

Annual Parent Survey 2026 - Specific comments and responses

Positive Comments	School Response / Context
Communication is extremely good. Teachers are brilliant.	Our tendency is to focus purely upon the things that are not working and offer explanation or solution. However, we thought it was important to put the positive comments as well. We really appreciate the time that you have taken to write these.
Overall, I think the school is an excellent one, all of the staff are helpful and pleasant and the ambience and general feel of the school is positive, in my experience. Plus of course the education provided is delivered in a child focused and an encouraging way, we have always been impressed by NWA.	
My child has settled in well at school and goes with a smile on her face and leaves with smile. Staff go above and beyond ! We are so proud of how much our daughter has achieved.	
I don't not feel there is any improvements to be made. I feel North Wootton Academy is a fantastic school	
I've been the most happy with the school this year especially because of our class teacher and the teaching assistants they've gone above and beyond to bring the best out of him.	
I think you're all amazing!!	
I love this school. My daughter loves coming to school. She gets upset if she thinks she is going to miss out on something, FOMO at its finest. Keep doing what you're doing, it's appreciated!	
Everything is fine	
A lovely school with a strong emphasis on behaviour and education and encouraging children to excel. Could be more emphasis on the children being more friendly and welcoming, encouraging kindness and playing together to make everyone feel part of the school.	
I cannot thank the school enough for all the support, care and understanding the school show my son.	
Thank you all the staff for their care and dedication.	
I really like being part of the school community - I find the staff friendly and approachable	

With many of these areas, there will be a divergence in the way families and school perceive things. Inevitably, we are looking from the perspective of 320 pupils, whilst families will be generally, and understandably, considering the needs of their own children at a higher priority. The purpose of our response is not to dismiss

the concern or appear defensive but to try and provide the context that may underpin the perception of what we do. We appreciate that this does not always come across that way in print.

Comments for clarification or improvement	School explanation or next steps
<p>Support within School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet Sen. Needs better • Daughter is struggling with writing I feel she needs more support • Also lack of TAs in my child's class to help with maths intervention. • Booster groups and more intervention before y6 for children falling behind 	<p>As noted in the general feedback, this boils down to staffing capacity. Taking away the 7 teaching assistants working in Reception or in a 1:1 setting due to safety, we are left with 7 support staff trying to cover the remaining 280 pupils, meeting the needs of a further 42 pupils with a registered SEND all of whom have specific targets, scores more who just find an area of learning tricky and the same number again where we are looking to extend, not to mention covering all lunch duties each day, dealing with pastoral issues etc.</p> <p>From my personal opinion (and many of the SEND advisors who regularly visit to support our school), my staff achieve 'magic' with what provision we have, but this is never going to be enough and we could always do more. As a school, we are looking to find creative ways to achieve this but as much of this support is bespoke to the child, this will always be restricted by the number of staff we have to achieve this. As noted, the great work that we do within the area of SEND is well-recognised by the Local Authority and they are looking to fund the school to increase this capacity, but there will still need to be prioritisation made which will inevitably leave some feeling under-supported.</p> <p>In regard to writing specifically, this is the hardest area to address as it is the most complex. It is the only subject area where teachers tend to be the only staff who address this and they obviously have the least time. Teachers are released for short periods every few weeks to work on this with specific children out of the lesson and it would be important to check if this is happening with your daughter. In addition, I am happy to meet to review your child's book and explain how you could potentially support her at home.</p> <p>Finally, with booster classes, every year group has booster sessions running every afternoon in all year groups, but again, there are only 7 adults running these for 280 pupils. In regard to the afterschool boosters, these are run voluntarily by the teachers as they fall outside contracted teaching hours. Totalling around 120 hours, this is already the equivalent of 4 additional weeks of teaching that my teachers and I provide unpaid. We do this in Year 6 predominantly as part of preparation for high school and a sense of urgency around educating our pupils as much as possible before they leave. However, if anything, this is unfortunately likely to decrease rather than increase as staff's time is increasingly pressured upon.</p>
