



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

The Provision for

PASTORAL CARE

including

CHILD PROTECTION

**in the pre-school, primary, special
and secondary sectors**

1998-2000

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Introduction

1. The Education and Training Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) comments on a school's arrangements for pastoral care within the Ethos section of the published report. One of the findings of the independent report of the Bangor Grammar School Inquiry and of the Osler Inquiry was that the Inspectorate's arrangements for the inspection of pastoral care, including child protection, needed to be developed further.
2. In the light of pilot work carried out in the Spring term of 1998/99, the Inspectorate arranged a series of conferences to inform the education system of the changes to be introduced in its procedures as a result of decisions taken following these reports. The conferences were held in April and August 1999 and were attended by 1,128 principals drawn from the pre-school, primary, special and secondary sectors. The revised procedures were introduced in September 1999 and included:
 - the use of questionnaires to gather parents' views on schools;
 - the publication of information leaflets for parents, governors and teachers outlining the inspection procedures;
 - the provision of opportunities for the parents, governors and teachers to meet with and/or contact the Reporting Inspector (RI);
 - arranging meetings to allow inspectors to talk with groups of children, usually from years 4 and 6 in

primary, from years 8 and 12 in secondary schools, and years 7 and 12 in MLD special schools, and year 12 in SLD schools; and

- an evaluation of the school's response to Department of Education Circular 1999/10.
3. Normally, schools are given some four working weeks notice of Inspection. In 1999/00, a new form of inspection, which gave no advance notice to the school, was introduced to evaluate the school's provision for pastoral care, including child protection, as evidenced through the work observed in the classroom. In this form of inspection, known as 'unannounced inspections' as well as the revised arrangements outlined above, further procedures were introduced; these included:
- the completion of questionnaires by a sample of the children in year 7 in primary, years 9 and 11 in secondary, and years 7 and 12 in MLD special schools. The questionnaire approach was inappropriate for children in SLD special schools; and
 - the opportunity for the school to evaluate its own provision and discuss the outcomes with the RI.
4. In addition 43,000 copies of the booklet 'Evaluating Pastoral Care' were published; enough to provide a copy for every teacher and every governor.
5. In the 1999/2000 school year, the Inspectorate carried out 293 inspections in the pre-school, primary, special and secondary sectors. The revised procedures for the evaluation of the school's provision for pastoral care, including child

protection, were included in all these inspections and comment was made in the published reports.

6. In all inspections, questionnaires were issued to a sample of parents. If parents were not part of the sample, they could ask for a questionnaire and/or attend an arranged meeting with members of the inspection team on the first day of the inspection.
7. More than 20,000 questionnaires issued and just over 8,000 (approx 39%) were returned completed to the Department of Education. The questionnaire consisted of 20 questions which sought the parents' views on the ethos, the quality of teaching and learning and the management of the school. It included a specific question on child protection. The parents had also the opportunity to add a written comment.

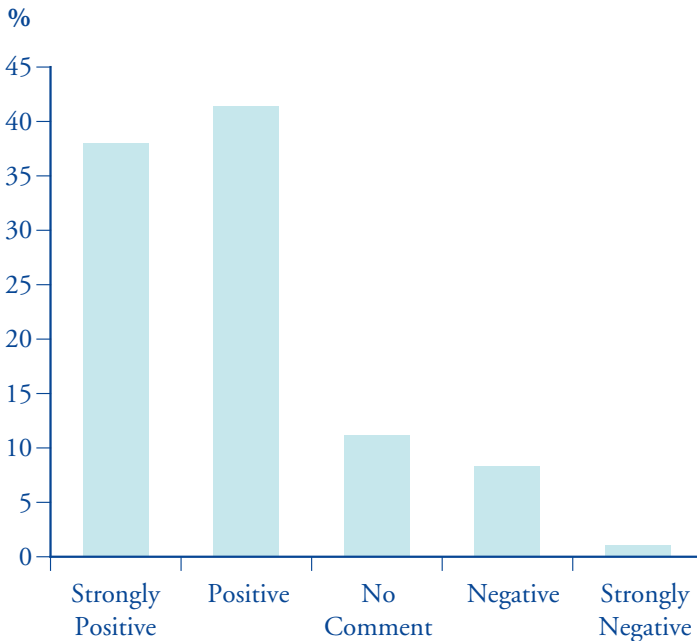
A number of quantitative terms are used in the report when commenting on aspects of provision. In percentages, the terms broadly correspond as follows:

More than 90%	-	almost/nearly all
75%-90%	-	most
50%-74%	-	a majority
30%-49%	-	a significant minority
10%-29%	-	a minority
Less than 10%	-	very few/a small number.

