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School Grounds in Scotland Research Report

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REPORTS

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SUMMARY

SCHOOL GROUNDS IN SCOTLAND

PROJECT BACKGROUND

School grounds are an inexpensive yet versatile resource, which offer a unique setting to promote positive health and well being, understanding of the environment, citizenship and physical activity for our school children. Grounds for Learning, Play Scotland and **sportscotland** commissioned John McKendrick, of the Scottish Poverty Information Unit, to undertake the first national survey of state sector school grounds in Scotland. This survey sought evidence on the current attitudes toward and use of Scottish school grounds, in order to inform national debate on how to target resources more effectively, support new initiatives and establish best practice in Scottish education.

SCHOOL GROUNDS IN SCOTLAND

Improving Scotland's school grounds is a worthy objective in its own right. However, the significance of school grounds extends beyond their perimeter boundaries. School grounds should be viewed as an integral part of wider concerns with education in Scotland and children in society. Although school grounds have an important contribution to make to a diverse range of Scottish Executive priorities, this potential is rarely acknowledged in official documents, strategies and plans. The ten policy areas which this report contributes to, and which are examined in more detail in the full report, are: the nature of education, Scotland's school estate, McCrone and staffing, schools and their communities, community transport and planning, sustainability, biodiversity, inclusion, children in society, and sport and physical activity. The potential for incorporating "joined up policy interventions" in Scotland's school grounds is rarely realised. A strategic approach to school grounds development could, potentially, involve a wide range of agencies to address a wide range of concerns.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

Every school in Scotland was surveyed in 2003. All local authorities in Scotland endorsed the research. Schools were approached with the permission of the Director of Education (or their equivalent) within their local authority area and head teachers (or their equivalent) were asked to arrange for the completion of the survey on behalf of their school.

Appropriate questionnaires were designed for nursery, primary, secondary and special schools and three abbreviated inserts were designed for schools that incorporated more

than one age-stage and type of school on a single site (nursery class, primary section and Special Educational Need unit (hereafter SEN)). A sample questionnaire can be found in Annex 2.

The total number of questionnaires completed was 1963. The overall survey response rate was 47%, comprising 36% for providers of nursery level education (518 surveys returned), 53% for primary schools (1148 surveys returned), 52% for secondary schools (207 surveys returned), and 47% for special schools (90 surveys returned). Response rates for local authorities ranged from 28% (Edinburgh and Stirling) to 63% (East Ayrshire and South Lanarkshire).

Survey returns were sufficient to allow detailed analysis including differences emerging by school type, school roll, local authority and age of school.

The dataset will be lodged with the ESRC data archive in 2005.

Key Points: The Study

- 1,963 questionnaires were completed.
- 47% of schools took part in the survey.
- Schools from every local authority in Scotland participated.
- The research had the support of all 32 Directors of Education (or their equivalent).

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Scotland's School Estate

Results from the *Scottish School Grounds Survey* provide useful context for current debates and policies that aim to develop Scotland's school estate. It is found that the Scottish Executive's on-going school building programme in Scotland is not of a sufficient scale to significantly alter the age profile of Scotland's schools (particularly primary schools and rural schools); concern over loss of school grounds seems disproportionate to the amount of land lost to development in recent times, although - given the Scottish Executive's commitment to support sport in schools - concern over the loss of playing fields in secondary schools may be warranted. Furthermore, the Scottish Executive's concern to foster 'community-based' schools is far removed from the reality of primary school grounds in Scotland, given that only one in eight primary school grounds are currently used by community-based organisations.

There is great variation in size within each school type; reference to 'primary schools' or 'secondary schools' must therefore be made with caution.

The character of Scotland's school estate varies across geographical areas. There is some evidence of an urban/rural divide in terms of school roll (smaller primary schools in rural local authorities), age of school (more older schools in rural local authorities) and grounds sharing (which is most likely to be found in more rural authorities).

Variations in the character of Scotland's school estate can also be discerned across school type. Primary schools tend to be housed in older buildings and a significant number of secondary schools have lost land to development in recent times.

Key Points: Scotland's School Estate

- 31% of Scotland's schools were built before World War Two.
- 25% of Scotland's primary schools were built before 1900.
- 19% of secondary schools have lost school grounds to development in the last ten years; about half of this (10% of secondary schools) was loss of playing fields.
- Almost a third of secondary schools share their grounds with community groups (30%), although ground sharing with community organisations is less common in other types of school (e.g. only 12% of primary schools).
- Ground sharing is most prevalent in four rural authorities (e.g. 88% of schools in Orkney) and is least prevalent in the City of Dundee (17%).
- The average roll for primary schools, among schools surveyed, was 180.
- 16% of primary schools surveyed had a roll of 35 or less, while one in five primary schools had at least 300 pupils.
- The average roll for secondary schools, among schools surveyed, was 798.
- 12% of secondary schools surveyed had a roll of 200 or less, while one in three (32%) had at least 1000 pupils.

Character of School Grounds

In general, the *Scottish School Grounds Survey* found widespread satisfaction with the size of the area given over to school grounds in Scotland. However, one in ten schools considered their grounds to be "much too small", and one in five considered their grounds to be either "too small" or "much too small", which may be a cause for concern. This is consistent with findings showing that those school grounds which were judged to be "too small" were more likely to be those which: had more pupils (more demand for space), had fewer features; had fewer area types; were used less in curriculum learning; and had been reduced in size having lost ground to development in the last ten years.

In the survey, schools were asked to describe the types of area (e.g. grass, hard surface) and specific features (e.g. bins, fixed play equipment) that could be found in their grounds.

Scottish schoolscapes are diverse with most grounds possessing a range of area types and features. Hard surface playgrounds, planted areas (ground and containers), car parks, grass areas not used for sport and trees are commonplace in Scottish school grounds. However, there is widespread demand for sheltered areas, shelters and seating areas.

In addition to area types and features that are commonplace throughout schools in Scotland, there are also characteristics that are particular to sectors. For example, secondary schools are more likely to have bike racks and weather stations, and nursery schools are more likely to have equipment storage facilities and non-fixed play equipment. Nursery schools tend to have more diversity of features and area types than nursery classes.

In accounting for differences among schools, it would have been reasonable to expect smaller schools (defined by school roll) to have a more limited range of area types and features. However, it was found that the very smallest (and the very largest) secondary schools are those that are most likely to have the most diverse school grounds. Furthermore, while there is no correlation between area type diversity and school size for primary schools, the smallest primary schools tend to possess *more* school grounds features.

Key Points: Character of School Grounds, Area Types and Features

- Of the 15 different types of **area** that may occur in school grounds (as defined for this study), schools reported relatively few, with an average of about five different types of area per school.
- The most common area type found in Scottish schools is the hard surface playground, which is found in 97% of primary schools, 92% of secondary schools, 82% of special schools and 70% of nursery schools.
- Four other area types were common, each found in about two-thirds of schools: planted area (ground), planted area (containers), grass areas (other than sports playing fields) and car parks.
- Nine of every ten respondents expressed a desire for more area types in their school grounds.
- The most desired area type is that of sheltered areas, which is wanted by almost half of all primary and secondary schools.
- Of the 24 different school ground **features** defined and used in the survey, schools reported an average of six in their school.
- On average respondents expressed a desire for 7 more features for their school.
- Schools in rural local authorities tend to have more features than those in urban areas.
- Trees were frequently mentioned as an existing feature (48% of nursery schools, 61% of primary and special schools, and 67% of secondary schools).
- 95% of respondents expressed desire for more of at least one area type for their school grounds.
- The two most wanted features for all school grounds are seats and outdoor shelters. Fixed play equipment is the third most wanted feature for nursery, primary and special school grounds, while picnic tables is the third most wanted feature for secondary school grounds.
- 69% of school grounds in Scotland are considered, by the respondent, to be "about the right size".
- 29% of secondary school grounds in Scotland are considered by the respondent to be too small
- 39% of schools which had lost ground to development in the last ten years were considered to have grounds which were "too small or much too small" (compared to 'only' 22% of those schools which had not lost grounds to development).

Provision for Sport in School Grounds

The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* provides an evidence base to inform understanding of sport in Scottish schools. This importance of this issue has heightened in recent years as the Scottish Executive has accorded a key role to schools (and their grounds) in the drive to increase levels of physical activity among children and young people.

Provision for sport in school grounds is commonplace in secondary schools with the majority possessing grass sports pitches and around half possessing an athletics track. Athletics, football, hockey and rugby are widely played on an organised basis in secondary schools. Almost half of primary schools have grass sports pitches. The most common sports played on an organised basis in primary schools are small-sided football, netball, rounders and athletics.

The survey confirms that there are marked variations in the provision of sports pitches and the number of sports practised in school grounds across age-stages (more pitches and

more sports in schools for older children). For example, while 90% of secondary schools have on-site sports pitches, these feature in only 50% of primary schools.

There is also a strong regional character for some types of pitch (blaes/mineral is most prevalent in west central Scotland) and sports (rugby is played more frequently in the Scottish Borders).

Although there is more provision for sporting activity in secondary schools, there are fewer pupils per pitch in primary schools. Furthermore, primary schools tend to have a higher proportion of their pupils engaged in active play during break times than in secondary schools.

Secondary schools are more likely than primary schools to report that their grounds are very important for sport. However, 40% of secondary schools reported problems with the quality of their sports pitches and 25% have taken steps to improve provision for sports through school grounds project development work.

Key Points: Provision for Sport in School Grounds

- 45% of primary schools have no sports pitches, compared to only 4% of secondary schools.
- 92% of secondary schools have at least one on-site sports pitch compared with 52% of primary schools.
- Grass pitches are the most common type of sports pitch; they are found in 25% of special school grounds, 44% of primary school grounds and 82% of secondary school grounds.
- The higher the school roll, the more likely a school is to possess its own on-site sports pitch. Secondary schools with more than 1000 pupils have an average of 4.4 pitches, while those with at most 200 pupils have an average of 2.1 pitches.
- The highest levels of ownership of on-site sports pitch and 'other' outdoor sports facilities are found in secondary schools; 82% of secondary schools have a grass pitch, 43% have an athletics track, 21% have tennis courts, 15% have a synthetic surface pitch and 6% have a cricket wicket.
- 9% of schools have access to (their own) sports pitches off-site.
- The playing of organised sport varies enormously by age stage, e.g. hockey is played in 72% of secondary schools and 21% of primary schools.
- The number of organised sports practised in school grounds varies across school types; on average, six sports are practised in secondary school grounds, compared to three in primary and two in special school grounds.
- The main sports that are played on an organised basis in school grounds are athletics, rugby, football, netball, rounders and hockey.
- Some sports have a strong regional basis of participation, e.g. shinty (north west Scotland), rugby (south east Scotland and the Scottish Borders) and cricket (central/eastern Scotland).
- Three-quarters of all schools reported that either 'all' (45%) or 'almost all' (31%) of their pupils are engaged in active play during breaks, with primary school children being much more active than secondary school pupils.
- School grounds are judged to be 'very useful' or 'essential' as a resource for sport in 72% of secondary schools and 42% of primary schools.
- Poor quality sports pitches is considered to be a problem in 35% of primary schools and 43% of secondary schools; it is the main school grounds problem in 26% of secondary schools.

- 90% of schools use their grounds for physical education.
- Sport is the focus of school grounds improvement projects in 15% of primary schools and 27% of secondary schools.
- Secondary school grounds are used, to a substantial extent, by the community for sporting activity outside school hours; two-thirds of secondary schools reported that their grounds are used for 'organised sport' with one-third reporting use by the community for non-organised sport.

Extra-Curricular Use

The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* demonstrates that school grounds are used at different times outside school teaching hours, i.e. breaks during the school day, activities that 'wrap-around' the school day (formal pre- and after-school activity), and outside school opening hours (a range of formal and informal activities by the school and the wider community during evenings, weekends and holidays).

The school day is punctuated by morning break and lunchtime. Morning breaks tend to be either 15 or 20 minutes in duration and the majority of lunch breaks are either 45 or 60 minutes in duration (a minority of schools also timetable an afternoon break).

At the time of the survey, the most schools in Scotland had after-school clubs and a substantial minority had pre-school clubs. However, given Scottish Executive support and encouragement for such provision, it is likely that this snapshot is from a trend of extending provision.

Secondary school grounds are more widely used than primary schools by the local community outside school hours. The majority of secondary schools are used by schools for extra-curricular activity, by after-school clubs and by the local community for organised sport. They are also used, to a lesser extent, as a short cut, as a site for non-organised sport, for 'curricular' activity that takes place outside school hours and for pre-school clubs.

Key Points: Extra-Curricular Use of School Grounds

- 60% of schools in Scotland have after-school clubs, with 20% having pre-school clubs.
- Clubs are most common in secondary schools (81% have after-school clubs and 28% pre-school clubs).
- All primary and secondary schools have a morning break and a lunch break but only 13% of schools have an afternoon break.
- Morning breaks tend to be either 15 or 20 minutes in duration.
- Lunch breaks tend to be either 45 or 60 minutes in duration.
- 14% of primary schools and 4% of secondary schools have lunch breaks that are less than 45 minutes in duration. However, 16% of primary schools and 8% of secondary schools have lunch breaks that are more than 60 minutes in duration.
- 90% of secondary school grounds are used outside school hours, compared to 61% of primary school grounds, 35% of special school grounds, and just over a quarter of nursery school grounds (28%).
- Organised sport, outside school hours, is reported to take place in 66% of secondary school grounds, 8% of special school grounds, 13% of primary school grounds and 4% of nursery school grounds.
- 58% of schools utilise their grounds outside school hours for extra-curricular activities and 53% have their grounds used by after-school clubs.

School Grounds as a Learning Resource

The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* asked respondents about: the value placed on their school grounds for curriculum learning for sport and for play; whether or not school grounds are used to support learning in specific curriculum fields; the frequency with which they are used for physical education/games and 'other' learning; and school participation in educational projects which would be expected to utilise school grounds.

It is clear from the responses that school grounds are valued and used as a resource for play, sport and curriculum learning. However, significant differences are evident which inform understanding of the nature of this resource.

In nursery level education school grounds are seen as particularly important as a learning resource and are used in support of a wide range of curriculum areas. Secondary schools tend to use school grounds more frequently than other schools for physical education and games and tend to value school grounds highly as a resource for sport.

Nursery schools tend to use grounds more often, and value them more highly, than nursery classes within primary schools.

The perceived value of grounds as a learning resource is closely associated with the character of the grounds themselves. Thus, more diverse grounds are more highly valued for curriculum learning, grounds in which sport is played more frequently are more highly valued for sport and those grounds with more play equipment are more highly valued for play. Similarly, schools with a wider array of 'ecological' elements are more likely to be *Eco-Schools*.

Although higher levels of provision are associated with more positive evaluations of school grounds as a resource for learning, play and sport, it is significant to note that the smaller the primary school, the more likely its grounds are to be used for *each* of the 5-14 curriculum learning fields specified for that age group.

Key Points: School Grounds as a Learning Resource

- Almost two-thirds of schools participate in at least one project that is initiated or developed by an outside agency, e.g. *Eco-Schools*.
- A wide range of opinion was expressed on the usefulness of school grounds as a curriculum learning resource, a resource for sporting and physical activity and a play resource.
- Nursery schools are most likely to value grounds as a curriculum learning resource (63% responding that they are 'very useful' or 'essential'). This figure reduces to 38% for special schools, 32% for secondary schools and only 25% for primary schools.
- Only 10% of nursery schools reported that their grounds were 'not at all useful' as a curriculum resource.
- More diverse school grounds are more likely to be valued as a curriculum learning resource; 98% of those grounds with at least seven area types are considered to be useful (quite, very or essential), compared to 'only' 75% of those grounds with less than four area types.
- Secondary schools are most likely to value grounds as a resource for sports and physical activity (72% responding that they are 'very useful' or 'essential').
- 98% of school grounds that are used most frequently for physical education teaching are considered 'very useful' or 'essential' as a resource for sport and physical activity, compared to only 38% of those grounds that are not used for teaching physical education.

- Nursery schools are most likely to value grounds as a play resource (74% responding that they are 'very useful' or 'essential').
- There are marked differences between types of school with regard to the use of school grounds to support learning for specific areas of the curriculum. For example, 87% of nursery schools, 71% of primary schools and 22% of secondary schools use their grounds for learning in emotional, personal and social development. This pattern of response is consistent across 5-14 curriculum fields, other than physical education and movement.
- 91% of nursery schools, 87% of primary schools and 91% of secondary schools use their grounds for curriculum learning in physical education and movement.
- The vast majority of nursery schools use their grounds for curriculum learning in emotional, personal and social development (87%), communication and language (85%), knowledge and understanding of the world (88%), mathematics (88%), and expressive and aesthetic development (78%).
- The majority of primary schools use their grounds for curriculum learning in environmental 'scientific' studies (83%) and for personal and social development (71%).
- The majority of secondary schools use their grounds in technological studies (72%).
- The smaller the primary school, the more likely its grounds are to be used for *each* of the 5-14 curriculum learning fields specified for that age group. For example, 48% of those with up to 35 pupils use their grounds for art and design, compared to only 28% of those with more than 300 pupils.
- Three-quarters of secondary schools use their grounds 'very often' or 'all the time' to support physical education and games during school hours (74%).
- 41% of nursery schools use their grounds 'very often' or 'all the time' to support curriculum learning in fields other than physical education and games.

Regulation and Monitoring in School Grounds

The extent of segregation, monitoring and restrictions on access to school grounds contradicts the common portrayal of school grounds as a "children's space". Virtually all school grounds are monitored during school breaks; most schools are monitored outside school hours; most forbid children from accessing parts of their school grounds during break time; most enforce extra restrictions in inclement weather and most have a behaviour code. Many primary schools segregate their grounds in some way. Thus, school grounds are spaces in which children are controlled and regulated by adults who are charged with their responsibility.

Regulation is marginally more prevalent in primary schools. Notably, behaviour codes for school grounds and the enforcement of restrictions on access to, and use of, school grounds in inclement weather is common in primary schools.

More generally, however, there is considerable variation in the way in which school grounds are regulated across school types. Monitoring of grounds during school break times, for example, is highly variable across school types with janitors being prevalent in primary and secondary schools, assistants being more prevalent in nursery, primary and special schools and teachers being more prevalent in nursery, secondary and special schools.

Key Points: Regulation and Monitoring in the School Grounds

- The majority of schools either have (83%), or are planning to introduce (7%), a behaviour code for school grounds.
- 93% of primary schools, 72% of special schools, 71% of secondary schools and 65% of nursery schools have a behaviour code for school grounds.
- In schools with SEN units, there is little evidence of school grounds segregation on the grounds of 'special educational need' (7% of schools), whereas 66% of nursery classes in primary schools reported that their pupils have their own grounds which are set apart from those of older pupils, i.e. segregation on the grounds of age.
- School grounds are segregated in some way in half of Scotland's primary schools.
- The larger the primary school, the more likely that school is to segregate its grounds, e.g. grounds are segregated in 74% of those with at least 300 pupils, but 'only' 25% of those with between 35 and 99 pupils.
- Less segregation is encountered in school grounds from rural local authorities in Scotland (35%, compared to 62% of urban local authorities), which may be related to the size of school or the size of available grounds.
- Virtually all school grounds are monitored during school breaks and two thirds of school grounds are monitored outside school hours.
- Significant contributions to break-time school grounds monitoring are being made by classroom/nursery assistants (58% of all schools surveyed), janitors (46%), school grounds supervisors (43%) and teachers/nursery teachers (37%).
- The likelihood of janitors monitoring school grounds during break times increases for larger primary schools (6% in the smallest and 68% in the largest), but decreases for larger secondary schools (77% in the smallest and 10% in the largest).
- Janitors are the most prevalent form of school grounds monitoring outside school hours for all age stages and sectors (43% of nursery schools, 61% of primary schools, 83% of secondary schools and 72% of special schools).
- Virtually all primary schools place restrictions on use of school grounds in inclement weather (97%), as do a large majority of special schools (82%). However, over a third of nursery schools place no restrictions on pupils' use of school grounds (37%) and only a minority of secondary schools enforce restrictions on the use of school grounds in bad weather (24%).
- The majority of schools forbid children from accessing parts of their school grounds during break time, i.e. 84% of primary schools, 70% of secondary schools and 67% of special schools.
- Preventing access to car parks during break time is commonplace (87% of secondary schools, for example).
- Pupils are not permitted access to sports fields during break time in 11% of secondary schools.

Challenges in School Grounds

The types of problems reported cover both those concerned with protecting grounds (vandalism, maintenance, CCTV) and the poor quality of grounds (lack of surface variation, quality of sports pitches). Car parking is also a particular problem that manifests itself in a number of guises. There are problems that are generic to most school grounds (e.g. vandalism, lack of CCTV, lack of surface variation and poor maintenance). Similarly, the

lack of car parking spaces for parents and the inadequacy of dropping off/picking up areas are fairly common car-parking related problems.

The likelihood of problems being reported is closely linked with the character of school grounds. Thus, those grounds which are used as short-cuts and spaces in which people 'hang out' after school hours are more likely to have problems with vandalism; those schools without a maintenance policy for their grounds are more likely to be troubled with maintenance problems; and the larger the school, the more problems that are reported.

The poor quality of sports pitches is more of a problem in primary and secondary schools than nursery or special schools; problems caused by intrusion from others and a lack of supervision are most keenly felt in secondary schools; and problems related to car parking provision for parents are reported to be more of a problem in both primary and secondary schools.

Key Points: Challenges in School Grounds

- On average, respondents reported 2.6 problems in school grounds, with fewer than five problems being reported for 90% of schools.
- Nursery schools are more likely than other school types to consider that they do not have any school grounds problems (21%).
- Vandalism is the most prevalent problem in Scottish school grounds – over a third of secondary schools (36%), two-fifths of primary and nursery schools (40% and 44%) and more than half of special schools (56%) reported vandalism to be a problem. Indeed, this is identified as the main problem in 26% of nursery schools, 22% of primary schools and 43% of special schools.
- The poor quality of sports pitches is a particular problem in primary school grounds (35%) and secondary school grounds (43%). This is identified as the main problem in 26% of secondary schools.
- Vandalism is a problem in 67% of school grounds that are used as a short cut, compared to 39% of those school grounds that are not used as a short cut.
- 13% of primary schools with 35 or fewer pupils do not have a problem with the 'lack of space' in their grounds, compared to 27% of primary schools with at least 300 pupils.
- The majority of all school types were reported to experience problems with car parking in their grounds. A 'lack of car parking spaces for parents' (71%) and 'inadequate dropping off/picking up areas' (66%) feature as a problem for the majority of all school types.
- Among car-related problems, child safety was reported to be less of a problem than the lack of car parking spaces for staff across all school types.

Special Educational Needs and School Grounds

Comparisons between special schools (for children with SEN) and those schools which are defined according to their age stage (schools from which children with SEN have traditionally been excluded) were considered for each theme in the *Scottish School Grounds Survey* and findings are presented under each heading of this summary. Additionally, this section considers issues that pertain directly and exclusively to children with SEN.

Although only 26% of schools make an explicit reference to school grounds in their inclusion strategy the majority of school grounds are found to be fully accessible. There is little segregation of grounds on account of SEN, and school grounds play is characterised by integration of SEN and non-SEN pupils.

However, responses indicate that school grounds are considered to be particularly useful in special schools, especially in stand-alone special schools.

Key Points: Special Educational Needs

- A quarter of schools in Scotland reported that their school made reference to school grounds in their inclusion strategy (26%). Secondary schools were least likely to make reference to grounds in their strategy (19%).
- The two authorities in which schools were most likely to make reference to school grounds in their inclusion strategy were Midlothian (45%) and Stirling (38%).
- Segregation in school grounds is more likely to be influenced by age of pupil than by SEN, with most respondents (97%) reporting that children with SEN used the grounds at the same time as other pupils.
- More than half of respondents reported that all of the pupils with SEN mix with others through school grounds play, while one quarter reported that “almost all” pupils with SEN mix with other pupils in school grounds play.
- The highest level of integration of SEN pupils through play is in Glasgow; 91% (or 10 of 11) of special schools in Glasgow reported that ‘all’ or ‘almost all’ SEN pupils mixed with others through school grounds play.
- The majority of respondents from special schools consider school grounds to be more important to pupils with SEN than to pupils without SEN (54%); in SEN units in mainstream schools, 80% consider school grounds to be equally important to pupils with SEN than to pupils without SEN.
- 72% of all special schools and schools with SEN units report that their school grounds are “fully” accessible for SEN pupils.

Developing Scotland’s School Grounds

Although school grounds are accorded a low priority in development planning and although most schools (70%) do not have a school grounds maintenance policy, the extent to which schools have improved their grounds in recent years tends to suggest that they are important to schools. Three-quarters of schools in Scotland had improved their grounds, although this was less common in the secondary school sector (59%).

Improvement projects are multi-faceted with regard to motivations, instigators, project focus, pupil involvement and sources of funding. However, there are features that are common to improvement projects across school types. Thus, most projects are of recent origin, most seek to ‘improve the appearance of school grounds’, and head teachers typically instigate improvement projects.

There is considerable variation across sectors in the nature of school grounds improvement projects. Notably, pupils are less involved in secondary school projects; parents are more likely to instigate projects in primary schools; community and education authorities are more likely to instigate projects in secondary schools; curriculum learning is most likely to be a reason for improvement work in nursery schools; fostering school identity and improving the behaviour of pupils is most associated with primary schools; improving sports resources is most typical of secondary schools; and whereas most nursery projects are described as ‘on-going’, most special school and secondary school improvement work tends to focus on a specific project.

The main barriers to improvement are reported to be lack of time and money.

Key Points: Developing Scotland's School Grounds

Development planning

- School grounds are described as a low priority in relation to school development plans in 27% of schools and are not referred to at all in development plans in a further 30% of schools.
- 58% of nursery schools described school grounds as a 'main' or 'high' priority in development planning.
- 64% of schools which consider their grounds to be 'very useful' or 'essential' as a curriculum learning resource also describe them as either a 'main' or a 'high' priority in their school development plan, compared to 'only' 34% of schools which consider their grounds to be 'not at all useful' or only 'quite useful' as a curriculum learning resource.

