

# TANFIELD LEA COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

## PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

January 2017

Thank you to everyone who completed the questionnaire for us. The first part was done on Parent View and if you wish to view the responses there (which were extremely positive) then you would need to log on to Parent View and put in our school name – the link is <https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk>

We also asked for responses to some specific questions. The information and feedback we received is recorded in this document.

There are many things which make you proud that your child/children attend here – we really appreciated reading them and feel that the comments celebrate much that makes our school so good.

We asked parents specifically if there was one thing they'd like to change about our school what would it be, and why – this is question 6 on this document. Our school leadership team have looked at these ideas and our responses can be seen in green.

Thanks for taking time to read this document.

### GENERAL QUESTIONS requesting a Yes/No response

1.	Can you confirm that you have completed the 12 questions on line via Parent View?		
	Yes 43	No 4	N/A1
2.	Do you access twitter?		
	Yes 10	No 38	
3.	Are you one of our followers on twitter? <b>@TanfieldPrimary</b>		
	Yes 9 N/.A 6	No 33	
4.	If we were able to offer child care after school would you be interested in accessing this? (There would be a charge if we were able to offer this type of provision.)		
	Yes 28	No 13	Blank 3
5.	<p><b>What do you think makes our school special and therefore makes you proud that your child/children attend here? (please continue on the other side)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendly village school. Teachers and staff are all friendly, approachable. All round good environment for teaching and learning (Y3)</li> <li>• Friendly supportive atmosphere. Planned opportunities are in the best interests of the children – not just in terms of academic opportunities but wider opportunities too. (Residentials, music tuition, clubs, school council, events e.g. family bike ride) (Y1 and Y5)</li> <li>• Visible Head Teacher who is always available and knows what is going on in school (YR and PS)</li> <li>• We love the focus and importance given to the outdoor play. Our kids love it and I think it is so important. It helps keep them healthy as it keeps them moving and it helps with their imaginations and learning (Y1 and Y5)</li> <li>• The outdoor grounds and OPAL play are unique to the school and our children benefit hugely from this. All teachers are approachable and spend the time to get to know your child. As a parent that is reassuring and gives both of us confidence in the knowledge that our children are very well looked after during school hours (Y1 and Y3)</li> </ul>		

- Having the staff that always help and keep my child happy to go to school to learn when he does. They always keep us informed with progress (Rec)
- Good home/school links (Rec)
- Excellent staff and Head Teacher – it is well governed and it's clear how much staff care and strive for good results (Rec)
- My daughter loves the OPAL outdoor play area. Her Mum and I love to see the enthusiasm and professionalism shown by all staff. Thank you. (Y3)
- Friendly and welcoming atmosphere (Y5)
- The school is fantastic. I attended there myself as a pupil and felt happy there. (Y5)
- The school feels like a family. The staff know the children well and take an interest in them. Positive behaviour is celebrated and children are encouraged to be caring and supportive of one another (Y1 and Y4)
- Both of my children seem happy at school and enjoy attending school. Happy kids = Happy Parents. Any issues I have had the class teacher has been available for me to discuss my concerns, friendly staff who were approachable and made me feel welcome in school, so if this is how my children are treated I am happy (Rec and Y2)
- The encouragement they both receive regarding learning is excellent. Lots of positive praise is given. My children speak highly of their teachers and both have good relationships with them, making their school days enjoyable (Y2 and Y6)
- The school is a very parent family friendly school and ensures that parents are kept informed and are involved in their child's education. My daughter feels happy and safe at the school and is progressing well with her education which is partly down to how comfortable she feels with the teachers and staff. Everyone is very approachable and friendly which makes it easier for her to speak up and get involved and gain in confidence (Y6)
- Am very proud that all 4 of my children got accepted into this school. They have been offered a lot of help and a lot of support through certain things. School is very understanding and everybody is easy to get on with. (Y2 and Y4)
- Tanfield Lea Community Primary School is a very friendly school with fabulous teachers and support staff. My daughter is really happy and has made excellent progress. The OPAL is also a very special addition to school life. (Y2)
- I attended this school when younger. I always hear good words about it. I am proud for my children attending as the teaching skills have paid off with my children. They are coming on great with their learning and I can see the difference from pre-school to reception. I like the fact that the pre-school is there for children as it does make a big difference for helping children move on to reception and I get to know about how children (PS/Rec)
- The staff really know my son as an individual and take the time to address any concerns which arise. We are kept well informed about school events and about his progress. Our son loves coming to school and we have seen a huge amount of progress in the very short space of time he has been attending Pre-School (PS)
- My son has settled into pre-school very comfortably. He speaks highly of his teachers and loves to tell me stories of his day and about his class mates. On particular quality about the school is that it identified and acknowledged the importance of the transition period for when my son started pre-school, the tools used within school such as the introductory days for parents to visit with their child and the use of photos messages to parents of their children settling in all helped to alleviate parental worries/anxieties (PS)
- The effort made to understand each child's likes and interests. My son comes home talking about his day and the friends he has made, including Mrs Watson (PS)
- Outstanding staff. Great facilities for the children (PS)
- Fantastic teachers and teaching assistants. Good communication. My son is very happy and therefore it is easier to learn (Rec)
- My child comes home from school every day happy and therefore I am happy too. I know she is receiving all the help, support and care she needs as an individual. Also this school has been very understanding with all of my child's hospital appointments during the school day. I am very happy that she attends Tanfield Lea Community Primary School. (Rec)
- Both of our children attend and have had nothing but positive experiences. It is a well run school with excellent

