

Wirksworth Junior School Staff Away Day Report



09:00 – 15:30
Monday 20 February 2017
Wirksworth & Middleton Cricket
Club Pavilion



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Away Day objectives

By the end of the Away Day we will have:

1. Captured and celebrated the achievements of Wirksworth Junior School over the last year;
2. A better understanding of the structure, and content within, the Wirksworth Junior School Strategic Development Plan;
3. Explored ideas and agreed actions on how we can best deliver the vision for Wirksworth Junior School;
4. Had the opportunity to spend time with colleagues away from the pressures of a normal school day.

Agenda

Time	Session
09:00	Arrival & registration
09:30	Welcome & introductions
	Celebrating our achievements
	Exploring the Strategic Development Plan
11:15	Break
	Identifying the issues
	From words to action
13:00	Lunch
	Review & recap
	Reviewing the actions
	Moving forwards
15:30	Close

Attendees

The Away Day was attended by the following staff and governors:

First name	Surname	Role
Michelle	Beech	Teaching & Learning Assistant
Neill	Bennett	Chair, Governors
Sally	Bradbury	Senior Business Assistant
Laurie	Croft	Teaching & Learning Assistant
Bernie	Donovan	Y4/5 Teacher
Mandy	Fentem	Teaching & Learning Assistant
Sarah	Glover	Teaching & Learning Assistant
Sarah	Gregory	
Lesley	Grover	Headteacher

First name	Surname	Role
Sharon	Hytch	Y5/6 Teacher
Jannine	McCarthy	Governor
Jenny	Morrison	Y3/4 Teacher
Barbara	Southam	Senior Business Assistant
Sue	Spencer	Teaching & Learning Assistant
Helen	Taylor	Y5/6 Teacher
Julia	Twigg	Teaching & Learning Assistant
Rachel	Warren	Governor

Apologies were received from Sarah Robson.

Celebrating our achievements

The aim of this session was to capture and celebrate the achievements of Wirksworth Junior School (WJS) over the last year.

Responding individually staff and governors noted down their motivations for working at WJS and what they considered to be WJS's key achievements over the last 12 months.

The content generated from the session was as follows:



1. Something I'm proud that we have achieved over the last year is...

Something I am proud that we have achieved over the last year 'Silver Award for school games mark'.	Achievements of last year's SAT's result. Results and improvements in 1 st class at number 2.	Widening the Year 6 experience to include more teachers with amazing success.
Results for last 2 years. Wider sports opportunities.	Guiding and nurturing our most challenging children so they self-manage their behaviour.	Something I'm proud of that we have achieved over the last year is I feel we have grown (closer) as team.
A superb set of results in 2016!	Children's achievements in 1 st class in numbers 2.	Pulling together and Lesley!
I am proud of how my colleague and I collaborate 2 brains are better than 1.	Achieved lots of sporting opportunities including lots of children.	How well we have all pulled together and worked as a team.
Something I'm proud that we have achieved over the last year is that - despite all the pressures – people have been willing to work as part of a team.	Something I am proud we have achieved over the last year is the way in which we nurture children's social development as well as their academic progress.	Something I'm proud that we have achieved over the last year is how well our 'Y6' children did in their SATs.

Themes:

- Teamwork.
- Sport.
- Inclusion – staff and pupils.
- SATs.
- Interventions – bringing children on to realise their potential.
- Forest schools / Outdoor learning.

