



THE PORTSMOUTH GRAMMAR SCHOOL

FEEDBACK TO PARENTS ON SURVEY FINDINGS THE PORTSMOUTH GRAMMAR JUNIOR SCHOOL

May 2018

1. BACKGROUND

This is a summary of the main findings from the online survey we undertook during February and March 2018 on behalf of The Portsmouth Grammar Junior School. We would like to thank all parents and guardians who took the time to respond.

The aim of the survey was to find out what parents particularly value about The Portsmouth Grammar Junior School, where they would like to see the School develop in the future and to explore their attitudes to a wide range of aspects of school life.

There was a 57% response rate to the survey. In total, 159 families completed the online questionnaire, representing a broad spectrum of parental views.

This is an independent summary of the findings.

2. IMAGE AND ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

As parents might recall, there was a section in the questionnaire in which they were asked to select five words which together best describe The Portsmouth Grammar Junior School. A list of 22 words was supplied containing both positive and negative words.

The word most frequently selected by parents to describe the School was 'academic', chosen by over 60% of parents. This was followed by 'encouraging', 'welcoming' and 'dedicated', which were chosen by between 40% - 50% of parents.

The majority of parents (75%) feel that the School strikes the right balance between academic achievement and other pursuits and activities, although a minority (16%) would like slightly more focus on academic achievement.

When taken together, this reinforces the impression which runs throughout the survey that parents believe the School offers high academic standards and excellent resources whilst also providing a rounded education with a wide range

of co-curricular activities. In addition, parents value the welcoming and inclusive atmosphere as well as the ethos and traditional values at the School.

Before we look at the responses in more detail, including some of the criticisms, here are examples of some of the comments parents made, which demonstrate the high regard in which they hold The Portsmouth Grammar Junior School:

"The school's greatest strength is that it offers a holistic education. Every pupil is valued regardless of who they are. Difference is celebrated and whatever a child is interested in, they have the opportunity to flourish."

"The school maintains high levels of academic rigour and has a wide breadth of co-curricular activities."

"It's a great school, we have seen his confidence grow phenomenally in a short space of time, as well as his abilities in Maths and English. The range of opportunities and activities are also really fantastic and, best of all, he enjoys school!"

3. OVERALL PARENTS ARE VERY HAPPY WITH THE PORTSMOUTH GRAMMAR JUNIOR SCHOOL

Parents are strong advocates for the School with 70% saying they would 'definitely recommend' it to friends and a further 21% saying they would 'probably' do so. The Portsmouth Grammar Junior School scored slightly higher on this measure than the average of all other prep or junior day schools which have undertaken the survey.

Another pleasing result is that the majority of parents are satisfied with the School, with 79% of parents saying they are 'completely' or 'very' satisfied. This is also above the average of other prep or junior day schools tested.

A further indicator, which measures the extent to which the School has met parental expectations, was also very high: 28% of parents say the School has exceeded expectations and a further 59% say it has met them.

4. RATING THE DIFFERENT SCHOOL FEATURES

We asked parents to consider a list of 41 different school features covering many aspects of school life and to rate each one as 'very good', 'good', 'average', 'poor' or 'very poor'.

The School's results were excellent: 37 of the 41 features were rated as either 'good' or 'very good' by at least 75% of parents. The Portsmouth Grammar Junior School significantly outperforms the SchoolPulse benchmark scores on 16 of these features, and two of the features are in the top five of 48 prep or junior day schools we have tested: the way parents' evenings are run and the preparation for entrance to senior school.

The following aspects performed significantly above the benchmark of 48 other prep and junior schools with individual features rated particularly highly by parents:

- **Academic provision** - The quality of teaching, the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills and the range of academic subjects on offer were rated as 'very good' or 'good' by over 90% of parents. The teachers' ability to inspire your child was also rated extremely highly with over 55% rating it as 'very good'.
- **Communication & relationships** - Communication with your child's Form Teacher, approachability of staff (to parents), the relationship between teachers and pupils were given high ratings by more than 85% of parents.
- **Co-curricular provision** - The range of educational and recreational trips/visits, the provision of musical opportunities and the provision of sports opportunities were rated as 'very good' by nearly 60% of parents with a further 30% or so rating them as 'good'.
- **School facilities and catering** - Academic facilities and equipment and security of the school site were strongly endorsed by over 85% of parents.

Ratings for three of the features have significantly improved since the 2015 parent survey, based on the proportion of parents who rated them as 'very good'. These include:

- Security of the school site
- Value for money
- The school uniform shop.

The one feature which parents rated less well this time was car parking/drop-off and pick-up arrangements. Some find the experience stressful, especially where different drop-off/pick-up times and locations are involved.

5. ACHIEVING SCHOOL AIMS

Parents were asked how well they felt the School achieved certain aims in relation to their children. Nearly 80% of respondents felt that their child enjoyed school, had made some good friends and that their child's self-confidence had been enhanced by the School. 70% - 75% felt their child feels valued at school and that the School does all it can to ensure their child achieves his or her potential. Some parents felt that more could be done to recognise talents beyond the classroom.

6. AREAS WHERE PARENTS WOULD LIKE TO SEE IMPROVEMENT

We are conscious that, whether it is 10% or only 1% of parents who identified something to improve, this still represents real families whose experiences are not as they would wish. However, what follows should be read remembering that the overall results are very positive. We asked all parents to identify up to

five areas in which the School should invest time, effort or money. The following areas were highlighted:

	% of parents selecting as a priority
Car parking/drop-off and pick-up arrangements	46%
Value for money	21%
Feedback on your child's progress	16%
The way your child is stretched & challenged academically	16%
The quality of the food	15%

Car parking/drop-off and pick-up arrangements

In common with both previous surveys, this was the top priority that parents believed the Junior School should spend the most time, effort or money on improving, with just under half of parents selecting it. Whilst parents are sympathetic to the difficulties of the School being in a city centre location, they feel that anything that could be done to improve this situation would be most helpful.

