



# Parent Questionnaire Summary 2021

Thank you to those parents/carers who took the time to respond to the governor parent questionnaire in the summer. This was the second year we have run a solely online survey. We had 175 responses from across the school – just over half the number who replied in the previous year. We will therefore be looking at ways in which we can increase the take up next year, as it is important that we get responses from a good cross-section of the year teams. A big thank you to last year's YR parents in particular as we had 45 responses from this year group alone which gave the team a really good overview of how parents feel. In comparison, there were only 12 responses from Y6. We'd like to think that all those who didn't respond were happy with our provision in school, but we hope that we can encourage more of you to take part next year. Below and overleaf is a summary of the responses. The figures in brackets are from last years' survey where there was an equivalent/similar question for comparison. The school's own questions (rather than those from the Ofsted questionnaire) are marked with a \*.

| Question  | Overall positive responses | Strongly agree % | Agree %    | Disagree % | Strongly disagree % | Don't Know % |
|---|----------------------------|------------------|------------|------------|---------------------|--------------|
| 1. My child is happy at this school   | 97%<br>(98)                | 63<br>(69)       | 34<br>(29) | 3<br>(<1)  | <1<br>(<1)          | 0<br>(<1)    |
| 2. My child feels safe at this school   | 97%<br>(98)                | 66<br>(75)       | 31<br>(23) | 2<br>(<1)  | <1<br>(<1)          | 0<br>(<1)    |
| 3. This school makes sure its pupils are well behaved   | 96%<br>(96)                | 41<br>(47)       | 52<br>(49) | 3<br>(4)   | 0<br>(1)            | 3<br>(3)     |
| 4. The school makes me aware of what my child will learn during the year                          | 96%<br>(95)                | 46<br>(50)       | 48<br>(45) | 4<br>(4)   | 0<br>(0)            | 2<br>(1)     |
| 5. My child does well at this school  | 95%<br>(96)                | 50<br>(57)       | 45<br>(38) | 5<br>(3)   | 1<br>(<1)           | 0<br>(2)     |
| 6. The school lets me know how my child is doing  | 88%<br>(96)                | 31<br>(48)       | 55<br>(48) | 11<br>(2)  | <1<br>(<1)          | 2<br>(2)     |
| 7. The school has a broad, balanced curriculum  | 97%<br>(98)                | 43<br>(51)       | 50<br>(43) | 3<br>(<1)  | 0<br>(<1)           | 5<br>(5)     |
| 8. The school supports my child's wider personal development                                      | 92%<br>(88%)               | 33<br>(43)       | 47<br>(45) | 6<br>(5)   | 1<br>(<1)           | 13<br>(6)    |
| 9. I am concerned about the impact of school closures on my child's learning and development*     | N/A                        | 24               | 34         | 30         | 6                   | 6            |
| 10. I am confident that the school is doing all it can to provide recovery support where needed.* | 93%                        | 39               | 43         | 5          | 1                   | 11           |

*(Please note we remove the 'don't know' responses from the totals before calculating the percentages of 'overall positive responses')*

| Question  | Overall positive responses | My child has not been bullied % | Strongly agree % | Agree %   | Disagree % | Strongly disagree % |
|---|----------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|-----------|------------|---------------------|
| 11. Thinking about the last 12 months, my child has been bullied and the school dealt with the bullying quickly and effectively | 93%<br>(95)                | 82<br>(84)                      | 2<br>(3)         | 10<br>(8) | 5<br>(3)   | 2<br>(2)            |

| Question   | Overall positive responses | I have not raised any concerns % | Strongly agree % | Agree %    | Disagree % | Strongly disagree % | Don't know % |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|------------|------------|---------------------|--------------|
| 12. Thinking about the last 12 months, when I have raised concerns with the school they have been dealt with properly* | 92%<br>(94)                | 48<br>(54)                       | 23<br>(19)       | 19<br>(21) | 7<br>(4)   | <1<br>(<1)          | 3<br>(2)     |

| Question   | Yes %      | No %     |
|--|------------|----------|
| 12. I would recommend this school to another parent* | 97<br>(98) | 3<br>(3) |

We are delighted that in the vast majority of cases, parents remain extremely satisfied with the provision which we are offering at Whiteley Primary School. A very high proportion of children continue to feel safe and happy at our school despite what has been a turbulent year due to the impact of the Covid pandemic. With the exception of question 6 (see below), the number of positive responses were very similar to those from last year.

