CSSC membership survey 2019 evaluation

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Chief Executive's foreword

CSSC came into operation on 1 September 2016 to advocate on behalf of the controlled sector. For the first time the sector has a representative voice.

Listening to controlled school leaders has underpinned CSSC's work to date. In early 2017 a number of well-attended 'listening events' were held. Principals and chairs of Governors from across the sector engaged with CSSC at these events and their feedback underpinned our 2017/18 programme of work.

I am delighted that 95% of controlled schools have chosen to register with Council, giving us a clear mandate to speak on behalf of the sector. To ensure that we continue to meet the needs of controlled schools, all member schools were given the opportunity to share their views through a membership survey, carried out during February and March 2019.

This survey was the first opportunity member schools have had to feedback directly to CSSC on all aspects of our work.

I am pleased that 47% of member schools responded, providing valuable insight on how CSSC can continue to develop.

The feedback we have received will help us to shape our programme of work and ensure that the work we do is beneficial to controlled schools individually, and for the sector as a whole.

Barry Mulholland
Chief Executive

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Introduction

The Controlled Schools' Support Council (CSSC) was set up in September 2016 as the advocacy body for Northern Ireland's controlled schools. For the first time the largest educational sector has a representative voice.

The need for CSSC has been made abundantly clear in the short time it has been in existence, with 95% of controlled schools opting-in to register with the Council.

To ensure that the organisation is meeting the needs of the controlled sector, all member schools where given the opportunity to share their views through a membership survey.

All controlled schools were surveyed by the Business Consultancy Service (BSC) in 2018 as part of its review of CSSC. To avoid duplication CSSC did not carry out its own membership survey in 2018. This 2019 survey is therefore the first opportunity member schools have had to feedback directly to CSSC on all aspects of its work.

The survey was sent to member schools at the end of February 2019.

This analysis explores the responses given by school principals and will help to shape CSSC's programme of work and ensure that the work it does is beneficial to controlled schools individually, and for the sector as a whole.

There were views and comments expressed by schools about other organisations. While this report focuses on CSSC and its work, we will be following up and engaging with these other organisations to ensure controlled schools receive appropriate professional support.

Response rate

The membership survey opened on 25 February 2019 and closed on the 31 March. Member schools (n: 527) were invited to complete the survey online though Survey Monkey or to return a hard copy version which was sent to all member schools.

In total 248 schools responded to the survey, accounting for 47% of member schools. A breakdown of responses by phase is shown in the figure below.

Figure 1: Number of responses by phase

	Responses	
Phase	**N**	**%**
Nursery	30	12.1
Primary	168	67.74
Non-selective	24	9.68
Grammar	12	4.84
Special	14	5.65
Total	248	100

The response rate for each phase is detailed in Figure 2. A good response rate overall and by each phase provides a representative sample for the survey.

Figure 2: Response rate by phase

	Survey respondents by phase (n)	Member schools by phase (n)	Response rate by phase (%)
Nursery	30	58	52
Primary	168	367	46
Non-selective	24	53	45
Grammar	12	16	75
Special	14	33	42

In terms of school type, we asked schools to detail if they were controlled integrated, Irish medium or neither of those categories. Figure 3 shows the responses.

Figure 3: Is your school controlled integrated or an Irish medium school?

School type	Response (n)
Controlled integrated	72
Irish medium	1
Neither of the above	175

The sector contains 27 controlled integrated schools, yet 72 schools defined themselves as 'controlled integrated' in their survey response. One school commented, "We are not officially integrated but historically we welcome all faiths and enrol children from all faiths

annually". The volume of responses to this category perhaps indicates that many schools are of the same opinion and classify themselves as 'integrated' despite not formally transforming. This may merit future investigation.

Communications

Website

Figure 4: Have you visited the CSSC website?
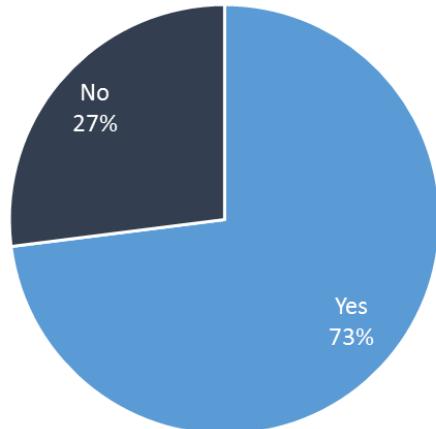
73% of respondents had visited the CSSC website.

21 respondents commented on the website with the majority agreeing that the content was informative. Many also commented that it was easy to navigate.

One respondent commented that they had seen "little of interest" and asked for videos from the conference on 8 March to be uploaded [the video was uploaded to the CSSC website on 14 March 2019].

One school stated "I like the celebration of what is going on, which is important."

Monthly e-newsletter

Figure 5: Do you read our monthly e-newsletter?

83% of respondents said that they read our monthly e-newsletter.

Of the 35 comments, the majority of principals stated that due to time pressures they can only scan or briefly 'gloss over' the newsletter.

