

Queen Mary's High School

**Kirkland Rowell Educations
Perceptions Monitor**

Parents & Pupils

April 2012

Staff, parents and pupils were all given the opportunity to complete a comprehensive Kirkland Rowell questionnaire in April 2012. The completed questionnaires were returned to Kirkland Rowell for analysis and a summary of the findings is given in this document.

Thank you to everyone who completed the survey, the feedback given is very valuable in planning for the future of the school and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will be taking the comments forward when looking at the School Improvement Plan for next year. 63.8% of staff, 41.0% of parents and 87.5% of students completed the survey, sufficient numbers in each case to be able to produce data for all criteria.

Kirkland Rowell state that Queen Mary's High School has reason to be happy with the majority of its activities. Comments showed that the majority of parents and pupils are very happy with the school and many of the negative comments were qualified in light of the parents' and pupils' overall satisfaction with the school.

In order for teaching and learning to be effective it is essential that the behaviour of students is managed effectively and so it was very pleasing to see that students are most happy with 'Truancy Control', 'Control of Bullying' and 'School Discipline'.

As in all things there are areas which could be improved and although many of the comments in this summary relate to these issues these should be viewed in the context of the large number of positive responses given to most areas. Responses to many of the points raised are given below.

The school has always prided itself on offering a wide choice of options at both GCSE and 'A' level and will continue to do so but in some years no students choose to study a particular subject and in this case classes do not run. Some students commented in their responses that they would like to see a wider choice of subjects at GCSE including Business Studies, Psychology and Law. We have discussed these possibilities and decided that they are not subjects we will be offering in the foreseeable future. Business Studies and Psychology are offered at 'A' level and we are advised that there would be no advantage in offering them at GCSE because some of the content is repeated. In the case of Law universities do not require either a GCSE or 'A' level in Law for entry to a Law course but are seeking students who show excellent critical thinking skills which they have developed through the study of other subjects. We very much support the development of critical thinking skills and all year 9 pupils are offered the opportunity to gain a level 2 award in Reasoning and Thinking skills.

The offer of Greek & Latin GCSE was raised by parents, these are subjects that all students are given the opportunity to study during their time at Queen Mary's High School and a new cohort began studying these languages in September 2012. We currently have 30 students studying Latin and 16 students studying Greek, these students will take their GCSE in 2015.

We offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities in school covering most curriculum areas and additionally Sport, Literature, Duke of Edinburgh Awards, Film club, Games club, Debating and various national competitions. We do however recognise that students and their parents are not always fully aware of what we do offer and we are committed to improving

communication with parents. We are therefore looking at different possible ways of passing on information, including putting a new parent tab on our web-site.

We were aware that our Career's Advice Service was not giving students the level of support they deserved and having investigated various possibilities we have purchased the services of a new provider who will deliver a much enhanced Careers Advice Service. This began with all year 11 students having a careers interview on the Learning Review Day in September. Feedback from these interviews was very positive and students felt it was a valuable experience which will help them make the right choices for their future.

When pupils and parents look at league tables it is understandable that they may not be completely happy with the exam results at Queen Mary's High School. However, the league tables do not give the complete picture. When our exam results are looked in the context of the school, national data shows very clearly that overall the 'A' level and GCSE results for our pupils are higher than would be expected given their starting point. In technical jargon, when the performance of individual students is studied in more detail, our results show positive value added and over the last four years this has been an increasing trend.

It was very pleasing to read that many of the parents who commented said how happy and confident their child had been since starting at Queen Mary's High School. It was equally disappointing that some parents are least happy with 'Developing Confidence', 'Happiness of the Child' and 'Developing Potential' because these characteristics are the embodiment of our core values which are at the heart of our Vision Statement. We have an extensive pastoral care system in school including Personal Achievement Managers for each year group, two members of staff employed solely to look after the welfare of students and a variety of support programmes designed to help students develop their social skills and become confident, happy and successful individuals. We will be looking to see how we can further develop these systems this year and have made a start by basing our assembly programme around 'Values' with a different value being highlighted each month, the first of which is Respect.