2. A personal motivation for working at WJS is...

Personal lovely team / good friends / interaction with children.	Working with such inspiring colleagues and children.	A personal motivation is inspiring children to love reading!
A passion to watch the school develop positively whilst facing the latest educational challenges.	A personal motivation is that I feel appreciated and respected by my colleagues.	To hopefully make the school a wonderful learning environment for our children.
A personal motivation for working at WJS is to try to provide the best possible education for the pupils.	The lovely and supportive colleagues and the children!	Wanting to help the school to be the best place for our children to learn and develop.
Pulling P.E / sport – kids etc. together so that's it's fluid and natural.	Working with a caring team of friends who have their hearts in our school.	A personal motivation for working at WJS is the opportunity to 'act up' stretch myself occasionally in class and to work within one classroom at T.A.
A personal motivation for working at WJS is being able to see children progress and develop, especially children who struggle with certain areas.	A personal motivation for working at WJS is seeing children achieve something they thought they couldn't.	To be part of (responsible) the development of children in all aspects of school and in particular those children who struggle with certain areas.
A personal motivation for working at WJS is seeing children smile when they finally 'get it'.	A personal motivation for working at WJS is helping the children from a staff group perspective – all teachers sharing the same goal.	Developing children's skills within all abilities and seeing them learn through different, ability-related objectives.

Themes:

- Children.
- Colleagues.
- Making a difference.
- Inspiring and motivating.
- Seeing children develop and grow as a person (not just academically).

A whole group discussion then took place to identify the school's 'ingredients for success' or the contributing factors that led to the achievements listed in response to Q1.

Ingredients for success

- Teamwork.
- Tenacity.
- Creativity.
- The kids.
- High expectations.
- The want / desire – pupils and staff.
- Collaboration.
- Facing and striving against adversity.
- Support.
- Hard work (blo*dy hard work!)
- Respect for one another.
- Professionalism.
- Flexibility.
- Persistency.
- Encouragement.
- Good relationships – colleagues and children.

This exercise had proven that the school can and does demonstrate significant achievements across a range of areas. The group were asked, during their discussions during the day, to be mindful of the 'Appreciative Inquiry' approach when looking for solutions i.e. seeking to replicate the 'ingredients for success' more frequently and more consistently.

Exploring the Strategic Development Plan

The purpose of this session was to develop a better understanding of the structure, and content within, the Wirksworth Junior School Strategic Development Plan (SDP) (see Appendix 1).

Working in small groups, each group was given the Strategic Framework sliced into separate individual strategic objectives and strategic intentions. The task was to identify the four strategic intentions and group the relevant strategic objectives under them.



Thinking about the communication

Each group was then given a different 'audience' to consider and asked:

- a) What elements of the SDP might be of particular interest to the audience; and
- b) What would be the most engaging and effective way to communicate with the audience about the SDP?

Groups rotated round the different audiences, building on the content generated by their colleagues.

Working on their original audience groups were asked to identify the ideas which were felt to have the biggest impact for the least amount of effort. The 'top three' were noted, these are highlighted in **green** below.

Pupils

What elements of the SDP might be of particular interest to pupils?

- High standards.
- The most able pupils are making progress.
- All pupils feel safe and emotionally secure at school.

- Pupils are able to express their views on staying safe, including online, knowledgably and demonstrate this in their behaviour.
- Around behaviour – how we communicate what is expected and consequences.
- To sustain an enriching learning environment, which nurtures and optimises children's academic, social and spiritual development.
- There is a creative consistent and successful implementation of the N.C making the most of opportunities to enrich children's L&T opportunities.

What would be the most engaging and effective way to communicate with pupils about the SDP?

- Art, drama, ICT, sport, oral – not writing it down. Target one area and question their view and idea of the target i.e. what is creativity?
- Pupil voice. Pupil interviews (group) collaborative discussion. School council. Views taken seriously and acted on - feedback – 'you said... we did'.
- To communicate that they are responsible for their behaviour and the effect it has. Classroom consistency; rules and consequences. Modelling.
- Positive play nurture.
- Verbal feedback.
- Rewards/charts.
- Presentation of work.

Staff

What elements of the SDP might be of particular interest to staff?

- Breakdown of SDP focus on one heading each half term.
- All!
- 3.4

What would be the most engaging and effective way to communicate with staff about the SDP?

- Days like today – inset, staff meeting.
- Letter from governors / management to staff (recognising achievement etc.).
- Termly staff meeting – for all staff.
- Newsletters on staffroom wall every week.

