



Merridale Primary School

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2023 Parent/Carer Survey Evaluation

Earlier this term, we asked for your opinions and views about how the school performs in a range of different areas. We received 56 completed surveys. All of this information has now been collated and your comments noted and discussed. We have provided a summary of each question area and a selection of comments made, which reflect the views held by the majority of respondents. We have also, in our summary, identified how the school is going to respond to areas of concern raised to improve what we do in the future.

I think you will agree, after reading the summary that the general view of how the school is performing is a very positive one and we will aim to continue to work alongside you to ensure that this is maintained and built upon in the future.

Thanks, once again, for your contribution to this survey.

1. [My child is happy at Merridale Primary School](#)

96% of parents/carers agreed or strongly agreed that their child is happy at Merridale.

My children always come out of school smiling and always mention how they've had a good day at school.

Wonderful school. Wonderful people.

My child is very happy at Merridale.

The school really cares about children and their families. They want them to be happy and successful.

They are really happy at Merridale. Learning is made fun.

2. [My child feels safe at this school](#)

96% of parents/carers agreed or strongly agreed that their child feels safe at school.

As a school, we are proactive in ensuring that all pupils feel safe whilst they are in our care. All reported issues are dealt with and we encourage children and families to let us know whenever issues arise so we can address and resolve them.

School staff, including school leaders, will always make themselves available to discuss any concerns you may have. If you have any concerns that a problem has not been addressed, please contact Mrs Towle at school.

3. [The school makes sure its pupils are well behaved](#)

[94% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that the school ensures pupils are well behaved](#)

We are incredibly proud of the excellent behaviour and conduct shown by the vast majority of our students for the vast majority of the time. We spend a lot of time teaching children to respect each other and our school through our school's values and Golden Rules. Any reported issues are always dealt with and we invest a great deal of time working closely with children and their families to ensure that problems are addressed and resolved. We encourage children to report any issues at the earliest point so that staff can respond appropriately.

4. [My child has been bullied and the school dealt with the bullying quickly and effectively](#)

82% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that the school dealt with bullying in an effective and swift manner (or that their child had not been bullied)

We take all reports of bullying very seriously.

From our Anti-Bullying policy:

“Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will pupils be able to fully benefit from the opportunities available at schools.

What is bullying? Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can take many forms (for instance, online bullying via text messages or the internet), and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences. Stopping violence and ensuring immediate physical safety is obviously a school’s first priority but emotional bullying can be more damaging than physical.”

If you have any concerns about your child being bullied, please contact Mrs Towle at school at the earliest possible point.

5. [The school makes me aware of what my child will learn during the year.](#)

86% of parents and carers agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

One comment shared was:

“A termly newsletter highlighting which topics are going to be covered would be useful.”

I would like to take this opportunity to remind parents and carers that we provide a curriculum newsletter for each class each term, detailing what children will be learning. These can be found here:

[The Curriculum by Class | Merridale Primary](#)

We also provide Learning Logs (Year 1-6) on class pages, linked to topics being covered in school.

Another parent commented that children in Nursery just seemed to be playing and not learning.

At Merridale we follow the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. This framework sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well, are kept healthy and safe and that

children have the knowledge and skills they need to start school. It specifies the requirements in the prime and specific areas of learning we must cover in our curriculum.

Learning is planned by ensuring challenging, playful opportunities across the areas of learning and development. Learning opportunities provide support and challenge for pupils that build on previous learning.

Children at Merridale experience learning in these areas through a balance of whole class/group/individual teaching and play-based learning through provision. This may be through the children's interests, topics and themes and continuous provision activities. Where appropriate, continuous provision is enhanced to encourage the understanding of a certain topic or to develop particular skills. Planning for the curriculum is flexible so that children's unique interests are supported. Vocabulary and communication is woven throughout our curriculum. Children are encouraged to learn and use new words and share their learning, thoughts and ideas verbally.

Another parent/carer commented that children needed to be taught computing. At Merridale, we teach computing as part of our curriculum – children have opportunities to use laptops and ipads and a wide variety of applications to develop their skills. We also have an e-safety curriculum to ensure we are teaching children how to stay safe online.

Our aim, at Merridale, is for parents and carers to be partners in their child's learning. We provide regular workshops and meetings to demonstrate and explain how we teach across the curriculum and encourage all adults to attend. We have recently held workshops on Kinetic letters (our new handwriting scheme), Phonics, Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check, Year 6 assessments, open story-time sessions, Online safety as well as Discover showcases for topics. If any parents or carers feel they would like more information on our curriculum, please get in touch.

