

St. Eithne's Primary School

Questionnaire for Parents Results

April 2008/2009

248 questionnaires returned out of around 325 families.

A special thanks to all parents who completed the questionnaire. We value all the honest frank suggestions and are proud that you portray St. Eithne's in a very favourable light. Below is a summary of the responses. We are unable to show all comments in case children and families may be identified whether directly or indirectly. However, we take all comments on board and at the end of the results I have summarised what steps we plan to take (are taking) in answer to your suggestions and responses.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child settled in well when they started school and the arrangements were good.	164	79	4		1

Comments/Suggestions: Below are a variety of different comments by respondents.

Some Comments: Made feel very welcome and comfortable. Couldn't wait to get back, Arrangements fine but just time for my child to settle. The school has made us feel welcome. Teething problems to begin with but determined hard work of teacher and staff he now looks forward to school each day. He only started in P.2 so the fact that he settled is a credit to the school. She recovered from a car accident and didn't start on 1st Sept. The care and attention to her was excellent.

School Comment.

We do our utmost to make sure children settle. P.1 children are phased in throughout the month of September. The children have a visit in June before the Summer before they arrive in September and parent meetings are arranged for October to discuss any concerns regarding this settling in. The vast majority odd children settle in well but on the odd occasion a child would rather be at home in the comfort of mum's arms and even mum would rather have him/her at home.

I am able to speak to a senior member of staff if I need to.	140	96	5	0	7
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Comments/Suggestions:

We've never had cause to contact, but would feel happy if required..., Never had reason to. Able to speak to anyone if I wished, Never had to avail of this, always very contactable and willing to meet. Senior staff to be congratulated for dedication and hard work, Thank you.

School Comment.

You can always speak to a senior member of staff. However, remember that teachers all staff have a complete and full timetable. Turning up at the door expecting to be seen immediately will take them away from the class, the children and will only impinge on the education of the children. An appointment can always be arranged.

The homework system is clear and my child receives a manageable amount of homework.	135	96	16	1	0
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Comments/Suggestions:

Yes. Just right. Very manageable as the teacher goes over that day in school what work needs to be done at home. Felt that a bit more homework would be beneficial. Perhaps a homework diary instead of a reading record with teacher guidelines on length of time child needs to spend. Going over reading 3 times can get a bit boring....loses interest. I'd like to see the weekly spelling test book.

School Comment.

Homeworks can wear us all down, parents, teachers and children. There are also a wide range of different opinions about homework. Many parents want more, others want less and of course the pupils want it banned. We have a homework policy which is available on the website.

We shall review our Homework Policy and practice.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child is given the opportunity to take part in a wide range of interesting enjoyable class activities.	153	85	2	0	8
Comments/Suggestions: Over the years she has been provided with some imaginative & excellent learning opportunities. My child loves being asked to take part in any activities and is always telling of his happiness at home. My child enjoys a "hands on approach" to learning examples they can participate in. School Comment. Clubs are really voluntary. Many schools do not provide any clubs except for football, netball and swimming. At St. Eithne's we provide a vast number of clubs. All the teachers take a club and they do it because they understand the benefits to children not because they have to. Many children are in more than one club. School ends at 3: 0 Clock for most of the children and any activity done after that is voluntary. Thanks to all staff and parents who help out. You all deserve medals and not criticism.					
My child enjoys school.	145	93	8	1	1
Comments/Suggestions: Yes he is a very sociable child and enjoys meeting his friends and learning new interesting subjects. Yes but like any other child there are always days he would rather stay at home and watch TV. Longer lunch time..my child would like an extra 15 minutes play.					
The discipline in school is consistent and bullying incidents are dealt with and handled appropriately.	110	102	8	1	27
Comments/Suggestions: Experienced some problems on way to school but we dealt with it. I don't know but hear it's nipped in the bud quickly. Never had to deal with this. Never had to experience any bullying than-God. Can't comment as we have no experience of it. Thank-you to senior staff. One parent wanted cameras in the class. (This would be an invasion of pupils' privacy and illegal). School Comment. With 450 children at St. Eithne's discipline is a major factor. The principal, Vice-principal and all the teachers make a huge effort to maintain discipline through mainly positive measures. Investigations are carried out regularly and all are resolved. However, on the odd occasion a parent is not satisfied because there may in fact be no case to answer or because their child has been accused of bullying. We shall always make sure our children are safe from bullying and take steps to protect them.					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I get information about the progress of my child in school.	154	85	7	0	3
Comments/Suggestions: Very good at setup. Parents meetings are very informative of my child's progress and in between times if needed. Rough indication of child's development in respect of peers. Parent teacher meeting very good communication is very important. No issues of concern... various teacher meetings throughout the year. Would like more progress information in P.6. School Comment: There are two parent teachers meeting in the year a monthly newssheet and an annual report. P.1 parents also meet the principal and class teacher in May before the child comes to school and the child comes to class for an hour on the second last day of the term before he/she comes in September.					
There are opportunities for parents to be involved with the school if they want to be.	134	102	3	0	9
Comments/Suggestions: Time impoverished. There are many opportunities for parents. I honestly didn't know...too early to tell. I don't know, I haven't heard anything about it. I feel opportunities to parents could be made more aware. School Comment. Help from parent volunteers is vigorously sought for clubs, bus trips and for the school PTA. This is always mentioned in the Newssheets, club notes and other publications. We would love more help from parents who are willing to give us a little of their time and must express our gratitude to the many volunteers who already give their time freely.					

