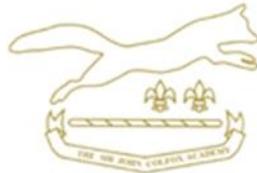


The Sir John Colfox Academy



Inspiring Learning, Achieving Excellence

Headteacher: Mr David Herbert BSc PGCE NPQH

June 2017

Dear Parents

I am pleased to be able to present the results from the recent Parent's Questionnaire (Years 7-10). Thank you very much to all those who contributed their views. The return of just over 100 was a little disappointing, but was representative of all year groups. As promised anyone who requested to speak with a member of staff to offer a more detailed opinion on one aspect or another, is being contacted by the most appropriate member of staff. There were some very constructive points made and the Senior Leadership Team and I read each returned questionnaire in our meeting last week.

I have presented the numerical data in response to each question. The first section were the standard OFSTED 'Parent View' questions, while the second part were more Colfox specific. I have provided an overall summary at the end of Part 1 and then in Part 2, offered a short response to each of the results.

It is not feasible to offer a detailed summary of all the written feedback made. Many of these were highlighting specific teachers who have clearly had a real impact on their child's learning. I want to reassure you that these kind comments have been passed onto the staff concerned and to stress how lovely it is for them to receive such validation. It was very much appreciated towards the end of a very busy school year.

Part 1: Parent View Questions

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
1. My child is happy at this school.	40%	54%	6%		
2. My child feels safe at this school.	39%	58%	3%		
3. My child makes good progress at this school.	33%	58%	4%	1%	4%
4. My child is well looked after at this school.	37%	62%			1%
5. My child is taught well at this school.	22%	70%	4%		4%
6. My child receives appropriate homework for their age.	22%	62%	12%	3%	1%
7. This school makes sure its pupils are well behaved.	27%	47%	17%		10%
8. This school deals effectively with bullying.	21%	38%	7%		34%
9. The school is well led and managed.	33%	60%	1%		6%

10. This school responds well to any concerns I raise.	36%	46%	5%		13%
11. I receive valuable information from the school about my child's progress.	33%	52%	9%		6%
12. Would you recommend this school to another parent?	39%	59%	1%		1%

Summary

We are very pleased with these results indeed. As I have the opportunity of working as an OFSTED Inspector in other schools, I am well used to reading the results of this particular questionnaire! These would represent a very positive view of the school from our parents. When you add the 'strongly agree' to 'agree' then the proportion of positive responses is the best we have ever had. I am mindful that the returns only represent the views of those who replied, however, that is all we are able work with.

I want to assure you that we have no intention of resting on our laurels and as we come to write our School Improvement Plan for 2017/8 aspects from this questionnaire (including written comments), emails received through the year (positive and negative) and parental conversations will be reflected. Specific areas from this part of the questionnaire we want to address are:

- 1) Continue to develop our assessment systems in Key Stage 3 and 4 so that it is more easily understood (15% disagreed, or did not know in relation to question 11). The new GCSE grading (9-1) and the new Key Stage 3 attainment targets are different to those which we have been used before. We will look to improve our feedback in relation to these.
- 2) Review aspects of our Behavior for Learning Policy to improve on the 17% of negative responses to this question. I think this an area that can be improved and minimising the effect that low level disruption can have on learning is very important to us.
- 3) Continue the work started last year on homework. 84% positive is a good overall result for this aspect. However, the Year 7 and 8 specific question in Part 2 suggests some work is still to be done in Key Stage 3. There were some very helpful written suggestions on this topic.

Overall, we are delighted that 98% of returns indicated they would recommend the school to another parent. This seems to be reflected in the excellent student numbers in the current Year 7 (full) and the new intake for September 2017 (2 spaces only at this stage). Despite falling primary school numbers locally, we have increased our numbers into Year 7. This has been down to an increase in the number of students coming from out of our immediate catchment area. It is always lovely to meet prospective new parents who have had the school recommended to them by current students and parents. Thank you.

All Year Groups-Part 2

	Yes	No	Don't Know
1. School council have raised the motion of introducing house coloured ties for the school uniform, instead of wearing the coloured badges. Do you think this is a good idea?	33%	48%	19%
Comment: We will also be asking this question of students in the near future. It was after all a student proposal. There are no planned uniform changes for 2017/18 (we would always give one year's notice) and there does not seem to be a strong feeling on this from parents. The coloured dot badges we have used in the past to show house identity have not stood the test of time.			

