

NORTHUMBERLAND County Council

The Federation of Longhorsley and Whalton Church of England Aided Schools

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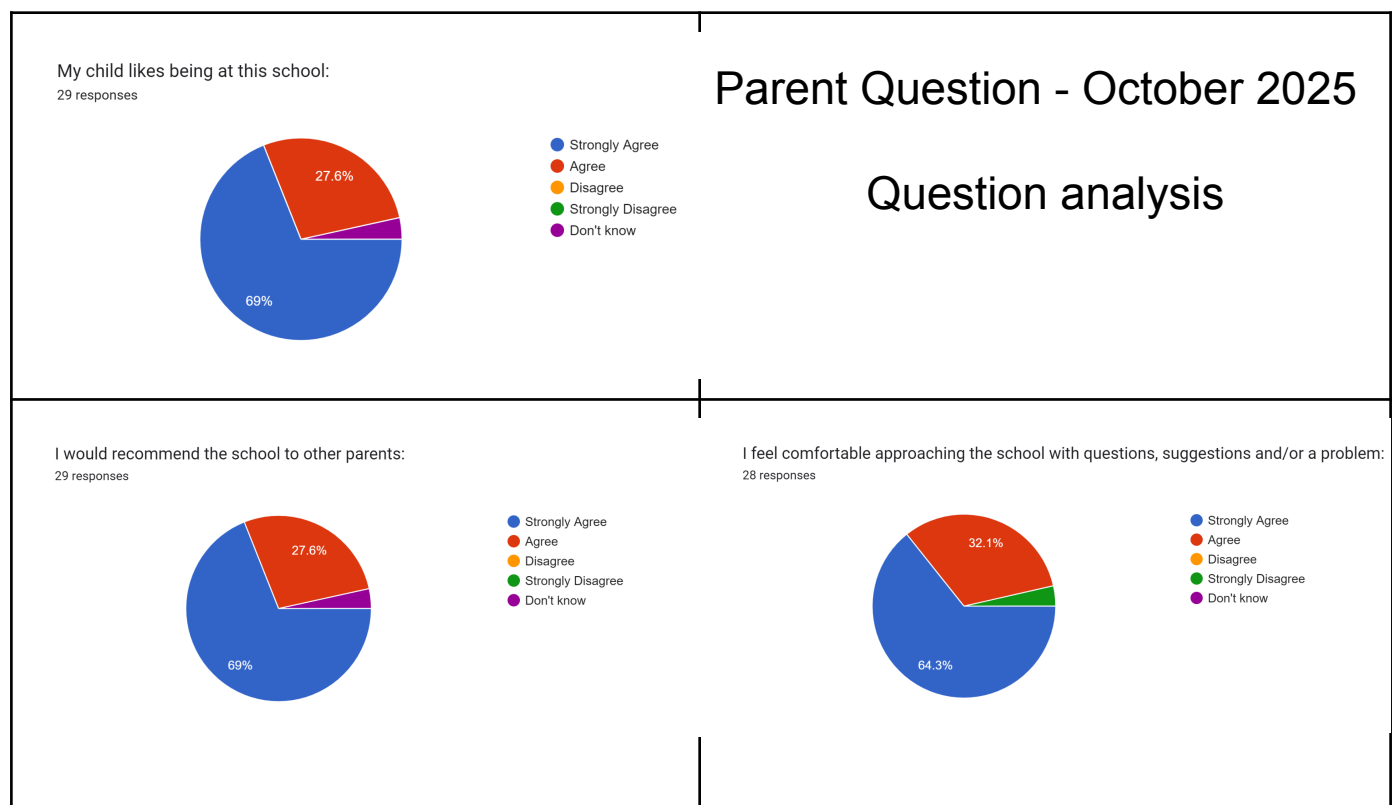
18th November 2025

