

C.G.S. Newsletter

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Special Supplement

June 2009

A Parent Survey was conducted throughout the Winter Term to gauge parental views on various aspects of school life. A similar survey was conducted in 1997, 2000, 2003 and in 2006. Alumni Puja, WeeWee, Abhinandan, Tapesh led by Aziz, went through the 1137 forms that were completed, representing almost all CGS parents. Many thanks to our Alumni who spent many hours extracting quantitative and qualitative data from the completed survey forms.

CGS Survey 2009 Results!

| Questions | 2009 | 2006 | 2003 | 2000 | 1997 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 9. Your view on C.G.S. administration: | | | | | |
| a. It is effective and efficient. | 55% | 47% | 59% | 53% | 47% |
| b. It is satisfactory. | 40% | 48% | 38% | 46% | 47% |
| c. It is incompetent and ineffective. | 5% | 5% | 3% | 1% | 6% |
| 10. Why you choose to keep your child in C.G.S. | | | | | |
| a. Because it is genuinely a good school. | 78% | 72% | 79% | 78% | 78% |
| b. Because you have no other choice. | 18% | 20% | 15% | 19% | 20% |
| c. Because it has achieved a 'elite status'. | 5% | 8% | 6% | 3% | 2% |
| 11. The assessment system at CGS is: | | | | | |
| a. Satisfactory, it motivates my child. | 87% | 91% | 94% | 90% | N/A |
| b. Unsatisfactory, my child is not motivated. | 13% | 9% | 6% | 10% | N/A |
| 12. The CGS environment is: | | | | | |
| a. Good. | 65% | 59% | 73% | 62% | N/A |
| b. Fair. | 29% | 34% | 21% | 31% | N/A |
| c. Poor. | 6% | 7% | 6% | 7% | N/A |
| 13. Cleanliness (toilets etc.) of premises is | | | | | |
| a. Good. | 68% | 76% | 71% | 67% | N/A |
| b. Fair. | 26% | 20% | 21% | 31% | N/A |
| c. Poor. | 6% | 4% | 8% | 2% | N/A |
| 14. Does CGS successfully make students self-sufficient? | | | | | |
| a. Successfully. | 83% | 85% | 84% | 75% | N/A |
| b. Unsuccessfully. | 17% | 15% | 16% | 25% | N/A |
| 15. Does CGS successfully teach students etiquette: | | | | | |
| a. Successfully. | 78% | 83% | 87% | 87% | N/A |
| b. Unsuccessfully. | 22% | 17% | 13% | 13% | N/A |
| 16. Do you support sports matches with other schools? | | | | | |
| a. Yes | 95% | 93% | 93% | 91% | N/A |
| b. No. | 4% | 6% | 5% | 5% | N/A |
| c. Other: | 1% | 1% | 2% | 4% | N/A |
| 17. Students from class 3 upwards are able to borrow library books weekly. Is your child borrowing books regularly? | | | | | |
| a. Yes. | 70% | 68% | 53% | 58% | N/A |
| b. No | 30% | 32% | 29% | 18% | N/A |
| 18. Are you satisfied with the amount of reading your child is made to do at CGS? | | | | | |
| a. Yes. | 75% | 76% | 78% | 82% | N/A |
| b. No. | 25% | 24% | 22% | 18% | N/A |
| 19. Is your child socially well-adjusted at CGS, has he/she made sufficient friends? | | | | | |
| a. Yes. | 93% | 96% | 92% | 97% | N/A |
| b. No. | 7% | 4% | 8% | 3% | N/A |
| 20. Is your child happy going to school at CGS? | | | | | |
| a. Yes. | 95% | 97% | 97% | 99% | N/A |
| b. No. | 5% | 3% | 3% | 1% | N/A |

HOW DOES THE SURVEY HELP CGS IMPROVE?

The survey invited parents to respond to several school related issues via a questionnaire. Each and every form is painstaking read through in complete detail. Results are tabulated to provide quantitative and qualitative data which can then be used to formulate short, medium and long term strategic policy. Transparency is essential therefore alumni are recruited for the job.

Key faculty members including Directors, Heads, Department Heads, Class Coordinators and admin officers will sit together to review the findings and use information gathered from the survey to bring about change. Possible solutions and strategies will be discussed and an action plan formulated. The action plan will include a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) and balancing priorities with feasibility. For example, the last survey conducted in 2006 showed parents wanted an increased number of PTM's. We took that request on board and have implemented policies that create more opportunities for parents and teachers to interact. The parents day in school, is just one such example; where parents in Lower and Middle School come and spend an entire day in school with their child and are able to understand our teaching methodology as well as meet all the subject and class teachers.

Unfortunately not all issues will have immediate solutions or 'quick fixes'. The ongoing problem we have with traffic and parking is one such example. One strategy we have come up with to reduce the traffic pressure at Lower/ Middle is to bus class 5 students to the Upper School at pick-up time. This has eased the congestion marginally but unless we get the full cooperation of all drivers, guardians, parents in maintaining traffic rules, traffic will continue to be a problem.

