



To: Parents/Carers, Key staff at Parkwood Academy  
From: Sharon Court, Project Worker, Autism in Schools.  
Date: 10.02.23  
Title: Feedback from Parent Meeting.

Date of Meeting

10.02.23

Number of attendees

13  
SC from SPCF  
GC (Head Teacher attended for 30mins)

Discussion Points

SC introduced herself and the project to new members of the group.  
SC gave feedback to the group from the following meeting.  
Some parents said they were still not getting emails from the school with info about the meetings, some said they'd had a notification the day before.

At the previous meeting the group had mentioned looking at homework. Instead of the usual round table discussion, all the group participated in a task. The group were on 3 different tables, SC gave each table a sheet of flipchart paper and pens and asked the group to work together thinking of;

- Why homework may be difficult for SEND students
- The homework process at school.
- What could be done to help our SEND CYP (children, young people).

Below are the points made by the groups;

**Why Homework may be difficult for SEND Students – Feedback from group work.**

- Clear cut off – school is school, home is home.
- Too much homework given.
- SEND student struggles to be organised – folder in a mess.
- Tired after trying to cope/mask in school.
- Hard on parents to encourage.
- School day is long enough.
- Hard to concentrate.
- Parents not able to support very well – not aware of how things are taught.
- Too much pressure
- SEND students who take medication to help them concentrate in class – medication expired when home.
- Misunderstanding the work, struggling to understand what to do.