teachers and community spirit. Our children always come home happy and are making great progress (Rec and Y3)

- Very good level of teaching resources available to allow small group work (ie. Phonics etc) here children need it. Reading levels are able most schools in my experience. Teachers are always there when needed and listen! Excellent head which flows through the school. (Y4)
- Every visit to the school I see Miss Hemmings visible and talking to the children, knowing them all by name (from family experience with other schools, this is not always the case). The children always seem happy and from assemblies I have attended for various occasions there is always interaction. My children feel valued at school and that is important to me, feeling inclusive of the environment they spend the majority of their time in. (Y3 and Y6)
- The sense of 'community' is strong. The positive ethics and culture of the school. The fact that pupils are treated as individuals and are encouraged to grow in confidence, responsibility and independence by the staff. The behaviour of pupils when visiting the school and when walking to school is great. The excellent support given by "Friends of Tanfield" particularly in relation to part funding trips and supporting events. (Y5)
- I feel that teachers are very helpful and easy to get along with (Y6)
- Fantastic teaching staff, great learning environment e.g. OPAL play etc. Our son really enjoys coming to school and learning (Y2)
- My children are very happy at school. There are a variety of activities after school. My children have improved at maths for going to the Breakfast Club (Y3 and Y6)
- Pushes my son to do well and work hard. All children around school always seem to be polite (Rec)
- My child attends this school because it's the local school to our area (Rec)
- Impressed with the monitoring and tracking systems that are in place to allow levels of progress to be effectively monitored; intervention strategies that can be put in curriculum time to enable individual development to continue in delivered topics (PS and Y1)
- Amazing for hitting targets and understanding each child's individual needs (Y1)
- Good opportunity to learn new skills by playing on OPAL. Learning the art of negotiation and debating during the building of structures. Encourages all children to get involved (Y4)
- The teachers are very easy to talk to and very approachable if there are any concerns. Also the OPAL is excellent and my children love being outside
- The small village that the school is in has a great community spirit. Teachers and assistants are always happy to help. My child has not had a single day he didn't want to attend and that just proves how much he enjoys his time at Tanfield Lea. Great work! (Y2)
- The support my child receives in school. She feels fully supported in class and knows there is someone there to help her when needed. (Y1)
- I feel that the teachers/staff have a good relationship with the children which carries on throughout the time they are there. This is a very positive point for II. The school encourages all children to be independent and has a good anti-bullying scheme (Y4)
- I love the OPAL play. The boys love getting messy (Y1 and Y2)
- I attended Tanfield School. It's always been a brilliant school. Teachers are fantastic and all the children are great at achieving. (Y1)
- *Nothing as yet as my daughter has spent most of her time to and from school distressed (Rec)*
- The community feel. The outdoor space (OPAL). The 'safe' feeling. Having a child upset that she can't go on a weekend. Having a child happy to attend and learn. How far my daughter has come in 5 months! (Rec)
- Good outdoor facilities, allows to learn at different levels (Y1)
- My daughter has a good bond with her teachers and I feel this is showing in her progress. (Rec)
- My daughter enjoys the school and likes to talk about each teacher about what they do to help her throughout the day. Good reports always a benefit when placing my child in school (Rec)
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6. **If there was one thing you could change about our school, what would it be and why?**