Those who commented on the content said that it was informative. Two schools stated that due to formatting they had difficulty reading/accessing the document [CSSC officers are already aware of one school having issues with downloading the newsletter and so it is sent in a different format].
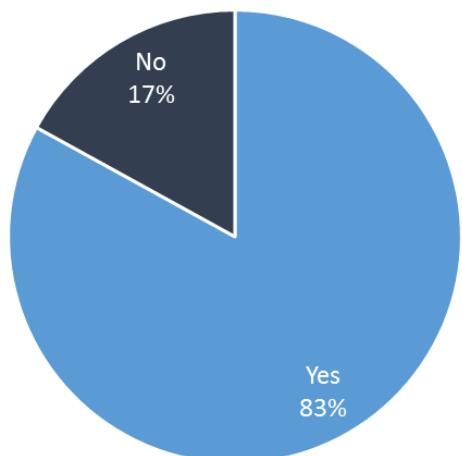
Posted newsletter

Figure 6: Do you read our posted newsletter?
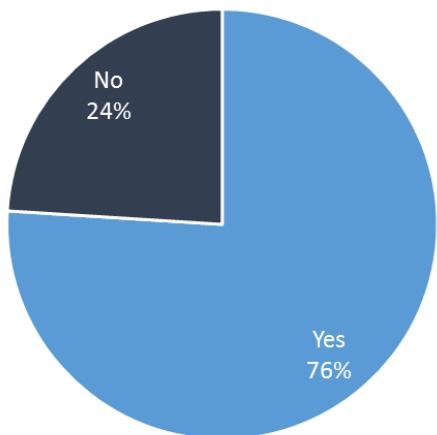
76% of schools read the posted hardcopy newsletter.

As with the e-newsletter there is an emphasis on scanning the information quickly due to time pressures. Those who commented said the content was informative.

A number of principals commented that they shared it with governors and other staff. One respondent asked for additional copies for the staff room [CSSC would be happy to provide additional copies on request].

Twitter

Figure 7: Do you follow CSSC on Twitter?

The majority of respondents (82%) did not follow CSSC on Twitter. Principals used the comments section to detail that the main reason for this was that the schools do not have a twitter account.

Four of 20 schools who made comment stated that they will follow CSSC as a result of completing the survey.

Two other respondents stated that it is useful for keeping up to date with events.

One respondent said that educational bodies, such as CSSC, should not engage on social media.
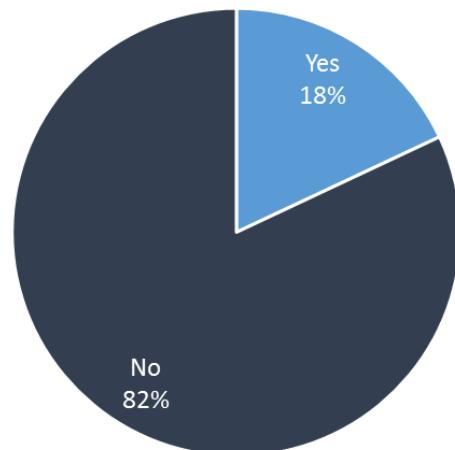
Receiving information

Figure 8: How do you prefer to receive news and information from CSSC? Please select all that are applicable.
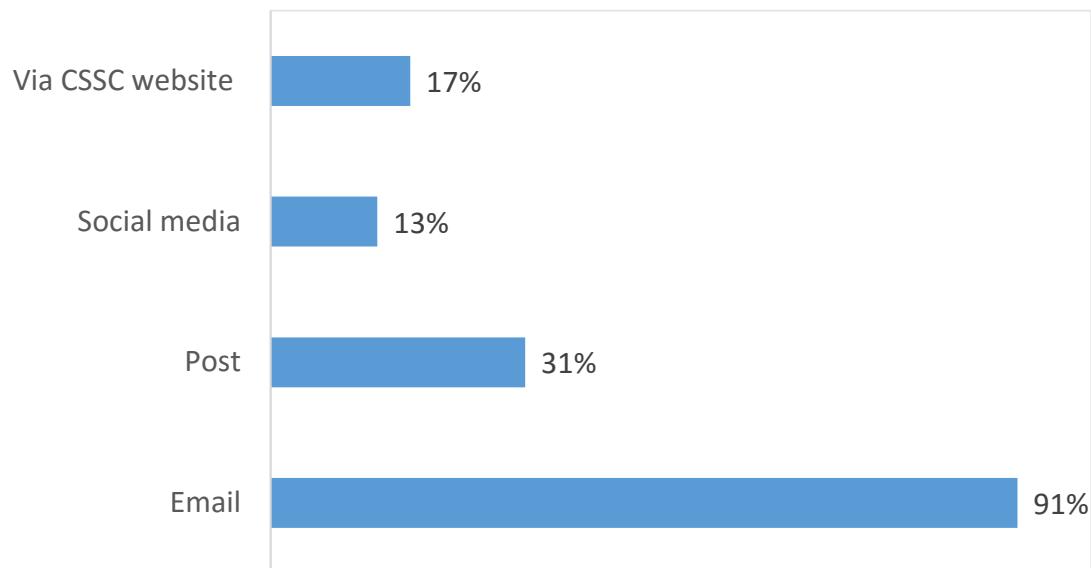
The majority of respondents (91%) stated that they would prefer to receive news and information from CSSC by email. This corresponds the answers respondents gave to the last few questions; a greater proportion of schools read the e-newsletter compared to other forms of communication (website, posted newsletter and Twitter feed). Similarly, more respondents preferred postal communication over the website and social media.

Events

Figure 9: Do you think that CSSC events are beneficial and aligned with the needs of controlled schools?
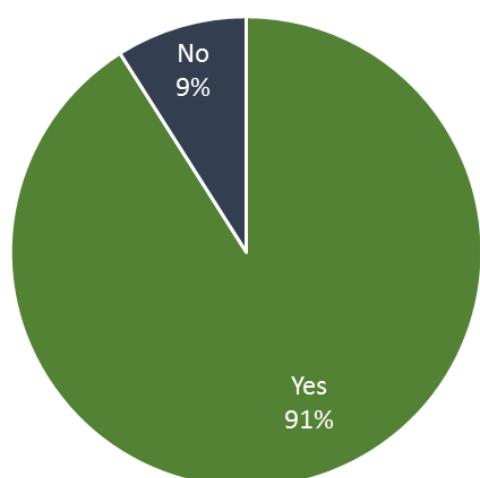
91% of respondents agreed that CSSC events are beneficial and aligned to the needs of controlled schools.

