

The Head teachers' response to the 2016 Kirkland Rowell Survey

First, let me thank all those who took the time to respond to this survey. It is very apparent from your responses that the vast majority continue to support the school and appreciate what we are all trying to do here - provide a well- rounded and meaningful education for your boys and girls in a positive and engaging way. The overall response within the returned questionnaires was extremely positive and it is pleasing to see a high rate of overall satisfaction within the parental body. The full report of the parental survey has been posted on our website and as you can read in the body of the report, there is a strong view that the school is good with some outstanding features and a few things that require improvement. This matches mine and the governor's perception almost exactly! Your concerns, where recorded have been noted and I will follow those up within school.

It is also important that we recognise where specific comments and concerns are raised and respond to them. I would add that a small number of comments were **very** specific and those cases are best addressed on an individual basis. I have said before that often anonymity does not best serve moving forward and I would encourage open communication in cases of very specific need or where you have a concern.

I offer the following help and guidance in response to comments made under question 19, '...any other comments about the school'

Teaching consistency

Thirteen parents mentioned English and ICT teacher consistency. It is true to say that recruitment was challenging during the course of last year and this presented some short term in-year challenges. This was particularly prevalent in English and ICT where we sourced the best teachers available from the supply agency stock. This is not like recruiting full time permanent staff and monitoring their short term performance in the context of a shortage of availability was demanding. As most will appreciate, the priority had to be examination groups and it is pleasing to report that pupil performance in both subjects were in line with results nationally. I want to reassure parents that those difficulties are now behind us and that the school is fully staffed with experienced and knowledgeable professionals who all want the best for their charges.

Homework

Six parents mentioned homework in their general comments. This was a concern that was raised in the context of the last report. Where parents feel there is not enough homework students feel there is too much! Some parents want more and others less. What we seek to achieve is consistency and we want to do better. We endeavour to provide a balance according to a timetable and have made this a high priority for development during the academic year 2016-17. The homework process is being monitored tightly to ensure cooperation from all concerned, staff, teachers and parents! Sometimes it is difficult to stick rigidly to a homework timetable but divergence from the schedule should not be the norm. It is of concern if there is a perception that homework is inconsistent or set at varying times. In the context of the questionnaire most parents in all years thought that the amount of homework given was 'about right'.

Communication

Four parents mentioned communication and specifically not receiving letters. Can I reiterate that all circulated letters that are sent home via students are also posted on the school website. Half termly newsletters are now sent electronically to email accounts so parents can access information even if their youngsters 'forget'!

Thank you all once again for contributing to this important survey.

Steve Hall, Head teacher