

Polehampton CE Infant and Junior Schools

Focus on Feedback: Responses



Summer 2025

Below are the comments and our responses for this term's Focus On Feedback. Please note that, where similar questions/comments have been raised, we have used one parent feedback comment/blended a few comments to illustrate the general view, rather than duplicating. There were also some questions which were answered in the previous feedback surveys, so we have not added those again.

Thank you all for engaging in the latest round of Focus on Feedback – we have found it very useful and appreciate your comments.

Mr Phil Sherwood
Executive Headteacher

Helen Medcalf
Head of School

Liz Castell
Head of School



“The self-choosing of books in Year 1 is great, and means that new books can be selected as and when my daughter needs. Moving up a reading level is a great motivation for the nightly reading.”

Thank you for the positive feedback! We're glad it is so motivating.

“School starting at 8.40 rather than 8.50 makes such a difference to the working day, even though it is only 10 mins!”

This is great to hear – thank you. We are keen for all pupils to be in school from 08:40 so they can benefit from the morning learning activities that are set from 08:40 each day.

“When starting in year 3 there are lots of new sporting opportunities at junior school e.g. school football teams, cross-country running. It would be really helpful for parents to have more information about what opportunities will be on offer and when, to help prepare the kids for these trials when they come up, as it felt like we heard about them only from the kids after they events had happened. Likewise for the inter-house fun-run, or other whole-school sporting events yet to come like swimming gala, we'd love to hear more context/what to expect ahead of time to be able to encourage our small people from home!”

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Thank you – this is really helpful feedback. We are currently discussing plans for next year and will build this in to our on-boarding processes. We know that Mr Dickinson and the other sports staff would be very keen to help increase awareness.

“My daughter has really enjoyed doing the afterschool football club at the Infants. Currently there isn't an afterschool football club at the Juniors due to insufficient demand. Please could you try running one again from September? There's a good group of current year 2s who do the Infants club. Hopefully they would continue and make a future juniors club viable. Thanks”

We will look at this with the sports team too – thank you!

“It would be great if the Junior school could sent only a single version of each communication, rather than two. Also, just receiving communications relevant to our year group would be beneficial as I don't think everyone needs to know about the Year 5s returning late from their residential. It gets quite frustrating all the duplicate and irrelevant emails and then risk missing something important in all the noise.”

[There were also one or two other comments about consolidating emails and communications, including the organisation and timing of arrangements for some parent meetings]

Thank you for those who provided feedback on this. Communications is always a priority, but we have not committed detailed time to unpicking all of the ad-hoc communications that may, in good faith, be sent out by other staff. We have added this to our list to prioritise for 2025-2026; it has been a learning curve since having Arbor for communication. We hope you will see an improvement from this as the next academic year progresses.

“Could the way accidents reporting be looked into. If a child has an accident at school it's quite often teachers aren't aware, the slips lack of information for parents on serious incidents.”

Thank you for this feedback. We have recently bought in a system called Medical Tracker, which will contact you via email with minor issues, and alert you more formally for any serious incident. This should help provide more expansive information than the current slips and avoid any slips getting lost in transit between end of school and home.

“Have noticed more provision for sporting events for example scooter/skateboard sessions. Great for health, physical skills and mental well being. Please keep the variety up! Could more opportunities for nutrition/cooking be incorporated to support this too? Thank you”

We're delighted to hear that these initiatives are popular and will certainly look into the viability of other sessions wider than just sports. Thanks for your comment.

“Arbor app is so unusable for many things. Trying to log in for one child and then the other often is impossible, even when loading one on the app and then one on the website. Why can't there be a toggle when you log in?”

“When booking breakfast and afterschool club on arbor:

- **it lists all the historical bookings first so you just see a sea of dates when trying to confirm whether they are booked in for a day. Would be useful not to see anything in the past, or it be on a separate tab if people do want it**

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- when making new bookings you have to select from autumn last year, last day of autumn term, spring term and summer term - feel like we could remove the historical ones
- you have to select the sessions for each day, when there is only a single session available - why cant this be defaulted / not required?
- would be good to be able to cancel sessions from the app/website as well as just book them"

This is a useful suggestion – we will pass this on to the Arbor developers and speak with our account manager to see if this can be actioned.

"It would be wonderful if breakfast club could open 5 mins earlier, like it was originally badged to on the introductory flier. 7:40 means that it is possible to get the 7:54 train and not have to wait for the 8:23 train for work, which is what 7:45 means. Is there any way this can be achieved? Thanks!"

As previously mentioned on Focus On Feedback, we are sorry to report that we are unable to change the time at the moment. The initial poster sent out to parents in April 2024 stated a 07:40 time to open, but this was not possible due to our duty to keep working hours the same when we followed the TUPE process and brought staff from the previous provider over to Polehampton's team. The time was amended from V1 to V2 of the poster and was clearly stated with a number of months' notice before the club started. We will continue to take staff availability and user demand into account when considering start times but, at the moment, we must remain with our start time of 07:45. Sorry that we cannot adjust the opening hours at this time.