**There were a few suggestions around After School Care:-**

- Appropriate wrap around care for full time working parents (at a charge). Parent Evenings after work hours.  
AND
- No changes but an after school club would be beneficial. Also activity clubs for reception children AND
- After School club for working parents AND
- After School club and holiday clubs AND
- To offer after school club would be a huge advantage as a working parent

**The school will also investigate further the possibility of After School provision.**

**Staff work long hours and we offer parents evenings until 5.30pm. The dates are in the newsletter in advance. If you are unable to attend, staff are willing to arrange meetings in person or via telephone.**

**In the past we have held activity clubs for Reception children but they have struggled to engage at the end of the day as they are generally very tired and many were tearful. We therefore now only offer after school clubs from Y1 upwards.**

**There were also some questions regarding Breakfast Club:-**

- If Breakfast Club commenced at 7.30 and an out of hours school club was introduced. Currently we employ two child minders and an out of school club to take care of our children during these hours. To be able to access the school instead would benefit both our children and us.
- Breakfast Club to start 10 minutes earlier to help parents that start work at 8.30 a.m. in Newcastle/Durham
- Cost of Breakfast Club

**The school feel that children spending 1 hour in breakfast club before school, in addition to working hard throughout the day is enough for the children. Increasing this to an hour and a half would be too much for them and not give the children the best start to their day. However, the school will look into the possibility of starting breakfast club at little sooner - at 7.50.**

**Breakfast Club costs £2 for a day or £8 for a whole week. This is for child care between 8 a.m. and 8.50 a.m. as well as the offer of a breakfast. It seems very good value to us.**

**Some questions were about After School Activities:-**

- More choice of after school activities e.g. cookery skills, music and dance, craft club, cinema/film night, games and puzzles, after school care.
- More after school activities – longer times.

**The length of time for the after school clubs is decided as appropriate for each activity – it is not operated as a child minding facility.**

**We offer a variety of afterschool clubs: Choir, Cookery Club (in Spring/Summer), Story Stones and various sports activities. In the past, we have run a film club, but that was not well subscribed. The Friends of Tanfield do organise occasional film events.**

**There were two concerns expressed about the homework given to our Reception children:-**

- I feel that sometimes reception have too much homework to do and it's hard as a parent to get them to do the phonics and writing in the red book then do more in the green book – sometimes it takes us several hours  
AND
- I feel there needs to be less homework. I understand the importance of homework but sometimes there is too much and I feel we have to rush it and I am unable to spend the correct amount of time supporting my daughter.(Rec)

**Reception homework should be done in regular short bursts of no longer than 20 minutes. The total amount of work, including reading, should be no more than 1 hour per week. Homework is designed to give you quality time with your child helping them to develop. If you find it is taking longer than this, please speak to your class teacher.**

**Two questions were around the notice we give for some visits/activities: -**

- Nothing apart from more notice for school trips
- Short notice of events/occasions. As a full time working parent it is sometimes difficult

