

## Summary Report Pre and Post Project Micro-Polls and Focus Groups 23rd September 2015

The Data, Results, and Commentary enclosed in this report are confidential and subject to the provisions of the UK Data Protection Act. Any publication, distribution, or communication, of this report, or parts of this report, should only be with the permission of LucidTalk.

LucidTalk is a member of all recognised professional Polling and Market Research organisations, including the UK Market Research Society (UK-MRS), the British Polling Council (BPC), and ESOMAR (European Society of Market Research Organisations). The BPC are the UK professional body ensuring professional Polling and Market Research standards, and all polling, research, sampling, methodologies used, market research, and results and reports production, for this project, are, and have been, carried out to the professional standards laid down by the BPC.

Subject	Polling Projects - Micro-Poll Projects
Issue	23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2015
Date	23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2015
Author(s)	Bill White – LucidTalk

## LUCIDTALK – INTRODUCTION and Professional Credentials

---

LucidTalk is a specialist polling and market research company based in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Its mission is to provide professional, in-depth, polling and market research services to public, private, media, and political and public affairs organisations, in Northern Ireland, Ireland, and the UK.

The company was founded in 2012 by Bill White, who has worked at the highest level in the Information/Communications Technology (ICT) industry for over 25 years, and has built up a highly experienced team of staff and Consultants, including Gerry Lynch, Alex Kane, Liam Clarke, John Simpson and Roy Garland.

LucidTalk is a member of all recognised professional Polling and Market Research organisations, including the UK Market Research Society (UK-MRS), the British Polling Council (BPC), and ESOMAR (European Society of Market Research organisations) and uses the latest polling/market research technologies, and predictive methodologies, thus ensuring the highest degree of accuracy and detail in all projects. All polling, research, sampling, methodologies used, market research projects and results and reports production are, and will be, carried out to the professional standards laid down by the BPC.

The work was commissioned by the Integrated Education Fund, and independent charitable trust, established in 1992, to support integrated schools. The aim of this work was to pilot a best practice model of consultation, enabling the wider community to participate in education discussions, and to measure parental demand for different types of education.

## Strabane Community Audit – Methodology and Structure

---

The project used poll questions agreed with the project partners and the British Polling Council, ensure neutrality and balance. The pre poll-project survey was carried out over a period from the 10th April to 23rd April 2015, and the post-project survey was carried out between the 7th and 18th June 2015. The projects involved telephone interviews with pre-primary, primary, and secondary level school parents (18 years+) within a 20 mile radius of Strabane, until a random sample of 520 full responses were obtained within this targeted Strabane area for both the pre-project and post-project polls. The sample of 520 was demographically representative of the residents within the above geographic area. All data results produced are accurate to a margin of error of +/-2.1%, at 95% confidence. LucidTalk would be pleased to answer any questions/queries regarding the poll project, and/or the poll results.

Five focus groups were carried out for this project, with the following groups: Strabane Parents, Castledearg Parents, Local Teachers, Community Leaders, and Media/Business Leaders. The focus groups included discussion based around the agreed polling questions and all comments were recorded and analysed.

**Project Dates:**           **Pre-Project Micro-Poll 10th April to 23rd April 2015,**  
  **Post-Project Micro-Poll 7th June to 18th June 2015**

**Focus Groups: Commenced 4th May 2015**

If any individual, groups of individuals, or any organisation, would like more detail regarding this poll-project, and a full review and presentation of the poll-project results, then they should contact LucidTalk directly on: [info@lucidtalk.co.uk](mailto:info@lucidtalk.co.uk).

## KEY POLL RESEARCH POINTS AND CONCLUSIONS

---

All points related to poll results are reflective of the post-project poll, except where specified otherwise:

### **Consultation:**

Most respondents do not feel they are being adequately consulted by education authorities about changes being made to education provision in their area.

Over 70% said they hadn't been consulted about changes proposed changes.

Over 80% believe that parents should have a say in what changes should be made in local education provision in the Strabane area.

**NB These questions produced the strongest response and opinions - with the vast majority of project participants (95% parents) saying they were rarely or never consulted about educational issues in their area, and/or affecting their children.**

### **Distance from Schools:**

Majority of parents live within a smaller distance of their child's primary school, between 1-5 miles, than their child's secondary school which is usually between 3-8 miles from the home.

