



Parental Surveys Information Sheet

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Parental Surveys

A good parental survey can give you a great insight into your parent body, no matter what the topic. It can also act as part of your communication strategy to introduce the idea of change to your school. Here we look at some of the key tips when conducting a parental school survey.

Choosing the content of your survey

This sounds obvious yet is really important. Do not be tempted to ask questions about areas of your school that you are not currently looking at reviewing or changing,. Parents need to feel listened to, so consult their views on the key topic you are reviewing and resist the temptation to ask about other areas. The parental survey can be a stepping stone to letting parents know that some changes may be afoot.

Encouraging a good completion rate

Make sure that your title is specific to the issue you are conducting your survey about, this sounds obvious however you would be surprised how the title can impact the rate of return on surveys. In your letter use phrases such as "Your opportunity to input" that are positive and powerful, encouraging parents to participate in order to have a voice. The parental survey is a positive opportunity for parents and shows that you as a school value the parental opinion. Keeping the survey short and stating how long it will take in your accompanying letter can also help.

Deciding how to conduct the survey

Thanks to technology conducting initial research online is easy, as is analysing the data. JotForm and SurveyMonkey both provide excellent analytical and reporting tools.



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Publication of survey results

It is important that parents receive a summary of the feedback from your survey so they feel the information they gave has been considered. It can also help you share evidence to show why the school is moving in a certain direction. For example, publishing the fact 72% of parents have shown a preference to online parents evenings can help explain the decision for the 28% who don't agree with your choice.

Style of questioning

Asking questions that can be easily evaluated, so yes/no or scales enable you to quickly analyse results. Open ended questions need to be individually considered, and if you have chosen to allow people to give their name, may need individual follow up which is time consuming. That said, they can give a real insight and additional ideas beyond raw data.

Anonymity

This is a consideration for you as a school. If your survey is anonymous it removes the need to follow up with individual comments as you don't know who they are from.

Segmenting your audience

If you are seeking views on a topic where you will not be going for a whole school approach, and may, for example, be open to taking different approaches for different year groups, it is important that you collect Year group information. You may also find that whilst the overall result of a survey, may, for example be split between two different ideas, there are clear different needs for different audiences depending on age/gender/location of parents.

More Information

The ISP can craft, distribute and analyse your parental survey on a key topic for only £399. This includes working with you to advise on questioning, building the survey, and writing a summary report of the findings. This is for a survey of no more than 30 questions. If you would like further information please email or call Alicia Coad for an initial discussion.

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