There were 78 individual comments about events:

Almost half of the comments provided were positive stating that in their experience CSSC events are 'beneficial', 'effective', 'excellent', 'useful' and 'well planned'. There were also remarks about the opportunity to network.

19% of the comments stated that respondents had no experience of CSSC events. The majority of these respondents (59%) answered 'no' to the original question.

A further 14% of comments focused on timing and location. In particular principals asked that consideration is given to ensuring that events do not clash or occur close to EA, ETI or other education events. Teaching principals in particular commented that they could not dedicate the time to come to events; this is predominantly significant for nursery principals.

Some principals did not disagree that CSSC events are relevant, but suggested areas for improvement. For example: "CSSC events are becoming better but there still appears to be a gap between the needs of principals and clear articulate passionate voice representing their needs and concerns" and "CSSC events to date have been appropriate, but the quality of the delivery of content has not always reached expectation."

6% of comments gave points to consider such as providing a calendar of CSSC events at the start of the academic year, more time to network at events, to hold more sector specific events and to ensure there is enough capacity for a greater number of attendees as events can book up quickly.

School representation

School Support Officer

Figure 10: Do you know who your School Support Officer is?
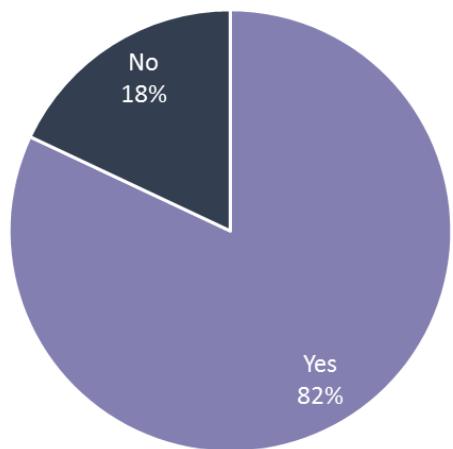
82% of respondents did know who their School Support Officer is.

This figure should improve through time as the organisation develops. When a comparison of phases is carried out only 69% of nursery schools answered 'yes' to this question. Each of the other phases were around the 80% mark.

Board of director representatives

Figure 11: Are you aware that each school phase has an elected representative on CSSC's board of directors?

78% of respondents are aware that each school phase has an elected representative on the board of directors.

There is more to be done to raise awareness of CSSC's representative structure.
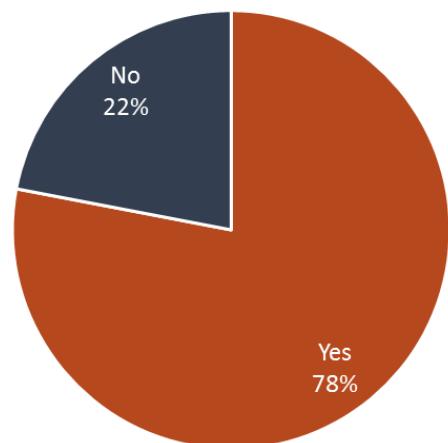
Key function areas

Advocacy

Representation on strategic groups

Figure 12: Did you know that CSSC has representation on strategic groups, including DE's and EA's area planning structures, and EA's pre-school education group?
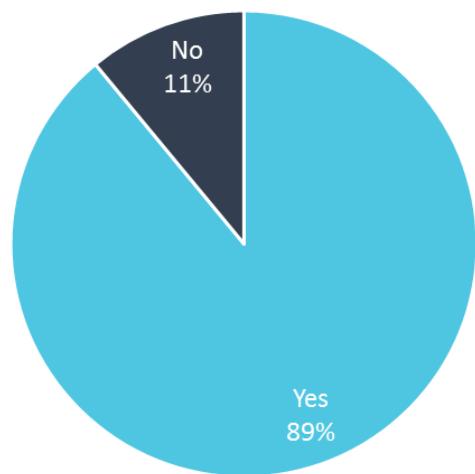
89% of respondents did know the extent of CSSC representation. The majority of comments expressed gratitude for CSSC's representation such as:

"Schools really need to have a voice and more importantly have our voice heard where it will be effective."

"So glad that the controlled school voice is being so clearly heard at long last."

"Good to have representation on these bodies for controlled schools."

"Glad they have an ear to the ground on EA groups especially."

"Extremely important and excellent work by CSSC."

"This is essential."

Other comments stated that they were aware of this information through CSSC officers and communications. One respondent asked for more information on the groups CSSC members sit on.

Consultation responses

Figure 13: Did you know CSSC responds to public consultation on behalf of the controlled sector?

92% of respondents answered "yes", they are aware of CSSC responses to public consultations.

Only seven respondents commented on their answer, the majority stating that this was important work:

> "It's helpful to have a sectoral response."

> "A very important role."

