

# Principal's Post

KEEPING YOU INFORMED FROM MR SPRINGETT-MCHUGH & MRS DRAPER

## Parent Survey Summary

Dear Parents and Carers

Thank you to all those who took the time to share their views in our recent parent survey - we received 129 responses. Although this seems a lot, we do have 680 children in our academy. We are always keen to hear your views and act on these where we can. This survey forms the ideal format for us to do this and use the feedback in our development plans. We will continue to undertake the survey on an annual basis, so please do take the time to complete our surveys when they are released. If, between now and next year, you have any ideas or constructive feedback, please do catch any member of staff.

Please find below some highlights from the recent survey.

**Mr N Springett-McHugh**

Executive Principal

### The Academy Community

#### Strengths:

- 81% (104/129) parents know the roles and responsibilities of staff
- 87% (112/129) parents know how to access the fundraisers
- 77% (96/129) parents feel the academy is well led and managed
- 87% (112/129) parents feel their child is proud to be part of the academy
- 80% (103/129) parents feel proud to be part of the academy

#### Areas to develop:

- 60% (77/129) parents understand the role of governors
- 36% (47/129) parents know how to access the governors
- 36% (47/129) parents are able to offer support to the Fundraisers
- 70% (90/129) parents would recommend the academy

## Sample of positive comments:

*"I think the school has worked extremely hard realigning itself with the core output of academics. That said, I personally think that a full turnaround will only be achieved in another two years. We are definitely on the right track."*

*"I am happy that the academy has taken drastic measures to improve after the alarming Ofsted result!"*

*"Wonderful shift in focus back to be on core learning and encouraging engagement with the children and parents."*

*"We fully support the positive changes made by the relatively new leadership and appreciate the hard work from all the staff at OPA."*

*"I'd like commend the leadership team and all the teachers for creating a truly fantastic environment to support our children's learning in such a short space of time. The changes introduced since Mr Springett-McHugh joined has had a noticeable positive impact and, in my view, has significantly improved standards. As result, my children are now thriving. There is also a real sense of energy and vibrancy all around the school, from the colourful and engaging decor and displays, the improved facilities and resources to the revamped curriculum and whole 'FAB' principle, it's clear that that this is a school that is well-led and has high standards. Please continue with the good work, it is very much appreciated."*

## Academy Response:

A sincere thank you to all those who recognise the major work going on to turnaround our academy. Improvements have been taking place in every single area of provision, from learning through to the environment. This is not a quick fix and is very much about ensuring the changes are the right ones and that they are embedded into our new culture.

We do recognise that change is difficult for many, and we have worked hard to communicate this without overloading you. There was a lot to do! However, looking ahead, many of the major changes are now in place and it is about embedding these and ensuring they are impacting positively for our children.

We have noted that accessing, knowing and understanding the role of our governors is an area we need to work on. This is something that will be discussed at the next governors' meeting and will form part of their plan to improve this area.

We sincerely hope that, as we move forward embedding the new culture and Oxley Ways, those of you who are unsure will be able to recommend OPA once again and be confident in what we are doing.

## General Learning and Home Learning

### Strengths:

- 79% (102/129) parents are happy with their child's learning in reading
- 78% (101/129) parents are happy with their child's learning in writing
- 82% (106/129) parents are happy with their child's learning in maths
- 77% (100/129) parents agree that the work their child receives is suitable for their ability
- 80% (104/129) parents agree that their child receives appropriate home learning

### Areas for Development

- 67% (86/128) parents agree their child is challenged appropriately
- 55% (70/127) parents feel the Accelerated Reader home learning supports their child to make progress with reading
- 67% (85/126) parents plan to attend workshops to help them know how to support their child in home learning

## Sample of positive comments

*"He has come home with facts he has learned in the day and is so eager to share what has been taught."*

*"My child has made massive progress since September."*

*"My son's teacher this year has been excellent. She has a good understanding of his learning needs and has supported him greatly to ensure that he has the support he needs. .... I always feel she is approachable and open to my comments too."*

*"My child loves being in class and talks very positively about school."*

*"The level and variety of learning through the different topic areas provides great stimulation and interest for the children."*

*"My child is like a sponge, loves it...always talking about what he has been learning."*

