

Wythenshawe Network Case Studies

Organising a Successful Event - Peel Hall Primary School — ‘Keeping Healthy’

Background

Peel Hall Primary School decided to hold a ‘Keeping Healthy’ event following suggestions at a Wythenshawe Network meeting. The event was held at the end of July in order to tie in with the school’s sports day. It was attended by all of the school staff, a representative of the Parental Involvement Team, approximately 15 parents¹, and some of the school’s existing contacts. These included the school nurse and the dental team. Mrs Rachel Foster (nursery teaching assistant) was the chief organiser of the event, but was also assisted by two other members of staff who had expressed an interest in holding a similar type of event. Their interest stemmed from the fact that the school had previously been presented with a gold healthy schools award².

Preparation

During the network meeting Rachel gained ideas from other schools that had already held a ‘Keeping Healthy’ event. She was given the opportunity to visit other schools’ events, and was happy with the level of resources available. These included telephone numbers of useful contacts in order to follow up sources of information. Network funding was used to purchase items such as fruit and prizes awarded to children. Although Rachel used existing contacts on this occasion, other contacts established at the network meeting have already proven useful. For example, a Fire Officer will be visiting the school to give talks to children and parents.

‘The coaching from the Parental Involvement Team really helped as they gave details of contacts from schools that had held this type of event previously. Jean was brilliant; she even attended on the day to offer her support.’

*Mrs Rachel Foster, Nursery
Teaching Assistant*

Other staff helped with setting up equipment on the day prior to the event, as well as two parents. Rachel let all staff have advance notice of the ‘Keeping Healthy’ day in order to ask for their input. They were given a timetable of activities a few days prior, and all were helpful and supportive.

¹ Parent(s) refers to parents and other adults involved in the care of pupils

² Refer: www.wythit.com/wythit/Health/Default.aspx?CmsContentID=99

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The Event

The whole of the school was involved in the ‘Keeping Healthy’ day; Key Stage 1, reception and nursery children in the morning, and key stage 2 in the afternoon. Key Stage 2 lessons that morning were tied in to the ‘Keeping Healthy’ theme. Some older children (school councillors) also helped to organise activities for the younger children. The school held the event in both of the school halls, the dining room, and both school playgrounds.

‘We targeted the activities at different levels to suit each child’s ability. If a child really enjoyed a particular activity, they were encouraged to stay for as long as they liked.’

Mrs Rachel Foster, Nursery Teaching Assistant

Activities were targeted at various levels so that all pupils could take part. The day went smoothly as each activity was well staffed and adults were easily able to point children in the right direction for the type of activity that would be suited to each individual. Example activities were: a dancing display, and making fruit cocktails.

For the ‘fruit cocktails’ activity, Rachel used some of the money provided by the Wythenshawe Network in order to purchase five different types of fruit. There were four workstations where children could chop up fruits of their choice and put the pieces into cups. Younger children were assisted with the chopping up by school councillors. During the activity pupils were encouraged to discuss the various tastes and aromas of the fruits.

Children enjoyed taking part on the day, and there was a positive response to the event from teachers, other personnel and parents, with many of them thanking Rachel for her input. Rachel was asked to give a talk at a future network meeting in order to share the school’s success and ideas with other schools. This gave Rachel a great boost to her own self esteem. Although Peel Hall has an existing Parent Support Group, the hosting of this event encouraged a new set of parents to become involved.

Useful Tips

Rachel recommends that organisers fully utilise the help on offer, including the coaching sessions by members of the Parental Involvement Team, which proved invaluable. She believes that the key to organising a successful event lies in the planning. It is important that all members of staff are fully aware of plans, and are consulted well in advance for their input, ideas and support.

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Outcomes

- Forging of new links with parents
- Utilisation of parents’ skills to help in different areas of planning/holding the event
- Enhanced staff relations
- Establishing new links with the community
- Sharing good practices with other schools
- Enabling children to experience the fun side of learning
- Parents enthusiasm regarding future planned events and school life in general
- Improved relations between teaching staff and parents

Future Events

Peel Hall will be holding a ‘Dads and Lads’ event in the future, which will focus on involving male carers in their children’s school life. Rachel has already asked for support from staff and parents and for any suggestions regarding activities. She is looking forward to the challenge of adapting new ideas into the school’s setting.

A Fire Officer will be attending the school to give talks on Health and Safety, Fire Safety and First Aid for Parents. This contact was established at one of the Wythenshawe Network meetings.

Rachel is looking forward to attending future network meetings.
