

School Lane Surgery Feedback



May 2025

In May we visited School Lane Surgery to speak with patients about their experience with health and social care services. From this visit we received 23 reviews for the service. The reviews have an average star rating of 4.3 out of 5.

School Lane Surgery is a GP practice located in Thetford. Upon their last inspection in January 2024, the surgery received a rating of 'Good', from the CQC. There are approximately 17,500 patients registered with the practice at this current time. School Lane Surgery offers a variety of services including Diabetic, Asthma, and COPD checks.

Healthwatch Norfolk Officers who visited School Lane Surgery noted:

Signage regarding opening hours is provided in Polish and Portuguese as well as English ensuring a wide range of patients can understand the information.

The waiting room is spacious with clearly defined areas for separate surgery and pharmacy queues.

A ramp is available at the entrance as an alternative to stairs which increases accessibility however, we observed a wheelchair user having difficulty climbing the internal staircase as there is no lift to first floor appointment rooms.

Overall, people appeared to be satisfied with the care they received from School Lane Surgery, specifically mentioning the friendly and caring attitudes of the staff as well as timely appointments. There were mixed opinions about accessing appointments, alongside issues with prescribing medications and the telephone booking system.

Below there is a graph that shows the key themes and feelings shared in the feedback collected by Healthwatch Norfolk.