**We pride ourselves on the fact that we do communicate the majority of events well in advance. Every termly newsletter gives you all up coming events. There are some that have to be arranged at short notice due to external influences but, whenever possible, we give you advance notice. Please keep the 'Dates for your Diary' page to help you with the dates.**

**We aim to provide at least 2 weeks notice for trips arranged by staff. Occasionally, there is less notice for externally arranged activities (e.g. the swimming galas, football tournaments). The newsletters inform people of whole school events well in advance.**

**There were also some questions about parking/speed on the road: -**

- Better parking facilities for parents, however I acknowledge this may be unachievable AND
- Parking! But it seems a problem at most schools.
- For the school to take action against the parents who consistently park on double yellow lines and zig zags outside of school

**As recognised – we are not able to provide parking facilities. We do encourage parents to walk to school or park away from the school and walk. We do regularly remind parents about parking appropriately and do work with the local PCSOs to help enforce this.**

- When will there be speed limits introduced on the main road. Can a zebra crossing not be put in place?

**Traffic calming measures were put in place about 2 years ago – this is where our School Crossing Patrol man bases himself – where the road narrows. Re speed limits – there are some Durham Schools where there is a 20 mile an hour speed restriction in place. This is a trial and it is hoped that, in the future, we may get the same measure put in place.**

**Then there were the following statements and our responses: -**

- Better organisation going into upper school on a morning. Maybe space out classes going in start – 8.45/8.50. My daughter finds this very stressful as she is pushed around in the cloakroom along with other younger/smaller children.

**From now on teachers will send the classes in this order: Mr Patterson's, Mrs Davis', Mrs Brown's, Miss Ellis', then Mr Temple's, and Mrs Johnson's.**

- From a personal point of view I think more science study and no religious study – it would produce more tolerant and open-minded students – We understand the school must adhere to the National Curriculum! Our daughter loves to come to school and always has positive things to say about the staff. The proof is in the pudding. Many thanks to every one of you.

**As you mentioned, both Science and R.E. are compulsory elements of the National Curriculum. We aim to produce tolerant, inquisitive and open-minded children through these subjects as well as assemblies, social and emotional themed activities, residentials and extra-curricular activities.**

- School meals – allow children to select the menu choice in advance

**The school will look into this.**

- I would like to see a wider range of pupils being picked for sports teams. My impression is that the same few children represent the school on several occasions.

**The multi-sports festivals are designed for every child and each year group take part in. The competitions, using Sports Premium funding, are designed to allow talented children to compete with others, just as we encourage talent development in music for example in the Carol Service.**

- Handwriting – starting letters with a whoosh. I do understand why and the sooner they start it – the better – but both my children struggled to grasp it in reception. I think maybe introduce it later when joined up writing is expected.

**We want the children to learn the correct letter formation just once, so that they can more easily form cursive writing later in their school career.**
- Another parents evening as there was only one at the beginning of the year (Rec). Breakfast Club to start a little earlier and after school care if possible.

**Re parents evening – the Reception evening is held sooner to discuss how children have settled in as well as how they are progressing. If you would like to check on your child’s progress at any time just approach the teacher and ask if you could arrange to meet. We are going to investigate the possibility of starting Breakfast Club at 7.50. The school will also investigate further the possibility of After School provision.**
- More Pre-School placements, but further to your recent communications this is being addressed. We are keen to get our daughter in to pre-school at Tanfield. Would be good if you also have more spaces in your after school clubs so that all children can join in if they wish.

