



Menston Primary School

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Headteacher: Iain Jones

September 2019

Governors' Annual Pupil Interviews – July 2019

In the summer term governors interviewed pupils to gather information that might help the school to plan future work. Governors talked with a sample of children from years 1-6.

They talked with children about many things, but particularly about what made them happy in school, what worried them, how their teachers helped them to learn, about playtimes and lunchtimes, what they thought about homework and what they would say to another child who was thinking of coming to the school. We were delighted with what the governors discovered.

Governors reported that “Overwhelmingly, students at MPS are happy either all or virtually all the time.” When governors asked what made them happy, the children talked about friends, school trips, lunchtimes and playtimes. They were very positive about Science, Art, school meals and were broadly positive about outdoor learning and the ‘Daily Mile.’

When asked if anything worried them some children talked about friendship issues such as when they felt that others were unfriendly or disloyal or when they thought things were unfair. Some commented that if work was too hard they worried, but, when governors followed this up, they found the children “had a clear understanding that the teachers and other staff were there to help them.” They also found that children had a range of strategies and resources to help them when they were stuck. Children were particularly positive about the coaching system, which they enjoyed whether they were coaching or being coached. It was clear that independence in learning was being built up over time.

At playtimes and lunchtimes older children said they enjoyed helping younger children and younger children said they liked this. This is clearly a real win-win for the school. They liked the wide range of activities available, but a small number of older children were frustrated if they couldn't get the activity they wanted most. Older children also said that they wanted something to climb on like the younger children have and some asked whether a ‘quiet area’ might be established.

Governors asked about homework and found no child for whom homework was a problem. Most children read regularly at home and most could explain the homework demands put on them.

Governors collected some quotes about school:

“It's a wonderful place for learning.” Year 1 child.

“The teachers are kind.” Year 2 child.

“You learn lots of fun things.” Year 4 child.

“The teachers have always been the highlight.” Year 5 child.

The governors asked why children might feel at home here at Menston Primary and one child answered - “You may be different, but everyone else is different too.”



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What have we done and what are we going to do in order to improve learning and playing even more?

1. We have introduced the Clamberstack climbing frame into the KS2 middle playground. This enhances both the playtime and lunchtime offer to children.
2. We have asked class teachers to review the way our older children are allocated to the different lunchtime activities and to ensure that children can see how these opportunities are helping them to learn new skills, to be comfortable when meeting and making new friends and how this is part of wider preparation for moving to high school.
3. We are exploring ways to enhance our quieter areas. This will include the building of a Polytunnel for gardening and the improvement of the area under the shelter next to the climbing wall.
4. We are setting up play and lunchtime "Buddy" systems which link year 6 to Foundation and let year 5 children be playground helpers in Key Stage 1.
5. We are continuing to expand the Jenby's programme which teaches children how to recognise and cope with stressful or anxious situations.
6. We are writing a Relationships Policy to set out how we will develop the children's ability to relate to each other in different contexts and we have started work on the 'All Together' programme which is provided by an organisation called 'The Anti-Bullying Alliance.' This will enable us to quality assure our systems and procedures for preventing and tackling any unwanted behaviour that might be perceived as bullying.
7. We are developing our curriculum so that it includes more science, art and practical opportunities and also so that it develops children's independence and their ability to work with different children and groups.
8. We have refurbished and redecorated the four classrooms around the Victorian hall to provide higher quality learning environments for children in years 5 and 6.
9. We have altered the layout of the Link toilets and cloakrooms adding large windows to let in more light and to improve safety and supervision in these areas.

Next year we plan to complete the refurbishment and redecoration of the Victorian hall and cloakrooms. This will complete a programme of improvement works which began over five years ago.

Governors are committed to providing a high quality learning environment for children which enables us to progress with higher standards, the development of STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) and outdoor learning. In doing so we will keep abreast of national and local developments in education and will continue to involve children and families in this development. I will write next week to report on the findings from the annual Parents' Questionnaire and how these are helping us to plan for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Iain Jones
Headteacher