

8th April 2022

Dear Horizon families and friends,

As we near the end of the spring term it is a time to contact you directly, giving you some updates and also sharing some key information with you. In our letter to you this term we have some of the headlines from the Parent survey that many of you completed at the end of last term and some introductions to members of our Horizon team. Thank you for taking the time to complete the parent survey, we really do value your feedback and do make developments in light of this.

Once again it has been a busy term in school with our leaders and teachers ensuring the best quality of education. When I have been visiting schools, I have seen children in all of our schools engaged in learning, eager to share what they are learning and talk about what they have learned. In our next newsletter in the summer term, we will have an update from each school.

You are all aware of the remaining challenges of COVID-19 and the impact this is having in schools, and in life in general. Our leaders have done an outstanding job this term juggling staff around to ensure that all children are receiving the best education. This has been a very difficult and I am sure you join with me in thanking all the staff in schools for being so flexible, ensuring we keep each year group open. We would like to thank you for working with the schools and adhering to the guidance, we know how difficult this has been. It is remarkable that we have only had to close two nurseries for a short period of time this term. Linked to COVID I want to give you the most up to date guidance we have and the guidance we will be following once we return after the Easter break. We will be following the UK Health Security Agency guidance.

New guidance came into force on the 1st April, and this guidance states:-

- adults with the symptoms of a respiratory infection, and who have a high temperature or feel unwell, should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people until they feel well enough to resume normal activities and they no longer have a high temperature.
- children and young people who are unwell and have a high temperature should stay at home and avoid contact with other people. They can go back to school, college or childcare when they no longer have a high temperature, and they are well enough to attend.
- adults with a positive COVID-19 test result should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 5 days, which is when they are most infectious. For children and young people aged 18 and under, the advice will be 3 days.

Like you, we are unable to order any of the free LFD testing kits and will be asking our teams to follow the above guidance, I am sure your schools will have communicated this with you. In addition to this we will maintain our high levels of hygiene. We will continue to encourage the children to regularly wash their hands, use hand sanitiser when needed, and also cover their mouths when sneezing, coughing etc. The schools will maintain the high levels of cleaning at regular intervals.

If children are unwell, we urge them to stay at home. The guidance clearly states that children should stay off school if they have a high temperature and feel unwell and can return once their temperature drops. If we receive more specific guidance your schools will communicate this with you.

Introduction to some of the new members of the Horizon family... Welcome...



Tom Sargeant – I first came to Pomphlett as a trainee teacher during my PGCE, on the back of several months out of schools due to the pandemic. Having had my previous placement cancelled, Pomphlett stepped in to let me continue my practice when no other school would. To say that I was grateful would be an understatement! Despite having my confidence shot, and being extremely nervous after such a delay, I was made to feel welcome and comfortable in the school from day one.

I could tell almost immediately that the ethos of the school matched my own, and I knew that I wanted to be part of the team. During my PGCE, my colleagues and the children of the school helped me to develop every single day. Since then, I have worked as an intervention teacher in KS2, before attaining a full-time position with

my own year 5 class this year. I feel extremely fortunate and proud to have a job that I enjoy coming to every day. It isn't a stretch to say that my entire teaching career so far has become what it is thanks to Pomphlett and I wouldn't have it any other way!



Ed Carr - The Early Careers Teachers' course has been beneficial to my teaching in several ways. Firstly, the seminars (twice a month) are informative and interactive, they encourage me to apply my already known knowledge into conversations with my peers on the course to further develop my experience working in a classroom setting and how to provide a positive education to my children.

Secondly, I have access to a resource called 'Brightspace'. Brightspace is where all my work-based training and assignments will be. The training provides videos from different educational workers in a variety of roles across education. These videos and assignments also help me develop my pedagogy.

Thirdly, my school are great at supporting my development as a ECT by allowing me ECT time where I can work on these assignments and training but also allow me time to undertake observations of other teachers in my setting to watch and learn from experienced teachers in the education system. I also know that when I am learning something new that I may be unfamiliar with my Hyde Park team will all support me and give me advice and guidance without hesitation. Hyde Park is a lovely place to work because of the collaboration and general care within the team.



Vicky Broughton - I started as Headteacher of Widewell Primary Academy in September 2021. I have worked in schools in Devon and Cornwall for over 20 years and during this time I have had many teaching and leadership responsibilities. Prior to joining Widewell, I was the Deputy Head Teacher of a maintained, two form entry school in Plymouth.

