

## Parent/Carer Survey Results – Spring 2016

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete our recent survey for parents/carers. We had a record response, with 181 completed questionnaires. This enables us to have confidence that the views expressed are probably representative of a wide range of parents/carers. Your views are very important to us, and help us to formulate our plans for school improvement over the coming year and beyond.

As you may be aware, our governors, our staff team and I are strongly focussed on doing everything we can to develop St Swithun's into an outstanding school. Our sights continue to be set high. Our aim is for as many children as possible to achieve (or exceed) the new, higher, expected standards for their age.

### 2016 Parent/Carer Survey Results

Showing percentage of responses that were 'strongly agree' or 'agree'

	Statement	Strongly agree/ Agree
1	My child is happy at St Swithun's.	98%
2	My child feels safe at school.	99%
3	My child makes good progress at St Swithun's.	92%
4	My child is well looked after at school.	98%
5	My child is taught well at St Swithun's	95%
6	I know what my child has to do to be successful.	91%
7	My child receives appropriate homework.	82%
8	Pupils at St Swithun's are well-behaved.	96%
9	The school deals effectively with bullying.	90%
10	The school is well led and managed.	96%
11	The school responds well to any concerns I raise.	91%
12	I receive valuable information from the school about my child's progress.	89%

Would you recommend the school to another parent? YES 95%

Parents mentioned many things that they feel are strengths of the school. There are a number of key themes, mentioned by many respondents, which emerge when looking across all the positive comments:

A selection of comments:

*The school clearly strives to be part of the community. Its ethos of mutual respect and collective learning is evident across the students and in my opinion rubs off on the parents too. This results in an informal but proactive environment.*

*I have always felt a sense of family in St Swithun's, making the children feel at ease to be able to concentrate on the learning they have to do.*

*Good range of school trips and opportunities to perform in school plays and sharing assemblies. FOSS is good with good fund raising.*

*Encouraging interests of children and individuality. Valuing the children as leaders and giving them responsibilities. Friendliness and warm welcome.*

*School keeps children interested and eager to learn. They grow up realising the importance of being polite, helpful and inquisitive.*

*A community feel. Commitment from teachers and staff. Excellent teaching skills. Wanting to do the best for pupils. Supportive and inclusive. Willing/happy to listen. Uniform. Praise and rewards. Caring – genuinely caring – staff.*

*All the pupils are known by the staff and treated as individuals. They are taught to respect each other and be tolerant of difference. The teachers give freely of their time and are always approachable and responsive. Trips to interesting places are plentiful and give children good opportunities to learn.*

*The teachers and their approach to learning. I feel very comfortable with the teachers in Saplings. They are very approachable and personable and really understand the needs + learning opportunities of the children in the class. My son really enjoys his time at school.*

*Good behaviour is valued. A family feeling. A great atmosphere – not just about the academic learning.*

*Regular communication via Parentmail, newsletter and school website. Parents are kept informed.*

*Dedicated teachers, friendly, well run.*

*I am constantly impressed by how often the teachers 'go the extra mile' – organising and attending events after school hours, making sets and costumes for plays etc. I know I can trust them to look after my children and help them navigate the sometimes perplexing and frequent changes to the National Curriculum.*

*The atmosphere of the school seems positive – it's a place our children want to go to.*

We are really pleased that so many of you so positive about the school and there were many positive comments about individual members of staff. Thank you for all this feedback. However, we are not complacent and remain committed to continual improvement.

We also value your suggestions for improvement, with the key ones being:

- More extra-curricular clubs
- Homework (too little / too much / lack of consistency)
- Learning a foreign language in KS1

With your positive comments, there were clear themes that emerged, so it is easy to share these, confident that they are representative of the views of a significant number of parents/carers. With suggestions for improvement, these were more varied and individual, and it was harder to identify themes.

### **What will we do as a result of the survey?**

**We will try to make the things you like even better!** Compliments work the same way with us as they do with the children – we will say ‘thank you’ and resolve to do even better!

