Monday 6th December

Dear parents and carers,

Thank you to those who completed our recent parent questionnaire. Your feedback is always useful to us. I would like to take this opportunity to explain some of the changes parents can expect to see as a result of this survey, and to provide some additional information about aspects of our current provision which I thought it might be useful to share with you.

**Survey Findings**

You told us that:

\* You agree or strongly agree that your child feels safe at this school.

\* You agree or strongly agree that your child is happy at this school.

\* You agree or strongly agree that your child has opportunities to take part in clubs or other activities.

\* You agree or strongly agree that there is a good range of subjects at Brackenwood.

\* You agree or strongly agree that the school makes sure that pupils behave well.

Some of you identified the following areas you would like us to improve:

\* You would like the school to keep you better informed of your child’s progress.

\* You would like the school to make you more aware of what their child will learn during the year.

\* You would like the school to have higher expectations of pupils.

\* You would like the school to better support pupils’ wider personal development.

**Our Response**

**Parental Engagement:** Primarily, you have told us that you would like to see an improvement in levels of communication and parental engagement, and would like more information about how your child is getting on in school. Our Open Evenings last week provided you with the opportunity to come into school to look through your child’s work, see the classroom and meet the class teacher. Hopefully, this will have helped to strengthen relationships between parents and the school and enabled you to feel more informed of your child’s progress. Our Christmas Carol concerts will hopefully provide a further opportunity to welcome you into school, whilst our new-look newsletter will provide you with more regular updates about what is happening at school. Parents may request a visit to the school at any time, and are invited to join a Parent Forum in order to strengthen parental voice.

As a result of parental feedback, we will no longer use telephone calls to carry out parental consultations, but will replace these with scheduled Zoom meetings in the Spring term. This should substantially improve the levels of communication between home and school.

**Curriculum Information:** Some parents have requested more information about what your child is learning during the year. Information about our curriculum can be found on the school website, and our online Learning Links meetings in September also provided useful information about this. In addition, we will ensure that sufficient communication regarding the curriculum is made with parents at the beginning of Spring and Summer terms.

**Expectations of Pupils:** Some of you feel that the school should have higher expectations of pupils. As levels of parental engagement increase, I am confident that our high expectations of pupils will become more apparent, and that you will become more aware of the broad range of measures in place to ensure that as many pupils as possible reach or surpass age-related expectations. For example, lessons are monitored rigorously to ensure that levels of challenge are appropriate to the ability levels of pupils, and many layers of additional support (see below) are in place for any child who requires extra help.

**Supporting Pupils to Catch Up:** We have placed a heavy emphasis on supporting pupils to catch up after the disruption of COVID-19 and school Lockdowns, especially in the core areas of Reading and Maths. Assessments are completed in reading so that we know the reading age and ability of every child in school, and recognise which pupils require additional help with reading fluency and phonics development. Reading lessons take place in all classes every day to develop comprehension and vocabulary skills, and to foster a love of reading. For pupils who require additional support, however, there are a number of interventions in place to help them. These include:

\* Read, Write Inc Phonics (accessed by 23 children)

\* Reading Wise (accessed by 37 children)

\* Individual 1-1 support, 3 to 5 times weekly (accessed by 41 children)

Similarly, maths lessons take place for one hour daily in all classes using the Power Maths scheme. This ensures that all children are challenged appropriately and that maths is taught using a consistent approach across the school. Pupils who require additional support in maths also have access to a number of interventions, including:

\* Extended School Day Provision (accessed by 12 pupils)

\* 1-1 Catch Up Maths sessions (accessed by 12 children)

\* Online tutoring (accessed by 12 children)

All children are assessed at regular intervals in order to allow us to evaluate the impact of these additional interventions and to continue to identify the pupils who may be falling behind.

**Pupis’ Wider Personal Development:** Some of you would like to see the school do more to support pupils’ wider development. Once again, I would hope that as parental engagement improves, you will become increasingly aware of the strategies we have in place. I have included below just a few examples of ways in which we do this:

1. Encouraging Healthy Lifestyles- pupils are encouraged to bring in healthy snacks at break time and have access to a range of healthy options at lunchtime. They participate in two hours of PE each week, have access to a range of extra-curricular sports clubs and can attend a before school Wake and Shake session each week. In our November 2021 pupil survey, 88% of pupils told us that the school encourages them to follow a healthy lifestyle all or most of the time.

2. Encourage Healthy Relationships- children learn about healthy relationships through their PSHE lessons (Personal, Social and Health Education) and SRE (Sex and Relationships Education). In addition, children participate in regular assemblies which focus on issues such as equality and diversity, respecting differences, and understanding the beliefs and opinions of others. In our November 2021 pupil survey, 98% of pupils told us that the school encourages them to respect people from different backgrounds and to treat everyone equally.

3. Providing Mental Health support for pupils- there are a number of ways in which we do this, including individual and whole class approaches. For example, we are currently providing a number of individual pupils with bespoke interventions through Thumbs Up and ELSA, whilst Y6 pupils are currently in the middle of a 6 week Essential Life Skills course. In our November 2021 pupil survey, 87% of pupils told us that the school encourages them to look after their emotional and mental health.

Thank you again to those of you who participated in this survey. We will always endeavour to improve our provision in response to what you tell us, and I hope that this letter has offered some clarity and reassurance on the main issues raised.

Very best wishes,

Conal Holmes

Headteacher