



## Howden le Wear Primary School Weekly Newsletter

Friday 8 July 2016

Vol: 5 Issue: 37

### Headteacher's Notices

#### Parents / Carers Questionnaire Results – Summer 2016

I would like to thank the parents/carers who kindly took the time to complete and return the questionnaire. We issue the questionnaire on an annual basis to enable us to compare findings and review the impact of school initiatives. The questions used are the same as those used on the Ofsted Parentview online survey website. We see this as a vital part of our school self review. Should anyone have any ideas or concerns, we are always ready to listen and review practices.

|  | Strongly Agree | Agree | Unsure | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|--|----------------|-------|--------|----------|-------------------|
| <b>My child is happy at this school.</b>   | 89%            | 11%   | 0%     | 0%       | 0%                |
| <b>My child feels safe at this school.</b>                                       | 84%            | 16%   | 0%     | 0%       | 0%                |
| <b>My child makes good progress at this school.</b>                              | 89%            | 11%   | 0%     | 0%       | 0%                |
| <b>My child is well looked after at this school.</b>                             | 84%            | 11%   | 0%     | 0%       | 0%                |
| <b>My child is taught well at this school.</b>                                   | 100%           | 0%    | 0%     | 0%       | 0%                |
| <b>My child receives appropriate homework for their age.</b>                     | 63%            | 21%   | 5%     | 11%      | 0%                |
| <b>The school makes sure its pupils are well behaved.</b>                        | 84%            | 16%   | 0%     | 0%       | 0%                |
| <b>The school deals effectively with bullying.</b>                               | 58%            | 26%   | 16%    | 0%       | 0%                |
| <b>The school is well led and managed.</b>                                       | 95%            | 5%    | 0%     | 0%       | 0%                |
| <b>The school responds well to any concerns I raise.</b>                         | 84%            | 11%   | 5%     | 0%       | 0%                |
| <b>I receive valuable information from the school about my child's progress.</b> | 89%            | 11%   | 0%     | 0%       | 0%                |
| <b>I would recommend this school to another parent.</b>                          | 100%           | 0%    | 0%     | 0%       | 0%                |

**25 questionnaires were returned and on some papers not all areas were marked. Some were noted as not applicable and others noted as no experience of this issue.**

For the most up to date information about what is going on in our school including dates for your diaries, parental information and school performance information, please visit our website at:

**<http://www.howden-le-wear.durham.sch.uk>**

Please scan your smartphone device over the QR code to the right to be taken straight to our school website!



## Parents/Carer Questionnaire Analysis

### **What you like about the school and what you think we are doing well:**

- Communication with parents is good.
- The school is welcoming, friendly and flexible.
- Breakfast Club is ideal for working parents. Good choices at Breakfast club.
- The outdoor activities and learning opportunities are good.
- 'Star of the week' and behaviour/conduct based rewards are positive and motivational for children.
- The school makes an effort to celebrate special events such as the Queen's 90th Birthday.
- After school clubs are great, offer a good selection and are free.
- Recent healthy eating/lifestyle focus has been good - 'my child has learned a lot and has changed some behaviours as a result.'
- Good teaching in school, children make progress.
- Extra support for children with handwriting, reading, maths is effective and enjoyable for the children.
- Staff are pleasant, approachable and helpful.
- 'I have every confidence in the management of the school and believe my children's interests are always put first.'
- Community involvement of the school within the local area.
- Good range of educational visits offered to support the curriculum.
- The nursery provides high quality learning opportunities and children love attending.
- High quality learning environments which encourage care and respect.
- Staff are dedicated and involved in all school events.

### **How the school might improve:**

- Homework/spellings - too much / too little/ too easy/ too hard/ homework takes too long to complete.
- Regular marking/testing which could be fed back quicker to parents to know how their child is doing and progressing.
- Too much pressure on children nowadays in school.
- Increased number of minor accidents at playtime/lunchtime.
- More notification is needed of events in school.
- Could parents be included in more assemblies?
- After school clubs don't provide an equal number of choices for each Key Stage.
- Could the school offer a holiday club provision?
- Bike/scooter shelter in school so children can ride/scoot to school.