I feel privileged to be part of the Learning Board of Horizon Multi Academy Trust and am proud to work collaboratively with the schools across the Trust.

There are many other new members of the team, and we welcome them to the Horizon family. There will be time to meet more of the team in our next newsletter.

Meet two of our Chairs of local governors...



Kevin Cockram - I am currently the Chair of Governors for Plaistow Hill School after returning in 2013 when my grandchildren started to attend school following my own children who attended over 30 years ago.

I have a personal passion and love for the school in helping and supporting the governing body, with the dedicated staff and Trust of a school in the continuing delivery of the educational standards that our children deserve.

A school that our continuing success as a governing body can be proud of and a school which remains so well respected in our local community.



Sue Shelley - I have been Chair of Hooe LGB since Autumn 2020 – an interesting time to take on the role as I am sure you will agree! I retired from my role as Education adviser in 2019 and wanted to 'give something back' as they say. I do enjoy the role immensely, but it has been, and continues to be, a steep learning curve! The more I learn, the more I realize that my starting point may well have been one of unconscious incompetence.

I have appreciated the range of support available. When I began, the Trust and DfE governance handbooks were really useful to refer to, and I still use these. Online training sessions and training opportunities from within the Trust have been invaluable, including the recent Ofsted session and

the LGB sessions led by Maria our CEO. But I think the learning I have gleaned from other Chair colleagues in our Chairs' Hub meetings has helped probably the most; it is so good to listen and share good practice – and ask those questions which sometimes can seem to be too simple. Our LGB work together as a real team, and I appreciate their commitment.

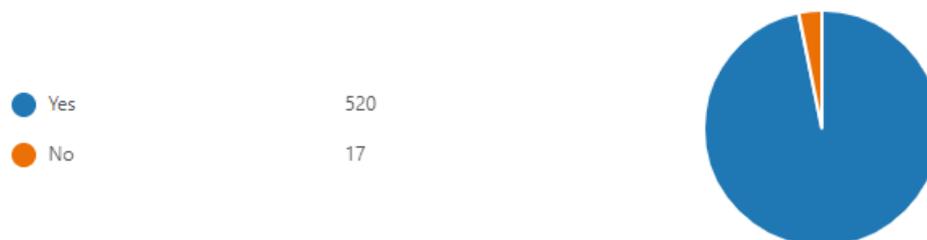
In spite of Covid, we have managed to build a good working relationship with each other and with our school team. It has been good to get back to meeting 'in person' and to look forward to having lunch with the staff at the end of term. I have great admiration for Kate our HT; how she keeps all those plates spinning is amazing! We meet regularly (often weekly!) and I hope that she sees me as her critical friend; we each believe that our good working relationship is key.

I realize that the role of chair is not something to be taken on lightly; you have to be committed. I do sometimes ask myself, 'What retirement...?'

As a trust we have eight highly committed governing bodies who take on this role voluntarily. We really value and thank them for their time that enables them to carry out their role effectively in our nine schools. It has been very challenging for them over the last two years as they have been unable to visit the schools in the way they would have planned or wanted. These visits have started again and throughout the lockdowns the governors continued to meet with leaders and staff at the school. On behalf of the trust board, we would like to thank them for all they do for our schools and for challenging and supporting our schools ensuring we are doing the best for our children. If you are interested in becoming a governor, please do get in touch as we are looking for people who have range of skills and knowledge to work with the trust.

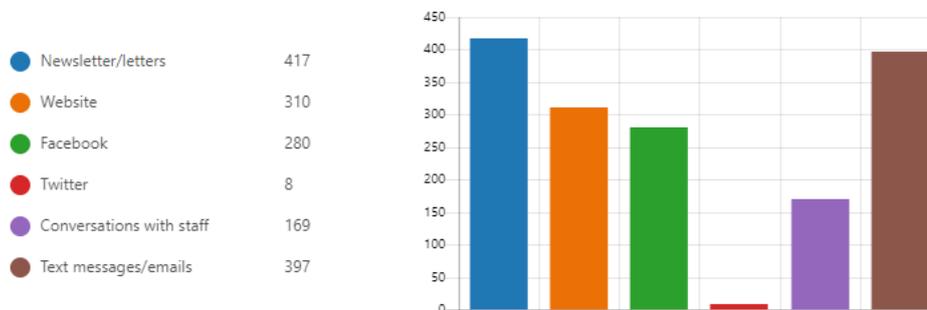
Parent survey- key messages...

