

Create an effective learning environment

Leeds Chinese Community School

National Excellence Award Winner 2008

Background

Leeds Chinese Community School (LCCS) is a voluntary, non-profit organisation. It provides Chinese Language lessons and promotes the Chinese culture among the local community. What started as a small learning group in 1966 has grown into a school today with over 150 students. It holds an awards ceremony every year to celebrate the pupils' good results and behaviour.

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The school's committee is a mixture of parents, teachers and pupils; they represent the key stakeholders, and can express the needs and improvements required in the school. The school's structure and volunteers' roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, so everyone knows what is expected of them. Every year, there is a parents' day, which is an opportunity for parents to discuss their child's progress with teachers.

In the past, the school has experienced difficulties in discussing different teaching methods. They have found there are many methods in the field, but some are suitable for younger children and some are more suitable for older ones. To overcome this problem, they have referred to the government guidelines for language teaching and have divided their all teachers into 3 groups – KS1+KS2, KS3 and KS4, and each group meets regularly to discuss different methods.

To make the learning environment inspiring for the children, they integrate a wide variety of activities in to their teaching like games and drama. They encourage teachers to introduce fun activities for learning in lessons, like simulating a restaurant or market, to create an environment which is closely related to daily life. They are also preparing a questionnaire for the students in order to steer the school's future direction.

With a positive learning environment, the school's overall attendance has improved, students can engage with learning and teachers are motivated to carry out their duties. The whole school's atmosphere for learning is improved, so students are more likely to realise their potential and achieve better results.

Top Tips

- Good student/teacher/parent relationships are vital to creating a strong learning environment.
- Regular meetings with teachers provide an opportunity to reflect and review teaching methods, progress and any issues.
- Make the lesson fun as children learn through play and different resources such as library books and ICT to suit different learning styles