



20 May 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

## **Parent Questionnaire May 2024**

I am most grateful to all those parents and carers who have helped us by completing the recent questionnaire. In this letter I will summarise the findings and highlight any points about the journey and improvement we need to make.

129 responses were received representing 54% of families (this figure takes account of families with more than one learner where one response was submitted for both young people and also learners for whom more than one adult submitted a response).

The survey asked parents to express an opinion on whether they agreed/disagreed with a number of statements, and also included a comments box to share any additional views. The overwhelming majority of parents utilised this option and shared insightful observations which help us to better understand aspects of school life that are working well as well as those where change is needed.

Beginning with our primary responsibility to keep our young people safe whilst in our care, 92% of families either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. Two parents disagreed with this statement, and 8 did not express an opinion

Looking at young people experience of learning and progress, 73% of families strongly agreed/agreed that the school works jointly with parents to carefully plan meaningful steps towards outcomes. This demonstrates our commitment to fostering positive relationships with parents and ensuring their views and aspirations are heard and included in the work we do. 73% of families also understood the wide range of opportunities available to learners as part of a curriculum that is broad, balanced and personalised to each learners needs.

As part of a joined up and learner-centred approach, effective collaboration between the school and partner agencies is vital. Despite the significant challenges faced in terms of pressure on health and social care services, 75% of families felt the school did this well. There is an ongoing dialogue with health and LA colleagues to refine the commissioning process for new to school learners in acknowledgement that at times there is a lag between provisions being agreed and therapists being commissioned or available to deliver interventions. Similarly, we are continually reviewing the effectiveness of social care referrals to ensure families are in receipt of appropriate support packages outside of school.

81% of families agreed that their child is making sufficient progress, with a number referencing positive changes seen as a result of the work undertaken at school. Of the small number who disagreed with this statement and felt that the school no longer met their child's needs the

majority referenced class and staff changes and communication difficulties as a factor which is addressed later in the report.

With 'life beyond Glenwood' considered as part of every plan and decision made by school, we are committed to preparing our young people for adulthood through the curriculum in place and by providing opportunities and experiences which will support them to be as independent as possible. Whilst 56% of parents agreed with this statement, a significant number of KS1 & KS2 parents did not express an opinion. The data will support us to have more effective communication with the parents of younger learners to link agreed short-term goals and strategies to longer term visions in a sensitive and appropriate way. We asked parents whether they felt the school was supporting their young person to make positive steps to a healthy lifestyle. 80% of families felt this was true, evidencing the valuable work undertaken by the class teams in this area.

In order for our learners to have a happy and formative day at school, it is vital they are supported to be in a 'positive' position for learning. Parents overwhelmingly agreed with this statement, with 93% of parents agreeing the school does this well. In light of the significant challenges faced currently in terms of maintaining a state of sensory calm within overcrowded classes and in the face of significant challenges in terms of staffing, it is really positive that parents acknowledge the efforts made by staff to ensure this.

Effective channels of communication between home and school are vital and an area of great importance to the school. We know that the majority of our learners are unable to share information relating to their school experience with parents themselves and it is incumbent upon us to ensure pertinent information is shared in an appropriate and timely manner. There are a variety of ways in which information is shared, including class emails and communication books for day-to-day information, EFL for updates regarding curriculum activities and incidental progress or achievements, and telephone calls for more sensitive discussions. These channels sit alongside a host of whole school initiatives including newsletters, social media platforms and the school website.

Parents preference is for information to be shared regularly by the class teacher via the class email, communication book and EFL App. In a climate of high staff turnover, recruitment difficulties, high sickness levels and increasing class sizes, it has been challenging for class teams to consistently meet parents' expectations in this regard. Despite these difficulties, 74% of responses agreed that the school was communicating effectively with families. A number did, however, raise valid concerns regarding the quality and frequency of exchanges with the class teams which we are continually working to address.

Given the significant challenges faced in terms of the school's growth, letters from school leaders and governors have been shared with families to ensure they are kept fully informed. 83% of parents stated that this helped their understanding of the pressures faced and the impact on our daily experience. We will continue to share pertinent information to keep families up to date with any information that impacts our young people and families.

79% of families agreed that the school is led and managed effectively, with 89% of families confirming they were happy with their young person's overall experience at school. 84% of families also felt that the school was receptive to parent suggestions and listened to concerns. Analysis of the families who did not feel this was the case tells us that their young people have been affected by teacher absences, high staff turnover, and unexpected class changes. The

concerns shared are valid and understandably impact families' confidence. School leaders are working closely with the local authority to agree and implement changes which will support a number of improvements and mitigate any adverse impact on existing learners as a result of the significant demand for places at Glenwood through tribunal direction.

### Summary

The feedback from parents is largely positive and includes many statements relating to young people making good progress, feeling happy and supported at school, as well as comments validating the hard work and commitment of staff.

There are absolutely areas in which we need to improve and efforts will continue to be made to address these within the context of a national crisis in regard to a shortage of teachers and immense pressure on the SEND system. We are ambitious in our aspirations for learners, and aim to be flexible and responsive to their changing needs (and the needs of parents) during what can only be described as highly challenging and uncertain times.

I will continue to update on the action we are taking to work on improvement points which involve dialogue with county leaders for education and SEND this week.

Lastly, I must again thank you for honest, candid and detailed critique which we understand is made to support improvement. Of course, it is also very encouraging to receive some very kind appreciation that members of staff will be very uplifted to hear.

Yours faithfully



Elizabeth Cornish  
Headteacher