

18th October 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

It was good to see and talk to so many of you during the recent parents' evenings. Thank you to everyone who filled in our questionnaire; 115 completed questionnaires were returned which represents 46% of families in the school.

A huge number of you value and appreciate all aspects of the school, 23% of respondents going so far as to say there was nothing that you would want to see changed. Typical comments included "I love this school" and "Everything here is amazing".

Over half of respondents cited the staff as the school's most valued asset. You described our staff as caring, passionate, committed, supportive and approachable: an enthusiastic team of people who listen and understand and who teach your children well. Some mentioned individuals which it would not be right to do here but there was particular mention for the office staff who present a friendly but efficient face and also for support staff especially those involved in SEN. A couple of parents felt that SEN provision could be improved. It goes without saying that if you have a particular concern regarding your own child you should speak to the class teacher, the SENCo (Mrs England) or the Head Teacher about this. There were also some concerns about staffing levels at breaktimes which we will look into.

The second most commonly mentioned aspect was communication. Here there was a difference in opinion: some feeling that communication is a real strength of the school, others that it could be improved. Specifically you told us that you valued Tapestry (in the Foundation classes) and the class Dojo (in years 1 to 6) although it was also reported that the use of the class Dojo is not consistent throughout the school. Many of you find the messaging service useful, saying it provides plenty of information although the use of pdf attachments can cause problems for some. Some reported problems with receiving too much or too little information, or for receiving information too late. All we can do is apologise for this; school tries hard to provide sufficient information in an accessible way but we don't always get it right.

About one third of respondents said that they value the ethos of the school. You told us that Little Paxton School has high standards and also treats each child as an individual so that, on the whole, children feel happy and secure. Some had concerns that we might be looking to grow still further in the future. Please be assured there are no such plans and, in any case, the site is at capacity: it would not be possible to build any further without significantly encroaching on the outdoor space which would not be permitted.

There were several positive comments about extra-curricular activities including some which mentioned the work and support from the LPSA and also some suggestions for improvement of extra-curricular provision. This is something that our new Head Teacher will look at in due course.

Several of you mentioned that value the variety of opportunities offered to enable parents to be involved in school life but a number would like more such opportunities. We also recognise that holding parents evenings in the hall has its drawbacks. Specifically there were concerns about the noise level, potential lack of privacy and the lost opportunity to see children's work in the

classrooms. Immediate changes were made for the second Parents' Evening and we will look at arrangements for the future so that we can ensure these meet everyone's needs.

A few people mentioned how particular problems they had encountered were dealt with. Some have had a very positive experience, others less so. School is very keen to work with everyone to ensure all our children have a good experience. If you have concerns please raise these with your child's class teacher in the first instance, if that is not appropriate or you feel that further action is necessary you should approach a member of the Central Leadership Team (Miss Watts, Mrs Jenkins or Mrs England) or the Head Teacher. If things are still not resolved please contact the Governing Body. We can be contacted through the school office or by emailing our Clerk (JMarshall@littlepaxton.cambs.sch.uk).

There have been a few issues with school meals recently. This is something that school is already trying to address. It would be useful, if you are aware of a specific issue, if you could let us know as we can then bring it to the attention of the caterers.

A few parents asked if there could be more provision for PE, maybe introducing a daily mile as some schools do. Again this is something Mrs Moore will look at in due course.

We wholly heartedly agree with those of you who mentioned the new buildings and also the extensive refurbishment of much of the existing building. We are very fortunate that the LA, having recognised the need, agreed to fund the building work which has provided greatly enhanced facilities for the children.

For those of you who prefer information in a tabulated form please see the table at the end of this letter. All your comments and concerns have been shared with Mrs Moore who will, over the coming months, work with governors to address your concerns. School improvement is a continuous cycle of plan, implement, monitor and evaluate. We are constantly looking for ways to improve our school. To do this effectively we need to prioritise the areas that we work on. We don't always get it right and rely on parents and pupils to tell us when something isn't going well or simply needs a refresh.

I thank you all for your support of the school.

Yours sincerely,

Penny Conway
Chair of the Governing Body

Aspects that are valued and should be kept		Aspects that could be improved	
None mentioned by respondent (section of questionnaire left blank)	12	There are none	26
		None mentioned by respondent (section of questionnaire left blank)	6
Staff – comments included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passionate and committed • Helpful and supportive • Listening and approachable • Great teachers • Dedicated and enthusiastic • Good SEN support • An outstanding team 	63	Staffing – including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More staff on duty at break and lunchtime • Necessity to run mixed age classes • Better SEN provision • Concerns about staff changes • Need more male staff 	15
Communication is good – including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class Dojos • Tapestry • Information by email • Separate messages for each communication • Good information provided for parents 	18	Communication issues – including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachments to emails don't always open properly – could we change the format? • More consistent use of Dojo across the school • More concise communication sent more in advance • Too many emails – can't more be combined? Preferred the old style newsletter which put everything together. • More information for new people joining the school 	21
Village school with strong ethos: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children feel happy and secure and take a pride in learning • Keep current size (don't get any bigger) • High standards 	39		
Events, trips and visits – including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LPSA events • Range of activities • Organised fund raising 	12	Concerns about extracurricular activities – including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are limited after school clubs and there is more after school provision for younger children than older ones • Expense of trips and events • Fewer non-uniform days please • Pity there is no whole school panto trip this year 	19

School is welcoming of parental engagement – including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invitation to lunch • Helping in the classroom, at events and on trips 	6	Would like to see more or better engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents evening in the hall is too noisy, lacks privacy and can't look at children's work • More regular invitations to assemblies etc • More opportunities to help in class or on trips 	17
Problems dealt with quickly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good approach to bullying • Problems dealt with quickly 	4	Dealing with problems better: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying could be dealt with better • Separate playtimes for KS1 And KS2 • Better use of playground buddies • More help with friendship issues 	5
School dinners	1	School dinners – including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of choice for some • Food running out • Portion size, especially for older children 	5
Good range of different sports	2	More opportunities for PE. Could the school do "a mile a day"?	4
Buildings and outside space	4	Better use of outside space for more outdoor learning	2
Other positive aspects mentioned by respondents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good reward systems • The guinea pigs • Veg garden • Homework menu • Sports day 		Other concerns mentioned by respondents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More maths and English homework related to work in class rather than projects • Make sure school always opens on time • More individual events at sports days (not just team events) • More ICT based learning • E-safety information for parents • More information for parents about new concepts (eg split digraphs, arrays) • A bigger hall so all children can eat lunch together • A bigger playground • Website needs updating 	

