

Title: Parents' and Teachers' Perceived Satisfaction of Parents' Meetings in the Primary School

Contact Author: Gillian Inglis

Session: ?

Email: g.inglis@strath.ac.uk

Address: Department of Primary Education, Faculty of Education, University of Strathclyde

City: Glasgow

Country: Scotland

Zip: G13 1PP

Phone: 0141 950 3745

Fax: 0141 950 3151

Author and Affiliation: Gillian Inglis, lecturer

Abstract:

**PARENTS' AND TEACHERS' PERCEIVED SATISFACTION OF PARENTS' MEETINGS
IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

G. Inglis

Department of Primary Education, University of Strathclyde

g.inglis@strath.ac.uk /Fax:0141 950 3151

The data in this paper is drawn from a wider doctoral study of parents' meetings in Scotland that is informed by grounded research. Scottish parents are advised that parents' meetings in schools should be the focus of a shared discussion on the individual child's progress, resulting in future goals (McClelland,1993). However, research on parents' meetings in the UK characterises these events as projecting a superficial consensus between parents and teachers for the sake of the child (Walker,1998; Crozier,1999). As the recent literature was rooted in a secondary educational context (12-16+ years), this paper discusses a study that examines whether these issues are transferable to primary education.

The experiences of a sample of parents and teachers at 3 primary schools were collated by the use of a diary – interview approach. This paper focuses on the facets of parents' meetings that contribute to parental and professional satisfaction, including the key themes of reaching a consensual view of the child, the interpersonal qualities of the teacher and aspects of meeting organisation. The data from this phase of the study suggests that satisfaction is linked to the participants identified purposes of the event, principally, that teachers transmit information on the individual child and that parents have an agenda of specific information that they seek. Thus, key in parents' perceptions of their role is that they should be able to ask questions and express their views in order to support their child. Correspondingly, they expect teachers to provide honest information and advise them towards supporting their child.

The paper concludes that the teacher and parents in the study express a higher level of satisfaction than the literature suggests. However, it questions the validity of an exclusively adult dialogue on the child in a modern educational context of children's rights and citizenship education.

References

Crozier,G. (1999) Is it a case of 'We know when we're not wanted?' The parents' perspective on parent-teacher roles and relationships

Educational Research 41(3) pp315-328

McClelland,S.E. (1993) Scottish Education 5-14:A Parents' Guide Edinburgh: HMSO

Walker,B. (1998) Meetings without communication

British Educational Journal_24(2) pp163-178