

## Ofsted parent view - The importance of parental engagement

The 'Governance handbook' makes clear the importance of the school board ensuring there is a process in place which enables the board to listen, understand and respond to parents, and to remain accountable to them. The handbook also emphasises the importance of governors ensuring that open and transparent opportunities and processes exist for parents to share their views on their child's education. This enables informed decision-making from the school board based on the perspectives and opinions of diverse sources:

*'Effective boards are well-informed about, and respond to, the views and needs of key stakeholders, particularly parents and carers. They enable productive relationships, creating a sense of trust and shared ownership of the organisation's strategy, vision and operational performance.'*

A competency framework for governance, DfE (2017) page 11

Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted parent view, provides parents with the opportunity to share their views on 14 areas of school life. Ofsted has consulted with parents on what they want to know about schools, with inspectors on the information they want to know, and with school leaders to ensure they receive feedback that will be useful for them.

During an inspection, the inspector will ask the head teacher to write to parents informing them of the inspection and inviting them to share their views on Ofsted parent view ahead of and during the inspection initially by 11am on day 1 and at the latest by 12noon on day 2. During an inspection, parents also have the opportunity to share any additional comments with inspectors via a text box that can be found at the end of the Ofsted parent view questionnaire. These comments are not published and are only used by inspectors as part of the information used to form their judgement on the school.

The inspection team will consider and weigh up the responses from Ofsted parent view alongside other forms of evidence they look at during the inspection process and use this to make their overall judgement of the school.

### Ofsted parent view questions

Ofsted's Ofsted parent view gives parents the opportunity to share their views on 14 areas of the school's performance and choose for each statement whether they:

- Strongly agree.
- Agree.
- Disagree.
- Strongly disagree.
- Say they don't know.

The 14 areas that Ofsted seeks parents' views on are:

- My child is happy at this school.
- My child feels safe at this school.
- The school makes sure its pupils are well behaved.
- My child has been bullied and the school dealt with the bullying quickly and effectively – parents are able to select the response 'My child has not been bullied'.
- The school makes me aware of what my child will learn during the year.

- When I have raised concerns with the school, they have been dealt with properly – parents are able to select the response ‘I have not raised any concerns’.
- Does your child have SEND? – if yes, the survey asks parents how strongly they agree with this statement: ‘My child has SEND, and the school gives them the support they need to succeed.’
- The school has high expectations for my child.
- My child does well at this school.
- The school lets me know how my child is doing.
- There is a good range of subjects available to my child at this school.
- My child can take part in clubs and activities at this school.
- The school supports my child’s wider personal development.
- I would recommend this school to another parent (yes or no answer required).

### **Making Ofsted parent view work for your school**

Ofsted parent view is often only in focus at the time of an inspection, but it is available as a tool to gain parental feedback throughout the academic year, which we expect TPA schools to utilise.

Ofsted are able to provide schools with group logins for collecting Ofsted parent view results at events such as parents’ evenings. Schools should request guest logins within 5 working days of any planned event by emailing Ofsted at [parentview.queries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:parentview.queries@ofsted.gov.uk) and should ensure the school’s security network is adapted to remove any block to restrict access to the site.

Governors should make certain that it is used to its full potential.

Once ten responses have been submitted to Ofsted parent view, Ofsted will publish the responses received and will continue to publish responses as they are submitted. Schools can sign up to receive an alert each time a response is received or elect to receive a weekly or monthly update instead. Knowing when a response has been submitted can help the school to identify if there is an issue that a parent is dissatisfied with or concerned about. It is likely that unprompted responses are in response to a specific concern or a parent being dissatisfied with an issue. Knowing the point in time that these are submitted can aid the head teacher to sensitively address issues by exploring with the leadership team any circumstances that may have given rise to the feedback received.

Head teachers will provide regular updates on the number of responses received on Ofsted parent view and any trends in feedback submitted. Governors should then be prepared to ask questions about any emerging trends.

Governors should consider questions that will identify if any trends are indicative of a wider concern. For example, if there is a rise in parents disagreeing or strongly disagreeing that the school makes sure that children are well behaved, this may be indicative of an increase in poor behaviour in school. Similarly, if parents’ feedback is that they don’t know if they receive valuable information about their child’s progress, this may suggest that parents are not fully aware of the information available to them or do not understand the information they receive. Governors should seek to understand the reason for any trends and have confidence that a plan will be implemented to address this.

## **Increasing responses on Ofsted parent view**

As well as using the feedback submitted to Ofsted parent view at the time of an inspection, Ofsted also uses the feedback as part of their risk assessment process. Therefore, it is important that governors make certain that the feedback submitted is broad and balanced and reflects the views of the whole school community and not a select, dissatisfied few.

Ofsted have made the Ofsted parent view logo available to all schools, with a hyperlink that takes parents directly to the Ofsted parent view page.

Here are some simple yet effective questions that governors can ask to monitor if schools are doing all they can to increase the number of responses submitted to Ofsted parent view:

- Is the Ofsted parent view logo easy to find on the school's website to gain maximum opportunity for feedback?
- Are parents provided with clear instructions as to how to register on the site and how to complete the form?
- Are parents provided with additional information about the school's Complaints Procedures Policy should they have a complaint or concern that they would like to raise?
- Does the school regularly post reminders to parents to share their feedback on Ofsted parent view, including a link back to the page on the school website where the link to Ofsted parent view can be found?
- Are 'thankyou' messages posted to acknowledge feedback submitted and encourage others to share their feedback?
- Are soundbites of feedback shared on social media in order to promote the positive feedback received? For example, "X% of parents strongly agree that their children feel safe at this school".

Schools communicate with parents in many different ways and at different times. Governors should ask how these communications systems are used to promote Ofsted parent view.

Are resources, such as laptops and tablets, always available to be used at school events to encourage feedback being submitted to Ofsted parent view?

How often is the school newsletter used to promote the use of Ofsted parent view, share trends in responses and outline the action the school is planning to take to address any feedback given?

Has consideration been given to providing translation support for parents for whom English is not their first language?

## **Analysing and using the results**

Once the school board is satisfied that there is a robust strategy in place for promoting Ofsted parent view to ensure balanced feedback is received, governors should turn their attention to making certain that the feedback received is analysed and used to gain a positive impact.