sociocultural theories of learning has led me to begin to examine the social and cultural aspects of pedagogy by exploring the

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inclusion of parents and home values in the construction of the teaching and learning environment. This paper documents a co-operative inquiry action research study which allowed an exchange of knowledge, values and cultural background experiences between home and school. I endeavour to show how this began to enhance self-efficacy in the parents' ability to directly affect their children's learning, and to reflect on my influence and understanding of involving parents of children with additional and diverse learning needs. It outlines how this work has significantly influenced my thinking and my reading about how we would enter "a community to create with parents a shared landscape" (Pushor 2012, p. 469), in which there is reciprocity of mutual engagement in the development of whole-school processes to directly involve parents in policy development and school activities.

2 Background to research

I work in an Irish, Catholic co-educational primary school which opened in September 2007 with an enrolment of 57 pupils and 4 teachers, including a Principal, myself as first assistant and two other teachers. By March 2008 I had been appointed Deputy Principal. Within a year, the school had trebled in size. Our school now has a current enrolment of 345 pupils (December 2017), twenty-four teachers, 10 Special Needs Assistants and four ancillary staff. The staff in the school, with the exception of two members, is Irish and the children, while most have been born in Ireland, come from a broad range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds; the school has a multicultural population and a mono-cultural staff.

An important part of the principal's leadership has been an emphasis on pastoral care and the nurturing of school-wide practices to create an affirming and inclusive environment for staff, children and parents alike. In leading for diversity, his leadership can be described an "authentic engagement with self and others, a willingness to take risks, be resilient and push boundaries" (Devine 2013, pp. 408-409). Leadership is "layered and multiple" (ibid 2013, p. 409), and central to this leadership is the empowerment of others. It involves the creation of a collaborative culture, which encourages involvement, professional development, mutual support and assistance in problem solving, allowing school staff to become involved in the work of the school outside of the classroom.

The centrality of the children's wellbeing is underlined in our school's mission statement. We strive to create and provide a safe, secure and happy environment where values of respect and understanding are promoted. While there is a choice of school patronage available on the campus, 48% of the school population is non-Catholic. Inclusivity is valued. We are committed to the holistic development of all pupils, preparing them to reach their full potential and to play a full and active role in their community.

The majority of the parent body have been born outside of Ireland and are unfamiliar with the Irish education system. Strong home-school relationships are valued. We recognise the role of parents as the primary educators of their children. A Whole School Evaluation (WSE) (November 2015) confirmed that effective communication channels between home and school have been established. Responses to parent questionnaires administered during the evaluation indicate that parents are happy with the school. While the evaluation acknowledged our school's identified priority to further develop home-school links, a recommendation was made to "develop whole-school processes to directly involve parents in policy development and school activities" (Department of Education and Skills 2016 p.1). It is in this context that I write this paper.

3 Research Methodology

Action research is the preferred strategy of enquiry; a form of practitioner research where there is professional intent to intervene to improve practice in line with values that are rational and just, and specific to the situation. Kemmis (2009 cited in McNiff 2013, p. 63) explains this as the "sayings doings and relatings" of people in ecologies of practice. My ontological and epistemic stances are situated within this definition. I believe that learning happens within a social context; we *are* in relation to and with others. Knowledge then is shaped by, shared with, and refined through critical dialogue with others.

This collaborative relationship also implies that my own professional values are central to any investigation. My guiding principles are respect and understanding. I acknowledge each person's entitlement to equality of opportunity to realise his/her potential for growth, to be listened to, to speak, to offer opinions, to question and to be happy yet to be responsible for their words and actions towards others; to belong to a community that works, lives and learns together for the good of all. Thus, my ontological and epistemological stances resonate with Heron (1996, p. 127) as he describes human flourishing as the "mutually enabling balance between autonomy, co-operation and hierarchy". In recognising the self-determi-

nation of each person, as we support and learn with and from others, while taking appropriate "responsibility for doing things to and for other people for the sake of their future autonomy" (ibid p. 127), I adopt the principles of Heron's (1996) co-operative inquiry.

