

Work with other organisations Manage finances wisely

Dr. Fazil Kucuk Turkish School

Background

Dr. Fazil Kucuk Turkish School was set up in 1984 by volunteer parents in the London Borough of Lewisham to help children of the Turkish community get in touch with their cultural heritage and learning their Turkish mother tongue.

They have been running from Catford High School since 2001. During these years they have established a good working relationship with the High School staff and management. *If anything is needed for the supplementary school it can be asked for, although it has taken years of negotiating and relationship building to get to this stage,* explains Akjen Havali, Headteacher of the Turkish School.

The Turkish School rents the premises through Lewisham Council, who pay the rent through grants. Lewisham council was approached by Dr Fazil Kucuk just after 9/11, when they were experiencing somewhat hard times. Having just left their old premises, they didn't have anywhere to run the school from for a couple of months.

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The school started off by renting nine small classrooms. Today, as the Turkish School has grown and as time has gone by, they have moved to bigger classrooms within Catford High School. They also have access to the main hall, the canteen and the kitchen. Photocopying has been made easier as they also have access to the photocopier.

In the hallway of Catford High School, Dr. Fazil Kucuk has a notice-board of activities and photos showing the work of the supplementary school. This helps to promote their activities as the school has many visitors. It gives the supplementary school a visible profile and connection to the overall school environment. Here, they showcase the benefits their work and what it brings to the students who attend, and to the community as a whole.

When running a supplementary school from mainstream school premises, it is especially important to build up a good relationship and to acknowledge the caretaker of the school, as they can help push you in the direction you want through their relationship with other school staff, says Akjen. The caretaker is the one who will open in the morning and who will close after the school and is the one who is present during the day to help if any help is needed.

Having established a relationship with the Catford High School caterers, they are now planning to set up Turkish cookery classes for the children. Insurance is an issue and will need to be resolved. This new idea has been greatly welcomed by Turkish parents who don't have time to spend cooking with their children.

The school has gone from strength to strength through having built good working relationships and taking on board the views from everyone involved in the school, and by always inviting mainstream school staff to their folk-dancing events and telling them about the work being done. The school travelled to South Korea for the international folk-dancing festival to represent Northern Cyprus. There is now a Turkish theatre production coming over from Northern Cyprus interested in

doing 2 shows in London. Akjen's school is helping with publicity and putting up posters. Ticket revenue is split and half goes to the school.

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The school charges an annual fee of £60, which helps them to run the school, maintain an informative website and put on lots of activities. The school also has an annual fundraiser school dinner and dance event. Ticket price is £20 for adults and £15 for students and children. The price includes performance, meal and raffle prize. These fundraising events help the school to become more self-sustainable and exist through its own means of fundraising.

The school has recently started a monthly newsletter to give a specific forum to highlight the good work they have been doing. This gives them the opportunity to shout from the rooftops about every big and small way they work towards helping their community. They also have an informative website that lists all their activities and promotes their work. This is a good visual way of showcasing your work in the public domain, and attracting people to your school.

Top Tips

- Approach your local authority for help with premises
- Try to establish a good relationship with mainstream school staff and management by telling them about school progress and invite them to events.
- Take on board views from everyone involved in the project
- Establish a good relationship with the caretaker as he/she can help push you in the right direction
- Don't be afraid to try new ways to raise funds, for example, starting a website to promote your work.
- Highlight and promote your work and activities as much as you can. You never know what opportunities they may lead to.
- Remember – Relationship-building takes time!