Parents and students both highlighted 'Healthy Lifestyle' as a cause for concern with the quality of food provided at lunchtime being cited as a particular issue. The canteen does serve a variety of dishes each day which always include salad and pasta dishes, sandwiches (on both white and brown bread), wraps, freshly made soup (in the winter) and jacket potatoes with a variety of fillings. Pizza is regularly served, as are potato wedges and burgers but no food is fried and on the occasions chips are served they are oven chips. A variety of fresh fruit is always available together with a selection of yoghurts for dessert. Promoting a healthy lifestyle is very important to us and we will continue to respond to feedback and look regularly at the quality of the food served in the canteen. However, some students do not like the healthier options we offer and prefer to eat toast at breaktime followed by bread rolls or a plate of potato wedges for lunch. We need to work with these students to promote healthy eating and ensure that they do choose some of the healthy options on offer.

The quality of some of our school facilities was an area that staff, parents and students said made them least happy. The senior leadership team work very hard to ensure that we always get maximum value for the money we spend on the school facilities and this includes having a regular program of redecoration for all areas of the school and creating spaces which are multi-purpose. However, we have a small site and limited funding which inevitably means that we are unable to make all of the improvements and provide all of the facilities that we

would like to. Many of our buildings are grade II listed, over 100 years old and expensive to maintain. We are very aware that we need to improve the toilets at school and replace the roof over big school hall but both of these are major expenses which we are unable to meet out of our annual capital budget. We have been trying to secure a grant to carry out these works but have had no success to date. We will of course continue to seek alternative funding.

Quality of teaching in some areas was a concern with the use of supply teachers being specifically mentioned. As in any walk of life there will be times when staff are ill and unable to come into school and teach. We are very fortunate at Queen Mary's High School that our teachers are passionate about the education of our students and do their best to ensure that the education of students does not suffer when colleagues are ill. In the case of a short-term illness this means that other members of the department can step in to ensure that any work set is of an appropriate standard and quality. In the case of a long term absence we will contact a supply agency to find a suitable replacement teacher, which means someone who is qualified to degree level in the subject they will be teaching and has a proven track record. We have been very fortunate to have had some excellent and highly qualified replacement teachers over the last three years who have embraced our ethos and done their best for the students they have taught. Students should not assume that having a supply teacher means being taught by someone who is less qualified or less able than their regular teacher, it is just a different teacher helping them to make progress and reach their potential.

In terms of local community engagement we are not a 'community school' in a residential setting and few of our pupils live in the area immediately surrounding the school. However, we do engage with and support the local community in a number of ways including carol singing, visiting care homes, allowing some primary schools to use our facilities and providing regular activities for Looked After Children in Walsall.

If you would like to make any comments on this report then we would be pleased to hear from you either by e-mail to kc@qmhs.org.uk or at one of our Parent Drop-In sessions on the last Wednesday of each half-term from 3:45pm – 6:00pm. You may also like to express your views by completing an Ofsted parent view survey accessible by logging on to <http://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

	Most Happy		Least Happy		Priorities for Improvement	
	Parents	Pupils	Parents	Pupils	Parents	Pupils
School security	X					
Availability of resources	X					
Truancy control	X	X				
Control of bullying		X				
School discipline		X				
Choice of subjects	X	X				
School communication	X					
Levels of homework				X		
School facilities			X	X		X
Developing confidence			X		X	
Happiness of the child			X		X	
Developing potential			X		X	
Exam results			X	X	X	X
Computer access				X		X
Careers advice				X	X	X
Healthy Lifestyle			X	X	X	X
Teaching quality					X	X
Spanish	X					
PSHCE	X	X				
RS	X	X				
D & T	X					
Textiles	X					
Chemistry		X				
Biology			X	X		
Theatre Studies		X				
German				X		
Physics			X			
Psychology			X			
Business Studies			X	X		
English			X	X		

Parent Survey key points – 295 completed questionnaires

Developing Confidence in Pupils and **Career's Advice** are more important to parents than teachers thought they would be.

School Communication and **Developing Moral Values** are less important to parents than teachers thought they would be.

School Security is more important to parents at this school compared to parents at other similar schools but **Developing Moral Values** is less important.

As pupils progress through the school **Developing Potential** and **Career's Advice** become more important to parents but **School Facilities** and **Levels of Homework** become less important.

88.6% of parents would recommend Queen Mary's High School to another parent.

Parents are generally happy with the way in which the school delivers the Every Child Matters outcomes with the exception of **Healthy Lifestyle** where parents would like to see more exercise and a healthier diet for pupils.