<p>School Trips</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would be great to have more trips for the children, ones that support the curriculum and get them to see their local area more. • There is a big focus on cost and not wanting to put parents under additional financial pressure, 	<p>We totally acknowledge that there has been a decrease in trips for two main reasons: firstly, it comes back to staff. Depending upon pupil age, staff ratios for trips varies between 5:1 to 15:1 not including those in a 1:1 setting. An upcoming trip for 84 infants requires 18 adults. We are really strict in which adults we use as volunteers insisting that they are DBS checked and therefore, we are hugely fortunate that we have so many members of the PTA who are able to support us. Last year, staffing levels were so tight that this was almost impossible.</p>

<p>given the economic climate that is understandable. However, the school is located in one of the most desirable areas of King's Lynn and in comparison to South Wootton doesn't seem to have as many school trips, nativity opportunities. We would always be willing to pay for our child to do any of these. I just wanted to add this, as we understand the focus has to be on keeping things accessible for everyone but there also many parents and families at this school who are willing to pay for the children to do more.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I do think more school trips could be organised. My child is in year 2 and has only been on one school trip in reception (to Castle Rising). I think this is a shame as lots of local schools take children out on fun trips, especially during the warmer months. 	<p>The second reason is cost, it is hard to arrange a trip for less than £20 per pupil due to the price of coaches and we have to consider every family's budget. We will always pay for those who receive Pupil Premium funding, but we can equally not insist that everyone pays which is why we have the 90% rule for trips to go ahead. If 10 pupils do not pay in each phase per trip, this is £600 which then cannot be spent on a phonics programme or a booster session. It again comes down to what we see as the greater priority.</p> <p>That said, this year we will have taken 15 sport teams to competitions, Year ½ to Sandringham, ¾ to Gressenhall, 5/6 to town for a our Shakespeare performance, Year 6 to Crucial Crew and around 45 of them on a three-day residential, two choir outings, one foodbank visit, the whole of Key Stage 2 to the new town library and every year group will have completed a local fieldtrip around North Wootton. As a general rule, we will aim for one local and one further field trip per year, per primary phase.</p>
<p>Extended Care/Clubs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast club is expensive • The breakfast club, mainly on a Friday will often open late with no one there to unlock the gate at 7.45. This is a pain when needing to leave to get to work on time. • Making after school clubs easier or fairer to book! I've tried every time and haven't been successful once yet. Maybe a rule that if a child has already booked the same activity before, it goes to a child that hasn't yet done that activity? • More choice of activity clubs for those who aren't into sport. • Wider range of after school clubs - different ones each term. • If capacity allows, broaden opportunities for more children to become involved in or experience alternative lunchtime activities such as gardening/ eco clubs, performing arts, sing and sign, Lego etc. 	<p>As I noted in a recent newsletter, the current prices for this service were last set in 2021 and have been frozen for the last 5 years. During this period, the cost of staffing has increased significantly, with staff wages rising by approximately 25–30% and therefore, unfortunately, if anything costs may increase as this is an additional service and one that cannot be funded by an already stretched school budget. This said, the government has announced changes for September in which a part of breakfast club may become funded. However, at this point, it is very unclear as to how this would be possible as potentially we could have 300 pupils attend each morning which would be unsafe. We will be completing some consultation upon this shortly.</p> <p>In regard to clubs, we have tried to make this as fair as possible releasing these on a Monday at 4pm to try and avoid holidays, work hours etc. Whilst popular, generally only one or two are totally full and we therefore, only allow a pupil to do cooking club once a year to allow others the opportunity. We constantly review the clubs we run but as we have a full-time sport HLTA, this will predominate. However, we have listened to the feedback from this survey adding Lego and Computing Club in the last few years and try to change these termly to a degree. In addition, we will always be limited by the skills set of those available to run the clubs as well as their time to prepare the activities: craft club for example requires a considerable amount of time to plan and resource; this has to be a consideration also. Finally, we limit clubs for Reception children due to ratios. Within the EYFS class, we have a ratio of around 1:8 for good reason and this would not be financially viable to try to match this within most of our clubs, hence why we wait for the children to mature more.