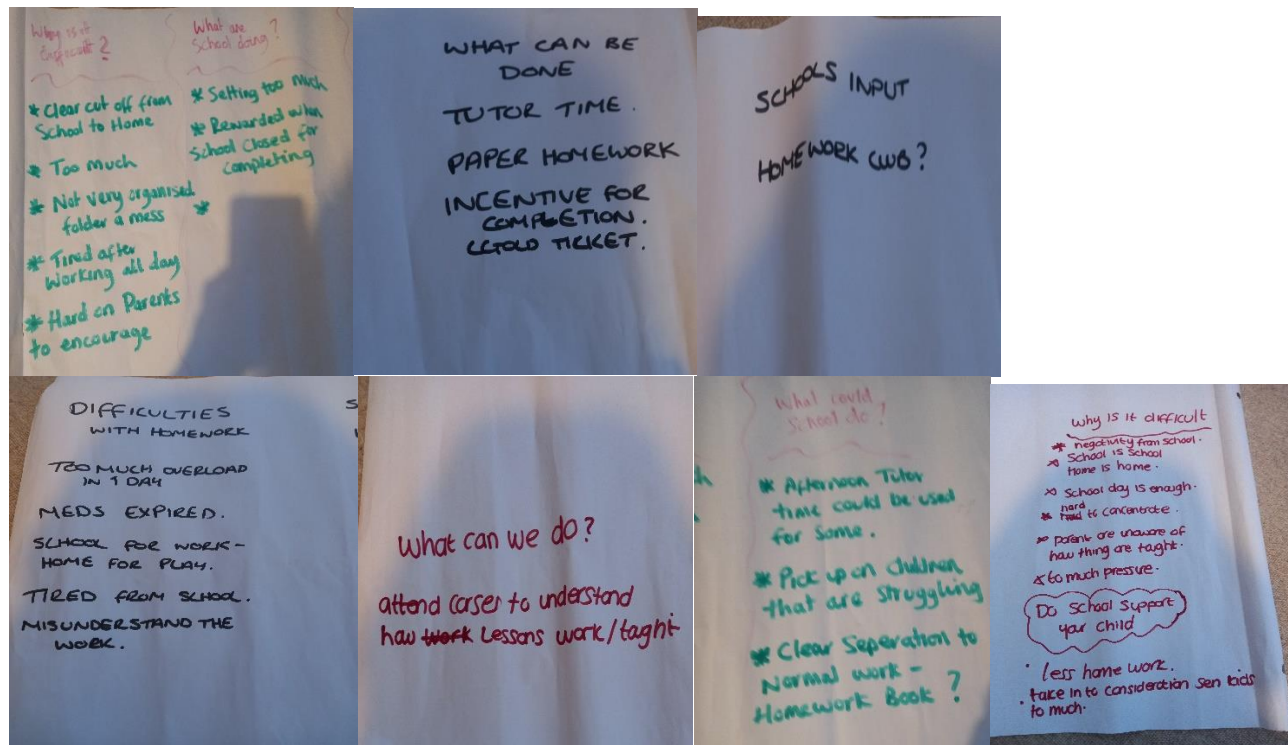
**The homework process at school.**

- Think there is a homework club but doesn't seem to be advertised
- Setting too much
- Some teachers do reward students for completing homework (example given of school closed and student rewarded for doing work at home).

### What could be done to help our SEND CYP (children, young people).

- Parents to attend course to understand lessons and how subjects are taught.
- Homework done in some of the tutor time.
- Paper homework sent home.
- Incentive for completing homework.
- Staff to take into consideration SEND students and understand why it might be difficult for them.
- Set less homework.
- Staff to pick up on students who are struggling.
- Clear separation to work done in the school. Homework books?

Below are parts of the group task.



During the group working the Head Teacher joined the meeting. Parents said they appreciated the HT taking the time to come and join in the meeting.

### Folders/Organisers

Parents discussed the folders used by used by Y7-Y10 students. Some parents understand the concept of the knowledge organiser being a practical means to keep work together.

Y11 students have course guides. Parents said these were bulky/heavy to carry around.

Some parents did not realise homework was in the folder and thought it was only set online.

Some parents said their CYP struggled to keep the folder neat and organised.

Some parents said the folder was tatty being carried round all day.

Head Teacher informed the group there was to be a relaunch of the folders after half-term. Ownership and independent working is being encouraged in the school. SC said this may present issues for some SEND students.

If a student loses their folder or needs any dividers etc. to speak to their form tutor.

Maths Homework was highlighted as a particular issues for various reasons.

Parents said maths had changed greatly since they did maths and they found it difficult to support their CYP. This led to frustration at home when the CYP is struggling.

Parents talked about school providing parents knowledge but recognised this is difficult due to time, but possible signposting from the maths department to helpful websites/books etc may be useful to parents.

Science was also highlighted as another subject parents struggled to support their CYP's with for similar reasons to maths.

### **SPARX Maths App.**

Parents said the automated emails cause anxiety that their CYP is not doing enough.

Parents find the message saying to encourage their CYP frustrating because they don't always have the knowledge to help.

A seek help message is sent out automatically, parents would like to know if this is picked up by the teaching staff?

Are staff aware of the areas the CYP is struggling with?

Do staff look at the percentages of completion for tasks? Parents said need 100% to pass – are teachers looking at those who are not reaching the pass mark and explaining what they have not understood?

Parents it was frustrating to have to remember a code to use the app on tasks. Some parents said their CYP's wrote the code down. One parent said their CYP had not got the code and forgotten it and had to start the tasks from the start which had upset the CYP.

Parents asked if there was a method to copy and paste the code?

Could a user guide for parents and students be put together?

Parents wondered if staff had used SPARX and understood the frustration with the app.

Parents said the tasks are too long. It needs to be broken down in size.

Some parents said their CYP's were doing 20% a day as this was more manageable because there other subjects with homework.

Parents said the maths app meant at least 30mins a day, longer if they were struggling to do the work. Log-in issues create anxiety.

Having to get 100% to pass is demoralising.

Parents recognise the school is not responsible for the SPARX app but wondered if able to feed back to the company/DfE?

### **Homework Routine**

Some parents explained the homework routine they have in place at home. One parent has a timetable and this has helped to keep the routine going.

Discussion on how a routine can help and how to create one fitting your individual CYP, some students will want to do it straight after school, others will need a little time to re-regulate themselves, how small chunks may be preferred, to have refreshments. Also discussed how doing homework can help life skills like time management.

