


January 2026



NEWSLETTER

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Looking Forward in 2026

Dear Parents, Carers and members of our community,

I hope you have all had a positive start to 2026. As you know, we began the term with an unexpected delay due to a boiler failure. I would like to extend my sincere thanks for your patience, understanding, and support during the last-minute changes this situation required. Your cooperation helped us manage the disruption smoothly and safely.

This new half-term brings with it a refreshed programme of clubs and opportunities for our pupils. Our ever-popular arts and crafts club continues, and I am delighted that several new clubs have been introduced, inspired by the suggestions made by the children during their recent house assembly meetings. It is important that we continue to give our children a voice, and this is a wonderful example of their ideas shaping school life.

We have also made significant investments in IT equipment across the school. Additional digital screens and visualisers have now been installed in classrooms, further enhancing teaching and learning experiences for all pupils.

Alongside this, our support staff have embarked on a range of new professional development opportunities. This training is designed to strengthen their skills and ensure they are equipped to meet the needs of every child in our school community - both now and in the future.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

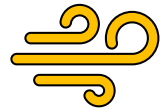
Chris Harris – Acting Principal

Latest House Points

Earth – 11,373



Air – 12,579



Water – 12,091



Fire – 11,730



**Key Dates
for your
diary**

**Parents Evening
Mon 2 & Tues 3 Feb 2026**

**No Teacher-Led Clubs
w/c 2 Feb 2026**

**Last day of half-term
13 Feb 2026**

We're a proud
member of the
EMAT family



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School Uniform Reminder

As we begin the new term, we would like to remind all families of the importance of wearing the correct school uniform each day. A consistent approach to uniform helps our pupils feel prepared for learning and represent Upwell Academy with pride.

Full uniform expectations can be found on our school website, and we encourage parents and carers to check these guidelines regularly.

	Required		Optional	
	Generic	Branded	Generic	Branded
Grey trousers or grey skirt or pinafore dress	X			
Grey shorts or bottle-green gingham dress (From May to October only)			X	
White buttoned shirt	X			
Academy tie		X		
Bottle-green jumper/cardigan with the academy logo		X		
Black formal shoes (not trainers)	X			
Years 5 and 6 only: A black blazer with the academy logo				X
For PE:				
Black plimsolls or trainers	X			
Black shorts	X			
Bottle Green polo shirt with the academy logo		X		
Plain black hooded jacket and joggers. No logos.	X			
For Swimming:				
One-piece swimsuit for girls or swim shorts/ trunks for boys	X			
Swimming hat	X			
Rash-shirt			X	
Goggles			X	
Towel	X			
Plastic bag for wet clothes	X			

Children are to attend school in their PE kits on the days that they have PE lessons. For those attending an after-school sports club, they should wear normal uniform and change at the end of the school day.



Year 6 Leavers' Hoodies

We are pleased to confirm that Year 6 pupils now have their leavers' hoodies. These can be worn on PE days from now on, and every day after SATs week as part of their transition celebrations. They are a great way to mark their final year at Upwell Academy.



Mid-Morning Break – Snack Choices Available

A range of snacks available for pupils to purchase during mid-morning break. These options offer a simple and affordable selection for children who would like an additional snack during the school day.

Daily Choices

- Popcorn – 50p
- Toast – 50p
- Cheese on toast – 60p
- Orange wedges – 60p
- Melon wedge – 60p
- Raisins – 60p
- Pancakes – 60p
- Juice drinks – 70p
- Milkshakes – £1.50

**THIS SCHOOL
IS NUT FREE**



Friday Specials

- Cinnamon bun – £1.00
- Cake or biscuit – £1.00

These items are available each day from the snack hatch, giving pupils a variety of tasty choices to enjoy at break time.

Some parents choose to provide their child with a snack from home for mid-morning break. If you do, please remember that **we are a nut-free school**, so no nuts or nut products should be included. We also kindly ask that snacks do not contain chocolate bars or sweets, as we aim to promote healthy eating habits throughout the school day.



Becoming a Parent Governor

We will shortly be inviting nominations from parents who may be interested in becoming a Parent Governor on our Academy Committee (AC). The role of a parent governor is the same as that of any other AC governor, and involves three key responsibilities:

- Taking a strategic view
- Acting as a critical friend
- Ensuring accountability

A Representative, Not a Delegate

Although parent governors bring valuable insight from having a child at the school, it is important to remember that the role is not about representing personal views or individual issues. Parent governors should address any personal matters in the same way as any other parent and not through their governor role.