Parents

What elements of the SDP might be of particular interest to parents?

- All of it!
- Safety (3.1) (3.2), achieving full potential (4), emotionally secure (3.1), behaviour good (3.1) (3.2), making progress (4).
- Sustain an enriching learning environment (1.1).
- Safeguarding uncompromisingly effective (1.3).

What would be the most engaging and effective way to communicate with parents about the SDP?

- School website 'tell us what you think' page on the website. Facebook. Key events for parents i.e. parent evenings. Multimedia presentation linked to website and Facebook (video).
- Plan in a picture / poster.
- Open meeting once a year.
- How to use the school website lesson for parents.
- School magazine – 1 or 2 a year.
- Children's views and communicating with parents.
- Prospectus.

Governors

What elements of the SDP might be of particular interest to governors?

- All of it!
- Strong leadership.

What would be the most engaging and effective way to communicate with governors about the SDP?

- Governors coming into the school. Invites/being informed – about events, celebrations etc.
- APP, Emails, Website. Briefing could be sent to governors.
- Displays – photos, etc. on the website for those who don't come into school.
- Inset days. Governors need to know their role.
- Full contact details for all governors (buddy governors etc.).

Wider community in and around Wirksworth

What elements of the SDP might be of particular interest to the wider community?

- OFSTED judgements.
- Community involvement.
- Creative achievements.
- Results.
- Sporting successes.
- That the children behave well and interact with members of the community.

What would be the most engaging and effective way to communicate with the wider community about the SDP?

- Notice boards in town and cricket club etc.
- Press G&T 'press department' – newspapers, radio. Year 6 involvement.
- Banner at the bottom of the school drive.
- Carol singing in Old People's Homes.
- Wirksworth library.
- Wirksworth community website.
- Invite members of the public in for events etc.
- Sponsorship – local businesses?
- Children's art work – stall in town/pub/cinema.
- Carnival float/Wirksworth festival.

A bit of analysis

This session sought to identify the biggest issues which were preventing WJS from delivering its vision.

Pete explained that the purpose of the SDP (and the strategic intentions and objectives within it) was the pursuit of the WJS vision.

Working in pairs, staff and governors wrote down what they considered to be the 'Top three issues' connected with achieving the strategic intentions within the SDP. Each issue was put on a separate post-it.



The issues were shared in small groups, and then as a whole group, with any duplication removed at each stage.

Staff and governors then, individually, voted for what they felt were the three most important issues to discuss and agree action on.

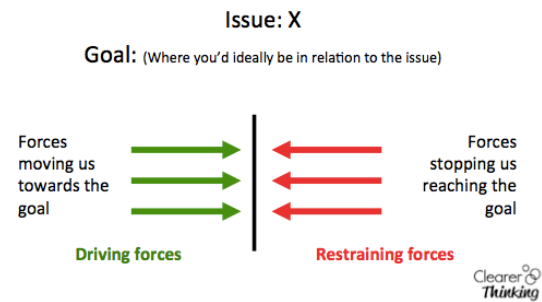
The votes were totalled and the following list of issues generated:

Rank	Issue	Votes
1 st	Ineffective communications	28
2 nd	'The How' time to deliver the actions within the plan	20
3 rd	Lack of forward planning, so much to do that things are sometimes left to the last minute	19
4 th	Freedom to take different approaches to delivery	16
5 th	Behaviour of children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Affects how well you can work with children - Impacts on safety of children - Then impacts on what you can achieve with children 	10
6 th	Work life balance	4
7 th	'The What' day to day activities of how we implement the plan	4
8 th	Budget / funding	1
9 th	Time to understand the plan	0
9 th	Stable environment "outside influences"	0
9 th	Increased work load	0
9 th	Pressures from government, OFSTED, outside agencies to achieve results	0
9 th	Parents' involvement / lack of in what their children are doing – agreement needs reinforcing or emphasising – home school agreement involvement.	0

Force Field analysis was then conducted on the five chosen issues. This involved identifying the Driving Forces (factors that were helping the Practice move towards the goal) and Restraining Forces (factors what were preventing the Practice from moving towards the goal).