### **How the school will follow up the suggestions to improve:**

**Homework** was the main concern expressed in this year's annual questionnaire responses. As I have explained previously it is always a difficult area and one that we consider regularly. Some parents would prefer their child not to receive work, others at different times of the week/weekend/holidays. Some parents would prefer quicker homework linked to core learning instead of topic based, choice activities. We endeavour to provide homework activities which support and extend children's learning first and foremost. However, as a parent myself, I am fully aware of the time implications involved in completing homework for one or more children; particularly if this includes longer pieces of homework. I am keen to stress we run a very successful after school homework club that supports children in completing their homework with school staff, but also realise that all children do not wish or need to attend this facility. In light of the high level of homework based responses from parents in the questionnaire, I plan to organise a full review of homework across the full school before we return in September and ensure that if any changes are identified by staff and pupils, they are communicated to parents as soon as we return to school. Should any parents wish to discuss this issue personally with me, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

**Feedback from tests** - pupils are regularly tested as part of our continuous assessment cycle in school. Tests range from weekly spelling or times tables to formal 'exam' style tests which are sat by pupils in the summer term each year. However, pupil testing provides only one indicator of the overall teacher assessment judgement for a pupil; and at times pupils can 'over perform' or 'under perform' in such tests. It is important that teachers reflect on the full picture of assessments - work in books, application of concepts, discussions with staff about pupil progress; alongside any testing that has taken place; before they feedback to parents. Taking time to digest the full picture of pupil progress will ensure the judgements being communicated to parents are accurate. In school we feedback to parents formally three times a year at parents consultation evenings; as well as providing parents with a written annual report in July annually. We also have an open door policy in school, so if you know your child has taken part in a test, we are more than happy to provide you with the outcomes if you let us know. To move this forward I will review with staff how smaller tests, such as weekly spelling results, are communicated to parents and endeavour to improve this system. Again, I can empathise if you have worked hard at home with your child all week to learn their spellings and you then don't get to find out quickly how well they have done.

**Too much pressure on children in school** - We live in an ever changing educational world and recent changes to the National Curriculum have 'raised the bar' in terms of what is expected from pupils in each year group. Curriculum content is now more complex, detailed and challenging. This has certainly been felt this week when national testing data was released showing that only 53% of Year 6 pupils nationally achieved the new expected standard for reading, writing and maths - a big drop from the 80% who achieved it last year. Like yourselves we very much want to ensure children across school achieve highly; but also want them to have a fun, enjoy school, 'be children' and not be affected by the stresses that curriculum pressure may bring. I intend to discuss this with our full staff in the near future and look to implement some changes, particularly for our younger children, to rectify this.

## Parents/Carer Questionnaire Analysis Continued....

**Playtime/lunchtime accidents** - Whenever children are outside there are always at least two adults in attendance. Our first aid record book shows that the vast majority of incidents that occur are minor, but I agree that the number of incidents have risen slightly over the last year. Adding more adults outside will not necessarily stop children having accidents, but I will look at where staff are positioned when they are outside and where their focus is to review the effectiveness of supervision. I will also instruct staff to regularly reinforce through PSHE lessons and assemblies the importance of staying safe in school and avoiding minor accidents.

**More notification of school events** - I feel we have very good communication channels with our parents and community and the weekly newsletter is the main driver for this. However to address this; in September I will issue an events diary for the full school year that will outline all the key dates in each of the three academic terms.

**Parents attending assemblies** - We try to include parents as often as possible in the events we host in school. We will try over the coming year to facilitate more parents opportunities to attend assemblies and events in school.

**After School Club choices** - I believe we provide a comprehensive after school club offer for all our children; more so than many other schools locally. Traditionally after school clubs would only be available to older Key Stage 2 children and we have tried in recent years to offer choice for our younger children. Mrs Clark and I will look at our half termly after school club choices and continue to ensure our younger children are catered for and wherever possible add more choices for younger children.