Value for money

Although value for money was rated highly by parents at the School and also exceeded the benchmark for other prep or junior schools, 21% of parents mentioned this as an area of focus. In general, these concerns related to fee increases in recent years or to the availability of sibling discounts, as was the case in the Senior School survey.

Providing feedback

Some parents are keen to see improvements regarding the feedback they receive on their child's progress with some commenting that they would like more frequent or more detailed feedback.

Academic stretch

Although 82% of parents rated the 'way their child is stretched and challenged academically' as 'very good' or 'good', approximately one-sixth of respondents felt this needed more attention. From the comments, it emerged that some parents would like their children to be stretched more. This implies that, while parents recognise the standard of teaching as being very impressive already, they wish the School to keep high quality, inspirational teaching at the top of its list of development priorities.

Quality of food

Some parents would like to see more healthy food choices on offer with the children being encouraged to choose healthier options. A few parents commented that they felt that the food was expensive.

Other themes of interest

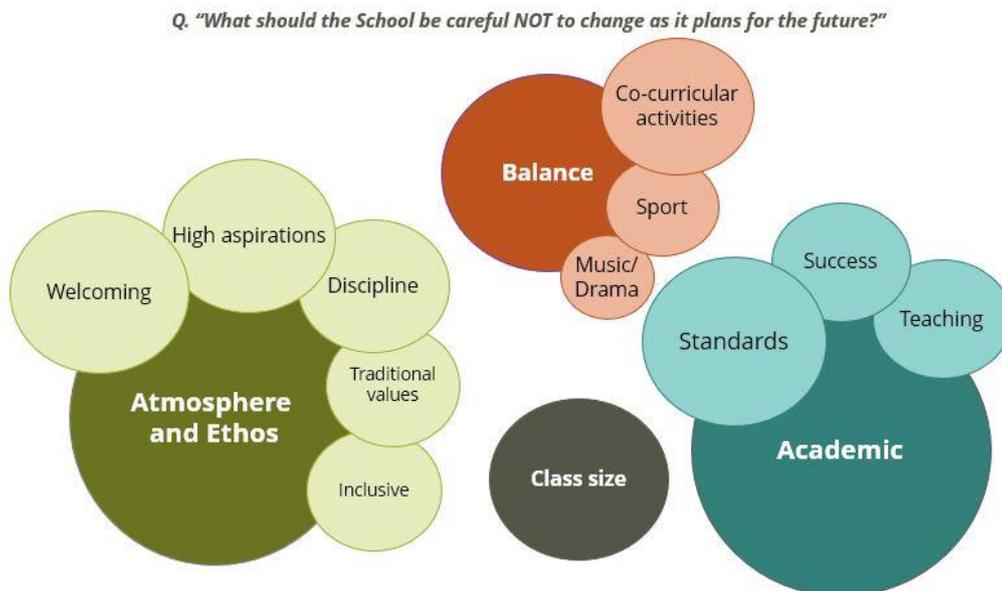
Analysis of the written comments from parents also revealed that they do not want class sizes to become too large, whilst some felt that the amount of homework and the timings could be improved.

7. PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Parents were asked about what the School should be careful not to change as it plans for the future.

Parents appreciate the welcoming, inclusive atmosphere at the School as well as the focus on traditional values and discipline. They are also keen to retain the encouragement of high aspirations and standards amongst the pupils. They greatly value the high academic standards, the quality of the teaching and the curriculum and want these to remain a priority for the School.

As the Head considers the future of The Portsmouth Grammar Junior School, parents are keen to maintain the balance provided with the academic standards through the wide range of co-curricular activities such as competitive sport and music. They would also like to ensure that class sizes do not become too big. Overall, the atmosphere and ethos of the School are valued by many, as shown in the graphic below:



In this chart, the larger the circle, the more parents mentioned it as a priority.

8. SUMMARY

The Portsmouth Grammar Junior School is valued by parents for offering a very strong academic provision where communication with their child's Form Teacher and the approachability of staff to parents are rated highly.

The School has high levels of satisfaction and advocacy amongst parents who feel their children are happy at The Portsmouth Grammar Junior School. Parents rate more highly than we normally find those aspects of the school relating to the academic and extracurricular provision, communication with the school and the facilities and many other individual features.

Parents wish the School to seek ways to improve the arrangements for car parking and drop-off/pick-up arrangements and to improve some aspects of

feedback provided on pupil progress. They would also like the School to continue to demonstrate value for money and to be mindful of fee increases. Some parents feel there may also be scope to improve the number of healthy food choices on offer, to consider homework arrangements in certain year groups and to monitor pupil friendliness.

Whilst there are undoubtedly areas in which parents would like to see the School invest further time and resources, the overall picture is one of an extremely well-regarded school with many strengths.

"She is part of the PGS family, and loves every moment of her time at school."

"The main thing for me is, the staff seem to genuinely care about the students, and knowing that my child is being treated with kindness at the school gives me great comfort every day."

"Our son has not had a day of unhappy time at the school, feels supported by the teachers and enjoys learning and the school life. We cannot praise the school and its staff and educational standards more. Well done!"

Please note that all responses remain totally confidential and anonymous. Although quotations have been used as part of this feedback, they are representative and cannot be attributed to an individual.

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