



## **IPPN - Highest Aspirations for CAFÉ**

### **What would success look like for your school if CAFÉ really succeeded?**

The following is a summary of feedback of views about CAFE from the meeting of the Board, Staff and National Council of the IPPN in Portlaoise on 2nd December 2023.

#### **Vision & Purpose:**

- What is the purpose of education?
- Debate between education and what is school?
- Society vs Economy – priority?/purpose?
- Focus on children as future citizens (societal values);
- Curriculum is being led by industry and the needs of industry, rather than instilling love of learning;
- Meeting the needs to ensure education for all – across sectors;
- Shared Vision for all stakeholders – parents, teachers, pupils etc;
- Enthusiasm for and value of schooling;
- What is the nature of education – it's much more than teaching and learning, it's about nurture; school must adapt to the new future for education.

#### **Transitions/Holistic:**

- Primary school changes depend on secondary school;
- Integration between pre-school and primary school;
- Holistic development of teaching and learning;
- Collaboration, communication & transitions between pre-schools, primary schools & post-primary;
- Collaboration, communication and transition from primary to secondary need to be joined up – there is a huge disconnect;
- Co-ordination preschool/primary/secondary/3<sup>rd</sup> level.

### Resourcing:

- Properly resourced – OT, Speech Therapist;
- Education to be resourced based on needs rather than on the basis of a budget – which is usually too limited;
- Resourcing and funding;
- City-weighted salaries;
- Adequate support services (in-house) S+C/ OT etc;
- Special needs – support services;
- Resources should follow importance – some may spend time in hospital or prison but everyone engages with education; we need conversation about priorities.

### Teachers as trusted Professionals:

- Diversify the profession to mirror diversity of citizens;
- Value leadership positions in education – middle/teacher leadership;
- Value the profession – see Finland!
- Enthusiasm/values/attitude respected and prioritised;
- Trust in the education profession;
- Promoted posts (AP II) – not sufficiently rewarded.

### Skills and values:

- Critical Thinking; Resilience; Creativity; Practical;
- 21<sup>st</sup> century skills;
- Trust – not inspection-driven;
- Social responsibility and skills;
- TESS mandatory from the start of Junior Infants;
- Inclusion i.e. proper resources, evidence-based approaches, wrap-around professional services and choice;
- AI - Chat GPT came up with critical thinking, social responsibility, skills, resilience and responsibility – who is running who?

### Other:

- School-**building design** – more open spaces;
- The **Inspectorate** – standardised; there is disconnect between curriculum and standardised testing;
- **Positives** should be highlighted – what's working well + the great work!?
- **Irish-language qualification** is an obstacle;
- **Evidence-based** approach;

- Allow schools to **focus on Teaching & Learning**.

## **Voices that need to be heard – and How?**

### **Voices:**

- **Child:** Voice of child, the primary voice; different children whether young offenders, neuro-diverse, suffering bereavement, trauma, homelessness, direct provision (displaced children) and those who are not disadvantaged or accessing alternative education; school leavers;
- **EWO's:** Input from Educational Welfare Officers (EWO) re commonality across cases they support? Any successful early interventions that can be embedded – 'a stitch in time'; care-workers;
- **Voices from the Margins:** Minority/under-represented groups – local leaders in working-class communities; travellers; young offenders – homeless people – those living in direct provision;
- **Youth Organisations:** Representation from youth organisations (e.g. Foróige) and youth support groups (e.g. Barnardos, Youth Projects; SVP, Rainbows);
- **Who not to privilege:** What voices should not be heard?
- **System:** School leaders; educators; patron bodies; School Inspectorate; TUSLA/HSE; INTO/IPPN; NAMBSE
- **Parents/Adults:** Parental and grand-parental voice and community supporters; Adults – those well served by the system and those not well served;
- **Experts:** everyone and nobody is an expert, including parents and teachers;
- **Others:** NGO's; business leaders; artists; community development groups; gathering of information and data from all relevant sources.

### **Getting Voices heard?**

- **Pupil Voice:** focus groups (no leading questions); student councils; EPIC; SEN and siblings of SEN pupils; pupil survey/home school visits; pupil art; ask them how they want to be asked;
- **Focus Groups:** with children; parents; teachers; SNA's;
- **BEACONS:** At local level e.g. BEACONS;
- **Media:** young voices on social media and mainstream media;
- **Submission/Surveys:** Submission from IPPN/INTO etc – principal/teacher surveys; invite submissions;

- **Awareness:** Increase awareness; QR code on telly for parents; School Inspectorate communication with schools; influencers (sports/music); relatable; inspirational, advocates;
- **Composition:** Make-up of the assembly is important – representative of all stakeholders and demographics;
- **Authentic:** Authentic, meaningful voices, not tokensim – validated;
- **Heard:** Trust – that their voices will be listened to and valued;
- **National Education Day:** If inviting schools to participate in a ‘national day of education’ ask children to draw a picture in colour – this will provide rich data; tap into multiple intelligences in all our schools;
- **Stories:** Get stories about those who succeeded despite poor start and what is good about education; also stories of those failed by the system;
- **Good Models:** there are already good models of student engagement as during the 1916 commemorations; the BEACONS model; the work of the NCCA – there are many mechanisms.

**Comment from Chris (facilitator):** ‘The bit that came across most freshly for me was about the potential use of focus groups, i.e. when CAFE has its terms of reference and maybe timetable for modules, you could run focus groups (with children, with parents, with teachers) on specific points that are being addressed as a way of re-thinking how we think about experts / expertise.’

3.12.23