

**Ryarsh Primary School
Parent Survey 2018**

This year we received 82 responses to our annual Parent Survey, which was twice as many as last year. Thank you so much for taking the time to share your views.

It was lovely to read so many positive comments from parents referring to many strengths of our school, including the following:

- We encourage, inspire and motivate children to have enthusiasm for their learning
- We have clear school values, including good behaviour and attitudes to learning
- We are inclusive and provide appropriate learning, support and opportunities for children with different skills, talents and attainment
- We are a strong community where children and staff know each other well
- We offer a good sports provision for our children
- Our curriculum is interesting, with a variety of visits, visitors and activities provided
- Our teachers are enthusiastic, kind and totally dedicated

One of our school values is *'Everyone at Ryarsh Primary School takes pride in themselves, others, their school and their community'* and it is encouraging to see that this is shared not only by children and staff, but also our parents.

A summary of the overall responses is as follows:

	% responses 'strongly agree' and 'agree'
My child is happy at this school	98%
My child feels safe at this school	98%
My child makes good progress at this school	99%
My child is well looked after at this school	99%
My child is taught well at this school	98%
My child receives appropriate homework for their age	89%
The school makes sure its pupils are well behaved	99%
The school deals effectively with bullying	94% (including 'don't know')
The school is well led and managed	98%
The school responds well to any concerns I raise	91% (including 'don't know')
I receive valuable information from the school about my child's progress	94%
I would recommend our school to another parent	100% Yes

A selection of your comments:

My children are supported academically. They are happy and enjoy coming to school each day. Teachers are approachable and provide engaging and lessons that challenge.

We love the school's friendly and welcoming atmosphere.

I think the School is fabulous, I really feel they listen to the parents and try to make each family feel important and not just a number. I love the way all years interact together so well. Well done!

Just thank you for everything, we have thoroughly loved our time at Ryarsh. It is an amazing school. We feel utterly privileged to have been a part of it for the last 6 years.

We feel very fortunate to have such dedicated and hardworking teachers for our children.

Inspirational teaching which has enabled our child to make amazing progress.

Breakfast club and after school clubs are excellent and provide a fantastic service.

The school makes sure that they work to the best of their ability, whilst making sure that they are pushed so do not become complacent.

I'm incredibly happy with Ryarsh School, I believe it does all the right things in keeping my children happy and safe whilst encouraging them to reach and surpass their potential in many different ways! There is just the right balance between learning and fun along with the support and care from all the teachers and staff. Thank you!

Our schooling experience here has been exceptional and our children are very happy at Ryarsh.

Fantastic school, with supportive staff who continue to push my children to what they know my children are capable of. My children are known individually by all staff and the children from the school all look out for each other. I couldn't ask for anything more, happy children = happy mummy.

Has excellent communication between school and home, we always know what our children are learning and how we can support them.

Every year we also conduct our surveys for children, staff and governors. Together with parents' views, these responses build up a picture of our school.

Comments from our children this year:

The teachers are extremely friendly and always support you in your learning. Also they will solve any problem you have.

It is a wonderful place of fun and learning where you can do both at the same time.

There is always a challenge. Learning is not just doing what you are told to do.

Everybody is kind and caring.

Comments from staff:

Ryarsh is a great school and a great place to work.

All staff pull together when needed and support each other well. All children are made to feel valued.

I feel extremely proud and privileged to be part of Ryarsh Primary School.

Comment from governors:

Great teamwork, with everyone's focus on brilliant outcomes for children.

Throughout our parents' responses, we have numerous good ideas and interesting suggestions. Some of the most commonly identified areas for improvement are as follows.

