

The Bold Statement From Penyrheol Staff That Sparked a School-wide Feedback Overhaul

“Everyone has their voice, and everyone’s opinion matters.”

Damian Benney, Headteacher, Penyrheol Comprehensive School

The School

Established in 1973, Penyrheol Comprehensive School caters for around 900 pupils aged between 11 – 16 and serves the surrounding communities in the county of Swansea, Wales. Its most recent Estyn report was carried out in 2018, and the school was awarded a ‘Good’ in all five inspection areas.

Damian Benney, headteacher at Penyrheol, has been doing [Teacher Tapp](#) for years. When Teacher Tapp launched School Surveys, the new offer caught his eye. Like all leaders, Damian works hard to provide an enjoyable school life for all pupils and wants all pupils to have strong relationships with staff and their peers. Damian and his Senior Leadership Team believed they had all the systems in place to achieve this, so they were shocked when staff told them that they didn’t feel their voices were being heard.

The Challenges

“We’re not listened to enough!” was the catalyst statement from staff at Penyrheol that set off an overhaul of the school’s feedback system. Like many schools, despite having a framework for feedback and dialogue embedded in its routine, they didn’t provide enough opportunities for all staff to share their voice anonymously and regularly. This led to skewed views of morale, dominated by just a small number of voices.

They had tried writing their own surveys, but because these didn’t include any comparative data or benchmarking, the leaders were limited in what they could conclude from the results, and they didn’t know how the school was performing compared to similar schools.

The Solutions

[School Surveys](#), powered by Teacher Tapp, changed that. The Penyrheol leadership team saw the independent survey tool as a way to introduce a systematic and benchmarked


approach to the school’s feedback culture. This is how they achieved success...

Sending out surveys to all staff

Surveys are delivered regularly to all staff, not just teachers. The regularity of the surveys allows progress on actions taken to be tracked effectively over time. Everyone has their voice, and everyone’s opinion is taken into account.

Sharing results transparently

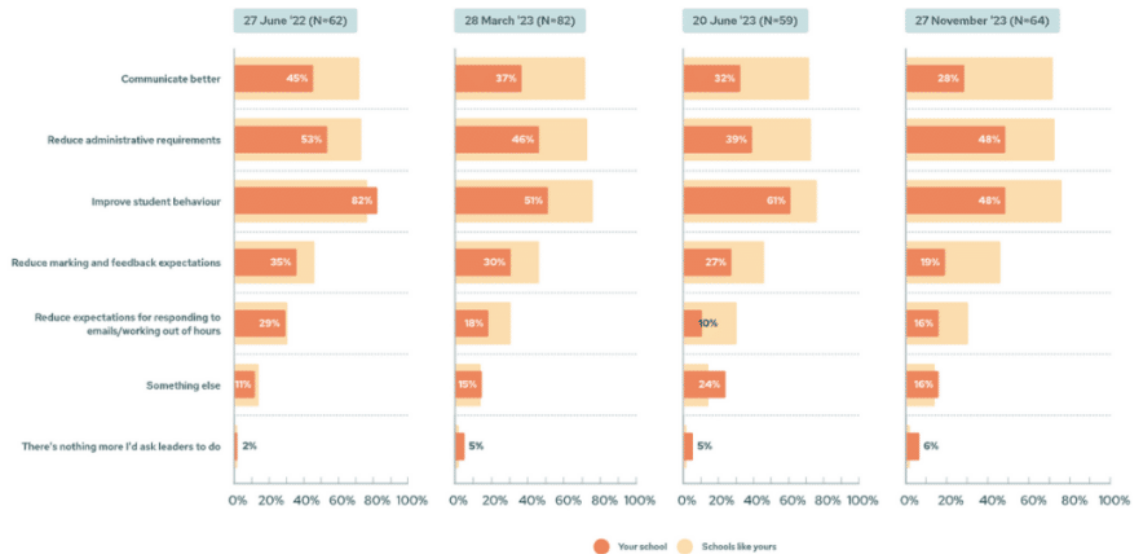
Survey results are available instantly after a survey closes. The report provides the leadership team with clear results and charts, ideal for sharing in a staff briefing. “The way the graphs show the change of opinion over time is really powerful, especially in terms of boosting morale,” Damian enthused! Penyrheol also produces a ‘You said, we did’ document, which is sent to all staff, highlighting issues raised, the follow-up measures taken and the results of these actions.

RESPECT ASPIRE THRIVE BELONG	
 Ysgol Gyfun PENYRHEOL Comprehensive School	
<u>Staff Voice 2023/24</u>	
You said...	We did...
Improving pupil behaviour would have the biggest impact on staff wellbeing	We had a staff meeting where the promoting positive behaviour policy was discussed and some key points clarified. All staff were given hard copies of the policy and the microscripts induction booklet. We also launched some new initiatives.....
Punctuality and internal truancy were two of the biggest issues we face in terms of behaviour	We have launched an internal truancy and punctuality working party for interested staff. This will focus on these 2 areas. We have analysed the last 4 weeks of data in terms of punctuality. The 'top' 25 late pupils have had punctuality warning letters sent home with the number of hours of lost learning time included in the letter. Punctuality will be analysed in another 4 weeks and in particular, the punctuality of the 'top' 25 to gauge improvements. Punctuality detention lists will be included in every other weekly bulletin. The change to SSDR makes targeting internal truancy more effective

Accurate benchmarking

The benchmark data, which shows how staff in similar schools have responded compared to the staff at Penyrheol, has been a big success. Damian had previously enjoyed seeing how other teachers respond to questions on Teacher Tapp, and the insights from the benchmarking in School Surveys takes that to the next level: “Having this powerful benchmarking capability on School Surveys was one of the things that attracted me to this great product,” he explains.

Q: What should leaders do to improve wellbeing in school?



This chart is for illustrative purposes only.

Key Results

Morale has improved

Penyrheol has delivered five staff surveys since mid-December 2023 focused on staff morale. Initial responses highlighted low morale from a number of staff and were, understandably, concerning. By using School Surveys to gather opinions, the actions that were taken as a result, and the clear feedback from the leadership team have reassured staff that SLT are listening and reacting to issues. Results from the most recent survey show a marked improvement in morale.

Areas for improvement have been identified

The regular surveys have revealed new ways to support pupil behaviour. Staff at Penyrheol had already made significant progress with behaviour in general, but insights from the surveys revealed specific issues that still needed to be addressed, and an action plan is being developed based on the findings.

Staff feel empowered

When everyone has a voice and the confidence that their opinions shape the school's development plan, it creates an empowered staff community. Precise benchmarking also gives the true picture of the school's situation compared to similar schools; a factor that can be reassuring and motivating in equal measure.

"It's been brilliant for us. Absolutely brilliant."

IMPACT

No. of surveys delivered
to date

9

No. of responses

875

Biggest Impacts

- ★ Improved staff morale
- ★ Areas for improvement identified
- ★ Accurate benchmarking gives the true picture