

the Governors' Newsletter



School is always a busy place. You can see how hard our teachers, support staff and Headteacher are working when you visit school. Maybe you hear about it from your children, but you might not be aware of what the governors do. At Curbar Primary School, we are all part of the team – working for our children – and we want to keep you, as important members of that team, informed about our role.

Here is the update for the last few months.

There has been a meeting of the Standards and Curriculum Committee, who look at what the children are learning; the Resource Management Committee, who oversee buildings, contents and staffing and two Full Governors Board Meetings. Governors have been involved in working parties related to points on our School Improvement Plan. There have been briefings from Derbyshire Council and meetings within our cluster to keep us up to date on new legislation and priorities. School muck-in days and the Art Show have also provided hands on involvement. For details, read on

'Why do schools have governors?'

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland every state school must, by law, have a governing body.

Their job is to provide strategic management to the school, acting as a 'critical friend', supporting staff but asking the difficult questions too.

Their 3 key functions are:

1. To ensure the school's strategic vision is clear. Asking, "Why are we doing it like this or not like that?"
2. To hold the Headteacher accountable for the educational performance of pupils. Asking, "Why did group x do better than group y? Why are we in the top 10 %, not the top 1%"
3. To oversee the budget, making sure all money is well spent. Asking, "What benefit do we get from spending £x on that?"

They are not involved in day-to-day running of the school.

Finance

The focus this term has been the school budget. It is at this time of year every state school has to review its income and spending plans for the coming four academic years and approve them. Schools must ensure that the budget balances for at least the next two years. We get a lot of support from the Finance Department in Derbyshire County Council. They draft up the spreadsheets we use and Mrs Rumney, our Administration Officer keeps things up to date throughout the year. The draft figures are scrutinised by governors and spending on each item is justified – this includes everything from electricity to furniture, staffing and materials. In the current economic climate, every penny counts. Funding has been cut, costs increased and with a small Reception intake last year (every child on roll adds around £3,300 to our budget) we have had to look long and hard at all our spending.

PR

Whilst not strictly speaking a governor responsibility, it is part of promoting the school and increasing our income. We have been involved in writing articles, meeting prospective parents and furthering community links.

School Improvement Plan (SIP)

The school is currently aiming to raise achievement in writing, in particular by effectively differentiating between learners of different abilities. To help understand how this work is progressing Angie Cottle and Charlotte Wright recently attended a book scrutiny with staff governor Linda Berry where they looked at samples of children's work from different ability ranges submitted by their class teachers. Angie and Charlotte followed guidelines for assessing pupils' responses to writing tasks, how the work set was appropriate for the child's ability and how it engages and inspires them to strive towards their potential. They also looked at the feedback pupils received from their teachers, peers and their own self-assessment and how effective this was in helping them improve their writing.