Improvements

- The majority of all types of school reported having already made improvements to school grounds (75%), ranging from 57% (secondary schools) to 84% (primary schools).
- School grounds improvement work which is on going is most characteristic of nursery schools (80% of improvement projects), whereas specific project work is most characteristic of secondary schools and special schools (72% and 91% of improvement projects, respectively).
- The majority of school grounds improvement work is of recent origin, e.g. 74% of work in secondary schools was undertaken in the last four years.
- Except in nursery schools, most projects tended only to cover a 'small part' of the grounds. In nursery school grounds projects are as likely to cover all (34%), most (35%) or a small part (31%) of the grounds.

Project focus

- On average, improvement projects focus on two or three themes.
- Appearance of the school is the focus for 67% of nursery school grounds projects, 61% of primary school grounds projects, 55% of secondary school grounds projects and 50% of special school grounds projects.
- A nature-related focus (including food growing, plant growing and wildlife areas) is more common in nursery schools. For example 25% of nursery school projects involve food growing, compared to 1% of secondary school projects.
- Half of secondary school grounds projects focus on sport (51%). This compares with 20% of primary, 18% of special school and 10% of nursery school grounds projects.

Project initiation

- On average, 2.5 people were credited with the idea for school grounds improvement projects.
- Head teachers initiate 85% of projects and two-fifths involve teachers. Pupils contributed to the start of school ground improvement work in half of primary schools, but in only a third of secondary schools, a quarter of special schools and one in seven nursery schools.

Pupil involvement

- High levels of pupil involvement (defined as performing at least three roles such as fundraising, planning, constructing, initiating) are most likely in primary schools (77% of primary schools), followed by special schools where the equivalent figure is 53%. In secondary and nursery schools pupil involvement tends to be much less.

Fundraising

- Schools tend to draw on a range of funding sources to finance school grounds improvement projects; averages range between 1.8 sources per project (secondary schools) and 2.3 sources per project (primary schools).
- School fundraising is prominent as a funding source for school grounds improvement work in nursery, primary and special schools (51%, 56% and 56%, respectively), but is relatively less widely used for secondary school grounds projects (31%). This may partly reflect the larger size of sports projects, which are more common in secondary schools.

Barriers

- The two main barriers to school grounds improvement work in each school sector emerge as a 'lack of time' and a 'lack of money'.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The report has resulted in a substantial number of recommendations and proposals for areas requiring further understanding.

- 1 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* should be used to propose a two-tier list of (i) key indicators (ii) thematic indicators, which would serve as measures for monitoring and target setting in Scotland's school grounds. These indicators should be transparent, robust and facilitate self-evaluation. These would be of value to local authorities and the Scottish Executive and should include information on the size and character of school grounds in Scotland. This would follow the lead taken by the Department for Education and Skills and would afford the potential to monitor change, or the lack of change, in the condition, use and perception of school grounds in Scotland. The development of a school grounds strategy (either for Scotland as a whole, or for individual local authorities) would require the availability of such data.
- 2 The results from the *Scottish School Grounds Survey* should be used to raise awareness among those responsible for school grounds that size of grounds is not a barrier to developing a rich and diverse schoolscape.
- 3 Consideration should be given to using derelict areas or wasteland as a focus for a campaign to target school grounds improvements, using to the full any opportunities to promote sustainable practice and support biodiversity.
- 4 The need for schools to include their grounds in development planning should be highlighted. School grounds were not referred to in development plans in 30% of schools, and considered a low priority in terms of development planning by a further 27%.
- 5 The School Premises Regulations should be reviewed and enforced to ensure there is adequate provision for school grounds for various purposes including sport and physical activity.
- 6 Consideration should be given to how to promote equity in the use and provision of school grounds for curriculum learning across the sectors, and to address

differences found between encapsulated and stand alone providers. In particular, further investigation should be undertaken to identify how nursery classes' grounds could be improved.

- 7 Research findings may reflect current perception rather than real understanding of educational opportunities offered by school grounds. This poses the question of whether enough is currently being done across all sectors to raise awareness and understanding of the potential value of school ground as a curriculum resource. Existing barriers should be challenged and opportunities explored.
- 8 The reasons for existing lower participation in school grounds educational projects in secondary and SEN schools need to be addressed, and ways of developing opportunities for these sectors explored.
- 9 There is a need to explore opportunities to promote diversity of area types and features in school grounds as this is clearly linked to their value as a curriculum resource.
- 10 Consideration should be given on how to support the development of higher levels of physical activity in schools, particularly in secondary schools.
- 11 Consideration should be given to how best to respond to the expressed demand by secondary schools for synthetic sports pitches. The level of demand is high (67%) and relatively much higher in secondary schools than in other school types.
- 12 The findings from the *Scottish Schools Grounds Survey* should be used to support the need for adequate provision for sports fields in new build schools.
- 13 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* finding that school grounds are widely used for the purposes of curriculum learning should be used to campaign for a broadening of *Scottish Executive Education Department and School Estates Division* to focus on the school campus (buildings and grounds), rather than the current, more limited, focus on school buildings.
- 14 Flexibility should be provided within the maintenance policy where this is contracted out (for example PPP schools), to give schools the ability to influence and shape the nature of their school grounds for educational benefit over the lifetime of the contract.
- 15 Local authorities should be briefed on the need to incorporate play-related training into the staff development of classroom assistants and playground supervisors. Such training would address issues such as safety, but would also raise awareness of the importance of play, the value of risk and best practice for adults in facilitating play.
- 16 Local authorities should be encouraged to undertake staff development work with teachers, which would demonstrate the potential of using school grounds in learning. Such staff development could draw upon exemplars of good practice and may be indicative of a supporting role for organisations such as *Grounds for Learning*.
- 17 Findings should be shared with Scottish Executive Biodiversity Group, the Local Biodiversity Plan network, Eco Schools and other partners in the field, in order to highlight the significant role school grounds play in providing opportunities to support biodiversity, and what support can be provided to promote best practice, with the underlying concern that hard surface areas still dominate the school grounds landscape.

FURTHER ENQUIRY

- i In further school grounds research, particularly for areas of investigation where subjective assessments are required (such as perceived problems), it would be worthwhile to obtain views from other key stakeholders, such as teachers, support staff, directors of education, members of school boards, janitors, local residents and, of course, school pupils.
- ii More detailed research on school grounds' area types and features should be undertaken using a case study approach. More detailed information on the size of areas and the quality and character of area types and features would provide greater depth of understanding and give an opportunity to highlight good practice.
- iii Schools which consider their grounds too small are less likely to use them as a learning resource. Further analysis could identify whether it is the size of ground that discourages an outdoor focus or whether the main barrier is lack of awareness/experience.
- iv Restrictions on children's access to certain areas of the school grounds may limit the value of school grounds as a resource for formal and informal learning and play. The impact of accessibility on learning and play should be considered in more detail to provide best practice guidance.
- v Further research should be undertaken to examine the ways in which school grounds are being developed and used to enhance their value as a learning resource.
- vi The data gathered looked at how schools perceived the value of their school grounds to deliver the formal and informal curriculum. More information is needed particularly regarding the hidden curriculum of school grounds, and how this can support or detract from a positive school ethos. This would require a more pupil-centred approach.
- vii Further school grounds research should be undertaken on social interaction at break times.
- viii The value of other features and area types in school grounds - outdoor shelters or wooded areas for example, that act as a catalyst for play, needs further enquiry and promotion of their play value for children.
- ix Children's perception of their school grounds as a resource for play, taken across all ages and sectors, needs further enquiry, in order to have an inclusive approach to best practice and design. The drop off in perceived active play in older children has implications for children's health and well being, and needs further analysis, particularly from a child's perspective.
- x Consideration should be given to commissioning supplementary research or granting permission for research to develop the dataset by adding a classification of whether secondary schools are within the catchment areas of Social Inclusion Partnership areas. This would allow for the results of the *Scottish School Grounds Survey* to be used to provide baseline information relevant to the *Sport 21* targets.
- xi Further research should be undertaken to understand the reasons why the poor quality of sports pitches was judged to be a particular problem in primary (35%) and secondary schools (43%). The importance of this issue is heightened given the potential role of sports pitches in meeting community needs and suggests that this issue should be considered as part of a community sports development strategy.
- xii Further research should be undertaken on sports pitch availability in primary schools. Half of Scotland's primary schools possess their own sports pitch. The reasons why

the 'other half' do not possess a sports pitch – and the prospects for providing sports pitches among these schools – would be worthy of further consideration.

- xiii Further research should be undertaken on the grounds lost to secondary schools, 19% of which have lost grounds in the last 10 years, with 10% losing playing fields. It is important to ascertain whether the area lost is a threat to the resource base, or whether lost ground was surplus to requirements.
- xiv Further research should be undertaken to examine the relationship between in-school and out-of-school activity patterns. The suggestion that active play in school grounds should be included in the analysis of the extent to which physical activity targets are being achieved among children raises the question of the extent to which active play in school grounds compensates or merely replicates out-of-school patterns of physical activity among children.
- xv The issue of afternoon breaks should be reviewed. One in ten schools have an afternoon break. It would be interesting to explore the reasons for having such a break and whether there is an evidence base to support it on pedagogic grounds. Such a study should include an examination of the effects of the length of breaks (including morning and lunchtime breaks) on the nature of activity undertaken.
- xvi Given the importance of grounds to learning, sport and play, consideration should be given to commissioning supplementary research to examine the significance of grounds lost to development in more detail.
- xvii Local authorities using PPP should be encouraged to consider the implications for school grounds, *at each stage of the re-development process*. Anecdotal evidence included with questionnaire returns by survey respondents, suggests that the proposed redevelopment of schools is a significant reason for not developing school grounds as a learning resource in the interim period.
- xviii Local authorities should be encouraged to clarify the responsibilities for school grounds maintenance and, in particular, the role accorded to schools. One in ten respondents did not provide data on whether their school grounds had a maintenance policy (10%). Subsequent research should also clarify the author of maintenance policies for school grounds, i.e. the school or local authority.
- xix Further school grounds research should examine the implications of the McCrone report on school grounds development projects. It may be reasonable to assume that teachers will be less motivated to initiate or become involved in projects that do not have a curriculum focus, as McCrone has led to relief of responsibility for these matters. This may lead to a narrowing of focus for improvement projects (curriculum learning becoming more prominent).
- xx Future school grounds research should be undertaken into the nature of community use of school grounds. The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* provides headline data on the incidence of grounds sharing with community organisations. Given the wider significance of community-school interactions under the *Integrated Community Schools* initiative and national strategies to make Scotland more physically active, there would be merit in furthering understanding of the nature of community use of school grounds. In particular, it would be helpful to understand why community groups use school grounds in only an eighth of primary schools and why grounds sharing is more common in rural areas.
- xxi Sustrans and other agencies concerned with promoting safer journeys to and from school should be encouraged to explore the reasons why three-fifths of schools in Scotland report that they 'do not have' and 'do not want more' bike racks. Although a fifth of schools in Scotland report a need for more bike racks, the overall findings will

- be a cause for concern for those concerned with promoting more sustainable journeys to and from school.
- xxii This baseline survey provides useful input to, and one possible measure of the impact of, the Eco Schools programme. If the survey is repeated after a period of time it could provide a useful indicator of local authority efforts to implement recycling and sustainable practice within the school community.
 - xxiii Further consideration needs to be given to the measurement of sustainability of school grounds projects, as this is a key element of success.
 - xxiv The desire by schools who already have a range of area types to want more may suggest that exposure to diversity (which will include natural area types) enhances appreciation of their benefits. The role for raising awareness and understanding of these benefits should be explored, both from the point of view of child and adult.
 - xxv Current information provided to schools on biodiversity needs to be assessed in order to enhance advice that supports the role schools can play in promoting biodiversity, as well as furthering understanding of biodiversity across the whole curriculum.
 - xxvi Consideration should be given to using the survey to contribute toward social inclusion debates in Scotland. It would be helpful if a measure of community well being was included in the analysis of the dataset in order to inform understanding of extent to which all children have access to a quality school grounds environment in Scotland.
 - xxvii Future school grounds research should explore whether or not segregation by age changes behaviour and whether de-segregating school grounds may lead to a more inclusive environment at break times. It might be most interesting to explore this for primary schools with a population of between 100 and 200 pupils (which are equally divided between those with segregated grounds and those whose grounds are not).
 - xxviii School ground behaviour codes are commonplace throughout Scotland's schools. Future school grounds research should ascertain the extent to which children and young people are empowered or constrained through these codes, i.e. the extent to which they are envisaged as 'active citizens' or as a group to be controlled and regulated.
 - xxix The reasons why schools restrict access to certain areas of the school grounds needs further enquiry - whether this is due to real or perceived risk, poor grounds design, inadequate outdoor shelter and clothing, or behaviour issues and supervision reasons
 - xxx In accordance with Article 12 of the *United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child*, further research should seek to engage children to ascertain their perspectives on the issues raised in this report.

The *Scottish Schools Grounds Survey* demonstrates that school grounds are valued and used as a resource for curriculum learning, sport and play. However, there are many ways in which school grounds, and the ways in which they are used, could be improved and developed. The findings of this study highlight a range of issues for consideration by policy makers and practitioners

1

INTRODUCTION: SCHOOL GROUNDS IN SCOTLAND

School grounds are literally and metaphorically on the outside ... In Scotland we do not have baseline information on the range of uses and users of school grounds or their attitudes to the school grounds.

(Casey, 2003a, p.24)

BACKGROUND

- 1.01 Scotland's school estate comprises around 400 freestanding nursery schools, 2300 primary schools, 400 secondary schools and 200 special schools (Scottish Executive/COSLA, 2003).
- 1.02 Despite the work and campaigning of a number of organisations including *Grounds for Learning/Learning Through Landscapes*, for many years school grounds have been either marginalised or completely ignored in debates on children's play, sporting participation and learning (Billimore, *et al.*, 1999; Hampshire County Council, 1998; Kenny, 1996).
- 1.03 While it would be misleading to assert that school grounds have moved to the centre-stage of debates on children's play, sporting participation and education in Scotland, over recent years an interest has emerged in the contribution of school grounds to these issues. Indeed, there are currently ten public debates/policy developments in Scotland to which school grounds have a contribution to make.
 - Nature of education,
 - Scotland's school estate,
 - McCrone and school staffing,
 - Schools and their communities,
 - Community transport and planning,
 - Sustainability,
 - Biodiversity,

- Inclusion,
- Children in society, and
- Sport and physical activity.

The significance of school grounds to these issues is discussed in Chapter 2 of this report.

SCOTTISH SCHOOL GROUNDS RESEARCH PROJECT

- 1.04 The Scottish Poverty Information Unit has prepared this report under commission from Grounds for Learning, Play Scotland and **sportscotland** (hereafter the 'project partners').
- 1.05 School grounds are an inexpensive, yet versatile, resource that offers a unique setting to promote positive health and well being, understanding of the environment, citizenship, physical activity and sport for our school children. However, information on the available resource was incomplete (Early Years Education, 2005). No national picture existed of the current state and use of school grounds and no baseline data was available from which change could be measured. The project partners sought evidence on the current attitudes towards, and use of, school grounds in order to inform national debate on how to target resources more effectively, support new initiatives and establish best practice.
- 1.06 The project partners commissioned a literature review in 2003 which examined existing school grounds research undertaken in Scotland, UK and abroad (Casey, 2003a).
- 1.07 The present study included every state-sector supported nursery, primary, secondary and special school in Scotland and sought to provide information on six aspects of school grounds.
- Policies pertaining to use, including reference in school development plans,
 - Attitudes toward use,
 - Range of uses and users,
 - Availability, attributes and sharing of grounds across schools,
 - Current use as a resource, and
 - Restrictions on use and 'local' issues.
- 1.08 It was agreed at the outset that this research would focus on the collection of detailed data on school grounds and their management across Scotland, and would not include input from children themselves. However the project partners may undertake further work which does require a children's perspective, in line with recommendations for further work identified in this report.

PLAYING FIELD PROVISION FOR SCHOOLS

- 1.09 **sportscotland** has a particular interest in sport related aspects of school grounds, including facility provision and sports development. They aim to define an appropriate standard of provision for school playing fields in terms of both quantity and quality of provision. This will provide guidance on the planning and design of outdoors sports facilities for all those involved in building and managing schools.
- 1.10 **sportscotland** commissioned the *Scottish Poverty Information Unit* to incorporate additional questions in the survey to increase information available on sports provision in Scottish schools.

AIMS

- 1.11 The report aims to meet the requirements of the project partners by:
- Profiling the character of school grounds in Scotland and their perceived value as a learning, play and sporting resource;
 - Examining how the character and utility of school grounds varies by school type (age-stage, school size, and between mainstream and special schools) and across local authorities in Scotland;
 - Engaging policy and practice, and making recommendations for the future development of school grounds in Scotland; and
 - Critically appraising the contribution of the survey to our knowledge base and making recommendations for further research.

METHOD

- 1.12 The first national survey of school grounds in Scotland was the means used to fulfil the aims of the research. The intention was to produce a landmark document which would serve as a benchmark for future research on school grounds in Scotland, providing key and baseline data on the current nature and use of school grounds in Scotland.
- 1.13 Details of the survey development, design, administration and response rates are included in Annex 1. A copy of the questionnaire is in Annex 2. It should be noted that the survey included both full questionnaires (sent to all stand-alone schools) and shorter 'insert' questionnaires (for encapsulated providers). The tables in this report show results from the full questionnaires throughout, except where the base is described differently in the associated footnote.
- 1.14 By way of introduction to the report, it should be acknowledged that:
- The response rate of 47% exceeded the expectations of the *Scottish Poverty Information Unit*;
 - Four questionnaires were designed for particular types of school (nursery, primary, secondary and special);
 - Three abbreviated inserts were designed for schools which incorporated more than one age-stage or type of school on a single site (nursery class, primary section and Special Educational Need unit);
 - The questionnaire was piloted in Midlothian (these results were analysed as a pilot dataset and were thereafter incorporated into the main dataset);
 - The main stage surveys were revised in light of the pilot experience and in consultation with the project partners;
 - The survey had the support of the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland;
 - Schools were approached with the permission of the Director of Education (or their equivalent) within their local authority area;
 - All local authorities in Scotland endorsed the research;
 - Head teachers (or their equivalent) were asked to arrange for the completion of the survey on behalf of their school;
 - Survey respondents were provided with a project information sheet, endorsement letter from their Director of Education (or their equivalent), questionnaire and inserts, and stamped addressed envelope;

- Every school in Scotland was surveyed in 2003 (at the end of the 2002/03 or start of the 2003/04 school year);
- The overall survey response rate was 47%, comprising 36% for providers of nursery level education (518 questionnaires returned), 53% for primary schools (1148 questionnaires returned), 52% for secondary schools (207 questionnaires returned) and 47% for special schools (90 returned);
- Response rates for local authorities ranged from 28% (Edinburgh and Stirling) to 63% (East Ayrshire and South Lanarkshire); and
- Survey returns were sufficient to allow detailed analysis including differences emerging by school type, school roll, local authority and age of school.

REPORT STRUCTURE

1.15 This report is structured into an introduction, a contextual review, nine substantive sections and a conclusion.

- The contextual review places the survey against the broader context of policy and practice pertaining to children, schools and school grounds in Scotland (Chapter Two);
- Chapter Three, *Scotland's School Estate*, provides background information on school roll, school age, ownership of grounds in the community, grounds development (loss of land) and grounds sharing;
- Chapter Four, *Character of School Grounds* presents information on the area types and specific features that are found in school grounds in Scotland. Data is also provided on the perception of school grounds size;
- Chapter Five, *Provision for Sports in School Grounds*, includes information on active school grounds play, playing fields provision, use of grounds for organised sports, use of grounds for community sport and their potential as a resource for physical education and movement;
- Chapter Six, *Extra Curricular Use of School Grounds*, considers the use of school grounds at break-times and outside school hours, prevalence of pre- and post- school childcare and club activity, and general use of grounds outside school hours;
- Chapter Seven, *School Grounds as a Learning Resource*, provides information on participation in educational projects which utilise grounds, perceived usefulness of school grounds for learning, use of school grounds to address learning in different skill fields, and the frequency with which grounds are used;
- Chapter Eight, *Regulation and Monitoring in School Grounds*, reviews the prevalence of behaviour codes, management of children's behaviour in, and use of, school grounds at break times;
- Chapter Nine, *Challenges in School Grounds*, includes information on perceived problems in school grounds and issues pertaining to car parking;
- Chapter Ten, *Special Educational Needs and School Grounds* engages the issues of segregation, mixing, relative importance and accessibility of school grounds play for children with Special Educational Needs, and considers the prevalence of inclusion strategies; and

- Chapter Eleven, *Developing School Grounds*, considers the status of school grounds in development planning, the management of school grounds and different facets relating to specific school grounds improvement projects.
- 1.16 The conclusion summarises the knowledge base that was established through the survey, before identifying themes for further research into school grounds in Scotland and making recommendations to develop policy and practice.

2

SCHOOL GROUNDS IN CONTEMPORARY SCOTLAND: POLICY AND PRACTICE

In the past we had grounds which were award winning and provided an exciting environment for learning. Until a year ago staff voluntarily maintained the playground to enable children to use it. We have had to stop this for the safety of both staff and children. We hope that the national debate will indeed lead to more effective use of resources and establish best practice in this area of Scottish education.

(Survey respondent)

BACKGROUND

- 2.01 This review considers the broader context of policy and practice pertaining to children, schools and school grounds in Scotland, against which the findings can be set. It considers each of the issues detailed in 1.03: The nature of education, Scotland's school estate, McCrone and school staffing, schools and their communities, community transport and planning, sustainability, biodiversity, inclusion, children in society, and sport and physical activity.
- 2.02 The importance of each of the ten domains does not only rest in the specificities of each issue. At a less tangible level, it has been suggested that concern for school grounds has a positive impact on children's sense of self and their understanding of how they are valued by the institution of the school. Arguing that "because children understood ... grounds as being essentially a place for them, which they believed .. had [been] designed for their use", Titman argues that school grounds development takes on heightened significance (1994, p.60, cited in Casey, 2003a, p.11). By extension, disinterest in, or neglect of, school grounds may have adverse effects for schools and their pupils.

NATURE OF EDUCATION

- 2.03 The Scottish Executive launched *The National Debate on the Future of School Education* in March 2002 which, after a period of consultation and reflection, resulted in *Educating For Excellence: Choice And Opportunity. The Executive's Response To The National Debate* (Scottish Executive, 2003a), a vision and strategy document

which was published in January 2003. There is much within *Educating For Excellence* that is suggestive of a key role for school grounds in learning. One of the nine key priorities to “meet each individual child’s needs” is to improve school buildings to create a school estate in which all schools have the right facilities, which are well designed, well built and provide a flexible environment which continues to meet future needs (Scottish Executive, 2003a, p.4). Furthermore, ‘Modern Schools’ was one of the four sections into which *Educating For Excellence* was structured (Scottish Executive, 2003a, pp.16-17). Each section of *Educating For Excellence* raises points which suggest a contribution for school grounds to the wider commitment to promote ‘excellence in education’, i.e. Learning and Teaching (1.02j), Parents, Pupils and the Community (1.02d, 1.02i), Working Together (1.02c) and Modern Schools (1.02f). Explicitly, in the ‘Learning and Teaching’ section there is recognition of the importance of children’s learning outside classrooms (Scottish Executive, 2003a, p.7). However, while suggestive of the importance of school grounds to learning and learning outside the classroom, there is only one explicit reference to school grounds in *Educating For Excellence*. Significantly, it is pupils who are reported to have expressed this desire for improved playgrounds (Scottish Executive, 2003a, p.16).

- 2.04 *Educating For Excellence* is consistent with *The National Priorities in Education*, which were approved by the Scottish Parliament in December 2000 (*The Education (National Priorities) (Scotland) Order 2000*). Of the five national priorities, two allude to the importance of school grounds, i.e. ‘Framework for Learning’ involves a commitment to enhance school environments so that they are conducive to teaching and learning, and ‘Values and Citizenship’ acknowledges the interdependence of schools and their pupils with other members of their neighbourhood and society.
- 2.05 Debates on the future of school education in Scotland provide rationale for rethinking the role of school grounds in learning. However, there are few references to school grounds and, where mentioned, there is no specification or explicit acknowledgement of the contribution that school grounds can, or should, make to learning. It may be that this, at least in part, reflects community and organisational lack of awareness of the opportunities afforded by school grounds.

SCOTLAND’S SCHOOL ESTATE

- 2.06 Although schools are required to have an outdoor area adjacent to the school building through the *School Premises (General Requirements and Standard) (Scotland) Regulations 1967* the area of school ground space that is required is not defined in the regulations and it is accepted that this area will vary according to the nature and layout of individual schools.
- 2.07 Quality school environments are not only deemed important for their functional utility; in *Educating For Excellence* it is reported that pupils considered that ageing buildings made them feel that education is not valued by society (Scottish Executive, 2003a, p.16). Promoting excellence in school design and improving facilities for after-school activity are among the visions for the future that are outlined in *Educating For Excellence* (Scottish Executive, 2003a, p.16).
- 2.08 However, the primary concern with the physical environment of Scotland’s schools has been with school *buildings*, rather than school *grounds*. For example, in *Educating For Excellence* the Executive acknowledged that they were on track to achieve the *Programme for Government* commitment (Scottish Executive, 1999a, p.7), to build or substantially renovate 100 school buildings by the end of 2003 (Scottish Executive/COSLA, 2003, p.5), with no reference being made to the development of the grounds around these buildings. This concern was further reinforced with the additional commitments made in 2002 to complete an additional

200 new or substantially refurbished schools by 2006 (Scottish Executive, 2002a, p.11) and in May 2003 to extend this renewal programme to 300 schools by 2009 (Scottish Executive, 2003b, p.26).