4 Co-operative inquiry

Heron & Reason (2001, p. 1) describe co-operative inquiry as working with other people who have similar concerns and interests to:

> Understand your world, make sense of your life and develop new and creative ways of looking at things.
>
> Learn how to act to change things you may want to change and find out how to do things better.

Heron (1996, p. 20) describes this as two or more people researching a topic through their own experience of it, using a series of cycles in which they move between this experience and reflecting together on it. Each person is co-subject in the experience phases and co-researcher in the reflection phases. In the action phases they experiment with new forms of personal or professional practice and in the reflection phase they reflect on their experience critically, learning from their successes and failures, and developing understandings which inform their work in the next action phase. Thus, both political and epistemic participation are involved. Heron (1996, p. 49-50) outlines the inquiry stages as:

4.1 Stage 1 The first reflection phase the inquirers choose

- The focus or topic of the inquiry and the type of inquiry.
- A launching statement of the inquiry topic.
- A plan of action for the first action phase to explore some aspect of the inquiry topic
- A method of recording experiences during the first action phase.

4.2 Stage 2 The first action phase when the inquirers are

- Exploring in experience and action some aspect of the inquiry topic.
- Applying an integrated range of inquiry skills.
- Keeping records of the experiential data generated.

4.3 Stage 3 Full immersion in Stage 2 with great openness to experience; the inquirers may

- Break through into new awareness.
- Lose their way.
- Transcend the inquiry format.

4.4 Stage 4 The second reflection phase; the inquirers share data from the action phase and

- Review and modify the inquiry topic in the light of making sense of data about the explored aspect of it.
- Review the method of recording data used in the first action phase and amend it for use in the second

After the four stages of the complete cycle, the inquiry continues through "several more reflection – action – reflection cycles, the concluding reflection phase of one cycle being continuous with the launching reflection phase of the next" (ibid, p. 50). While the stages of inquiry are outlined, Heron reminds us that this is "only *a* way". He (ibid, p. 49) does not consider that adopting these stages, "explicitly or tacitly, is the only way to do a co-operative inquiry".

5 Methods of data collection

Dadds and Hart (2001, p. 169) write about the importance of methodological inventiveness and the willingness and courage of practitioners "to create enquiry approaches that enable new, valid understandings to develop; understandings that empower practitioners to improve their work for the beneficiaries in their care". In inviting parental participation, I decided not to video record the sessions to avoid undue stress, although photographic evidence was collected later in the process. Notes were taken during the feedback sessions of the workshops. I maintained a research journal on a continuous basis, which contained my personal accounts of progress made throughout the process. It also reflected my values and recorded personal insights as these impacted on the data

and its interpretations. A follow up focus group discussion with colleagues reflected on parental response.

As with all teacher research, a letter outlining the proposed research was circulated to the parents. This would inform their consent for the use of comments or ideas shared during the parent workshops. It was explained such data would only appear in the final study with their prior consent.

By accounting for how my values informed this work and how they become my standards of judgement, I begin to develop my own pedagogy, *a pedagogy of the unique* (Farren, 2006). I attempt to validate my claim "to know" against critical feedback. McNiff (2007, p. 320) recognises two forms "first, by subjecting the account to the test of commensurability with one's own internal commitment and, second, by subjecting it to external public critique". This writing of this paper is one such opportunity.

