**Parental Questionnaire September 2017 RESPONSES**

Thank you to the many parents who completed our recent school questionnaire. Please find below a representation of the feedback along with some of the ways that we already are or intend to respond.

Many thanks for taking the time to provide us with such valuable feedback.

1. What do you think is good about Seaton Sluice First School?

*Parents were very positive about the nurturing, family orientated feel and the fact that the school was small enough to know everyone! Other aspects that were praised included:*

*the tracking of progress, the community spirit, the singing school ethos, staff that go the extra mile, interesting lessons, safe and secure environment, the standard of teaching, the school utilises funding very well, the open door policy and the celebrating of success. Specific comments included:*

My children love this school. I never have problems getting them to school.

I’m proud to say this is my son’s school.

Being a singing school is fantastic!

The values- all of the children learn to be kind and are encouraged in the right way.

My child has really benefitted from nurture group and it has been extremely important in his social development and confidence.

Our child always arrives and comes home happy.

Quality of teaching staff is excellent.

1. Are there any aspects of school life that could be improved and how could this be achieved?

The following suggestions were made (school responses in red):

Dates for parental involvement a bit earlier (School Calendar planned well in advance)

A breakfast club (Trialling next term)

 Lining up in the morning (Year One are now separate from Reception)

 More school clubs would be nice (Extra clubs planned and delivered)

Lunch times-freedom to sit with their friends or classes (Seating arrangements changed)

Maybe more lessons outside (Forest School and more opportunities for outdoor learning)

 New reading books (To be considered for future resources depending on budget)

Better communication of when a child is behind in a subject and resources to help them push forward at home (More honest conversations at Parent’s Evenings or at end of day)

More information on timetables (day to day classroom) as opposed to school calendar (Each class to send home timetable next term)

A flexible drop-off would alleviate traffic congestion and assist working parents who struggle to balance work/home (This is being considered as part of breakfast club)

A male teacher or more male teaching staff would be good. (Male sports coaches leading clubs over lunch time)

 A better open line of earlier communication as often things are last minute (ie requests for craft materials/help etc)

Keeping initiatives going- seem to swap often. Need time to embed (No further new initiatives planned)

I would like to see more out of school clubs that are not sport/music related such as a craft club, reading club, movie club, lego club that would encourage all children. This could be achieved by using parent volunteers and the community room perhaps. (Wider variety of clubs currently offered)

How money is spent eg PTFA money (To be fed back through Letter/Newsletters)

More interactive opportunities for parents to be involved in the topics children are learning about such as Stay and Play sessions in early years. (To be planned in by staff)

Keep on listening to parents (Will continue to do so)

Sometimes letters home need a bit more clarity-the latest one about an after school club appeared a bit muddly (Communicated with staff)

Consideration of times when text messages are sent- not late at night (Communicated with staff)

There is a need for recognition of children who are well-behaved and achieve consistently. There is a need for an incentive for high achievers too. (School Ambassadors)

Making more use of outdoor space including Holywell Dene and the beach (Being planned into curriculum)

Continuity of cover- trying to use same staff (Use Higher Level Teaching Assistants where at all possible. Mrs Bennett also provides some cover- supply staff last resort or to provide continuity)

We would like to talk to teachers for longer at parent’s evening. (Parents encouraged to approach staff after school for further discussions apart from Parental Consultations)

Like to see more activities for working parents to take part such as Fair on Saturday, shows after school hours (Summer Fair on Saturday next year, a Saturday family sing-along planned)

I think a wrap-around service would be beneficial (To be considered)

A diary of events could be created (Included at the end of each newsletter)

1. We pride ourselves on being a nurturing school and would like to develop this further. Forest School is an exciting initiative where the emphasis is on risk taking, confidence building and real-life learning in the outdoors. Would you like to see this being offered as part of the curriculum and why?

Everyone responded extremely positively to this idea. Comments included:

*Would provide opportunities to test their own abilities and naturally learn to asses risk and how to deal with unfamiliar situations.*

*Important for children to have contact with nature*

*Wonderful! I think this type of education is so valuable for children with a more practical learning style- definitely for free spirits*

*Brings excitement to learning life skills and gives children more outdoor learning*

*Think this would be amazing- love this idea*

*I’ve seen it embraced at other schools with great results.*

*I would like to see this as I believe it will help build a different skill set and also help the children enjoy the outdoors more which I think helps their indoor concentration and better problem-solving skills*

*There are so many links into the core subjects.*

*Part of risk-taking, confidence building and real-life learning is about having respect for the environment so anything that can aid in this is brilliant.*

*I would like to see this available for all children*

*Yes- it would have a positive impact on self-belief, confidence, communication, problem solving skills and children’s emotional well-being*

*Definitely, I think traditionally the school has been very risk-adverse. We live next to a fantastic beach and dene yet the school have never made use of such great facilities. Real-life learning is so important and equips children with life-long skills. I would love to see the children spending a day in the dene with a camp fire and toasting marshmallows with Nelson of course!*

*Yes- I think that children come alive outdoors*

1. We are very interested in having our very own ‘school dog’ (Mrs Bennett has recently bought an adorable puppy called Nelson). Depending on responses, Nelson would be vetted by a dog behaviourist and participate in a structured training programme. This would provide opportunities for the pupils to be responsible, caring for the needs of the dog and learning alongside them. The dog would support the social/emotional development of our pupils and would be tightly supervised at all times, on a lead with the children in addition to public liability insurance being organised. What are your thoughts on this?

Generally, this again was very positive. The concerns included the risk of allergies, distracting from the curriculum, some children being over possessive with the dog and where the funding would be coming from to organise public liability insurance.

Our response to concerns:

If Nelson (Mrs Bennett’s dog) was to be our school dog, he is a cockapoo which means as a breed he is hypoallergenic and his coat does not moult. He would begin by being involved in school life for one day and we would review how this was going. He would be looked after in a separate, well-equipped area and always kept on a lead when with the children. He would work alongside the full school community so particular children would not get over-attached or possessive. The public liability insurance would be fully funded by Mrs Bennett and there would be no cost implications whatsoever to SSFS.

Other positive comments included:

Brother’s school have this and the kids adore the dogs, gives them a release and helps them calm down. They had a lot of learning over the first few terms, found that children with no experience of dogs although keen needed special sessions to ensure they were gentle enough with the dogs (they were being pulled along the lead and ripped the dog’s paws to shreds!

Also wonderful- a good opportunity for the children to learn and be caring. Lots of evidence of animals enhancing learning.

Great idea! We believe that children connect with animals on another level, bring out their caring nature and a good comforter for them if upset

Fantastic- children need to be confident around animals but not over friendly. This will help with this and hopefully have those worried children more confident around dogs

As a family that would love a dog but don’t have the time with working, I think this is a great idea. The children will love this and Nelson will have a lovely life at SSFS

Love it! Totally brilliant idea and think the children will totally respond well to Nelson.

As long as the dog isn’t a large dog and doesn’t require a large amount of looking after, I’m fine with it

This is a lovely idea and I think the children would really enjoy this opportunity

The children would love this!

I think this is a lovely idea (as long as health considerations like asthma and allergies are considered.

Love, love, love this idea! Having a dog is fabulous in our family. Our dog and child are best friends. Nothing better if feeling sad and getting a hug off a dog.

Yes please- our daughter is very excited at the prospect.

I’m happy for this to go ahead

A worthwhile initiative. Pets are therapeutic but would be concerned about the fine line between caring and having responsibility as some children need the opportunity to care but not the ownership- this would have to be made clear.

Fantastic idea- great feeling of responsibility. Animals are a great calming aid so think this would work well.