Actions to strengthen the Driving Forces or weaken the Restraining Forces were then generated. The results of this exercise were as follows:

Force field analysis



Issue: Ineffective communication.

Goal: Better communication.

Driving Forces →	← Restraining Forces
<p>Methods of communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website • App • Newsletter • Facebook • Texting system – could be used more effectively • Action plan/improvement plan • Email • Meetings • Discussions • Online calendar • Notice board • Staff briefing • Library • Home/school link books • Pupils work • School reports • Who are we communicating with? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pupils ○ Staff ○ Community ○ Parents ○ Governors ○ 'Outside' agencies – LA, OFSTED ○ Other schools <p>What are we communicating?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good news/successes/achievements • Events • What pupils are learning and the progress they are making • Best practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quickly changing priorities • 'Ambushes' • Part-time staff not always receiving information.

Driving Forces →	← Restraining Forces
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part-time staff not always being available • Emails etc. not always being opened regularly

Actions to strengthen the driving forces or weaken the restraining forces:

- Highlight to parents all the methods of communication we use (again!).
- Communicate good news/successes in local press and the community.
- Continue to build on the school website.
- Share the school improvement plan with all.
- More regular opportunities for parents and members of the community to come into school to look at work, projects, homework etc.

Issue: Time to deliver the actions within the plan.

Goal: Create productive time.

Driving Forces →	← Restraining Forces
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inset day • Staff meetings • Use subject leader time • Staff take responsibility to find ways to maximise time (forward planning) • Use T.A.s effectively and work with same T.A in the classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of daily workload preventing time • Length of school day • Professional restrictions • Pressures from outside/in • Knowing the plan • Ownership/time • Marking work

Actions to strengthen the driving forces or weaken the restraining forces:

- SIAD meetings (school improvement and development) – dedicated staff meetings/half termly/non-negotiable/all staff present.
- Subject leadership time – half dedicated to strategic intention 1 and objective within.
- TAs to take story time (rotated) and teaching staff have specific tasks to achieve (coming from the above?) during assembly and story.
- Potentially look at length of school day (e.g. 8:30 – 3:10) or shortening lunch break.
- Directed time (1265 hours/year).
- Random acts of kindness.
- Review marking policy – e.g. 'deep marking' once per half term focussing on progress and articulating it. Verbal feedback indication. Progress review every half term. Built into policy – ability to explain this process to OFSTED. 2 weeks – light touch marking.

Issue: Lack of forward planning, so much to do that things are sometimes left to the last minute.

Goal: To have a planned calendar of events (e.g. annual) and activities (other school based).

Driving Forces →	← Restraining Forces
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork – everyone will pull together to get things done but currently happens in a rush • Time set aside to go through annual diary • Office staff who put things in registers • Briefing helps • Whiteboard in staff-room • New calendar/APP/FB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workload – makes time feel restrained • Communication – getting everyone together doesn't always happen to discuss • Previous calendar wasn't use friendly • Timetable planning time doesn't happen for the whole year • Use of notice/whiteboard • Not everyone attends meetings/whole meeting • Not being aware sometimes • Agenda for staff meetings • List of staff meetings (in advance) • Short notice for deadlines • Communicating changes of staff • More inclusion for staff attending events or meetings (lunchtime staff, cleaners etc.)

Actions to strengthen the driving forces or weaken the restraining forces:

- First staff meeting back after every 'big' term – look at and set dates/plans for events and activities during the forthcoming term.
- List of staff meetings planned out (with days possibly rotated).
- Lunchtime staff – informed about the outcomes of the termly staff meeting! Same week as rest of staff.
- Regular staff planning sessions – before the new term so staff have time to gather resources and liaise.
- Workload discussion – what can we reduce? What has to be done?
- Subject leadership time was really beneficial – can we continue half a day a mini term?