Findings and Outcomes of the Revised Arrangements

8. The responses to the specific question on child protection from the full range of questionnaires, ie just over 8,000 from almost 300 inspections show that over 80% of parents are either positive or strongly positive in their support for the schools' action on this matter: less than 10% returned negative or strongly negative views.

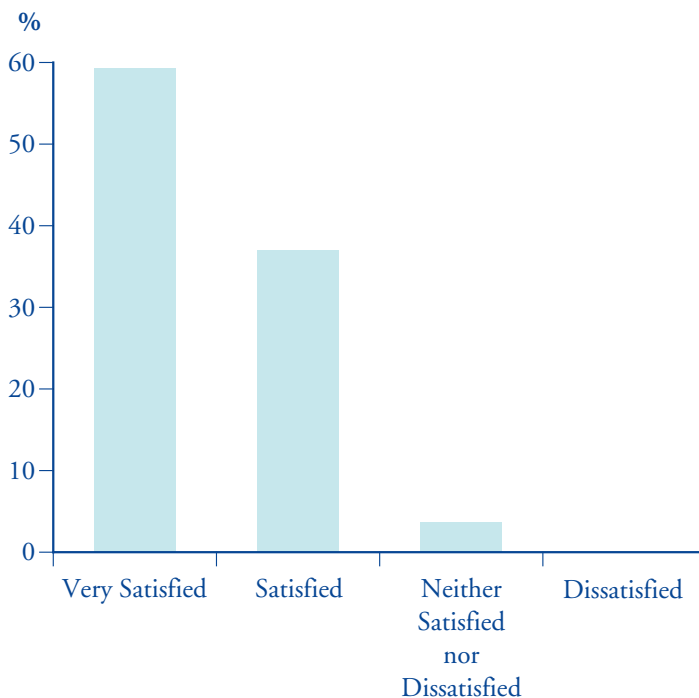
Child Protection - Parental Feedback 1999/2000



9. In 1999/2000, 16 Lay persons were included on 38 inspection teams. Commonly, lay persons were asked, as part of their role, to reflect on the issue of pastoral care provision from a lay perspective. With only one exception,

the lay persons reported on the strength and sensitivity of the school's provision. The table below sets out the extent to which the lay persons were satisfied that the views of parents were taken into account during the inspection.

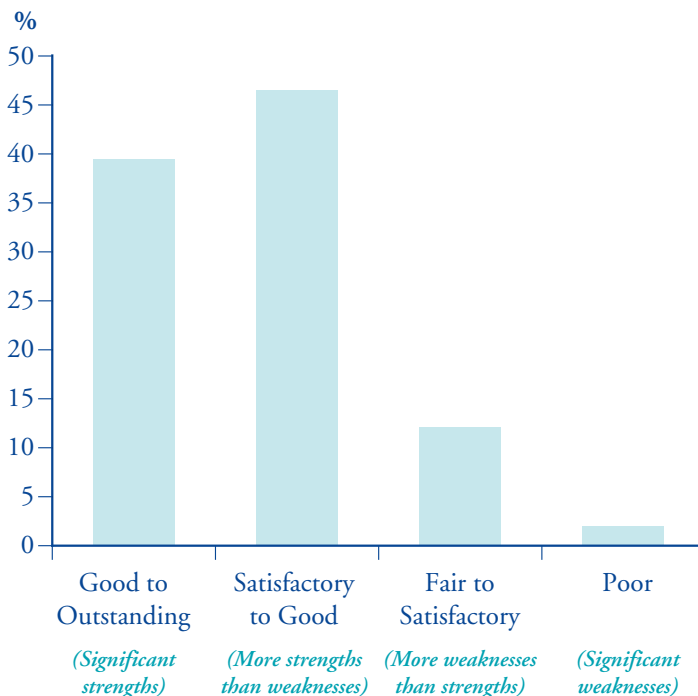
Given the stated purpose of the pre-inspection meeting, how satisfied were you that the parents' views were taken into account?