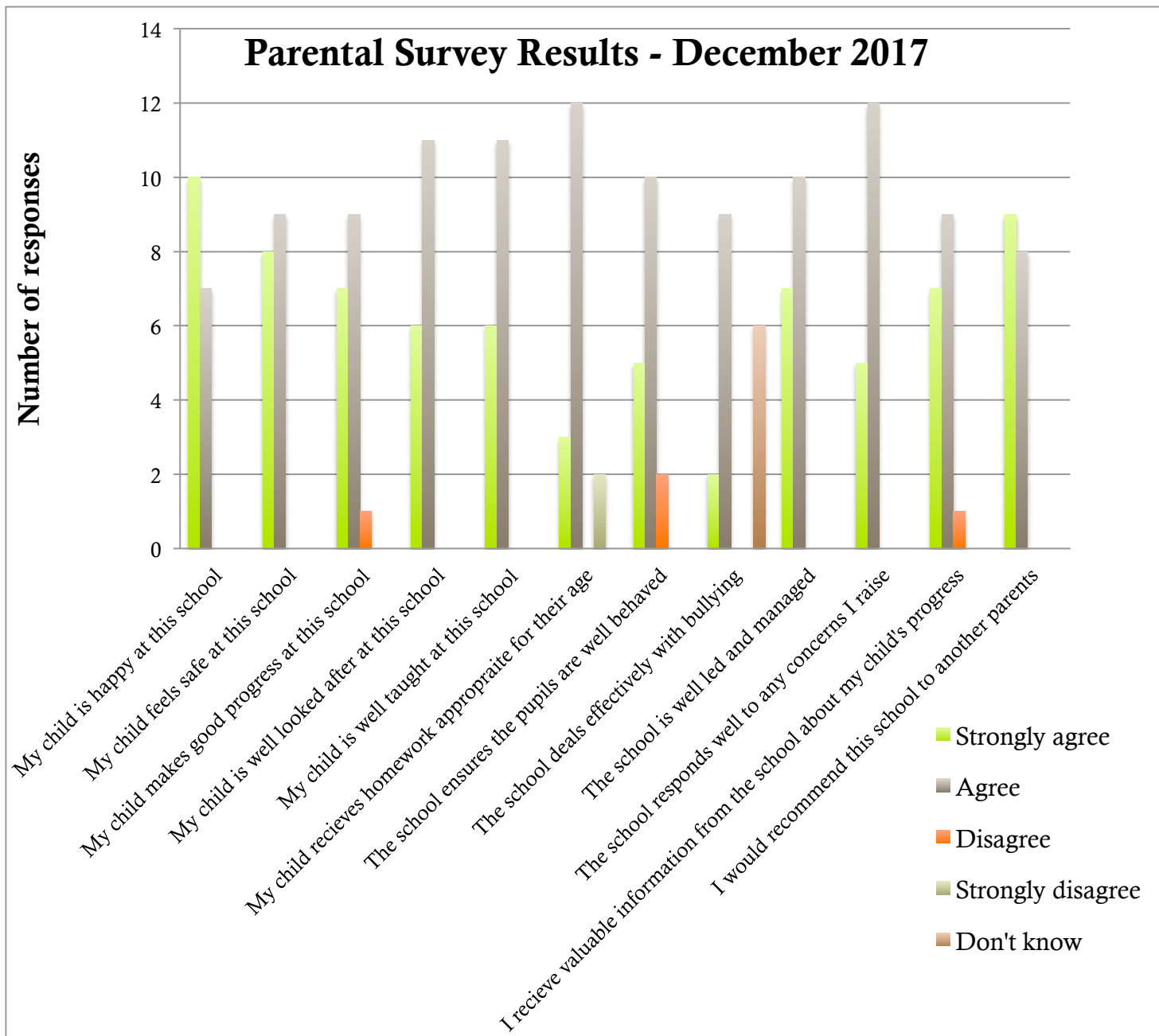
GDPR

David Jackson has been appointed to oversee the progress school is making to ensure it is compliant with these new regulations that come into force on 25th May.

SATs

A governor has sat in on every KS2 SATS paper as an impartial observer. This is considered best practice in carrying out these tests.

Surveys



Governors seek feedback from parents and from children a few times every year. The last was in December (that means it will soon be time for another!). The results are broadly very positive and provide reason for celebration. The areas showing disagreement provide us with areas to question school and improve. **One plea – please complete them when they arrive with you. Last time, 17 surveys were returned out of over 40. Your input is vital to us having an accurate picture of parent opinion.**

A reminder of who's who and their particular responsibilities:

Standards and Curriculum Committee

Jane Taylor, chair of governors, SEND, Pupil Premium

Helen Walton, chair of committee

George Wolfe, Safeguarding and Anti-bullying

Angie Cottle

Linda Berry

Charlotte Wright

Alan Cain

Simon Beahan

Resource Management Committee

Jane Taylor, chair of governors

Alison Thorpe, vice chair of governors

Raymond Griffiths

David Jackson, GDPR

Simon Beahan

John Dix, Health and Safety

Don Leitch

Working parties to support the SIP

Maths

Helen Walton

George Wolfe

Writing

Linda Berry

Angie Cottle

Charlotte Wright

Behaviour for Learning and Welfare

Simon Beahan

Alison Thorpe

You are always welcome to email governors.
Each has an email address with the following
format:

firstname.surname@curbar.derbyshire.sch.uk