> "Excellent response on the CSHS consultation."
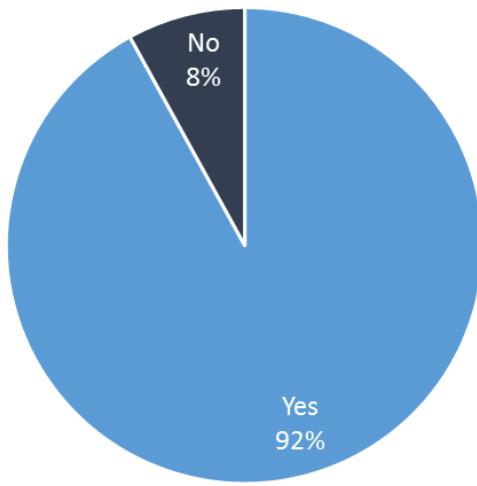
Ethos

Figure 14: Did you know that CSSC is in the final stages of developing an ethos toolkit for controlled schools?
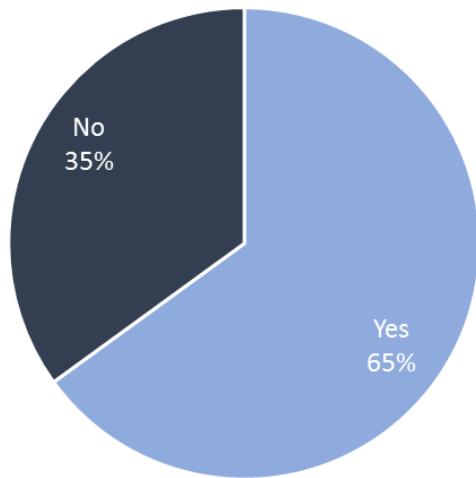
65% of respondents answered 'yes' to this question, meaning that over a third were unaware about CSSC's ethos toolkit.

Of the 27 comments many principals remarked on attending the workshops associated with CSSC's ethos work. There is a clear appetite for the ethos toolkit with many positive comments, such as:

"Practical help and support such as this is greatly appreciated."

"I am very interested to pursue this further throughout the next number of months."

> "I would really like to access a copy of the toolkit. Sounds particularly useful."

> "We are hoping to use the toolkit in the near future."

Given the response to the original question and the positive comments regarding the toolkit, it is clear that this area of work needs further promotion.

Governance

Figure 15: Did you know CSSC has a role in identifying, encouraging and nominating governors?

62% of respondents answered 'yes', with a high proportion (38%) answering 'no'.

There were a total of 12 comments for this question; responses were mixed. Some principals welcomed the work, others commented on a lack of awareness as to how CSSC nominates and identifies governors. Other respondents asked for assistance in the filling the gaps in their own boards of governors.

It is clear that there is more work for CSSC in clarifying this role and communicating it to schools.
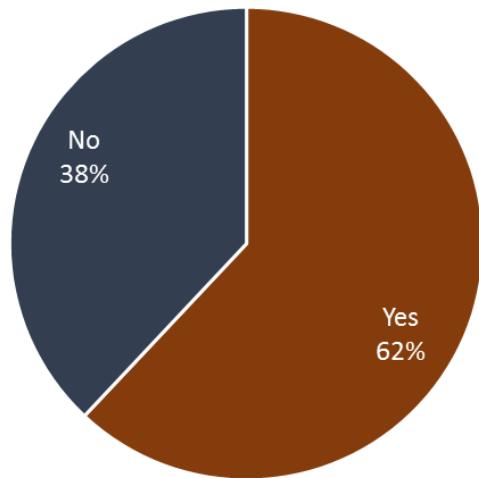
Raising standards

Figure 16: Did you know CSSC works with EA to support raising standards in controlled schools?
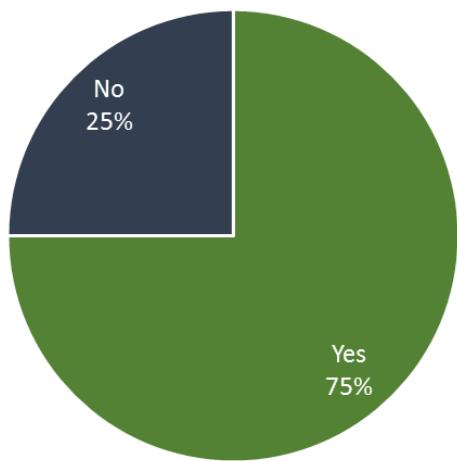
75% of respondents knew about CSSC's work with EA to support raising standards.

The majority of comments expressed a desire to find more about what this role involves:

"Would be interested in finding out more."

"How is this done?"

"Clarification on which organisation does what."

"Would like more detail about this function."

"Unclear of the links between CSSC and EA."

More information on the links between CSSC and EA should be provided to CSSC members as there is a lack of knowledge and a request from principals to know more.

Schools' estate

Area planning representation

Figure 17: Did you know CSSC's Chief Executive, Head of Education Support and School Support Officers are involved in area planning groups at all levels (Area Planning Steering Group, Area Planning Working Group and Area Planning Local Groups)?

69% of respondents were aware of CSSC's involvement in area planning groups.

One respondent commented "extremely important and excellent work by CSSC". There were only six comments on this question. While a couple of respondents used the comment field to acknowledge the work, another asked for "more feedback or communication for special schools" and one commented "but the CSSC has more restrictions than CCMS schools, for example regarding issues over land ownership".
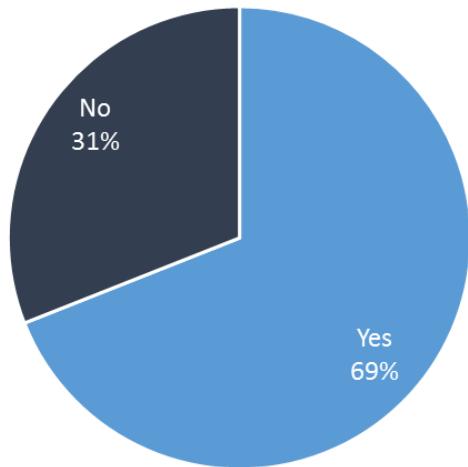
Development proposals

Figure 18: Did you know CSSC has responded to every development proposal relating to controlled schools and those which could have an impact on individual schools or the sector as a whole?
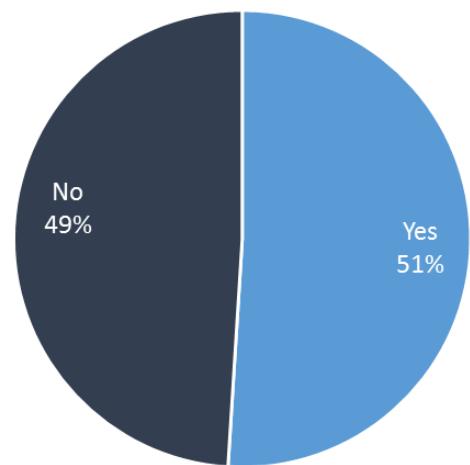
51% of respondents were aware of CSSC's work regarding development proposals. However a significant proportion (49%) of respondents were unaware, a significant proportion.