Parent Evaluation Summary

Achievement Summary Grade – 2

Of the 22 criteria in this section 20 were graded as good and 2 as satisfactory.

Areas for improvement:

Ratio of parents saying school is improving versus declining
English literacy across the curriculum

Teaching Summary Grade - 2

Of the 33 criteria in this section 1 was graded as outstanding, 31 as good and 1 as satisfactory.

Areas for improvement:

Teaching in Biology, Physics & Psychology
Teaching of RWCM (English)

Behaviour and Safety Summary – 2

Of the 47 criteria in this section 1 was graded outstanding and 46 as good.

Areas for improvement:

Community spirit
Caring teachers
Developing confidence
Control of bullying

Leadership Summary grade – 2

Of the 44 criteria in this section 4 were graded as outstanding, 38 as good and 2 as satisfactory

Areas for improvement:

Ratio of parents saying school is improving versus declining
School facilities
Extra-curricular activities

SMCS Development Summary Grade – 2

Of the 42 criteria in this section 3 were graded as outstanding, 33 as good and 6 as satisfactory

Areas for improvement:

- Encouraging local community activity
- English skills
- Extra curricular activities

Parents' Comments – over 150

The specific comments of parents, which occurred on more than one occasion, were as follows.

Many of the parent comments were very positive and many of the negative comments were qualified in light of the parents' overall satisfaction with the school.

The parents were enthusiastic in the number of comments that they made and the comments were diverse in their nature.

Many of the parents who commented said how happy and confident their children had been since starting at Queen Mary's High School.

Positive Comments (57)

Twenty four parents commented that they were happy with the overall performance of the school.

Fifteen parents were pleased with the overall standard of education provided.

Seven parents were pleased with the amount of learning support their child received.

Six parents were pleased with their child's progress.

Five parents believed that their child had grown in confidence.

Teaching, Learning and Curriculum (68)

Thirteen parents felt that the quality of teaching in some subjects could be improved.

Twelve parents expressed concerns over the alleged decline in standards of the science department, with some commenting on the lack of teachers.

Nine parents commented on the incidence of staff absence, and the use of supply teachers.

Seven parents believed the amount of homework their child received to be excessive.

Six parents referred to staff as caring, helpful and approachable.

Five parents considered the choice of subject options to be restrictive.

Five parents requested teachers to be more approachable.

Four parents believed that additional support was required in weaker areas.

Three parents would welcome more practical PE lessons.

Two parents commented that their child's work did not always seem to be marked.

Two parents requested a wider range of extracurricular activities be made available.

Learning Environment (16)

Six parents felt that the school was in need of improved hygiene and cleanliness.

Five parents felt that more could be done to improve school toilet facilities.

Five parents suggested overall improvements to the school and its facilities could be beneficial.

Behaviour and Welfare of Students (20)

Eleven parents would welcome the provision of more healthy food options.

Ten parents felt that the school needed to take a stronger approach to discipline.

Four parents would welcome more rewards.

Three parents requested improved lunch menu choices, which they felt at present, were limited.

Two parents commented on the disruptive behaviour of some students and the seeming lack of control in class.

Two parents requested improved security within the school.

Two parents felt that more could be done to encourage their child to reach their full potential.

Other (30)

Four parents believed that communication between the school and parents needed to improve.

Three parents felt that the lunchtime provision needed to improve.

Three parents believed the school website was in need of improvement.

Three parents would welcome the introduction of parents' evenings.

Two parents suggested that more could be done to improve the provision of careers advice.

Two parents requested more regular feedback on their child's progress.

Two parents felt that the school uniform was too expensive.

Pupil Survey key points – 630 completed questionnaires

Pupil's perception of their progress in the following subjects was significantly higher than the parent satisfaction: **Chemistry, Theatre Studies, Music, Physics, Psychology.**

Pupil's perception of their progress in the following subjects was significantly lower than the parent satisfaction: **Spanish, Resistant Materials, Textiles, History, Economics, Japanese.**

Pupils felt the school was performing significantly better than their parents did in the following areas: **Control of bullying, School discipline, Teaching quality, Developing confidence, Happiness of child.**

Pupils felt the school was performing significantly worse than their parents did in the following areas: **Availability of resources, School security, Levels of homework, Computer access, Workload tailored to child, Encouraging & listening to parent's views.**

School discipline and **Levels of homework** are more important to QMHS pupils than to pupils at other similar schools but **School facilities** and **Choice of subjects** are less important.