Issue: Freedom to take a different approach to delivery.

Goal: Teach to your strengths.

Driving Forces →	← Restraining Forces
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Team sharing knowledge• Joint planning meetings• Effective communication• Appreciation of others skills• Sharing best practice• Personal motivation and dedication• Goodwill from staff• We have a broad range of skills and expertise within our staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staffing and support• Training (CPD)• Money/funding• Constant change in the curriculum• Mixed messages of what is required (OFSTED v local SIP)• Time• Pressure to deliver results• Parental pressures

Actions to strengthen the driving forces or weaken the restraining forces:

- Identify strengths of individual staff members.
 - Review timetables and structures of lessons
 - Do we stay with one teacher per class?
 - Do we want to team teach?
- Clarify/justify methods and content of current practise and identify what is compulsory and what is not.
- Ensure specific time is allocated (every half term) for joint planning meetings – could be twilights).
- Parental pressures: - adhere to public policy to follow procedure of complaints. Ensure mutual respect.
- SWAT for staff as well as children
- Acknowledge achievements good will and hard work.

Issue: Behaviour / impact / learning / safety.

Goal: Improve behaviour so children are able to learn and feel safe.

Driving Forces →	← Restraining Forces
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Classroom rules• Behaviour policy• Electronic reward systems (texts)• Celebrations• Activities on playground to limit problems• Good staff on the whole• Nurture/Forest schools• Outside agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Society/media• Lack of consistency• Parent back-up skills• Expectations• Consequences – clarity! Shared with all.• Outside agencies?• Budget• Lack of pride in school<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Uniform◦ Litter◦ Healthy eating◦ Respect for adults and each other• Lunchtime is too long!

Driving Forces →	← Restraining Forces
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good role modelling from staff/some children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good relationships (lack of) between lunchtime staff and children – lack of training/skills • Lack of punctuality and consequences

Actions to strengthen the driving forces or weaken the restraining forces:

- Consequences / follow-up actions – consistency.
- Timetable change – staff to man lunch, home early.
- Nominated disciplinarian (full authority).
- Zone areas – within a quiet room.
- Children given responsibility – lunch hall – food, health, year 5/6 buddy.

Zero money spent!

Next Steps

By way of a final reflective exercise staff and governors were asked to articulate what they felt were the important next steps by completing the statement '*After today it's important that we...*'

The content generated was as follows:

Carry on working as a brilliant team	Follow up
Make something happen/change from today	Important that we actually make sure some of the action points are turned into reality. Review school day!!
Keep the momentum going and calendar time to do this asap	After today it's important we follow up the action plans e.g. putting them in writing
After today it's important that we keep working together to move forward to build on what we already have	After today we should look at all of the actions and plan out what we are going to do first and so on
Keep hold of the positives and continue to support each other	After today it is important that we follow things through within an agreed timescale and things don't just get left
After today it's important that we.... Have quality time to put some outcomes into practice!	After today it's important that we make sure we follow through with all our ideas and remain positive. Actions should be assigned to individuals or groups
After today it's important that we develop the ideas and actions discussed for the benefit of the community that is WJS	After today it's important that we continue to bring the same energy that we've been able to harness today into school
After today it's important that we make sure we 'follow-through' with the actions – be specific about Who? What? When?	

Other potential action ideas

A number of additional ideas had been put in the 'Car Park' during the day. These were recorded as follows:

SATs time?? Apply for time for children. Lesley to sort.	Look into Phil as minibus driver for WJS – existing insurance/licence
Whole day for art activities and then exhibit work with invitations to the wider community	Opportunities to spend time in other rooms in school i.e. team teach or supporting
3.4 Need to involve wider community with respect to behaviour, development, impacts outside of school gate. Lots can contribute and play their part.	Staff meeting days to be rotated if possible to include part time staff and TAs
List of staff meetings to be displayed in staff room	Reinstate Monday morning briefing?