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the after school club football cannot be played outside can they not play it in the hall? Or do another activity rather than colouring in or a quiz (my 6 year old has no interest in this) we booked for the football not because I can't pick him up...last term we paid for after school football but it was hardly ever played so I may as well had picked him up. • Clubs for children in reception. 	<p>With the two more specific points around late gates and football sessions, with the former, I have spoken with the staff and try to attend before 7:45 and have not found this to be the case since. Whilst with the wet football sessions, most of the time we will try and get onto the playground unless very wet. On Friday, Mr Russell has no access to the halls and so was trying something different, but we will not be continuing with this activity moving forward.</p>
<p>Sport Provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think there needs to be a competitive sports day to prepare them for high school events. Even if you don't feel it's suitable for the lower school I think it needs to be considered to prepare them at KS2. • Be more competitive at sports day • The school is excellent all round and we are pleased with the education. There is little to critique in our opinion, but if pushed we would say the provision of sport could be changed/extended. Sending 5/6 year olds out of their sports lesson is a bit extreme and we believe there are better ways for the children to be engaged and disciplined in sport. There is a big increase in expectation in year 1 and the way the sport lessons have been held this year could be improved. Sport seems to be a bit of an afterthought but for a lot of children is a huge area of enjoyment and skill for them. It's a big part of our child's life and will be for the remainder of their education. This is the only area we can establish where this school differs from a private education. Overall, we are really pleased. • The recent Olympic event although exciting for the children the small print of the payment details shows that the percentage is given to the school post cost etc. it would be interesting to 	<p>This is a difficult one as I appreciate that we are coming from different perspectives as I have met with several parents to discuss this.</p> <p>For us, sport is one of the most important things in school as it directly supports our TEAMWORK values. Moreover, it is our opinion that we are one of the sportiest primary schools around based on the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We have received the Gold Sports Mark for quality PE provision for the last three years and been recognised as a county leader by external advisors whether it be Norfolk County Council or West Norfolk School Sport Partnership. - We were one of the first primary schools to have a full-time dedicated sport HLTA who provides over 25 hours of sport a week in various forms. This includes weekly and termly house competitions involving every pupil in school as well as one-to-one sessions for our higher need pupils. - Having a dedicated PE staff of three HLTAs 2 hours (or lessons) of dedicated PE time for every child in school, all of whom hold a professional qualification in teaching PE: Norfolk PE Competence Standards. - Taking over 200 participants to sporting events (15 out of school and 5 in school), winning a number of these and looking to extend opportunities by hosting Howard School on a termly basis, organising the Cluster Football competition and hosting the EMAT inter-school sports day. - Having multiple competitive sports on our playground and fields every day such as four-square, basketball and football, with the latter being refereed at all times as we want to promote that level of competitive sport in a controlled manner. <p>Therefore, we very much feel that we place a huge emphasis on competitive sport throughout the year and provide as many opportunities as possible for our 'sporty' and able pupils to shine. However, for our actual sports day, this is not the main purpose. This is a day in which we provide an event that all of our pupils can compete as a team and is not about celebrating individual sporting prowess. It is not about providing an opportunity for the best thrower, jumper etc. to beat their peers as this only serves to create an enjoyment of sport for a small minority of pupils and at the expense of everyone else. Obviously, we do the sprints in this</p>