6 Cycle 1

6.1 Phase 1 Co-researchers: an area of concern

During the 2015-2016 academic year, myself and one Special Needs Assistant worked together to provide additional support to a small group of children, who presented with additional and diverse learning needs. In collaboration with class teachers and parents, we reviewed and monitored the children's School Support Plans (SSP) and Individual Education Plans (IEP), both formally and informally. The children's positive response to instruction was evident. However, being keenly aware of home and school as the two most prominent loci where social interaction leads to individual development, we wanted to draw more on families' "funds of knowledge" (Moll et al. 1992) in enhancing home and school learning. These parents were already aware of my earlier doctoral research on formative assessment in the infant classrooms, but now I wanted to invite them to work with us to investigate how we could include parent and home values in the teaching and learning environment of the infant classes. Being mindful of the sensitivities involved in bringing a group of parents together whose children present with diverse learning needs, we spoke to each of them individually and invited them to participate. We explained that we would like to help them to support their child's learning, and that we also wanted to create "opportunities for the exchange of ideas … and foster rich dialogue and collaboration" (Cobb 2014, p.51) in this work. They also received a letter outlining what was involved, as referred to earlier.

A series of four parent workshops based on the early learning skills that underpin literacy, mathematical, and social development were devised by the class teachers, the Special Needs Assistant and myself. These as, Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2005, p. 120) explain, were to enable the parents "to know what is expected of their children and offers a context for understanding links between learning tasks and learning goals", enhancing their capacity to support their children's learning. These workshops were held during March and April 2016. While we understand the centrality of the role of the children's class teachers, myself and the SNA would co-ordinate the workshops and each class teacher would have the opportunity to work at one session. The format of each workshop included an overview of the skill being explored, and an activity would then be introduced and conducted with the parents, which they could take home to work on with the children. We would also encourage the parents to share their own games and rhymes with us. Time would be allocated at the start of each subsequent session for review and sharing of this experience. Of concern to us here was what Reason (1999, p. 208) describes as a "revisioning of our understanding" of collaboration in planning for and supporting children's learning, as "well as transforming practice". We wanted all members of the group to contribute both "to the ideas that go into [our] … work together, and also [to be] … part of the activity that is being researched" (ibid, *p*. 208).

6.2 Phase 2 /3 Co-subjects immersed in the experience

While this programme was initiated by the school, it was not because of a perceived insufficiency of parental engagement. Of the seven children, six parents participated in these workshops. The other parent could not participate in the workshops as she had just commenced employment. One of the six parents attended the first workshop, but was unavailable thereafter as the family was returning home for an extended holiday. She did however attend a final session having returned to Ireland. As Goodall (2015, p. 174) clarifies, "the most effective instances of parental engagement do not tend to happen in school", we continued to support these parent's engagement with their children's learning through informal contact.

Of the six parents, five were mothers, while the other father and mother took turns to attend. In reflecting on this participation, I concur with Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2005, p. 107) who suggest that parent's involvement "is

motivated by two belief systems: role construction for involvement, and sense of efficacy for helping the child succeed in school". Throughout the SSP and IEP process, these parents had shared a sense of responsibility for their children's learning, as well as a belief that they should be engaged in supporting this learning but they sought support to do this.

This work encouraged parent-child interaction through play. The simple games of bingo, pattern work, threading and cutting, and musical emotion word games had been successful in targeting the "parents' knowledge, skills, time, and energy" (Hoover- Dempsey et al. 2005, p. 120). Feedback showed that the parents appreciated that their involvement was influencing their children. An honest response from one parent, who found that while her child knew how to play the games, he wouldn't always do so, encouraged others to share difficulties they were encountering. One parent explained that her child sometimes found it difficult to take turns with his sibling when playing the games. We could offer parents ideas to promote the child's learning and understanding through positive reinforcement when he /she was making the effort to do the action being worked on. It also offered an opportunity to share the importance of how a "growth mindset" (Dweck 2006), promotes resilience in the face of difficulty, which leads to success in learning. But the parents also began to listen to each other. On one occasion, one parent explained how she used flour, water and food colouring to make a playdoh, which we had explained could be used to promote the fine motor control skills necessary for handwriting. Another parent had tried out this suggestion and returned to the group the following week to share her success with this.

