

17<sup>th</sup> March 2023

Dear Families,

I am writing to update you on the recent surveys we have conducted and share the main findings with you. A big thank you for all of you who returned a survey we had over 140 replies across Mainstream and Specialist Provision. Lots of the questions were comparable to previous years so we could look at trends where we have improved or where things were not as good. We also appreciate all the lovely things you said about our school and the staff that work here. Thank you. We have added some of these to our website.

There will be further surveys for Breakfast Club and After School Club users very soon.

Main findings from the Survey:

**Q. My Child enjoys coming to Brookside**

*The vast majority of children enjoy their time at Brookside. This came out in their survey which took place a few weeks ago.*

*You agree with 97% (60% strongly agree) saying the same.*

**Q. My Child makes good progress at Brookside**

*Again, an incredibly positive response here with the vast majority of you recognising the progress your children were making (99%). This was up on the very disrupted pandemic year of 20/21 where only 70% of you felt that this was true.*

**Q. Members of staff are accessible and approachable**

*Another positive response where only 3% said that they did not find staff accessible or approachable. 8% of replies said that they Did Not Know. Digging a little deeper on this we do have a growing population who, due to work commitments and transport, are not able to be at the gates in the morning or at the end of the day. Also, as children grow through Brookside and become more independent there seems to be less interaction than in the earlier years.*

*I would add here that at any time you can speak to me or Mrs Ashford if you are finding this difficult. You can also always ask to have a phone call or meeting with a member of staff to discuss any concerns you have.*

**Q. I am aware of what my child will be learning through the year and I am well informed about my child/ren's progress and achievements**

*'I am aware of what my child will be learning through the year' has improved on 20/21 where only 66% agreed with this statement (it is now 81%) but this is still an issue we need to continue to address.*

Hopefully, you will note that our class pages are being updated this year and the website for each class will now clearly lay out what is happening in each class. For example, the curriculum meetings we put on at the

beginning of the year were not massively attended, but lots of parents said they were informative. We have also started Sharing Assemblies again this year, as well as Open Afternoons.

We do feel that there is a gap between the first parent evening and the second one and we are exploring ways in which to inform you about your child(ren)'s progress between these dates. There is also a divide on how to conduct parents' evenings with some parents wanting face to face and others wanting online. This is something we will look in to in more detail for next year.

**Q. My children feel safe and well cared for at Brookside**

There was a little more concern in this area than in previous years with 5% saying this was an issue. These were in two year groups in particular, Year 3 and Year 4, and related to some incidents that had happened early this year that children and families were talking about. We also picked this up in the children's survey.

We do everything we can to make sure behaviour is as good as it can be at Brookside but, incidents of challenge do happen. When they do we always address them and try to resolve the issues. Sometimes this is a quick fix and at other times it takes more time. We do not share what we are doing to ensure that confidentiality is kept – so I think that sometimes it looks like we are doing nothing. That is certainly not the case. Our brilliant pastoral team (thank you for the wonderful praise and recognition they got in the survey) have never been so busy. Coming out of the pandemic we have noticed more challenge around anxiety, school avoidance and challenging behaviour. This is at a time when external support services and thresholds for help have never been more difficult to get.

We are working with groups of children and the wider school community on a number of things including resilience and understanding how to deal with worries and fears.

**Q. The Academy website, newsletters, social media sites provide me with key information about the academy, the curriculum, and events**

Though the overall opinion was positive (96% agreed) this one generated the most comments.

It was a mixed bag (a bit like the old Homework question) with many saying there is just too much communication. Too many emails etc. Others say there is not enough. Some wanted a weekly newsletter, others wanted us to stop sending them as much as we do. A big issue was around the number of different systems we use for booking and paying. *Why didn't we just have one app?* That would be bliss, but we use different companies for different services and currently they all have their own system. We did look into a system for everything, but it was just not possible. We will review our processes for communication this year.

**Q. I would recommend Brookside to another parent**

I always think that this is one of the most important questions because we find that though people want things to change, they are often still happy with their school. That was slightly different this year. Usually there is a small number who would not recommend Brookside and they have clear reasons why they feel this way. This year we got our highest strongly agree in this section at 65% with 94% saying they would recommend Brookside to another parent. Nobody said they would not recommend Brookside, but a small number said they 'Didn't know' which is a way of telling us that things need to improve for them and their child/ren. Where there was a comment attached to this we have noted our own practice and if there is anything we can improve or needs improving.

## **Some actions we will take based on our Survey**

### **You told us**

We need better information about what is happening in the Academy. What my child is learning and how they are doing at school.

### **We will**

Signpost all of the things that happen at Brookside regarding sharing information or showing progress within the year group on the Class Page of the Website.

Continue to have a curriculum session at the beginning of the year.

Look at producing a short report mid-year so that you can see how your child is doing between the Autumn and Spring parent evenings.

### **You told us**

That communication is either too much or too little. That there are a lot of systems and procedures to book and pay for different things at Brookside.

### **We will**

Review all of our current systems of payment and ordering to see if there are better ways of doing this.

Develop our newsletter to contain more information.

Look at ways to develop our website so that it becomes a more reliable 'one stop' place to find the information you need.

### **You told us**

That you are proud of your local school and that you appreciate the magnificent work of the community to make Brookside an incredibly special place.

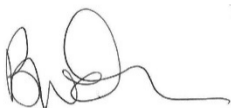
### **We will**

Continue to work hard at the things that Brookside do well.

Be open and honest about where we can improve.

Always appreciate our special community because this is what makes Brookside a great school to learn in, work at and be a part of.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian Walton', with a stylized, flowing script.

Brian Walton