

Customer Survey 2008 Entry

Background

The School Admissions Team provides a school placement service for parents & schools within the Plymouth City boundary.

One of the team's functions is the allocation of community secondary school places when children become eligible to transfer from primary school to secondary school.

The Survey

We are always interested in feedback from parents and one of the methods that we use to gather this is by issue of a customer survey. The purpose of the survey is to look at ways of improving the service that we offer.

Parents applying for a 'secondary school' place were issued with a survey form either as part of their on-line application or as an attachment in the "Next Step Booklet".

Parents were asked for their comments on the following topics:

- ◆ How helpful they found the information provided to them
- ◆ Whether the information they were looking for was easy to find
- ◆ Whether the information was clearly presented
- ◆ How easy the application form was to complete

Parents were also invited to submit general comments

What we learnt

3,151 parents applied for primary school places for September 2008. Of those parents who applied, 1,996 (63% of the application cohort) survey forms from the on-line and booklet survey were returned.

Of the 1,996 forms received from the on-line and booklet survey;

- ◆ 79% of parents found the information provide very helpful.
- ◆ 74% of parents found the information they required very easy to find.
- ◆ 85% of parents found the application form easy to understand
- ◆ 79% liked the style and presentation of the information.
- ◆ 360 individual comments were also received.
- ◆ Of those who responded, most parents found the application process quick to complete.
- ◆ The majority learnt about the online facility via council literature and the school

Positive Comments from Parents

On-line Comments

- ◆ This process seems very straight forward and I cannot see any improvements that are need
- ◆ Nothing, think it is very easy to complete
- ◆ Not really, it is a fairly straight forward application form, easy to read and easy to complete, many thanks

- ◆ No, was detailed excellently and in a way of easy understanding.
- ◆ No, very straight forward, especially for a computer novice! Thank you
- ◆ No, it was very straight forward and easy to use. I found that the support staff that were at the schools open evening were incredibly helpful, and put my mind at ease about how easy it was. Many thanks !!

Booklet Comments

- ◆ It was easy enough to fill out so it don't need to be improved
- ◆ it was very straightforward
- ◆ Do not need to be improved more I found it straight forward which is good
- ◆ It was fine, excellent format
- ◆ Booklet is set out clearly, it is easy to read and the information provided were very helpful

Where possible parental suggestion have been incorporated into procedure design for the year 2009 intake year.

Recommendations

Recommendations centred upon comments received from parents are as follows;

- ◆ Repeat the survey for new parents.
- ◆ Repeat the promotion of the on-line website.
- ◆ Include details of both parents/carers on the application form.
- ◆ Revise on-line application to include update facility.
- ◆ Clearer catchment maps online
- ◆ Highlight in the parents guide the necessity of completion of a school's own application form if a RC school is requested by parents and clarify the impact of non completion
- ◆ Amend parents guide to clarify that all pupils listing a grammar school as a preference will be required to sit the selection examination regardless of parental rank of grammar school

ON-LINE COMMENTS - SECONDARY ADMISSION 2008

Q1 How easy was it to complete the online application form?

Very Easy 1059	Very Difficult 1	Easy 288	Difficult 6	N/A 21	No Response 0
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Q2 How long did it take to complete the online application form?

0-5 Minutes 471	6-10 Minutes 116	11-15 Minutes 39	16-20 Minutes 12	21+ Minutes 13	No Response 724
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Total Forms Received: 1375

Q3 How did you hear about the online application form?

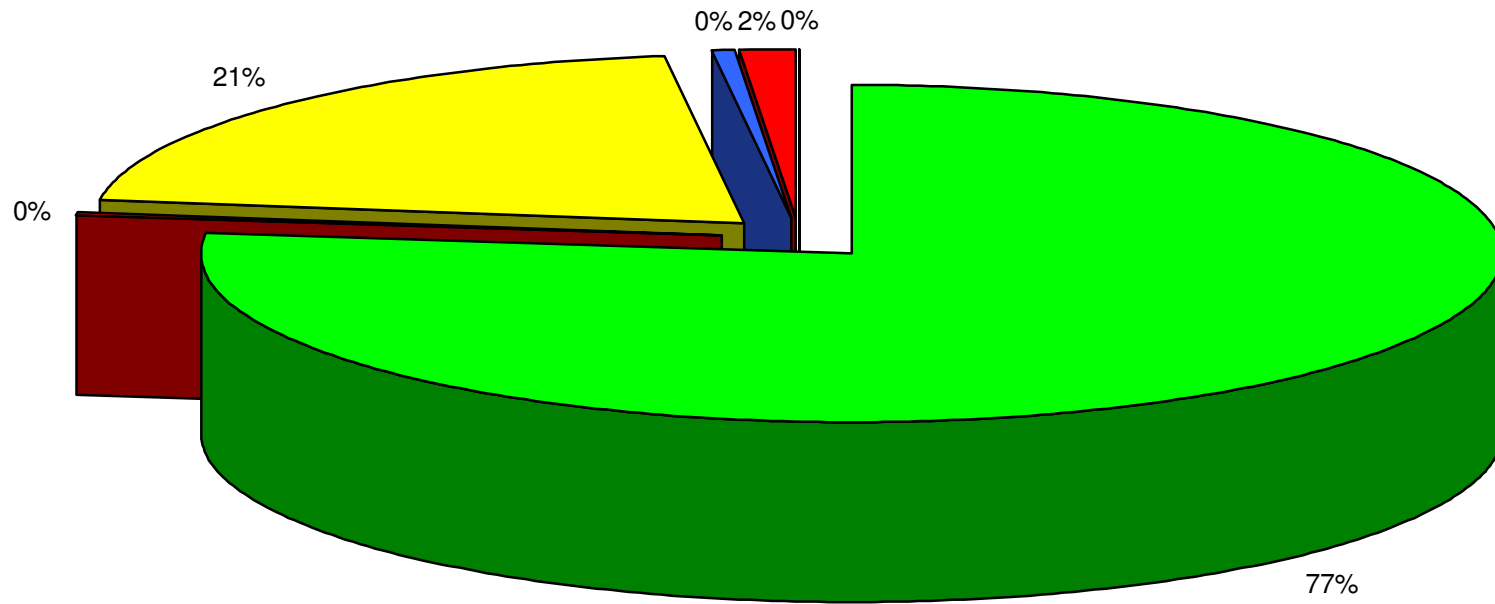
Parent 98	School 524	Booklet 696	Media 14	Leaflet 234	Poster 9	Other 80	Previous Use 184
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Note: Some parents indicated more than one source