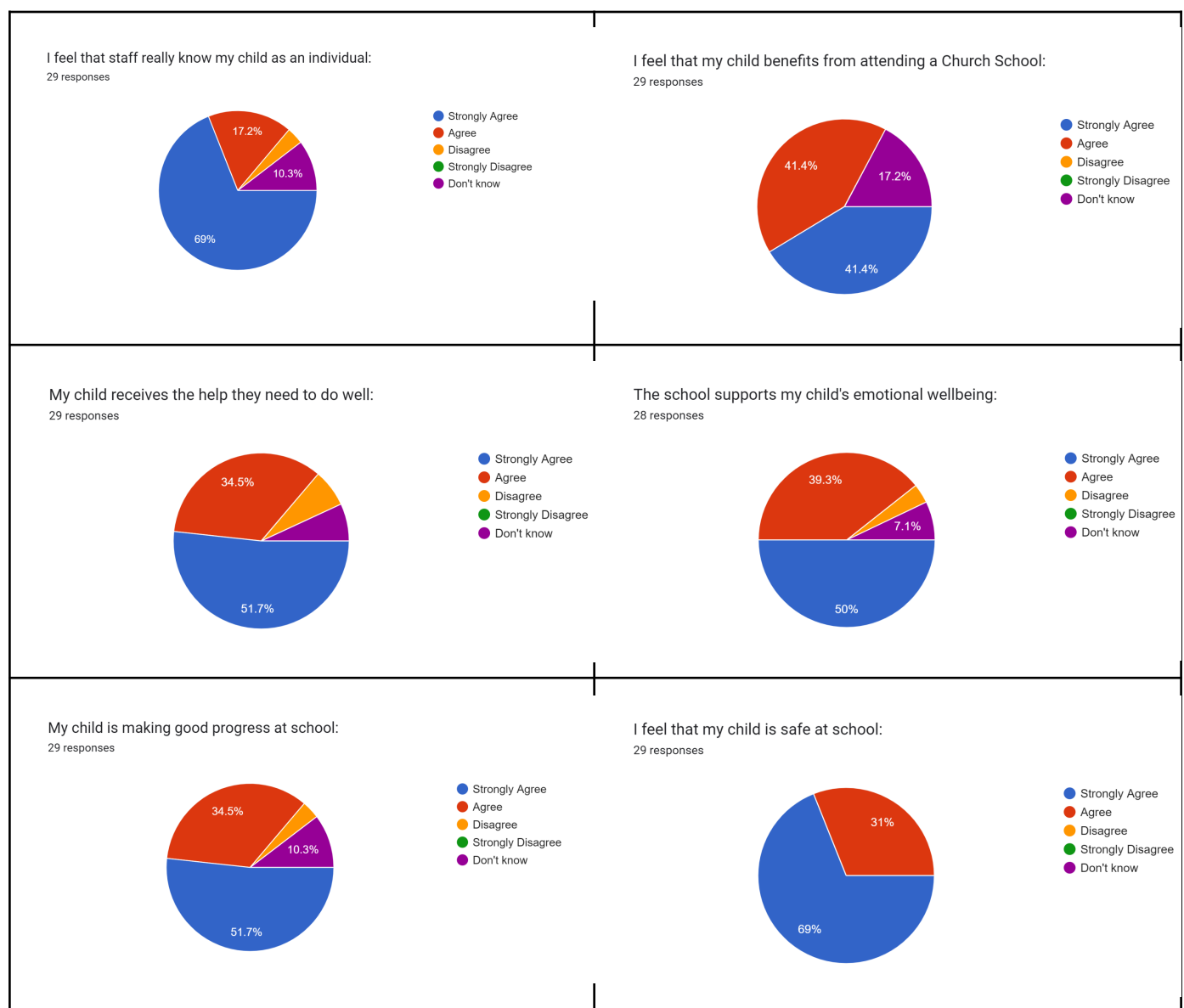
Dear Parents,

As we find ourselves hurtling towards December, a few bits and bobs to share and update you with.

Parental Feedback

At our Pupil Progress Meetings before half term, we asked for your feedback via our Parent Questionnaire and have the responses below for you. There were 29 responses in total with one response = 3.4-3.6% of the overall percentage.





Firstly, thank you so much for completing the questionnaire and for your honest feedback. It is great to see that you all unanimously feel that your child/ren is/are safe at school and that the vast majority of you feel that they are making good progress, that they receive the help they need to do well and that we support their emotional wellbeing. The fact that nearly all of you are happy to recommend our school to other parents (and only one person didn't know), is just brilliant and I extend my heartfelt thanks to the entire staff team who share and support our school vision on a day to day basis: 'Love your neighbour as yourself so we can aspire, believe and achieve to be the very best that we can be' for all of our children. In terms of the Church school question - we had our very successful SIAMS Church inspection last December, if anyone (particularly any parents new to school) would like to have a look, hopefully reading this will help: [Longhorsley SIAMS Report](#).

