

## Parental feedback from July 2022

### Stars (the things you really like about St. George's Central CE Primary School and Nursery)

#### 'Similar' responses have been grouped together

Many thanks for all your 'stars'. It is great to receive feedback on things you feel are going well. It is also encouraging to hear that amendments we make in school are having a positive impact on the children and yourselves.

#### **Parental star – Provision/Ethos/Facilities**

- \*The opportunities and experiences that the children are able to be a part of are absolutely amazing!
- \*All the opportunities the children get with school trips and sports.
- \*Well done to St George's Central for successfully organising 2 separate trips to Brathay Hall for the Year 5's and Year 6's this year. A residential school trip very often marks the first time that children are away from their parents and is practically a 'rite of passage' for them. My daughter thoroughly enjoyed the entire experience and felt safe and well looked after during her stay. I feel sure that the wonderful memories of the trip will stay with the children for many years to come.
- \*The grounds and the school are so clean and the playgrounds are amazing!
- \*The comprehensive reward scheme that gives pupils a real thing to strive for that they enjoy.
- \*The beautiful school grounds make an incredible environment for my children to learn in, especially love the new Jubilee Garden.
- \*Reassures parents, provides excellent facilities and opportunities for children to learn and play.
- \*Family feel school.
- \*There's always something for the children to do, the school seems to have a lot of extra activities that keeps things more interesting and exciting.
- \*School pick up and drop off seems to run a lot more smoothly as opposed to previous schools my children have attended. Also when there is an event or anything we have to attend, it all seems to run very efficiently which I was very impressed with.
- \*Photos on social media, showing what classes are doing during the day.
- \*Jubilee Garden.
- \*Good community presence.
- \*Lots of different activities. Very creative school that thinks out of the box.
- \*It's a smaller school, feels more personal. The facilities at the school are fantastic! They are always changing reading books for the children.
- \*Lovely settings and surroundings for the children. Good playground facilities.
- \*A broad library.
- \*The provision/resources in classrooms and outside are fantastic and look exciting and engaging for the children.
- \*Lots of opportunities available for taking part in things for school.
- \*Well planned out events – parents are up-to-date with what is happening and when.
- \*Lots of pictures from events online so we can see what has happened.
- \*Very well organised and all my issues are sorted.
- \*I love how I am able to see what my child has been getting up to in school on Seesaw.
- \*I love how many activities there are outside for the kids.
- \*Constantly updating the school from the continuous provision to the new forest school, great outdoor areas to explore and a fantastic library.
- \*The digital newsletter format launched this year is another excellent idea that involves children and has the ability to encourage their public speaking skills and I was very impressed by the quality of the production of each newsletter.
- \*Engages the students in as many sporting activities as possible – I like the encouragement of as much outdoor activity as possible in these times.
- \*The facilities and equipment are clean and welcoming.
- \*There is a wide range of activities for the children to try.
- \*They always plan amazing school trips.
- \*The new style parents' evening.
- \*I think the idea of a pupil-led parents' evening was simply brilliant! What a great way to involve the children in what is traditionally a parent/teacher only event, and one which will, no doubt, boost their self-confidence. It was an absolute joy to watch my child as she presented the highlights of some of the key topics learned and activities that she had taken part in during the year.
- \*Individual approach to the child.

#### **Parental star – Staff**

- \*The friendliness of all members of staff and how approachable everyone is.
- \*The warm welcome! All Staff are so friendly and it puts you at ease that everyone has your child's best interests at heart.
- \*The way Mr Kenny goes above and beyond to include and help every child in his care, coming up with creative, fun and innovative ways to engage with the children whilst at the same time efficiently communicating with parents all the little details that are important for a holistic picture to how their child is during their day.
- \*Compassionate and caring teachers.
- \*All staff are friendly and approachable.

#### **Parental star – Staff continued**

- \*Miss Beswick! What an absolutely outstanding teacher. She's knowledgeable, polite, caring, understanding and she always keeps you updated and informed of everything. Best teacher my kids have had at St George's Central. She's a credit to the school.
- \*The teachers/staff are approachable, friendly and understanding. If I've ever had any concerns with my children they're more than happy to help and that is really reassuring as a parent leaving my children in their care.
- \*Teachers going 'extra mile' to help children with their learning.
- \*Teachers are fantastic and really have the motivation to make a difference in our children's education.
- \*The teachers are friendly and approachable.
- \*The headmaster will interact with parents really well and very much has his finger on the pulse.
- \*That all teachers communicate and it has high standards. I can't recommend it high enough, not had a problem so far.
- \*My daughter's teacher, she has been amazing with her. My daughter absolutely loves her teacher and enjoys going in to class. Miss Beswick thank you so much for supporting and helping my daughter, she really has come so far being in your class. Another thank you for helping me try and get some help for her to check if she has autism. I know it didn't go the way we wanted but thanks to you I'm able to go to the doctors to get her the help she needs.
- \*Visibility of the headteacher every morning when arriving at school. Very approachable and welcoming to parents and students.
- \*The children never seem to be sad going to school. All the children I see have a big smile on their faces when going into class and this is testament to the teachers and the school creating an environment where children want to come and learn, play and develop.
- \*The staff are so friendly and caring
- \*Qualified staff and level of knowledge.
- \*High level of knowledge.

#### **Parental star – Communication**

- \*The level of communication between school and parents/families.
- \*Key dates letter. It's great to have dates in advance, life is so busy so this helps plan well ahead.
- \*They keep you well informed via emails

**Wishes (ways that you think we could improve St. George's Central CE Primary School and Nursery)**

**'Similar' responses have been grouped together**

<b>Parental wish:</b> <b>Extra-curricular activities</b>	<b>School response</b>
More paper based homework, not everyone uses Seesaw, I prefer to do things on paper. We have asked and they will give it to you but then the few weeks later could forget, I like old school paper homework. It is not a bad point as it's available just think it should be given out more often, and I know it's saving paper etc but like I said not everyone is on their phones all the time to use Seesaw.	<p>On page 3 of our Home Learning Policy, it states:</p> <p><b>'Most home learning activities will be set via Seesaw. Paper copies of all home learning will be made available in the classroom for your child to take if they wish.'</b></p> <p><i>I am therefore sorry that your request for paper copies of home learning has not been consistently met. All staff receive a copy of this feedback and so they will see this response and I will also remind staff face-to-face to consistently have paper copies of home learning activities available for your child as per our current policy.</i></p>
<b>Parental wish:</b> <b>PE kits/Sugar free water</b>	<b>School response</b>
Children should go to school in their indoor PE kit also.	<p>Since January 2018 our children in Year 1 – Year 6 have come to school in their PE kit on the day that have outdoor PE. I think your suggestion of extending this to include the indoor PE days is a great idea! This would mean that children in Year 1 – Year 6, would come to school in their PE kits on two days a week and there would be no need for any indoor PE kits to be stored in school (apart from maybe pumps as children may prefer to walk to school in trainers).</p> <p>Having pumps is essential for Year 1 – Year 6 children as the nature of the indoor hall based PE activities is best suited to wearing pumps. In adopting this approach, there would also be more lesson time for your children and it would free up much needed storage space in cloakrooms in school.</p> <p><b>We will therefore start this for children in Year 1 – Year 6 from September 2022.</b> More information with regards to the days your child will have their outdoor and indoor PE lessons will be included on the Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> July newsletter.</p> <p>Your child will be coming home with their unique school tracksuit voucher later today that you can use at both Icon Embroidery and Wendy's Uniform Shop to claim the £9 discount we are now offering to all children in Year 1 – Year 6.</p> <p>As children in our school based Early Years classes access 'PE-based' activities on an almost daily basis, children in our Darlington Street Nursery should continue to keep their pumps in school and children in Reception should continue to keep an indoor PE kit in school.</p> <p>Our policy on sugar free flavoured water is in line with all other local schools and so our stance on this remains unchanged – no flavoured water (of any variety) is permitted.</p> <p>All flavoured waters are sweetened with some type of sugar – even 'sugar free' ones contain artificial sweeteners, which goes against our Healthy Schools stance.</p>
<b>Parental wish:</b> <b>Choir</b>	<b>School response</b>
Dinnertime clubs, would be nice to have choir during dinnertime again.	<p>This year, as a trial, we moved choir to 12pm on a Thursday. The Music Room is the only space available during the school day for choir to take place in and over the course of the school year, the number of children attending choir significantly increased which meant that the Music Room was no longer an option for choir during the school day.</p> <p>In order to avoid a repeat of this situation and allow more children to access choir from the start of the school year, from September 2022, choir will take place after school, each Monday for both <b>KS1 and KS2</b> children, 3:15pm – 4:15pm.</p>

Parental wish: Parent information	School response
<p>More education for parents on how to assist learning at home in relation to phonics, reading, maths.</p> <p>More involvement of the parents in understanding the curriculum of a particular term. What you will be learning in class, how we can help at home and this helps us to engage with our children about their school day rather than just saying 'what did you do today at school' we can also plan activities at home for the weekend or planning a day out around what they will be learning in school to further connect with children.</p>	<p><i>Pre-COVID, we would regularly have parent/carer workshops in many areas across school. As we have returned to 'normality', I suppose the focus of our attention has been on welcoming you back into school to see your children 'perform' in the various school plays and performances.</i></p> <p><i>On the key dates letter that will be emailed to you next week, as well as the planned 'Meet the Teacher' meetings for you to attend during the first school week in September, we have already planned a Phonics/Reading Workshop for Key Stage 1 parents/carers on <b>Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2022</b> and also one for Reception parent/carers on <b>Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2022</b>. There will also be a workshop focusing on Inclusion for all parents/carers on <b>Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2022</b>.</i></p> <p><i>When we email you the updated half termly dates letters (emailed to you on the final Friday of each half term from Friday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2022 onwards), you will see that we will start to include more parent/carer workshops, in various subject areas, for you to attend.</i></p> <p><i>You will be provided with lots of curriculum information at the 'Meet the Teacher' meetings during the first school week in September. If you are unable to attend the meeting or if you would like further information about what is being covered in your child's class, you could speak to your child's teacher at any time of the school year via any of the available methods (Seesaw, email, an informal face-to-face conversation at the classroom door or a more formally arranged meeting).</i></p> <p><i>As we have mixed classes from Year 1 upwards, we have to plan our whole school curriculum overviews on a 'two-year rolling programme'. This means that topics areas that your children will learn about are in place for 2022/2023 and 2023/2024. We have recently updated these and they will be on the school website for our September start under the Curriculum section of the website (Curriculum Overviews links) and also on individual class pages of the website.</i></p>
Parental wish: After school club (wrap around care)	School response
<p>It would be really good to have opportunity to leave child at school for few more hours (paid afterschool club).</p> <p>I think it would be great if the school could offer an after school facility for children whose parents are required to work beyond the school closing hours.</p> <p>After school club that is continuous.</p>	<p><i>One of the strengths of our school is the amount of extra – curricular clubs our staff lead after school, for free, on a weekly basis. The clubs on offer for your children are reviewed each half term. In terms of providing a regular 'paid for' after school club, as I stated in this feedback last year:</i></p> <p><i>'We have no 'regular' after school provision in place at our school. With the staffing levels needed to meet the basic ratios for this, the financial charges that would need to be in place for this are what I would consider to be 'very high'. When it comes to after school provision, I often think:</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Is being in the same school environment from 7:30am until 6pm ideal for children?</i></p> <p><i>I am aware that people have roles/responsibilities that require them to work long hours and know how arrangements need to be made for before and after school. Making use of one the child minders who regularly pick children up from our school could be an option. Through using one of the local child minders, you will have that after school care and your child will have a change of environment. For me, this will help support their mental health and well-being as they 'relax' in a homely environment after being in the school one all day.'</i></p> <p><i>My opinion and our school position on this, remains unchanged from these comments from last year.</i></p>

Parental wish: Informing parent/SEND	School response
<p>More informed parents, as voids tend to be filled with the god of the gaps theology.</p> <p>Also, the SEN provision is still hit and miss. We (I am not the only parent who feels this way) feel that, though there are staff who do try, they all feel that it's sporadic support and like climbing uphill constantly to get the children the support they deserve to thrive in the school community just as a neurotypical child does.</p>	<p><i>In terms of keeping parents/carers informed, over the course of the school year, there is:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-A Meet the Teacher meeting for each class at the start of the year.</li> <li>-A Key Dates letter.</li> <li>-A Half Termly Dates letter (includes updated events as they are booked throughout the year).</li> <li>-A monthly newsletter.</li> <li>-Regular social media updates (Facebook/Twitter).</li> <li>-Regular contact from teachers via Seesaw</li> <li>-Regular whole school emails from me.</li> <li>-Individual class based emails from me (when needed).</li> <li>-Three parents' evenings (including the new 'presentation style' evening).</li> <li>-Many opportunities for you to come into school.</li> <li>-Availability of all staff for you at the start and end of each day.</li> </ul> <p><i>You will see from reading all the 'wishes' how from September 2022, there will also be:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-A re-introduction of Open Afternoons, twice a year for each class from Year 1 upwards.</li> <li>-More parent/carers workshops in key topic areas to support your child's learning.</li> </ul> <p><i>If I a look at this comment from a 'different angle', in all schools, over the course of the year, there are many 'events' that take place 'behind the scenes' which may involve external agencies. In these cases, restrictions are usually in place regarding the level of information I am able to disclose to you. In all cases, my aims are to maintain the level of service that we provide to you and your children and then ensure that I share the appropriate level of information with you. I cannot and would not want to control the established communication networks that parents/carers have in place beyond the school gate. In all areas of life, we have to accept that there are people who will always 'fill the void' (even when they are informed).</i></p> <p><i>I will continue to provide you with regular school updates, using the methods outlined above.</i></p> <p><i>Supporting your children, at every level, is our number one priority and so I am sorry if you (and others) feel this way. I do share your frustrations as we too sometimes feel like the support we receive from services linked to schools is 'sporadic'. We in school have continued to work face-to-face with children since March 2020 whilst some sectors continue to be in the 'working at home lifestyle'. Maybe I am old fashioned, but for me, I have noticed a difference in the offer and support where this is concerned.</i></p> <p><i>It has been mentioned in a previous 'wish' about us re-starting our parent/carer workshops. Maybe there is the potential for us to organise a parent/carer workshop centred around the Inclusion offer. Mrs Leech will lead this on <b>Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at both 3:30pm and then repeated at 6:00pm</b>. It is envisaged that this session will last 30 minutes. Should anyone feel they require a more individualised meeting, at any time throughout the school year regarding their child and/or our SEND offer, then please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Leech in school.</i></p>
Parental wish: SEN provision	School response
<p>Fancy dress day, it is very costly if you have more than one child. Children these days don't want to go in homemade outfits and bought ones are expensive. For example, on world book day, in other schools they go in PJ's and take a book. They can always use the PJs again whereas most children will never use the fancy dress outfit again. It puts a lot of pressure on parents.</p>	<p><i>We have not had any 'Fancy Dress Days' this year. In almost all cases, we take a 'non-uniform' approach, sometimes linking things to a particular colour. For example: Comic Relief – wear something red.</i></p> <p><i>The main day that we have previously made use of a 'Fancy Dress Day' is on World Book Day each March. For the very reasons you have stated, this year we decided to take a more cost effective, less 'pressurised' approach through asking children to come into school wearing any clothing that was 'bright and colourful'. This was linked to our visit from poet, Matt Goodfellow and his book 'Bright Bursts of Colour'.</i></p> <p><i>We will be looking to continue with this 'cost effective' approach each World Book Day from now on. We will confirm our approach for the March 2023 World Book Day, to you, in the Friday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2023 newsletter.</i></p>