Note: Breakdown of 'Others'

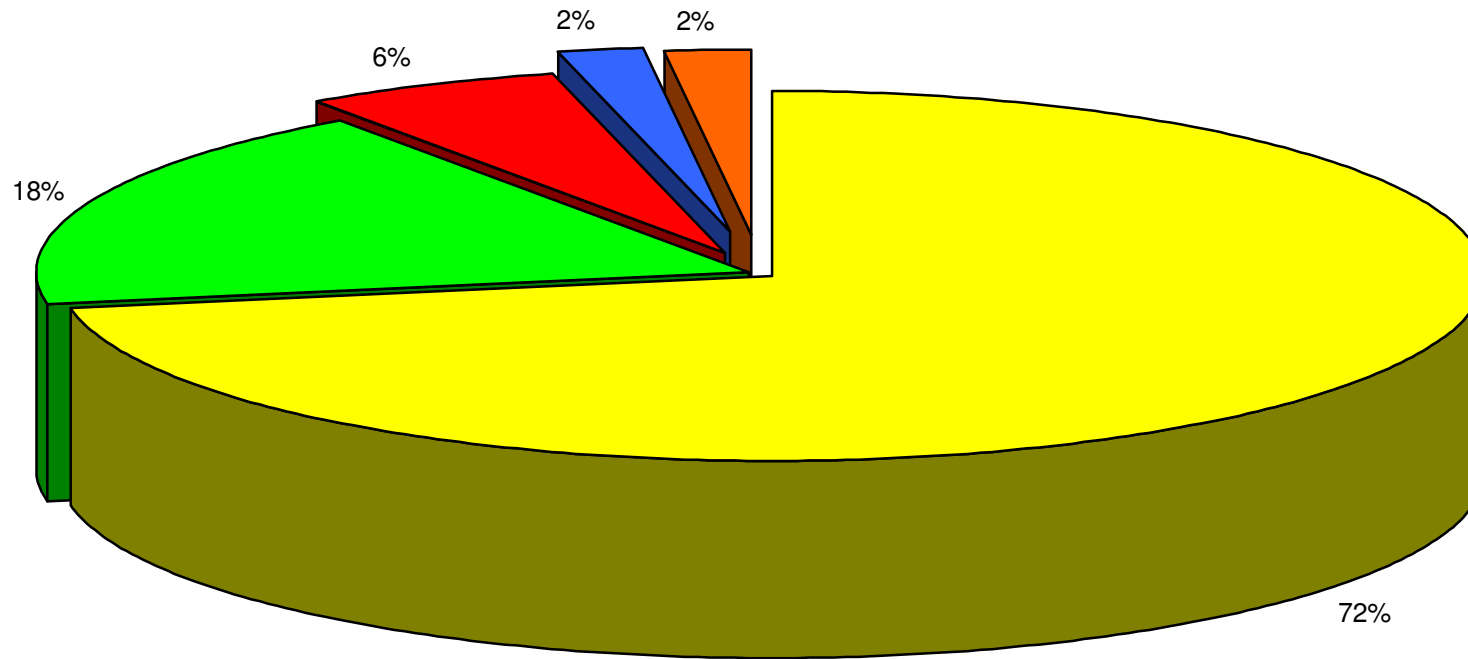
Booklet 30	Choice Advisor 15	Open Evening 17	Other Agencies 9	PCC Website 9
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Q1. How Easy Did You Find The Application To Complete?



