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Parents' and Carers' Voice: You said, we listened

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete our recent parent and carer survey. Your feedback gives us a really useful picture of what you value about Stour Valley, as well as the things you would like us to continue working on.

There was a great deal of positive feedback, and some very clear themes.

Children feel safe at Stour Valley
One of the strongest positives from the survey was how many parents told us that their child feels safe at school. Responses to this question were overwhelmingly positive, with most parents agreeing or strongly agreeing that their child feels safe at Stour Valley.

That is particularly important to us. Parents described Stour Valley as a small, welcoming community where children are known by staff, feel secure and know there are adults they can turn to. Parents also talked positively about children settling into school, feeling listened to and developing confidence.

A small school where children are known
A really strong thread throughout the feedback was the value families place on our size and sense of community. Parents talked about staff knowing students as individuals, knowing their names and personalities, and children not getting "lost in the crowd".

This is something we are very proud of and something we want to protect as the school continues to develop.

Strong relationships between staff and students
There was some lovely feedback about our staff. Parents described teachers as encouraging, supportive and approachable, and individual colleagues were recognised for the difference they have made to students' confidence, enjoyment of school and learning.

Teaching, opportunities and enrichment
Parents valued the quality of teaching, the breadth of our curriculum and the support available as students approach their GCSEs. Revision guidance and preparation for examinations were also recognised positively.

Trips, clubs, performances, sport, DofE and other opportunities beyond lessons were highlighted too, particularly the part they play in helping young people develop confidence, independence and wider interests.

What you have asked us to keep working on
Alongside all of the positive feedback, you also gave us some helpful challenges. We want to acknowledge this properly without losing sight of the very positive overall picture.

Communication and keeping families informed
Communication was praised by many parents, particularly the responsiveness of staff and the information available through EduLink. Some parents told us, however, that their experience is not always as consistent as they would like.

In particular, we heard that some families would value clearer or more regular information about academic progress, greater clarity about SEND support, and better information around behaviour and achievement points. We also heard from some parents who were not always sure who to contact or did not always receive a timely response.

In response to your feedback, we are looking at how we can provide you with more regular information about progress, further strengthen communication around SEND support and make it clearer who you should contact when you need help or information.

Feeling safe and responding to concerns
Feeling safe was one of the strongest positive messages from the survey, and there were several examples of concerns being responded to quickly and support being put in place. For example, parents described concerns being dealt with on the day, the following morning or very quickly.

We also heard that there are areas where we need to strengthen communication and ensure that students feel confident raising concerns when something is not right.

We are listening to that feedback too and will continue to look at both how we respond when concerns are raised and how confident students feel about speaking to an adult when something is wrong.

The canteen and lunchtime experience
A smaller number of comments related to practical aspects of the canteen and lunchtime experience, including queues and time to eat, cost and choice, and provision for students with allergies.

These are practical points that we will review.

Thank you
There is a great deal in this survey for us to be proud of. Above all, we were delighted by the strength of feeling around children feeling safe, being known as individuals and having positive relationships with staff. Those things sit at the heart of the kind of school we want Stour Valley to be.

Kind regards,

Rachel Kelly
Headteacher