Many of the comments regarding this question expressed gratitude and commended the work, such as:

"That has been a huge volume of work."

"An extremely important aspect of CSSC's advocacy role."

"This has been a welcome development."

"This is very much appreciated."

A couple of schools have been affected by development proposals and were happy with the support provided by CSSC:

"CSSC were very supportive in a recent development proposal that would have an effect on our school."

"I have worked with an officer on a couple of occasions and I was very pleased with the quality of the response produced."

One school mentioned that "it would be interesting to know the extent of any CSSC influence on development proposal outcomes".

It is noted that half of respondents were unaware of CSSC's work. Perhaps it is an issue that schools will only become aware of if they are affected by the process. However given the volume of work which is dedicated to development proposals and the area planning process it would be beneficial to highlight the level of work that is undertaken.

Memorandums of understanding (MOUs)

Figure 19: Did you know CSSC has an agreed memorandum of understanding with each of the following organisations?
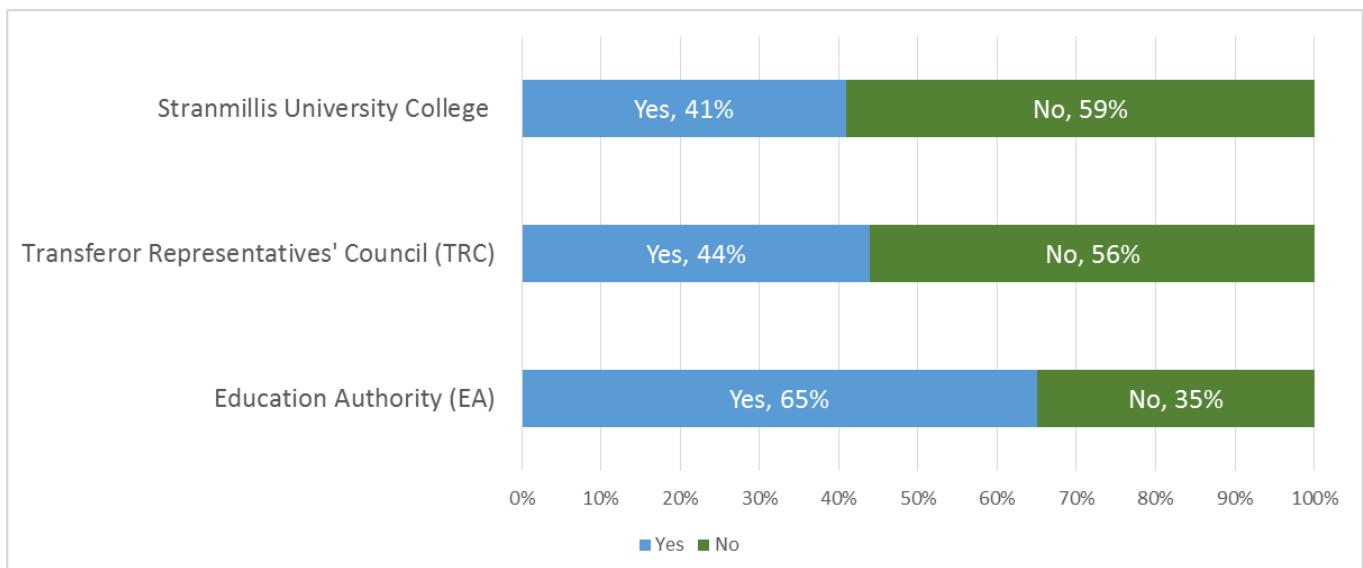
At 65%, the MOU with the Education Authority (EA) was the one more principals were aware of, compared to MOUs with the TRC (44%) or Stranmillis University College (41%).

Commenting on the EA MOU, principals stated that is was an important link with comments including "I would like to see the content" and "The memorandum of understanding needs to be more clearly defined in the roll out of support/provision to schools."

Only one comment was given on the TRC MOU, stating that they were unsure of the TRC's role.

Regarding the Stranmillis MOU, two comments mentioned that a link with Ulster University could also be beneficial.

Further comments

The 'further comments' section took the form of an open ended comment box. In total, 75 respondents took the opportunity to make comment about CSSC. An analysis of the comments shows that the majority (63%) were positive comments about CSSC work and staff. Other feedback provided areas for action, areas for improvement and some general comments.

Positive comments

The range of positive comments focus on three key areas. The first reflects on support which has been provided to schools by CSSC and how well this has been received, for example:

> "Any support provided to date has been entirely relevant, highly effective and useful. Please continue this fantastic work."

> "Anything I have attended which has been organised by CSSC has been to a high standard and of real use in, e.g. our school's aim to become increasingly effectual in learning provision for children and as contributing bodies the communities they serve."

> "I have found the advice this school has received on numerous occasions to be consistent and helpful."

> "I have found the CSSC to be a very useful point of contact and they have helped me on a number of issues."

Secondly, CSSC is deemed to be a necessary and much needed support for the controlled sector:

> "I think that the CSSC is providing support at the grass roots level …. I am most impressed by the CSSC and look forward to their continued support and advocacy."