One parent said they had implemented a homework routine, it was a struggle but they were continuing with it.

### **Homework Recognition**

Discussion on the school ethos of homework. The school does not 'punish' for homework not done. School views homework as important and imparts to students it will help them perform better and achieve faster progress.

Parents said it would be good to have recognition for those who do the homework and have a system of 'praise' to keep motivation and encourage.

### **Homework Support**

Parents recognise the 30min lunch break means a lunch club to do work is not feasible.

Is there a 'help' session for CYP to go to when they need some help on a topic or need some guidance?

### **Impact of Strikes**

Some parents reported their Y11 CYP's had come into school on the strike day but not been taught lessons or done extra revision sessions. One parent said their CYP has been told to read the a text book for English which they'd already read recently, they felt the time could have been used more productively. Another parent said doing past papers would have been more beneficial.

Parents whose CYP's were at home said they'd struggled to find out if work had been set. Some had found work, some hadn't.

SC explained that if a teacher is participating in strike action they do not have to set work. Set work is likely to be set by teachers who are not striking but covering other classes for the day.

### **GCSES**

Parents discussed that doing GCSE's was intense. A parent said how their CYP was now struggling with stress with the workload and they wished they'd not been forced to do all the GCSE's but focus on core GCSE's and others needed for their future pathway.

Parents talked about how focusing on less would enable them to do well and may get better grades if able to spend more time on fewer subjects.

### **Options**

Some parents have CYP's in their option year. One parent had no information, one parent said there is a meeting in March. Would there be some extra support (e.g. chat with student and parents/carers) for SEND students selection options?

### **Work Experience**

A parent said they'd received a letter to sign about work experience on the 28<sup>th</sup> Jan and it had to be returned the same day.

Parents talked about how hard it is to find work experience since COVID. One parent told the group how a company went from possible places to none available when they said their CYP had SEND. Group talked about how this can be a barrier to finding suitable places. Parents also talked about successful placements.

### **Happy News**

The group ended with parents sharing happy news.

One parent said her Y7 CYP had been invited to go on a PE away day which they had very much enjoyed, and coped well with the change to routine.

Parents said the school was good on putting on school trips, days out and having new experiences.

Parent said their Y11 CYP who has had struggles with speech had read out loud in class. The teacher had phoned to let the parent know. This was much appreciated. Parents said it's great to hear from teachers about positives and appreciate it when they take the time to contact parents.

A Y8 parent talked about a recent birthday party for their CYP involving go-karting and how well they had listened to the safety talk and coped brilliantly with the occasion.

Parent of a Y11 CYP said a change in circumstances meant their CYP had to unexpectedly make their own way to a venue and meet others from their school. It hadn't been far to go but was a great achievement towards gaining confidence and independence.

SC said dates for the next meetings will be emailed out.

### Areas Identified for Development/Training

SPARX

### Themes

- Homework Focus session
- Why homework can be difficult for SEND students
- Homework process at Parkwood

- How can parents/school help students with homework.
- SPARX App
- GCSES
- Options
- Work Experience
- Teacher Strike Action
- Parents recognition staff are busy and making comments in the meeting on appreciation.

**Impact**

- Parents opportunity to voice their thoughts and experiences of homework.
- Feedback to the school of parents thoughts and suggestions regarding homework.
- Good group work between the parents, sharing experiences.
- Head Teacher joined the session. Parents appreciated this.
- Good mix of year groups, helpful to hear from Y11 parents and how the folder system changes to revision guides.
- Understanding of the school ethos of homework.
- Parents sharing positive news about their CYP, staff and the school.

<u>Actions</u>	<u>To be completed by whom</u>	<u>Date to be completed</u>
SC to type and send notes to LO. SC & LO to have catch up/feedback from meeting SC to contact to LO about a parent who spoke after the mtg	SC <u>LO &amp; SC</u>	13.02.23 Before next meeting