As in previous years, phase leaders have looked in detail at the responses and comments from within their phase to look at whether there are any key actions to identify. They have also shared lots of the lovely positive comments with their teams – thank you to everyone who took the time to share these as it is great to know where their efforts are particularly appreciated. This year, there were lots of comments which thanked staff for helping to provide continuity for the children and some sense of ‘normality’ whenever possible. Below is just a flavour of the positive comments received:

- *‘Although Covid has put a stop to parents in school this has not affected the warmth and happiness vibes given by all members of staff.’*
- *‘My child is very happy at school and it is reassuring how staff have dealt with all the new regulations and keeping the children as safe as possible.’*
- *‘It has been a very difficult year for school children but all the staff from the Governors, Head Teacher, Teachers, Teaching Assistants, Admin staff, HC3S and the facilities staff have been amazing. It must have been a logistical nightmare to organise but they did a brilliant job and should be proud of what they achieved.’*
- *‘I believe this is a truly exceptional school and I wish both my children had had the opportunity to attend from year R’*

We are also grateful for parents’ honesty in letting us know where there are aspects of our provision which don’t meet expectations as this helps us to review our practice. In some cases, this may lead to specific changes; in others, it helps us to recognise where we need to better communicate with parents to help others understand the reasoning behind our decisions. The results of the questionnaire are also reviewed by governors, helping to ensure that parental views are taken in to consideration within their strategic overview.

#### **Q.6 The school lets me know how my child is doing**

This question had the lowest number of positive responses this year (88%), and the largest difference from the previous year. We do feel it’s understandable that some parents felt less informed about how well their child was doing during the year as changes due to Covid reduced contact with class teachers. Virtual parent meetings meant that parents didn’t have the termly opportunities to look at their child’s work, and the temporary assessment system brought into address the need for recovery in the curriculum meant that Y1-6 parents didn’t receive the usual termly ‘tracker’ updates for how their child was progressing in reading, writing and maths.

We hope that the following actions this academic year will help parents to feel better informed about how their child is doing at school:

- In person parent meetings in the Autumn term – earlier than usual to facilitate building the relationship with the class teacher and to find out how children have settled in to the new year group. This will include an opportunity for Y1-6 parents to see their child's work. We hope to use a similar approach in the Spring term.
- A return to our usual 'HAM tracker' system for assessment in Y1-Y6 (Hampshire Assessment Model) – parents will receive an update in the Spring and the Summer to show whether their child is 'on track' in each of the domains for reading, writing and maths (parents of children in KS1 or who are new to the school will be sent more information about our assessment system later in the Autumn term).
- Whilst not about individual progress, we also hope that the introduction of the school Facebook page will be another way to help parents keep informed about some of the key activities and learning happening in school.

### **Q8. The school supports my child's wider personal development**

It's good to see that this question had a higher number of positive responses this year, and fewer 'don't know' responses. There were also a number of individual comments from parents which acknowledged the efforts staff took to support their child beyond the curriculum – for example, with particularly anxious children or those who experienced emotional difficulties during the year. I hope that the learning journey overviews which are used from Y1-Y6 to help keep parents informed of what is being taught in classes also helps to reassure parents of the breadth of our curriculum and the importance we place on developing the 'whole' child. We are also enjoying bringing back some of the opportunities for children which were lost when we had to work in class bubbles. For example, our whole school monitor roles with pupils taking on responsibility outside of their classroom; the use of trips and visitors to enrich the curriculum; and the reintroduction of extra-curricular activities, all of which contribute to children's wider development.

### **Q.9/10 – The impact of school closures and the support from school for recovery**

The governors included these new questions this year to gauge the level of concern regarding the impact of the pandemic on their children, and whether there is confidence in the school to support children with recovery. It's understandable that more than half of parents who responded are concerned about the impact on their child of the school closures. However, we are delighted in the level of trust shown in us as a school to do all we can to help the children get back on track. In many ways, we have been amazed by the resilience of the children over the past 18mths and how they adapted to the 'new normal'; nevertheless, we recognise that for some children, the lost learning time has had a considerable impact. For our younger children, the reduced access to pre-schooling and fewer opportunities to socialise outside their family has also impacted on their wider development. As a school, whilst we are aiming to get back on track with our usual year group curriculum, all staff are very aware of the need to identify where there are gaps in children's knowledge and experiences, and teachers are adapting planning, providing interventions and doing all they can to help children to help children to progress.