- 2.09 Public Private Partnerships (PPP) are the Scottish Executive's preferred means for local authority financing of schools building programmes. Ten school public private partnership projects, with a capital value of £530m, were approved in 1998. In June 2002, the Minister for Education and Young People announced PPP projects across 15 councils amounting to a £1.2 billion package of investment in the school estate (Scottish Executive/COSLA, 2003, p.21). While it could be argued that without PPP, there would be bleaker prospects for renewing Scotland's school estate, it should be noted that schools do not own their buildings *or grounds* under PPP conditions of contract. New schools built under PPP will reflect the detail of the brief: the educational value of school grounds rests with the awareness among local authorities of the potential as a learning resource across the whole curriculum. School grounds under PPP are managed under a separate maintenance contract (Grounds for Learning, 2004).
- 2.10 *Building Our Future: Scotland's School Estate* is a collaboration between COSLA and the Scottish Executive which presents a vision for the physical environment of schools in Scotland (Scottish Executive/COSLA, 2003). In the foreword, the report's authors state that the document heralds the "biggest ever programme of new investment in Scotland's school buildings, [which] begin[s] to address the legacy of many years of under-investment" and that the strategy "... puts in place a framework ... which consider(s) the future of the whole school estate and plan(s) for the long term, to an extent which has never been done before" (Jamieson *et al.*, 2003, p.3). It is envisaged that it will take until 2018 to implement this strategy (Scottish Executive/COSLA, 2003, p.6). *Building Our Future* encourages local authorities to consider the physical construction and condition of buildings *and grounds*, but does not highlight what grounds might contribute to learning (Scottish Executive/COSLA, 2003, p.31); this hampers the ability of local authorities to implement a ground management plan that explicitly recognises the educational value of school grounds.
- 2.11 Thus, further to the broader debate on the future of school education in Scotland, the specific sub-debate on Scotland's school estate also provides rationale for rethinking the role of school grounds in learning, but fails to make explicit reference to the importance, actual or potential, of school grounds to learning.

McCRONE AND SCHOOL STAFFING

- 2.12 Through *Educating For Excellence* the Scottish Executive is committed to giving a greater role to support staff to "free teachers of administrative burdens" (Scottish Executive, 2003a, p.13). This commitment dates back to the introduction of classroom assistants, which was first announced by the Secretary of State on 14 July 1998 following the conclusion of the Comprehensive Spending Review (The Scottish Office, 1999a). The dissociation of teachers from non-teaching based grounds duties was reinforced by the absence of any reference to school grounds in the agreement that was reached following the McCrone report on teachers' conditions of service and duties (Scottish Executive, 2001a).
- 2.13 Thus, responsibility for activity in school grounds not only rests with the strategic management responsibilities of head teachers or the out-of-classroom learning activities managed by classroom teachers. Classroom assistants, through their responsibility for 'the quality of care and welfare of pupils' are normally charged with responsibilities for supervising "non-teaching areas", areas which include playgrounds and other school grounds (Scottish Executive, 2001a, Annex B).

Classroom assistants must be able to fulfil their responsibilities and this implies the need for training in supervising "non teaching areas".

SCHOOLS AND THEIR COMMUNITIES

- 2.14 The Scottish Executive has committed itself to an integrated approach to service delivery through which "a range of professionals, including teachers, social workers, health professionals and others, work together in a single team in Integrated Community Schools, with the interests of the individual child at the centre" (Scottish Executive, 2004a). This commitment finds expression in service delivery targets; in *Educating For Excellence* there is a commitment for every school to adopt the "Integrated (formerly New) Community School" approach by 2007 (Scottish Executive, 2003a, p.10).
- 2.15 The 'Integrated Community School' approach challenges the vision of the school as a distinct institution *in* communities, and presents, as an alternative, a vision of schools as a resource *of* the community. For example, in the foreword to *Educating For Excellence*, Cathy Jamieson, the Minister for Education and Young People begins by asserting that she wants to see "excellent comprehensive schools, at the heart of local communities." (Jamieson, 2003, p.3). This vision has practical implications for service delivery and the use of schools and their grounds by the surrounding community. Indeed, through *Building Our Future*, the Scottish Executive has asserted that "[schools] are a physical focus for many communities and provide a real or potential resource for the community, for example, offering opportunities for life long learning, culture, recreation and sport. This is an explicit objective for the 21st century school: to deliver better services to the community through the school environment" (Scottish Executive/COSLA, 2003, p.29). The vision is consistent with the Scottish Executive's concern with active participation in society and citizenship, and the promotion in education of learning about citizenship through being an active citizen (Mannion, 2003).
- 2.16 The vision of the school and its community that is promoted through the 'Integrated Community School' approach is at odds with the practical responses to school security and public access which followed the publication of the report from the *Public Inquiry into the Shootings at Dunblane Primary School on 13 March 1996* (Lord Cullen, 1996) and the government response to this (UK Government, 1996). There is an unresolved tension between preventing access to school grounds on the grounds of personal safety and school security on one hand, and transforming schools and their grounds into community resources on the other.
- 2.17 Just as competing visions of schools and their communities lead to tensions between closing off and opening up school grounds, so is there a tension between facilitating risk/challenge and ensuring pupil safety. HM Inspectorate of Education works with the Care Commission to provide an integrated system of regulation for the inspection of pre-school education, boarding schools, residential special schools and secure accommodation for children. Integrated regulation and inspection is required by law (*Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001*) because care and education of children and young people are so closely linked. *Grounds for Learning* is among the organisations which are concerned that over-rigorous application of health and safety assessments of school grounds and the lengthy procedures with which schools have to comply could act as a severe disincentive to developments in school grounds.

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT AND PLANNING

- 2.18 The campaigning work of *Sustrans* through its *Safe Routes to Schools Campaign* and the then Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) have raised awareness of the impact of the journey to school on transportation, sustainability, environment and physical well-being (DETR, 1999; Transport 2000 Trust, 1999).
- 2.19 There is public concern at the level of risk presented to children by road traffic accidents. Reducing risk on the journey to school is considered to be one means through which to tackle this problem. A national target has been set for Scotland to reduce the number of serious and fatal accident child casualties of children by 50% by 2010, compared with the average for 1994-1998 (The Scottish Office, 1999b).
- 2.20 The journey to school is not seen as an issue that is external to the school. Resources have been developed to facilitate change through educating children in schools (Sustrans, 1999; 2004). Furthermore, the Scottish Executive has called for schools to be integrated within wider transport plans, taking account of issues such as accessibility and transport to school. (Scottish Executive/COSLA, 2003, p.30). School Travel Co-ordinators are taking a lead in the journey to and from school, with the support of Road Safety Officers and Active School Co-ordinators (**sportscotland**, 2003a).
- 2.21 School grounds are considered to have a role to play in facilitating 'safer' and 'sustainable' journeys to school through the provision of bicycle parking facilities and in-school separation of vehicular traffic from pedestrians and non-vehicular modes of transport. School grounds are also used for cycle training.

SUSTAINABILITY

- 2.22 The 'environment' has concerned people through time and was, for example, of special significance to many tribal communities. But, religious/symbolic worship aside, we have not treated the environment compassionately for much of our history. Concern over the environment increased throughout the 20th Century, intensifying in the 1970s. The desire to develop "sustainably" has gained currency in recent years, having been introduced in the government Act that established Scottish Natural Heritage (*Natural Heritage (Scotland) Act 1991*). The need to ensure that "activity/development continues in the long run without threatening that part of the environment which sustains it" is now firmly established as sound working practice.
- 2.23 Initiatives such as *Forest Schools* (Forest Education Initiative, 2004) and *Eco Schools* (Encams, 2004) seek to embed an appreciation of nature and the environment within the life of schools and, while the former is a fledging initiative, the latter is a well-established Europe-wide scheme, with *Eco Schools* registrations in Scotland dating back to 1995. Individual local authorities have also sought to support environmental projects in schools, e.g. North Ayrshire Council Education Services. At a national level, environmental education has been given direction through documents such as *Learning for Life* (The Scottish Office, 1993).
- 2.24 The value of school grounds for environmental education and environmental stewardship is always implicit, and often explicit, in these initiatives. Indeed, the first summary recommendation from a recent report published by the Green Alliance/Demos was that "new ways are found to facilitate environmental education through out-of-school learning and green school design" (Thomas and Thompson, 2004, p.3). With their natural links to outdoor education, school grounds are a readily available resource for environmental education.

- 2.25 A recent survey in central Scotland commissioned by the *Forestry Commission* drew attention to a positive correlation between visits to forests in childhood and visits in adulthood (Ward Thompson, *et al.* 2004). It could be inferred that more school grounds activity would also encourage outdoor participation in adulthood and, additionally, 'environmental stewardship' for school grounds.

BIODIVERSITY

- 2.26 The *Scottish Biodiversity Strategy* was launched in May 2004 with the aim of enabling Scotland to become a world leader in biodiversity conservation by 2030 (Scottish Executive, 2004b). Biodiversity is defined as "... simply the variety of life. It represents a new appreciation of nature, with the emphasis on the incredible diversity of varieties, species, habitats and ecosystems that exist all around us, and on their value to humans." The *Scottish Biodiversity Strategy* comprises five strategic objectives and six implementation plans, one of which pertains to 'interpretation, communication and education'.
- 2.27 Supporting and enhancing biodiversity is an example of environmental stewardship, and thus could be conceived as part of the broader agenda on sustainability referred to above. Indeed, the *Scottish Biodiversity Strategy* acknowledges that biodiversity is a key indicator of the success in achieving sustainable development. However, there is a danger that the particular focus of biodiversity on habitats and ecosystems would be marginalised or overlooked without a specific strategy.
- 2.28 Acknowledging that "children ... experience more firsthand learning about biodiversity in the open spaces around them" (Scottish Executive, 2004), raises the issue of the extent to which school grounds can be protected and enhanced as an integral part of Scotland's biodiversity resource, and the extent to which schools - through their grounds - could make a significant contribution to Local Biodiversity Action Plans.

INCLUSION

- 2.29 Eradicating child poverty is at the heart of the UK and Scottish Government's agenda (Bradshaw 2001; Department of Health 1999). In 1999, Prime Minister Blair announced that it was to be the government's mission to eradicate child poverty by 2020, to half it by 2010 and to reduce it by one quarter by 2004. While tackling child poverty is a goal that is common to all national regions in the UK, there is a greater emphasis on social *inclusion* in Scotland (The Scottish Office, 1999c), which results in the distinctive broad based approach to addressing problems associated with poverty and a heightened concern with other barriers which prevent full participation in Scottish society.
- 2.30 *PlayInclusive*, an action research project involving five schools and an adventure playground, recently explored ways to develop and share understanding of the way play supports inclusion among children of diverse abilities and needs. It argues that play in schools should be at the centre of a framework for inclusion. The role of adults and the physical environment of schools are each considered to be significant influences on the quality of children's experience of play and inclusion (Casey, 2003b). This mirrors work commissioned by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, which sought to produce a non-statutory good practice guide on accessible play space (Dunn *et al.*, 2004).
- 2.31 Inclusion has also been promoted in the education system with the commitment to mainstream delivery to pupils with 'special educational needs', (SEN) which was introduced with the *Education (Scotland) Act of 1990* (Children in Scotland, 2002). In recent years, there has been a growth in the number of mainstream schools with

dedicated SEN units and a corresponding reduction in the number of stand-alone special schools.

- 2.32 School grounds are an important space for those concerned with promoting an inclusive society in Scotland. Children are now encountering more diversity in abilities and needs in school grounds and it is acknowledged that inclusion can be promoted through positive school grounds provision and organisation. More generally, the characteristically Scottish focus on social inclusion raises the question of the extent to which all children have access to a quality school grounds environment in Scotland.

CHILDREN IN SOCIETY

- 2.33 Children and young people are the subject of a range of public debates, from those concerned with policy interventions designed to tackle youth crime, to those which campaign to safeguard and extend children's rights. These debates have implications for school grounds.
- 2.34 The Scottish Executive introduced its *Action Programme to Reduce Youth Crime* to marry the need to take firm and decisive action to prevent youth offending and stop it re-occurring, with the need to understand some of the underlying causes of youth crime and the lack of opportunities for some young people to achieve their full potential (Scottish Executive, 2002b). This is consistent with the broader social justice agenda in Scotland.
- 2.35 Through the *Action Programme to Reduce Youth Crime*, local authorities are charged with a responsibility to address issues pertaining to youth crime. The spiralling cost of vandalism and the perceived need to protect children from the dangers of unknown others in the wider community (post Dunblane, see 2.16) have encouraged a concern with 'protection' and isolating school grounds from the wider community.
- 2.36 The Scottish Executive has established the Anti-Bullying Network (Anti-Bullying Network, 2004) so that teachers, parents and young people can share ideas about how bullying should be tackled. It is part of the *Positive School Ethos Programme*, which is based at the School of Education of the University of Edinburgh (Scottish Schools Ethos Programme, 2004).
- 2.37 Many school grounds are blighted by youth crime and tarnished by the anti-social behaviour of young people. The steps taken by schools to address these problems can be seen as part of the broader strategy to address these issues in wider Scottish society. It should be acknowledged that school grounds have contributions to make through supportive activity that facilitates the personal and social development of young people, such as making provision for sporting activity (Scottish Executive, 2002b, p.11).
- 2.38 These concerns also relate to behaviour in school grounds during school time. The Discipline Task Group of the Scottish Executive (2001b, p.5) recognised concern over "increasing levels of indiscipline and anti-social behaviour ... outside the classroom in corridors, playgrounds, dining areas, on school buses and also areas immediately adjacent to school grounds". Among the 36 recommendations to address indiscipline and bad behaviour, are four that are relevant to school grounds:
- Schools should agree and share good practice on routine procedures for managing pupils *in and around the school* and within classrooms. These procedures should be applied consistently by all staff (Recommendation 4)
 - Local authorities should provide guidance and advice to all staff regarding the levels of intervention they expect from them with respect to their handling of

disciplinary matters in classrooms *and public areas within the school*. (Recommendation 11)

- Schools should develop agreed systems for shared responsibility between staff at all levels for the conduct and behaviour of children and young people in corridors, *playgrounds and public areas within the school*. (Recommendation 12)
- Schools should ensure that opportunities are provided for senior pupils at both primary and secondary levels to take responsibility for 'buddying' and/or mentoring junior pupils. (Recommendation 14)

- 2.39 The *United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child*, the most universally accepted human rights instrument, set standards to which signatory governments must adhere (United Nations, 1989). It reflects a new vision of children in which they are neither the property of their parents nor helpless objects of charity. They are human beings with their own rights. Through Article 12, the Convention requires that states must "... assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child".
- 2.40 *Civil Rights in Schools* (Alderson, 1999) was a research project which sought to ascertain children's awareness of their civil rights and to examine the practical relevance of these rights in schools. Three-quarters of children surveyed had not heard of the Convention and less than a fifth of children considered that they had an effective school council. Children wanted to contribute more to their school community.
- 2.41 There is growing recognition among academics and professionals working with children of the ability and right of children to express opinions and contribute to decision making on a diverse range of matters that pertain to them. This is a 'right' that should extend to school grounds.

SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- 2.42 Health has improved in Scotland over the last century and, in a global context, Scotland is among the healthier nations. However, in the context of other developed nations, Scotland compares less favourably on many key indicators of health and well being. Child health is a key priority for the Scottish Executive. The Scottish Executive's concerns and goals have been clearly stated through publication of *Towards A Healthier Scotland* (The Scottish Office, 1999b), *Our National Health* (Scottish Executive, 2000) and *Improving Health in Scotland – the Challenge* (Scottish Executive, 2003c). Health targets have been set for physical activity as part of a broader strategy that encompasses smoking, alcohol misuse, nutrition, dental health and teenage pregnancies. A *Physical Activity Task Force* was charged with responsibility for mapping patterns of physical activity and making recommendations to increase activity levels for children, young people and adults in Scotland (Scottish Executive, 2002c) and the National Physical Activity Strategy was launched in February 2003 (Scottish Executive, 2003d).
- 2.43 Schools have been given a key role in the drive to increase levels of physical activity among children and young people. Through *Educating For Excellence* the Scottish Executive has committed every primary school to be involved in *Active Schools* by 2007 (Scottish Executive, 2003a, p.11). Active Schools will recruit an Active Schools Manager within each local authority area. A network of full-time Active School Co-ordinators (Primary) and part-time Active School Co-ordinators (Secondary) will also be recruited to work with clusters of primary schools and their associated secondary school. The aim of this network is to promote and support the development of

physical activity and sport opportunities for children and young people. An expansion of after-school activity is also set to feature more prominently in schools as a result of Scottish Executive's encouragement to foster more active lifestyles among children and young people.

- 2.44 Active Schools will be concerned with a wide range of behaviour and activity including the journey to school, play in and around school, organised sport and physical activities and links to physical education (**sportscotland**, 2003a).
- 2.45 Even without the positive action being proposed through Active Schools to attain national activity targets, it should already be recognised that, as a site of active play, school grounds are increasingly valuable as more of today's generation of children play outside less frequently than earlier generations (Blatchford, 1998).
- 2.46 At one level, sport and recreation are a means of release from paid work and domestic responsibilities, an essential ingredient of quality of life. However, they are also valued as an integral part of the health and social inclusion agendas.
- 2.47 National targets have been set to increase the number of under-represented groups (especially children and young people) taking part in cultural and sporting activity by 5% by 2006 and to increase the number of cultural and sporting programmes in areas of social and economic disadvantage by 10% by 2006 (Scottish Executive, 2002b, p.12).
- 2.48 Beyond schools, Sport 21 (**sportscotland** 2003b) has set targets for increasing participation in sport, two of which relate to targets set by the Physical Activity Task Force (Scottish Executive, 2002c).
- Raise levels of physical activity among primary school children to 80% by 2007. This involves children undertaking one hour of moderate intensity physical activity on most days of the week, e.g. brisk walking;
 - Make progress toward all schoolchildren in Scotland taking part in at least two hours of high quality physical education classes per week;
 - Raise the number of 13-17 year olds taking part in sport in addition to the school curriculum more than once per week to 85%;
 - Raise levels of weekly sports participation (outside the school curriculum) in Social Inclusion Partnership areas for those aged 14 and over to 49%;
 - The Sport 21 strategy also recommends increasing the proportion of people within 20 minutes walking time of a sports hall and for sports to be incorporated into Community Planning.
- 2.49 These targets will require developments in transport support, sports provision and access to clubs, coaching and sporting facilities. Through *Building Our Future*, schools are charged with the responsibility of providing, "... facilities for sporting and cultural use to meet school, and where appropriate, community needs". (Scottish Executive/COSLA, 2003, p.30)

CONCLUSION

- 2.50 The breadth of debates and developments to which school grounds could contribute implies that there is potential for harnessing the support of a wide range of interest groups to address the future of school grounds in Scotland.
- 2.51 This opportunity could also be seen as a potential barrier in that, school grounds mean many things to many people. In turn, this could mean that there is a lack of distinct focus for policy and practice. As Casey (2003a, pp.2-3) has cautioned, the starting point for considering school grounds has viewed them as a "site for social learning and development, source of problems and anxiety; reflection of the outside

world; forgotten space that is undervalued; distinct and separate world with its own culture and tradition; outdoor classroom; site for research; site for intervention; place for play; and as an integral part of the school/community". These diverse understandings are at times contradictory – e.g. reflection of the outside world *and* separate world with its own culture and tradition – which heightens the difficulty of mobilising support across interest groups and philosophies.

SUMMARY: SCHOOL GROUNDS IN CONTEMPORARY SCOTLAND - POLICY AND PRACTICE

- 2.52 Improving Scotland's school grounds is an objective that is of value in its own right. However, the significance of school grounds extends beyond their boundaries and school grounds should be viewed as an integral part of wider concerns within education in Scotland and children in society.
- 2.53 Although school grounds have an important contribution to make to a diverse range of Scottish Executive priorities, this potential is rarely acknowledged in official documents, strategies and plans.
- 2.54 The potential for "joined up policy interventions" is readily apparent. A strategic approach to school grounds development could, potentially, involve a wide range of agencies to address a wide range of concerns.

SCOTLAND'S SCHOOL ESTATE

An alternative (to school grounds development) is to find a piece of land adjacent to the school and to adopt it as an area for development. In fact, schools should be encouraged to use local sites if this is a possibility, since it can often present an easier option than starting from scratch in the grounds themselves. This appears to be happening with increasing frequency.

(Kenny, 1996, p.50)

SCHOOL GROUNDS IN THE COMMUNITY

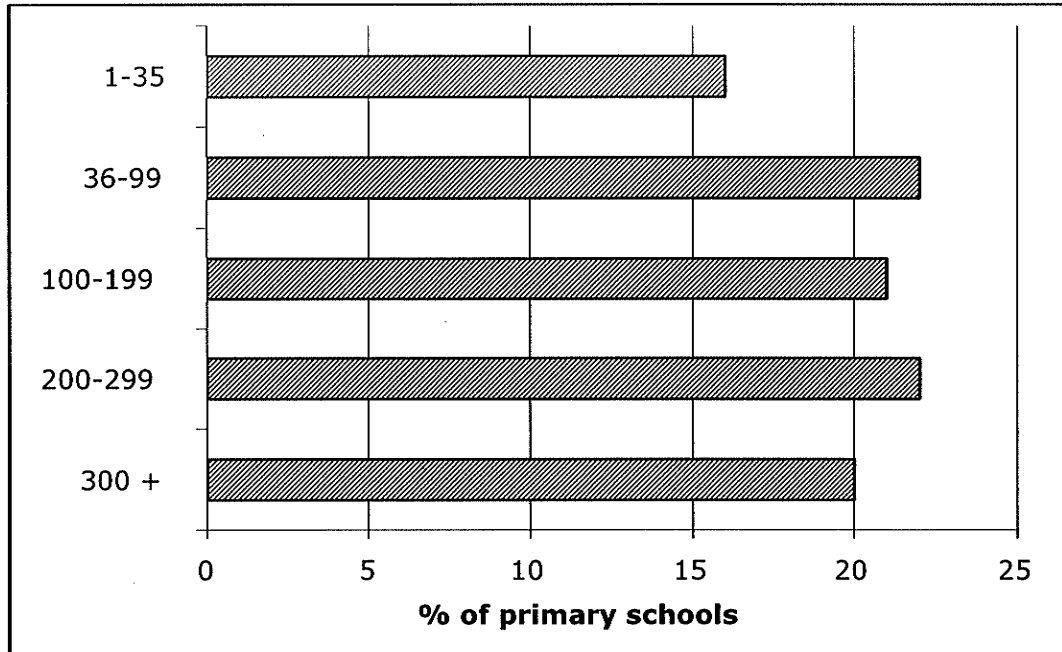
- 3.01 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* collected information on whether or not schools were responsible for maintaining grounds in their community. Although Kenny (1996) detected a trend toward maintaining grounds in the community almost a decade ago, only five percent of schools currently maintain grounds in the community.
- 3.02 Higher levels of responsibility for school grounds in the community is characteristic of a significant minority of schools in northern rural/island Scotland, for example, in Orkney (18%, 3 of 16 responding schools), Highland (11%), Aberdeenshire (9%), Shetland (8%) and Moray (8%).

SCHOOL ROLL

- 3.03 In an era of demographic change in urban and rural Scotland, and one in which financial pressures impinge on educational authorities in local government, the issue of school roll has taken on added significance. Education authorities have the power to close schools (Georghiou, 2004) and one of the key grounds for questioning viability is 'actual school roll in relation to potential capacity'. In recent years, proposed school closures have generated public outcry in urban Scotland (e.g. Glasgow), accessible rural Scotland (e.g. Midlothian) and more remote rural Scotland (e.g. Scottish Borders).
- 3.04 The Scottish Executive (2003) provided school roll data from their annual report on Scotland's school population.

3.05 The average school roll for responding primary schools was 180. As Figure 3.1 illustrates, there is considerable variation in the number of pupils registered to attend primary schools in Scotland with 16% of schools having a roll of 35 or under, while 20% of primary schools have at least 300 pupils.

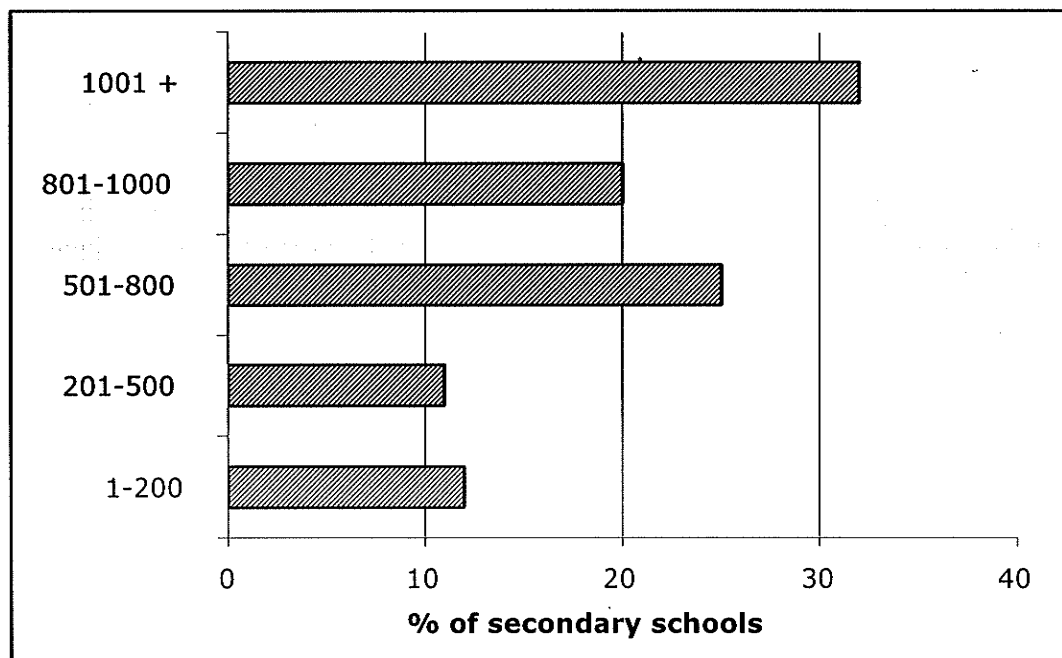
FIGURE 3.1 SCHOOL ROLL, PRIMARY SCHOOLS



Data from Scottish Executive (2003).