As pupils progress through the school **School security, School facilities** and **Levels of homework** become less of a priority to them but **Teaching quality, Caring teachers** and **Careers advice** become more important.

Pupils are generally happy with the way in which the school delivers the Every Child Matters outcomes with the exception of **Healthy Lifestyle**, where pupils would like to see greater promotion of a healthy diet, and **Encouraging Local Community Activity.**

Pupil Evaluation Summary

Achievement Summary Grade – 2

Of the 22 criteria in this section 6 were graded outstanding, 15 as good and 1 as satisfactory.

Areas for improvement:

- Ratio of pupils saying school is improving versus declining
- Exam results
- Developing potential

Teaching Summary Grade - 2

Of the 33 criteria in this section 6 were graded as outstanding, 26 as good and 1 as satisfactory.

Areas for improvement:

- Teaching in Biology & Business Studies

Behaviour and Safety Summary– 1

Of the 47 criteria in this section 31 were graded outstanding and 16 as good.

Areas for improvement:

Continue to maintain / improve all criteria

Leadership Summary grade - 2

Of the 44 criteria in this section 20 were graded as outstanding, 23 as good and 1 as satisfactory

Areas for improvement:

Ratio of pupils saying school is improving versus declining

School facilities

Computer access

Careers advice

SMCS Development Summary Grade – 2

Of the 42 criteria in this section 24 were graded as outstanding, 14 as good and 4 as satisfactory

Areas for improvement:

Encouraging local community activity

Pupil comment summary – around 400 responses

Students made many very positive comments about the school and a significant number of the negative comments listed below were qualified by saying that overall they were very happy with the school. Students new to year 12 gave particularly favourable comments comparing QMHS to their previous school and commenting on the quality of teaching, willingness of most staff to help them and the positive atmosphere in the school.

Comment	No. responses
Teaching, Learning & Curriculum	
Poor standard of teaching including overuse of textbooks, number & quality of supply teachers	76
Lack of caring teachers including not being approachable, having favourites, lack of consistency in dealing with pupils, lack of help/encouragement, late finish to lessons	62
Homework including too much, set on wrong night, during exam period, meaningless	63
Lack of subject choice at GCSE & A level (Business Studies, Psychology, Latin, Greek, Law, Media Studies)	13
Need more study leave	2
Want greater range of extra-curricular activities including local community engagement	6
Lack of computer facilities including access to printers and blocking some web-sites	15
Would like cookery taught to all years	7
One to one tuition needed for all students	1
Learning Environment	
Poor facilities including buildings & PE	18
Poor 6 th form facilities (no kitchen, microwave, kettle, hot water, place to chill)	7
Lack of cleanliness (particularly in toilets & canteen), cleaners should clean	27
School environment including redecoration, chewing gum stuck to desks and things left lying around	19
Locker rooms are dangerous – too small, overcrowded, year 8 locker room security	13
Money is not spent wisely in school (moving 6 th form centre, sliding doors in canteen, Plasma screen)	7
Lack of resources (library)	2
Improve security including closure of gates	1
Behaviour & Welfare of Students	
Lack of healthy food in the canteen	25
Need more activities to build confidence/self-esteem	1
Would like to see improvements in discipline (year 9 mentioned frequently), policy not always applied, disruption in lessons, lack of respect	36
Inequality in giving out commendations between staff and year groups	1
Lack of community spirit	3
Unhappy at school	3
Issues with bullying	9
Too much pressure put on students to achieve	3
Students not encouraged to reach their potential	4
6 th form students should be treated as adults	2
Racism (not explained) & homophobia in students	4
Student views not taken into consideration	2
All students punished for lack of morals in a few. Loss of extended lunch	6
Discipline policy too harsh (attendance & truancy)	1

Comment	No. responses
Other	
Poor career and option choice advice	12
Failure to deal with complaints appropriately	8
Poor communication between home and school including reporting criteria	7
Uniform/dress code is too strict	2
Have parent's evening not Meet the Teacher	1
Update web-site more frequently	1