

DUG Meeting: Winchelsea Special School

Workshop 2 – 22nd April 2009

*The **Design User Group (DUG)** is made up of selected staff at the school, student representatives, parent representatives, and professionals supporting us.*

At our last meeting we discussed:

Sustainability: We are due to have a sustainability staff meeting on 27th April, led by Tricia Zimmerman. After the meeting, staff and students will be identified to take the sustainability agenda forward, supported by Tricia.

We will then update the sustainability section of the School Strategy for Change (SfC) and revisit our Key Performance Indicators to see if any additions need to be made in the light of changes including sustainability thinking.

We then considered what facilities would be needed and where these need to be located in relation to one another. For example, what facilities need to be closest to the classes for the youngest children? *Please keep in mind that we are NOT actually working from (or designing) plans of the school – we are talking about what we need, and where we need to put it in relation to other parts of the school.*

Here are some of the ideas we came up with:

The **Early Years Foundation Stage space** needs to be close to the public/private boundary, as parents and children will frequently be in and out of the school, and Early Years and Foundation Stage children have a wide range of multi disciplinary visitors.

Staff spaces – we discussed what is required. Considerations include the large number of Teaching Assistants; the need for appropriate working spaces; the need for a relaxation/social space; the position of the administrative staff in relation to the teaching/TA staff.

- The staff room is seen as a sanctuary. A training space could, however, be used also as a staff social space at break and lunch times.
- A defined space for working is a professional requirement, and could be situated within the learning zones. Should those be in the class base areas, or the specialist learning area? These must be big enough to accommodate both teaching and assistant staff.
- Should admin staff be distributed into staff work bases, or remain separate?

The school community's 'Heart' – a multipurpose space which could include assemblies – whole school, senior and junior; dining; display (both ICT based, 2D and 3D); social areas; performance space; café.

- The community who use the school regularly – including As UR, youth club – may also use this 'heart' space.

The **specialist facilities** will need to be of the standard required to ensure that Winchelsea can participate in the 14-19 agenda across the two Local Authorities, and can deliver appropriate vocationally based qualifications.

- What is the right adjacency for the specialist area, and the class based learning areas? We suggested that the specialist area is closest to the public/private boundary so that the specialist facilities can be used by adult learners, community, other schools (eg Manorside). The 'upper' learning area (for 14-19 type age range) would then need to be relatively closer to the specialist area than the 'lower' learning area (for 7-13 type age range) as they would use the specialist facilities more frequently.
- What sorts of specialist spaces will be needed, and how many? Eg:
- one fully equipped science lab, and one science studio, might be better than 2 full labs;
- design technology currently used 10 out of 35 periods per week; how might they be used more?
- Kitchens, the café, food technology, the veg patch outdoors, and dining, all require some adjacency to allow students to make links between their own food, cooking, and eating.

The training/parents/therapy multi-use spaces are in public space, close to specialist space.

Is the division into 3 learning bases (Early Years Foundation Stage, 'lower' and 'upper') correct?

- Should there be a separate post-16 space? The 'tension' between giving a sense of progression through the school versus supporting the family environment where older and younger children interact well with each other, needs consideration.

Outdoor spaces need careful consideration of fencing – to manage children who like to run off.

Other aspects which we will consider for our next workshop:

Should each class base have an attached outdoor space?

Should each specialist discipline have its own outdoor space, or one outdoor space attached more generally to the specialist zone?

Where is the learning resources centre/base? Does the school have one, and if so, where should it be?

How should Manorside work with Winchelsea, and vice versa?

Next steps.

1. Next scheduled meeting on 5th May. It will be an internal meeting attended by the DUG and interested staff to:
 - i. discuss further the adjacencies diagram;
 - ii. consider what kinds of spaces might be found within each 'bubble';
 - iii. other aspects as highlighted above.

Questions for your consideration:

- 1... Is there anything we have not considered at this stage?
- 2... Are there any other facilities we should consider?
- 3... Should there be an Information Centre provided on site for parents?
- 4... Is there anything else you would like us to consider?