2. This year we have been trialling a new system for parent's evenings of everyone being in the main hall. Do you think we should retain this system for future parent's evenings?	83%	8%	9%
Comment: There were many additional comments made on this aspect and clearly the vast majority do favour the new system which we will therefore retain. Some parents raised the issue of wanting longer slots: 6, 7 or even 10 minutes. In lengthening the slots, the issue would be enabling every parent to have an appointment in busy core subjects. Please remember that if ever you want to have a more detailed conversation with a teacher about progress in a subject, then you are very welcome to make an appointment by contacting the office at any stage of the school year. You do not need to wait until parents' evening where the short time slots and venue (references to speed dating were made!) might not be appropriate for your needs.			
3. Some parents have requested an earlier entry time to the school for students. We currently open the doors to students from 8.15am. If there was a 'breakfast club' to supervise children in the school earlier than this, e.g. 7.45am to 8.15am would this be something you would consider paying for?	14%	78%	8%
Comment: At this stage, the numbers who are expressing some interest in this would not appear to be viable in terms of the school employing staff to run a breakfast club facility. If you are experiencing significant problems with this please contact the relevant Head of Lower/Upper School.			
4. There has been much in the press this year relating to keeping children safe online, including the use of social media. Do you feel that your child has enough education about internet/online safety?	72%	21%	7%
Comment: There were many additional comments on this topic. Some feeling that their children had received more than enough guidance on this topic, and some not enough. We will contribute to review of schemes of work in PSHE and in ICT learning. Some parents requested an information session for parents on safer use of the internet including making home usage safer. We will be putting on an evening session for parents next academic year in response to this.			
5. This year 150 students did not return a form making any choice request for curriculum enrichment week. Given the cost of other curriculum trips/events during the year, do you still think the school should retain a curriculum enrichment week in the summer term?	78%	13%	9%
Comment: Alongside the uniform question (below), this question produced the biggest response in terms of specific written feedback. The majority are clearly in favour in some form of alternative activities for students at the end of the year. Some comments noted that the students were deserving of this as a 'treat' at the end of a busy year working. Some replies referenced the different choices this year (adventure and fun was removed so that trips were aligned to a curriculum area) and felt they should be fun based than this year. Others suggested that it should remain a learning focussed week and as you can see some wanted it to be removed altogether! The rising cost of all trips was noted in some replies (a very true fact) and that on top of other trips during the year, this week was an extra burden for some families. We will discuss this with students as well but with returns at nearly 80% it is fair to say we will continue with some form of trips next year.			
6. Some parents have suggested that school uniform would be more consistent if all skirts and trousers had to be purchased via our current on line provider and not be subject to the current free choice/style differences that we currently see. It has been suggested this would be easier for parents. Would you prefer to see us only allow a choice of skirts and trousers that would be chosen by us and made available through our online provider?	29%	67%	6%

<p>Comment: There is not the space here to capture the full strength of feeling in all of the replies on this question. Uniform can be an emotive issue! Regardless, the majority view is that insisting on the purchase of skirts and trousers from our online provider and removing the element of choice is not the way forward. The question of sourcing best value products was very important for many and we have no wish to place a bigger financial burden on families. Some replies commented that teachers should do more to enforce the current rules in relation to skirts in particular. I have some sympathy with this view but note also that teachers' main role is to teach! Other replies suggested that parents should take more responsibility when buying uniform and check their children before they leave the house. I do not want to labour this point but again, there will be no change for September 2017 and if there were a need for change in the future, we would always have a one year lead in, as we did when we moved from polo shirts, to blazers in 2010. Before the end of term I will write to all parents clarifying the school uniform. As well as short skirts, the other area that was noted was the creeping in of school shoes that are in fact trainers. Students who have been wearing Nike, Reebok, Vans (and other makes) etc that are not part of school uniform are being spoken to and asked to replace. One unnamed reply said that girls should not be made to wear tights with their skirts due to overheating. I can clarify here that they do not have to wear tights and have never been made to. It is fashion that seems to dictate that most wear tights, not school rules.</p>			
7. The school 'Parents Friends Teachers Association' collapsed some years ago because of a lack of support. Historically once children have gone onto secondary school the interest in things like PFTA drops! If it was re-started is this something that you might wish to get involved with?	24%	58%	18%
<p>Comment: This is excellent news! In the positive replies that were named we will be seeking to pull together a meeting to try to restart our PFTA in one form or another. It is doubtless true that with funding for schools having been cut so severely, the need to generate some funds will be most helpful. I am hoping to arrange a Ball next Autumn as a fundraiser for our Expressive Arts and Sports extracurricular programme.</p>			
8. Nationally more and more schools are being forced to seek some form of financial contribution from parents for things such as extra-curricular activities e.g. transport to school fixtures. This is something we are seeking to avoid and intend to do more active fund raising. However, if there was a small cost for such occasions would you be willing to support this?	82%	10%	8%
<p>Comment: There were some very helpful comments in support of this. However, I want to stress it is something we are seeking to avoid. Contributions to this kind of thing would always be voluntary but to give you an example a coach to Bournemouth and back for a school fixture costs an average of £500. Even small collections of £1 towards the cost of these excursions over the year would make some difference. Thank you for your support with this.</p>			