**School Holiday Clubs** - Unfortunately this is not a facility we are able to offer at present utilising school staff. We will however, continue to provide information to parents on local clubs/organisations that are offering activities during school holidays.

**Bike/Scooter shelter** - I will get our new School Council in September to conduct a survey on whether children would like such a facility.

May I take this opportunity to thank you again for your time, co-operation and wonderful comments you have made about our school. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss any areas more fully or have any suggestions as to how we can continue to improve.

Thank you for your continued support.

Mr C Baines  
Headteacher

**Please feel free to share your views about our school on the  
Ofsted Parentview website.**

**Parental responses are then collated and available to view in graphical form.**



**<https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/>**

### School Summer Fair

Our annual summer fair is scheduled for next Friday 15 July from 2pm in the main school hall. Everyone is welcome and we hope the weather is as nice as it is today for our fair next week.

Last week you received five strips of raffle tickets on the newsletter for you to sell to family and friends. Tickets cost 50p per strip. Please return the counterfoils, money or unsold tickets to the school office by next Thursday.

Games will continue to be available for children and families to play in the main entrance next week in advance of the summer fair. Each game is 20p a turn; and this year we have Guess the Teddy's Birthday and Find the Treasure. Each game will be drawn at the summer fair with the winners each receiving a prize.

Finally we are still looking for donations, particularly bottles of wine for our bottle stall and along with any suitable donations for raffle prizes.

**We look forward to seeing everyone at the fair next week.**

### Sports Day Re Run Next Monday

We will have another go at running Sports Day next Monday 11 June from 1.15pm. Hopefully the weather will be great and ice creams will be on sale at the end of the event. We look forward to seeing as many parents as possible next Monday.



### **Jack Drum Arts AUCKLAND CASTLE SUMMER SCHOOL**



Monday 1st until Friday 5th August  
10am - 4pm  
Ages 8 +  
£20 for the week

Auckland Castle,  
Bishop Auckland, DL14 7NR

Join a team of musicians, and environmentalists to create an interactive outdoor experience for the public to enjoy. We'll use the natural surroundings of Auckland Castle as inspiration for stories and soundscapes, forage for resources to create our own instruments, and learn all about the scientific processes of sound and nature ending with a performance for family and friends at the end of the week. All young people will have the opportunity to undertake Arts Award Discover or Explore as part of the activities on offer.

A partnership project delivered by Jack Drum Arts and Auckland Castle Trust [www.aucklandcastle.org](http://www.aucklandcastle.org)  
To book please call 01388 743797 or  
email [enquiries@aucklandcastle.org](mailto:enquiries@aucklandcastle.org) for more information

NB: a small number of subsidised places are available for low-income families in receipt of benefits.



### Children's Achievements In School

Every Friday teachers choose a child from their class to be recognised for something special they have achieved that week. This week's chosen children are:

#### Mrs Wheatley's Nursery Class



Mrs Wheatley in Nursery would like to congratulate **Jacob Pigg** for his imaginative role play in the class 'ice cream parlour' this week. Great work Jacob!

#### Miss Knaggs' Reception Class



Miss Knaggs has this week nominated **Sam McGow** for experimenting with sounds in words and writing a sentence when playing a game with friends. Great work Sam!

#### Ms Simons' Year 1/2 Class



Ms Simons would like to say a huge well done to **Luke Thompson** for super effort in all his written work in class this week. Well done Luke!

#### Mr Clarke's Year 3 Class



Mr Clarke would like a special mention this week for **Lucie Underwood** for showing a great level of independence and maturity in all that she does in school. Great work Lucie!

#### Mrs Salkeld and Miss Hutchinson's Year 4 Class

Mrs Salkeld and Miss Hutchinson are really pleased with **Kate Johnson** for producing an amazing volcano project which she has planned and carried out independently! Well done Kate!



#### Mrs Clark's Year 5/6 Class

Mrs Clark would like a special mention this week for **all of the children in Year 6** for some amazing SAT results that were returned to school this week. Well done to each and every one of you!



**Well done to all our children this week for their fabulous effort and hard work in school.**

