

"Ethos – Why Bother?"

West Park Centre, Dundee



September 2004



ORGANISATION

Torry Academy, Aberdeen

FOCUS

Creating a positive ethos – a multi-layered approach or ‘a Recipe with many ingredients’

Can you describe briefly any initiatives or projects in place that illustrate the focus of our conference?

Creating a positive ethos requires many strategies but if self esteem is raised, achievement will eventually follow. We start with very active P7 - S1 curricular links and continue with positive discipline policies, award and merit schemes, special events highlighting, for example, citizenship and have increased our links with the community, particularly through the visual - performing arts. Inclusion is central to everything we try to achieve.

How are these initiatives being monitored and evaluated?

The usual analysis of results from MISYIS to SQA. Attendance and exclusion rates are monitored. We have two full scale departmental review schedules every session. Ethos is always given high emphasis on the development plan. We place high value on feedback from parents and the wider community. Ethos is an important part of our annual audit. Staff committees drive forward ethos initiatives.

What are some of the biggest challenges faced by teachers and young people or members of your organisation, in implementing the initiatives or projects?

We have a daily battle against negative influences in society in general and in the local area which contains pockets of severe deprivation. Many of our students suffer from poverty, insecurity, low self-esteem and lack of initiative and ambition.

What has worked well?

Broad banking of classes. Merit and Award Schemes. Emphasis on visual and performing arts. Introduction of formal school uniform chosen by pupil themselves. Strong Primary/Secondary links, multi agency approaches (to a degree), Citizenship Day, buddy and peer tutoring schemes, work experience.

CONTACT INFORMATION

**Torry Academy
Tullos Circle
Aberdeen
AB11 8HD**

**Val Reid
01224 876 733**

What did not work & lessons learned?

Some aspects of social inclusion particularly those relating to pupils with behavioural difficulties, are still causing a great deal of concern. We cannot always rely on outside agencies and increasingly have to rely on our own resources.

Future plans?

To increase enterprise activities for pupils and thus improve ethos by making pupils take more responsibility for projects and so develop confidence and motivation.