

(school logo)

A report on the results of research among Current Parents

undertaken in March 2005

by



*The sense of school community and lack of pretence creates
a good atmosphere and environment for learning*

*We are delighted with our son's level of enthusiasm for everything;
the teachers have really 'engaged' his interest*

Unlike local schools, pupils are not made to feel it is 'uncool' to learn and try hard

Strong, dynamic, enthusiastic, committed leadership from the Headmaster

*The ambience is welcoming, there is a family atmosphere,
yet the school is demanding but not elitist*

*I would have no hesitation in recommending Dauntsey's. It is friendly, relaxed - and
a dynamic school. We like its easy-going yet organized style.
It seems to have clear and visionary leadership and approachable staff*

There is a culture of achievement and encouragement of individual strengths

The children are happy, enthusiastic and enjoy going to school

*I would recommend the school in terms of finding the
individual's strengths rather than being a solely academic establishment*

My child is very enthusiastic about all aspects of the school

It is a good all round school and produces really well balanced young adults

INTRODUCTION

Dauntsey's School has always regarded parental views as important and from the results of similar research undertaken in February 2002 the School was confident that it was meeting the expectations of its parent body in providing academic excellence in a caring supportive community. Nevertheless, the School's Governors, its Headmaster and his senior management felt that it would be both valuable and responsible to once again give parents the opportunity to express their opinions in a formal, and independently assessed way. They felt such research should not look solely at the school's academic provision but also at all the other key 'non tangible' aspects that are essential in providing an all-round education to the boys and girls within the school.

Accordingly, it commissioned THE SCHOOLS MARKETING PARTNERSHIP (SMP), a well-respected consultancy specialising in the independent sector of education, to undertake postal research in early 2005. A total of 42% of parents responded which is about the level of response SMP would expect. Some verbatim quotes from parents responding to the survey can be found on the front of this synopsis.

THE RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

The following represents a condensed version of the document provided by THE SCHOOLS MARKETING PARTNERSHIP to the School's Senior Management, which summarised the consultancy's conclusions. This summary has been provided by SMP and is shown here unedited.

1. Dauntsey's is clearly seen as a school providing an excellent all-round education in a family-friendly, caring environment that contributes to the high academic achievement the School secures.
 2. Parents see the main strength of the School as the provision of an all-round education, followed by its high academic standards and caring atmosphere.
 3. Further strengths cited by respondents were the wide range of extra-curricular activities, the sports and recreational facilities, highly motivated and committed teaching staff and the drama and music departments.
 4. Very few weaknesses were identified by parents. The standard of teaching, in certain subject areas, the lack of opportunities for sport for all and high school fees were mentioned by 11%, 9% and 6% of respondents respectively.
 5. Overall parents are very happy with the quality of teaching with 53% of respondents giving a 'very good' rating which is well above SMP's average score of 48% amongst other independent schools. Teachers were praised for their dedication and for the enthusiasm for learning they instil in the pupils. As individual subjects however, Art, IT, French and Physics did receive some negative comments.
 6. Encouraging for the School is the fact that 82% of respondents felt their child's ability to learn had increased since joining Dauntsey's and similarly 72% felt there had been an increase in their child's enthusiasm for learning. Overall parents seem very satisfied with the breadth of the curriculum although 12% wished to see Psychology offered and 10% felt Food Technology should be taught.
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7. Parents seem very satisfied with the quality of the formal written reports they receive about their child's progress – 90% believing them to be either 'excellent' or 'good'. 76% felt the quality of Parent/Teacher meetings was either 'excellent' or 'good' but there does seem to be some dissatisfaction with the frequency and organisation of the meetings with 17% of respondents complaining about lengthy queuing times and the lack of an appointment system.
 8. Pastoral care is a major strength of the School, with 84% of respondents judging this aspect to be either 'very well' or 'well' handled and of these, 57% gave a rating of 'very well' handled which is higher than SMP's average of 48% amongst its other independent school clients.
 9. The wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer seems to be appreciated by parents with 93% rating the provision as 'very good' or 'good'. Of these 58% gave a rating of 'very good' which is significantly higher than SMP's average of 40%. Parents are full of praise for 'Moonrakers' and the School's tall ship the *Jolie Brise*. There were, however, some negative comments on the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme as run by the School.
 10. 92% of respondents felt the Sixth Form facilities and provision were either 'very good' or 'good' although only 29% of respondents felt the Sixth Form options had been 'very well' explained. Just under two-thirds of parents (65%) felt the standard of careers and Higher Education advice to be either 'very good' or 'good' with 32% of these giving a rating of 'very good', significantly higher than SMP's average of 23%.
 11. There was a mixed response to the School's website with some parents finding it very informative and useful whilst others felt it was not easy to navigate and was not kept up-to-date.
 12. The School is undoubtedly keeping its fee-paying parents happy, with a high 99% of respondents being satisfied with their child's overall development and of these 78% were 'very satisfied' which is the highest score ever recorded by SMP, the average amongst other schools being 49%. 96% of parents also believed Dauntsey's offers good value for money although there were some comments from 11% about school fees being expensive.
 13. The School's friendly atmosphere is the over-riding reason why parents seem to have finally chosen Dauntsey's. This does not come as a surprise given the numerous references to this throughout the research.
 14. Encouraging for the School is the overwhelming confirmation by parents (97%) that they would 'definitely' or 'probably' recommend Dauntsey's to other parents. Indeed, 83% of these parents would 'definitely' recommend the School which is the second highest score, on this aspect that SMP has ever recorded.