*"I have just returned from parents evening and was blown away by the amount of progress my daughter has made since the start of Year.6. Clearly, the new teaching and support strategies are highly effective! Best of all, my daughters both enjoy their school work and I feel they are appropriately challenged to reach their full potential."*

*"Definite improvement over past year - keep it up!!"*

*"Our child is becoming an avid reader and reaches out for a book on his own accord. He feels appreciated when he puts in extra efforts in his work and is eager to give it his best."*

## Academy Response:

We are delighted that this area is showing real trust from parents in feeling their child is learning and progressing well. A substantial amount of work has gone on across the academy, and continues to do so, to ensure that children learn, progress and have high quality teaching every day. This is our absolute core focus. With our focus on core learning and enhancement of our wider curriculum, it is clearly having a positive impact for all. We still have work to do, and this area will always be central to everything we do. Challenge is still an area on which we are focussing, and Senior Leaders are constantly monitoring and highlighting this with all staff. Accelerated Reader, although for the majority is working really well, is causing a few concerns for individuals. This will be shared with class teachers so they can look on an individual basis. Comments received at Parent Consultations also support your positive feedback that you feel general learning has improved hugely over the last year.

Home learning was reintroduced last January in direct feedback from yourselves. It is great this is so well received and the positivity around what is being set is clear. Some tweaks are still needed which will be shared with Heads of Year to act on specifically on the level of challenge being set. Please share your thoughts with class teachers and/or Heads of Year if your child struggles with challenges set or finds them too easy

## Learning Environment, Activities and Ziggy Club

### Strengths:

- 97% (125/129) parents consider the academy buildings and facilities provide a good environment for learning
- 88% (113/129) parents agree that FAB Finales are a great opportunity for their child to share their learning with them
- 75% (97/129) parents agree that their child takes part in and enjoys the events provided by the Fundraisers – FOOPA
- 99% (76/77) of parents who use Ziggy Club find it a useful resource
- 89% (57/64) of parents who use Ziggy Club agree that their children enjoy attending
- 97% (66/68) of parents find it easy to book their child into Ziggy Club
- 85% (82/96) of parents agree that their child enjoys any academies they attend and that they provide opportunities to try out new sports

## Areas for Development:

- 52% (67/129) parents agree that lunch meals are of high quality
- 63% (81/129) parents believe there are a range of opportunities for adults to come into the academy
- 60% (77/129) parents agree that year group performances are of a high quality
- 65% (78/121) parents agree that there are a wide range of after-school activity clubs on offer
- 39% (48/122) parents agree that their child has the opportunity to represent the academy at sporting events

## Sample of positive comments:

*"The FAB Finales have been a brilliant addition to the school. It is great to see what the children have been up to, but also gives them a sense of pride when they get to show us. It has enhanced their learning experience greatly and provides a great talking point at the dinner table in the evening."*

*"It has been lovely to come in and see their work and how proud the children are during the FAB Finales."*

*"The quality and range of the school meals is fantastic and makes my life as a working mum much easier, as I can be confident she has eaten well every day."*

*"My son really loves sports of any kind and is totally encouraged and developed by the sports team."*

*"Sincere thanks to the staff who look after kids before and after school. They are doing great job."*

*"Great after school clubs offered!"*

## Academy Response:

Enhancing the learning environment across both sites was a real necessity, both to bring our older campus up to today's standards and ensure our new campus became a school for children and not a clinical new-build. With 97% in agreement, it is clear that this has been a huge success. A couple of parents made comments that they felt the focus was on the environment rather than everything else. We can absolutely assure you that this is not the case, and has never been so. As mentioned constantly in newsletters and posts, core areas of learning, curriculum and teaching has been the focus. The environment enhances all of this and promotes a positive space for everyone to thrive in. Our Premises team work so hard to make such rapid progress in a short space of time. There is still lots to do, so this area will continue to improve and be very visual for us all.

There was a mixed picture around our meals provision with 52% agreeing they are good quality and 42% unsure. From the comments shared, it was clear this was mainly due to parents not actually tasting them or experiencing the meals for themselves. However, the positive comments were that the majority of children who have meals enjoys them. We will share these findings with our provider and look at ways in which parents can experience the meals for themselves.