3.06 The average school roll for responding secondary schools was 798. National school roll data is presented in Figure 3.2 which shows that 12% of secondary schools having 200 pupils or less while 32% have 1000 or more.

FIGURE 3.2 SCHOOL ROLL, SECONDARY SCHOOLS



Data from Scottish Executive (2003).

3.07 Average school roll also varies across local authority areas:

Although low cases necessitate caution when interpreting data for secondary schools, there is firm evidence of significant differences across Scotland in the size of the secondary school population. For example, the average roll for the 13 responding secondary schools in Highland was 548, which was less than one-half of the average school roll for the 17 responding schools in Fife (1146).

More marked variation in average school roll is evident for primary schools and higher returns facilitate more detailed comparison across authorities. Small primary schools are particularly characteristic of Eilean Siar (average roll of 42 for 14 schools), Argyll and Bute (79, for 53 schools), Highland (87, for 78 schools), Orkney (95 for 9 schools) and Shetland (73 for 16 schools). On the other hand, large primary schools are particularly characteristic of Edinburgh (average roll of 449 for 14 schools), East Renfrewshire (333, for 17 schools) and Renfrewshire (305, for 20 schools). Thus, for primary schools, there is a marked difference in average school roll between those local authorities that are mainly characterised by remote rural areas and those from urban areas.

3.08 The reporting of results has taken account of the wide variations in school roll across Scotland and care has been taken to avoid inappropriate generalisations.

AGE OF SCHOOLS

3.09 Scotland's school estate is currently being transformed through a building programme that has been extended incrementally since it was first announced by the Scottish Executive through their *Programme for Government* commitment in 1999 (Scottish Executive, 1999a, p.7).

3.10 According to the Scottish Executive and COSLA (2003), Scotland's school estate "is diverse and its profile varies within and across local authorities. The schools vary in age, type and condition" (p.8), and reflect "education policy, architecture and investment over more than a century – from the introduction of universal education in the late 19th century, through post war building techniques, to curriculum flexibility and the use of technology in the late 20th century. There have been distinct phases in school building activity, such as the building boom in the 1950s and 1960s and the shift towards maintenance rather than new building work during the 1980s and 1990s" (p.19).

3.11 Although the trends that have shaped Scotland's school estate are known, there is no national level data on the age of schools in Scotland.

3.12 Through the *Scottish School Grounds Survey* respondents were asked to state the year in which their school was built. Where information was provided of successive stages of building/refurbishment, the earliest year was recorded. Many respondents were not able to provide details of the year in which their school was built.

3.13 Survey returns highlighted a wide age range for state sector schools in Scotland, dating from 1766 to the year of the *Scottish School Grounds Survey* in 2003.

3.14 Thirty-one percent of Scotland's current school estate pre-dates World War Two with 18% being built during or before the 19th Century. The 1960s and 1970s also account for sizable proportions of the current school estate, i.e. 24% in the 60s and 36% in the 70s.

3.15 The Scottish Executive's on-going school rebuilding programme (see para 2.08 and Scottish Executive/COSLA, 2003) is not of a sufficient scale to significantly alter the age profile of Scotland's school estate. The building of 300 schools by 2009 is less

than the number of existing schools that were built during or before the 19th Century and many of the schools that are being rebuilt or replaced are of more recent origin.

- 3.16 There is significant variation in age of school across school age-stages (Table 3.1). The primary school estate is the oldest (one quarter of Scotland's current primary school estate pre-dates the 20th Century, 25%), and the nursery school estate is the youngest (two thirds (66%) of nursery schools post-date the 1960s). Between these extremes, the mid-late post-war period accounts for the majority of Scotland's secondary school estate (50% of secondary schools date from 1960-1979) and special schools estate (60% date from 1960-1979).

	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
Age of School	%	%	%	%
To 1899	8	25	7	12
1900-1939	11	15	11	7
1940-1959	8	13	11	8
1960-1969	8	18	25	24
1970-1979	20	19	25	36
1980-1989	11	4	9	10
From 1990	35	6	12	3
<i>N</i>	297	974	177	59

Base: all responding schools. There was a relatively low response rate to this question.

- 3.17 Older schools are more characteristic of rural local authorities in Scotland; 27% of schools in rural local authorities were built before 1900, compared to 11% of schools from urban local authorities. The differences are most apparent at primary school level. While a quarter of primary schools in Scotland pre-date 1900, this rises to almost half of primary schools in some rural districts (Angus, 50%; Aberdeenshire, 48%; and Perth and Kinross, 45%) and at least a third in many other rural districts (Fife, 36%; Highland, 37%; Argyll and Bute, 38%; Dumfries and Galloway, 40%; and Moray, 40%). At the other extreme, a fifth of responding primary schools in North Ayrshire (21%, 4 of 19) and a quarter from Shetland (25%, 3 of 12) were built after 1990. Angus was a district of extremes as it had the highest proportion of the oldest primary schools, and it also had among the highest proportion of the most modern primary schools (18% being built after 1990).
- 3.18 Although there is no correlation between school roll and age of school for secondary schools, it is found that older primary schools are more likely to be smaller schools (Table 3.2). Thus, 34% of primary schools with 35 or fewer pupils were built before 1900. This contrasts with the majority of primary schools with 100 or more pupils, which were built after 1960.
- 3.19 Caution is urged when interpreting data on school age. It should not be inferred that all older schools are not fit-for-purpose.

	Year School Built		
	Before 1900	1900-59	Later than 1959
Number of Pupils on School Roll	%	%	%
1-35	34	9	8
36-99	34	18	15
100-199	12	30	22
200-299	10	22	28
300 or more	10	22	26
N	232	263	450

Base: all responding schools. School roll data from Scottish Executive (2003). There was a low response rate to the age of school question.

DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL GROUNDS

- 3.20 There is continuing concern about loss of school grounds to building development, including school playing fields. The *National Playing Fields Association*, for example, has published a 10-point plan to help people protect their playing fields from development (NPFA, 2004). New planning controls in Scotland were introduced in 1997 following the publication of *National Planning Policy Guideline 11 (NPPG 11) Sport, Physical Recreation and Open Space* (The Scottish Office, 1997). **sportscotland** is a statutory consultee on all planning applications affecting playing fields. If a local authority wishes to approve an application against the recommendation of **sportscotland**, then the application is referred to the Scottish Executive for a decision.
- 3.21 The *National Physical Activity Strategy* has accorded an important role to school grounds in facilitating higher levels of activity among children in primary and secondary schools.
- 3.22 The schools building programme under Public Private Partnership (PPP) has increased concern over local authorities granting permission for building on existing school playing fields (Grounds for Learning, 2004).
- 3.23 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* collected information on whether schools had lost playing fields or 'other school grounds' to development in the last 10 years.
- 3.24 It was found that the majority of schools in Scotland had not lost ground to development in the last 10 years (90%).
- 3.25 Of the 173 schools that reported that they had lost ground to development, one 25% had lost playing fields, 63% had lost 'other' grounds, and 12% of schools had lost both playing fields and 'other' grounds.
- 3.26 The difference between secondary schools and other age-stages in the extent of grounds lost to development is exacerbated by the nature of grounds lost. Secondary schools are twice as likely as nursery, primary and special schools to have lost playing fields to development. However, this, at least in part, reflects higher levels of playing fields ownership among secondary schools.
- 3.27 Some variation across local authorities can be discerned in the extent to which schools lost grounds to development, although comparisons are limited by small

samples for some local authorities. Only one school in each of Eilean Siar, Dundee and Inverclyde reported losing school grounds to development. On the other hand, school grounds were lost to development in a significant minority of primary schools in Shetland (25%, 4 of 16), East Renfrewshire (29%, 5 of 17) and Midlothian (50%, 5 of 10) and a significant minority of secondary schools in Highland (23%, 3 of 13), South Lanarkshire (27%, 3 of 11) and Aberdeenshire (35%, 6 of 17). The highest rates of loss of playing fields are found in Lanarkshire: 9% of primary schools in North Lanarkshire (5 of 54 schools) and 27% of secondary schools in South Lanarkshire (3 of 11 schools).

- 3.28 There is no association between school roll and the likelihood of grounds being developed for secondary schools, although there is some evidence in the case of primary schools. Twice as many of the primary schools with the largest school rolls (300 or more pupils) reported grounds being developed in the last ten years, compared to primary schools with the smallest school rolls (35 or fewer pupils), i.e. 14% and 7%, respectively. This may be a result of the tendency for smaller schools to be in rural areas with less pressure on land resources.

SHARING OF SCHOOL GROUNDS

- 3.29 One response of education services to demographic change, to the commitment to denominational education and to the expansion of nursery level education has been the sharing of school grounds and buildings in Scotland across age-stages and between schools of the same age-stage which once were independent institutions.
- 3.30 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* collected information on school grounds sharing with other organisations, including community organisations.
- 3.31 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* found that almost half of Scottish schools share grounds with other schools or organisations (48%). Grounds sharing is least common for special schools (33%), while the majority of secondary schools in Scotland share grounds (55%). Forty-three percent of nurseries share grounds, as do 50% of primary schools. More than one in six primary schools (16%) and one in every five secondary schools (19%) share their grounds with at least two other organisations.
- 3.32 Sharing grounds with a nursery class/school is the most typical form of grounds sharing in primary schools (71% of primary schools who shared grounds, share with a provider of nursery level education).
- 3.33 Sharing grounds with community organisations is also common for secondary schools (Table 3.3), almost a third of which share grounds with a community organisation. Grounds sharing with community organisations is less common among nursery, primary and special schools.

	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
Organisations with which Grounds are Shared	%	%	%	%
Community Groups	15	12	30	14
Other: Health	1	1	3	2
Other: Church	2	*	0	0
Other: Hospital	1	0	0	0
Other: Private Business	*	*	0	0
Other: After School Club	4	3	1	1
Other: Playgroup	7	18	8	11
<i>N</i>	<i>517</i>	<i>1149</i>	<i>204</i>	<i>87</i>
Base: all schools responding which share grounds with at least one organisation (not including other schools).				
* = less than 1%				

3.34 The extent to which schools shared grounds varies considerably across local authorities in Scotland:

- For the whole school estate, ground sharing is most prevalent in four rural authorities (Orkney 88%, 15 of 17; Highland, 67%; Shetland 64%; and Angus 61%), and is least prevalent in the City of Dundee (17%). However, an urban/rural divide would be an oversimplification as, for example, high and low rates of grounds sharing are also found in the Lothians, i.e. high in Midlothian (64%) and low in East Lothian (28%).
- School grounds are not shared by any of the twelve responding primary schools in Dundee, and by three-quarters of nursery schools in Aberdeen City (72%), East Lothian (78%, 7 of 9), Falkirk (75%, 9 of 12) and West Dunbartonshire (77%, 10 of 13). In contrast, school grounds are shared by two-thirds of nursery schools in Argyll and Bute (69%, 9 of 13), East Dunbartonshire (69%, 9 of 13), Eilean Siar (65%, 11 of 17) and Aberdeenshire (60%).
- Rates of grounds sharing in Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Argyll and Bute vary markedly between nursery and primary schools. Aberdeenshire and Argyll and Bute are among the local authorities with the highest proportion of grounds sharing in nursery schools and the lowest proportion of grounds sharing in primary schools. On the other hand, Aberdeen City is among those local authorities with the lowest proportion of grounds sharing in nursery schools and the highest proportion of grounds sharing in primary schools.

3.35 It should be noted that 'grounds sharing' is one component of, but not equivalent to, the vision of 'Integrated Community Schools' proposed by the Scottish Executive. For example, a positive response to 'grounds sharing' in the survey may be to acknowledge a weekly let to the Brownies.

SUMMARY: SCOTLAND'S SCHOOL ESTATE

- 3.36 Results from the *Scottish School Grounds Survey* provide useful context for current debates and policies that aim to develop Scotland's school estate. It is found that the Scottish Executive's new school building programme in Scotland is not of a sufficient scale to significantly alter the age profile of Scotland's schools (particularly primary schools and rural schools); concern over loss of school grounds seems disproportionate to the amount of land lost to development in recent times, although - given the Executive's commitment to support sport in schools - concern over the loss of playing fields in secondary schools may be warranted. Furthermore, the Executive's concern to foster 'community-based' schools is far removed from the reality of primary school grounds in Scotland, given that only one in eight primary school grounds are currently used by community-based organisations.
- 3.37 There is great variation in size within each school type; reference to 'primary schools' or 'secondary schools' must therefore be made with caution given the wide range of schools within the category.
- 3.38 The character of Scotland's school estate varies across geographical areas. There is evidence of an urban/rural divide in terms of school roll (smaller primary schools in rural local authorities), age of school (more older schools in rural local authorities) and grounds sharing (which is most likely to be found in the more rural authorities).
- 3.39 Variations in the character of Scotland's school estate can also be discerned across school type. Primary schools tend to be housed in older buildings and a significant number of secondary schools have lost land to development in recent times.

4

CHARACTER OF SCHOOL GROUNDS

[the school ground is one of] the most impoverished, sterile and climatically exposed landscapes in the country.

(Denton-Thompson, 1989)

... I attended the village primary school with tarmac grounds – a small constrained place with a solitary tree. The tree was significant in that it not only provided some growth in an area devoid of greenery but also was used as a meeting place during break times. Aside from the tree there was a shelter which was often used for ball games.

(Grant, 2004, p.4)

- 4.01 To assess the character of contemporary school grounds in Scotland, two distinctions were drawn in the current study:
- Between the area types and features of school grounds; and
 - Between what is there at present and what respondents would want their school grounds to have (or to have more of).
- 4.02 Diversity *per se* is valued for the broader range of play, sporting and learning experiences that this affords children. For example, a recent report for Scottish Natural Heritage argues that children play more creatively in areas with trees and 'more varied features' (Land Use Consultants, 2004, p.41). Further support for diversity in school landscapes comes from those who promote sustainable development in that biodiversity in school grounds presents more opportunities for children to broaden their basis of environmental knowledge and skills (Bartlett *et al.*, 1999, p.181).
- 4.03 Indeed, a wide range of demands is placed upon school grounds from pupils and from service providers. For example:
- Children's use of the playground is complex and multi-faceted. In the mid 1990s, Ward-Thompson (1995) used photographs to canvass opinion on the playground preferences of pupils and teachers in two schools in the city of Edinburgh. From

these photographs, Ward-Thompson identified 47 subjects, which were grouped into three playground elements, i.e. aspects of place experience (e.g. quiet), activities (e.g. playing games) and 'artefacts' (e.g. benches), arguing that children's preferences are for activity-based elements. It would seem logical to infer that artefacts which facilitate activity would be highly valued by children (e.g. play equipment), although Ward-Thompson also noted that "properties related specifically to human comfort and refuge were particularly important" (Ward-Thompson, 1995, p.137). Trees and water features were desired by children, but less so by staff, while there was all-round support for "passive areas", i.e. areas not given over to active play.

- An emerging demand on school grounds is in support of work undertaken as part of *Active Schools* (sportsScotland, 2003a). Head teachers surveyed as part of an interim evaluation of the initiative were concerned at the inadequacy or lack of some particular features (storage facilities for physical equipment and playground markings) and problems with grass areas (drainage or limited size).

4.04 Respondents were also asked for their view on the adequacy of the size of their school grounds to provide a comprehensive review of the character of school grounds in Scotland.

AREA TYPES

4.05 Respondents to the *Scottish School Grounds Survey* were first asked to indicate which, if any, of fourteen area types were present in their school grounds, e.g. food growing area, grass areas not used for sport (see Table 4.3 for a full list). Thereafter, respondents were asked to state which of these fourteen areas types they considered their school required more. Thus, those responding in the affirmative to the 'want more' question for any given area type includes both schools without an area type which would like to have it and schools which already have that area type, but which would like more of it.

4.06 High, medium and low levels of area type diversity were defined as possessing at least seven types of area (high), between four and six area types of area (medium) and less than four types of area (low).

Number of area types found in school grounds

4.07 The average number of area types possessed ranged from between four and five different area types for nursery school grounds to between five and six different area types for primary, secondary and special school grounds.

4.08 On average, schools desire more of between two and three area types in their grounds.

4.09 Those schools with fewer area types are most likely to want more area types (Table 4.1). Thus, the proportions of schools that want a high number of area types (more than seven) are, 34% for schools that possess a low number of area types, 26% for schools with a medium number of area types and 21% for schools which already have a high number of area types.

TABLE 4.1 NUMBER OF AREA TYPES WANTED, BY NUMBER OF AREA TYPES POSSESSED				
		Number of Area Types Possessed		
		Low	Medium	High
Number of Area Types Wanted		%	%	%
	Low	31	31	38
	Medium	35	43	42
	High	34	26	21
	<i>N</i>	424	920	565

Base: all respondents who wanted area types.
Definitions: High means at least 7 area types; Medium is 4-6 inclusive; Low is less than 4.

- 4.10 The number of area types possessed by schools varies between nursery classes and nursery schools, by school roll among secondary schools and across local authorities.
- 4.11 Nursery classes in primary or secondary schools are much more likely to have access to fewer area types than nursery schools (see Table 4.2). Indeed, twice as many nursery classes as nursery schools possess a "low" number of area types (72%, compared to 36%).

TABLE 4.2 NUMBER OF AREA TYPES POSSESSED, BY MODE OF NURSERY LEVEL EDUCATION			
		Nursery Class	Nursery School
Number of Area Types Possessed		%	%
	Low	72	36
	Medium	24	46
	High	4	18
	<i>N</i>	300	512

Base: all respondents from nursery schools and nursery classes.
Definitions: High means at least 7 area types; Medium is 4-6 inclusive; Low means less than 4.

- 4.12 There is not a clear relationship between school roll and the number of area types possessed in primary schools; however the very smallest and very largest secondary schools (defined by roll) are more likely than other secondary schools to have more area types. For example, 27% of secondary schools with over 1000 pupils and 22% of those with 200 or fewer pupils have a high number of area types, compared to only 13% of those with between 800 and 1000 pupils.
- 4.13 Nursery schools in Dundee tend to have a high number of area types (46%, 6 of 13) as do those in Midlothian (50%, 4 of 8). High numbers of area types are found in primary schools in Angus (50%), Edinburgh (54%, 13 of 24), Midlothian (75%, 9 of 12), Orkney (78%, 7 of 9) and Perth and Kinross (57%).
- 4.14 Less diversity - having less than four area types in the school grounds - is evident in the nursery school grounds of Eilean Siar (47%, 8 of 17), Scottish Borders (75%, or 9 of 12) and South Ayrshire (all of its six responding nursery schools), and in the primary schools of East Ayrshire (27%), South Ayrshire (39%, 2 of 13) and South Lanarkshire (20%).

- 4.15 The vast majority, 90% of all schools, reported that they wanted more area types in their school grounds ranging from 80% in nursery schools, through 93% in primary schools to 95% in secondary schools.

Area types found in schools

- 4.16 The most common area surface found in Scottish schools is the hard surface playground: 97% of primary schools, 92% of secondary schools, 82% of special schools and 70% of nursery schools have such a playground (Table 4.3).
- 4.17 Four other particularly common area types are: planted area (ground), planted area (containers), grass areas not used for sport, and car parks, although, as can be seen in Table 4.3, there is some variation between school types.
- 4.18 There appears to be potential for school grounds development in many schools with 14% of special schools, 8% of secondary schools and 6% of primary schools having derelict or wasteland in their school grounds.
- 4.19 Stand alone nursery schools are more likely than encapsulated nursery classes to have any given area type. For example 63% of nursery schools report having a grass area which is not used for sport, compared to only 36% of nursery classes which are encapsulated within primary or secondary schools.

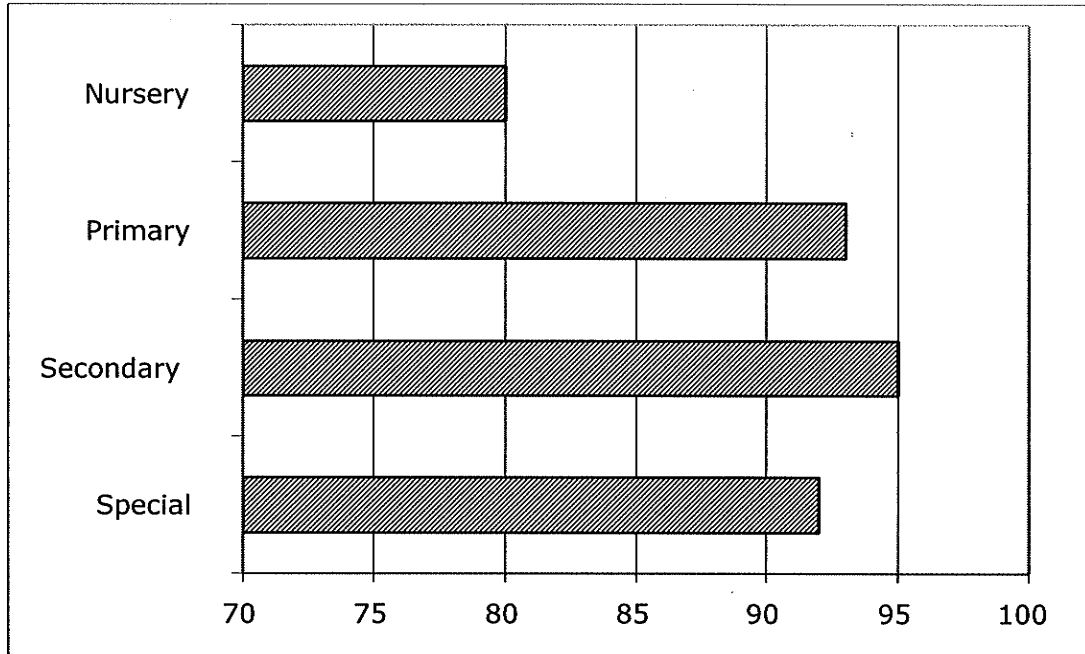
	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
HAVE	%	%	%	%
Sheltered area	18	33	20	30
Grass sports pitch	87	41	76	25
Plant area, ground	66	66	52	72
Car park	50	76	95	79
Plant area, containers	70	61	30	57
Synthetic grass pitch	1	1	17	1
Hard surface playground	70	97	92	82
Wooded area	29	40	42	46
Food growing area	23	8	4	14
Grass area not used for sport	63	67	71	83
Grassed, 'wild' areas	18	25	24	25
Blaes/mineral pitch	4	16	39	17
Pond or marsh	3	9	14	8
Inner courtyard	17	20	55	36
Other	18	2	2	16
Derelict area/wasteland	5	6	8	14
<i>N</i>	520	1145	203	89

Base: all respondents.
For ease of comparison, Table 4.3 and Table 4.4 are presented in the same rank order – in descending order of area types wanted by primary schools.

Area types wanted in schools

4.20 The vast majority of respondents expressed a desire for, or a desire for more of, at least one area type in their school grounds, (80% of nursery schools, 93% of primary schools, 95% of secondary schools and 92% of special schools) (see Figure 4.1).

FIGURE 4.1 DESIRE FOR MORE AREA TYPES, BY SCHOOL TYPE



- 4.21 On average, respondents expressed a desire for, or a desire for more of, three area types per school.
- 4.22 Sheltered areas were most wanted; by 35% of nursery schools, 46% of primary, 45% of secondary and 41% of special schools (Table 4.4).
- 4.23 Nursery schools express the greatest demand for 'landscape' area types such as food growing areas, planted areas and wooded areas, which may reflect the importance of environmental studies in the nursery level curriculum.
- 4.24 Secondary and primary schools express the greatest desire for more functional or utility area types, such as car parks and grass sports pitches.

WANT MORE OF	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
	%	%	%	%
Sheltered area	35	46	45	41
Grass sports pitch	11	31	27	28
Plant area, ground	28	30	15	20
Car park	12	30	33	17
Plant area, containers	16	24	11	13
Synthetic grass pitch	8	22	67	41
Hard surface playground	14	18	17	15
Wooded area	20	17	9	12
Food growing area	25	13	3	16
Grass area not used for sport	18	13	9	11
Grassed, 'wild' areas	17	12	3	9
Blaes/mineral pitch	2	8	10	9
Pond or marsh	6	7	3	4
Inner courtyard	9	4	6	15
Other	10	3	3	12
Derelict area/wasteland	2	1	0	1
<i>N</i>	503	1124	201	86

Base: all respondents.
For ease of comparison, Table 4.3 and Table 4.4 are presented in the same rank order – in descending order of area types wanted by primary schools.

Relationship between area types possessed and area types wanted in schools

- 4.25 Overall, those who have fewer area types tended to express a desire for more area types. However this does not apply consistently to individual area types as shown in Table 4.5.
- 4.26 There are some types of area which most respondents who 'do not have' it, 'do not want' it, such as wild grassed areas and pond/marsh areas.
- 4.27 For other area types, if a school has it, they tend not to want more of it, for example hard surface area, planted area (of ground) and grassed area not used for sport.

