

3 March 2023

Dear Parent and Carers

Response to Parent and Carer Survey

Thank you to all who completed the recent survey. We take the view that all feedback is good feedback. Honest criticism, responded to openly and genuinely allows us to improve our offer and ultimately enhances your child's experience in school.

Last year we sent out two parent/carer surveys, one on sexual harassment in school (in response to the national focus; we did a lot of work on a Code of Ethics and established a student Ethics Committee and that remains a focus); and one for a subject review of History. This year so far, we have asked you about Computer Science and Maths and this half term we will be asking for your feedback on Modern Foreign Languages, with PE, Music and Drama in focus next term. We review each subject area on a two-year cycle. We have also carried out a review of our curriculum offer and we were grateful for your responses to that survey in the Autumn Term.

We had 153 responses to the latest questionnaire, based on questions that Ofsted use. In the vast majority of responses the feedback was overwhelmingly positive, but the following three areas did highlight room for improvement. In times pre-pandemic, we asked parents/carers to fill in these questionnaires on Parent/Carers' Evenings, but we will now send out a link annually to the survey. Rather than wait until my end of term letter, I thought I would respond with our feedback now.

Initial feedback to parent/carer questionnaire

As mentioned above, there were three key areas that emerged from the survey that I want to address immediately, as it is either the case that we have already taken steps to address the concerns raised or that work is in progress to address them.

1. Some children avoiding using toilets as groups of older children were congregating in the communal area, some of whom are vaping.

We have completely reorganised the staff duty rotas since half term and there is a member of staff on duty in the corridor outside both downstairs sets of toilets at breaktimes and lunchtimes. This has had a dramatic effect on removing loitering students and all students can now feel safe when using the toilets at these times.



The issue of students vaping in toilet cubicles is a relatively recent thing, and difficult to deal with. We assume (and tell students this) that more than one person in a toilet cubicle means we suspect that they are vaping/up to no good.

The revised duty rotas have helped with this.

In addition, we are looking to purchase vape alarms, as we understand there are models now available at a reasonable cost per unit which will allow us to put one in every toilet cubicle. Ideally this will happen over the Easter holidays.

2. Awareness of what your child is learning throughout the year.

Just under 70% of parents/carers who responded said that they are not made aware of what their child will be learning during the year. We will take this on board when we consider information that we send you at the start of an academic year. In the meantime, I would like to bring your attention to our website [Welcome to Stour Valley Community School. - Stour Valley Community School](#) where you will find curriculum information about each individual subject and contacts for staff who teach that subject, should you require more information. You also receive a statement about what your child is taught throughout the year in the full report, but I realise that you often don't receive this until nearer the end of the academic year.

3. Homework and timely feedback about how your children are getting on at school.

There were a lot of comments about homework. One of our school development priorities this year is, "Review the organisation and effectiveness of homework whole school". We have had sessions with staff around this and one thing most staff agree on is that planners are no longer fit for purpose; we have also asked students about this, and they agree.

From next year students will not have planners to record homework. We have bought a package called 'EduLink' and it is being trialled this term with a group of Year 9 students and their parents/carers. EduLink's homework function lets teachers set and record homework so that students and parents/carers can easily track what work is due and see when it has been completed. If we set homework on TEAMS, it automatically updates in EduLink.

We are trialling it over the next few weeks, with a view to launching to the whole school after Easter. From September we intend that 'live' data will be available to you via the app, including behaviour and achievement points.

Thank you again for your ongoing support and feedback.

With kind regards

Rachel Kelly, Headteacher