Thanks were given by Lesley to everyone for their hard work and sustained input throughout the day.

Evaluation

Before staff departed they completed a short evaluation (using flip chart and post-its). A summary of the responses is shown below:

1) How well did the day meet its stated objectives?

Not at all!				Completely
1	2	3	4	5
				100%

2) What have you most enjoyed about the day?

- Getting different peoples' perspectives (and the food!).
- Having the opportunity to share views.
- Spending time with colleagues.
- Colleague time.
- Working together.
- Talking to colleagues outside the classroom.
- Everything!
- All

3) What have you learnt from the day?

- That change is not impossible.
- That is we are all willing things can happen.
- We are all on the same song sheet.
- That we can make change happen together.
- That I'm so grateful to be working with such wonderful people!

4) What would have improved the day?

- Nothing you did an excellent job.
- Nothing.

5) Any other comments?

- Relaxed, no pressure, brilliant and helpful.
- Great day. Thanks. Can we do something similar annually?
- Thank you.
- Great job, charming facilitator thank you!
- Super and very professional.
- Massive thanks!
- Great day. Very good facilitating!
- Very practical and useful!

The workshop ended @ 15:30

Vision

*A school where our children learn well,
can be themselves and be inspired to be
the best they can be, get on with each
other and fulfil their potential*

Strategic intention:

1. TO ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT AT ALL LEVELS

Strategic objectives:

- 1.1 – To sustain an enriching learning environment, which nurtures and optimises children's academic, social and spiritual development.
- 1.2 – To be a fully effective school leadership team and governing body which uses robust self-evaluation to drive further school improvement.
- 1.3 – To ensure that safeguarding is uncompromisingly effective and all pupils feel safe, emotionally secure and are able to express themselves within an environment of trust, tolerance and security.
- 1.4 – To maintain high levels of staff morale and well-being.

Strategic intention:

2. TO ENSURE TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT ARE OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY

Strategic objectives:

- 2.1 - Secure high standards of pupil achievement so that all children reach their full potential on their learning journey
- 2.2 - All teaching evaluated against OFSTED criteria judged consistently good with the majority outstanding
- 2.3 – There is creative, consistent and successful implementation of the new National Curriculum making the most of opportunities to enrich children's learning and teaching opportunities.
- 2.4 – Teachers and teaching assistants are able to monitor the progress of all* their pupils through efficient use of assessment data, providing appropriate and effective interventions where necessary.

Strategic intention:

3. TO ENSURE THAT THE PROVISION FOR PERSONAL

DEVELOPMENT, BEHAVIOUR AND WELFARE IS OUTSTANDING

Strategic objectives:

- 3.1 – All pupils feel safe and emotionally secure in school.
- 3.2 – Pupils are able to express their views on staying safe, including on-line, knowledgeably and demonstrate this in their behaviour.
- 3.3 – Staff are well-trained in safeguarding and issues such as PREVENT in order for them to be vigilant for signs of potential abuse.
- 3.4 – All stakeholders have the opportunity to contribute to the school's policies relating to personal development, behaviour and welfare.

Strategic intention:

4. TO ENSURE THAT THE OUTCOMES FOR ALL* PUPILS REFLECT THEIR FULL POTENTIAL

Strategic objectives:

- 4.1 – The progress of disadvantaged pupils by the end of the key stage compares favourably with that made nationally by other pupils with similar starting points.
- 4.2 – The most able pupils are making progress towards attaining the highest standards.
- 4.3 – Lower attaining pupils are being supported to attain as well as they should.
- 4.4 – SEND pupils' needs are clearly identified and provision is in place to ensure improvement in progress.

* This includes those pupils eligible for the Pupil Premium, those with SEND, higher attaining pupils and any other groups of pupils with specific needs.