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
There are high expectations for my child to work hard and to do their best .	137	202	5	0	4
<p>Comments/Suggestions: Teachers wants the best for my child but don't over-push. I don't know that I like the "High Expectations" would prefer that they "work hard and do their best". I don't agree with the term "High Expectations" but I would agree that there is huge encouragement and support to work hard and do their best. The teachers help them to use their talents to the best of their ability. School life has taught my child excellent confidence.</p> <p>School Comment. The term High Expectations is one which DENI and other education groups encourage us to promote. We do want our children to work to the best of their potential and achieve what they are capable of in their lives.</p>					
I am happy about the quality of education my child receives.	161	78	5	0	4
<p>Comments/Suggestions: All of our children really enjoyed their time at school. Due to restrictions/shortcomings in Ed. System school has constraints and specialist teaching is limited, e.g. dyslexic students. Curriculum appears okay. Yes my child is progressing very well and range of subjects are varied to prepare him for secondary school. My child has received a high standard of education at St. Eithne's. Very dedicated staff.</p> <p>School Comment. The 11 plus drew some interesting comments. We are still at an impasse regarding where we go from here. Pupils in Year 6 & 7 this year will be taught the revised curriculum which rules out preparation for Grammar school entrance exams. However, after school transfer club will be available to those children who wish to sit the tests.</p>					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
There is a range of after school activities if my child wants to attend.	161	65	1		21
<p>Comments/Suggestions: 1 child in P.3 and doesn't go to clubs thus need to pick them up separately. She's only P3 but will enjoy clubs from next year. We have not been informed (P3). I don't think there is anything available for P.1. My daughter in P3 perhaps too young for after school activities. P.2 Don't know of any clubs for his age. The afternoon clubs offer excellent activities. A good variety to suit all children. Would like more drama and dance. Cookery class should be more inviting for boys.</p> <p>School Comment. An amazing range of clubs are available for P.4 to 7 children. We believe that children in P.1, 2 & 3 should be home in the arms of their loving mothers. These children are very young and there is no better TLC for them than in the home environment after a hard day's work.</p>					

Good Things & Things I like to see developed.

The good features of the school are:	Things about the school I would like developed or
Clubs	Bike Shed
Friendly Committed Staff	Playground Buddy system.
Friendly Family school / Friendly Environment	Football nets on Playground
Great Education & Experiences	Netball Hoops on playground
Happy Children	Improve Play area.
Staff approachable & supportive.	Canteen meals could be better
Modern Facilities/ Resources	Vegetable Garden
Modern Facilities/ Resources	Extend Special Needs help.
Security	Car park system abused
Annual Show / Christmas Shows	Clearer Homework Policy / Diary / Abolish Homework
Organisation & management	First aid for children
Great Communication	Extend Special Needs help.
Breakfast Club	Car park system abused
Clean Spotless School well maintained	Teachers always right? Suggest Cameras in class.
Love Nature Walks / trips	
School Ethos	
Sports Activities	

All suggestions made by parents are valued and will be taken in the light they were offered. We thank you so much for your responses and hope that the plans I list below indicate our willingness to take on board those suggestions and we endeavour to within reason comply with the most requested developments.

I am sure you will not mind if we do not abolish homework as suggested but we shall try and look into our homework procedures & practice.

Planned Areas To Develop.

1. **Bicycle Shed.** This has been planned and actually completed. We are allowing Primary 7 children to come to school on their bikes first as long as they follow our rule of safety. P.6 children will be asked if enough space is available.
2. **Improve the Playgrounds.** We have just completed the fixed equipment in a new Outdoor Foundation Area beside the Primary 1 classes. More is to be done. We have also had a request from our Pupils' School Council to put in football nets, basketball and more ways to enjoy the play time. This is now in the planning stage and we hope to fund raise and get other funding to complete this sometime this year. (A plan will be available later)
3. **Playground Buddy system.** This is another area we are planning to set up this year as we renew the play areas themselves.
4. **Clearer Homework Policy / Diary / Abolish Homework.** The homework policy is available on the website. We shall look into our policy and practice of homework setting throughout the school and attempt to create a consistent step by step approach from Year 1 to 7 which shows progression and continuity.
5. **First aid for children.** Primary 7 teachers are to be trained this year so that they can teach their children First Aid.
6. Canteen meals could be better. This is in the hands of the WELB Catering Service but the suggestions made here will be related to them.
7. **Vegetable Garden.** A business in the community initiative is now helping us to add to our Nature area. One of the plans is to set up a vegetable garden for the younger pupils.
8. **Extend Special Needs help.** Special need help has been extended this year. However, due to falling numbers it is likely to be reduced next year. We have always provided extra help on a large scale. Classroom assistant help is dependant on a number of legal procedures which are dictated to us by DENI and the WELB special needs office.
9. **Car park system abused.** The car park belongs to the DOE and as such behaviour of other road users can only be policed by the PSNI or traffic wardens. I can as principal however, request that proper road manners be applied with the safety of my children in mind. This however, is as far as I can go. The Principal will try to on the car park as much as possible. Ultimately, it really is up to road users to have some care and attention for the safety of our children.
10. **Cameras in class.** We cannot spy on pupils and staff it would be impinging on their human rights.