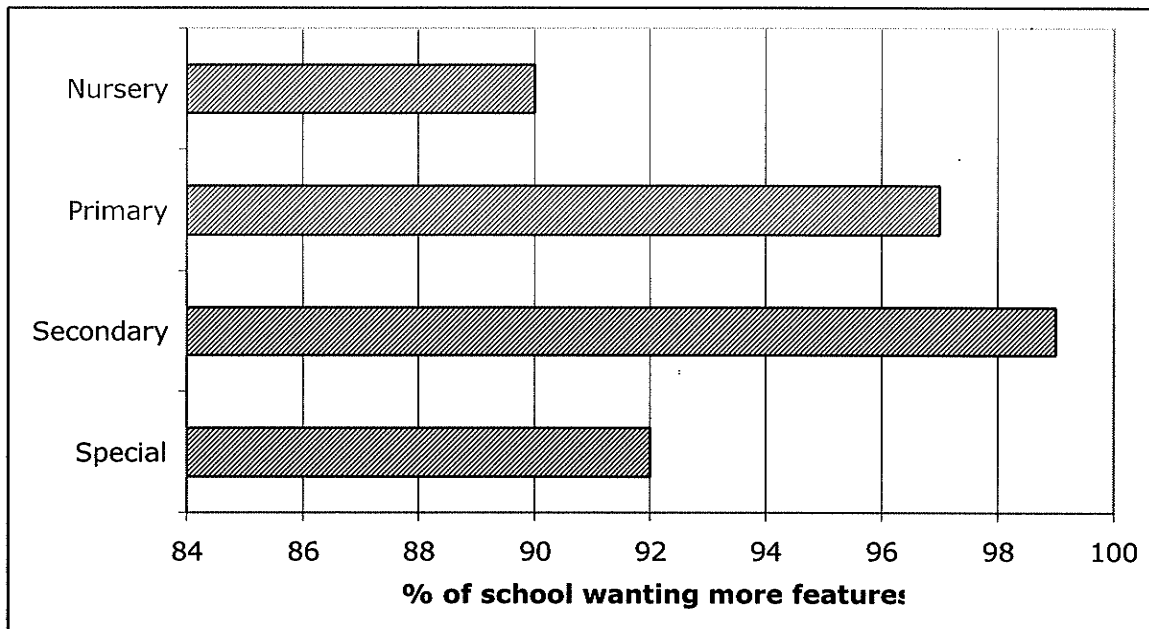
	Have area, Do not want more if it	Do not have area, Do not want area	Have area, Want more of it	Do not have area, Want area
AREA TYPE	%	%	%	%
Sheltered area	21	36	6	36
Plant area, ground	53	20	12	16
Car park	55	21	17	8
Plant area, containers	52	28	8	12
Hard surface playgrounds	75	8	14	3
Wooded area	35	49	3	14
Grass area not sport	62	24	5	9
Grassed, 'wild' areas	22	66	1	12
Pond or marsh	8	86	*	6
Inner courtyard	23	71	1	5

Base: all respondents. (N=1909). Row percentages tally to 100%. No significant differences were found for food growing area or for derelict area/wasteland.
* = less than 1%

FEATURES

- 4.28 Respondents were asked a similar paired set of questions on school grounds features, as they had been asked on area types. First they were asked to indicate which, if any, of twenty-four features were present in their school grounds, e.g. trees, seats (see Table 4.7 for full list). Thereafter, respondents were asked to state which, from the same list of twenty-four features, they considered their school required or required more of. High, medium and low levels of features were defined for analysis: eight or more features (high), between five and seven features (medium), and less than five features (low).
- 4.29 The vast majority of all types of school expressed a desire for more features in their school grounds (nursery 90%, primary 97%, secondary 99%, special 92%).

FIGURE 4.2 DESIRE FOR MORE FEATURES, BY SCHOOL TYPE



Number of features in school grounds

- 4.30 The average number of features possessed ranges from between five and six for nursery and secondary school grounds to between six and seven different features for primary and special school grounds.
- 4.31 The average number of features desired ranges from between four and five for secondary school grounds, between five and six for nursery and special school grounds, to between six and seven different features for primary school grounds.
- 4.32 In contrast to area types, there is little evidence of a correlation between the number of features possessed and the number of features wanted (Table 4.6).

		Number of Features Possessed		
		Low	Medium	High
Number of Features Wanted		%	%	%
	Low	31	31	37
	Medium	32	33	31
	High	37	36	32
	N	635	654	625

Base: all respondents who wanted additional features.
 Definitions: High means at least 8 features, Medium is 5-7 inclusive; Low means less than 5 features.

- 4.33 The number of features possessed by schools varies between nursery classes and nursery schools, by school roll in both primary and secondary schools and across local authorities. These differences are discussed below.

- 4.34 Nursery classes tend to have fewer features in school grounds than nursery schools, although the differences are not as marked as those for area types described earlier (Table 4.2). Thus while only 33% of nursery classes report having five or more school grounds features (as defined in the questionnaire), the same can be said of 55% of nursery schools.
- 4.35 School roll is associated with the number of area types possessed in both primary and secondary schools. However, the nature of these associations varies across school types. For primary schools, the relationship is counter-intuitive – schools with fewer pupils have school grounds with more features. For example, 46% of the smallest group of primary schools (35 or fewer pupils) have eight or more school grounds features, compared to 29% of the largest primary schools (defined as those with more than 300 pupils). For secondary schools, the smallest and the largest secondary schools (defined by roll) are more likely than other schools to have a 'high' number of features. For example, 31% of secondary schools with over 1000 pupils and 35% of those with 200 or fewer pupils have seven or more features, compared to only 15% of those with between 800 and 1000 pupils.
- 4.36 School grounds in more rural local authorities tend to have more features than those in urban local authorities: Thirty-eight percent have eight or more features, compared to 24% in urban local authorities (24%).
- 4.37 At the level of the local authority, significant differences are evident with a high number of school ground features (defined as more than seven) being found in half of the schools in Angus (49%), Argyll and Bute (47%), Edinburgh (49%) and Stirling (48%), two-thirds of the schools in Perth and Kinross (64%) and three-quarters of schools in Orkney (76%, 16 of 21). On the other hand, only 11% of schools have a high number of school grounds features in East Ayrshire, 9% in East Renfrewshire, 7% in Inverclyde and 7% in South Ayrshire. Of the variations for nursery, primary and secondary schools, the following are most worthy of note.
- Nursery school grounds in the Scottish Borders and Dumfries and Galloway tend to lack features (none of the ten responding nursery schools in Scottish Borders and none of the thirteen responding nursery schools in Dumfries and Galloway have a 'high' number of school grounds features). However, for primary schools the picture is quite different; these two authorities tend to have schools which have a higher number of features than the Scottish average (60% of primary schools in each authority have a 'high' number of school grounds features compared with a Scottish average for primary schools of 39%).
 - A low proportion of nursery schools and primary schools in West Dunbartonshire have a 'high' number of school grounds features (8%, 1 of 13; and 20%, 4 of 20, respectively).
 - A low proportion of both primary schools and secondary schools in North Lanarkshire have a 'high' number of school grounds features (19% and 8%, respectively).
 - A high proportion of both primary schools and secondary schools in Highlands have a 'high' number of school grounds features (51% and 54%, respectively).
- 4.38 There was much less variation among local authorities with regard to the number of school grounds features wanted. No local authorities featured as either above or below average for more than one school age sector:
- The highest proportion of nursery schools seeking a 'high' number of school grounds features (defined as seven or more features wanted) is found in North Lanarkshire (46%), Stirling (46%, 5 of 11 responding schools) and West

Dunbartonshire (62%, 8 of 13 schools); the lowest proportions are found in Aberdeenshire (11%) and East Dunbartonshire (8%).

- The highest proportion of primary schools seeking a 'high' number of school ground features (defined as seven or more) is found in Orkney (78%, 7 of 9 responding schools), East Renfrewshire (77%, 13 of 17), Inverclyde (69%, 9 of 13) and Falkirk (64%); the lowest proportions are found in Angus (23%) and Moray (26%).

Features found in schools

4.39 The following table shows the features present in grounds at the time of survey.

	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
FEATURES POSSESSED	%	%	%	%
Seating areas	33	55	57	55
Outdoor shelter	13	34	16	23
Fixed play equipment	39	22	11	43
Picnic area/tables	30	51	37	55
Painted playground markings	23	78	21	50
Equipment store facility	59	31	25	38
Parent waiting area	12	7	24	5
Weather station	3	7	17	4
Murals	11	25	23	14
Wildflower area	22	20	7	24
Bike racks	4	24	55	7
Bird box/table	45	39	10	38
Sculptures	3	4	14	14
Wildlife habitats	19	21	12	25
Bins	34	89	85	62
Non-fixed play equipment	64	47	7	36
Tree/s	48	61	67	61
Other recycling facility	3	9	8	6
Nature trail	5	3	3	6
Sandpit	33	9	20	9
Other artwork	7	7	20	13
Pond/water feature	5	8	14	9
Compost heap	9	14	4	8
Temporary playground markings	29	17	2	13
Other	3	3	2	2
<i>N</i>	508	1145	206	88

Base: all respondents. For ease of comparison, Table 4.7 and Table 4.8 are presented in the same rank order – in descending order of features wanted by primary schools.

4.40 There are significant variations in features found in different types of school.

- Nursery schools are more likely than other schools to have equipment storage facilities (59%), non-fixed play equipment (64%), sandpits (33%), temporary playground markings (29%) and fixed play equipment (39%).
- Primary schools are more likely than other schools to have compost heaps (14%), outdoor shelters (34%) and painted playground markings (78%).
- Secondary schools are more likely than other schools to have bike racks (55%), artwork (20%), parent waiting areas (24%) and weather stations (17%).
- Seating areas are found in the majority of primary, secondary and special schools (55%, 57% and 55%), but in only one third of nursery schools (33%).
- Picnic areas are more common in special schools (55%) and primary schools (51%), relative to nursery schools (30%) and secondary schools (37%).
- Sculptures are more common in special schools (14%) and secondary schools (14%), relative to nursery schools (3%) and primary schools (4%).
- Bird boxes or tables feature less prominently in secondary schools (10%), compared to nursery, primary and special schools (45%, 39% and 38%, respectively).
- Wildlife and wildflower areas feature less prominently in secondary schools: taking wildflower areas, for example, these are found in few secondary schools (7%), compared to nursery, primary and special schools (22%, 20% and 24%, respectively).

4.41 It was noted above that nursery schools tend to have more diversity in terms of area types, than nursery classes. The same is found with regard to school grounds features. Of the 24 features for which information was collected, nineteen of these are less likely to be found in nursery class grounds than in nursery school grounds. For five features there is no significant difference (outdoor shelters, murals, sculptures, painted playground markings and non-fixed play equipment).

Features wanted in schools

4.42 Ninety five percent of respondents expressed desire for more of at least one feature for their school grounds. Indeed, on average, respondents highlighted a desire for more of 7 features per school.

4.43 Once again, there is significant variation in demand (features wanted) across school types (Table 4.8).

TABLE 4.8 FEATURES WANTED IN SCHOOL GROUNDS, BY SCHOOL TYPE

	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
FEATURES WANTED	%	%	%	%
Seating areas	37	60	69	47
Outdoor shelter	40	50	59	50
Fixed play equipment	39	50	21	45
Picnic area/tables	30	47	51	34
Painted playground markings	33	44	15	31
Equipment store facility	24	29	28	28
Parent waiting area	17	29	22	16
Weather station	20	29	15	23
Murals	24	28	19	24
Wildflower area	28	28	8	19
Bike racks	6	28	30	9
Bird box/table	31	25	7	21
Sculptures	21	25	21	22
Wildlife habitats	25	24	12	16
Bins	19	20	31	13
Non-fixed play equipment	16	19	6	8
Tree/s	20	18	20	12
Other recycling facility	15	18	15	16
Nature trail	13	15	6	9
Sandpit	23	12	5	14
Other artwork	12	11	7	17
Pond/water feature	14	9	8	12
Compost heap	13	8	3	4
Temporary playground markings	5	3	2	5
Other	3	1	0	6
<i>N</i>	498	1136	202	86

Base: all respondents. For ease of comparison, Table 4.7 and Table 4.8 are presented in the same rank order – in descending order of features wanted by primary schools.

- 4.44 More seating is wanted in almost half of special schools (47%), the majority of primary schools and secondary schools (60% and 69%, respectively), in addition to a substantial minority of nursery schools (37%).
- 4.45 Similarly, outdoor shelters are wanted in half of special schools and primary schools (50% for both), the majority of secondary schools (59%), in addition to a substantial minority of nursery schools (40%).
- 4.46 For a further four features there is a fairly consistent level of demand across school types. These are sculptures (from 21% of secondary schools to 25% of primary schools), murals (from 19% of secondary schools to 28% of primary schools), equipment storage facilities (from 24% of nursery schools to 29% of special schools) and recycling facilities (from 15% of secondary schools to 18% of primary schools).

- 4.47 However, there is also significant variation in the type of feature desired in different types of school.
- Higher levels of demand for play features are evident in nursery and primary schools, (e.g. fixed play equipment is wanted in 39% of nursery schools and 50% of primary schools, compared to 21% of secondary schools).
 - Wildlife features are also wanted by more primary and nursery schools, relative to secondary and special schools. For example, 28% of nursery schools and primary schools want more wildflower areas, compared to 8% of secondary schools. This reflects the importance of school grounds for environmental studies in the younger years.
 - Demand for bins is greatest in secondary schools (31%, compared to 20% of primary schools, 19% of nursery schools and 13% of special schools).
 - Demand for picnic tables is most closely associated with primary schools and secondary schools (47% and 51%, respectively), compared to 30% of nursery schools and 34% of special schools).
 - Bike racks are more likely to be wanted for primary schools (28%) and secondary schools (30%), than special schools (9%) and nursery schools (6%).

Relationship between features possessed and features wanted in schools

- 4.48 Table 4.9 below shows the relationship between the desire to have particular features and whether or not the school grounds already have such a feature. The analysis includes all schools responding.
- 4.49 A substantial number of those schools which do not have seating areas, painted playground markings, outdoor shelter and trees would like to have them.
- 4.50 There are a number of features which schools tend not to have but also have little desire for, such as a weather station, sculptures, nature trail, and compost heap.
- 4.51 The feature which schools already have, but which they are most likely to want more of is "seating areas".
- 4.52 A notable proportion of respondents do not have and do not want bike racks.

	Have feature, Do not want more	Do not have feature, Do not want feature	Have feature, Want more of it	Do not have feature, Want feature
FEATURES	%	%	%	%
Seating areas	28	17	21	34
Outdoor shelter	20	31	5	43
Fixed play equipment	18	38	8	36
Picnic area/tables	32	25	12	31
Painted playground markings	39	24	17	20
Equipment store facility	30	43	7	21
Parent waiting area	9	66	*	24
Weather station	7	68	*	25
Murals	17	57	3	23
Wildflower area	17	57	1	24
Bike racks	19	60	3	19
Bird box/table	35	40	3	22
Sculptures	5	72	1	23
Wildlife habitats	17	60	2	21
Bins	59	21	13	8
Non-fixed play equipment	No significant difference			
Tree/s	51	31	7	11
Other recycling facility	7	76	1	16
Nature trail	3	84	*	13
Sandpit	16	71	1	13
Other artwork	No significant difference			
Pond/water feature	8	82	*	10
Compost heap	11	80	*	8
Temporary playground markings	18	79	*	3

Base: all respondents. N=1914. Rows total 100%
 * = less than 1%

PERCEPTION OF SIZE

- 4.53 Collection of data on the actual size of school grounds through a survey of this nature was considered to be too demanding for respondents. However, the *perception* of the adequacy of the size of school grounds is a significant issue in its own right and may affect use.
- 4.54 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* asked respondents to assess the adequacy of the size of their school grounds. Results are shown in Table 4.10 below.
- 4.55 The majority of schools considered their grounds to be proportionate to need (69% are "about the right size"). Few schools considered their grounds to be too large but a substantial proportion considered them to be "too small" or "much too small".

- 4.56 The proportion of schools whose grounds are perceived to be too small, varied according to school type, school roll in secondary schools, school grounds' character in terms of areas and features, use of school grounds in learning and whether or not grounds had been developed. These are explored in the following paragraphs.

	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
RELATIVE TO SCHOOL ROLL, GROUNDS ARE	%	%	%	%
Much too small	7	7	8	11
Too small	14	16	21	9
About the right size	76	69	68	72
Too large	3	7	4	7
Much too large	1	1	0	1
<i>N</i>	495	1127	201	85

Base: all respondents.

- 4.57 As Table 4.10 demonstrates, secondary schools are more likely than other types of school to consider their grounds too small, or much too small (29%, compared to 23% for primary schools, 21% for nursery schools and 20% for special schools). Throughout this section the description "too small" is used to mean a response of "too small" or "much too small".
- 4.58 Most concern over the size of school grounds is reported by nursery classes that are encapsulated in primary or secondary schools. Forty-one percent of nursery classes consider their grounds too small, compared with 21% of nursery schools.
- 4.59 Primary schools with a relatively high school roll are more likely to consider that their grounds are too small, e.g. 29% of those with 300 or more pupils being of this opinion, compared to 18% of those with 35 or fewer pupils. On the other hand, both the very smallest and the very largest secondary schools are most likely to consider that their grounds were too small (33% of secondary schools with over 1000 pupils and 32% of those with 200 or fewer pupils are of this opinion, compared to only 18% of those with between 201 and 500 pupils).
- 4.60 Schools with fewer features and area types are most likely to judge that their grounds are too small, as were schools which want more features and area types. For example, 42% of schools with fewer than four area types perceive that their grounds are too small, compared to 14% of those schools with seven or more area types. This may suggest that more diversity can enhance small school grounds to meet the needs of the school but it should be noted that smaller school grounds will, by definition, have less scope for some types of area and features. Further exploration would be necessary to separate out size and diversity issues.
- 4.61 School grounds are less likely to be considered to be too small if they being used as a resource for learning. For example, twice as many schools that do not use their grounds for physical education consider that their grounds are too small, compared to those that do (57% and 25%, respectively). Similarly, 50% of those schools that do not value their grounds as a curriculum learning resource consider that their grounds are too small, compared to 22% of those which value the curriculum learning value of their grounds. These findings may reflect the difficulties in using small grounds as a learning resource but also the potential to use limited space to maximum effect.

4.62 Table 4.11 shows the perception of adequacy of school ground size in relation to whether or not a school has lost land to building development.

TABLE 4.11 PERCEPTION OF SCHOOL GROUNDS SIZE, BY WHETHER OR NOT GROUNDS HAD BEEN DEVELOPED IN LAST 10 YEARS		
	Grounds Lost to Development	
	Yes	No
Perception of School Grounds Size	%	%
Too small	39	22
About right	58	72
Too large	3	6
Base (N=)	178	1654

Column percentages tally to 100%. Data is drawn from the full-length surveys.

4.63 Those schools that have lost grounds to building development in the last ten years are most likely to be those whose grounds are perceived to be “too small” (39% of those schools which have lost grounds, compared to 22% of those which have not lost grounds). This may imply that, in many of those schools which have lost ground to development, the loss of ground is unlikely to be a use of excess capacity.

SUMMARY: CHARACTER OF SCHOOL GROUNDS

4.64 Most schools are satisfied with the size of their school grounds. However, one in ten schools perceive their grounds to be “much too small”, and one in five consider that their grounds are either “too small” or “much too small”, which may be a cause for concern. Furthermore, these perceptions would appear to be reasoned judgements in that those school grounds which were judged to be “too small” were more likely to be those which: had more pupils (more demand for space), had fewer features; had fewer area types; were used less in curriculum learning; and had been reduced in size having lost ground to development in the last ten years.

4.65 Scottish schoolscapes are diverse with most grounds possessing a range of area types and features. Hard surface playgrounds, planted areas (ground and containers), car parks, grass areas not used for sport and trees are commonplace in Scottish school grounds. However, there is widespread demand for sheltered areas, shelters and seating areas.

4.66 In addition to area types and features that are commonplace throughout schools in Scotland, there are also characteristics that are particular to sectors. For example, secondary schools are most likely to have bike racks and weather stations, and nursery schools are most likely to have equipment storage facilities and non-fixed play equipment. Nursery schools tend to have more diversity of features and area types than nursery classes.

4.67 In accounting for differences among schools, it would have been reasonable to expect smaller schools (defined by school roll) to have a more limited range of area types and features. However, it is found that the very smallest (and the very largest) secondary schools are those that are most likely to have the most diverse school grounds. Furthermore, while there is no correlation between area type diversity and school size for primary schools, it is found that there is a tendency for the smallest primary schools to possess *more* school grounds features.

5

PROVISION FOR SPORTS IN SCHOOL GROUNDS

[School playing fields] support *Active Schools*, are invaluable in delivering the PE curriculum, and provide an arena for community sport. Further, they're an important resource in support of the national initiative *Let's Make Scotland More Active*. [Physical Activity Taskforce]

(Ian McKenzie [Head of Facilities Development, **sportscotland**], 2004, p. 10)

- 5.01 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* included several elements relating to the provision for sport in school grounds, which are reported in this chapter including facilities available, sports provided, plans for improvement, number of sports fields, and use of grounds for sport outside school hours. It has been reported earlier (chapter 3) that 19% of secondary schools have lost grounds to development in the last ten years, with a substantial proportion losing playing field area (10%).
- 5.02 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* collected information on the number of outdoor sports pitches and facilities possessed by schools. Information was collected on the basis of surface and sports type. Thus, schools were asked to report on the number of each of the following: grass pitches, blaes/mineral pitches, synthetic grass pitches, cricket wickets, tennis courts and athletics tracks. Schools were also able to provide information on other types of outdoor sports facilities that were not listed. Furthermore, this data was collected both for on-site sports facilities and for off-site sports facilities. Off-site sports pitches are those which are not part of the main school site, but which belong to the school.

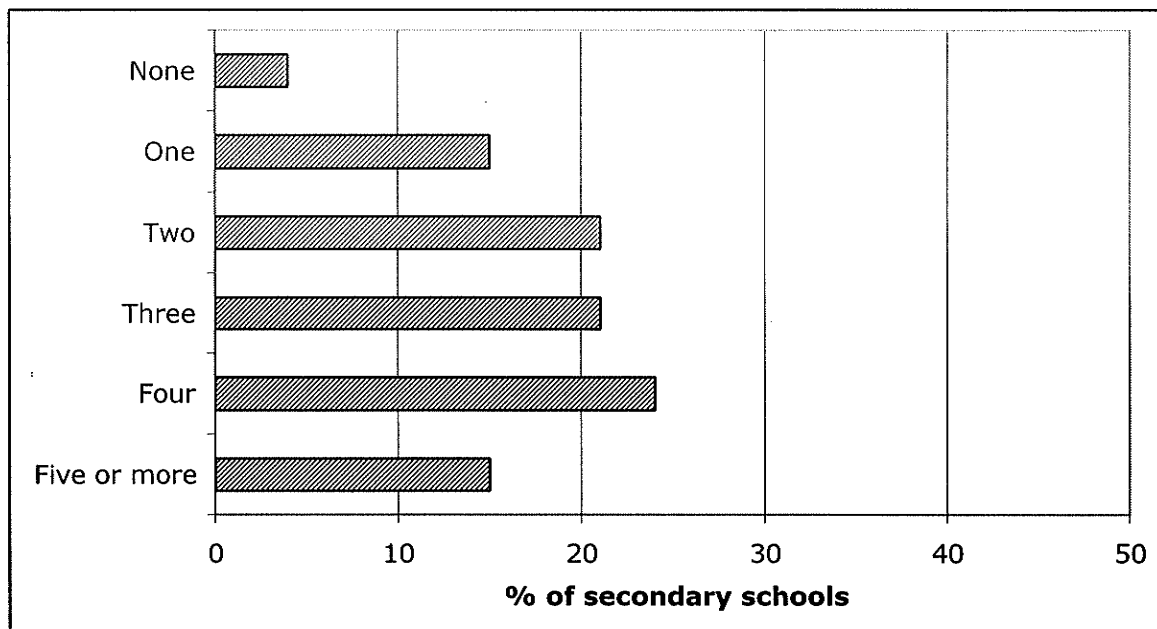
OUTDOOR SPORTS PITCHES

- 5.03 This section gives the main results relating to outdoor sports pitches, i.e. grass pitches, mineral/blaes pitches and synthetic pitches.

Total number of sports pitches possessed

- 5.04 There is a marked difference in outdoor sports pitch ownership (on- and off-site) across primary and secondary schools; whereas almost half of primary schools have no outdoor sports pitches (45% of schools), the vast majority of secondary schools have at least one outdoor sports pitch (96% of secondary schools).

FIGURE 5.1 TOTAL NUMBER OUTDOOR SPORTS PITCHES, SECONDARY SCHOOLS



Ownership of sports pitches

5.05 Table 5.1 reinforces the findings from Figure 5.1, providing data on ownership of on- and off-site sports pitches. Only one in ten secondary schools do not possess a sports pitch on-site, compared to almost half of primary schools. A small number of both primary and secondary schools possess off-site sports pitches.

	Primary	Secondary
Number of On-Site Sports Pitches	%	%
0	48	8
1	41	20
2	8	21
3	2	19
4	1	20
5 or more	*	11
<i>N</i>	1126	196
Number of Off-Site Sports Pitches	%	%
0	91	83
1	8	5
2	1	4
3	1	5
4	0	3
5 or more	0	1
<i>N</i>	1066	175

Base: all respondents. * = less than 1%

5.06 Intuitively, it might be expected that off-site sports pitches would compensate for a lack of on-site provision. However, it is found that off-site sports pitches are possessed by only 8% of those schools which do not possess an on-site sports pitch. Ten percent of schools with an on-site sports pitch also have access to off-site sports pitches.

Ownership of sports pitches by surface type

5.07 Table 5.2 takes the analysis beyond aggregate findings to consider the number of different types of sports pitch (grass, blaes/mineral and synthetic) possessed by primary and secondary schools.

		Grass		Blaes/Mineral		Synthetic	
		Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary
NUMBER OF SPORTS PITCHES		%	%	%	%	%	%
	0	56	18	84	56	99	85
	1	35	28	15	22	1	14
	2	7	17	2	18	*	2
	3	1	17	*	4	0	0
	4	1	15	0	0	0	0
	5 or more	*	7	0	0	0	0
	<i>N</i>	1061	169	1061	169	1061	169

Base: all respondents. * = less than 1%

5.08 Unsurprisingly, more secondary schools than primary schools are likely to have each type of sports pitch; for example, 82% of secondary schools report possessing a grass sports pitch, compared to 44% of primary schools. Fifteen per cent of primary schools possess a single blaes pitch. Twenty-two per cent of all secondary schools have more than one blaes pitch.

5.09 Both primary and secondary schools are more likely to possess grass sports pitches than blaes/mineral and synthetic sports pitches; for example, 82% of secondary schools report possessing a grass sports pitch, 44% report possessing a blaes/mineral sports pitch and 15% report possessing a synthetic sports pitch. For primary schools, 44% have a grass pitch, 16% a blaes/mineral pitch and 1% have a synthetic sports pitch.

Regional variation in possession of sports pitches

5.10 Between 50% and 70% of primary schools have a sports pitch in most local authorities in Scotland. Across all local authorities virtually all secondary schools had at least one pitch.

