

FEEDBACK FROM PARENTAL CONSULTATION ON SFL IN KINGSWELLS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Thank you very much to parents who took the time to write individual responses within the Parental Consultation to Support For Learning. Each response was valued, and provided very useful information to us in our efforts to improve the service and construct a modernised SFL policy for Kingswells Primary School.

Below is a summary of some of the most important points parents made in their responses, with some additional information from the school below each point.

1. All parents who responded had a positive attitude to the opportunity SFL provides for their children.

The school is delighted that parents have a progressive and welcoming approach to their children receiving SFL.

2. Parents felt that SFL should be provided on a specific needs basis, with all children in the school to be considered for selection in each school year.

School policy will confirm this. SFL is for any pupil, whenever it is recognised they need it. Class teachers have the opportunity to make new referrals to the SFL teacher at any time or to ask for advice.

3. Most parents who responded felt that SFL had been valuable and had worked well for their children, helping improve confidence and important skills in reading, writing and spelling.

Several parents thanked Mrs. Donovan, our previous SFL teacher, for the good work she had done with their children over the last few years.

4. Parents felt it very important that staff were well trained in specialised areas of pupil support (eg: dyslexia).

In recent years presentations have been made to school staff, after school and during In Service Days, on conditions such as autism, Downs' Syndrome and ADHD. Many staff members have undertaken extra specific training on a voluntary basis to improve and update their skills and qualifications.

5. Parents commented on the excellent quality of work done by Pupil Support Assistants at Kingswells Primary School to support young learners.

Pupil Support Assistants have been given discussion time with class teachers early in the school session, to ensure each PSA has a good understanding of the most significant barriers to learning in their assigned class(es), and to also ensure PSAs know which children are most in need of support in each block of the school day.

6. Some parents felt that the process of diagnosis and referral for SFL lacked clarity and was more biased towards literacy than numeracy.

If your child is receiving SFL in term one of this session you will already have received a note in a sealed envelope informing you of the subject areas in which the support will be provided. Any new referrals thereafter will be communicated to parents in the same way, sometimes with an advance telephone call if appropriate. Parents should assume the support will be on going throughout the session unless they receive a note or call to indicate the reason why the support has stopped.

7. Some parents pointed out their concerns that withdrawing children from their class for SFL could lead to their child feeling excluded from whole class activities and uncertain about their role when returning to class.

This is a legitimate concern shared by the school staff. As far as is possible, SFL sessions will be timetabled to coincide with when pupils would be working on the same subject in class (eg: SFL maths timetabled for when the class do maths). In a large primary school however, timetabling logistics make it impossible to guarantee this in every case.

Interestingly, when we asked P4-7 pupils who receive SFL on their views recently, a slight majority preferred to come out of class for SFL, usually because they could concentrate better in more quiet, isolated surroundings.

Decisions on whether an SFL group work in the class area or the SFL area will be taken by the class teacher and SFL teacher on a flexible basis, depending on the circumstances of each situation.

8. Many parents who responded felt that the communication process between school and parents in relation to SFL was not thorough enough: some parents did not always know if their child was receiving SFL, and that updated information about their child's progress and how to help at home was lacking.

The school accepts that most of the criticisms regarding poor communication are valid and that improvements are required. Mr. Glennie, SFL teacher, will leave spaces in his timetable most Wednesdays for parents of children with SFL to call the school for updates on progress or pop in for prearranged meetings.

He will also organise sporadic workshops, such as the recent ones on phonics and letter formation, and contribute to curriculum evenings to help parents feel more confident in supporting aspects of their child's learning at home in the years ahead.

9. Some parents indicated that they would like more information about what SFL actually is at an earlier stage, highlighting the need for a clear, up to date SFL policy available to all pupils.

A new SFL policy, using feedback from pupils, parents, teachers and support staff will be made available to all parents later in the session.