<p>know what was originally raised by the school compared to what we have ended up receiving. Could we do our own fundraising event on this and potentially raise more money? Maybe a PTA options created alongside sports leaders?</p>	<p>format, but this is where children have chosen to participate, chosen to compete and therefore, have choice over being in a position to win or lose. This is why we feel there is a balance. Every event is still scored and the totals counted so we still feel this is a competition with overall winners and losers, as children need to understand these concepts also.</p> <p>This is a similar approach to other aspects of the school where we do not force every child to sing or dance solos in our performances as some may find this uncomfortable or embarrassing, particularly in front of two hundred adults. But we do ask them to sing in a choir where their individual talents cannot be judged. We view sports day in the same way, it is not about having a public event for those who are unconfident in their physical ability to be made, to put this on public display.</p> <p>After last year's feedback, we did survey all of the children to see what they thought of it in the autumn. 263 out of 280 enjoyed the day. Of those who did not 4 felt it was not proper sport and wanted it more competitive, 3 younger pupils did not like it because they found it embarrassing or scary being in front of all of the adults and the remaining did not like it because they got too hot and sweaty. Therefore, we do feel that our approach is beneficial to the majority of our children and ultimately, this is for the children and not the adults. This said, we reflect upon the comments again, particularly around preparation for high school and see if we can maybe add some additional events on a separate day.</p> <p>In regard to the two other points, sending Year 1 children out of lessons. We try to run PE lessons with few or no TAs as they can use this time to complete interventions with other pupils. This year, we have worked hard to ensure clear expectations around behaviour in PE lesson to enable this. However, we got this wrong in the first week of term with the Year 1s and they were not ready for this and this will not happen again. Finally, in relation to the Olympic athlete. The final figures were as follows £ 5,824 raised with a 60/40 split so that the school received £3,122 as a voucher to spend on sport equipment which we are doing this month. As I have said previously to parents, we were more interested in a free Olympian visit and had no idea that so much money would be raised. It was a great event and we do benefit massively, but we will not repeat this for at least 2 years as we try to carefully consider how much we are asking for money. We may well run a similar event internally next year but not for donations as we are already hugely fortunate to have such a successful PTA and calendar of events.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I feel strongly that there is too much pressure on year 3 with regard to answering times tables questions under time pressure. Speed should come once learning is embedded not at the start of year 3. This approach really knocked my child's confidence. For me this is the age they should transition to become fluent readers 	<p>We would totally agree that reading is always the priority and this is why we continue to set expected reading homework throughout the entire school. The majority of our children achieve a 'free reader' level as they leave Year 2. However, just as the focus on phonics is so important at Year 1 in order to achieve this a year later, we do turn our attention to times tables in $\frac{3}{4}$ as this knowledge is fundamental for understanding a huge part of the mathematics that follows in Year 4-6. Within the classes themselves, there is not a huge amount of timed practice, maybe only in Maple as the Year 4 pupils have a timed national assessment to prepare for. Therefore, I can only assume that this is on TT Rockstars. Genuinely, the timed element is supposed to make it</p>

<p>which is a vital life skill, this should be the top priority and has become lost amongst everything else. I had to taper in the homework for my child at the start of the year myself as it was overwhelming. He can now manage the quantity required with some support, but it would have been more productive in the long run for school to have built it up gradually over the first term. Overall my child is very happy at school and I feel that if I were to raise a concern it would be received well and dealt with properly.</p>	<p>fun and there are various settings where this can be removed if families prefer. We have reflected however, on the jump from KS1 to KS2 in regard to homework and have begun to alter this for September.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was disappointed to hear during the nativity play that no other year groups do a Christmas play or class play of any sort before year 6. I do understand that it takes time out of the timetable to prepare a class assembly but it would have been great to see my child take part in something like this, before they were in year 6. 	<p>We complete a Nativity in Reception, run a Shakespeare festival in Year 5 and a Nativity service and end of year performance in Year 6. With each of these, there is around 20-25 hours of lesson time dedicated to this. Learning time is precious and school is all about competing priorities, therefore, we believe 80-100 hours is the right amount of time to dedicate to this part of school at specific times that impact the children's learning the least.