There were also lots of additional comments given by parents too:

- *X really enjoys school and is doing well with her learning.*
- *X is an excellent teacher and Y really benefits from being in his Class.*
- *We have seen X grow academically and socially over the last few years and are so proud to see how far she has come. We are very lucky to be part of this lovely school - we couldn't have asked for a better start in life for our daughter. Many Thanks*
- *Great School, X loves it and the staff seem very supportive of helping children to do well!*
- *X continues to enjoy school. Thank you for everything.*
- *....overall - we are delighted with the school and the staff supporting our children.*

- *X is very happy at school, lovely friends and she is very settled. Talks fondly about her classroom, teachers.*
- *Lovely & welcoming school with lovely parents, teachers & children.*
- *School is a lovely calm and supportive environment where the children thrive as individuals and as part of school and village community.*
- *Longhorsley is a happy safe environment for X. He happily runs into school every day.*

In terms of any parents who 'didn't know' or were 'unsure' of the progress of their child, hopefully the parent meetings with your classteacher helped with this. If not, as always, please do get in touch with your child's class teacher (or myself), if you ever have a question or problem.

Finally, as part of the questionnaire, we always ask if we can do anything further to continue to improve our school. Please see the grid below:

You said:	We did/or plan to:
<i>After visiting Rothbury music festival and seeing other primary schools orchestra groups it made me reflect on the limited access to learning to play different instruments we have. We pay for lessons but even Music Partnership North only offers X lessons here and it is a shame kids are not getting a chance to try alternative instruments. Even a choir would be hugely beneficial to allow kids to explore the non academic side of their development.</i>	Thank you, this is really helpful. We have been able to find a local contact with a focus on traditional Northumbrian folk music and have arranged to offer a choir after school club in January for Years 1- 4. We have also checked with Northumberland Music as well - here is the link to their music tuition. It would be great to add to our talented violinists who we currently have at school. At Whalton, we have had drums, keyboard and piano sessions too, we have also had clarinets here too - it does depend on availability of a tutor, and what parents ask for as well. In terms of musical instruments as part of the curriculum, the children become familiar with different instruments in weekly music lessons such as: percussion (claves, triangles etc) in Early Years and into Year 1 and then glockenspiels in Year 2 which then moves onto wind instruments (such as the recorder in Years 3 and 4). For any further information on our music curriculum, please see Miss Bowen, who is our Music lead.
<i>Both children really enjoy school. School lunches could be larger portions as sometimes they are hungry at hometime.</i>	Thank you and not a problem. The children are offered seconds when anything is left over, as well as visiting the salad bar, which is very popular too. There is new guidance on portion sizes from NCC - in line with the new recommended Early Years (5 and under) portions guideline. However, if any children come home hungry at all, please do let us know so we can make sure that they have plenty to eat and keep an extra special eye on them. Here is the new winter menu too so you know what your children are having.
<i>It would be useful to be informed of who is teaching my child other than the designated form teachers. I would also like to be informed who the TA's are in school. We, as parents, are reliant on our children telling us who is responsible for their education.</i>	Not a problem. This information goes out in one of our newsletters, before the summer holidays. Here is also a link to the staffing page of our website. Teaching Assistants work across the school as well as in individual classes, as does our Higher Level Teaching Assistant, Mr Gunn. Class teachers are

	always responsible for the planning of the teaching and their class at all times. We may have other supply teachers and teaching assistants visiting us when the needs arise. Any concerns, always please just come and ask.
<i>Transition from Reception to year one, didn't go as well as we would have expected. Name Pegs not done. No greeting from the class teacher at the door - children were left unsure what to do - heading into the classroom with coats on felt very impersonal.</i>	We are very happy to look at the transition from Reception to Year 1 as we really do want our children to feel comfortable facing any change and sincere apologies if that was not the case. Name pegs were ready for all of the children. They went with their teacher to put them in their new places. Next year, this will be done as part of the transition days before the end of the summer term. We can easily have the Y1 class teacher meet and greet too, alongside either myself or Mr Morris.

