



How Very Effective Primary Schools Work (Published in association with the British Educational Leadership and Management Society)

Chris R James

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'Chris James, Michael Connolly, Gerald Dunning and Tony Elliott have produced a comprehensive analysis of the very effective primary school. Although the research for the book draws on the authors experiences in Welsh Primary Schools, the range of literature cited and the analytical frameworks employed ensure that their findings have a much broader relevance. They define a very effective school as one that provides high levels of attainment and rich educational experiences despite being located in extremely challenging circumstances. A key insight of the book is that although these schools are consequently extraordinary their practice was in many ways quite ordinary . This is because these schools worked in much the same way as the very best of schools have always done. In many ways, this as the authors note, is an optimistic message that all children deserve to be educated in such very effective schools. The virtue of How Very Effective Primary Schools Work is that it makes clear those characteristics and strategies that can help every school to become great' - David Hopkins, HSBC iNet Chair of International Leadership, and formerly Chief Adviser on School Standards to the Secretary of State 2002-2005. 'All children, especially the poorest, deserve capable, mature and well adjusted teachers and leaders who work together to lay firm foundations of learning and behaviour, then enrich and elevate everyone's learning far beyond that in optimistic cultures of security, persistence and hope. Based on solid research from 18 outstanding schools in challenging circumstances, this is the vital message of this important and unique book. Chris James and his colleagues show that highly effective schools need high functioning adults and communities who expect and get the best from everyone, dedicate themselves to others without burning themselves out, are not frightened of challenges and contradictions, stay around to fulfil their obligations to others and see their efforts bear fruit, and are emotionally comfortable in their own skin. If you want to become more effective as a school you will need to become more effective and adjusted as a teacher, a leader and an all-round human being. This inspiring and indispensable book, will stir and steer all who read it in that educationally essential quest' - Andy Hargreaves, Thomas More Brennan Chair in Education, Boston College. All good teachers and headteachers are concerned with improving pupil attainment. In high attainment schools, they must recognize how to sustain success. In schools with low attainment levels, they must come to understand the challenges they face and find ways of overcoming the difficulties. This practical, research-based book describes the key approaches used by very effective schools. The authors explain how success can be achieved and maintained and describe ways of working that bring about high levels of pupil attainment. They also explain why these ways of working are successful. This book is essential reading for headteachers, teachers, students of educational leadership and management, school governors, and those who work in local authorities.

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