

12 March 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Parent/Carer Questionnaire November 2020

Thank you to all who took the time to complete the Parent/Carer Questionnaire in November 2020. In total, we received 253 responses, fewer than last year, but this was expected given the survey was online rather than being handed out at parents’ evening. As always, your feedback is incredibly valuable to help us know what we are doing well and what we can do better as a school.

General questions

We were incredibly pleased that 244 of the 253 responses said they would recommend the school to others, but there are still a number of areas for us to strive to improve upon. Overall, 92% answers to the individual questions were positive about the school but 7% answers disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statements presented. The proportion of positive answers was similar to last year, but the extent of disagreement was higher than last year, in part due to three new questions that were asked on the response to the pandemic. Figure 1 shows the breakdown by the 14 questions.

Figure 1

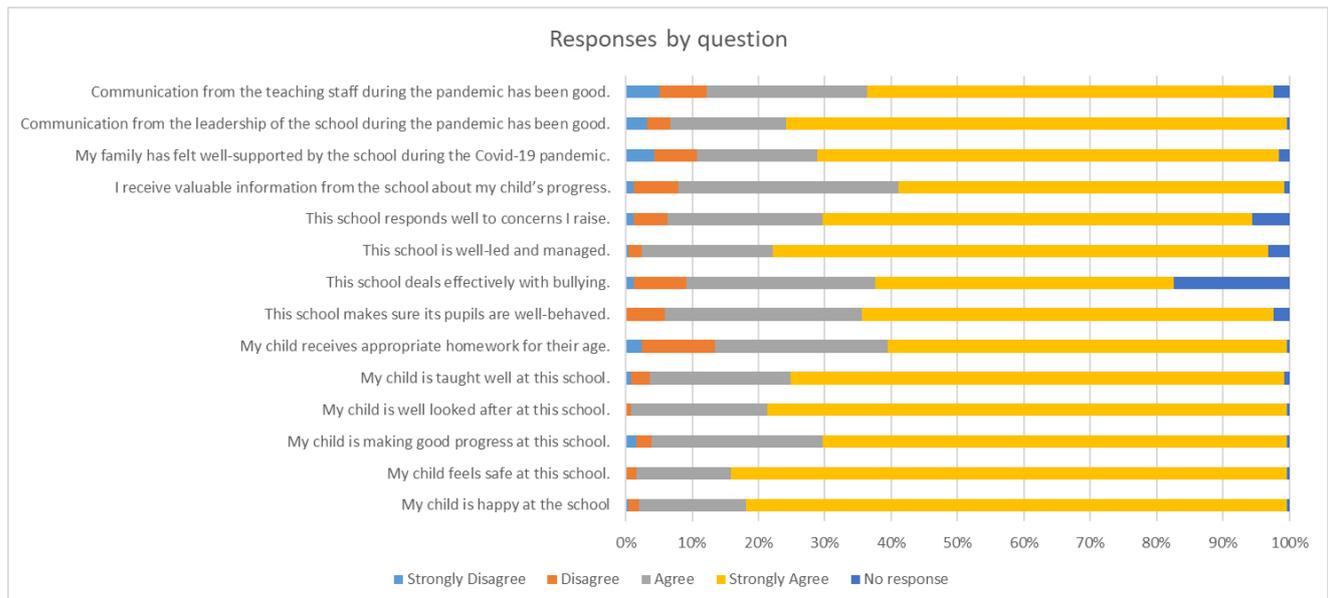


Figure 1 shows there was overwhelming support for the happiness, safety, progress, care and teaching of children and the leadership of the school. However, six questions are worth highlighting in terms of disagreement from parents/carers:

- **Appropriate homework** – 13% disagreed that their child received appropriate homework for their age, up from 4% last year. This year we asked an additional question to the 34 parents who disagreed about *why* they thought there was inappropriate homework. Nearly all of these responses said there was too little homework.
- **Bullying** – the proportion of people disagreeing that the school deals effectively with bullying had increased from 1% last year to 9% this year (23 parents).
- **Information about progress** – there was a notable increase in the proportion disagreeing that they receive valuable information about the progress of their child – up from 1% last year to 8% this year.
- **Three new questions on the response to the pandemic** – these three questions had a disagreement level of between 7 and 12%. The survey was conducted between lockdowns, so the timing of the survey is important in considering what types of concerns parents had.

Written responses

We asked two questions that allowed parents to provide fuller, written answers. The first question was on strengths of the school and the second question on possible improvements to the school.

Key strengths

There were 171 written comments (68% of respondents) on the strengths of the school:

- As last year, nearly half of the positive comments related to the **quality of teaching** and the teachers.
- Over a quarter commented on **the sense of community and the caring and supportive environment** in the school.
- **Communication** was praised by 24 parents/carers, whilst also noted as an area for improvement by 16 parents/carers (see below).
- Other positive comments were about leadership, the response to COVID and the curriculum.

How can we improve?

79 people (31% of respondents) gave suggestions for improvements. The responses focused mainly on:

- **Drop-off and collection** – this was the prime area of concern, with responses focused on the challenges created by the COVID one-way system, and the parking and driving situation around the school.
- **Improving communications** – this mainly related to the ability to communicate easily with teachers outside of parents' evening and asking for more regular feedback on children's progress.
- **Home Learning** – this related to the experience from the first lockdown and mainly requested greater levels of contact if the school were to close again (which of course it did in January).
- Other suggestions included points around how poor pupil behaviour is dealt with, stretching more able pupils, making some building improvements and using the outdoor space further.

Next steps

- **COVID-related issues, including communications:**
 - We recognise that some of the concerns raised related to the experiences of parents and carers during the period prior to November 2020 – i.e. the first lockdown and the period in school from September to Christmas. The response to the second lockdown included a number of measures to enhance the home learning experience and the extent of communication with teachers. This included the use of Teams for teaching and feedback, weekly video assemblies and a weekly phone call to home to see how things were going.
 - As the school has re-opened this week, many of the drop-off and collection concerns are likely to resurface given the same social-distancing measures will need to be in place as in

September-Christmas. We will monitor again how well this is working and your continued feedback is much appreciated so we can keep the process under review and operating as best we can in the circumstances.

- In a 'normal' year, parents are provided with written summaries of progress twice a year, as well as a full annual report and have two parent consultation sessions and a drop-in session. In addition to this, Woodlands has an open-door policy for parents to contact the teacher for information at any point throughout the year. Once parents can be invited into school again, we will be holding after-school drop-in sessions for children to show their parents their books and to informally catch up with the teacher.
- **Behaviour, including bullying:**
 - Any increased concerns around behaviour or the school's response to bullying are taken very seriously. We propose to take the following actions:
 - Pursue an anti-bullying accreditation. This ensures we reach a set standard for preventing and responding to bullying.
 - Communicate with parents about bullying so they know what to do, including sharing a greater understanding of what constitutes bullying in schools and how we deal with it.
 - Run a Behaviour Forum for parents and carers to explain our behaviour approach, including how different types of incidents are dealt with and to hear views.
- **Homework:**
 - The pandemic has led to an unprecedented period in the way we have had to teach our children. As teaching returns to a more normal pattern, we intend to look again at the level and type of homework. We will look to conduct a further short survey of parents to seek further views as we recognise that views may differ by year group in terms of the amount and types of homework being set.

Thank you again for all of your comments – your feedback is extremely valuable both for the Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body. Thank you also to one of our new governors, George Little, who conducted the analysis of the data.

Finally, please do not hesitate to get in touch with either of us or any one of the governors if you have any comments on the survey results, would like to discuss any of the points raised, or would like to offer more general feedback.

Yours faithfully,

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