> "It is empowering to know that we have a strong voice and also that CSSC is responding so effectively to our needs. Thank you."

> "It is great to finally have an organisation to promote and support the controlled schools."

> "At long last CSSC is the body we have always wanted to represent the interests of controlled schools and is doing so extremely well."

Finally, many comments focused on commending the work of CSSC and its staff, with many principals focusing on the helpfulness, professionalism and good attitude of staff:

> "I have found the support officers to be extremely helpful especially when I make a call to CSSC. If they are unable to get me an answer straight away they do follow things through and get back to me. Much appreciated!!!!"

"Really pleased we have you. Great relationships/attitudes with your staff that are extended to us; nothing is ever too much bother, levels of enthusiasm always high. Keep up the great work and thank you."

"The amount of absolutely first class work being done by a small team of people is truly inspirational."

In a number of comments individual staff members were named and commended for their work.

It is clear that many principals welcome CSSC and value the work the organisation is doing on behalf of the controlled sector:

"CSSC are a much needed and valuable support to controlled schools. They are proactive and visionary. A much needed group with excellent staff who are responsive at all times."

"CSSC has been a very welcome, supportive addition to the educational landscape. I have been impressed with the scope and range of its activities and the staff with whom I have had contact are consummately professional. Many thanks for the Trojan hard work which goes into CSSC."

"I have nothing but praise for the work which CSSC officers are doing and for the manner in which they have raised the profiles of our schools."

"I have been quite impressed with CSSC …. I have been on a number of days offered by CSSC now and have found them all to be useful. I feel the organization is gathering momentum and more people are becoming aware of who they are. I hope they continue to grow in their influence."

Areas for action

A number of schools called for better representation for various parts of the controlled sector, such as:

"At present there is a perception within the non-selective sector, post-primary, that less attention is being paid to their needs and challenges at this present time when the greater pressures are affected this sector disproportionately."

"Disappointed that there isn't a small school representative on CSSC board also it lacks a geographical spread - quite a lot around the Portadown/Lisburn/Banbridge area."

"I was wondering if there is any representation on your Board of Directors from the integrated sector. As a Controlled Integrated school this is something that would be important to us."

The controlled sector is large and diverse, and as the body for the sector CSSC must ensure that it is the voice for all school types and phases. It is perhaps unavoidable that at such an

early stage of the organisation some school types may feel that more work needs to be done to represent all facets of the sector. Although work has been done to engage with the sector as a whole, there is an opportunity for different member schools to become involved at the next election process.

Some principals asked for CSSC to address a number of issues which were of concern, for example teachers' pay, the iprocurement process, school funding and maintenance and addressing governor problems. See below:

> "Can we please work on: teachers' pay, numbers allocated via PEAGS in areas relating to EA nursery schools vs playgroups! Also consider the removal of underage children from the EA preschool system. Schools must be consulted on issues such as: new computer systems for admissions and iprocurement where systems are VERY time consuming for staff where we do NOT have full time admin staff and do NOT offer an easy way to order equipment etc. or arrange admissions. The people ACTUALLY working the system should have final say on these matters as they use them! Lack of C2K for nursery settings and again new systems set up which nursery computer systems are not up to date enough to even be able to open these email! Again this results in nursery schools purchasing from their own budget which should be being used for the children."

> "CSSC appears to be building momentum but still appears hesitant or strong enough to back vocally the principals/governors concerns regarding funding, impact on large classes, impact of increasing SEN needs, poor building maintenance/ school estate and profile of the excellent work and many voluntary roles which principals, teachers and governors do unseen/unheard in order to keep the system working."

> "I would like to see CSSC take more control of difficult governor situations which unfortunately can arise."

> "I think CSSC has been a welcome development for the controlled sector and given us a voice. Governors would like clarity around their (CSSC) specific role, particularly with regard to the distinct/unique differences between CSSC and GTCNI. I would like to see clusters developing organised by CSSC and a lead professional particularly around SEN legislation and GDPR. This would give schools within the sector the opportunity to work collectively and share workload/expertise. I would also suggest that CSSC look into the workload associated with SDP. Action plans are useful but the rest is extremely time consuming and unnecessary. Please lobby for changes to this."

Beyond larger general issues, some principals took the opportunity to raise some practical concerns for CSSC to address, such email timings, a calendar of events and the focus of events:

> "I really hate your emails arriving on a Friday afternoon. I can't give them any priority or time as I'm finishing the week off and making prose for the next. Wrong timing for me."

"Would like more notice about events a yearly calendar available in August would be useful."

"…noted directly to CSSC…the CSSC should not continue to promote Woman's Leadership Development!!!!...What about being inclusive and having gender neutral Leadership Development!"

"I think it is very beneficial to have a group to represent controlled schools however I do think training/professional development needs some additional thought."

A small number of principals called on CSSC for high level representation for controlled schools:

"CSSC needs to continue representing our sector at high level with the present political stalemate and school conditions."

"I hope that CSSC can be the voice to ask the difficult questions."

"It is very important that school issues are highlighted but more important that issues are brought to those who can deal with them and resolve them."

Areas for improvement

There were three comments regarding disappointing service from CSSC:

"I continue to experience difficulty in arranging a representative from CSSC to one of our BOG meetings... I have both phoned and emailed but to no avail."

"I had a visit from the CSSC last year and did not feel it was at all beneficial. I have decided not to go to the CSSC for advice. I put time into this organisation along with my Chair of Governors and feel it was totally wasted. I am bitterly disappointed."