The SWOT analysis is a reality check; after all, it is too easy to 'gloss over' our weaknesses and view CGS, through rose-tinted spectacles. Every time the survey results come in we sit up in our chairs and reflect on the many comments made by parents, focussing particularly on the areas they are 'unhappy' with. The survey is also a tool to get parents further empowered and provide them with a platform for them to share their views.

The results:

Quantitative data is tabulated on the front page. It is interesting to see trends over a 12 year period, from when the survey was first introduced. The first three surveys, in 1997, 2000 and 2003 were completed by parents on a voluntary basis, subsequently, in the 2006 and 2009 survey all parents were required to complete the questionnaires. Most indicators have not changed significantly from our last survey in 2006, showing, in most cases, a change of less than 5%.

We asked parents which 3 areas they were '**most unhappy**' with the top answers were (the numbers in brackets represents the percentage of parents who expressed this view:

- 1 **Fees too high (24.6%)**
- 2 **Traffic and parking arrangements not satisfactory (15.8%)**
- 3 **No Playground (11.8%)**
- 4 **Lack of qualified teachers (11.6%)**
- 5 **Too much workload (9.9%)**
- 6 **Lock-out rule is too harsh (6.7%)**

We then asked parents which 3 areas they were '**most satisfied**' with, the top answers are:

- 1 **Good teachers and teaching methods (45.1%)**
- 2 **Hygiene and maintenance of premises (33%)**
- 3 **High discipline standards (27.2%)**
- 4 **Good ECAs and Sports (18.6%)**
- 5 **Outings and functions (12.8%)**
- 6 **Good Academic programme (10.5%)**
- 7 **Good Student-Teacher relationships (8%)**

Let us examine the areas parents were '**most unhappy**' with:

1 Fees too high: Almost a quarter of parents felt the fees were too high, and with the current financial global crisis this is an understandable problem for many. CGS has expanded its financial aid programme and the introduction of the A.K. Khan Scholarships in 2008 means many more families can benefit.

2 Traffic / parking problems: Just under 16% complained about this ever increasing urban problem. We have already employed a large security team to ensure the smooth flow of traffic as far as possible but we do require the cooperation of parents to ensure success.

3 No Playground: 1 in 9 parents requested a playing field, however with the scarcity of land in our urban context this will only lead to a further increase in our already high fees! We will continue to rent facilities from the city including cricket grounds, squash courts, swimming pool, athletics field and football fields.

4 Lack of qualified teachers: 11.6% of parents felt we had a lack of qualified teachers and certainly this is the complaint that has caused us the greatest concern. Our only consolation is that on the flip side 45.1% of parents were most satisfied with the '**Good teachers and teaching methods**'. Teacher training is an ongoing endeavour and while hiring qualified teachers in our greatest challenge, we are faced a nation-wide shortage of qualified teachers as there are no suitable tertiary institutions for teacher-training. Your feedback will help us focus more on this problem and hopefully implement a more comprehensive in-house training schedule.

5 Too much work-load: 1 in 10 parents felt the workload at CGS was too great. Unfortunately in an increasingly competitive world students need to be prepared to face the challenges that lie ahead and one of the ways of preparing them is stretching them to the limit. Parents could off-set this by ensuring their children participate in ECA's and other physical activities to create a balance.

6 Lock-out: 1 in 16 parents felt this was a harsh rule. Lock-out is a hallmark of the firm discipline at CGS, it teaches students an early lesson in punctuality. One only needs to be locked-out once to feel the pinch, and hopefully, never repeat it. During inclement weather and political unrest lock-out rules are relaxed.

Parents used this opportunity to express their suggestions for improvement. Here are some comments that were expressed:

- ◆ "I feel a moral class may be beneficial"
- ◆ "Students should visit old age homes, orphanages and be made aware of their social responsibility"
- ◆ "An E-club promoting environmental awareness should be initiated"
- ◆ "I think children from all classes of society should be blended"
- ◆ "Practical applications like power point can be introduced in many subjects at all levels"
- ◆ "Spoken English at CGS seems to be deteriorating. Include spoken English classes in the curriculum"
- ◆ "A foreign language should be introduced from class 3 onwards"
- ◆ "There should be no favouritism at CGS"
- ◆ "Creative writing / report writing (both English and Bengali) should be encouraged more"
- ◆ "Ensure that students are in touch with Bengali culture / traditions"

All these and the many other suggestions given by parents have been noted and are issues we will be looking into. If this dialogue has invoked further thoughts and you have something to add do write in or email us at: chittagonggrammarschool@hotmail.com, your comments will remain confidential.

We thank all parents for taking the time to complete the survey. The criticism will push us to improve and we are encouraged by the many positive comments, in particular a parents who writes, "High educational atmosphere combined with fantastic, outstanding co-curricular activities at CGS! Our prayers are with you!"