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Views on Education in Wales: re-contact survey

Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of a survey of 400 individuals in Wales (247 interviews were with parents of a child aged 3-19 in education in Wales, 43 with 16-19 year olds¹ in education, and 110 with adults without any children in education in Wales). Fieldwork took place in January and February 2016. All participants had taken part in the National Survey for Wales 2013-14 and had agreed to be re-contacted. The re-contact survey sought to understand how confidence in the education system might be measured, and to examine issues on parental support for children's education.

1.1 Confidence and satisfaction with the education system

- When asked to rate their confidence in the education system in Wales on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 was 'not at all confident' and 10 was 'extremely confident', the majority of respondents (63%) gave a score of 7 or more (defined as 'confident').
- When asked what they thought about the state of education in Wales nowadays on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 was 'extremely bad' and 10 was 'extremely good' the majority of respondents (71%) gave a score of 7 or more.
- Parents of children in education in Wales were highly satisfied (89%, though lower for secondary schools, at 84%) with their child's or their own education; this was typically because parents felt their child was doing well there, or that they thought the education offered was of high quality (both 27%).
- The vast majority of parents felt their child's current education exceeded (69%) or was meeting (22%) their expectations; 9% felt it was below expectations.
- Analysis shows that people's confidence in the education system in Wales and how they rate the state of education in Wales overall are moderately associated but that they are not considered to be the same thing.
- For non-parents and those in education, the main influence on both their views about the state of education in Wales and their confidence in the education system was whether they thought teaching is of a high standard. For parents, the main factor determining both overall views and confidence levels was whether they felt the standard of education was constantly improving.

¹ Aged 16-19 when interviewed for the 2013-14 National Survey.

1.2 Parental support

- The vast majority (95%) of parents felt involved in their child's learning and development, though just over half (52%) desire to be more involved than they are currently.
- Almost nine in ten (88%) parents were confident about where to go if they needed information or guidance on helping to support their child. Many parents (80%) had used such sources of information, advice and guidance to help with supporting their child, most often materials provided by their school (28%) and / or advice and guidance from teachers (26%); around a quarter had searched the internet for this information or advice (26%).
- The vast majority of parents felt confident in their ability to support their child's learning and development (94%) and / or felt their child receives enough support at home (94%).
- Two-fifths (41%) wanted additional support to help them support their child. These parents most often wanted information about the curriculum (28%), better communication from schools (21%), information on relevant books/online resources (19%) and more guidance on how parents can help with specific activities (12%).
- Four-fifths of parents felt there are barriers to giving their child/children more support at home: most often time (42%) and the child not wanting (more) support (12%).

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IFF Research

Full Research Report: Mark Winterbotham, Catherine Turner, Erica Garnett and Sam Selner – IFF Research (2016). *Views on Education: re-contact survey* : Welsh Government, GSR report number 75/2016.

Available at: <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/national-survey/>

Views expressed in this report are those of the researchers and not necessarily those of the Welsh Government

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