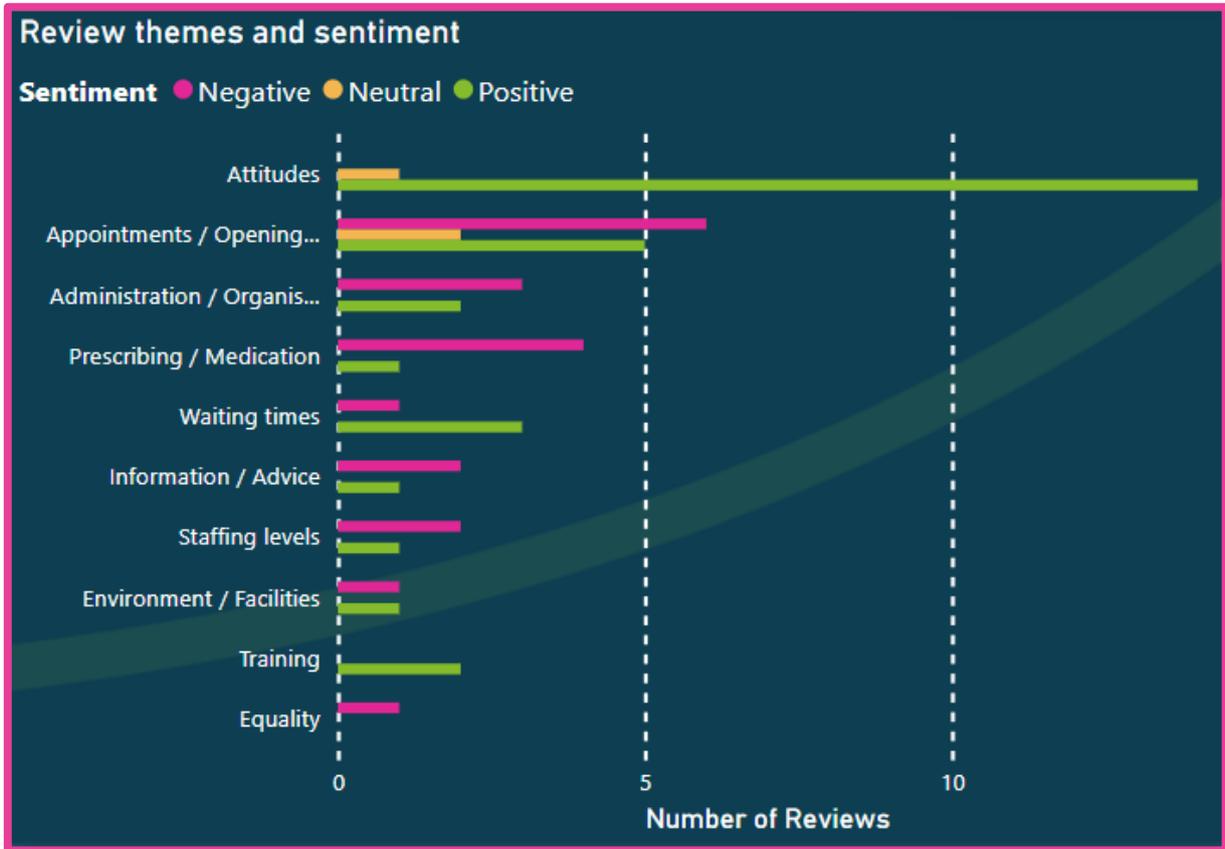


Figure 1- A graph depicting review themes and sentiment for the feedback collected from School Lane Surgery by the Healthwatch Norfolk Engagement Team.

Provider response

We take on board all the feedback from the Pts from HealthWatch as well as other feedback from Friends and Family as well as other sources. We are redesigning our appointment system to improve access, reduced DNAs and align our current capacity with demand as much as we can. This will be phased in and fully up and running by the 30th June. Whilst no appointment system is ever perfect we feel that by moving to a same day request this will reduce DNA rates, improve access and reduce the waits on the phones that Patients are complaining are too long. We are also recruiting more GPs with one recently started, another starting at the end of June and two more hopefully due to start in Aug and Sept later this year.

The reviews are displayed in the table below and can be found on our website www.healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk.

ID	Provider	Title	Review	Rating
258527	School Lane Surgery	Never had problems	I've never had any problems. Sometimes it is hard to get an appointment - I had to wait seven weeks. I rang five times without success so I came in to book that. I was seen yesterday and was happy with how it was dealt with. We've never come across any aggro.	5
258524	School Lane Surgery	Good surgery, very thorough	Whenever I need to see them they're excellent, 100%. I use online to book or I phone up and use the call back. The staff are very good, very thorough, especially the doctors who know my medical history. It's a really good surgery.	5
258504	School Lane Surgery	No complaints	They're very good, excellent! The appointments are on time, I can book easily enough either on the phone or by coming in. I've got no complaints about this surgery.	5
258500	School Lane Surgery	Not 'them and me', it's 'together'	They're top dog! They're on the job and they look after you as a human being. It's not "them and me", it's "together".	5

258494	School Lane Surgery	The additional doctors mean better service	They're first class. I phoned this morning, I was 20th in the queue and I used the call back. They called me within the hour and I've just had my appointment. I can't complain about them. Covid destroyed the NHS but I've seen a massive improvement here since then. There's more doctors so they're dealing better with patients, there's been lots of new staff in the last couple of months. Today I had a fresh matter to deal with and it was brilliant.	5
258561	School Lane Surgery	Every time I've used them they've been fine	Every time I've used them they've been fine. It's hard to see a doctor, as usual. I'm actually getting a physio appointment here, which I'm pleased about. I thought I would have to go to Watton. I'm in good hands.	5
258560	School Lane Surgery	They just look after me	Great. They just look after me. Always on time when I need them. The care is lovely when you're in.	5
258554	School Lane Surgery	Always helpful, happy and cheerful	The surgery is fine. Always helpful, happy and cheerful. You have to wait a while on the phone but you can normally get through. The care is good. They've got a lot better. The new system is much better; they call you back.	5

258553	School Lane Surgery	I'm happy with it at the moment	Everything at the moment is okay. I've been prescribed more tablets. I'm happy with it at the moment. The doctor helped this morning.	5
258543	School Lane Surgery	I'm happy with the surgery	I'm happy with the surgery. You've got to get in early on the phone to get an appointment. You can press number 8 and the phone system will call you back. Sometimes they refer me to Bury or I can get a same day appointment. The level of care is good. You get informed of what's going on. With luck my appointments are downstairs.	5
258530	School Lane Surgery	I wouldn't change surgeries	It's good. They're polite and efficient. If you have a problem they're always helpful, it's never too much of a chore. Sometimes you don't get past the triage but I'm not a doctor! No problems at all with the doctors themselves, I wouldn't change surgeries.	5
258523	School Lane Surgery	Staff always helpful	It's fine here, no problems. I just had a blood test and it was on time. The staff are fine, always helpful. Occasionally you can't get through on the phone but it's not their fault, they're just understaffed.	4