"We had an issue almost a year ago whereby support for me as a Principal was virtually non-existent from both EA and Union. I was advised to ring CSSC which I did and was informed somebody would be in touch regarding support/help immediately after the Easter Holidays. No further correspondence. I recently responded to the email regarding an offer of a CSSC officer coming to discuss the role of CSSC with my Governors. To date, no further correspondence."

CSSC apologises that the service received by a small number of schools has fallen short of the standards that we aspire to.

A 'Member schools service standards policy' was implemented in October 2018 to establish the standards to which CSSC is committed, together with the procedure for staff, through which CSSC expects to demonstrate excellence in customer service.

As this membership survey was anonymous, we cannot respond directly to the Principals who made these comments. However please be assured that we have reviewed our systems and put processes in place so that phone calls and emails are not missed in future.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss your comments further and would ask that you contact your School Support Officer in the first instance.

General comments

One respondent was "divided" on the need for CSSC, in the context of the current education system in Northern Ireland:

> "I am divided on the need for the existence of the CSSC. If other sectors are going to be given a voice at the table leaving the Controlled sector scrabbling for scraps then I understand the need for it and I would advocate for it; I just think it's really sad that it is needed at all. I will never agree with the system we have which indoctrinates our children from birth into different religions and political stances. Regardless of any idealistic point of view, it costs so much extra money and means we ALL lose out."

Two respondents stated that they are yet to be convinced on the need for CSSC, with one principal concerned over the ability of CSSC to achieve results for the sector:

> "Still to be convinced why CSSC needed to be established."

> "Yet to be convinced that CSSC can produce results that actually positively impact and address the real issues and pressures schools are faced with."

Conclusions

Communication

It is clear that the information CSSC provides to schools is considered to be informative, useful and relevant. In particular the focus on celebrating success in the controlled sector was complemented.

It is noticeable, however, that due to time pressures principals can only dedicate minimal time to browsing newsletters, the website and social media. This comes across clearly in response to each of the communication questions. It is therefore important that the information CSSC provides though newsletters continues to be succinct and concise, so that it can be quickly read and understood. In the same vein the website must continue to be easy to navigate with key information straightforward to find.

Events

On the whole, CSSC events are well received and rated positively. Consideration needs to be given to accommodating teaching principals or those who find it hard to dedicate time to events. Some points which were raised cannot be addressed at this point in time due to issues beyond our control, such as a calendar of events produced at the start of the year or ensuring that events do not clash with other education events. We could, however, build in more networking time and continue to ensure a good geographical spread of events.

School representation

It is positive that 81% of respondents know who their School Support Officer is, particularly as the organisation has only been in existence for just over two years. This percentage should grow year on year. A slightly smaller percentage (78%) knew about the role of school representatives on the board of directors. This needs more promotion, particularly coming up to the next CSSC election process.

Key functions

It is very clear that schools welcome CSSC's work particularly in representing and supporting the sector; they are appreciative that they now have a voice which represents them. This is particularly notable in the areas of advocacy and estate planning. There are some areas of work which need better promotion or clarification, such as the ethos toolkit, responses to development proposals and rising standards work. Clarity is also needed regarding CSSC's role concerning governors. These are areas which can be addressed.

The relationship between CSSC and EA is an area that requires greater clarity. Questions about how the two organisations work together and the contents of the MOU were asked throughout the responses. Many schools took the opportunity to call on CSSC to advocate to EA on their behalf regarding some of the issues they are facing.

Other comments

Overall, the majority of comments were positive and welcoming of CSSC and the role it plays in representing the controlled sector. It is reassuring that the majority of respondents used the further comments box to leave encouraging and supportive comments about CSSC's work to date, reaffirming the need for a support body for the controlled sector and specific work CSSC is undertaking.

A number of comments offered suggestions for CSSC regarding issues to focus on and particular areas of work. These will be considered by Council and CSSC officers. Some practical comments such as the timing of emails can be acted on immediately.

In terms of the comments about disappointing service, CSSC would again encourage the affected schools to make contact with their School Support Officer. Regarding the need for CSSC, it is encouraging that only two member schools voiced the need to be convinced and hopefully through time and continued work this opinion will change.

Overall

Overall the membership survey has shown that CSSC has great support from the sector. While it has highlighted the need for some clarification and better promotion of certain work streams, on the whole the work CSSC is undertaking and the manner in which it presents itself is well received and commended. Given that the organisation is just over two years in existence, the results of the survey are very positive and affirm the need for a sectoral body for controlled schools.

Actions undertaken

The feedback from this survey is invaluable to CSSC and will be used to inform future work. The following highlights actions that are already underway to ensure that CSSC continues to meet the expectations of its member schools.

Figure 20: Actions already under way to continue to improve CSSC's service

Comment	Action
Communication	
The content of CSSC's newsletters and website is informative and useful for schools. Information must continue to be focused on school needs and conscious of the time restraints school leaders' face.	CSSC's electronic and hard copy newsletters will be reviewed to ensure that information will continue to be relevant to schools in the context of CSSC's role.
The information on the website must continue to be easy to find and tailored to the needs of schools.	A review of CSSC's website began in Q1 (2019/20) for completion by end of Q2 to ensure that the content is up to date and it is an effective source of relevant information for schools.
The majority of schools prefer to receive information via email, as the majority of communications are already sent this way then it is important that this continues.	A review of CSSC's Constant Contact email platform is taking place in Q1 (2019/20) to ensure that engagement with principals is effective.
Consider feedback on the timing of e-newsletters	CSSC has already begun sending e-newsletters on different day(s) and will monitor open rates to maximise effectiveness.
Events	
Aim to provide a calendar of events at the beginning of the academic year, and where possible, work to ensure that CSSC events do not clash with EA, ETI or other education events.	CSSC will produce its calendar of events as soon as possible. CSSC will continue to seek dates of events from other organisations.
Continue to evaluate events and plan future events based on feedback and school/sector needs, including incorporating more networking time for participants at CSSC events.	A review of all events for 2018/19 is underway and feedback from this survey will form part of that. CSSC will continue to use insights from Principals and steering groups to ensure events are relevant to identified need.