6. Does your child have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)?

76% of parents and carers who stated that their child has additional needs agreed or strongly agreed that the school gives their child the support they need to succeed. 24% of parents – 5 parents/carers (who stated that their child has additional needs) did not know what support their child received at school.

From these responses, we identified that some parents and carers seemed to be unclear about the support that their child received at school if they have additional needs.

At Parent consultation meetings, teacher share the Individual Education Plans and targets for children who have additional needs and require extra support.

If you would like any further information or advice on this, please contact your child's teacher or Mrs Tara, our SENCO, at school.

7. The school has high expectations for my child

84% of parents and carers agreed that the school has high expectations for their child. 13% stated that they didn't know.

Merridale staff have high expectations for children's learning, behaviour and conduct. We appreciate that all children are on their own journey and we spend time getting to know them and their learning and emotional needs. All staff work incredibly hard to ensure that the children of Merridale to achieve their potential, whatever their starting point.

We endeavour to advise and assist parents and carers equip them with the skills and knowledge to support their children with their learning outside of school also through information sessions and workshops as well as Curriculum Newsletters and Learning Logs.

8. My child does well at this school.

96% of parents and carers agreed or strongly agreed that their children do well at Merridale.

We are proud of the achievements of our pupils – whether academic or non-academic. Our end of key stage 2 results show that our children achieve well from their starting points through our provision and support.

9. The school lets me know how my child is doing.

92% of parents and carers agreed or strongly agreed that school staff let them know how their child is doing at school.

We work closely with parents and carers when there are issues and we aim to maximise the potential for all children. We share successes and progress in many ways including through personal contact, phone calls, certificates and awards.

We share our assessments and targets with parents and carers informally and formally through parent consultation meetings in the Autumn and Spring terms as well as through an end of year written report.

77% of parent and carers attended our most recent parent consultation session (February 2022) and we urge all parents and carers to make the most of these meetings to find out how their child is doing at school.

One parent commented that they would appreciate a weekly update on how their child has done but this would not be something that we can provide but we would like to remind you that you can get in touch with your child's teacher at any point throughout the school year to discuss their attainment, progress or behaviour if you need to.

10. [There is a good range of subjects available to my child at this school.](#)

89% of parents and carers agreed or strongly agreed that Merridale provides a good range of subjects for children at the school.

9% of parents and carers stated that they didn't know.

Merridale Primary School follows the National Curriculum and covers all subjects as required. We provide regular information to parents and carers through our Learning Logs and Curriculum Newsletters via our website.

11. [The school provides a range of clubs and activities for children to take part in outside of lessons.](#)

80% of parents and carers agreed that the school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities. 13% said they didn't know.

We offer a range of clubs for children across the school including sports, arts, crafts, yoga, dance, choir and computing. Club letters are sent out at the start of each term and places are allocated on a first come, first served basis. We know that this sometimes means that children do not secure a place in their preferred club.

We ask for a £15 contribution per term for each club attended (approximately £1.50 per child per session) and children who are eligible for Pupil Premium funding are offered free club places. The true cost of running these clubs is closer to £25 per child per term but we do not pass all of this cost onto families so that we can make it as accessible as possible for all children.

Occasionally, we do have to cancel after school clubs sessions for example, when a member of staff is unwell. We are not able to offer refunds when this happens but, as clubs are already heavily subsidised by school, we feel that this is fair. We only ever cancel clubs as a last resort.

Clubs are offered to children so that they can explore their interests and hobbies. After school clubs are not provided as childcare. The school does not offer any wrap-around childcare options (breakfast club etc). One parent did comment that they would like wrap-around care for their child. Whilst we would like to support working parents, this is not something we are able to offer at this time. We recently surveyed parents and carers on this subject (March 2022) and identified that there were only 4 children who would attend after school childcare provision (making this

financially unsustainable). You can read further information about this here:
https://www.merridaleprimary.co.uk/files/ugd/9deda6_fecb3975bc1741578454b7558242a2c4.pdf

12. I am happy with the school's present policy on school uniform (i.e. that no uniform is defined by the school).

66% of parents and carers agreed with the present policy on school uniform.

This issue provokes a range of different, and often very strong, viewpoints with a number of parents and carers indicating that they would like the school to introduce a uniform whilst the majority of parents and carers (who completed this survey) indicated that they are happy with the current no-uniform policy of the school. Can I remind parents and carers that they are welcome to send their children into school in uniform-style clothing if they wish (as some families choose to do).