6.3 Phase 4 Co-researchers reflecting on a transformative experience

I had worked on a daily basis with the Special Needs Assistant for the past two years. We trust each other; our collaboration is safe and provides mutual support and challenge. Being conscious of engaging with the parents and not just giving information, we examined if the activities we planned emanated "from an ethos of the valuing of parent in the educational process" (Goodall 2015, p. 176). We wanted to acknowledge what they could offer and provide the assistance they needed to support their children's learning. We found that this was a small step towards positive parent-teacher collaboration which began to enhance self-efficacy among parents. Some had been unsure of how to support their child's learning. Now confidence in what they wanted to do was emerging. One parent volunteered to do some gardening with the children; she is interested in horticulture, as is her little boy. We had set out to include parent values. This would allow us to begin to draw upon the knowledge and skills found at home, to re-imagine our work in the SSP and IEP process to be, as Pushor (2011, p. 221) recommends, centred on the "co-construction of curriculum with parents, children and other family members". Parental feedback at the end of the four workshop sessions showed that that we had in some ways strengthened their beliefs in their ability to directly affect their child's learning.

As a school we acknowledge the right of children to communicate and socialise in the language of their home. Children who have attained some level of literacy in their home language are encouraged to sustain the development of literacy in this language. In the SSP and IEP meetings, we explain to parents how important the continued enhancement of the child's language and literacy skills in the home language is for affective development and acquisition of the new language. In these parent workshops, we had encouraged the parents to share home rhymes, songs and games but some openly stated their preference for using the language of the school at home and asked for written instructions for each of the activities to help them do so. One parent further explained that her child was "*experiencing difficulties with English and would prefer help with this*" (Field Notes 15/04/2016) to ensure her progression in learning. This is a valid concern that concurs with Walker & Tedick (2000, p. 22) who found that in immersion settings parents may have a "heightened desire for information about curricular content, student progress and, above all, a need for reassurance about achievement". The timeframe of this work was so short to actively involve the parents in enhancing first language. However, in learning from this, we later revised our introductory booklet for parents new to the school to include advice on the importance of continuing to use the first language of the home.

Some parents became comfortable discussing their children. One parent spoke at length about how she had learned about the importance of learning from mistakes; she has "*learned to change her approach to her*" child. She was beginning to re-evaluate her style of parenting and was "*not getting annoyed*" (Field Notes 15/04/2016). She wanted to help her child to become "resilient and resourceful and to learn to cope with change and situations in which things go wrong" (NCCA 2009, p. 16). Another was becoming quite open about the difficulties she was experiencing with her child at home. After each of the earlier sessions, she had waited until the other parents

had left before seeking advice, but now in the final session she spoke about trying out the suggestions. The group had offered reassurance. This openness led to a suggestion that the parents could come and work with the children in the Support Room. All parents agreed. Photographic evidence of this work would be collected.

7 Cycle 2

7.1 Phase 1 Co-researchers: further action agreed

A plan for a brief second action phase was decided. Each parent would work alongside her own child in the Support Room over two sessions. The Special Needs Assistant and I would start each session with the parents and the children would join us a little later. I would direct the activities. Each parent would then repeat the task with her own child, which they could later work on together at home.

7.2 Phase 2 / 3 Co-subjects immersed in the experience

Two parent-child sessions were conducted in May 2016. Similar activities to what had been shared with parents in the earlier workshops were introduced; chosen because the children were familiar with them and would not be daunted by what was being asked of them. We were "*anxious that this would be a successful experience for the children and their parents*. *It would be the first time parents would see their children at work in school and vice versa*" (Reflective Journal 04/05/2016). We wanted the children to welcome parental involvement; invitations from children are "uniquely important because they motivate parental responsiveness to learning needs" (Hoover-Dempsey et al. 2005, p.110). Most children were excited to do this; one hugged his mother and wondered why she was there in his school, others were keen to show what they could do. But some found the situation overwhelming and needed much support from the SNA or myself to participate. No parent became outwardly upset. By week two, they had relaxed.