At times, other parents may approach a parent governor hoping they will intervene in their child's issue with the school. In these situations, parent governors must refer parents to the principal and, where appropriate, the school's complaints procedure.

Parent governors act as representatives of parents, not delegates. It is not their role to gather opinions at the school gate or conduct informal "surgeries." If the Academy Committee wishes to consult a wider group of stakeholders, this decision—along with the method—must be agreed by the whole Committee.

What Parent Governors Cannot Do

Like all governors, parent governors must not take part in any cases, hearings, or complaints where they have a personal interest or involvement. In such circumstances, the governor must declare the interest and withdraw from that part of the meeting. They may still receive the minutes of that discussion, provided they are written sensitively and without identifying individuals.

Parent governors must also avoid using AC meetings to raise issues relating solely to their own child. If unsure, they should seek advice from the Chair of the AC or the Local Authority team.

Acting as a Critical Friend

The role sometimes requires additional sensitivity and diplomacy. Parent governors must set aside personal interests and always act in the best interests of the school, and above all, in the best interests of the children and young people it serves.



Visits to St Peter's Church

This term, every year group at Upwell Academy will have the opportunity to visit St Peter's Church in Upwell, an important and historic landmark within our local community. The purpose of these visits is to help children understand the special place the church holds in the life, history, and identity of Upwell.

St Peter's Church is a magnificent medieval building, well known for its striking Perpendicular-style architecture, its unusual octagonal tower, and its position beside the waterway that runs through the village. Inside, the church features fine medieval roofs, early 19th-century galleries, poppyhead benches, and a rare medieval brass lectern, all of which contribute to its architectural and cultural significance.

The church has long been a central part of community life in Upwell. Historically, it stood at the heart of a busy waterway and trading route. Its presence continues to serve as a reminder of the village's deep heritage and the generations who have lived, worked, and worshipped here.

During their visit, pupils will learn about the church's history, its importance to local people, and why it remains a key place of gathering, reflection, and celebration. By exploring this landmark, children will have the chance to connect with the story of their own community and appreciate the role such buildings play in shaping shared identity.



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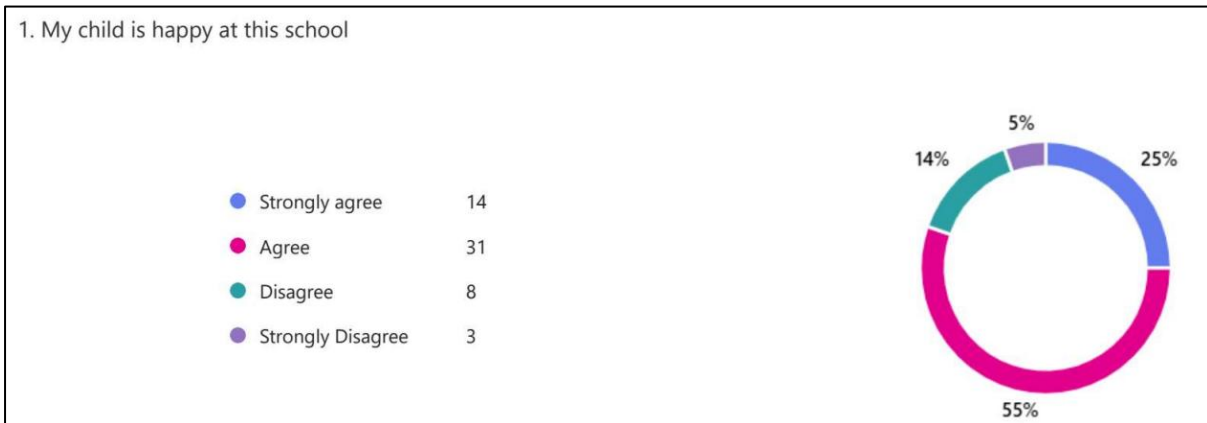