- 5.11 More marked variations across local authorities are found when the number of sports pitches in school grounds is disaggregated by school sector type. For example, of those local authorities with at least 20 responding primary schools, around a third did *not* have a sports pitch in Aberdeenshire (34%), Dumfries and Galloway (34%), East Dunbartonshire (35%), Falkirk (24%), West Dunbartonshire (21%) and West Lothian (20%), compared to around two-thirds of primary schools in Edinburgh (64%), South Ayrshire (71%) and South Lanarkshire (66%).
- 5.12 Regional variation is more marked when patterns of ownership of different types of sports pitch are disaggregated. Local authorities from west central Scotland are characterised by higher than average levels of blaes/mineral sports pitches and lower than average levels of grass sports pitches.
- 5.13 Grass sports pitches: -
- Five local authorities in west central Scotland have an average considerably below the national average of 37% of schools with grass sports pitches. These are: Glasgow (8% of schools with grass pitches), South Lanarkshire (22%), Renfrewshire (24%), East Dunbartonshire (25%) and West Dunbartonshire (28%). These schools tend to have more blaes/mineral pitches.
 - For primary schools, four west central local authorities have ownership rates that are well below the national average of 41%. These are: Glasgow (2%), Inverclyde (8%), East Dunbartonshire (17%) and South Lanarkshire (21%).
 - Although on-site grass sports pitches are more common in secondary schools (national average of 76%), rates are markedly lower in three local authorities from west central Scotland: Glasgow (43%), South Lanarkshire (50%) and North Lanarkshire (62%).
- 5.14 Blaes/mineral pitches: -
- In all but four local authorities some schools reported having at least one blaes/mineral pitch. The national average is 15% of schools, against which can be set ownership rates of 29% (Renfrewshire), 37% (Glasgow), 45% (West Dunbartonshire) and 48% (East Dunbartonshire).
 - Overall, 17% of primary schools reported having an on-site blaes/mineral pitch. Figures for blaes/mineral pitch ownership in primary schools are much higher in some local authorities in west central Scotland: 37% (Renfrewshire), 56% (Glasgow), 60% (West Dunbartonshire) and 52% (East Dunbartonshire).
 - Forty percent of secondary schools have an on-site blaes/mineral pitch with higher figures for Glasgow (67%), South Lanarkshire (84%) and North Lanarkshire (85%).
- 5.15 Synthetic pitches (almost exclusively in secondary schools): -
- No synthetic pitches were reported in twelve local authorities. A further fifteen authorities reported a total of only one or two synthetic pitches out of all the schools in the authority responding to the questionnaire.
 - Synthetic pitches were most prevalent in Glasgow (pitches reported in 8 of the responding schools), Highland (6 responding schools) and West Lothian (6 responding schools).

Variation in possession of sports pitches by school roll

- 5.16 School roll is also strongly and positively correlated with the likelihood of possessing a sports pitch in primary and secondary schools. Thus, the higher the school roll, the more likely that school is to possess its own sports pitch.
- 5.17 Table 5.3 presents a summary of the average number of sports pitches and average number of pupils per sports pitch for different sizes (school roll) of primary and secondary schools. This table emphasises the variation across schools. On average, secondary schools have up to four times as many sports pitches as primary schools. For example, 'average'-sized secondary schools have 3 sports pitches per school, compared to 0.7 for 'average'-sized primary schools. However, this does not necessarily imply higher levels of provision in secondary schools. Indeed, if we consider the average number of pupils per sports pitch, it is found that the highest rates of provision are in the smallest schools in both the primary school sector and secondary school sector. For example, the smallest secondary schools have a sports pitch for every 52 pupils, compared to 482 pupils per pitch in the largest secondary schools.

		Average number of pitches		Number of pupils per pitch	
		Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary
School Roll					
	Smallest	0.5	1.1	21	52
	Small	0.7	2.4	54	200
	Average	0.7	3.0	131	262
	Large	0.9	3.0	204	342
	Largest	0.9	3.5	316	482
	All	0.8	3.0		
	<i>N</i>	1042	192	1042	192
Base: all primary and secondary school respondents. Refer to Figures 3.1 (Primary) and 3.2 (Secondary) for school roll definitions.					

- 5.18 On the whole, sports pitch provision is better in urban than in rural local authorities. For example, there is a sports pitch for every 252 pupils in secondary schools from urban local authorities, compared to a sports pitch for every 387 pupils in secondary schools from rural local authorities.
- 5.19 The higher sports pitch ownership in urban local authorities, compared with rural local authorities, holds when school size is controlled for. Thus, for example, 'average'-sized primary schools in urban local authorities have 121 pupils per pitch, compared to 138 pupils per pitch in 'average'-sized primary schools in rural local authorities.

Variation in possession of sports pitches by age of school

- 5.20 Initial analysis suggests that older schools have higher levels of sports pitch provision per pupil. For example, primary schools built prior to 1860 are found to have an average of 51 pupils per sports pitch, which is a higher rate of provision than that for schools built in the late 19th Century (91 pupils per pitch), early 20th Century (173), mid-late 20th Century (186) and more recent decades (177). Given the Scottish

Executive's commitment to enhance sporting provision, it at first appears that modern schools are those with the lowest rates of sports pitch per pupil. However, further analysis controlling for school size shows that older schools tend to be smaller schools. When comparing like-with-like – for example, all primary schools with a similar roll – there are no significant variations in pitches per pupil according to age of school.

OTHER SPORTS PROVISION IN SCHOOL GROUNDS

5.21 The facilities discussed in this section include cricket wickets, tennis courts and athletics tracks. Table 5.4 shows the percentage of schools possessing such facilities.

Ownership of non-pitch outdoor sports provision

5.22 The highest levels of provision are found in secondary schools – for example, 43% of secondary schools reported having an athletics track (it was not possible to differentiate between those which had permanent tracks (probably very few) from those which had the capacity to lay out temporary running tracks on playing fields during the summer months), 21% have tennis courts and 6% have a cricket wicket.

	Primary	Secondary	Special
ON-SITE PROVISION	%	%	%
Cricket wicket	*	6	0
Tennis courts	1	21	1
Athletics track	1	43	2
Other	10	5	6
<i>N</i>	1126	196	83
OFF-SITE PROVISION			
Cricket wicket	*	2	0
Tennis courts	1	2	0
Athletics track	1	6	0
Other	1	1	0
<i>N</i>	1066	175	78
Base: all responding primary, secondary and special schools. * = less than 1%			
There was a high non-response rate to the off-site provision question.			

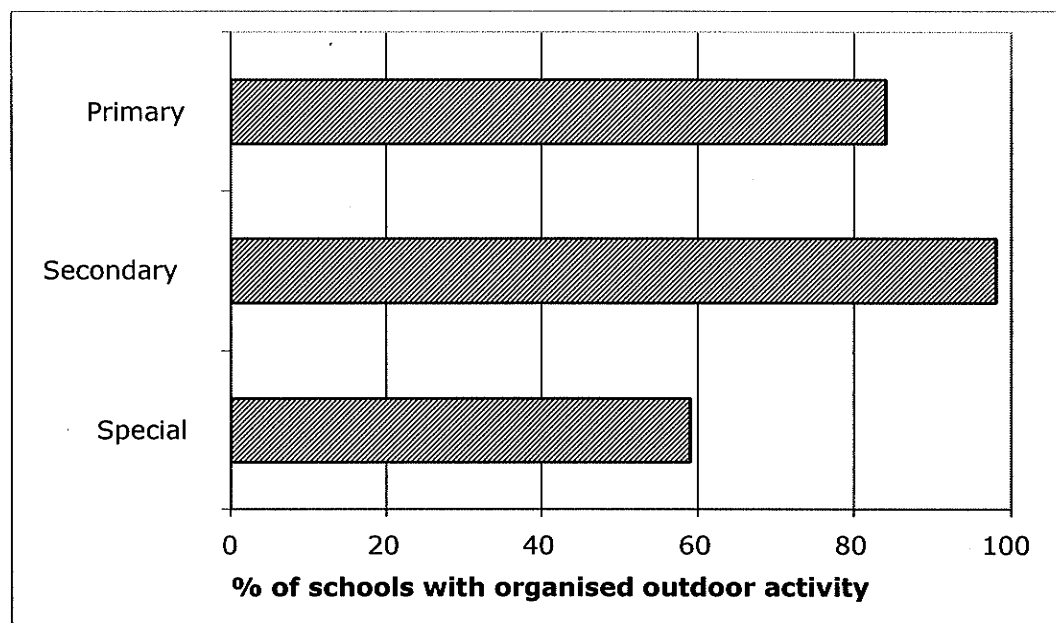
ORGANISED SPORTS IN SCHOOL GROUNDS

5.23 Respondents were asked whether their school grounds were used for organised sport (including that undertaken within physical education, through after school clubs or through community groups). A list of 12 organised outdoor sports was provided: athletics, basketball, cricket, football, hockey, netball, rounders, rugby, shinty and tennis. Respondents could add to this through an 'other' category.

Extent of use

5.24 Eighty-five percent of secondary schools reported use of grounds for at least four organised sports, whereas in primary schools 15% of schools report none, 39% report 1-3 organised sports and 46% report at least four organised sports.

FIGURE 5.2 PLAYING OF ORGANISED SPORTS IN SCHOOL GROUNDS, BY SCHOOL TYPE



5.25 Variations across local authorities are less marked than variation across school sector types. Higher than average rates of organised sports activity in school grounds were reported for a cluster of rural local authorities, i.e. Perth and Kinross (86%), Orkney (88%), Dumfries and Galloway (88%) and Angus (90%). Lower than average rates of organised sports activity in school grounds are found in Inverclyde (47%), Eilean Siar (47%) and Stirling (56%).

5.26 Variations in levels of organised sports activity in school grounds across local authorities persist when results are disaggregated by school sector type. Higher than average (84% for primary schools) rates of organised sports activity in primary school grounds are found in Dumfries and Galloway (99%) and North Ayrshire (95%). Lower levels of organised sports activity in school grounds in primary schools are found in South Lanarkshire (75%), Eilean Siar (71%), and Stirling (62%).

Organised sports

5.27 The main sports that are played on an organised basis in special, secondary and primary schools are as follows (see also Table 5.5).

- primary schools: small-sided football, rounders, netball, athletics, and rugby.
- secondary schools: 11-a-side football, athletics, hockey, small-sided football, rugby, rounders, basketball and netball.
- special schools: small-sided football, rounders and athletics.

	Primary	Secondary	Special
PLAY ORGANISED SPORT	%	%	%
Athletics	40	82	30
Basketball	18	41	19
Cricket	12	19	5
Football, 11-a-side	18	90	16
Football, 7-a-side	52	64	19
Football, 5-a-side	34	53	38
Hockey	21	72	11
Netball	44	39	7
Rounders	47	46	37
Rugby	28	61	5
Shinty	4	5	0
Tennis	9	25	7
Other	7	13	13
N	1118	200	86

Base: all responding primary, secondary and special schools.

5.28 Rugby and shinty stand apart from other organised sports in that they are commonly acknowledged to have a strong regional basis of participation in Scotland; shinty is associated with north west Scotland and rugby tends to be most popular in south east Scotland and the Scottish Borders. Both regional associations are reflected in the *Scottish School Grounds Survey* data on organised sports practised in school grounds:

- Shinty is a minority sport throughout Scotland, although higher levels of participation are found in Argyll and Bute (e.g. 30% of primary schools, compared to a national primary school average of 4%) and Highlands (45% of secondary schools, compared to a national secondary school average of 5%). However a significant level of participation is also evident for primary schools in Renfrewshire (23%).
- Rugby is most commonly practised as an organised sport in Scottish Borders (64% of primary schools, and 5 of the 6 responding secondary schools), East Lothian (67% of primary schools), and Dumfries and Galloway (46% of primary schools and 8 of the 10 responding secondary schools). Outside the south and south-east of Scotland, participation is higher than average in East Renfrewshire (53% of primary schools and in each of the 4 responding secondary schools), Dundee's primary schools (47%) and Clackmannanshire's primary schools (55%). Lowest levels of rugby being practised as an organised sport in school grounds are found in Inverclyde (10% of all schools), Eilean Siar (8%), Argyll and Bute 4%) and Glasgow's secondary schools (whose 19% was well below the Scottish average of 61%).

5.29 Regional variation in the extent to which other sports take place in school grounds is less obvious than for shinty and rugby. The main findings are described below. As noted earlier, the figures refer to the percentage of schools who report the sport

taking place in an organised way in their school grounds, whether this is through physical education, community activity or after-school clubs.

- *Cricket.* Cricket in school grounds is regionalised in Scotland with higher levels in east Scotland. For example, against the average of 12% for primary schools, above average rates are found in the primary schools of Angus (35%), Perth and Kinross (29%), Clackmannanshire (27%), Dundee (26%), Moray (26%) and Stirling (25%). On the other hand, a cluster of local authorities from some local authorities in west central Scotland reported lower than average percentages, e.g. South Lanarkshire (6%), Renfrewshire (5%), Glasgow (3%) and North Lanarkshire (2%), and there was no cricket in school grounds reported by responding schools in West Dunbartonshire, North Ayrshire, Falkirk and East Dunbartonshire. However, in west central Scotland cricket is played in some secondary school grounds in Glasgow (5 of the 21 responding schools) and some primary school grounds in Inverclyde (6 of the 13 responding likewise).
- *Athletics.* All secondary schools from eleven local authorities reported that athletics was practised as an organised sport in their grounds, compared to a Scottish secondary school average of 82%. Those secondary schools with lower levels of participation were found in Glasgow (67%) and Dumfries and Galloway. The primary school average of 40% is significantly greater than that of Stirling (13%), South Ayrshire (14%), Eilean Siar (21%) and North Lanarkshire (21%), but lower than the two thirds of primary schools which reported that athletics was practised as an organised sport in their grounds from Clackmannanshire (64%), West Dunbartonshire (65%), Orkney (67%), East Lothian (67%) and North Ayrshire (67%).
- *Basketball.* Variations were evident, although differences are not as marked for other sports and no consistent pattern emerges (by geographical or social profile of local authority area). Higher than average levels of organised basketball in primary school grounds are reported for Renfrewshire (55%, compared to the average of 18%) and Edinburgh (54%), while lower than average rates are most evident in South Ayrshire (no primary schools reporting participation), South Lanarkshire (4%) and West Dunbartonshire (5%). Higher than average levels in secondary school grounds are reported for Glasgow (57% of responding schools, compared to the average of 41%) and Highland (54%).
- *Hockey.* For primary schools, there were substantial differences by local authority. Hockey was undertaken in school grounds in almost half of primary schools in Dundee, East Lothian and Scottish Borders but in no responding primary schools in North Lanarkshire, South Ayrshire and East Dunbartonshire. All responding secondary schools from ten local authorities in Scotland report that hockey is played as an organised sport in their school grounds, while fewer than half of all secondary schools report likewise in Eilean Siar (1 of 7 responding schools), North Lanarkshire (5 of 13), Orkney (4 of 7), South Lanarkshire (5 of 12) and West Lothian (3 of 7).
- *Netball.* The extent to which netball was reported to take place on an organised basis in primary and secondary schools was above the national averages (44% and 39%, respectively) for responding schools from East Renfrewshire (59% of primary schools and 3 of 4 secondary schools), Fife (50% and 69%), Perth and Kinross (56% and all 3 responding secondary schools) and North Ayrshire (86% of primary schools and 3 of 5 responding secondary schools). On the other hand, figures were lower for Highland (19% of primary schools and 31% of secondary schools). Lower figures were also reported for the primary schools of Clackmannanshire (9%) and Moray (11%) and higher figures for primary schools in East Ayrshire (65%). Glasgow's schools are unique in that they are below the

national participation rate for primary schools (21%), but above the national average for secondary schools (52%).

- *Rounders.* As with basketball, variations across local authorities are less pronounced; on the whole only two local authorities have significantly higher levels than the national average of 36% of schools (Angus at 51% and Orkney at 64%) and only two local authorities have significantly lower levels (Clackmannanshire at 22% and Inverclyde at 17%). Furthermore, two-thirds of primary schools in Dumfries and Galloway (63%), Shetland (64%) and South Ayrshire (64%) reported the playing of organised rounders in their school grounds, compared to about a third of primary schools in Glasgow (33%), Renfrewshire (30%), South Lanarkshire (31%) and West Dunbartonshire (31%).
- *Tennis.* Only a small number of schools in the survey reported having tennis courts (21% of secondary schools) and this is reflected in the figures on organised sport in school grounds. Tennis in school grounds is almost non-existent in schools in a cluster of less affluent local authorities from west central Scotland, i.e. Glasgow (4%), North Lanarkshire (3%) and West Dunbartonshire (no schools), in addition to Eilean Siar (3%) and Dundee (3%). Participation is above average in the primary and secondary schools of Orkney (44% and 4 of 7 responding schools).
- *Football.* 11-a-side football is played on an organised basis in all schools in half of all local authorities in Scotland. At primary school level, variations in the extent to which 11-a-side football takes place in school grounds are more evident with higher than average rates found in Aberdeen City (66%, against the national primary school average of 18% of schools), Falkirk (44%), West Dunbartonshire (40%), Glasgow (36%) and East Dunbartonshire (32%), with less than one in ten primary schools reporting organised 11-a-side football in their school grounds in Argyll and Bute (9%), Clackmannanshire (9%), Highland (9%), Perth and Kinross (8%), Inverclyde (8%) and Eilean Siar (7%) and no responding primary schools in Stirling and South Ayrshire. It should, of course, be acknowledged that, for younger children, 11-a-side football is being phased out in favour of smaller-sided football.

Overall, no local authority falls far below the national average for the proportion of schools reporting organised 7-a-side football in their school grounds. Differences are evident for primary schools where participation ranges from 86% (primary schools in North Ayrshire) to 21% (primary schools in Eilean Siar). Other local authorities with an above average proportion of their primary schools reporting participation in organised 7-a-side football (51% of primary schools) are East Dunbartonshire (82%), Falkirk (76%), Clackmannanshire (74%) and West Lothian (71%), while below average rates are found for Argyll and Bute (28%), Highland (32%) and Shetland (33%). As for netball, it is found that Glasgow returns interesting results with above average rates of participation in secondary schools (86%), but below average rates of participation in primary schools (44%).

Participation in organised 5-a-side football in Scottish primary schools shows signs of an urban-rural divide with above average participation (34%) for a cluster of island and rural authorities, i.e. Eilean Siar (50%), Shetland (53%) Aberdeenshire (55%), Orkney (56%) and Dumfries and Galloway (66%), and lower than average participation rates in a cluster of more urbanised authorities from west central Scotland, i.e. East Ayrshire (11%), Glasgow (14%), Renfrewshire (15%), South Lanarkshire (19%) and Stirling (13%). Some deviations between primary and secondary school provision are evident with no responding schools from Eilean Siar reporting provision at secondary schools

(compared to 50% of primary schools) and both responding secondary schools from Stirling reporting provision (compared to 13% of primary schools).

SCHOOL GROUNDS AS A RESOURCE TO SUPPORT LEARNING IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND MOVEMENT

5.30 Chapter 7 provides detail on the responses relating to the value of school grounds as a learning resource, but for completeness the sports element is also reported here.

Usefulness of school grounds as a resource for sport

5.31 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* canvassed the opinion of survey respondents as to the usefulness of their school grounds for sport and physical activity, using a four point scale ranging from 'essential' through 'very useful' and 'quite useful' to 'not at all useful'.

5.32 There are significant differences variations by school type which are shown in Table 5.6. Seventy-two percent of respondents in secondary schools consider that their grounds are 'very useful' or 'essential' for sport and physical activity; while in primary and special schools the equivalent figures are 42% and 41% respectively.

	Primary	Secondary	Special
USEFULNESS AS A RESOURCE FOR SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY	%	%	%
Not at all useful	13	7	18
Quite useful	44	22	41
Very useful	27	26	32
Essential	15	46	9
<i>N</i>	1142	204	90

Base: all responding primary secondary and special schools. See also Table 7.1.

5.33 The likelihood of school grounds being valued as a sports resource reflects the number of sports pitches possessed and the use of school grounds in physical education classes. For example, 97% of those schools with on-site sports pitches value their grounds as a resource for sport, compared to 'only' 79% of those without on-site sports pitches. Similarly, whereas almost half of those schools which use their grounds 'all the time' or 'very often' in physical education consider that their grounds are "essential" as a sporting resource (49%), only 6% of those who use their grounds 'rarely' or 'not very often' in physical education are of the same opinion.

5.34 The likelihood of school grounds being valued as a sports resource is not associated with school size (school roll).

Quality of sports pitches as a problem

5.35 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* canvassed opinions on problems encountered in school grounds. Respondents were given a list of 14 problems and asked to identify those that were problems in their school grounds; thereafter, respondents were asked to state the main problem in their grounds – the quality of sports pitches was one issue that was assessed. The full results are discussed in Chapter 9,

Challenges in School Grounds. Results relating to quality of sports pitches are shown in Table 5.7.

	Primary	Secondary	Special
PROBLEM IDENTIFIED	%	%	%
Poor quality sports pitch	35	43	21
<i>N</i>	1137	205	89
MAIN PROBLEM (IF ANY)			
Poor quality sports pitch	14	26	7
<i>N</i>	979	163	72

Base: all responding primary secondary and special schools.

- 5.36 The poor quality of sports pitches is a particular problem in primary (35%) and secondary schools (43%), and a significant problem in special schools (21%). This problem was also highlighted by school head teachers in results from the evaluation of the *Active Primary Schools Pilot Programme* (sportscotland, 2004)
- 5.37 Poor quality of sports pitches emerged as the main problem for a quarter of secondary schools (26%).

Use of school grounds for physical education and movement

- 5.38 Physical development and movement is the descriptor which is used to describe learning in this area for both 3-5 and 5-14 level education in Scotland. Nine in ten of all types of school in Scotland report using their grounds for physical development and movement of pupils.
- 5.39 Respondents also provided information on the *extent* to which school grounds were used during teaching time for PE/Games and 'other learning', using a six point scale ranging from 'never' to 'all the time'. As shown in Table 5.8 almost all schools use school grounds for physical education.

	Nursery	Primary	Secondary
PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND MOVEMENT	%	%	%
Used	91	87	91
<i>N</i>	513	1150	204

Base: all responding nursery, primary and secondary schools.

- 5.40 However, differences across school types are evident when the frequency with which grounds are used for physical education is examined. Thus, whereas 74% of secondary schools use their grounds 'very often' or 'all the time', just over half of nursery schools use their grounds to the same degree (53%), as do only one in five special schools and primary schools (20% and 19%, respectively).

- 5.41 Nursery classes which are within primary or secondary schools are less likely than nursery schools to use their school grounds 'very often' or 'all the time' for the purpose of physical education and games (32%, compared to 53%).
- 5.42 Thirty-nine percent of schools with on-site sports pitches use their grounds in physical education classes, compared to 30% of those without sports pitches. Those reporting poor quality sports pitches are less likely to use grounds frequently than other schools: 25% of those reporting poor quality pitches use their grounds 'all the time' or 'very often' in physical education, compared to 38% of those for whom the quality of sports pitches is not seen as a problem.
- 5.43 In primary schools, 35% of those schools with between 36 and 99 pupils use their grounds 'all the time' or 'very often', compared to 9% of those with between 200 and 299 pupils. However, in secondary schools, higher use is more common in larger secondary schools: 84% of those with between 801 and 1000 pupils use their grounds 'all the time' or 'very often', compared to only 55% of those with under 200 pupils.

Participation in Safe Routes to Schools and Active Schools

- 5.44 Respondents were asked if their school was involved in *Safe Routes to Schools* and *Active Schools* and results are shown in Table 5.9. (Further information is provided on this theme in chapter seven, Table 7.4.)
- 5.45 Participation rates in projects that involving physical activity are higher in primary than secondary schools. In turn, the level of involvement is higher in secondary schools than in special schools.

	Primary	Secondary	Special
PROJECTS	%	%	%
Safe routes to school	31	22	7
Active School	17	13	10
<i>N</i>	1072	170	74

Base: all responding primary, secondary and special schools.

Developing Sports Provision

- 5.46 The survey indicated that twenty-seven percent of secondary schools had introduced an improvement project that focused on sport, compared with 15% of primary schools and 7% of nursery schools. See Table 5.10 below. (Table 11.2 gives full details of results relating to school grounds improvement projects.)

	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
	%	%	%	%
School grounds sport related project	7	15	27	15
<i>N</i>	504	1139	204	87

Base: all responding schools provision.

COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL GROUNDS FOR SPORT

- 5.47 Secondary school grounds are more used by the community for both organised and more informal sport activity than other types of school. This is expected as secondary schools generally have more sports pitch provision than other types of school.

	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
USE OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS	%	%	%	%
Community, organised sport	4	13	66	8
Community use, non-organised sport	7	19	31	11
N	501	1137	205	89

Base: all respondents.

ACTIVE PLAY

- 5.48 The evaluation of the *Active Primary School Programme* (sportscotland, 2004) suggests that 69% of pupils are 'active' at break-time and 71% are active at lunchtime. However, boys are more active than girls (86%, compared to 57% for break-time). These results – gender differences and slightly higher levels of activity at lunchtime for both boys and girls - are consistent with the *Physical Activity in Scottish Schoolchildren* project (Inchley and Currie, 2004).
- 5.49 It should be noted that non-active social interaction and friendship building is also an important school grounds activity, particularly for older children. Indeed, some forms of active school grounds play – the dominance of boys playing football – may be viewed as a problem of school grounds. (Swain, 2000).
- 5.50 Respondents to the *Scottish School Grounds Survey* were asked to estimate, on a typical day, how many of their pupils are involved in active play in school grounds. A five-point scale was used to assess the prevalence of active play, ranging from "all" through to "less than half" of all pupils. It should be noted that this data is based on perceptions of school grounds activity patterns rather than any more objective measure.
- 5.51 Three-quarters of all Scottish schools report either all (45%) or almost all (31%) of their pupils are engaged in active play during breaks, although, as shown in Table 5.12 below, there are substantial differences between types of school.
- 5.52 Fewer children are reported to be active in special schools, which may relate to mobility difficulties for some pupils. Most secondary schools reported that "less than half" their pupils are engaged in active play at break times (57%). This is consistent with findings from recent sportscotland research, which demonstrated that sporting participation reduces with age (sportscotland, 2002).