**As recognised – we are now in a position to extend our pre-school provision. We are hoping that the building work will start early in April. Re spaces in After School Club – for most clubs we do not have to turn children away. The spaces are limited as for most clubs we only have one member of staff to run this. Where this has happened recently we hope to put on an later club for those children who did not manage to access this the first time.**
- Better way to access lower school as it’s manic when older children are playing and you have to dodge the play equipment , balls being thrown and children running around - very hard with a pushchair

**I believe that the only time this happens is on a Friday afternoon when the upper school children are enjoying their Privilege Time. We will consider what we can do about this on a Friday afternoon.**
- More teachers as this year you have too many children in reception and there are too many incidents happening i.e. biting and misbehaving (Rec)

**We are well staffed in our Reception/Pre-School Unit. The number of teachers employed (and funded for) in school is linked directly with the number of children. In our current Reception we have 50 children and two teachers – 25 children in each class. The limit for a Reception class is 30 so legally we could actually take 10 more children (5 in each class). When young children start school they are learning in so many ways. They are in an environment which may be very different to their home experience. They are learning to share, co-operate, be kind and caring, take turns and as all parents will know, sometimes children can find this difficult. There will, inevitably, be situations where children may hurt each other. It is the role of the school and parents to deal with this appropriately and to the child/children to learn from this.**
- Increase amount of physical education in curriculum time – target multi skills and sports specific activities

**There is no statutory requirement is for children to have a certain amount of physical education during a week but schools who are recognised at providing outstanding P.E. dedicate at least 2 hours of physical activity a week. All our children do benefit from this as well as being even more active at lunchtime now – through OPAL. Many of our After School Clubs are physical and the children do have the opportunity to take part in an annual Multi Skills event as well as sports specific competitions. Unfortunately our timetable will not allow for any further increase in provision.**
- I wouldn’t change anything. All I would do is install hand sanitising stations as thread worms is a big on going problem and with them playing in the mud it spreads quickly

**Throughout the day children are encouraged to wash their hands after going to the toilet and when they are dirty. The school nurse has not recommended using hand sanitiser and there is no evidence to say that a) thread worms**

are a problem in school and b) that the mud is a factor in this

- That the lower school were allowed access to the school field

All Y1 and Y2 children are able to access the school field at lunchtime if they have their wellingtons on

- Dinner choice/options – I have a very picky son.

There are 2/3 options at lunchtime every day.

7. **Additional comments – If you want to explain any of your answers or if there is anything else you would like us to know about, please tell us here.**

- Our children are happy here and both their academic and social progress is evident. Staff are approachable and feedback from staff is helpful and frequent (Parent Meetings, Homework Book)
- Thank you all for making school so happy and enjoyable for my children. They love school and are making good progress. And if they are happy, then I am happy too!
- Friendly staff. Always polite, showing/setting good examples to the students
- My children can tell me on an evening what they have learnt that day, always something new and a sign they are learning and making progress
- I am really pleased I chose this school. From secretaries, lunchtime supervisors, TAs, teachers, caretakers, crossing patrol to head teacher, there is a lovely welcoming atmosphere. Thank you all for the part you play in my daughter's school life.
- Brilliant school, very informative and works brilliantly in its collaboration with children's parents
- Overall I am very happy with this school – my child is very settled and I can only thank the teachers for this
- This is a really lovely school with great teaching skills. It's a school which still feels like a real community school, with good community spirit. The Early Years expansion is brilliant.
- I am very proud my children attend Tanfield and on the rare occasion a relative collects my children on my behalf they too are impressed. I appreciate the text reminders that are issued (as a very disorganised parent!! ☹️ they help me out.
- I think lower school should be given a menu very week or term to pick food with parents at home and return it so they don't pick the same every day like my children do.
- Overall am very happy with curriculum delivery and progress being made. Well done!!
- My son has come on leaps and bounds since starting Y1 and away from his bully from last year. All round better atmosphere for him this year and his is a lot happier. Thank you for addressing it.
- I find it hard as a single parent to often attend 'Stay and Play' sessions. I work 40 hours a week and time off is structured around actual school holidays and have to rely on grandparents to collect and drop off. Phonics - homework attention span often limited when I get time to spend with her she can find it frustrating at the moment although I do understand the importance of this. (Rec)