Most parents find it acceptable to travel further for post-primary education, with 3-5 miles being the preferred distance.

### **Education factors:**

Majority of parents view educational reputation as the most important factor when choosing a school for their child. In term of ethos, a narrow majority at around 54% graded 'an Integrated school' either very important or important, ahead of a single faith school and Irish Medium school.

### **Support for an integrated school:**

When asked about types of provision that are not currently available in the Strabane area, there was notable support for the establishment of an integrated primary school. Of those expressing an opinion, 74.6% would support the establishment of an integrated primary school in the Strabane area.

## Key Results from Strabane Community Audit Project:

**Question 1.** Prior to this current Strabane area poll and community audit - Have you been consulted about any possible changes regarding education provision, which may occur in your area?

### POST-PROJECT POLL

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	YES		27.5%	143
2	NO		72.5%	377
			answered	520
			skipped	6

### Question 1

Noticeable that in the post-project poll-survey over 70% said they weren't consulted about education provision in the Strabane area - This is when the question (i.e. in the post-project poll) referenced the Community Audit project.

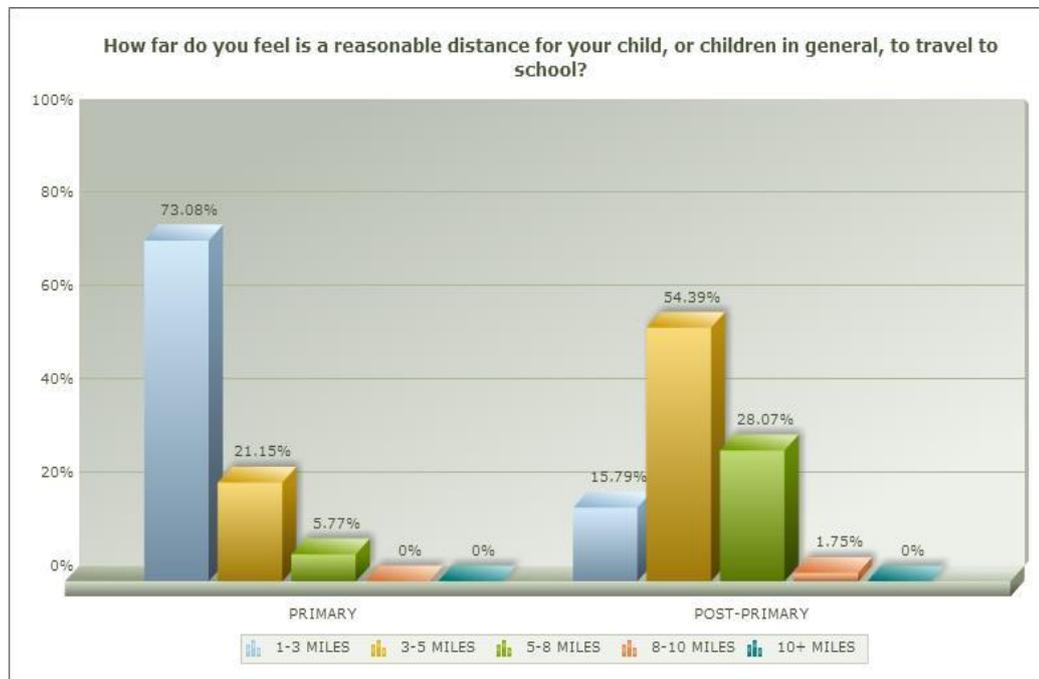
**Question 2.** Do you think parents and the community should have a say in what changes should be made to the local education provision? POST-PROJECT POLL

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	YES		80.2%	417
2	NO		3.8%	20
3	DON'T KNOW/NO OPINION		16.0%	133
			answered	520
			skipped	0

### Question 2

Overwhelming view in both the pre and post-project polls that parents should have a say in what changes should be made in local education provision in the Strabane area.

**Question 3. How far do you feel is a reasonable distance for your child, or children in general, to travel to school? POST-PROJECT POLL**



**Distance from Schools:**

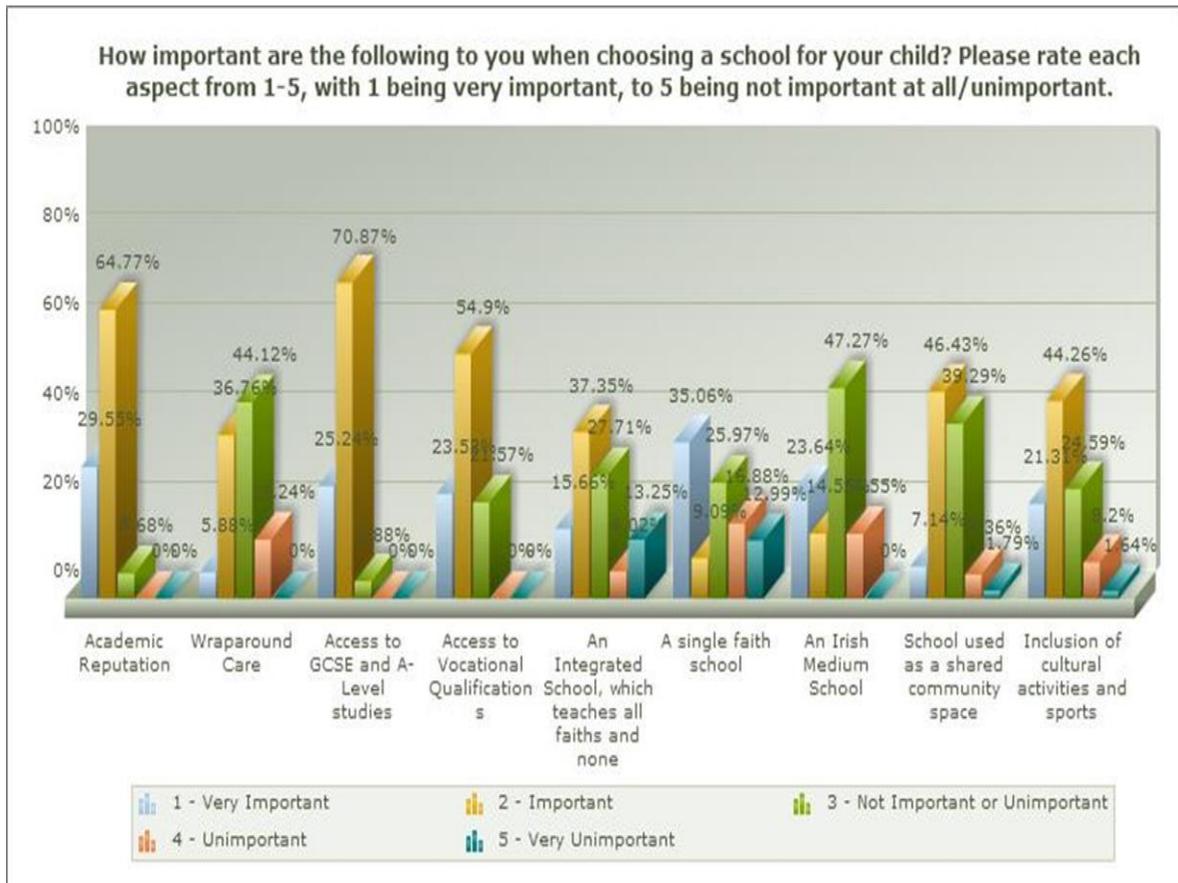
Most parents currently live within a smaller distance of their child's primary school i.e. 1-3 miles or 3-5 miles, than post-primary school which is on average 3-5 or 5-8 miles.

**Distance from Schools:**

Most parents find it acceptable that their child/children's secondary school would/could be further way than their child's primary school. Most parents think the following distances are the most acceptable i.e. Primary school: 1-3 miles, Secondary school: 3-5 miles.

**Question 4.** How important are the following to you when choosing a school for your child? Please rate each aspect from 1-5, with 1 being very important, to 5 being not important at all/unimportant.

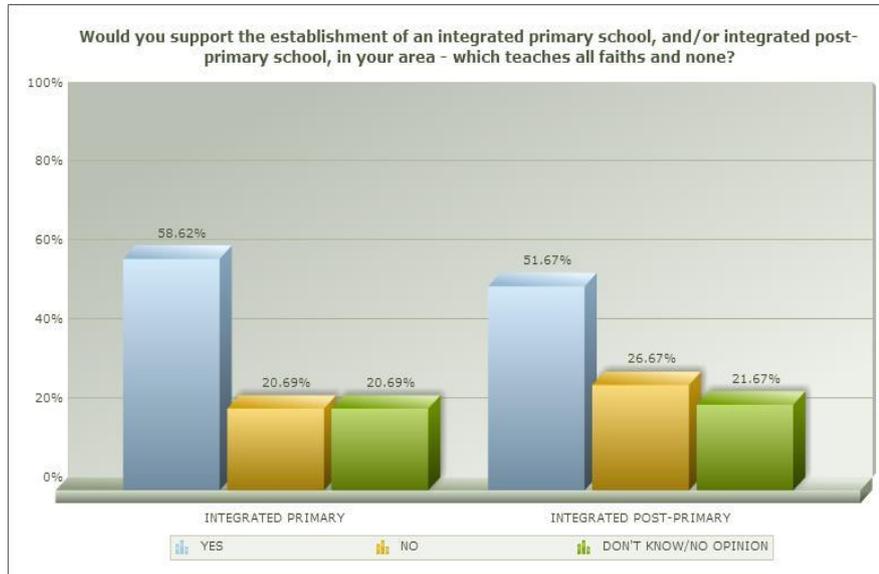
**POST-PROJECT POLL**



**Question 4**

Most popular aspect from both pre and post-project polls have been academic reputation and Access to GCSE and A-Level studies. In terms of school ethos, the post-project poll results show that there is more support for an integrated school than an Irish medium or single faith school.

**Question 5. Would you support the establishment of an integrated primary school, and/or integrated post-primary school, in your area - which teaches all faiths and none? POST-PROJECT POLL**



**Question 5:**

Of those expressing an opinion, 74.6% would support the establishment of an Integrated primary school in the Strabane area, and 66.6% would support the establishment of an Integrated secondary school.

**Question 6. If you have primary or post-primary aged children, how likely would you be to consider sending them to a new integrated primary or post-primary school, which teaches children of all faiths and none? Please grade 1-5, where 1=very likely/certain to send my child to this school, to 5=certain not to send my child to this school.**

**POST-PROJECT POLL**

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	1 - Very Likely		7.3%	38
2	2 - Likely		49.8%	259
3	3 - Neither Likely/Unlikely		26.0%	135
4	4 - Unlikely		4.0%	21
5	5 - Very Unlikely		12.9%	67
			answered	520
			skipped	0

**Question 7.** If you have primary or post-primary aged children, how likely would you be to consider sending them to a new Irish Medium post-primary school? Please grade 1-5, where 1=very likely/certain to send my child to this school, to 5=certain not to send my child to this school.

**POST-PROJECT POLL**

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	1		4.2%	22
2	2		16.0%	83
3	3		43.7%	227
4	4		14.6%	76
5	5		21.5%	112
			answered	520
			skipped	46

**Question 7:** There was good support for an Irish Medium post-primary school in certain sections of the Strabane community. However, when compared with Question 6 above, the results suggest that there would be more support for an integrated primary or post-primary school, than a post-primary Irish Medium school.

## FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

---

### Strabane Area Parents - 13 Attendees

#### Key Themes/Conclusions

- Academic standards and schools exam records are key to most parents.
- Parents would like to be involved more with 'real' education decisions re. their children
- There is support for a primary integrated school

#### Key Comments

'Schools contact us about class times and parking but nothing about curriculum or careers'.  
'A lot of the post primary kids seem to travel out of Strabane'.

There were strong views across all Focus Groups and from all parts of the Strabane community that parents and community members weren't consulted enough about education. The following e-poll result taken at the above focus group shows this.



#### Strabane Education Focus Group - What do you think? ?

Vote Now

*Do you think you as Parents, and the Strabane community, are consulted enough by the education authorities regarding Educational Services in the Strabane area?*

1. Yes - Excellent contact and communication  
0 (0%)
2. Yes - But contact and communication is patchy  
2 (15%)
3. No - Contact and communication is minimal  
8 (62%)
4. No - Contact and communication is zero  
3 (23%)

25

---

### Castledearg Area Parents - 7 Attendees

#### Key Themes/Conclusions

- There's a reputation that the best schools are in Omagh and Derry
- Parents would like to be involved more with 'real' education decisions re. their children
- Strong support for integrated primary school in local area

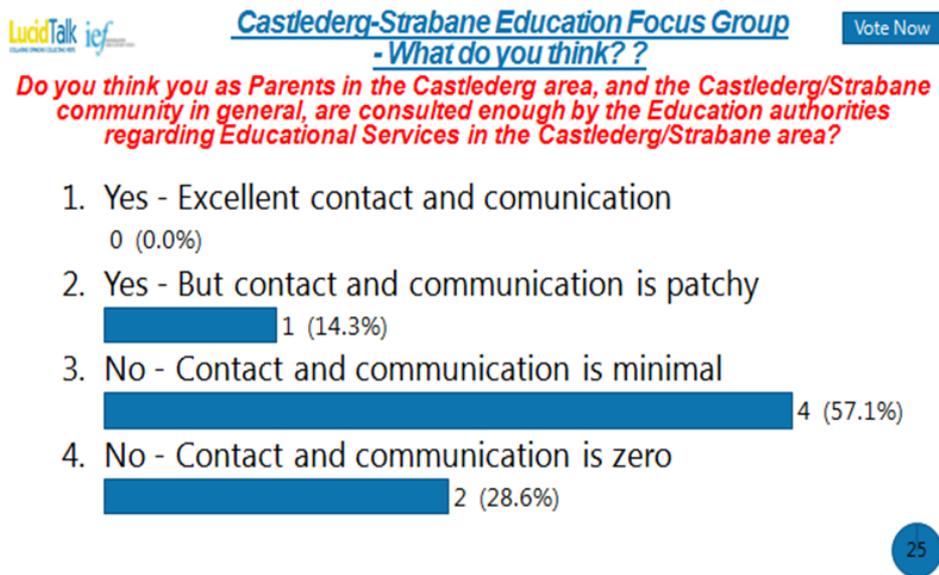
### Key Comments

‘Need more communication between parents and schools.’

‘A lot of local children here now travel to schools outside the Strabane/Castledearg areas.’

‘a lot of parents don't understand the difference between integrated schools and shared education.’

Again the following e-poll result taken at the Castledearg Parents Focus Group shows that little consultation is carried out among parents and the community.



---

### Strabane Area Teachers - 6 Attendees

#### Key Themes/Conclusions

- Lack of support for Teachers from the education authorities
- Teachers don't like or support academic selection, would support all ability school.
- Majority of teachers do not feel they are adequately consulted

#### Key Comments

‘Too much bureaucracy in education’.

‘Not enough support from parents of low-income families’.

Similar to both Strabane and Castledearg Parents, there were strong views from the Teachers Focus group that Teachers, and the community, weren't consulted enough about education. The following e-poll result was taken at the Teachers Focus Group.

*Do you think you as Teachers in the Strabane area, and the Strabane community in general, are consulted enough by the education authorities regarding Educational Services in the Strabane area?*

1. Yes - Excellent contact and communication  
1 (16.7%)
2. Yes - But contact and communication is patchy  
3 (50.0%)
3. No - Contact and communication is minimal  
2 (33.3%)
4. No - Contact and communication is zero  
0 (0.0%)

25

---

### Strabane Area Community Leaders - 9 Attendees

#### Key Themes/Conclusions

- Still a lot of division in the Strabane and Castlederg community
- Very difficult economic environment, lot of young people leaving for jobs
- Appears to be support and demand within the Catholic community for integrated education.

#### Key Comments

‘Need more investment in training, and schools need to co-operate more with community groups to enable the kids to get the right skills’

‘Awful lot of kids leave Strabane for secondary schools elsewhere’

‘Very depressed economic environment in Strabane’

---

### Strabane Area Media and Business Leaders - 8 Attendees

#### Key Themes/Conclusions

- Strabane has few employment opportunities and needs more investment.
- Young people leave due to lack of education and employment opportunities

#### Key Comments

‘Needs to be more connection between Schools and business to facilitate training that connects young people with jobs’.

‘Too many post-primary school children leave Strabane for schools in Omagh and Derry’.