FAB Finales have been very well received and have opened up our school and the curriculum to all parents every few weeks. However, they are very new and there is time for them to develop and be tweaked. Suggestions and ideas that have been shared will be part of the discussions for the leadership team in planning them going forward. Productions are similar in that feedback is extremely positive, however, running these are proving extremely challenging with a split site and year groups across both. With our new staging, lighting and media provision, the standard and quality has improved. The acoustics in both halls is also a real challenge so this is something of an ongoing area to look into. We will keep you updated in how we move this area forward.

Ziggy Club proves popular and those who attend enjoy and appreciate this provision. The new online booking system is also a hit. However, this has caused difficulties behind the scenes so we are having to make some further changes for later this year.

Clubs and academies prove popular and the majority of parents appreciate this provision and children who attend, on the whole, enjoy. However, there remains some concerns about communication and the system in the way that children are chosen for events. The sports team have worked hard of late to give further opportunities for children to represent the academy against other schools. The feedback we have from the survey will be shared with the sports team and they will use this to further develop this area so everyone feels they have an opportunity to attend these and represent the academy.

# Communication and Academy Day

## Strengths:

- 85% (109/129) parents know what is happening in the academy and where to get information about activities and events.
- 79% (101/128) parents know where to access further information when they need it.
- 88% (113/129) parents use the school website to access information
- 88% (113/129) parents follow the school on Facebook
- 85% (110/129) parents agree that the year group newsletter at the start of each new term provides useful information
- 89% (115/129) parents agree that they know who to speak to at the academy should they need to
- 74% (96/129) parents agree that the Oxley Observer is a great way to get information from the school
- 82% (106/129) parents agree that the majority of letter going home by email make things more manageable
- 81% (102/126) parents agree that the present academy day works for their family
- 93% (119/128) parents agree that our start time is just right

## Areas for Development

- 64% (82/128) parents agree that the academy responds to concerns raised
- 57% (72/127) parents agree that the early Wednesday finish at 2pm works for their child and family

## Sample of positive comments:

*"The communication has improved massively over the past year. I like that everything is on Facebook, and I appreciate the emails and texts. It means I now never miss out on anything."*

*"Great communication and insights into children's learning available which help us not only to support our children but to encourage and engage as well."*

*"Without the website, etc, I couldn't keep up with the different events and what both boys are learning."*

*"I love the range of communication from OPA. I use the website a lot and I love seeing the updates on Facebook."*

*"I feel that communication from school is good. I always know what is happening and when."*

*"Excellent communications - I now feel more involved in my child's learning at school rather than wait for the Parent-Teacher meeting to know what was done in the past."*

*"We use the Curriculum Enrichment programme, which my child absolutely loves!"*

*"Academy is progressing well, and in a positive direction. Huge congratulations to Principal, staff and students."*

## Academy Response:

It is clear that communication is now much improved and appropriate. Some comments still state we don't give enough and others state we give too much so as in all schools we probably will never get it perfect. There is still some last minute changes that happen and this upsets people and we completely understand that. All staff are aware any changes to dates shared must only happen when absolutely necessary. Sometime we don't get a choice but we will always aim to keep these to an absolute minimum. Overall people are loving seeing our window into the school through our Facebook posts. This shares a really positive view of our academy.

The website although relaunched earlier this year is more streamlined it still requires some changes and tweaks which we plan to do. Unfortunately, we are tied to a system we inherited and it takes a lot of work from academy staff. This will see further enhancements over the coming months and we will of course communicate these with you.

Some good ideas were suggested about coding emails so you know if it is for information or action. We are looking at implementing these soon. We are also ensuring that we set a timeline for notifying parents about an event. This will hopefully ensure we get rid of any last minute notifications which still slip in now and again!

In general, the academy day is working for parents. It is a long school day and can prove challenging for afternoon learning. However, staff work hard to plan appropriately to match challenges with the time of the day. Wednesday afternoons show a mixed picture with many saying how great it is, with the opportunities it provides but also others say it can prove a challenge for them. At this stage we have no intentions of changing the Academy day but we will continue to source views each year in our survey.