7.3 Phase 4 Co-researchers reflecting on a transformative experience

This time parent feedback centred on the children's learning. The parents saw what the children were doing in school. They showed an understanding of how the children were learning, and drew comparisons to their own school days of where rote learning instead of understanding was valued. We had thus begun to "exchange knowledge, values, and perspectives of [our] different cultural backgrounds" (LaRocque et al. 2011, p. 120). Some identified their children's strengths and difficulties; *she is good at maths… it's language that she finds difficult … he can say if he is sad …* (Field Notes 13/05/2016). They appreciated that learning can be enhanced through play and hand-on experience. Others exchanged ideas on various daily activities they shared with their children, such as cooking and baking, helping with homework, different television programmes that the children enjoyed, and on the YouTube videos that encouraged their children's participation in alphabet learning, and in number games and songs. The parent workshops had provided an opportunity to encourage what De Gaetano (2007, p. 147) underlines as "the parents' potential and capacities to emerge and flourish" around their children's learning and to " value the ways in which parents are already engaged with children's learning" (Goodall & Vorhaus 2011, p.6).

The parents were quite confident in managing the tasks at home but enquired if further workshops would follow. We sought suggestion for this further work. One parent thought we had done a lot of work on maths and asked that further work could be done around language. Follow-up workshops should reflect this suggestion, and the parent's earlier offer to volunteer her time and expertise to work with the children on the school garden should be accepted, if we are to show parents "that their voice matter" (LaRocque et al., 2011, p. 120). I think that we have travelled a little distance on the road to showing parents that "they have something to offer in a dialogical relationship" (Haines Lyon 2015, p.39).

8 Developing a pedagogy of the unique

McNiff (2013, p. 67) defines action research as a spontaneous, self-recreating system of enquiry. It allows for responsiveness to the situation, to those involved and to their growing understanding or consciousness raising, actively involving them in their own educational process.

Farren (2006, p.18-20) ascribes this as inspiring thinking towards developing one's own *pedagogy of the unique* which is "characterized in the recognition that each individual has a particular and different constellation of values that motivates his/her enquiry, as well as being situated in a distinctive context within which the enquiry develops". For me, this began with 'dialectical critique' and 'risk disturbance' (Winter 1996, pp. 13-14, cited by Cohen et al. (2000, pp. 228-229)). In reflecting on sociocultural theories of learning, which underpin my way of being, and my values and belief in what I do, I had begun to examine the social and cultural aspects of pedagogy. I understood home and school to be the two most prominent loci where social interaction leads to individual development. I know that we have established good communication channels to ensure parents are well-informed about the school and their children's progress. However, I had questioned my understanding of my role as an educator as "being in a relationship with and working alongside parents" (Pushor 2012, p. 477).

While responding to diverse learning needs, we strive to ensure that each child is nurtured to develop his/her potential. We cannot do this on our own. Factors that shape educational outcomes for children include school quality but extant research, reviewed by Desfogres and Abouchaar (2003, p. 4), also points to the importance of the form of "'at-home good parenting'" which has a significant positive effect on children's achievement and adjustment. We had seen during our SSP and IEP planning and review meetings that these parents wanted to be involved in their children's learning. We had wanted to include parents and home values in the construction of the teaching and learning environment, and to offer the help which would allow them to support their children's learning. As Goodall and Vorhaus (2011, p. 7) suggest in identifying interventions that are effective in supporting parental involvement, we had some understanding of what the parents were already doing with their children, and how they were "most likely to respond positively to attempts to engage them (further) in their children's learning". However, more importantly, we were now learning that the opportunity "to walk alongside parents for a short while" and to see our "teacher knowledge and expertise as a complement to parent knowledge" (Pushor 2012, pp. 471-472) in the education of their children, is where real engagement begins to be realised.