Consideration needs to be given to accommodating teaching principals or those who find it hard to dedicate time to events.	Where possible, CSSC will hold events at different venues / times to ensure that all Principals and/or nominated colleagues have the opportunity to attend.
School representation	
Continue work to ensure that every member school is aware of their dedicated school support officer, through direct contact, newsletters and the website. This is particularly relevant for nursery school principals.	CSSC's website now has a new interactive map in order for schools to find their school support officer. A link to the map will continue to be a standing item in the monthly e-newsletter and the option of including it in email signatures will be explored.
Continue work to promote each school phase's elected representative through newsletters and the website.	This insight will form part of the communications review. Action has already been taken to promote school representatives, for example in the delegate packs at the AGM.
In the run up to the next election process promotion work should be carried out concerning the role of the elected representatives and the opportunity for different types of representatives to enter the elective process (for example small school leaders, those in controlled integrated schools etc.).	The next CSSC election will take place in two years' time (2022). Work will be undertaken to promote how schools can get involved in terms of nominating representatives and the election process.
Key function areas	
Advocacy	
More information should be provided about which groups CSSC officers sit on and the remit of these groups.	This insight will form part of the communications review, with information shared in future newsletters and on the website.
A range of issues were mentioned by schools for CSSC to work on	These will be considered by Council and its committees and CSSC will advocate on behalf of schools on those areas that come under its remit.
Concerns raised about disappointing service should be addressed as a matter of urgency.	Member schools service standards policy has been implemented as outlined previously.
Ethos	
There is a clear desire for the ethos toolkit to be made available to all schools following the successful pilot in a number of schools.	Work is already underway to design and publish the toolkit, and schools will be

	provided with a copy in due course once the toolkit has been finalised.
Governance	
CSSC's role in identifying, encouraging and nominating governors is an area which needs clarification and promotion.	CSSC is already participating in the review of the governor nomination process. CSSC will seek to clarify and promote its role in the process on an ongoing basis
Raising standards	
More information on the raising standards work and the links between CSSC and EA should be provided.	CSSC acknowledges the feedback from Principals that they wish to know more about the links between CSSC and EA. Information will be shared in future newsletters and on the website, or via School Support Officers.
Schools' estate	
As with CSSC's advocacy work, a list of the groups officers sit on and the remit of those groups should be made available to member schools.	This insight will form part of the communications review, with information shared in future newsletters and on the website.
There is a need to raise awareness of CSSC's work regrading responses to development proposals.	This insight will form part of the communications review, with information shared in future newsletters and on the website as appropriate.
Memorandums of understanding	
Greater clarity regarding the MOUs with EA, Stranmillis University College and the TRC would be welcome	MOUs provide a framework within which CSSC can work in partnership with other organisations. The MOUs have been published on CSSC's website and will be featured in future newsletters as appropriate.

Please tick your school type:

Nursery	
Primary	
Secondary	
Grammar	
Special	

Is your school controlled integrated or an Irish medium school?

Controlled integrated	
Irish medium school	
Neither of the above	

How CSSC communicates with you

Please tick 'yes' or 'no' to answer the following questions and use the comments box provide more detail on your answer (for example, if you answered 'yes', are you satisfied with the information/content of CSSC's communications, or, if you answer 'no' is there a reason?)

	Yes	No	Comments
Have you visited the CSSC website?			
Do you read our monthly e-newsletter?			
Do you read our postal newsletter?			
Do you follow CSSC on Twitter?			

How do you prefer to receive news and information from CSSC? Please select all that are applicable:

Email	
Post	
Social media	
Via CSSC website	

Events

Do you think that CSSC events are beneficial and aligned with the needs of controlled schools?

Yes	
No	

Please use the space below to expand on your answer:

School support and representation

	Yes	No	Information
Do you know who your school's dedicated School Support Officer is?			You can use the interactive map on the CSSC website to find your School Support Officer or phone 02895 313 030.

Are you aware that each school phase has an elected representative on CSSC's board of directors?			Find out who the elected representative for your school's phase is on the CSSC website.

CSSC Key functions

Select 'yes' or 'no' and use the comment boxes to expand on your answer.

Key functions	Did you know?	Yes	No	Comments
Advocacy	CSSC has representation on strategic groups, including DE's and EA's area planning structures, and EA's pre-school education group?			
	CSSC responds to public consultations on behalf of the controlled sector?			
Ethos	CSSC is in the final stages of developing an ethos toolkit for controlled schools?			
Governance	CSSC has a role in identifying, encouraging and nominating Governors?			
Raising standards	CSSC works with EA to support raising standards in controlled schools?			

Schools' estate	CSSC's Chief Executive, Head of Education Support and School Support Officers are involved in area planning groups at all levels (Area Planning Steering Group, Area Planning Working group and Area Planning Local Groups)?			
	CSSC has responded to every development proposal relating to controlled schools and those which could have an impact on individual controlled schools or the sector as a whole?			

Collaboration

Did you know that CSSC has an agreed memorandum of understanding with each of the following organisations?

	Yes	No	Comments
The Education Authority			
Transferor Representatives' Council (TRC)			
Stranmillis University College			

Memorandum of understandings can be downloaded from the CSSC website.

Shared education

Is your school involved in a shared education project?

Yes	
No	

Please use the space below to expand on your answer:

Further comments

Please use the space below to provide any other comments about CSSC:

Thank you

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