Year 7

	Yes	No	Don't know
Do you feel that the transition arrangements have enabled your child to make a successful start to their school life at Colfox?	97%	3%	
<p>Comment: Mrs Duffy and Mrs Chudley were very pleased with this and a number of parents specifically commented on the transition process as having been very helpful and reassuring for their child.</p>			
The cost of the Hooke Court residential has risen to £65 per pupil. Do you think this residential in September was useful for helping your child to settle into Colfox?	75%	19%	6

Comment: When we started running, this trip in 2009 it was £48. The cost has risen slightly almost each year and we are mindful there might be a point that it could be considered as too much, it is already run at a loss with the school paying for the transport. However, the returns suggest that there is still value in this start of year trip for the students and it is running in 2017. There were several comments specifically about the quality of the food which have been noted.

Year 7 & 8

	Yes	No	Don't know
Last year we held a specific consultation with Year 7 and 8 parents about homework and agreed to reduce the amount set. Do you think your child gets an appropriate amount of homework?	76%	17%	7%

Comment: As you can see the majority do feel this is about right. We made some specific reductions to the amount of homework set in Year 7 and 8 this year, after feedback in 2015/16. Some parents made a positive direct comparison from last year to this. However, in the 17% who answered 'No' there was still some strong feeling in the written replies that we do not wish to ignore. The concerns raised were still about too much, rather than too little. Like uniform, homework is another issue we can feel strongly about. I am a parent myself! Please rest assured we will continue to look at this issue. Some returns identified specifically the difficulties faced with 'on line' investigative type homeworks where not enough guidance has been given. This is very helpful detail for us to work with.

Year 8

	Yes	No	Don't know
Do you think that the process of choosing options including the parents' evening and interviews with senior staff was helpful in making subject choices for Key Stage 4?	90%		10%

Comment: Thank you. It is a time intensive process but it seems clear that these personal interviews are a helpful part of the process. A few replies commented that it did feel early to be making these choices. However as all GCSE subjects will now be the harder 9-1 reformed qualification we feel strongly than taking 3 years to do them (during Years 9-11) will allow the appropriate amount of time to study all courses in the depth necessary and achieve the highest grades.

Year 10

	Yes	No	Don't know
Do you think that your child benefited from their work experience placement?	87%	7%	6%

Comment: I am very pleased that we have been able to bring this back for Year 10 students. It is clear that the vast majority have benefited from their week out of school. It has been calendared for 2018.

I hope that you found these results interesting. If you were not able to contribute this time around then there will be other occasions in the future. Likewise, you do not have to wait for formal occasions to share your thoughts and ideas with us. Please do contact the school to speak with member of staff most closely associated with your question, or ideas. If you are not sure who that would be then just contact the office who would be able to help point you in the right direction.

We are not far from the end of term but there is still a lot going on. GCSE and A Level exams are still in full flow; our new Junior Academic Prize Giving is on ??? House Prize Giving is on ??? Our

Sports Presentation Evening has been moved to the start of Autumn Term this year to allow all summer competitions to be completed and recognised. **Next Thursday and Friday we will be welcoming our new intake of Year 7** students for their two Induction days and over this final half term Year 5 students are spending time with us on one of their 'Taster Days'. Year 11 will be back for their Sixth Form Induction Day on Friday 29 June 2018.

Yours sincerely

David Herbert
Headteacher



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