	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
ACTIVE PLAY AT BREAK (HOW MANY PUPILS)	%	%	%	%
All	46	49	2	33
Almost all	33	33	9	36
Most	13	13	18	8
About half	5	3	15	7
Less than half	4	2	57	16
<i>N</i>	474	1134	186	86

Base: all responding schools.

- 5.53 Variations across local authorities are less marked than variation across school sector types. Higher than average rates of all children in school grounds involved in active play at break time were reported for Argyll and Bute (69% of all responding schools). Lower than average rates of all children in school grounds involved in active play at break time are found in Glasgow (30%), West Lothian (27%), East Renfrewshire (21%) and Midlothian (none of the 24 responding schools).
- 5.54 Differences in the proportion of children taking part in active play at break times are evident between local authority areas for both nursery and primary schools and are described below. No such differences are apparent for secondary schools.
- 5.55 For nursery schools there appears to be an urban/rural divide with higher proportions of schools from rural local authorities reporting that all of their children were engaged in active play in school grounds. Compared to a nursery school average of 45%, the proportion of schools in which all children are involved in active play in the school grounds is higher in Highlands (74%), Dumfries and Galloway (75%), Argyll and Bute, Moray and Scottish Borders (all 83%). Many local authorities from the Central Belt have lower than average rates: Midlothian (all eight responding providers of nursery level education), West Lothian (12%), Inverclyde (25%) and Glasgow (26%).
- 5.56 For primary schools, the average percentage of schools where all children are engaged in active school grounds play is 49%. Higher than average results are found in Argyll and Bute (72%), South Ayrshire (71%), Eilean Siar (64%) and Scottish Borders (62%). Lower levels of active school grounds play are found in Midlothian (none of the eleven responding primary schools), East Renfrewshire (29%), Edinburgh (33%), North Ayrshire (33%), East Lothian (36%) and Glasgow (37%).
- 5.57 Table 5.13 relates the levels of active play to playground features, area types and school roll (for primary schools).
- 5.58 Greater diversity in school grounds features and area types is associated with higher levels of active play in school grounds. For example, the proportion of pupils engaged in active play at break times ranges from 81% of schools with eight or more features to 69% of those schools with fewer than five features.
- 5.59 Similarly, those schools with more area types tend to have more children active at break times.

TABLE 5.13 ACTIVE PLAY, BY VARIOUS ASSOCIATED FACTORS			
	Pupils engaged in active play		
	'Almost all'	Not 'almost all'	N
	%	%	
Have Permanent Playground Markings			
Yes	80	20	1079
No	66	14	791
Have Temporary Playground Markings			
Yes	81	19	350
No	72	28	1520
Have Fixed Play Equipment			
Yes	81	19	505
No	71	29	1365
Have Mobile Play Equipment			
Yes	81	19	897
No	66	34	973
Number of Features			
Low (0-4)	69	31	590
Medium (5-7)	71	29	650
High (8 or more)	81	19	630
Number of Area Types			
Low (0-3)	72	28	391
Medium (4-6)	71	29	911
High (7 or more)	79	21	571
School Roll, Primary School			
1-35	96	4	176
36-99	85	15	239
100-199	82	18	239
200-299	75	25	232
300 or more	78	22	218
Base: all respondents. School roll data from Scottish Executive (2003)			

- 5.60 Smaller (defined by school roll) schools at both primary and secondary school level are much more likely to report that 'almost all' of their pupils are engaged in active play at break times. Differences are particularly marked in secondary schools (not included in table 5.13) where 'almost all' pupils engaged in active play was reported in 41% of the smallest secondary schools (200 or fewer pupils), compared to 9% of the largest secondary schools (over 1000 pupils).
- 5.61 Although the proportion of pupils perceived to be engaged in active play is not associated to the levels of sports pitch ownership, there is an association between active play and provision of play activities: higher levels of provision of permanent playground markings, temporary playground markings, mobile play equipment and

fixed play equipment are each associated with higher levels of active play in school grounds.

SUMMARY: PROVISION FOR SPORTS IN SCHOOL GROUNDS

- 5.62 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* provides an evidence base to inform understanding of sport in Scottish schools. The importance of this issue has heightened in recent years as the Scottish Executive has accorded an important role to schools (and their grounds) in the drive to increase levels of physical activity among children and young people.
- 5.63 Provision for sports is commonplace in secondary schools in Scotland with the majority possessing grass sports pitches. Athletics, football, hockey and rugby are widely played on an organised basis in Scotland's secondary school grounds. Almost half of primary schools have grass sports pitches. The most common sports played on an organised basis in primary schools are small-sided football, netball, rounders and athletics.
- 5.64 The survey confirms that there are marked variations in the provision of sports pitches and the number of sports practised in school grounds across age-stages (more pitches and more sports in schools for older children). For example, while 90% of secondary schools have on-site sports pitches, these feature in only 50% of primary schools.
- 5.65 There is also a strong regional character for some types of pitch (blaes/mineral is most prevalent in west central Scotland) and sports (rugby is played more frequently in the Scottish Borders).
- 5.66 Although there is more provision for sporting activity in secondary schools, there are fewer pupils per pitch in primary schools. Furthermore, primary schools tend to have a higher proportion of their pupils engaged in active play during break times than in secondary schools.
- 5.67 Secondary schools are more likely than primary schools to report that their grounds are very important for sport. However, 40% of secondary schools reported problems with the quality of their sports pitches and 25% have taken steps to improve provision for sports through school grounds project development work.

6

EXTRA-CURRICULAR USE OF SCHOOL GROUNDS

... Future plans include a sensory garden to bring in the local community and an open-air amphitheatre for outdoor performances.

(David Meek [Headmaster, Queen Anne High School, Dunfermline], 2004, pp. 4-5)

[teenagers] need the time, space and freedom associated with play for younger age groups.

(Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 2004, p.8 emphasis added)

- 6.01 One of the issues considered in the previous chapter, was the use of school grounds for the playing of sport outside teaching hours. This chapter extends understanding of how school grounds are used outside teaching hours by considering break times during the school day, formal pre- and after-school activity, and the full breadth of formal and informal uses to which grounds are put outside these hours.

PRE- AND POST- SCHOOL USE FOR CLUBS AND CHILDCARE

- 6.02 Supporting parents to 'return to work' is a key element of the Scottish Executive's social inclusion strategy. Reducing the proportion of children living in workless households and increasing the employment rates of groups such as lone parents are two of the 'social justice milestone indicators' that are currently used to measure the success of the work of the Scottish Executive (Scottish Executive, 2003e). Achieving these targets involves providing childcare facilities and provision for the care of school children after- and before-school hours.
- 6.03 More specifically, through the Scottish Executive's framework for the development of out of school care (Scottish Executive, 2003f, p.104), local authorities and local childcare partnerships are obliged to consider the provision of an after school care club in every school. Casey (2003a, p.20) reported that almost a fifth of primary schools in Scotland had such a club in 2003 (18%).
- 6.04 Furthermore, *Active Schools* are to be encouraged to support organised activities, some of which will be delivered through after school activities and after school care (**sportscotland**, 2003a). More generally, **sportscotland** is seeking to establish close working links between those responsible for *Active Schools* and *Active Communities*

(sportscotland, 2003a, p.2), which may also imply increased use of school grounds outside timetabled hours.

- 6.05 Thus, demand is emerging from several areas for after-school provision and for extra-curricular use of school grounds.
- 6.06 In the *Scottish School Grounds Survey* data was collected on the start time of "breakfast clubs" or before-school clubs and the end time of after-school clubs. When set against the start and finish times of the formal school day, this provides information on whether or not schools had such clubs and, where applicable, the duration of clubs. The type of before and after-school activity and the profile of participant pupils are not considered. It is likely that the after-school clubs include a variety of activities which are not child-care related, particularly at secondary and special schools.
- 6.07 At the time of the survey the majority of schools in Scotland had an after-school club (60%), with a minority having a before-school club (20%). Clubs are most common in secondary schools (e.g. at the time of the survey, 81% had after-school clubs and 28% had before-school clubs). Clubs are least widespread in special schools, only a third had an after-school club (33%) and only 17% had a before-school club (Table 6.1).

	Primary	Secondary	Special
BEFORE SCHOOL	%	%	%
Have club	19	28	17
None	81	72	83
<i>N</i>	1129	200	78
AFTER SCHOOL			
Have club	58	81	33
None	42	19	67
<i>N</i>	1129	200	78

Base: all primary secondary and special schools.

- 6.08 The results suggest potential for significantly higher levels of use of school grounds outside school hours than that indicated by Casey (2003a) in her narrower review of provision of after-school clubs with a childcare remit.

SCHOOL BREAKS

- 6.09 Casey (2003a, p.3) starts her review of school grounds research by remarking that "it seems logical to begin ... with the school grounds' most obvious current use – playtime or break time".
- 6.10 Blatchford's work in England provides insights into the changing nature of break time, highlighting the contraction of break time over the five year period prior to 1995 through a shortening of the lunch break and the withdrawal of an afternoon break (Blatchford, 1998).
- 6.11 Morning break time is a universal feature of school life in primary and secondary schools in Scotland (Table 6.2). However, a significant minority of special schools do not have a morning break time – or at least a dedicated time set aside as break time.

	Primary	Secondary	Special
HAVE BREAK	%	%	%
Morning	100	100	91
Afternoon	11	5	7
<i>N</i>	1138	195	76

Base: all responding primary, secondary and special schools

6.12 On the other hand, only a minority of schools have a scheduled afternoon break; 11% of primary schools and 5% of secondary schools (5%).

6.13 Nursery schools can be set apart from other types of schools on two grounds; these schools are much less likely to have a morning break, but are much more likely to have an afternoon break. Although this survey did not collect information on age groups the findings for nurseries may relate to age groups catered for, eg a tendency to have a 3-4 age group in the morning and 4-5 age group in the afternoon.

Morning playtime

6.14 The vast majority of morning breaks are between 15 and 20 minutes in duration (Table 6.3). Notably, a minority of secondary schools have a morning break of only up to 10 minutes (5%) and a significant minority of special schools have a morning break of 30 minutes or more (14%).

	Primary	Secondary	Special
DURATION OF MORNING BREAK (MINUTES)	%	%	%
5	*	1	0
10	1	4	1
15	75	78	59
20	19	16	25
25	1	1	0
30	3	0	14
<i>N</i>	1109	188	69

Base: all responding primary, secondary and special schools.
* = less than 1%

Lunchtime

6.15 The majority of schools have a lunch break of either 45 minutes or 60 minutes in duration. Primary schools are more likely to have lunch breaks that are either shorter or longer than the norm; 14% of primary schools have a lunch break that is less than 45 minutes in duration and a 16% have a lunch break that is more than an hour long.

	Primary	Secondary	Special
DURATION OF LUNCH BREAK (MINUTES)	%	%	%
Less than 45	14	4	8
45	29	41	23
50	6	9	26
55	5	4	12
60	30	35	27
More than 60	16	8	5
<i>N</i>	1133	199	77

Base: all responding primary secondary and special schools

Afternoon break

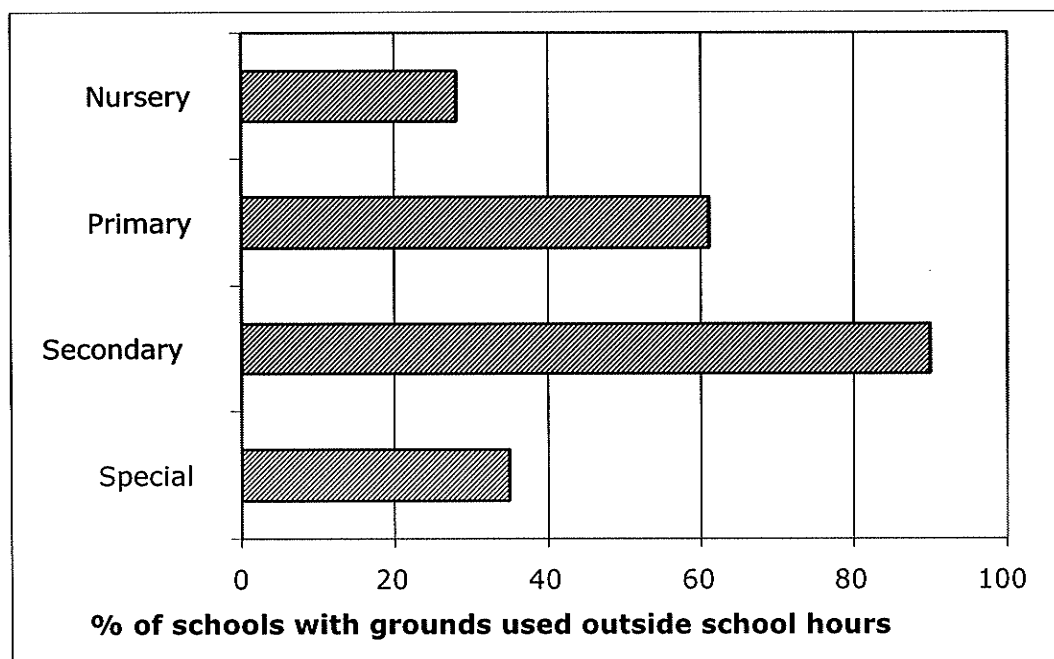
6.16 The vast majority of the 123 primary schools that reported having an afternoon break had a break of either 10 (29%) or 15 minutes (65%) duration. As shown above only 7% of secondary schools reported having an afternoon break.

USERS OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS

Overview

6.17 Outside school hours, school grounds may be used informally (e.g. as a short-cut through the neighbourhood) and formally (by schools or community groups). Indeed, the use of school grounds by the wider community is a pre-requisite of many developments funded through the New Opportunities Fund (now the Big Lottery Fund) and is being encouraged by the Scottish Executive through its physical activity strategy (Scottish Executive, 2003d).

FIGURE 6.1 USE OF SCHOOL GROUNDS OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS, BY SCHOOL TYPE



6.18 Ninety per cent of secondary school grounds are used outside school hours, compared to 61% of primary school grounds, 35% of special school grounds and 28% nursery school grounds.

Uses

6.19 The survey showed that there are substantial differences between types of school in the way they are used outside school hours as illustrated in Table 6.5. On average, school grounds are used outside school hours for two to three purposes per school and on the whole, secondary school grounds tend to be much more likely to be used than the grounds of other schools.

	Nursery	Primary	Secondary	Special
NATURE OF USE	%	%	%	%
School, curricular ¹	2	10	34	2
School, extra-curricular	3	36	80	11
After-school clubs	8	33	59	12
All school (curricular + non curricular)	11	48	83	18
Community, organised sport	4	13	66	8
Community, organised group (B.B.s etc)	4	3	20	5
All organised community (sport + groups)	7	16	69	9
Community use, non-organised sport	7	19	31	11
Community use, space to hang-out	13	26	23	15
Public right of way	4	11	19	7
Short-cut	4	18	31	11
All informal community	17	40	55	20
All community (informal + organised)	20	45	79	23
Other	1	2	2	3
<i>N</i>	<i>501</i>	<i>1137</i>	<i>205</i>	<i>89</i>

Base: all responding schools.
 1 Curricular activity outside school hours refers to activities such as monitoring weather stations (Geography) or portfolio work under light conditions that would not be encountered during school hours (Art).
 After school clubs may also contain some "school, extra curricular" and "community organised"

6.20 School-led activity – for curricular and extra-curricular activity – is most characteristic of secondary school grounds. For example, 80% of secondary schools, 36% of primary schools, 11% of special schools and 3% of nursery schools reported the use of their grounds for extra-curricular activity.

6.21 The use of school grounds by after-school clubs is most common in secondary schools (59%), compared to primary schools (33%), special schools (12%) and nursery schools (8%)

6.22 Organised community activity, such as sport and organised groups, is also most likely to take place in secondary school grounds. For example, organised sport is

reported to take place in 66% of secondary schools, 8% of special schools, 13% of primary schools and 4% of nursery schools

- 6.23 Primary school grounds are as likely as secondary school grounds to be used as a place for people to 'hang out' in (26% of primary schools and 23% of secondary schools).

SUMMARY

- 6.24 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* demonstrates that school grounds are used at different times outside school teaching hours, i.e. breaks during the school day, activities that 'wrap-around' the school day (formal pre- and after-school activity), and outside school opening hours (a range of formal and informal activities by the school and the wider community at evenings, weekends and holidays).
- 6.25 The school day is punctuated by morning break time and lunchtime. A minority of schools also timetable an afternoon break. Morning breaks tend to be either 15 or 20 minutes in duration and the majority of lunch breaks are either 45 or 60 minutes in duration (a minority of schools also timetable an afternoon break).
- 6.26 At the time of the survey, most schools had after-school clubs and a substantial minority had pre-school clubs. However, given Scottish Executive support and encouragement for such provision, it is likely that this snapshot is from a trend of extending provision.
- 6.27 Secondary school grounds are more widely used than primary schools by the local community outside school hours. The majority of secondary school grounds are used by schools for extra-curricular activity, by after-school clubs and by the local community for organised sport. They are also used, to a lesser extent, as a short cut, as a site for non-organised sport, for 'curricular' activity that takes place outside school hours and for pre-school clubs.

7

SCHOOLS GROUNDS AS A LEARNING RESOURCE

We cannot expect all schools to be transformed in such a way as to provide ... environmental learning opportunities. Yet, if educators recognised school grounds as increasingly important sites for environmental learning, then no matter how limited the potential of the school grounds, they would make decisions that recognise their value as an integral dimension of children's learning.

(Tranter and Malone, 2004, pp.153-154)

- 7.01 Most people do not think of school grounds as a learning resource. Titman (1994, p.5) argues that the utilisation of school grounds to support the formal and informal curriculum waned from the 1960s.
- 7.02 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* examines the role of schools grounds as a learning resource by collecting information on their perceived utility for curriculum learning, sport and play; whether or not they are used to support learning in specific curriculum fields; the frequency with which they are used for physical education/games and 'other' learning; and school participation in educational projects which would be expected to use school grounds.

PERCEIVED UTILITY AS A RESOURCE FOR LEARNING

- 7.03 Respondents to the survey were asked to say how useful they considered their school grounds to be as a resource for curriculum learning, sport and play. The results are shown in Table 7.1.

TABLE 7.1 USEFULNESS OF SCHOOL GROUNDS AS A RESOURCE FOR LEARNING, BY SCHOOL TYPE				
	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
USEFULNESS FOR CURRICULUM LEARNING	%	%	%	%
Not at all useful	10	15	13	16
Quite useful	27	60	55	46
Very useful	29	18	18	26
Essential	34	7	14	12
<i>N</i>	499	1140	197	89
USEFULNESS FOR SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY				
Not at all useful	11	13	7	18
Quite useful	22	44	22	41
Very useful	31	27	26	32
Essential	35	15	46	9
<i>N</i>	500	1142	204	90
USEFULNESS FOR PLAY				
Not at all useful	9	6	14	10
Quite useful	17	44	42	35
Very useful	30	27	25	32
Essential	44	23	20	24
<i>N</i>	500	1142	199	89

Base: all respondents.

Curriculum Learning Resource

- 7.04 The survey results, summarised in Table 7.1, showed that there were wide differences across school sectors.
- 7.05 Special schools value school grounds as a curriculum learning resource more than primary and secondary schools, but less than nursery schools. Thus, 63% of nursery schools, 38% of special schools, 32% of secondary schools and 25% of primary schools consider their grounds to be 'very useful' or 'essential' for curriculum learning.
- 7.06 For both nursery and special education, grounds are more likely to be considered useful in stand-alone schools. For example, while 63% of nursery schools have grounds which are considered to be 'very useful' or 'essential' for curriculum learning, this opinion was only held by 39% of those responding on behalf of nursery classes in primary and secondary schools. This trend is consistent with that reported in the Early Years Education survey of 2003 (Early Years Education, 2005).
- 7.07 Grounds that have a wider array of area types and features are more likely to be valued as a curriculum learning resource (Table 7.2). For example, while almost all schools with a high number of area types (seven or more area types) value their grounds as a curriculum learning resource (98%), this falls to 75% for those schools with a low number of area types (less than four area types).

TABLE 7.2 VALUE OF GROUNDS AS A CURRICULUM LEARNING RESOURCE, BY NUMBER OF AREA TYPES POSSESSED			
	Number of Area Types		
	Low	Medium	High
VALUE AS A CURRICULUM LEARNING RESOURCE	%	%	%
'Very useful' or 'essential'	75	89	98
'Quite useful' or 'not at all useful'	25	11	2
<i>N</i>	631	1011	592
Base: all responding schools, full and insert questionnaires. Low = less than 4 area types, medium = 4 to 6 area types (inclusive), high = 7 or more area types.			

7.08 There was no variation in the likelihood of grounds being valued as a learning resource by size of school (defined by school roll). The use of school grounds to support curriculum learning in different curriculum areas is reported later in this report (see Table 7.4).

Resource for Sport and Physical Activity

7.09 The extent to which school grounds are valued as a resource for sport and physical activity varied according to school type, diversity of grounds and patterns of use, but was not related to school roll.

7.10 Secondary school grounds are seen as very important for sport and physical activity; with 72% of respondents indicating that their grounds are 'very useful' or 'essential' for this purpose. The equivalent figure for nursery schools is 66%, with 42% of primary schools and 41% of special schools considering their grounds to be 'very useful' or 'essential' for sport and physical activity.

7.11 Differences are also evident between stand-alone and encapsulated providers for nursery level and special education. Nursery class grounds are less valued than nursery school grounds: Forty-three percent of nursery classes are perceived to be 'very useful' or 'essential' for this purpose compared to 66% of nursery schools. However 18% of special schools have grounds which are considered to be "not at all useful" for sports/physical activity, compared with 9% of SEN units.

7.12 Schools which used their grounds for physical education and schools grounds in which more organised sports are played are, predictably, more likely to be valued as a resource for sport and physical activity. In particular, the more often grounds are used in physical education, the more highly they are valued as a resource for sport and physical activity as shown in Table 7.3.

	Not used	Low	Med	High
Value as a resource for sport and physical activity	%	%	%	%
'Very useful' or 'essential'	38	75	93	98
'Quite useful' or 'not at all useful'	62	25	7	2
<i>N</i>	89	655	982	826

Base: all responding to this question, data from both insert and full questionnaires.
 Low = 'never' or 'rarely used', Medium = 'not very often' or 'quite often' used, High= 'very often' or all the time'.

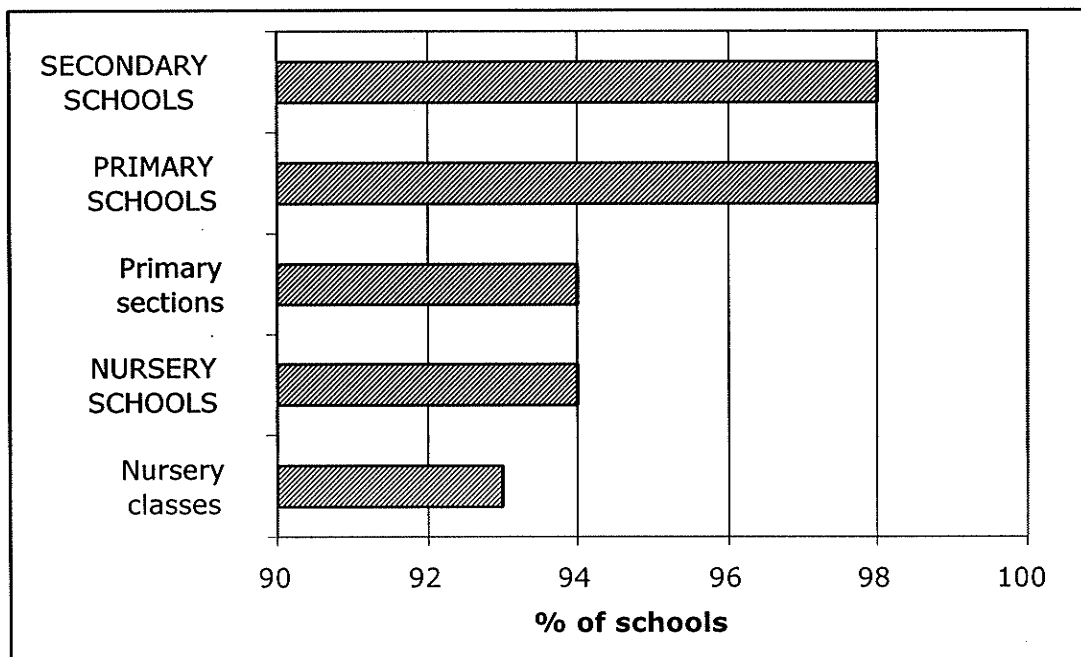
Play Resource

- 7.13 A wide range of opinion is expressed on the usefulness of school grounds as a play resource. Twenty six percent of respondents consider them to be 'essential'; 29%, 'very useful', 37% 'quite useful, and 8% consider their school grounds to be 'not at all useful'.
- 7.14 The extent to which school grounds were valued as a play resource varied according to school type, diversity of grounds and presence of play features as described below. The perceived value of school grounds as a play resource was not associated with school size.
- 7.15 Analysis by school type shows that a higher proportion of respondents in nursery schools value their school grounds as a play resource (see Table 7.1); 74% perceive them to be 'very useful' or 'essential' for this purpose (compared to, for example, 50% of respondents in primary schools).
- 7.16 For nursery, primary and special schools, encapsulated providers are much less likely than stand-alone providers to value their school grounds as a play resource; thus, the proportions which perceive their grounds to be 'very useful' or 'essential' for play are 74% and 49% for nursery schools and nursery classes, respectively, and 50% and 35% for stand-alone and encapsulated primary schools. However, in contrast, twice as many special schools had grounds that are considered to be 'not at all' useful as play resource, 10%, compared to 5% of SEN units in mainstream schools.
- 7.17 School grounds that have a wider array of area types and features are more likely to be valued as a resource for play. For example, whereas 40% of schools with a high number of area types (seven or more) consider that their grounds are 'essential' as a play and leisure resource, this falls to 19% for those schools with a low number of area types (three or less).
- 7.18 Predictably, possession of play features – sandpit, temporary playground markings, fixed play equipment and mobile play equipment – is associated with an increased likelihood of grounds being valued as a play resource.