"Would there be any chance of enabling Infant children to be walked from activity clubs to polecats so they can do some of the different after school club options? Thanks"

At the moment, we don't have the staff to wait until clubs are finished at the infant site and then walk them over. We know this is something that parents would like and will continue to consider how this might be able to be possible in the future.

"We love all the extra activities and events like the special assemblies and trips, where there is opportunity for parents to be involved. This create a lovely a sense of community at the school and we really appreciate the effort the school puts in to running these."

Thank you so much – this has put a big smile on our faces!

"Bit disappointed that there has been no Planet Protector Activity this year. My child was so proud to have been voted in as one and as far as I can see there have been no meetings and no responsibilities given out. The school not following through with it devalues the achievement of being elected."

We have not been able to hold Planet Protector meetings as we had planned to this year. The children who have been elected this year will continue with the role next year. This includes the children moving from year 2 to year 3.

"I feel like the Shining Light certificate programme needs to be delivered in a more fair, structured way. My child has only received one certificate this year where their sibling and friends seem to have all received at least 2. If the

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school is going to have these lovely initiatives, it's important that all children are treated fairly. I think all children should receive one a term."

Thank you for raising this, we know that teachers track this, but we will send a reminder about ensuring equity in the certificates given. We have had several conversations, as a staff team, about certificates and will continue to do so – however, at the moment, we can't promise one a term.

"Given the new government guidance on healthy eating for children, I am interested to know what the school are going to do to support parents give their children healthier packed lunches and snacks. I know of other schools that don't allow chocolate, sweets and crisps in their lunch boxes. Diet is so incredibly important and has such a huge impact on children's health, well being and behaviour, I believe schools are a key educator for families on this topic."

Thank you for raising this. We have a Healthy Eating and Lunch Box Policy which supports parents, including with posters at the end of balancing healthy lunches. This can be located on our website and has been in place for over a year.

Policing children's lunchboxes is a challenging and time-consuming process and is not something we can manage at lunchtimes. It is also more multifaceted than "making good choices". We can only guide parents toward making sensible and healthy choices, and this is complex and nuanced challenge in itself. However, lunch staff do feedback on individuals whose lunchboxes are nutritionally poor, so that we can support families on an individual basis.

Healthy eating also forms part of the children's PSHE curriculum, so they are also learning about making healthy and balanced choices themselves.

Finally, there is new guidance from the DFE coming, regarding nutrition in the Early Years, in September. This may give us further ideas and considerations.

"We aren't keen on the Numbots homework because of the timer element, and would welcome some spellings or worksheet homework."

As mentioned in previous communication, the focus for homework across both schools this year has been reading and timestables. Sending year group spelling activities out is something we will look at for September.

"My daughter has told me about a number of incidents with a particular disruptive child in her class. This must be a real challenge for the teacher to balance the needs of this particular child whilst also not hindering the wider education of the class. I wondered if there was a formal policy of how to deal with persistent disruptive behaviour."
[There was one comment other from regarding bullying and our process, with no name or class, so we cannot identify whether this was infant or junior site]

With regard to bullying, please see our Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy. Both can be located on our website. We have very clear processes regarding this and, if there is a specific issue a family has with behaviour or bullying, they should contact the school. Initially, the family should contact their child's class teacher (who will liaise with other staff, including us, if required). If the matter is not resolved to a satisfactory conclusion in your eyes, you can speak to a Phase Lead, followed by Assistant Headteacher and then Heads of School. After that, complaints can be made to the Executive Headteacher and then Local Governing Body.

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Our behaviour policy talks about persistent breaches to the policy (e.g. persistent disruption to learning); we must legally and ethically consider any additional needs for pupils and make reasonable adjustments before we consider our Suspensions and Exclusions Policy. This policy is then consulted and followed when strategies prove ineffective and the behaviour remains unchanged. There are, however, several legal duties that we must consider, which aim to balance disciplinary measures with a pupil's right to an education.

The important aspect to note is that there is a huge amount of work that goes on informally and formally to support behaviour and any incidents of bullying that may arise. We follow DFE guidance in line with advice from other professionals. We cannot speak about everything that goes on but rest assured that it is one of our key priorities and is discussed in our Local Governing Body meetings.

“It would be great if you could cancel booked OSC sessions. Due to not knowing what the plan is weeks ahead, I currently try to book a rolling two weeks, but often find myself having forgotten and having to book Sunday night. This means I pay ad hoc rates and the team can't plan the staffing numbers.”

Thank you for raising this – we will look into this with the Arbor team and see how this may be achieved. One of the problems with booking and then cancelling is that we could end up with, on paper, too many pupils for the session. Or, we staff according to expected numbers and then a large number cancel their session so we don't need as many staff but are still paying them anyway. We'll have a think about how this might work.

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