13. The school supports my child's wider personal development.

84% of parents and carers agreed or strongly agreed that the school supports their child's personal development. 11% of parents and carers indicated that they didn't know.

The school provides many opportunities to develop the whole child from visits and trips to outdoor learning and Forest School. We champion and celebrate inclusivity and diversity as well as teaching children independence and resilience. Our Relationship and Health Education (RHE) lessons prepare children for life, helping them to really know and value who they are and understand how they relate to others in this.

As a school we regular celebrate success and encourage children to be the best they can be through our values-based education, school aims and Golden Rules. Our Learning Mentor and Family Liaison Officer support children and their families to assist them in over-coming barriers and seeking support where it is needed.

14. I would recommend this school to another parent.

96% of parents and carers said they would recommend this school to another parent.

We are proud of our students and our school and we know that our families are too. We are over-subscribed for admission to our Reception class each year and we feel that this is a good indicator of our positive reputation in our community.

Parents and carers were also asked what the school did well and how the school might be improved. We have summarised some of the findings from this below, along with our response:

What the school does well:

- Lovely staff, very caring and nurturing.
- We are really happy how is daughter developed including her previous skills and her new one skills.
- Encourages the students to push themselves further. Teachers on the gate in the morning / afternoon are welcoming. The school gives opportunities for parents to come into school for sessions.
- They are doing well towards children education growth.
- Ensures good learning and safety.
- Encourages my child to do well.
- School is focused on children's reading and this is a very positive point. Children develop love for reading and this helps to develop their comprehension and writing skills.

How could the school be improved?

One parent requested that more time is given to parent consultation appointments. In order to schedule appointments for all parents and carers, this is not possible. Again, please can I remind parents and carers that they can request to speak to teachers and school staff at any time if they have any questions or comments regarding their child.

We know that many families continue to be concerned about dangerous and illegal parking and driving (including speeding) near school on Aspen Way. We have raised these concerns many times with the road safety team and encourage anyone else with concerns to do the same. Unfortunately, there are some members of the school community that ignore our requests to park and drive safely and legally and, whilst we have addressed this directly with them, we do not have any authority in this area.

One parent commented that children need to be given healthier food (more fresh vegetables). All of our school meals include a wide range of fruits and vegetables and children are encourage to taste and try these. At lunchtime, we have a self-serve salad bar that children can access also. Statement from Caterlink, our school meals provider: "Healthy eating is at the very heart of our approach to food. We wholeheartedly encourage balanced diets within our dining rooms and significantly invest in training our teams. Our policy of purchasing a range of seasonal produce from local and regional suppliers enables us to deliver

exceptional value". You can find out more about Caterlink here:
www.caterlinkltd.co.uk

All children in EYFS and Key Stage One also receive a piece of fruit each day through the government scheme. Our school curriculum also teaches children about health choices and diet through Design and Technology lessons, Physical Education lessons, Relationship and Health Education lessons as well as through our bi-annual Healthy Living Weeks across school

One parent suggested that we consider having more off-site trips and visits as well as residential. We make a commitment to ensure that all classes take part in off-site visits each year as well as more local visit opportunities. Year 6 also take part in a residential in Borth in June each year. Whilst we appreciate the value of these experiences for children, we also understand that visits can be costly to parents and families so we try to ensure we plan the best visits to increase and enhance our children's learning experiences.

One comment was made regarding the school's policy on not authorising absences for family holidays, visits and trips. School cannot authorise children's absence from school for these reasons according to government legislation. Children attend school for 190 days per year, which leaves 175 days for trips, visits and holidays. Taking your child out of school during term time affects their learning and progress as well as their routine. We have high expectations for our children's learning, progress and well-being that can only be achieved with regular and consistent school attendance. More information on this policy can be found here: [Attendance | Merridale Primary](#)

One parent commented that they think every class should take part in swimming lessons. Currently our Year 5 children take part in weekly swimming lessons as part of our curriculum. The cost of providing this for every class (as well as securing pool time for every class with a local pool) would be extremely challenging as well as expensive. We would encourage all families to take up the free swimming offer for pupils living in Wolverhampton – you can find out more here:

[Free Swimming for 8 – 15 year olds | City Of Wolverhampton Council](#)

As ever, if you have a question, complaint or concern about school (or you just want to let us know something that is going well), the best way to raise and address this is by arranging to come in and talk to school staff. In this way, we can work in partnership to provide the very best opportunities and support for our students and their families. Mrs Towle welcomes feedback and will happily arrange a convenient time to discuss any issues with families.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete and return this survey. Your feedback is important to us and will help us to continue to improve our school.