Bikeability

Really well done to all of the children in Years 3 and 4 - the Bikeability Instructor said that we should be really proud of our children as they are all fantastic! It is also really lovely to see more children coming to school on bikes too.

School Book Fayre

Many thanks to those who have already visited! This will continue to be open before school from 8.30am each morning and 3.30pm to 4.00pm on Thursday and Friday this week. Many thanks to Mr Morris for organising this as Reading lead.

Federation Day

What an amazing sight having the children from both schools in Longhorsley yesterday celebrating Interfaith week with the golden thread of kindness, generosity and community at the centre. Lots of new friendships made and the rekindling of old ones too! We hope you all heard about the stone soup our key stage 2 children made - it was delicious apparently!



PTA Crafty Christmas

This Friday, our lovely PTA will be in school, making Christmas crafts with the children. All children are invited to wear festive headwear to get into the Christmas mood!

The PTA have bundled the festive headwear day, the Christmas craft and star for a loved one into one package for ease if you didn't have your child attending any of our film nights.

Children's Class Birthday treats

With the new nutrition guidance coming in from Early Years in particular (from the Department for Education), alongside the current National School Meal Standards, please can parents kindly not bring cakes and sweets into school for the staff to give out to their classes at the end of the day for birthdays. With allergens to think about and the fact that many parents are not able to pick their children up themselves, to say yes or no, it becomes quite complicated too for staff! Many thanks for your support with this.

Holidays in school time

We are getting a high number of requests for in term time holidays. Whilst we are extremely grateful for your honesty when it comes to requesting a leave of absence from school for your child, you may or may not know that our daily attendance for all children gets reported to the Department for Education. We are then monitored to see how we are tackling any poor attendance. Here is the [link to our attendance policy](#). No 'in term time' holidays will be authorised, as they are very rarely exceptional. Many thanks for your understanding of this. Please can you make the most of our training days which are often either side of a main holiday - [see holiday and term dates on our website](#).

School Uniform

Just a gentle reminder that unless it is a PE day, please can all children come to school in the correct school uniform please; no jeans and no trainers - smart black shoes are part of our school uniform. Please let us know if we can help as we do have lots of pre-loved uniforms, including some shoes too, if there is ever a problem.

Font Alliance News

As a school, we have always tried to think 'big' to ensure that the children get as much curriculum enhancement, as well as opportunities to meet and mix with other children, especially in terms of transition.

For new parents, as well as being part of a Federation with Longhorsley, we are part of an informal alliance, called the Font Alliance, working together with schools who have the same philosophy as ourselves, some small, some much larger, some church, some non-church schools, all to benefit our children (and also our staff too). The schools involved are Rothbury First School, Cambo First School, Stannington First School, Ponteland Community Primary School, Tritlington C of E First School, Morpeth First School and of course, Longhorsley and Whalton. To this end, I just wanted to share with you what we have already done and what we are planning for the rest of the year, some as Federation days and some with our Alliance schools.

Last half term:

- Federation Zoo visit with Whalton - for all of the school (Autumn 1)
- Alliance Author Visit at Morpeth First School - for Years 1 and 2
- Federation Day - Inter Faith Week - all children from both schools (Autumn 2)

For the rest of the year:

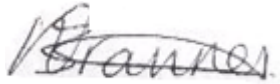
- A music Alliance event in the summer at Stannington Church
- World Book Day - Federation Day - Children invited to dress as a book character.
- Alliance Football Tournaments, including girls' multi-sport event and rugby
- Robinwood Residential - for all of Year 4 (and Year 5) with Longhorsley and Cambo
- Alliance Summer event at Ponteland Community Primary school for Years 3 - 6
- NEW Federation joint Sports Day - at Longhorsley

Christmas is coming!

In the run up to Christmas, we have many exciting events and occasions for both you and the children to come to and enjoy. Please make sure you keep looking at the [diary dates on our website](#). Updated dates were also sent out in November's newsletter too.

Looking forward to seeing you all in the coming weeks,

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'N Brannen', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mrs N Brannen
Executive Headteacher