258518	School Lane Surgery	Delay processing hospital information	<p>The surgery is fine but the contact between West Suffolk hospital and here is a problem. I know the hospital have sent the information and it's been received but this is the 5th time I've been in and it's still not processed. I'm waiting for cardiology medication. I don't like to complain but this is unacceptable now, it's been since before Easter. I'm a full-time carer for my blind wife and it's hard to leave her on her own while I keep coming here. They've said I can phone but the queue is very long. Also some of the doctors speak very quickly. I wish they'd speak louder and slower especially when they have strong accents as I'm hard of hearing.</p>	4
258512	School Lane Surgery	Not happy with the new booking system	<p>My experience has been very good but the new booking system is driving me up the wall! I tried on the phone last week to book a face-to-face appointment as I had something that needed to be physically looked at, and I got a telephone appointment. I told the doctor who called I wanted a face-to-face and she gave me one. You can't get through but the call-back does work. You used to be able to book same day or urgent appointments online but that's only for non-urgent now. Also the surgery pharmacist was supposed to phone me which hasn't happened. I went to collect my medication and it had been changed without my knowledge or any doctor involvement, the doctor doesn't know why.</p>	4

258506	School Lane Surgery	Noticed there's more doctors	It's OK. I've been with them for 63 years so I've seen it good and bad but the doctors and nurses are doing what they can. At the minute they're doing alright. I've noticed they've got more doctors in. The girls at reception are good. Sometimes there's a problem getting medication which I think is a bit of both the surgery and the pharmacy. But overall, they're pretty helpful.	4
258503	School Lane Surgery	They're dealing with my health well	I can't fault it here to be fair, it would be wrong to say anything different. I've never had a problem getting an appointment or speaking to somebody and they're dealing with my health issues well. I usually book online but if not I ring or walk over. It's four stars as there's always room for improvement.	4
258499	School Lane Surgery	Staff quality is 5 stars, system is 3	The staff are outstanding but they're overworked. It's not their fault, there's too many people. The quality of the staff is five, the system is three, so I'll give four stars.	4
258557	School Lane Surgery	The care is lovely	I find it easy to get an appointment. Quite easy. I miss being able to make an appointment online. The care is lovely. The only thing is the stairs. My husband is a wheelchair user but we can't always rely on a downstairs appointment.	4
258547	School Lane Surgery	A really good surgery	A really good surgery, really good doctors. It's just the phone thing, really. You have to wait. They will call you back but it's at their discretion. There is nothing wrong on the whole with the level of care. Also, the stairs. Today I had an appointment upstairs. I had to have help.	4

258515	School Lane Surgery	Incorrect information given to DVLA	It's alright. The doctor here filled out information for the DVLA that wasn't quite right so I feel like they should have spoken to me more before doing the form. Other than that, they're good.	3
258558	School Lane Surgery	The doctors have been really helpful the last few months	Ish! I'm on permanent meds due to my health. No-one tells us when our meds review is. I need help filling in forms online. The connection from the surgery to the pharmacy is not good enough. The doctors have been really helpful the last few months.	3
258552	School Lane Surgery	It's not as good as it used to be	It's not as good as it used to be. I rang up a couple of weeks ago and I was very far back in the queue. I tried again and I was still far back. Once you get an appointment, you can't fault the staff. I cannot fault the surgery.	3
258498	School Lane Surgery	I've not met my doctor	They're not great. I've lived here for four years and I'm yet to meet my doctor. I've seen nurses for my blood pressure checks and they're always top notch, very polite and helpful. I have the same prescription every month and there's always a delay which is sometimes because the surgery haven't sent the prescription over in time.	2