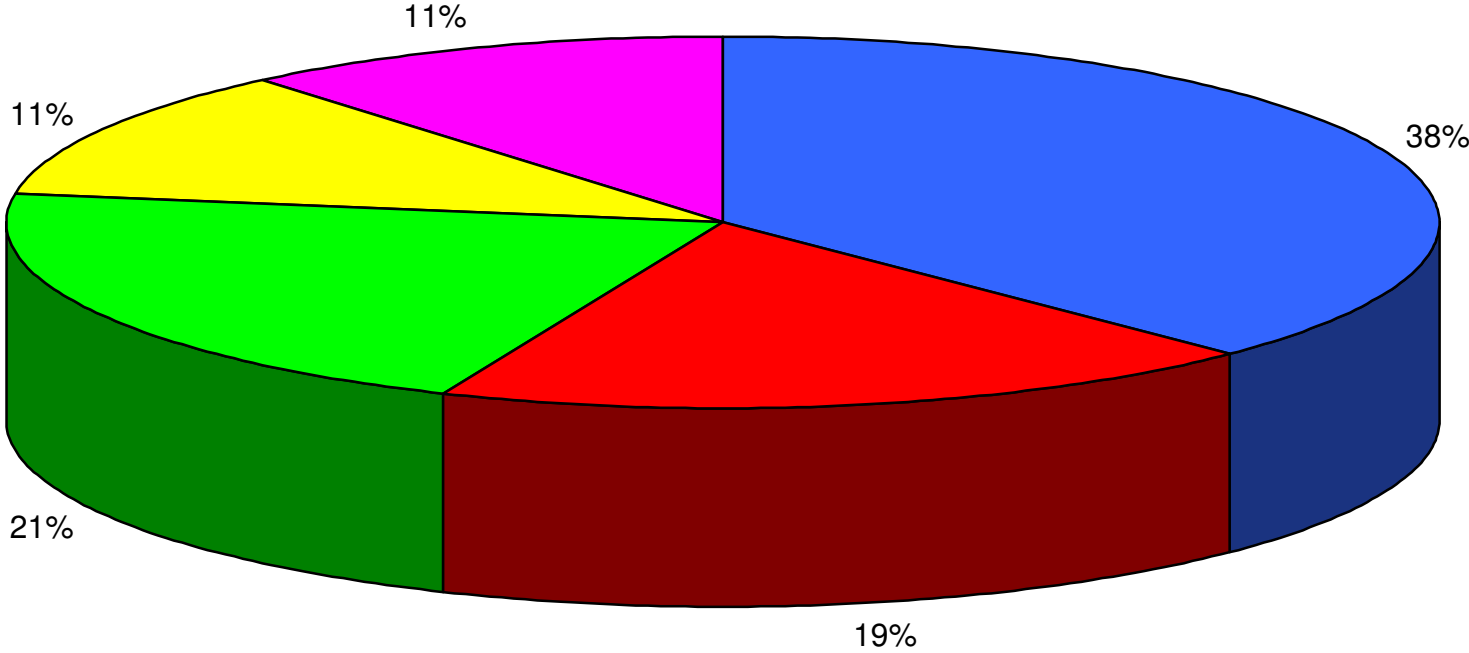
■ V.Easy ■ V.Difficult ■ Easy ■ Difficult ■ Neither ■ No Response

Q2. How Long Did It Take You To Complete The Application?



0-5 Minutes 6-10 Minutes 11-15 Minutes 16-20 Minutes 21+ Minutes

Break Down of Others (Question 3)



■ Booklet ■ Choice Advisor ■ Open Evening ■ Other ■ PCC Website

The Next Step Booklet Comments Secondary Admissions 2008

Q1 How helpful was the information provided?

Very Helpful	Adequate	Unhelpful
490	130	1

Q2 Was the information you required easy to find?

Very Easy	Adequate	Difficult
459	160	2

Q3 How clear was the style and presentation of the booklet?

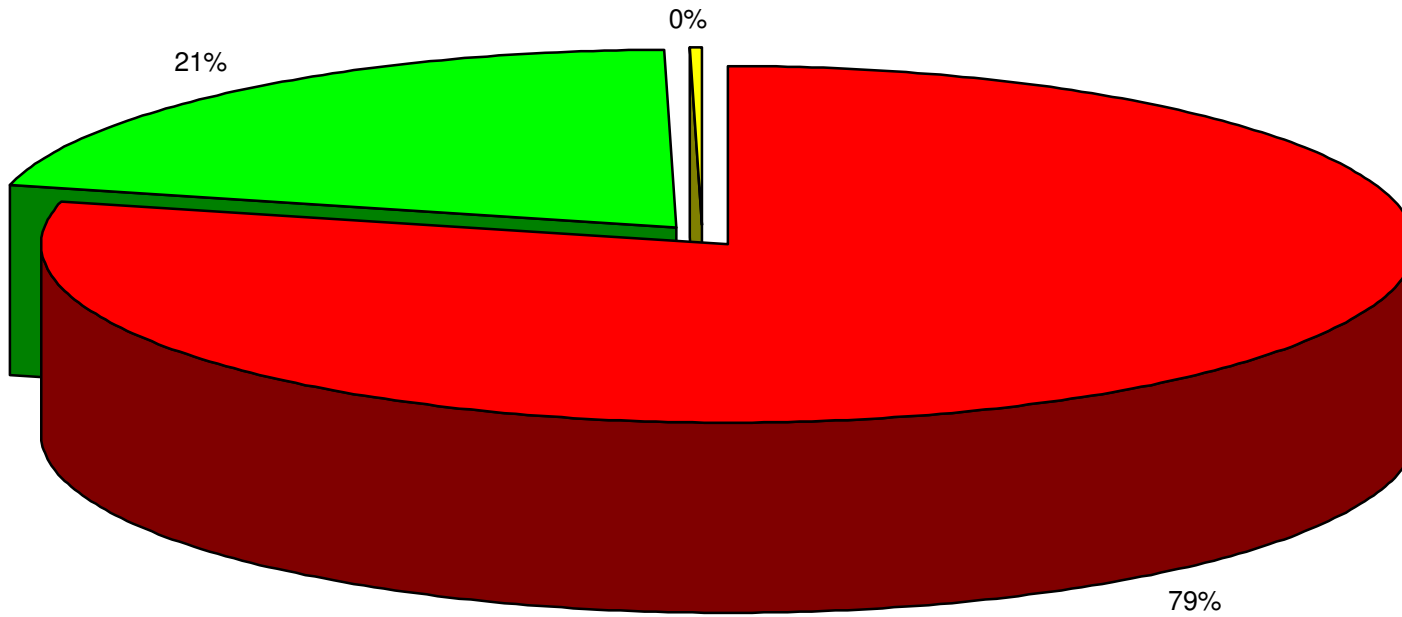
Very Clear	Adequate	Unclear
491	129	1

Q4 How easy was it to understand the application form?