### **Q11. Dealing with bullying**

Whilst we always hope that children will not experience incidents of bullying, it is an issue which all schools have to deal with over the course of the year. We are pleased that the vast majority of parents felt that their children hadn't experienced bullying at our school, and that where it had occurred, most felt that it had been dealt with effectively. We would obviously like all parents to feel confident that incidents have been dealt with appropriately and so we would continue to urge parents to let us know if you have any concerns about your child. From a few of the comments, it is clear that on occasion, parents were not sure about whether or how incidents had been dealt with; on occasion, parents referenced incidents which hadn't been brought to our attention. I would urge any parents who have concerns to make contact with the school. Whilst the class teacher should usually be the first port of

call if you have concerns about your child, if you have further concerns, or need reassurance that an issue has been dealt with, please do contact a member of the senior leadership team. The school office can put you in touch with the appropriate member of staff. Within the comments, it was clear that when concerns had been escalated, parents felt that they had been dealt with swiftly; we are fortunate to have a number of senior leaders who have time during the school day to investigate concerns and speak to parents in ways which class teachers find more difficult due to their teaching commitments.

### **Q12. Dealing with concerns**

Whilst the positive responses to this question remained high, it is always a disappointment to us if people don't feel that we have dealt with their concerns effectively. Whilst we know that there will be occasions where we are unable to meet a parent's expectations for very good reasons, we would urge parents to speak to a member of the senior leadership team if they have brought a concern forward which they don't feel has been addressed. We can look into the matter further if necessary, or help to explain the reasoning behind a decision.

### **Responses to Comments**

It's obviously not possible for us to address every comment individually, but there are a few of specific issues raised by individuals which we felt important to share here:

#### **Voluntary Contributions**

A comment from a YR parent regarding our use of the term 'voluntary contribution' on a letter about a school trip reminded us that it is a while since we have communicated to parents about our charging and remission policy, and explained why we have to ask for 'voluntary contributions' rather than a 'charge' for activities in school. We have included the following information on the first letter to Y1 parents regarding contributions this term, and will ensure in future that this also goes to all new YR parents on the first trip letter:

#### **Why do we ask for 'voluntary contributions'?**

Other than for a few exceptions (such as small group music tuition), schools are not allowed to make a compulsory charge for any activities which are part of the curriculum – this includes the costs associated with day trips and other enrichment activities such as visitors. However, schools *are* permitted to request 'voluntary contributions' from parents to help support activities, provided this is an optional cost and that all children are included in the activity, regardless of whether a contribution has been made.

At Whiteley Primary School, it is important for us that children experience a range of enrichment activities as they move through the school including trips and the use of specialist visitors. Whilst the school already fully funds or subsidises a number of these opportunities and experiences, the reality is that without contributions from a significant number of parents for all day trips and some in-school experiences, we simply wouldn't be able to offer the range of experiences which we know are valued by children and parents.

We therefore ask that you do support us in our request for voluntary contributions whenever possible, but understand that some families, due to financial circumstances, may not be able to contribute every time, or the full amount. For more information regarding voluntary contributions, please see our 'Charging and Remissions Policy' on the school website.

#### **Communications**

The word communication came up in a number of comments; several praised the communication with parents during the pandemic and several parents thanked the school for keeping them well informed. On the flip side, there were parents who felt that the number of Parentmail communications were sometimes too much, and that they felt that key messages might therefore be missed. We have started to look at ways in which we can try to reduce the number of Parentmail communications that go out

each week and also help draw attention to key messages. Some suggestions we are going to try include grouping year group messages to go out once a week using headings to highlight each message; using Parentmail texts rather than email to send out urgent and short reminders; and making sure that any attachments have a brief message with them to highlight what parents should look out for in the attachment. It is obviously a balance, though, as we know how important it is to keep parents and carers informed, and the use of Parentmail helps to reduce the use of paper - and avoids letters being lost in school bags!

### **Homework Club**

Homework club was mentioned as one of the activities which parents would like to see return now that children aren't limited to working in 'bubbles'. I'm pleased to say that Ms Bolton and Mrs Gallagher will be running a homework club at lunchtime for KS2 children once a week this year, and there are also plans for TimesTable Rockstars club later this term. We are currently in the process of reviewing our home learning policy, and this will be sent out to parents once it has been updated.

*Once again, I'd like to thank all those who took the time to give their feedback. If you have any feedback during the year, please do let us know – you don't have to wait until our end of year questionnaire, and we would much rather know sooner rather than later of any issues so that we have the opportunity to address these.*

*Lesley Pennington – Headteacher*