## General Happiness

### Strengths:

- 86% (112/129) parents agree their child has settled well into school this year
- 79% (102/129) parents agree that their child knows who they can talk to if they are unsure about something
- 81% (104/128) parents agree that the pastoral and play facilities at the academy are beneficial to the children's happiness
- 84% (107/128) of parents agree that the academy's values are clear and impact on their child

### Areas for Development:

- 51% (66/129) parents agree that behavioural issues are dealt with appropriately at the academy
- 57% (74/129) parents feel that their views are valued
- 63% (81/129) parents feel that their child's views are valued
- 65% (83/128) parents feel that the academy's reward systems impact on their child's happiness

### Sample of positive comments:

*"This is a strong area for Oxley Park Academy. I think the general happiness level of students, teachers and parents is good and certainly above average."*

*"My son feels confident with his teacher and knows he can go to her for support if required."*

*"My child is happy to go into school each day and he loves the outdoor space with the Foundation area as well as the pirate ship."*

*"My child loves going to OPA! My child loves his teacher and thinks extremely highly of them!"*

*"I have seen my child display 'courage' and 'curiosity' during the relevant weeks these were promoted at school which was lovely - he was happy to talk about where he got these ideas from."*

*"The FAB Fridays star performer assembly, red carpet and photo display give a child a real sense of achievement and is a great way of recognising and encouraging their efforts."*

### Academy Response:

It is wonderful to see that the majority of parents feel their child has settled well, feels valued and that our academy values impact positively on them. Our staff are clearly doing a good job too, making sure that children know who they can go to if they need to talk or get any help. Our pastoral and play facilities are also being seen as a real positive. These have been heavily invested in over the past year and continue to be a focus area for the coming year.

We felt sad that only 57% of parents who completed the survey felt their views were valued. We completed a very similar survey a year ago and this was used directly in many of the decisions made in the academy. Feedback from 'Meet the Principal' last year, feedback from productions and FAB Finales and general chat at the gates all are listened to, shared at the table and used when making any decisions for our academy. We recognise that, with such a large school, we will not get everyone's agreement, however, we really do listen to

you. Going forward, we will continue to listen and, if and when possible, make it more explicit in our communication.

Although we have lots of positives around rewards and general behaviour, we also had a number of concerns. Behaviour in school is a real strength and we can assure you that there is a really positive attitude to learning when you visit during the day. However, there are a few inconsistencies in how behaviour is managed. We have recently appointed a Behaviour and Rewards Champion – Mr Burden. He has started an exciting plan of how this area will be further enhanced. This feedback has been shared with him and he will use it to help ensure no inconsistencies exist. The new 3/5 stages are proving really positive and we agree has had a real impact across the academy.

## **We are proud to be part of Oxley Park Academy because:**

We received some wonderful comments in this area. Too many to list but see below a few we have picked out...

*“Our Year 6 team work hard. This was very evident in the SATS meeting that they held. I am extremely proud of all our Year 6 team who are trying to bring our school back into good repute academically. Additionally, Ms Newnham is very responsive in her emails and is quick (this is greatly appreciated). Being at the school for the SATS two years ago to this year, what a massive turnaround in preparation - all in the good.”*

*“The new leadership team are bringing much needed changes to make my child feel valued and want to learn.”*

*“My children enjoy going to school every day to learn new things in a safe welcoming environment.”*

*“It feels like a village school in the middle of a city.”*

*“It is a school worthy to be proud of, the focus is always on the children and their education first and is a massive foundation to their future.”*

*“It is a fantastic school with a great ethos and most importantly my son is really happy and loves to come to school!”*

*“I love the ethos of Dream, Believe, Achieve. I love how the school encourages the children, and encourages parents to be a part of the school. It's like you become part of a family. When we looked round the school, I loved how polite the children were and they had amazing manners.”*

*“Oxley Park Academy is, in our opinion the best, like the core values, the way my children are being taught, the way the school looks and the staff.”*

*“The school has changed a lot all for the better. My son's start to the Oxley Park Academy has been so positive and he is loving school. The teachers have been great, so supportive. The look of the areas within the school are excellent - colourful and engaging.....I am proud to say my kids are at Oxley Park.”*

*“OPA is an amazing school, from the communication with the teacher, the parent interaction and with FOOPA! I love the emphasis on the reading programme too! I think the school has worked amazingly hard over the last few terms. Keep going! \*proud parent dance\*.”*

*“The values and the community feeling of the school are great.”*

*“I can see the high standards and expectations that are communicated from everyone in the academy. The academy is on the up!”*

*“The school is child and parent-friendly to the point where grandparents comment so. The environment is a fantastic place to learn in. My son enjoys school. We find the majority of staff approachable. The school has improved a great deal in a short space of time and we look forward to this continuing, Thank you to all that have made this possible.”*