

Abstract

The National Education Welfare Board in the Republic of Ireland advocate a whole school approach to the Code of Behaviour. This work investigates the perceptions, amongst parents/guardians in three recognised post-primary schools in the Cork region of Ireland regarding the Code of Behaviour. Two of the schools were urban schools and the third was a rural school. This topic is attracting interest amongst Irish researchers generally but more work is needed to determine to see whether and to what extent the attitudes of parents corresponds with those in the literature.

Questionnaires and interviews were chosen as the research tools. This allowed for triangulation. One hundred and twenty four questionnaires were returned from the parents/guardians of fifth year students which represented a return rate of 95%. Six interviews were conducted with the principal and a parent of each school.

In the literature review, the writer mainly concentrated on Irish law cases and the National Education Welfare guidelines on developing a Code of Behaviour as well as Education Acts published by the Government of Ireland. By means of the questionnaires and interviews, the research set out to discover parents' knowledge regarding the Code of Behaviour, parents' opinions of the Code of Behaviour, how do parents know of the Code of Behaviour and the role of the school in the involvement of parents in the Code of Behaviour.

The results demonstrated that parents have, for the most part, a good knowledge of the Code of Behaviour. Also, parents were found to have a positive outlook regarding the Code of Behaviour. Parents were very aware of where they had seen the Code of Behaviour. There was some uncertainty with regards to the schools' involvement of parents in the Code of Behaviour. Recommendations included that all school partners have a positive contribution to make to the Code of Behaviour, that more parents be encouraged to get involved in Parents' Councils, that parents' booklets be published by schools and that parents be invited to read and sign a copy of the Code of Behaviour at the start of each academic year.