With regard to **communication**, it was a mixed message. Some of you were very positive, others felt there is room for improvement. This is an aspect that we have been, and will continue, to work on. For example, we have been trialling using Twitter in Year 2 over the last term. A survey of the parents using this tool has shown that this initiative been very much welcomed and the feedback has been universally positive. As a result we intend to roll this strategy out to all other year groups in the new school year. The main idea of this is to let you know more about classroom life prompt conversations with your children about what they have been doing in school. This will, of course, be optional, and Twitter feeds will only go to parents who have signed up to receive them from individual classes.

Two parents mentioned frustrations when dealing directly with **Parentmail**. We have taken this up with the company. We will also be talking with them about the extent to which their service is ‘mobile-friendly’.

As you are probably aware, a significant part of our school improvement work this year is an intense focus on **raising standards in maths** across the school. This has included the introduction of a new scheme of work in Key Stage 1, which will be extended into Key Stage 2 in the autumn. We have recently added our updated calculation policy to the school website, which shows the ways in which we teach this area of maths, which you may find useful. <http://www.stswithunsschool.co.uk/Policies>

**Extra curricular activities** We have (or have had, earlier in the school year) the following extra-curricular activities available, either at lunchtime or after school:

- Singing Squad
- Tag rugby
- Zumba
- Dance (Tuesdays and Wednesdays, modern and tap)
- Football
- Board games
- Gardening
- Rounders
- Theatre Club
- Science Club
- Cheerleading
- Gymnastics
- The School Band (woodwind and brass instruments)
- ‘Scratch’ Club (computer animations)
- Maths in Motion
- Journalism

Our popular After School Club, run by Oxford Active, also operates every day after school, up to 6.00pm. Kennington Playgroup offers a Breakfast Club, every day before school, from 8.00am.

We are very grateful that many of our teachers give their time to run extra-curricular clubs (either at lunchtime or after school). Others are also involved in providing small group tuition in English or maths after school. Teachers are under no obligation to run clubs or provide additional tuition, but it is indicative of the commitment of our teachers that they are willing to do so.

If there are any other clubs that you would particularly like to see happening in school, do let us know, and we will investigate the possibility of setting them up. Please bear in mind that we are restricted with the availability of hall space, as the After School Club has the use of the Key Stage 1 hall every day after school. The KS2 hall is also already used by clubs and classes every day after school.

**Homework** It is challenging to please everyone when it comes to homework, as some parents would like to see children being set lots of homework, other wanting none whilst their children are at primary school. Probably most parents' preference is for something between these two extremes, which is what we aim for. It seems that there may be some inconsistencies that we need to resolve and we will check that our practice is in line with our homework policy. <http://www.stswithunsschool.co.uk/Policies>

### **Learning a foreign language in Key Stage 1**

You may be aware that we teach French in Key Stage 2. It would be beneficial if we could introduce this into Key Stage 1. However, fitting in learning French in Key Stage 1 will be a challenge. Nevertheless, we will endeavour to begin to do this in the new school year. This would be in a fun way through songs, rhymes and games.

### **Bullying**

We were concerned to note that a few respondents felt that the school does not deal effectively with bullying. As you know, we have a zero tolerance of any kind of bullying behaviour and are committed to dealing with it swiftly and decisively if incidents occur. However, we *do* need to know about any issues. I am unaware of any unresolved incidents of bullying at present, but if you know differently, please come and tell me as a matter of urgency, so that I may investigate and put a stop to it. Thank you.

### **Reporting to Parents**

You may recall that earlier in the year, Mr Dando and I worked with a group of (non-governor) parents to revise the format of our annual reports. They needed to be changed to reflect the new National Curriculum. We also wanted to make them more concise, whilst making them more personal, with all the information that you, as parents, need. We hope that you will like the new format and will value your evaluation. Annual reports are scheduled to be sent home on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> July.

### **Suggestions?**

You do not need to wait for the annual survey to give us suggestions for improvements in school. There are several things you can do:

- mention your suggestion to your child's class teacher – or in fact any member of staff;
- mention your suggestion to me, especially when I am out and about around the school in the mornings before the start of the school day;
- use the suggestions slips that are on top of the cupboard in the parents' information area near the KS1 hall, or a piece of plain paper will do just as well. Please put your completed slip into the post box on the wall above the cupboard or hand it in at reception.

Whichever method you use to let us know your ideas, we will respond as soon as we can, usually within a day or two. If we are able to make the change you have suggested, we will, and if we can't, we will explain why.

Helen Atkinson  
May 2016