Very Easy	Adequate	Difficult
526	94	1

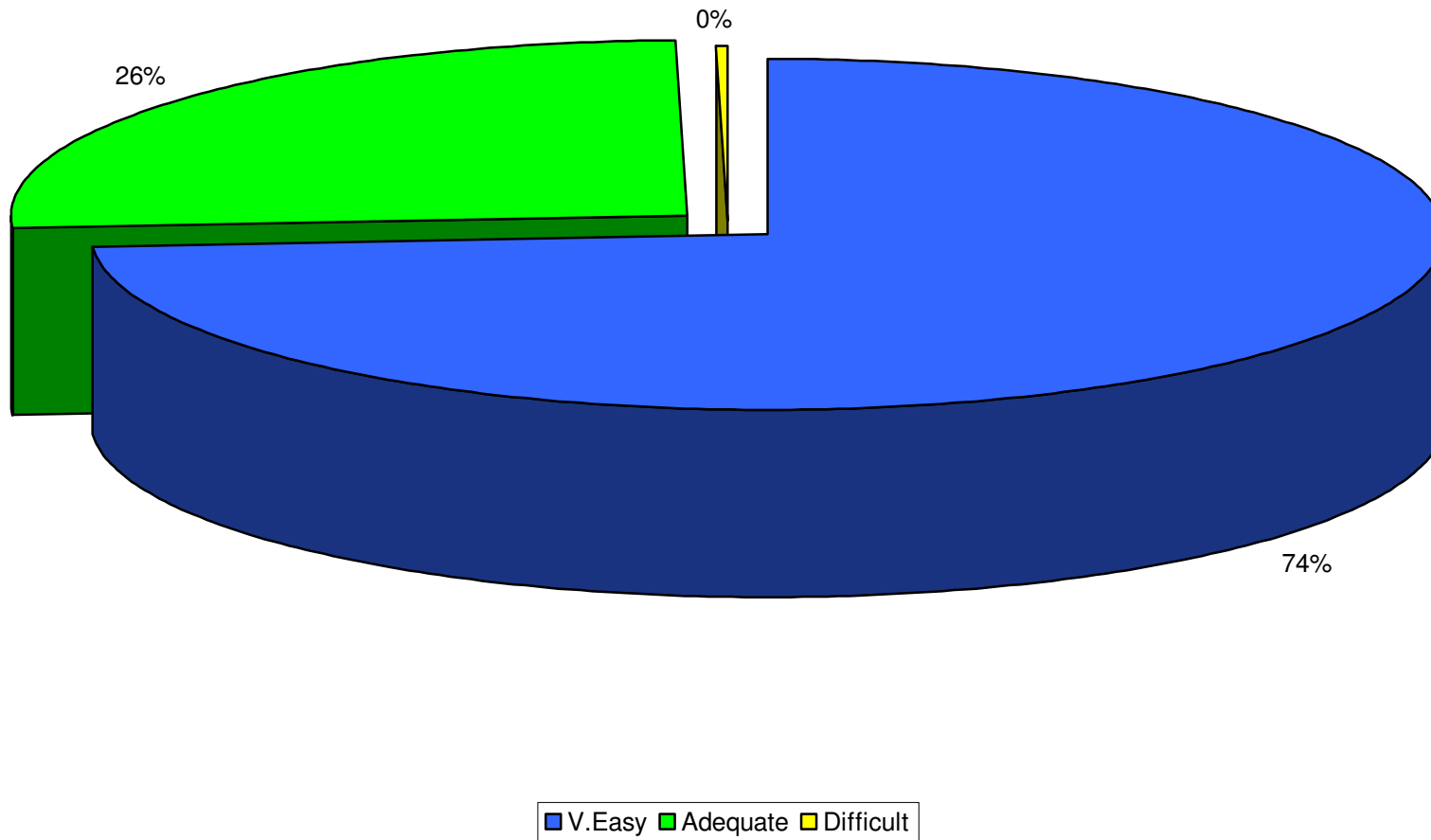
Total Forms Received: 621

Q1. How Helpful Was The Information Provided?