School dinners

We had an increased number of negative comments about the quality of our school dinners this year and as a result, we have already begun to conduct a thorough review of our catering service. Every comment given in the parent survey has been passed on to our school meals provider, Caterlink, and I will be meeting with their manager Kim Cook to discuss these further. Measures likely to follow include:

- Meetings between our cook and catering manager with our school council and other interested children to get our pupils' feedback on menu choices. This will help to get the

balance of the food right regarding different choices such as main meal, vegetarian option and jacket potato. In turn, this will improve the amount of choice offered to our children and ensure less food is wasted.

- A tasting opportunity for parents to try the school meals to judge the quality of food for yourselves. This would be led by our catering manager, so this would also offer you the opportunity to provide further direct feedback.

As with all school meals providers, Caterlink do work to precise nutritional standards and have to provide a standard portion size to children. Our school cook Kirsty is always positive and helpful, so with some further fine-tuning I am confident we can make improvements to this service. I will contact parents again with further details after the Easter break.

Homework

This year 89% of parents agree that homework is 'appropriate' – our highest figure for this question in the last four years of our survey. Once again, personal preferences vary widely, with some parents saying that they would like increased amounts of homework and others saying that they would prefer to see this reduce.

Road safety

Road safety was the issue with the highest number of responses. Your feedback has been discussed in detail at our recent Governors' meeting and this has helped to determine our next steps. Many parents suggested a zebra crossing or crossing patrol outside school, with our next most popular suggestions being a reduced speed limit, better road signs, staff/volunteers 'on duty', education for children on road safety and a pupil-led campaign to reduce irresponsible parking/driving.

I have already been in contact with our Parish Council, our MP Tom Tugendhat and KCC Councillor Mike Whiting to request road improvements outside school. We would like to see a pedestrian crossing, or at the very least the return of the red high friction surfacing which many families previously used as a crossing point. We also need better road signs to the west of the school. Highways improvements can only be accessed through our local government representatives and I am pleased to say that our Parish Council do support us in making requests of this type. I will keep you informed of our progress on these developments.

Your survey responses would suggest that it would be difficult to reduce the number of cars used on the school run. Of our parents who responded, 86% drive to school, either because of the distance or the need to go straight to work after dropping children off at school. Your answers to the question 'what would encourage you not to drive to school?' certainly made us smile – if only we could provide a lottery win, a new house or a large sum of money! However, on a more serious note, it does demonstrate that driving to school is currently the only preferred option for many parents – yet another reason why we need to ensure that the road outside school remains safe for all of us.

In the summer term, we will work with children on understanding road safety and we will create some posters and letters home from the children themselves. These would ask our parents to be more considerate and responsible in their driving and parking behaviour outside school, prioritising our children's safety over any other concerns.

With regard to speeding, the advice I have received from KCC is that any parents who are concerned about vehicles speeding in the area should contact the Kent Police Speed Watch Team at www.kent.police.uk/advice/community-support/speedwatch

We value every one of your responses and along with our Senior Leadership Team, I have read and reflected on them all.

Many of your comments will form part of our thinking during decisions taken now or in the future. For example, some parents would like to see a wider choice of after school clubs with external providers and this should be possible once our new hall is constructed. Other parents gave valuable feedback on our reward systems, including HTAs and Excellence Awards, and we will review this with our children to understand how these systems are currently working. Similar to homework, feedback on rewards for attendance is polarised, with widely differing views being strongly held. Some parents are extremely positive about attendance incentives and others totally in disagreement with the principle of celebrating or measuring children's attendance. All these views will be taken into account in our plans for the next academic year.

Thank you for taking the time and effort to provide us with such constructive feedback. It is a privilege to work within a school community with such high levels of engagement, positivity and commitment to our children's learning. Our staff work hard every day to maintain our high standards and provide an exceptional quality of education for every Ryarsh child; we strive to do our very best to make our school vision and values a daily reality. Thank you for your continued support.

Ruth Austin
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Our Vision: Here at Ryarsh Primary School we are dedicated to providing a safe, nurturing and happy learning environment. We are united by a strong sense of community and work together to enthuse and inspire all learners to give their very best.

Our Values:

