



**PARENTS' GATHERING**

**21ST JANUARY 2017**

**CARFIN**

Evaluation Report

**ABSTRACT**

'Enjoyed meeting other Catholic parents and drawing strength and consolation in difficult times.' A participant's view of the gathering. The evaluation report provides more information on the gathering, held in Carfin, 21st January 2017

# Parents' Gathering, Carfin 2017

## I. Introduction

The Bishops' Conference of Scotland asked The Catholic Education Commission to set up a parental involvement working group (PIWG) because the Bishops were clear that, as the first educators of their children, parents should be partners in Catholic Education. The first Working Group met in 2011, under the management of the Scottish Catholic Education Service (SCES) with a remit of enabling and encouraging parents to play their full part, and to deepen their understanding of the purpose and value of Catholic education. To date the Group has provided advice to SCES on parents' views and has produced a variety of resources for parents and for Parent Councils, as well as organizing events for parents. PIWG organised the fourth gathering of parents at Carfin 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017. Twenty-five parents attended and this report is based up 15 replies to the evaluation questions.

## II. Summary of the Evaluations

### A. Overall views of the gathering

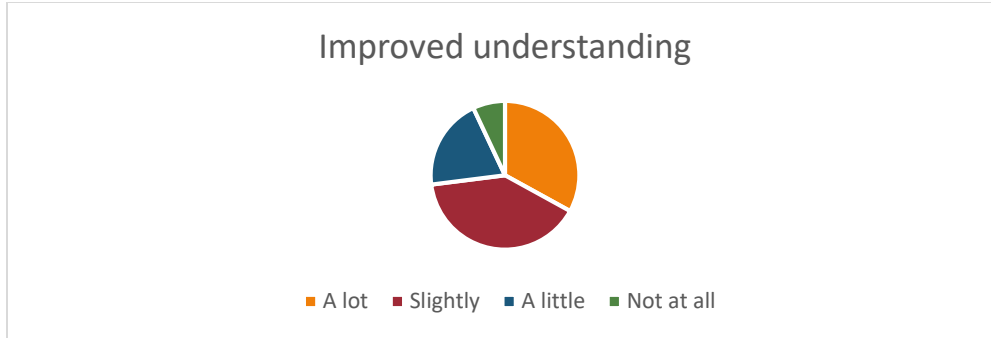
Participants were asked to describe in **two** words their views on the Gathering. 100% of the view were positive. The most common words used to describe their experience were:

*Insightful, Thought-provoking, Informative, Inspiring, Supportive, Interesting, Educational, Fellowship, Encouragement, Enjoyable, Enlightening, Comforting, Beginning, Development, Helpful, Heartwarming, Relaxed, Non-threatening*

### B. Developing in Faith:

*Do you feel that your understanding of *Developing in Faith* and the part Parent Councils can play has improved?*

14 out of 15 answered that their understanding had improved at least by a little.

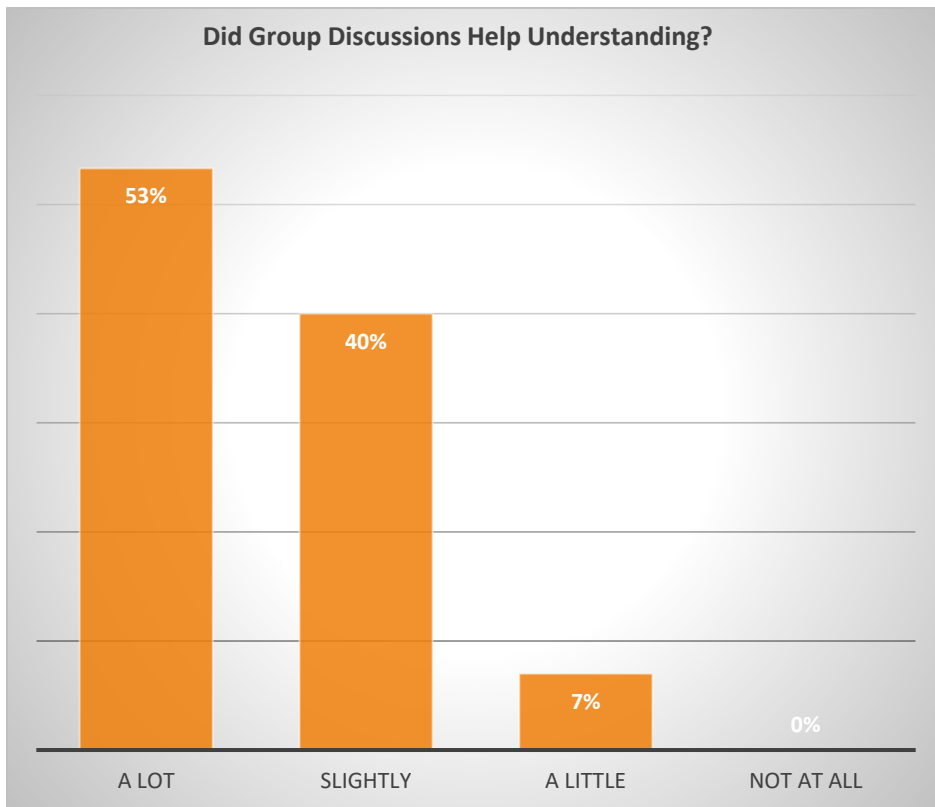


#### Comments

- *Has made me aware of this and will certainly make me investigate further.*
- *It has made me more aware of the positives and negatives that our school provides.*
- *Interesting discussions and ideas*
- *To promote parental involvement but having the confidence to raise the issue of religious engagement.*
- *We have set up a Faith group as part of the Parent Council, and so I've already done a lot of homework before I got here.*

#### Did your group discussions help your understanding?

All 15 respondents answered positively to this question.



## Comments

- *Enjoyed meeting other Catholic parents and drawing strength and consolation in difficult times*
- *Great variety of good practice round the table, and also frustrations about gaps in RE in our school, variable from school to school.*
- *Very beneficial to discuss differences in groups and experiences*
- *Brought up a starting point – more work to be done re more understanding needed. It was a good place to start.*
- *Very interesting discussions and good ideas on how to improve faith within my own family and community*
- *It was good to see what we have now done*
- *Got some good ideas to take away and knowledge of resources available.*
- *Group discussions very helpful, good to hear ideas from other schools/parishes. Reassuring that other parents feel the same*

## C. Developing in Faith:

### Did you find feedback useful?

All 15 respondents answered positively to this question.

## Comments

- *Lots of good ideas to take back to school parent council*
- *Very useful discussing various aspects of faith and evaluation*
- *Very interesting to see the common themes in each team.*
- *We heard other approaches which was very useful.*
- *Good to hear other groups discussion points*
- *Good to hear ideas and suggestions to kick start thoughts on what may be possible*
- *Great to hear what is positive in other schools/parishes*
- *Good points raised by all groups, food for thought and good points to share with school, family and friends*
- *I enjoyed the opportunity to discuss religious education with other parents and to hear the experiences of others/*
- *Interesting to see common themes emerge but also some good ideas coming up which I've noted for my own school. Will take back.*
- *Good to hear the positive things happening in schools.*
- *It was very interesting to hear other people's experiences and how they vastly differ.*

## **D. Suggestions for improvements of future gatherings**

- More sessions per year
- Sessions on RE Curriculum for parents
- More Attendees, spread the word via Parent Councils and schools
- Keep people on track
- Longer sessions
- Name badges
- Have meeting within each diocese
- Invite HTs and priests
- Use simpler language of discussion points
- Create action plans and commitments to try and create follow-through
- Reps from group to help parent Councils
- Better communication
- **Need to stress the importance to more parents**
- **Involve teachers to highlight how they try to reach out to homes**

## **E. Suggestions for development of Parental Involvement Working Group**

- **Promote the excellent work done more**
- **Look at social justice and parental support in order that parents don't feel judged but included. Develop opportunities for all parents to develop their own faith,**
- **Not sure keep going**
- **Regular events, perhaps coming to a PC meeting to explain remit of group**
- **Perhaps how to roll out Pastoral/Faith groups within schools and parishes 11**
- **Communicate harder .....if parents do not know then they won't look at wonderful resources**
- **Communicate better**
- **We need to meet more regularly to give time to express what we are experiencing and how we can develop and grow as parents, parish and school**

## **Conclusion**

Participants found the time spent together discussing *Developing in Faith* useful, Insightful, thought-provoking, informative and Inspiring. They expressed appreciation for the work done so far and gave the Group ideas to take forward for the future. PIWG members and SCES would like to thank all for their participation and hope that the next Gathering would be of interest more parents.