I know where to find information about my child's school?



Our schools' have shared key information on where to find information about our schools with you. This varies in each school, the majority of the key information about the school is on the school website. Please do ask the school if you need something and you are not sure where to find it.

I get information about the school from the following. You may choose more than one option.



We know some feedback received has linked to the fact some parents feel they receive too much information from different places. Schools are simplifying this in response to your feedback. So, we hope this will make it easier for you.

My child is happy at this school?

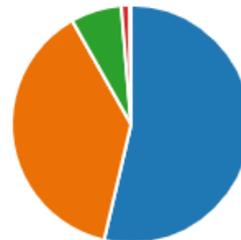
Strongly agree	277
Agree	209
Neutral	37
Disagree	12
Strongly disagree	2



Linked to this one point and the following one, as a trust we would want all children to feel happy and safe at our schools. We have been able to see where this is the case, or isn't and follow up with individual schools. Some children have struggled with staff wearing face masks- so in some places this has affected them feeling happy. In some others this has linked with issues with one of two friends. We have been able to look further into these elements as strive for this to be 100% happy and safe.

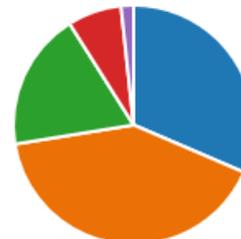
My child feels safe at this school?

Strongly agree	288
Agree	205
Neutral	37
Disagree	6
Strongly disagree	1



The school makes me aware of what my child will learn during the year?

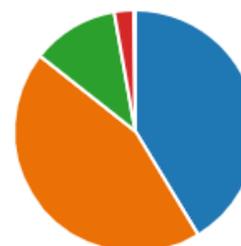
Strongly agree	169
Agree	220
Neutral	100
Disagree	39
Strongly disagree	9



Our teaching teams have been reflecting on these points and trying to ensure you have an overview of your child's learning on a termly basis. On each school website there is a section on the curriculum- for many of our schools this is being developed further, as they continue to review the progression of each subject from foundation to year 6. I know the school teams have found it difficult not being able to carry out parent meetings in person and share the children's books with you. If this has not already happened at your school this will be taking place soon so you can really see what they are learning and celebrate with your child all their hard work.

My child does well at this school?

Strongly agree	222
Agree	238
Neutral	62
Disagree	14
Strongly disagree	1



It is good to see that the vast majority of parents feel that their child does well at their school- we again would want this to be 100%. If you do not feel your child is doing well at the school, please do work with the school on this. It is critical that all of our children do as well as possible, having the best, richest and ambitious learning experiences fully

preparing them for their move to secondary school. We want to get this right together, and we do for the vast majority but we want to for all.

In the parent survey some of you stated that you did not know how to find information about Horizon. The trust has its own website that has key information. The web address of this is www.horizonmat.com. We have core ambitions as a trust, these are outlined below...

We are

Nine successful schools reflecting the diversity that is the city of Plymouth.

Schools with a proven record of raising school achievement.

Determined to raise standards.

Committed to collaborative working.

We are committed to

Excellence in all our schools.

Achieving the best outcomes and experiences for our pupils.

A motivated and well trained workforce.

Strong collaboration and sharing of expertise.

Retaining and celebrating the unique ethos and nature of each school.

Our Ambitions are

For all schools to be rated Good and aspiring to Outstanding.

To reflect the diversity of Plymouth, learning from and celebrating the differences of each school.

For all pupils to have broad, balanced and enriched opportunities.

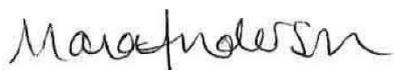
For all schools to aspire for attainment measures above national averages and positive progress indicators.

Due to the significant change in leadership in the trust over the last two years, with myself as CEO and a considerable number of new Headteachers and trustees, we are in the process of reviewing the Trust vision, values and mission. As part of this development, we will be sharing this with stakeholders as we progress this to ensure we all own it and feel it reflects our current position. Horizon is one organisation with a family of nine schools, all being committed to securing the best education for our 2300 children, from 2 years old to 11 years old.

Just to finish I would like to thank you all for your support of our school teams throughout the term. I know they are all very positive about being able to start the process of welcoming you all back into the schools. We know this has been difficult over the last two years and thank you for your patience and understanding.

I hope that you all have a wonderful break with your families over the Easter period and we look forward to seeing your children back in school later in the month.

Yours sincerely,



Maria Anderson
CEO