your space, your way
grounds for optimism

S2.2 Group Discussions + Interviews

Group discussions

Leading group discussions can be a daunting prospect, especially if it is with a group of people you don't particularly know!

Preparing well can make it a lot easier and could include…

- giving the group several questions to think about before the meeting and asking them to come ready with their comments
- using an 'ice breaker' at the start of the discussion to make sure everyone has the chance to relax and say something at the start, for instance you could try using the 'vision' activities
- deciding your main questions before the meeting and thinking about how you are going to record the discussion
- giving people time to think about the answer after you have asked a question
- writing each questions up after you have asked it, this will help the 'visual thinkers'???

Some example questions and prompts that may be suitable for a meeting with staff :-

What are the benefits of the school grounds?

What's good? Well used ? Special ?

What's bad? Under-used or problematic?

How are the grounds used for teaching NOW?

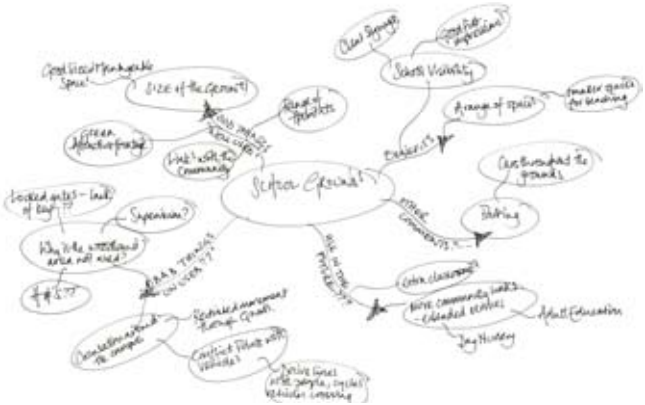
How would you like to use them in the future?

Any other comments or point to make?

Interviews can be a good way to find out what the people who take a lead role in managing or looking after the school, think about the grounds. This could include the site manager, community manager, heads of faculty, the Head Teacher or Chair of Governors

Recording group discussions and interviews

Group discussions can be difficult to summarise in a way that is easily shared with others. 'Mind mapping' techniques can be a very visual way of keeping a record and then feeding back the main points of the discussion to others.



Having plans of the site, or photographs of different spaces, available at the meeting can help people describe more precisely where or what within the school grounds their comments refer to.

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