

The *Parent and Caregiver Survey* (PaCS) was developed as part of [NSI Partnerships](#)' Effective School Improvement work. The PaCS is a statistically validated survey that can be used to gather parents' and caregivers' perceptions of six key aspects of the school climate:

- The level of **teacher support** for students
- The extent to which the school makes **student behaviour expectations** clear and promotes a safe environment
- The extent to which the school **affirms diversity** in the backgrounds of different families
- How **welcoming** parents find the school
- The ease and quality of **communication** between the school and parents / whānau
- The extent to which parents are informed about **how their child's learning is assessed**.

The development and validation of the survey are detailed in the following publications:

Aldridge, J. M., & McChesney, K. (2020). Parents' and caregivers' perceptions of the school climate: Development and validation of the *Parent and Caregiver Survey* (PaCS). *Learning Environments Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10984-020-09308-z>

Aldridge, J. M., & McChesney, K. (2020, June 17). How do parents and whānau perceive your school? A simple survey tool to find out! [blog post] *Ipu Kererū*. <https://nzareblog.wordpress.com/2020/06/17/simple-survey-tool/>

If you are unable to access the journal article, please contact Jill Aldridge or Katrina McChesney to request a copy.

***The PaCS may be freely used for educational and research purposes***, provided that the source is appropriately acknowledged. Reuse for commercial gain is not permitted. ***The PaCS may also be adapted for educational and research purposes***. We would appreciate hearing from anyone who has done so. We are also willing to collaborate on new versions or validations of the survey.

If you choose, you can contract NSI to assist with survey implementation. We can organise to administer the survey online and then analyse the data and provide you with a user-friendly report. Please contact Meghan Blackstock for a quotation or any queries.

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The survey is provided on the following pages.

Some parents/caregivers will have more than one child at your school. When administering the survey, you can choose to have parents answer the survey multiple times (giving separate responses for each of their children's experiences), or have parents answer the survey just once to give an overall picture of their views.

You may wish to add demographic items at the beginning of the survey (e.g. parents' or child/ren's cultural background; number of children at the school ...)

We recommend administering the survey online to facilitate easier data analysis. If you choose, you can contract NSI to assist with survey implementation. We can organize to administer the survey online and then analyse the data and provide you with a user-friendly report. Please contact Meghan Blackstock for a quotation.

The survey comprises 29 items across six scales:

- Teacher support (5 items)
- Student behaviour (5 items)
- Affirming diversity (5 items)
- Welcoming school (4 items)
- Communication (5 items)
- Assessment (5 items)

***For each scale, parents' responses for all of the items making up the scale should be added together and then divided by the number of items making up that scale*** (four for the welcoming school scale; five for each of the other scales). This will give the mean (average) score for each scale.

For example, there are five items for the teacher support scale. The mean of each parent's responses to these five items is that parent's reported score for this scale. The mean of all parents' mean scores for this scale is the overall score for this scale.

***Use the scale means (and not the means for individual items) to evaluate your school climate and identify areas for improvement.*** The questionnaire is designed to tell you about six things (the five scales), not 29 things (the individual items). Having multiple items per scale is a way of increasing the accuracy and validity of the questionnaire, meaning that we can have confidence in the results.

**Teacher Support** – assesses the extent to which teachers at the school are supportive of students.

	Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always
1. Teachers at this school care about my child/children.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Teachers at this school try to understand my child's/children's personal problems.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Teachers at this school treat my child/children with respect.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Teachers at this school give my child/children the help that they need with their school work	1	2	3	4	5
5. Teachers at this school challenge my child/children to do better	1	2	3	4	5

**Student Behaviour** – assesses the extent to which the school makes clear the expectations of student behavior and promote a safe environment.

	Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always
6. At this school, there are high expectations for student behaviour.	1	2	3	4	5
7. The school ensures that a safe environment is provided during break times.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The school ensures that disruptive classroom behaviours are minimised.	1	2	3	4	5
9. The school effectively helps students to learn to resolve conflicts.	1	2	3	4	5
10. The school deals with incidences of bullying appropriately.	1	2	3	4	5

**Affirming Diversity** – assesses the extent to which the background of different families is acknowledged and valued.

	Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always
11. At this school, my family's culture and background are acknowledged.	1	2	3	4	5
12. At this school, my child/children are encouraged to learn about different cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
13. At this school, there is respect for social issues (such as race, disabilities).	1	2	3	4	5
14. At this school, there is respect for sensitive issues (such as gender).	1	2	3	4	5
15. At this school, different cultures are valued.	1	2	3	4	5

**Welcoming School** – assesses the extent to which parents feel welcomed at the school.

	Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always
16. If I have a query or problem, the school staff go out of their way to help me.	1	2	3	4	5
17. When I visit the school, the staff are approachable.	1	2	3	4	5
18. When I visit the school, the staff are welcoming.	1	2	3	4	5
19. When I visit the school, the staff are respectful of me.	1	2	3	4	5

**Communication** - assesses the extent to which parent feel that they are able to communicate with members of the school staff.

	Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always
20. I am able to approach staff members to discuss concerns or grievances.	1	2	3	4	5
21. There is good communication from the school to the parents.	1	2	3	4	5
22. It is easy for me to make appointments to meet with relevant teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I feel comfortable approaching school staff to give them information about my child/children's development.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I feel comfortable asking teachers about the education of my child/children.	1	2	3	4	5

**Assessment Criteria** – assesses the extent to which parents are aware of how their child's work is being marked.

	Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always
25. There is regular feedback about my child/children's performance.	1	2	3	4	5
26. I know the criteria used for marking my child/children's assessment tasks.	1	2	3	4	5
27. School reports give clear feedback about my child/children's progress.	1	2	3	4	5
28. I know what learning is scheduled for my child/children in key areas.	1	2	3	4	5
29. I am well informed about my child's progress.	1	2	3	4	5