

**REPORT TO: DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL EDUCATION COMMITTEE –  
17 JUNE 2002**

**REPORT ON: PARENTAL SURVEY 2001**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**

**REPORT NO: 545-2002**

**1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 This report informs Councillors of the results of the first Citywide survey of parental opinion that was carried out in Dundee's schools.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that members of the Committee:

2.1 Note the contents of this report.

2.2 Instruct the Director of Education to communicate the results of the Citywide parental survey to all educational establishments, congratulating them on the positive results obtained.

2.3 Instruct the Director of Education to carry out a second Citywide parental satisfaction survey during the school year 2003-2004, and report the results to the Education Committee.

**3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 The financial implications of the survey were contained within the existing Education Department budget.

**4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Parents will be empowered to participate in decision-making.

**5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 These proposals will support schools in promoting equality of opportunity across the City by engaging parents in active dialogue.

**6.0 BACKGROUND**

6.1 A baseline measurement on general parental satisfaction was a success criterion of Objective 4 of the Education Department's Development Plan 1999-2002. It was decided that the most effective way to undertake this baseline measurement was to undertake a Citywide parental survey.

It was decided that this survey should be based on the questionnaire for parents that is used by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) when undertaking inspections of schools. The use of this questionnaire allows the Department and schools to benchmark their results against national average responses to these questions. 24,000 questionnaires (see Appendix 1) were issued to schools for distribution in September 2001.

## 7.0 CURRENT SITUATION

7.1 7181 questionnaires were returned by parents. As parents were asked to return only one questionnaire per school they have children attending, it is difficult to say what rate of return this equates to. However, with just over 22,000 pupils attending Dundee's schools, it is fair to assume that this equates to just over 15,000 families with children attending, and therefore the Department's "best guess" is that the return was between 40% and 50%, which is very high for this type of questionnaire with such a large distribution.

7.2 The returned questionnaires have been entered into a database and analysed within the Education Department. The overall results are now available.

7.3 In line with the system operated by HMIE on reporting results, the total number of responses stating that parents "strongly agree" and "agree" with the statements are added and the total number of responses stating that parents "strongly disagree" and "disagree" with the statements are added. These are then divided and an overall percentage "approval level" is reached.

7.4 The results of the survey are printed below. The results show very high levels of parental approval with the service provided by the Education Department.

It should also be noted that the National Baseline figures for parental responses to this questionnaire recorded by HMIE are all either less than, or equal to the approval level of those parents who responded in Dundee.

All Education Department staff should be congratulated on providing a service that attracts such high levels of approval from users.

		% approval	National Baseline
1	My child enjoys being at school	96	94
2	My child finds school work stimulating and challenging	95	90
3	My child is encouraged to work to the best of his/her ability	97	92
4	I am satisfied with the homework my child receives	89	81
5	I know that if my child is having difficulty he/she will be helped	96	91
6	I feel the teacher really knows my child as an individual	85	85
7	My child is treated fairly by his/her teachers	96	95
8	I get regular, accurate and helpful information about my child's progress in school work	82	77
9	Teachers are good at letting me know about my child's strengths and weaknesses	84	79

10	The school has explained to me what part I can play in my child's education	87	79
11	The school is good at explaining its work to me	85	78
12	I am confident that if I raise a matter of concern the school will do something about it	92	90
13	I am content with the part I am asked to play in my child's education	94	87
14	I come away from parent-teacher meetings feeling I have learned something useful	92	88
15	Pupils are generally well behaved	90	89
16	Teachers deal effectively with bad behaviour	89	86
17	The school is well led	96	91
18	The school has good accommodation	90	78
19	The school has good materials and equipment for learning and teaching	96	87
20	The school has a good reputation in the community	95	92

These results have been considered by the department's Senior Management Team, and have been shared with Head Teachers, School Board chairpersons and parent representatives. Schools have been asked to look at ways in which these results could be improved in the future. The results have also been used as part of the department's European Foundation of Quality Management (EFQM) self-assessment, and will be used to inform the writing of the Education Department Development Plan 2002-2005.

As the survey was carried out only a month into a new school year, the department would wish to carry out the survey at a different time in the school year in future, to test whether the timing of the survey has an effect on approval ratings, with particular reference to questions 6 and 8-11.

## **8.0 PROPOSAL**

It is proposed that:

- 8.1** The Director of Education be instructed to carry out a second Citywide parental satisfaction survey during the school year 2003-2004, and report the results to the Education Committee.
- 8.2** The Director of Education be instructed to communicate the results of the Citywide parental survey to all educational establishments, congratulating them on the positive results obtained.

## **9.0 CONSULTATION**

- 9.1** Before the questionnaire was distributed, School Boards, parent representatives, Head Teachers, staff and the Teaching Unions were consulted on to the format and timing of the survey. This report has been subject to consultation with the Chief Executive and the Directors of Personnel and Management Services and Support Services

**10.0**

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

.....  
Director of Education

.....  
Date

**WHAT DO YOU THINK?  
A Questionnaire for Parents**

The Education Department is committed to improving the service we provide. We value the opinions of parents about our service. Therefore we are asking all parents to answer a questionnaire about our schools. This will help in our planning process and help us to achieve Best Value.

Please answer these questions on the basis of your experience of your child's school. If you have more than one child at the same school please choose one of them and answer all the questions in respect of that individual child. Your name will not be identified.

What school is your child at? \_\_\_\_\_

Is your child? (please tick box)                      Male     Female   

What stage in school is your child at during session 2001/2002? Please tick.

Nursery        P1        P2        P3        P4        P5        P6        P7      
 S1        S2        S3        S4        S5        S6        Other   

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
1	My child enjoys being at school					
2	My child finds school work stimulating and challenging					
3	My child is encouraged to work to the best of his/her ability					
4	I am satisfied with the homework my child receives					
5	I know that if my child is having difficulty he/she will be helped					
6	I feel the teacher really knows my child as an individual					
7	My child is treated fairly by his/her teachers					
8	I get regular, accurate and helpful information about my child's progress in school work					
9	Teachers are good at letting me know about my child's strengths and weaknesses					
10	The school has explained to me what part I can play in my child's education					
11	The school is good at explaining its work to me					
12	I am confident that if I raise a matter of concern the school will do something about it					
13	I am content with the part I am asked to play in my child's education					
14	I come away from parent-teacher meetings feeling I have learned something useful					
15	Pupils are generally well behaved					
16	Teachers deal effectively with bad behaviour					
17	The school is well led					
18	The school has good accommodation					
19	The school has good materials and equipment for learning and teaching					
20	The school has a good reputation in the community					