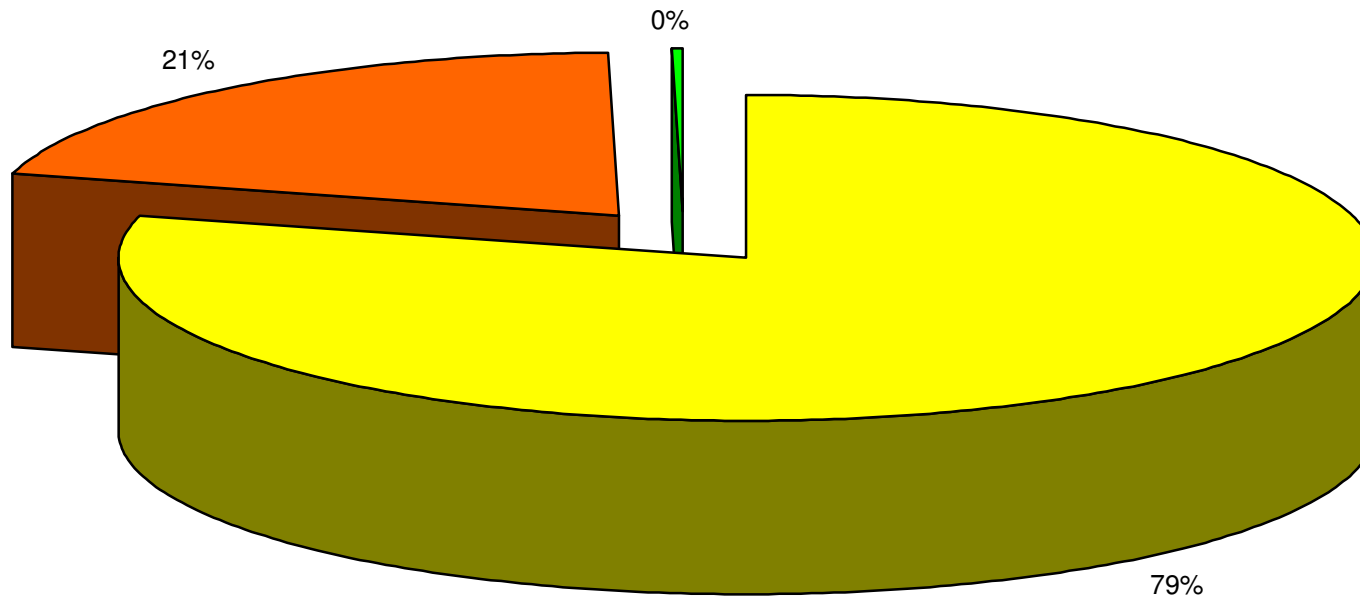


■ V.Helpful ■ Adequate ■ Unhelpful

Q2. Was The Information You Required Easy To Find?

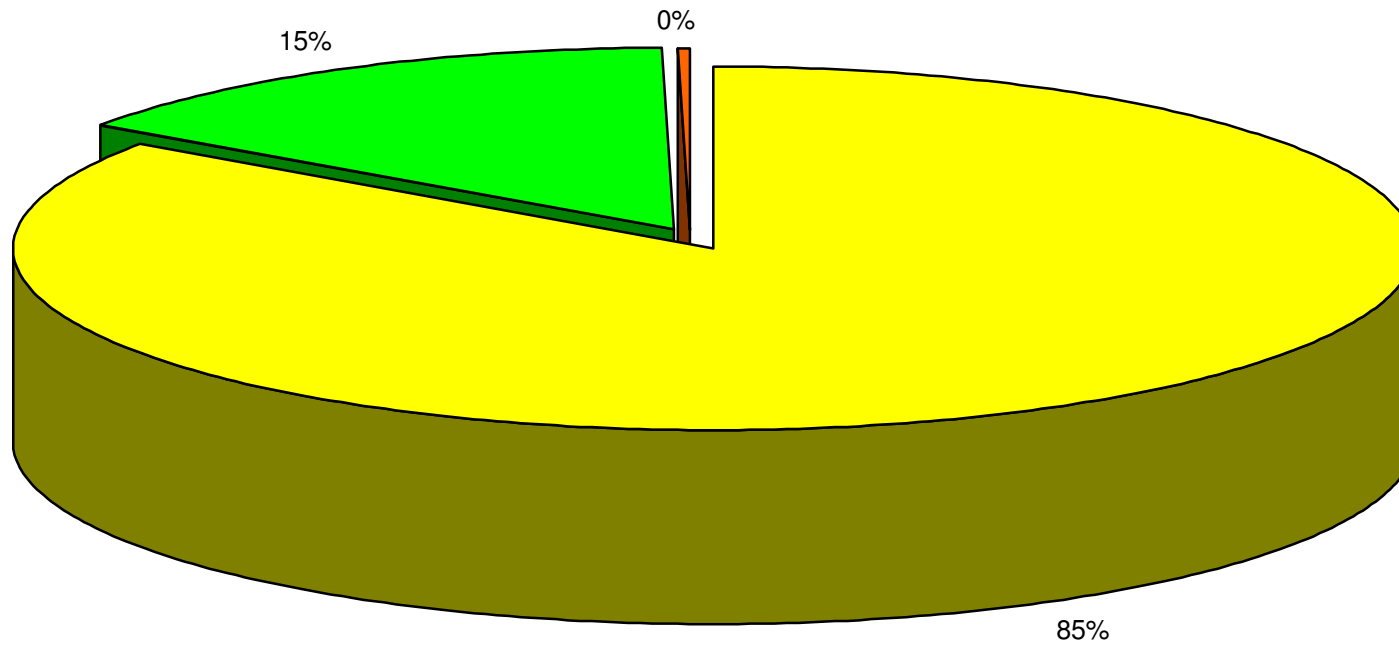


Q3. How Clear Was The Style and Presentation of the Booklet?



■ V.Clear ■ Adequate ■ Unclear

Q4. How Easy Was It To Understand The Application Form?



■ V.Easy ■ Adequate ■ Difficult

COMMENTS MADE BY PARENTS

Comments

- ◆ A little more space to write down any explanation to why we would like our child to attend the chosen school
- ◆ A little more space for reason on choosing schools
- ◆ A number of reasons as tick boxes.
- ◆ a review of whole form on screen in a printable format before submission.
- ◆ a space to put preferred name as my son chooses to be known by our family name rather than his birth name
- ◆ application was very easy and understanding to complete
- ◆ As a first time user I have found the application to be clear cut and easy to follow. Thank you.
- ◆ At the beginning I thought I was supposed to type something in the bottom space (below the pad lock symbol). This was a little misleading, at first. Once I got started then it was a piece of cake.
- ◆ be able to enter dad's details on it
- ◆ being a typist I am used to using the tab button to move to the next field, on certain pages you could not do this and I was re-directed to the home page and could you use the "back" button to get back to the form so I had to type it again
- ◆ Being able to input both parents name if the child has 2.
- ◆ Being able to save the form if necessary and log back in at another point to finish if you wanted to. Being able to review all the information that has been filled in on one screen.
- ◆ Wickliegh school was not on the current schools list
- ◆ Change 'Parent' to 'Parent/Carer' - carers need acknowledgment too!
- ◆ Child's primary school was not on the drop down list (Wembury School) and I was not able to type it in as an option. This, I believe, could quite easily be overcome. GW
- ◆ Choice adviser helped
- ◆ colours/background a bit bland! whole form a bit dull. Maybe have a summary at the end. What if I have made a mistake? No review option? The back/next buttons are a bit primitive!
- ◆ confirmation of the choices made in order to check it has been completed correctly.
- ◆ Completed by the choice adviser
- ◆ Confirmation of choices on screen before sending.
- ◆ Devon primary Schools are not included in pick list. Other than this found easy and straight forward.
- ◆ Didn't like the fact I had to choose three schools when there really is only two options from the safety aspect to us as a family.
- ◆ Different from paper form. Didn't include alternative education for primary school i.e. if not on list could type in manually. Apart from those points was reasonably straight forward.
- ◆ Difficult to access form on website without downloading additional JAVA software.
- ◆ difficult to access the form unable to find the form easily on website
- ◆ Do we get to see confirmation of the list of three choices before finishing the form and getting the confirming email???

- ◆ Everything seems straight forward and un-complicated
- ◆ facility to nominate either parent as contact, i.e. both have equal status
- ◆ font a little difficult to read
- ◆ For parents whose children are taking the 11 plus exam, the completion date of this application form and choices to have to make at this time, makes it very difficult .The third choice may be the only choice.
- ◆ Further explanation of the actual allocation procedure. I'm still unsure about whether we would be offered a place at our second choice school whilst awaiting the 11+ selection results and allocation for our first choice school.
- ◆ Given the option of not having to pick 3 preferences maybe just the 2.
- ◆ Had problems with access computers said that it was maliciouse software
- ◆ I cannot type my son's school into the field as the website will not let me.
- ◆ I don't think it could be improved upon.
- ◆ i dont think so
- ◆ I don't think you could improve it. It was very easy to complete I was very impressed thank you.
- ◆ i feel that if you wish to go back to the parents guide whilst still completing the form you should be able to save and return rather than start the application form again. Other than that very simple form to complete.
- ◆ I feel you should be able to skip the third preference if not required.
- ◆ I found the timing quite frustrating as the screen kep popping up 'contacting server'. I had to press the 'back' button a few times to get it moving again,
- ◆ I have applied for the two main schools we are interested in however the open days are not until later this month, am I able to change my first preference, if need be, once we have visited the schools?
- ◆ I normally associate a grey'd out box as not being required to be filled in, not that it requires filling in, change the highlighted colour for ease of use, the standard colour is blue if you hadn't noticed.
- ◆ I think bearing in mind the importance of the document, that additinal space could be provided for the parents to identify their reasoning behind each school selection.
- ◆ I think in the next step book a list of open days would be helpful when they are handed out, but the application process was very easy to complete and did not include anything to slow it down.
- ◆ I think it would be good to include the Cornish Schools as we are so close to the boarder.
- ◆ I think that tyhe application is basic and easy for all to understand.
- ◆ I think the online application is an excellent idea ! Very easy to use and clear,i dont really think anything needs to be improved.
- ◆ i think the whole council site needs to be made clear and more user friendly. the site is fine for experiance PC users ONLY
- ◆ I thought it was very straightforward.
- ◆ I was impressed with the ease and speed of applying online...thank you
- ◆ I wasn't always able to navigate to the next page and it needed several attempts on some pages. The booklet and conditions were on pop ups which we normally block; and although I temporarily allowed them the pages still didn't load. Other than that it see
- ◆ I would be nice to be able to see the complete form before submission to ensure it is correct. - it's a standard feature on many systems

- ◆ I would have liked to have received a copy of the completed form by email, or notification of the forms content to confirm it was error free. I now see from the next pages that I should receive an email copy of the form.
- ◆ I would like the information to be given out earlier possibly before the school holidays as i was given the information late by my sons school and found alot of ther open evenings had already happened which meant I had to make seperate appointments .It is
- ◆ I would like to be able to check what I have written before it is submitted
- ◆ I would like to see some way of cutting out the need to complete another seperate form for St Boniface, as this nullifies the benefit of an online application.
- ◆ I would only suggest that when you scroll down the names of the schools that the addresses were there to see aswell.
- ◆ I would prefer the space to state the reasons for the choices made to be greater. Other than this, the experience of applying on-line was easy.
- ◆ Im statisfied with present format.
- ◆ Im statisfied with this format.
- ◆ In the" reasons for" box it would be helpfull if we could read back everything that was written. Maybe a scrolling bar of some sort. I could not read back all i wrote. Apart from this it was simple and easy to follow
- ◆ Include the out of area Plymouth schools in ths schools list e.g Tavistock, Saltash and Ivybridge.
- ◆ It does not need improving as I have no experience with computers but still found it very simple and if I can do it anyone can.
- ◆ it has not got details and name of my daughters current school which is Kings School
- ◆ It is not immediately obvious how to bypass 2nd and 3rd preferences if I only want to apply for 1 school.
- ◆ It is very difficult to write why you would like your child to go to the second and third choice of school when you really want them to go to your first choice.
- ◆ it took a couple of attempts as the page was sometimes scrambled... not sure if its the site or my pc, yet havent had this problem anywhere else yet.
- ◆ It was a very user friendly tool to use.
- ◆ It was quite easy to use and handy aswell
- ◆ it was very straightforward
- ◆ It would be beneficial if there were more space in which to make comments as to the suitability of the school for the child in question.
- ◆ It would be good to have more information on the schools in DVD format so the family can explore the options in more detail and get a feel for the schools. This would enable those with disabilities, work or other commitments to explore the schools from ho
- ◆ it would be nice to have not just a place for siblings but a place for other family members eg, cousins that attend the school you choose.
- ◆ It wouldn't send the first time so now you may get it twice. Hard to write reasons for wanting child to go to other schools when you just want them to go to your first choice.
- ◆ its fine
- ◆ kept having to start again as link lost. this last time, complete form not displayed for completion. Not sure if it remembered details from previous entries?