10. The views of the parents and lay persons are confirmed by inspection findings. Almost all schools inspected in 1999/2000 have in place procedures for pastoral care and child protection in line with the Department of Education's

(DE) Circular 1999/10. Over 85% of the schools were judged to have procedures which had significant strengths, or their strengths outweighed weaknesses. The chart below sets out these findings.

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11. The features identified in those schools which had good to outstanding, or satisfactory provision included:
 - a whole-school policy for pastoral care/child protection to which all staff had contributed;

- additional guidance within the policy on areas such as anti-bullying, discipline, vetting, and dealing with complaints;
- all those who had contact with the children had been vetted, including part-time, voluntary or parent helpers;
- the appointed designated teacher and deputy were aware of their roles and responsibilities;
- all members of staff, including ancillary staff, had received appropriate training;
- members of the Board of Governors had attended the training in pastoral care and child protection;
- the parents had been informed and were aware of the school's procedures for pastoral care/child protection; and
- the system for dealing with complaints was well documented and open to all; the outcomes of investigations were agreed by the parties involved.

12. In the examples of the best practice observed, from all sectors, the schools had:

- developed links with organisations such as NSPCC and had initiated additional training for staff and pupils using programmes such as Kidscape;
- introduced a personal and social development programme which helped the children to become aware of their personal safety and well-being;

- developed links with agencies concerned with the well-being of the pupils;
 - discussed aspects of the school's pastoral care policy, and ensured that the aspects designed to raise esteem and self-confidence were integrated into classroom practice;
 - ensured that the pupils knew a member of staff to whom they could turn in times of difficulty;
 - dealt with any difficulties efficiently and sensitively;
 - distributed a student handbook addressing issues relating to child protection;
 - involved the management committee of the Pre-school Centre in drawing up the policy;
 - outlined clearly all information relating to the policy and procedures, in the Nursery School, in a handbook for parents; and
 - involved the parents in the production of the Child Protection policies and procedures.
13. In those schools where weaknesses outweighed strengths, aspects which had not been developed appropriately included:
- partial implementation of DE Circular 1999/10;
 - insufficient training for all the staff in the school;

- lack of communication between members of staff, teaching and ancillary, and the designated teacher;
 - inadequate information issued to parents on the school's procedures for pastoral care/child protection;
 - lack of rigour in detailing and following-up complaints;
 - failure to ensure that the school's policy for pastoral care/child protection was reflected in classroom practice; and
 - inadequate monitoring and evaluation of the procedures in place to ensure that they are meeting the needs of the children.
14. An important aspect of inspection activity is gaining direct first-hand evidence from discussion with the pupils. In each inspection, two members of the team, one of whom may have been the lay person, talked with a group of pupils. During these discussions the inspectors spoke to the pupils about:
- the things they enjoy at school;
 - how the school deals with good or bad behaviour;
 - how they are supervised outside the classroom; and
 - how their concerns and worries are dealt with.
15. The inspectors reported that the pupils were generally very responsive and participated fully in the groups; they had

very good insights into the life and work of the school. Almost all those interviewed indicated that they:

- felt safe and happy in their school;
- enjoyed their school;
- were able to take part in a range of extra curricular activities; and
- had someone they could turn to if they had concerns or worries.

In a small minority of discussions the pupils reported that they were worried about bullying; when these concerns were raised they were reported to the school.

Conclusion

From early 1999, the Department and the Inspectorate have introduced significant revisions to child protection procedures. Evidence from parents, from lay persons and from the Inspectorate shows that nearly all schools have responded quickly and positively to ensure that procedures are in place to protect the children and promote their welfare in line with DE Circular 1999/10. They have co-operated readily with the introduction of the additional inspection procedures to evaluate the school's provision for pastoral care/child protection. Most schools have in place procedures which help to ensure the well-being and safety of the children.

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