



# Ecclesbourne Primary School

## Newsletter Friday 12th May 2023



Dear **Parents and Carers**,

Many thanks to everyone who took the time to complete our online parental questionnaire. This year we managed to gather over 100 responses. The survey is important to us as it allows us to find out what you think of the school and what we can do to improve. I am pleased to say that responses were overwhelmingly positive with lots of lovely comments identifying what you like about the school.

For every question except two, all of the responses were over 90% positive with many cases where only one or two respondents didn't agree with the positive statements. For example, 99% felt their child is safe at the school, 99% felt their child is happy and enjoys being at the school and 99% of parents would recommend the school to another parent. A common theme from the vast majority of responses was that people feel welcome at the school and that staff are friendly and approachable.

The two questions which had a less positive response related to homework (*The teachers think about the homework they set and give the right quantity* = 72%) and the visibility of our academy council members. (*I know who the parent MACs are at this school* = 23%).

Every year the homework question appears to stir some strong emotions. Many people feel that primary-aged children should have no homework at all and that children should have time outside of school to play and enjoy non-academic activities. Others feel that children should be given work to complete at home. As ever, we are driven by the research. A recent study by the University of Hull says that '*The available meta-studies – research that combines and analyses the findings of a number of studies – suggest that homework has little or no positive benefit for the academic achievement of children of primary school age. A central reason for this seems to be the inability of children to complete this homework without the support provided by teachers and the school. What's more, homework may actually have a negative effect if parents set unrealistic expectations, apply pressure or use methods that go counter to those used at school. Homework may also increase inequalities between pupils.*' In light of this, and bearing in mind the time teachers would need to spend preparing and marking homework, all we ask is that children read or are read to every night and that, in KS2, they complete some maths fluency work through Mathletics.

The Academy Council has met this week and considered ways in which they can make themselves more visible. Hopefully we will see them visiting the school and making themselves known to more of you. However, if you are someone who is interested in joining the Academy Council, please speak to Mr Robins as we are currently seeking more parent members.

There were many positive comments about the school's communication but some people still feel that we could do more. We will endeavour to get more information out earlier on newsletters and hopefully people are finding it useful to get information in emails as well as text reminders of important information. The Trust is currently trialling a new system for communicating with parents in other schools and assuming it works well, it will be introduced at Ecclesbourne.

A very small number of parents commented on how children play in the playground and the rare incidences of poor behaviour. We regularly remind children of how to play safely and take seriously any inappropriate or unsafe behaviour when it occurs. Nevertheless, we have invested in more equipment for the children to use at playtimes and set up a lunchtime club for children who find playtimes difficult so that they can either reduce their time outside or be directed to spend their lunchtime inside.

A few parents mentioned the school meals and what is provided. The current catering contract is up for renewal and your comments and suggestions are informing the discussions with the new companies tendering for the contract.

Overall, we are pleased that the vast majority of you are so happy with the school but we always take our commitment to improvement seriously so if you have any ideas, concerns or suggestions please speak up. We are always happy to listen and even if we can't change things we may be able to explain why things are as they are.

Paul Robins  
Head of School  
Ecclesbourne Primary School