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication with the office and teachers could be better, making parents feel more included and comfortable. As a parent who can't always get into the office or speak to teachers I rely on communication via email which sometimes hasn't always been great. • Communication between parents and class teachers. Only find out child needs support with school work during parents evening. We would like to be informed as soon as there is a concern so we can address this. We understand teacher cannot always have time but meeting should be arranged outside of hours or 2 mins allowed at pick up time. • More regular newsletters At parents evenings, have available all books from the year so parents can see progress • Communicate with Sen parents more regularly. 	<p>Communication with teachers is difficult as almost all of their directed (contracted) time is used for teaching the children. All teachers should be available for 10 minutes at the end of the school day once the children have been released and I am available before and after school for 20 minutes to discuss issues and then follow these up with the teachers.</p> <p>I appreciate that this is difficult for families whose working hours are outside of these times which is why we do encourage you to email the office. To my knowledge, we do get back to you normally within 24 hours, certainly, if you ask for me to be included within the email chain.</p> <p>With Parent Teacher Meetings, we can put all of the books out as we are very proud of these. It is more the logistics of teaching a class until 3:15 and getting potentially 15 x 10 books sorted into named piles by a 3:30 start. It is something that we will try to do however moving forward.</p> <p>More specifically with discussing major concerns around your child, all of my teachers understand the expectation around not waiting until a parent teacher meeting. We cannot keep you updated on every slight area of weakness but I would encourage you to challenge my staff if this is around a major issue and why this has not been shared earlier.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would like to be able to get hold of the teacher easily. • Communicate with both parents. I've spoken to several parents and it only seems to be mum's who get the email so I don't think I'm the only one. Dad would also like to be included. I don't want to be left organising everything and taking the mental load alone. It's not in his junk and he's details are the same. I have already raised this with staff so it can hopefully be sorted. 	<p>With regard to SEN pupils, this is exactly why we have pulled your sessions out of the normal parent teacher evenings to ensure you have a longer period to discuss your child's learning with the teacher in line with national recommendations. Should this be insufficient in time, families can ask to book another meeting through the office. However, we try to limit planned sessions to 3 x 20 minute meeting per child (plus an additional hour for those with EHCP) as some classes have 10+ pupils on the SEND register, which together with the planned sessions for the remainder of their class, could total around 24 hours of parental meetings a year for some classes. There is a limit around the hours a teacher works and I have to ensure that this is fairly balanced.</p> <p>Finally, with the newsletter, I feel a monthly one is enough to get key information and more importantly dates across, knowing that we communicate most things through emails and termly phase leader letters.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrepancies between expectations within Year groups/ year group teachers in the lower years regarding homework and behavioural expectations • Address disruptive behaviour that can occur in classrooms. 	<p>There should be the same expectations within each phase directed by the phase leader and the joint planning time that is given to the teachers. Potentially, within the lower years, there is some differences in expectation as the Year 1s have to be treated slightly differently to Year 2 especially in that first term. However, this is something we have looked at this year especially in regard to reading and will continue to explore.</p> <p>From my perspective, we have excellent behaviour and this is down to the work around consistent expectations and behaviour management strategies. I have personally completed 66 parent tours this year, walking through every class at random parts of the day and almost always there is a comment around how calm and controlled each classroom is. This is not to say that all of our pupils sit silently listening for 6 hours a day. Naturally, there is constant management of behaviour and therefore, I can understand that families hearing that the same names being mentioned each day can have the impression of classes being overrun. However, the reality is some children need constant direction every 5 minutes for a variety of reasons – we would not see this as disruptive behaviour but us teaching children to learn. Moreover, we have a very clear system of 3 warnings that would aim to remove pupils into a parallel class or myself, when pupils are ever really struggling to settle into their learning, precisely to manage any potential impact.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled parking can be an issue 	<p>We do appreciate that it is impossible to access our disabled parking spaces but we are required to have the driveway locked between 8:30-9:00 and 3:00-3:30 due to this also being an access route.</p>