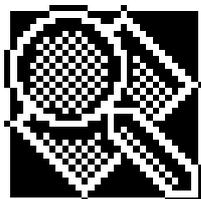


Action on Ethos

*This Case Study describes one school's account
of investigating Ethos.*

*It highlights the developments that took place
as a result of the exercise.*



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1 Background

Cross-curricular discussion groups had emphasised a need for improved communication and relationships within the school community. It was decided to operate a steering committee whose remit was within the (then) vision statement of the school to identify some targets for the improvement of **relationships** within the school community. Members were recruited and a committee was established comprising three parents (drawn from the School Board and the PTA), two students, four teachers, one support member of staff and the Depute Head as chairperson. The wide representation on the group was considered vital, as it was a genuine attempt to draw together representation from all members of the school community. School Ethos was then established as a priority within the School Development Plan.

2 General Aims

There were very clear aims behind the use of the Ethos Indicators. Of considerable importance was the attempt to create a real dialogue between students, staff and parents about the strengths of the school and areas for development. The second major aim was to attempt to identify a few clear action points around which the whole community could unite. This fitted in very well with the process of creating the first major school development plan, providing as it did clear objective information.

3 Methods/Strategies

Once the committee was appointed its initial meetings were taken up with preparing appropriate questions for the staff, student and parent questionnaires. We adapted the Scottish Office Ethos questionnaires as appropriate and also prepared a support staff questionnaire as the staff questionnaire was very teacher orientated. Questionnaires were then distributed and retrieved. Staff completed the questionnaire during time allocated on a staff in-service day, students in P.S.D. or R.E. time and parents were circulated through student post. After considerable debate it was agreed that the questionnaire would be sent out to every home rather than just a sample. We had a high response rate from all groups: the survey system was generally accepted by the school community as a means of improving relationships between staff, students and parents and it was perceived as an honest attempt to establish a genuine dialogue for the future.