While these workshops are one way of enhancing parental capacity for engagement, we recognise that many parents cannot be in the building. Of concern now is how we can support active interest in the children's learning "from the perspective of the home environment" (Hardie and Alcron 2000, p.110). This prompts me to reflect on my own childhood and the Saturday night viewing of the weekly detective story and on how my mother honed our literal and inferential comprehension skills through her comments and questions. We did not know that she was teaching us, and maybe she didn't either, but she did expect that we watched and followed the story line; that we could identify the characters, and predict what would happen and explain why. This for me is parental engagement with children's learning. We just need to find and tap their strengths.

Our work focused on developing a way to work with a group of parents of children with additional and diverse learning needs. This has helped us revise our understanding of an effective way to help parents engage with their children's learning on specific goals planned in the SSP and IEP process. However, I now think that, as Desfogres and Abouchaar (2003, p. 70) found, "if a difference is to be made for all children ... strategic planning which embeds parental involvement schemes in whole-school development plans" is essential. It must be based on a holistic view of parental engagement and it must be led by senior leaders (Goodall and Vorhaus 2011), who encourage involvement and the empowerment of others. I have come to appreciate this as based on an ethos of respect and core beliefs of "proactive collaboration", involving sensitivity "to the wide ranging circumstance of all students" and valuing "the contribution that all parents have to make", engendering parent empowerment (Raffaele and Knoff 1999, p. 452).

As a school, which does not have a Home School Community Liasion Coordinator to engage in full-time liaison work between the home, the school, and the community, we knew that it would be helpful to take time to define what we understand by involving parents more directly in policy development and school activities. We needed to consider the different perspectives, which are shaped by the difference in life experiences and in the attitudes and beliefs held by all in the school community. During the 2016-2017 academic year, we began the process of developing a broader understanding of what is clearly a very complex phenomenon. We defined what the terms *working with parents*, *parental involvement*, *partnerships with parents* and *parental engagement* mean to us as individual teachers, as well as a school. The positive impact of parental involvement on their children's learning is recognised. We acknowledged the influence of parental involvement in shaping the child's self-concept as a learner, and in promoting social and educational aspirations and values. We know that we involve the parents with the school, with schooling, as well as helping them to engage

with their children's learning, albeit being at different points of this continuum with different activities and with different cohorts of parents. Difficulties and challenges are also noted. The need for clear procedures and expectations around parental involvement with children in the classrooms is considered essential. This is situated in an understanding of the complexity around the whole issue of parental involvement and participation. It is essential that we are cognisant of cultural differences. Values and norms differ within the whole school community.

Recently, a member of the Support Team has been released for one day each week to encourage parental involvement and engagement. While this work is in its infancy, she has already undertaken Pushor's (2011) recommendation and has worked on the co-construction of the curriculum with the parents who manage the Homework Club in the school. She understands the importance of supporting an active interest in the children's learning from the perspective of the home environment (Hardie and Alcron, 2000) and is surveying parental interests to organise courses for parents, but also to tap their strengths.

My review of literature has prompted an interest in the typology of parental involvement advocated by Epstein et al. (1992, 1996, and 1997), which outlines six main categories of activities through which schools can engage with parents, family and the community at large, linking school outcomes with the way the school engages with parents. It is focussed engagement, based on a foundation of trust. It recognises that training needs to be provided not only for parents but also for teachers and that time must be given to planning, communication and consultation. And most importantly, it specifies that this work must be monitored, evaluated and reviewed to ensure its success in achieving mutually beneficial goals. To this end, *Partnership School Ireland*, a joint initiative by the National Parents Council Primary (NPC) and the Irish Primary Principals Network (IPPN) has been investigated. However, we have had not enough opportunity to elicit parental views on involvement with schooling and engagement with learning. We are cognisant of cultural differences and experiences. It has been decided to host an open evening for parents and teachers in the spring of 2018, to explore what we, the community, value in terms of children's learning. Outside experts will facilitate this. It is hoped that an Action Team Partnership can be created from this to directly involve parents in policy development and school activities.

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