

A Finger on the Pulse

Report of an exercise for participants at the Schools Forum Planning Day
12/11/04

37 'Key point' cards were returned

They fell largely into three areas, with inevitable overlaps:

- Every Child Matters;
- a County with an aura of challenge and excitement;
- a County with a broad view of what is to be valued as learning achievement.

1. Every Child Matters

The largest number (18) wanted to see every child fulfilling his or her potential, irrespective of background or ability; sample comments:

- 'happy children';
- children who have a voice in shaping services;
- 'without prejudice or discrimination';
- including flexibilities FSUs could offer;
- curriculum 'appropriate to needs of that child'
- 'regardless of institutions' needs';
- 'appropriate and individually beneficial routes';
- 'especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds';
- including 'desire to keep learning and developing throughout their futures';
- 'continue into lifelong learning' in that spirit;
- high achieving and inclusive;
- 'have regard to children's spirits'.

2. Innovation and challenge

14 want to see a County which is visionary and innovative (9 specific references) and able to 'think out of the box'. It should nevertheless be rooted in setting the highest standards for teaching and learning (4).

Sample comments:

- 'exciting, challenging, innovative';
- 'exciting and invigorating';
- 'hotbed of creativity, innovation and fun';
- innovative and challenging;
- engendering excitement;
- attracting people who want to work in the County';
- imaginative approaches to high standards;
- achievement and ambition.

3. Positive attitudes

Five, still in the spirit of (1) or (2), make specific reference to the value the 'learning community' of Devon needs to put on positive attitudes (e.g. to cultural diversity) and to valuing all achievements; and to the value and support that "Devon" (undefined) needs to demonstrate for 'education and its schools'