Parent Survey Feedback

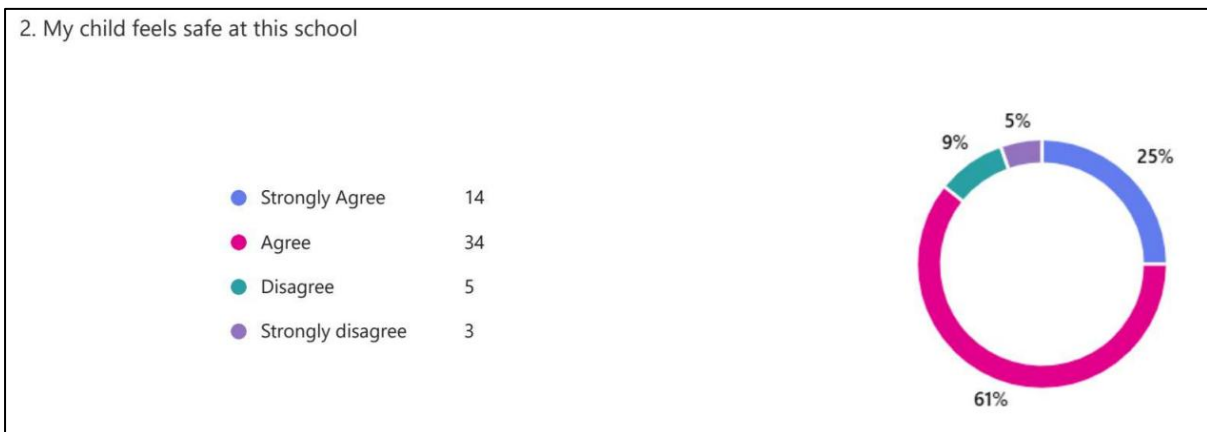
Thank you to every parent and carer who took the time to complete our recent parent survey. Your feedback is incredibly valuable to us, and it helps shape the decisions we make as an academy. We appreciate your honesty, your time, and your continued commitment to working with us.

Highlights

We are pleased to share that a strong majority of families feel their children are **happy at school**, with 55% strongly agreeing and 25% agreeing.

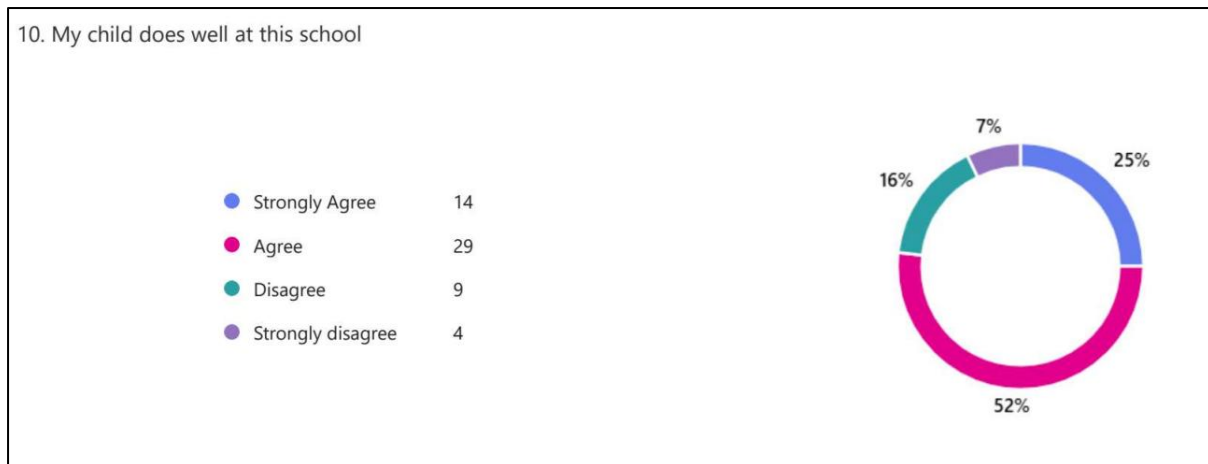


It was also encouraging to see that 61% of respondents felt the **school makes sure pupils feel safe**, with a further 25% strongly agreeing.



These results reflect the positive relationships, routines and expectations we continue to build together.

Many parents also feel their **children do well at this school**, with over 75% agreeing or strongly agreeing.



We are grateful for this vote of confidence in the work of our staff and the experiences we are providing for your children.

Listening and Improving

While the survey highlights some strengths, it also reminds us that an academy can always do more. Schools thrive when they listen, reflect, and improve - and your feedback is an essential part of this process.

Some responses show that not all concerns have been resolved to parents' satisfaction, and we want to address this openly. If you are unhappy with a situation or a decision, please come and talk to us. Even if you have spoken to the school before, we encourage you to come back so we can better understand the issue and work towards a solution. We want to get it right.

Working Together

Our aim is always to offer the very best for every child. Open communication, mutual respect, and shared understanding are key to achieving this. Your voice matters. Your experiences matter. And your partnership makes our academy stronger.



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