



## St Helen's 2019 Parents' Survey

Thank-you to the 56 parents who responded to our annual parents' survey. Your support in taking the time to complete this is really appreciated as it gives us an understanding of your thoughts and feelings about school life, helps us measure the progress we are making and shapes the future direction of the school.

We used an online survey company this year and have generated a report from this data showing the responses to all of the questions. This question by question report is available for parents to view on our website. You can find this under the 'School Life' section of the menu, or by typing the following link into your web browser: [www.sthelensprimary.org.uk/parentsurvey](http://www.sthelensprimary.org.uk/parentsurvey).

We have analysed the survey as a Senior Leadership Team and with governors and wanted to share with you some of the key areas of progress and also some areas for further development.

### Some highlights from the 2019 Parents' Survey:

- 100% of parents felt their child was happy at St Helen's
- 100% of parents felt their child was making good progress
- 98% of parents said their child felt safe at St Helen's
- 100% of parents said their child was taught well (up from 95% in 2017)
- 98% said that pupils are well behaved at St Helen's
- 100% said that the school was well led and managed
- 82% of parents said that they knew what the governors do (up from 72% in 2015)
- 96% of parents said that the staff have explained to them how to help their child with their learning
- 100% said that they would recommend the school to another parent
- Reception parents said that the recent changes to the reception induction period, including the shortened induction period and the home visits had been well received. We will continue to review this period for September 2019.

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There were also a number of comments that parents made about the strengths of the school which we wanted to share with the wider community:

*'A great school with excellent teachers. My daughter really enjoys school.'*

*'I can't praise the early years team highly enough. I can't think of anything else that could have been done to support my son and he is flourishing.'*

*'St Helen's is a lovely school where my children are cared for by people I trust.'*

*'My children are so happy at this school, they have run through the gate to go into class from their first weeks right through to year 6 which is testament to how much they enjoy coming to this school! We are extremely fortunate to have such a great school and appreciate all the hard work the leadership team and teachers put in.'*

*'Strong sense of community; good teaching and other staff; good leadership and management; excellent outdoor facilities; lots of opportunities for the children to learn outside the classroom.'*

*'An outstanding team of teachers that work well together, sharing their strengths and learning from each other. Clear values that the children understand and talk about and demonstrate in their actions.'*

*'The nurturing and development of the children as individuals.'*

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### **Areas for further development:**

As well as the 'tick box' questions, there was also an opportunity within the survey for parents to highlight areas for development. As a leadership team and governing body, we've looked at all of these comments and they will help to shape next year's school development plan. We're always keen to listen to parent feedback and so we've included some of the comments below and we've written a response to each of them outlining our plans and approach.

#### **'School dinners- both the food and the ordering system' – Parent Comment**

We have been working closely with our catering provider, Autograph, over the last few months to look to improve both the ordering system, the accuracy of the menu and the catering experience. We know that in the autumn term there had been a number of problems with the online system 'ParentPay' and we have taken these up with the company.

Autograph have engaged with us on this and in the last couple of months ran two Q&A sessions with parents and also provided samples of the menu for parents to try. This was really positively received by the parents who attended. We also had a visit from the company nutritionist, working with classes on developing their understanding of healthy eating and a number of theme days have been planned.

We continue to meet regularly with the catering management and would like to encourage parents who have any particular issues around the menu to make an appointment through the office to meet with Charlene, our catering manager.

#### **'Streamlining systems for payments for school trips, dinners etc' – Parent Comment**

As a school, we're going to be exploring ways of streamlining payment for school trips and in particular whether we can use ParentPay as a 'one stop shop' for all financial transactions, as well as looking into other available options. We will write to parents later in the year with more information about this.

#### **'Communication via email not paper which gets left in children's trays' – Parent Comment**

There were a number of comments from parents requesting e-mail communication on this year's Parents' survey. We will be working with our text message provider 'Teachers 2 Parents' to evaluate the cost and benefit of the e-mail service that they provide as well as exploring other potentially cost-free options.

#### **'I would value more detailed information on what we can do at home to specifically help our child develop on a regular basis' – Parent Comment**

Over the last few years, we have tried to simplify home learning to some of the key skills that we really want children to be confident in through the school. The three areas we have chosen to focus on are:

- Reading
- Mental calculation in maths – Times tables, number bonds etc
- Practising spellings


Recently, we have further developed this, holding a reading information evening with supporting information, but also through the purchase of 'Times Table Rockstars', which can be used online, or via an app. We also have guidance for supporting your child with spellings and all of this is available on our website on the 'Home Learning' page.

We then look to provide parents with helpful information at the parents' evenings, which take place twice per year. If any parent would like more information on supporting their child at home, we would be more than happy to discuss it. Please make an appointment with your child's class teacher, or via the school office.

**‘I would like to see more creative/performing arts in the curriculum.’ – Parent Comment**

The arts is such an important area of the curriculum and provides the children with the opportunity to make links and express themselves in different ways. This academic year, we've employed Jo, our 'Artist in Residence' who has worked with Years 1-6 over the year to develop some different and really high quality art outcomes linked to their learning. This is displayed throughout the school and has given the children the chance to work alongside a professional artist and learn some new skills along the way! We'd love to invite parents to come and take a look at the amazing displays of our learning and art which are around the school.

Since losing Mrs Joliffe, our music specialist, a few years ago, we have looked to invest in both the expertise of the teaching staff, but also bring in other musical opportunities which enrich the musical experiences of the children. Over the last year, Years 1 and 2 have taken part in a singing project, led by a vocal coach and the South Glos Music Hub. Year 3 and 4 are currently receiving weekly whole class brass tuition and Year 5 taking part in the 'Big Sing' along with other local primary schools. Our staff have also received training on a new piece of music teaching software, 'Charanga' and it is our aim to continue to develop the role of music in school life over the next few years.

A photograph of a young boy with dark hair, wearing a green school uniform, playing a silver trumpet. He is looking towards the right. In the background, another child is partially visible, also playing a trumpet. The setting appears to be a classroom with windows and educational posters on the wall.

## Thank-you

On behalf of the governors and senior leadership team, we'd like to thank parents for their support in taking the time to complete this survey and also for your continued support as we continue to move forward together as a school. As ever, do feel free to get in contact with your child's class teacher, or a member of the senior team if you have any questions or concerns.

Andy Spens (Headteacher), Jim McLaren (Chair of Governors)



A 'wordle' created from the comments on the school's perceived strengths