- ◆ larger boxes for reasons for choosing certain schools, going back to check what i had written was time wasting.
- ◆ Larger font as is difficult to read the small print.
- ◆ Like to be told whether I have to submit the additional application for a placement at Notre Dame direct to the school or to the LEA. Not very clear.
- ◆ little info regarding only wishing to apply one preference
- ◆ Make it easier to find the application form on the initial page.
- ◆ Maybe a 'review' page of all entered details
- ◆ More help with application form
- ◆ more information about 11+ dates of mocks and advise with listing of tutors, also how are you contacted confirming if sitting 11+
- ◆ more information about schools in one place
- ◆ more space to state your reasons for school choice
- ◆ My daughter attends Wembury Primary School, but it didn't offer me the option of that school in the drop-down menu - as it comes under Devon County Council, however I would have liked to have been able to enter the school in manually, but it did not allow
- ◆ My son currently attends Plymouth College Junior School and I was unable to select that option when asked for my child's current school.
- ◆ NEED TO BE ABLE TO ENTER A CURRENT SCHOOL ATTENDING IF OUTSIDE OF PLYMOUTH. TOOK LONGER TO COMPLETE BECAUSE I HAD TO PHONE AND FIND OUT WHAT I SHOULD DO.
- ◆ Needed more space in the box to write in our reasons for this preference.
- ◆ NICE EASY FORM! SIMPLE TO GET INTO! DONT CHANGE WHAT ISNT BROKE!!
- ◆ nil
- ◆ NO
- ◆ No
- ◆ No
- ◆ No
- ◆ no
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- ◆ No
- ◆ no
- ◆ no
- ◆ no
- ◆ No
- ◆ No - fine and simple!!
- ◆ No - I found it very user friendly
- ◆ No - it is very straight forward & user friendly - especially in the middle of a postal strike!
- ◆ No everything was nice and easy!!
- ◆ no found this easy to follow.
- ◆ No I feel that it has to be quite simple and straightforward and it was.
- ◆ no i found everything fine.
- ◆ no I found it very easy to use and understand
- ◆ No I found the application very user friendly
- ◆ No i thinks its really straight forward and very easy to use.
- ◆ no i thought the form was very very easy.
- ◆ No improvement needed
- ◆ no it is fine
- ◆ No it is reasonable and straight forward.
- ◆ No it seems very straightforward.
- ◆ no it was all good
- ◆ No it was easy to fill in.
- ◆ No it was very easy to complete
- ◆ NO IT WAS VERY QUICK AND EASY.
- ◆ No it was very user friendly and I don't feel that it needs to be improved
- ◆ No need for improvement, It is very clear and easy to follow.
- ◆ no not really, well presented, easy to use, and time sufficient.
- ◆ No very easy thank you.
- ◆ No very happy and easy to access
- ◆ No very simple thank you!!!
- ◆ No we found it quite straight forward thank you.
- ◆ no where on application to say if child was sa+ only had to put down if stated or special needs
- ◆ No, all seemed ok
- ◆ No, everything seemed to be fairly straight forward enough.
- ◆ No, I felt that the application along with the guide, 'The Next Step' provided all the information I required.
- ◆ No, i found it very straight forward and easy to use!

- ◆ No, I was surprised at the ease of the process
- ◆ No, it is very clear and user friendly and as long as the rest of the process goes smoothly I think it is an excellent tool.
- ◆ No, it was clear and concise. Exactly what is needed. Thank you.
- ◆ No, it was much easier than I thought.
- ◆ No, it was straightforward and clear.
- ◆ No, it was very straight forward and easy to use. I found that the support staff that were at the schools open evening were incredibly helpful, and put my mind at ease about how easy it was. Many thanks !!
- ◆ No, the application was simple and easy to complete - excellent!!
- ◆ No, the form is self explanatory
- ◆ no, very user friendly
- ◆ No, very user friendly. Perhaps advertising through media to ensure all children are included
- ◆ No, was detailed excellently and in a way of easy understanding.
- ◆ No,very straightforward,especially for a computer novice! Thankyou
- ◆ No.
- ◆ NO.
- ◆ No.
- ◆ no.
- ◆ No. It works very well.
- ◆ none
- ◆ None
- ◆ none
- ◆ None
- ◆ None
- ◆ None
- ◆ NONE EVERYTHING CLEAR .
- ◆ NONE EXCELLENT
- ◆ None it is very quick and easy to use.
- ◆ none that i can think of, very user friendly.
- ◆ None.
- ◆ not really
- ◆ Not really
- ◆ Not really
- ◆ Not really, it is a fairly straightforward application form, easy to read and easy to complete. Many thanks.
- ◆ Not with this form. However there are some improvements on the website that would make life a lot easier, especially in terms of finding out in which schools catchment area you fall, a search by postcode would hugely simplify and clarify the issue.
- ◆ Nothing
- ◆ Nothing
- ◆ nothing
- ◆ nothing
- ◆ NOTHING I THINK ITS VERY EASY TO COMPLETE .
- ◆ Nothing to improve
- ◆ Nothing, very easy to use.
- ◆ Nothing,an excellent well laid out step by step guide.
- ◆ only fault was finding entry to page on web site took longer than filling in the application