Parental wish: Afternoon events	School response
<p>More afternoon meetings/assemblies/stay and plays etc. It's fantastic to be involved in the school life but they are always in the morning and it's often difficult to get time off work so differentiated times would be great to allow all parents to attend.</p>	<p><i>Organising events of this nature in a morning is preferable for many reasons. I likened it to school photographs, which are always taken in the morning as there is always the possibility that something could happen during the day to 'spoil' them. With that in mind, we will be continuing with Class Worship taking place in the morning. You will receive the 2022/2023 Key Dates letter next week which will give you 8 weeks notice until the first event where parent/carers presence is welcomed: The Welcome to our school Worship for Reception children on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2022.</i></p> <p><i>Almost all parent/carer meetings we organise take place at 3:30pm and are then repeated at 6:00pm to ensure all people can access them. From September 2022, afternoon options will be available for the Nursery and Reception Stay and Plays. It is difficult to commit to which sessions will be mornings or afternoons at this moment and so nearer the time to these sessions, staff will make you aware of the exact timings. On the Key Dates letter, you will see that we have also re-introduced the 'Open Afternoons' for classes. These will take place twice a year for each class.</i></p> <p><i>As well as continuing to give you advanced notice of all our events, from September 2022, there will also be more of a balance with morning and afternoon events of this nature.</i></p>
Parental wish: Positives	School response
<p>I can't think of anything that I would want to change as I am more than happy with how the school runs now. And I can't thank the school enough for the support they have given my grandchildren.</p> <p>There isn't anything I can think of. I am completely happy with the school!</p> <p>Nothing at the moment.</p> <p>Don't have any suggestions I like the way it is.</p> <p>We are happy with everything!</p>	<p><i>Thank you very much! I can assure you that over this last year every staff member at St. George's Central has worked extremely hard. Thank you for your comments. During my ten years as headteacher at St. George's Central CE Primary School and Nursery, I am always looking to change things for improvement and I will continue to do this so that your children receive what we consider to be the very best offer.</i></p> <p><i>The one thing I have not yet changed over the last few years is this final comment that I always leave in this section of the feedback, when I look at all the 'stars and the wishes' as I say:</i></p> <p><i>"We do our best, but when you have over 300 sets of parents/carers who are different ages, come from different backgrounds, with different life experiences, it is sometimes difficult to please everyone. At the forefront of our mind, when we do anything at school, is the children and their long term benefit. That is why we are here! Without them, we would have a building with no life or soul. We will continue to work hard and ensure that the mantra of 'NEVER SETTLE FOR LESS THAN YOUR BEST' is something that every staff member carries out and every child leaves our school knowing and living."</i></p>

Mr M Grogan, Headteacher, Friday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2022