- ◆ only space to write in one parents details instead of both
- ◆ Parents need longer than this to consider.
- ◆ Perhaps the local private Schools could be listed on the section where it states name current School being attended.
- ◆ Please learn how to spell Plymstock!
- ◆ Please note Plymstock School is spelt Pymstock in the drop down box.
- ◆ Possibly a map of the schools of plymouth to give/remind of there location, and a direct link to each of the mainstream schools on the application page.
- ◆ Print out of proof of Application
- ◆ Provision for stating other primary school if not listed in drop down menu.
- ◆ RESULTS FOR PREVIOUS YEAR SHOULD BE PUBLISHED FOR EACH SCHOOL BEFORE YOU HAVE TO APPLY. WE ARE IN THE FORTUNATE POSITION OF BEING ABLE TO FIND THIS INFORMATION EASILY BUT OTHERS AREN'T
- ◆ Size. Very small on screen so would like to be able to enlarge it.
- ◆ Some better explanation of the consequences of the choices you make in the new 'equal choice' system would have been helpful
- ◆ SPELLING OF PLYMSTOCK SCHOOL!
- ◆ Surely only should be completed if not wishing to go to the feeder comprehensive.
- ◆ The ability to type in the address of the primary school my daughter is attending. The section has been left blank as the school is not on the list. I would also like to see a section dealing with any health/disabilities that affect the child as this may
- ◆ The application form should have its own web address, & should automatically start up on opening.
- ◆ The choice adviser completed the form
- ◆ The drop down box for schools was not working so had to type details in "other".
- ◆ The E version did not ask for both parents details!
- ◆ The ethnic monitoring. Should be able to self define rather than pick what best suits
- ◆ the form asked for a flat or house number, but you cannot proceed until you have entered both. Why ask for either when both are needed?
- ◆ the greyed boxes are a pain to see.
- ◆ The name of the Child's current school, Plymouth College, was not in your list. The Name of the Devonport High School for Girls, appearing in your list as "Devonport Girls High School".
- ◆ The Next Step guide is not wholly self explanatory. We needed to contact the admissions team to clarify certain points. They were extremely helpful, but the booklet could be clarified.
- ◆ The only problem i have had with the on-line application was the fact that my childs primary school was not listed on the 'current school attended' part.
- ◆ The only thing that caught my eye was that Plymstock School has been spelt incorrectly (Pymstock) - hopefully it won't cause any confusion regarding our preferred school!
- ◆ The school that my daughter currently attends (Kings School) is not on your list of schools currently attended.
- ◆ The use of the Choice adviser enabled this form to be completed very easily the use of an interpreter mad the process very easy. I have been able with the

use of the Choice adviser to establish a communications link which will keep me in touch

- ◆ There is not much that you could improve it is as straightforward as you could make it in my opinion.
- ◆ There is no room to put down Eleanor's primary school (not in drop down menu). For the record, she attends Wembury Primary School, Knighton Road, Wembury, Plymouth
- ◆ This process seems very straightforward and I cannot see any improvements that are needed.
- ◆ Titles do not include "Dr". The written form asks for both parents but this one just one. There is an "other" box under the named school in the Preference section that didn't make sense.
- ◆ To be honest if parents have done their homework beforehand then this part of the process should be simple. Your online form is straightforward with simple questions to answer.
- ◆ To make it easier to apply to school from other councils
- ◆ To make the form to apply for secondary school more noticeable on the website.
- ◆ Using the internet to apply for my son's secondary school is quick, easy and is received immediately. Thank you.
- ◆ Very good site, easy to use.
- ◆ Very impressed also quick and convenient
- ◆ We found the booklet given to us from the schools most helpful and easy to follow. The online booking is easy to find and complete.
- ◆ We speak English, we live in England, I would like to see England under country of origin.
- ◆ We would like to see both parents of the child entered into the system.
- ◆ When applying for a school in a county that your child is already being taught, but lives in a different county I feel the system of applying for a secondary school is not as smooth as it should be. We completed an application received from my son's school
- ◆ Whilst we have access to the internet and the set up is great - the reason we completed the form online was the 'shiny' paper the admissions form was printed on - not very practical as it smudges!!!
- ◆ Why does the online application form ask details about my son's ethnicity and language when it seems the written form does not?
- ◆ Yes - being able to review it before being obliged to confirm that it is correct!
- ◆ Yes - because my children do not attend a primary school within Plymouth, I have no way of communicating which primary school they go to on the online form. The drop down menu does not have it on. I do not know what to do now! For the record.....
- ◆ Yes, a pop up listing the criteria for assessing pupils ie the 1-6 criteria (have a sibling in school, in area, attends feeder school etc.