USE OF SCHOOL GROUNDS BY CURRICULUM FIELD

- 7.19 The Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum (1999) and Learning and Teaching Scotland (2000) have outlined the broad structure of the curriculum for learning in Scottish schools for children aged from 3 to 14. Seven broad domains of learning are specified, i.e. emotional, personal and social development, communication and language, knowledge and understanding of the world, environmental studies, physical development and movement, expressive and aesthetic development and ICT. Although the same broad themes are covered for the education of 3-5 year olds and 5-14 year olds, the way in which these are engaged varies across age stages.
- 7.20 The potential value of school grounds to learning is made explicit for the early years (3-5 year olds), but is largely implicit in discussion of the curriculum needs of older children (5-14 year olds).
- 7.21 The specification of curriculum learning needs for 5 to 14 year olds cuts across the divide of primary schools and secondary schools in Scotland. Thus, 5-14 encompasses the whole of primary-level education and the first two years of secondary-level education.
- 7.22 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* asked respondents to state whether or not their school grounds were used to support learning for the specific curriculum fields that pertained to their sector. Results are shown in Table 7.4.
- 7.23 Almost all schools of each school age stage reported that their grounds are used for curriculum learning (Figure 7.1). However, lower levels of use were reported for primary sections that shared grounds with secondary schools (94%), compared to stand-alone primary schools (98%).

FIGURE 7.1 USE OF SCHOOL GROUNDS TO SUPPORT CURRICULUM LEARNING, BY SCHOOL TYPE



Data is drawn from full and insert questionnaires.

Emotional, personal and social development

- 7.24 Emotional, personal and social development is measured at the aggregate level for nursery level education, whereas for the 5-14 stages it is divided into 'religious and moral education' and 'personal and social development' (PSD hereafter).
- 7.25 There are marked differences between school type with regard to the usefulness of school grounds for the purposes of learning in emotional, personal and social development. Use declines with age stage with 87% of nursery schools using their school grounds for this purpose, compared to 71% of primary schools (PSD) and only 22% of secondary schools (PSD) (see Table 7.4).
- 7.26 School grounds are used in a small number of schools for the purpose of religious and moral education (8% of primary schools and 2% of secondary schools).
- 7.27 Use of grounds is slightly lower for encapsulated providers; for example, 76% of nursery classes (within primary or secondary schools) use their grounds for the purposes of learning in emotional, personal and social development, compared to 87% of nursery schools.

Communication and language

- 7.28 Communication and language for nursery level education is equivalent to 'language' at the 5-14 stage. As was found for emotional, personal and social development, there are marked differences between types of schools with regard to the usefulness of school grounds for the purposes of learning in communication and language. Use also declines with age stage with 85% of nursery schools using their school grounds for this purpose, compared to 21% of primary schools (language) and only 1% of secondary schools (language) (Table 7.4 below).
- 7.29 Use of grounds is slightly lower for encapsulated providers of nursery level education; for example, 67% of nursery classes (in primary or secondary schools) utilise their grounds for the purposes of learning in communication and language, compared to 85% of nursery schools.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World / Mathematics

- 7.30 At nursery level, knowledge and understanding of the world encompasses mathematics, scientific and technological studies. Eighty-eight percent of nursery schools and 74% of nursery classes in primary schools are reported to use their school grounds to support learning in this area.
- 7.31 Once more, use declines with age stage for mathematics; whereas 52% of primary schools use their grounds for learning in this field, this falls to only 15% for secondary schools (Table 7.4).

Environmental, Scientific and Technological Studies

- 7.32 Environmental studies is divided into three at primary level education, i.e. science, social studies and technological studies. Each of these areas has a parallel with a related field in secondary level education, i.e. 'scientific studies', 'social and environmental studies' and 'technological studies', respectively.
- 7.33 For 'science' studies the pattern of response is consistent with that for the aforementioned learning fields, i.e. greater use is made of school grounds for the younger age group. Thus, 83% of primary schools use their grounds for science, compared to 4% of secondary schools (Table 7.4).
- 7.34 On the other hand, 30% of primary schools use their grounds for 'social/environmental' studies, compared to 55% of secondary schools and 20% of

primary schools use their grounds for 'technological/environmental' studies, compared to 72% of secondary schools (Table 7.4).

- 7.35 Patterns of use are similar for providers of primary level education (regardless of whether stand-alone or encapsulated).

	Nursery	Primary	Secondary
EMOTIONAL, PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT	%	%	%
Emotional, personal and social development	87		
Religious and moral education		8	2
Personal and social development		71	22
LANGUAGE			
Communication and language	85		
Language		21	1
MATHEMATICS			
Knowledge and understanding of the world	88		
Mathematics		52	15
ENVIRONMENT, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY			
Knowledge and understanding of the world	88		
Environmental studies, science		83	
Environmental studies, social studies		30	
Environmental studies, technological studies		20	
Scientific studies			4
Technological studies			72
EXPRESSIVE ARTS			
Expressive and aesthetic development	78		41
Expressive arts, drama		14	
Expressive arts, art and design		36	
Expressive arts, music		4	
PHYSICAL EDUCATION			
Physical development and movement	91	87	91
ICT			
ICT		3	1
	<i>N</i>	<i>513</i>	<i>1150</i>
		<i>204</i>	

Base: all respondents.

Expressive and Aesthetic Development

- 7.36 Expressive and aesthetic development is measured at the aggregate level for nursery level and secondary level education, whereas for primary level education it is divided into 'drama', 'art and design' and 'music'.

- 7.37 Use of school grounds for learning in expressive and aesthetic development is highest for nursery schools (Table 7.4); 78% use their grounds to support such learning, compared to 41% of secondary schools and 14%, 36% and 4% of primary schools (for drama, arts and music, respectively).
- 7.38 Encapsulated providers of education tend to report lower use of school grounds to support learning in expressive and aesthetic development. For example, 'only' 55% of nursery classes in primary or secondary schools use their grounds in this way, compared to 78% of stand-alone nursery schools.

Physical Development and Movement

- 7.39 Physical development and movement is the descriptor which is used to describe learning in this area for both 3-5 and 5-14 level education in Scotland. Nine in ten of all types of school in Scotland report using their grounds for physical development and movement of pupils.
- 7.40 More detail on the use of school grounds to support physical education is provided below.

ICT

- 7.41 Information and communications technology only pertains to 5-14 level education. Unsurprisingly, very few schools report that they use their school grounds for ICT education (3% of primary and 1% of secondary schools) (Table 7.4 above).

Significance of School Roll

- 7.42 Although the size of secondary schools (school roll) does not have a bearing on whether school grounds are used for learning in curriculum fields, size of school is consistently associated with use rates for primary schools. For every curriculum field other than physical education, use of school grounds to support learning is highest in the smallest schools (Table 7.5).

	School Roll				
	1-35	35-99	100-99	200-99	300+
USE GROUNDS TO SUPPORT LEARNING	%	%	%	%	%
Religious and moral education	11	14	9	3	3
Personal and social development	74	76	72	66	66
Mathematics	62	53	50	52	47
Language	34	26	21	17	9
Environment, science	90	86	81	80	77
Environment, social	35	37	27	32	21
Environment, technology	30	27	18	15	14
Drama	17	20	9	13	11
Art and design	48	40	31	35	28
Music	9	7	3	1	1
ICT	4	5	3	1	1

Base: all respondents. N=1119. Data for school roll is from Scottish Executive (2003). Respondents were only asked to report on use of school grounds for those curriculum fields that pertained to their age stage.

FREQUENCY WITH WHICH SCHOOL GROUNDS ARE USED

7.43 The previous theme considered the use of school grounds to support different domains of learning. The survey also invited respondents to provide information on the extent to which school grounds were used during teaching time. This complements data on use of grounds by curriculum theme and together they provide a more detailed picture of the value of grounds in learning. Respondents were asked to quantify the use of their school grounds for teaching time learning in PE/games and 'all other fields' and to use a six point scale ranging from 'never' to 'all the time' See table 7.6 below.

	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND GAMES	%	%	%	%
Never	5	2	4	7
Rarely	4	9	4	13
Not very often	8	23	3	23
Quite often	31	47	16	38
Very often	34	17	35	18
All the time	19	2	39	2
<i>N</i>	506	1148	206	88
LEARNING OTHER THAN P.E. AND GAMES	%	%	%	%
Never	6	2	6	3
Rarely	6	18	26	19
Not very often	11	38	38	25
Quite often	36	37	26	46
Very often	29	4	3	6
All the time	12	*	1	1
<i>N</i>	500	1144	199	89

Base: all respondents to questions. * = less than 1%.

Physical Education and Games

7.44 The modal response across school types was that school grounds are used 'quite often' to support curriculum teaching in physical education and games (39%); a further third reported using school grounds 'very often' or 'all the time' (33%).

7.45 However, these aggregate figures disguise marked variation across school types (see Table 7.6 above). Thus, while 74% of secondary schools use their grounds 'very often' or 'all the time', 53% of nursery schools, 20% of special schools and 19% of primary schools use their grounds to the same degree.

7.46 Nursery classes in primary or secondary schools are less likely than nursery schools to use their school grounds 'very often' or 'all the time' for the purposes of physical education and games (32%, compared to 53%).

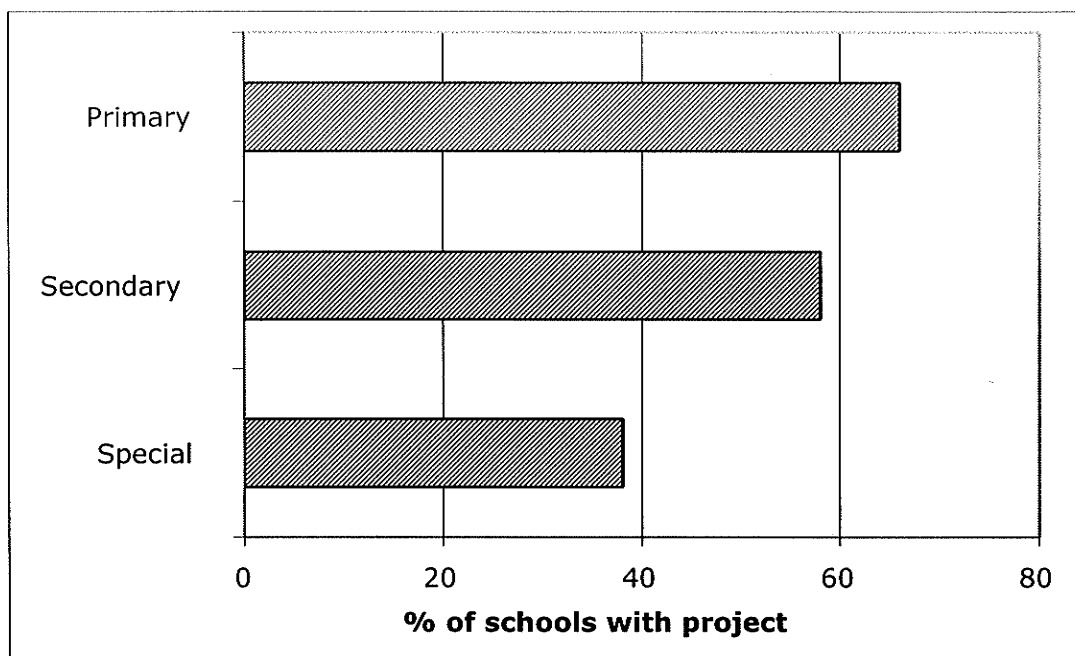
Frequency of use for Areas other than Physical Education

- 7.47 School grounds are used less frequently to support learning in areas other than physical education (Table 7.6); more than half as many use their grounds 'very often' or 'all the time' for 'other' learning (15% for other purposes and 33% for physical education and games).
- 7.48 The nursery sector is the only one in which 'other' learning in the school grounds is reported with a significant frequency; 41% of nursery schools and 21% of nursery classes in primary schools reported that their grounds are used 'very often' or 'all the time' for the purposes of learning other than physical education or games.

PROJECTS

- 7.49 In recent years, the range of nation-wide initiatives to which schools can subscribe has grown. Some of these schemes are driven by pressure groups (such as Sustrans' *Safe Routes for Schools* campaign), others are organised with private sector support (such as the Coca Cola Foundation sponsored *Eco-Schools* initiative), while others are integral part of government initiatives to improve education (such as the *Health Promoting Schools* campaign).
- 7.50 Respondents were asked with which, if any, of the following three projects their schools were involved: *Safe Routes to Schools*, *Eco-schools* and *Active Schools*. Responses emerging under "other" for this question included sport, health promoting school and grounds for learning project.
- 7.51 Two-thirds of schools surveyed in the *Scottish Schools Ground Survey* were reported to have 'signed up' to a project. Almost two-thirds of schools participated in one project, with almost one quarter of schools being involved in more than one project.
- 7.52 There were significant differences in project participation across age-stages and school type as shown in Figure 7.2. The majority of special schools are not participating in projects (62%). Two-fifths of primary schools and secondary schools participated in one project. Multiple project participation (at least two projects) was reported for a quarter of primary schools, 15% of secondary schools and 8% of special schools.

FIGURE 7.2 INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS TO USE GROUNDS, BY SCHOOL TYPE



Base: primary, secondary and special school respondents to question. Nursery schools were not surveyed on school grounds projects. There was a high non-response rate to this question (9%).

7.53 Mainstream schools are more likely to take part in educational projects such as *Eco-schools* (Table 7.7 below). Participation rates are broadly comparable between primary and secondary schools, although primary schools are more likely than secondary schools to participate in some types of project, e.g. 31% report being part of a *Safe Routes to Schools* project, compared to 22% of secondary schools.

	Primary	Secondary	Special
PROJECTS WITH WHICH INVOLVED	%	%	%
Safe routes to school	31	22	7
Eco-School	33	33	27
Active School	17	13	10
Other	14	6	4
N	1072	170	74

Base: all respondents in primary, secondary and special schools. Nursery schools were not asked this question.

7.54 For primary schools, participation in *Safe Routes to Schools* and *Active Primary Schools* is associated with school size, with higher rates of participation being characteristic of the largest primary schools. For example, 37% of those primary schools with at least 300 pupils report having a *Safe Routes to Schools* project, compared to only 12% of primary schools with fewer than 36 pupils.

7.55 Participation in *Eco-Schools* is associated with a broad range of school grounds features. Schools which are involved in *Eco-Schools* are more likely to have nature-related school grounds features such as compost bins (59% of schools with compost heaps are *Eco-Schools*, compared to only 29% of those schools without compost heaps). However the direction of causation is not indicated by the survey results.

- 7.56 One cautionary note from Scott Wilson Consultants (2001) should be sounded based on their evaluation of Scottish National Heritage's *Schools Grounds Grant Scheme 1995-2000*. As a result of a survey (370 returns, with 60% response rate), consultation and site visits, they concluded that although the majority of schemes made a difference to schools, particularly for the hidden curriculum, wildlife benefits were less well defined.

SUMMARY

- 7.57 School grounds are valued and used as a resource for play, sport and curriculum learning. However, significant differences are evident which inform understanding of the nature of this resource.
- 7.58 In nursery level education school grounds are seen as particularly important as a learning resource and are used in support of a wide range of curriculum areas. Secondary schools tend to use grounds more frequently than other schools for physical education and games, and tend to value grounds highly as a resource for sport.
- 7.59 Nursery schools tend to use grounds more often, and value them more highly, than nursery classes within primary schools.
- 7.60 The perceived value of grounds as a learning resource is closely associated with the character of the grounds themselves. Thus, more diverse grounds are more highly valued for curriculum learning, grounds in which sport is played more frequently are more highly valued for sport and those grounds with more play equipment are more highly valued for play. Similarly, schools with a wider array of 'ecological' elements are more likely to be *Eco-Schools*.
- 7.61 Although higher levels of provision are associated with more positive evaluations of school grounds as a resource for learning, play and sport, it is significant to note that the smaller the primary school, the more likely its grounds are to be used for *each* of the 5-14 curriculum learning fields specified for that age group.

REGULATION AND MONITORING IN SCHOOL GROUNDS

Children's understanding of place is best developed from sensory-rich experiences. Children can only have [sensory-rich] experiences when they also have the freedom to actively explore their surroundings. In many schools, interesting parts of the school grounds are declared out of bounds for the children, thus reducing children's sense of place.

(Tranter and Malone, 2004, p.152)

- 8.01 The extent to which children's use of school grounds is controlled and restricted was considered in terms of whether or not schools had a behaviour code; whether or not school grounds were segregated into areas for particular groups of pupils; who was responsible for monitoring grounds during break-time and after-school; and the nature of rules restricting access to grounds.

BEHAVIOUR CODE

- 8.02 Values and citizenship is one of the five National Priorities for Education established in 2000 (Scottish Executive, 2003a). Specifically, children are to be encouraged to gain respect for themselves and for one another and to appreciate their interdependence with members of their neighbourhood and society. This broad 'personal development' agenda together with other Scottish Executive strategy-induced change (such as tackling discipline problems and bullying by fully implementing the recommendations of the Discipline Task Group) gives impetus to implementing codes of behaviour to which children must subscribe and adhere.
- 8.03 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* found that the majority of schools either have (83%), or are planning to introduce (7%), a behaviour code for school grounds.
- 8.04 Although the majority of schools at each age-stage have a code for school grounds behaviour, this is most characteristic of primary schools (93%); around a quarter of nursery, secondary and special schools do not have such a code (24%, 27% and 25%, respectively) (Table 8.1 below).

	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
SCHOOL GROUNDS BEHAVIOUR CODE	%	%	%	%
Have code	65	93	71	72
Do not have code	24	2	27	25
No code at present, but planned	11	5	3	4
N	498	1145	200	85
Base: all responding schools.				

SEGREGATION IN SCHOOL GROUNDS

- 8.05 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* asked schools whether or not their school grounds were segregated by age range of pupils.
- 8.06 Among schools which shared their grounds, there was less evidence of school grounds segregation on the grounds of 'special educational need' (7% of schools), than on the grounds of age; a third of the nineteen primary school units which shared school grounds with secondary school pupils reported segregated grounds, while 66% of nursery classes in primary schools reported that their pupils had their own grounds which were set apart from those of the primary school aged pupils.
- 8.07 The segregation of school grounds is a feature in half of Scotland's primary schools. There was a clear rural/urban divide with less segregation being encountered in those schools from rural local authorities in Scotland (35% of primary schools, compared to 62% in urban local authorities). The highest prevalence of segregation is evident in Clyde side; West Dunbartonshire (90% of responding primary schools, 18 of 20), Renfrewshire (85%, 17 of 20), East Dunbartonshire (83%, 19 of 24) and East Renfrewshire (82%, 14 of 17). No segregation by age was reported in at least three-quarters of primary schools in six local authorities; Eilean Siar (93%, 13 of 14), Argyll and Bute (82%), Highland (81%), Orkney (78%, 7 of 9), Aberdeenshire (75%) and Stirling (75%, 12 of 16).
- 8.08 Predictably, the size of school (school roll) is a key factor to consider in accounting for the likelihood of primary school grounds being segregated. Primary schools with more pupils are significantly more likely to have segregated school grounds (see Table 8.2).

	School Roll				
	1-35	35-99	100-199	200-299	300+
SCHOOL GROUNDS SEGREGATION	%	%	%	%	%
Segregated by age	5	25	52	67	74
Not segregated by age	95	75	48	33	26
N	175	239	238	239	222
Base: all responding primary schools. School roll data from Scottish Executive (2003).					

MONITORING SCHOOL GROUNDS AND BEHAVIOUR

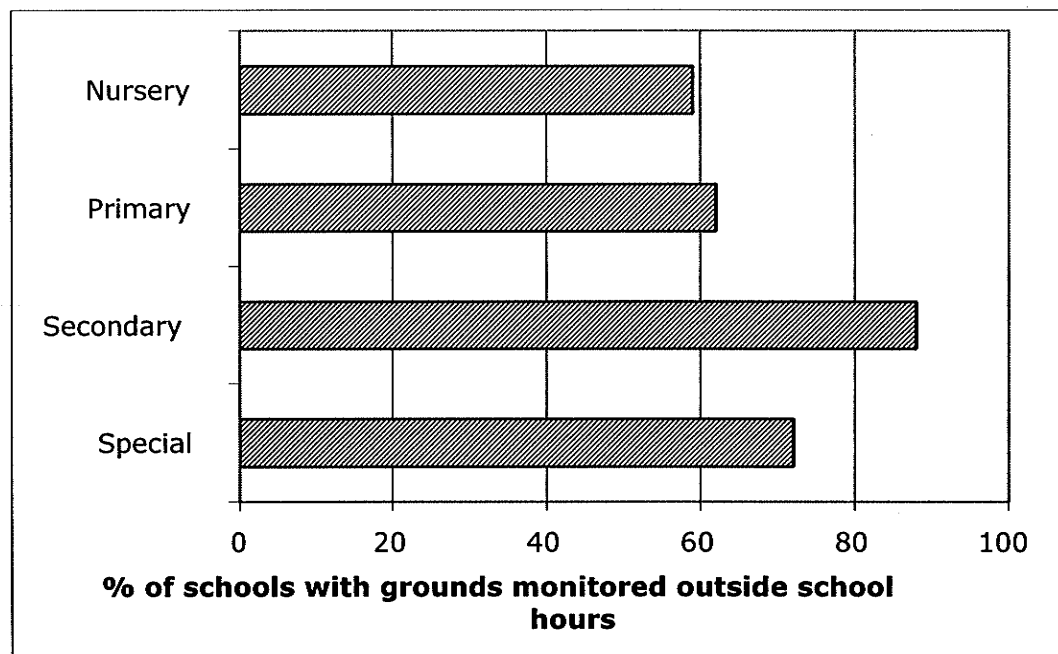
8.09 According to Audit Scotland (2001), fires and vandalism in Scotland's schools cost the sector £8.3 million in 2000, which although a significant reduction from the £12 million cost to the sector in 1995 (as a result, for example, of CCTV implementation), remains a significant burden to bear. This financial cost of fires and vandalism, together with concerns for the public safety of children that were heightened following the Dunblane tragedy (Lord Cullen, 1996), provide rationale for monitoring school grounds.

Outside school hours

8.10 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* asked respondents if their grounds were monitored outside school hours and, if so, how.

8.11 Two-thirds of schools are monitored and the likelihood of monitoring increases by age stage (59% of nursery schools, 62% of primary schools and 88% of secondary schools) (see Figure 8.1).

FIGURE 8.1 GROUNDS MONITORED OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS, BY SCHOOL TYPE



8.12 Janitors were the most common form of school ground monitoring outside school hours for all age stages and sectors; janitors are reported to monitor school grounds outside school hours in 25% of nursery schools, 38% of primary schools, 73% of secondary schools and 54% of special schools.

8.13 CCTV monitoring outside school hours features prominently in secondary schools (63% of schools), but less so elsewhere (e.g. only 9% of nursery schools). On the other hand, higher levels of neighbourhood/local monitoring were reported for nursery schools (23%) and primary schools (30%), compared to secondary schools (14%). Security guards and companies are currently very much a minority provider of out-of-school hours monitoring.

During school breaks

- 8.14 The new social studies of childhood literature emphasises the agency of children and although it does not necessarily follow from this, there is also a tendency to portray adults as over-bearing and overly concerned with curtailing children or over-protecting them. Other studies suggest that children are re-assured by, or express a desire for, adult supervision in places where children congregate; e.g. Ward-Thompson, (1995, p.138) in relation to school playgrounds.
- 8.15 Monitoring is a statutory requirement in special schools and in primary schools with fifty or more pupils; pupils must be supervised by at least one adult in school grounds at break times in these schools.
- 8.16 Virtually all school grounds are monitored during school breaks. Significant contributions are being made by classroom/nursery assistants (58% of all schools surveyed), janitors (46%), playground supervisors (43%) and teachers/nursery teachers (37%). One fifth of primary and secondary schools reported monitoring by prefects, with CCTV (14%), parent/volunteers (3%) and security companies (less than 1%) making more limited contributions.
- 8.17 However, the nature of monitoring varies across age stages. Results are shown in Table 8.3.

	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
MONITORS	%	%	%	%
Janitors	8	53	68	37
Security guards	1	0	1	0
CCTV	3	10	51	11
Playground Supervisors	7	61	8	14
Assistants*	48	61	13	69
Teachers*	50	22	53	49
Parents/Volunteers	6	1	0	2
Prefects	0	20	18	5
Other	5	14	22	26
<i>Base</i>	499	1145	203	90

Base: all respondents.
 * descriptors for 'assistants' and 'teachers' varied across school types, e.g. Nursery Assistants (nursery schools) and Classroom Assistants (primary schools).

- 8.18 The increase by age stage in the proportion of janitors monitoring school grounds during school hours is even more marked for break times (than outside school hours) rising from 8% in nursery schools, through 53% in primary schools to 68% in secondary schools.
- 8.19 CCTV is used in the majority of secondary schools (51%), but in barely more than one in ten of other school types.
- 8.20 Around two-thirds of primary and special schools use classroom assistants for school grounds monitoring during break time (61% and 69%); only 13% of secondary schools use teaching assistants.

- 8.21 Almost two-thirds of primary schools use playground supervisors (61%), in contrast to 7% of nursery and 8% of secondary schools.
- 8.22 Around half of schools in all sectors except primary schools use teachers for the purposes of school grounds monitoring during break time; (only) 22% of primary schools used teachers.
- 8.23 Variations relating to school roll are also evident as shown in Table 8.4.

TABLE 8.4 MONITORS DURING BREAK TIME, BY SCHOOL ROLL					
	Primary School Roll				
	1-35	35-99	100-199	200-299	300+
PRIMARY SCHOOLS	%	%	%	%	%
Janitors	6	31	75	77	68
CCTV	1	2	6	18	19
Playground Supervisors	43	67	63	57	67
Classroom Assistants	33	43	72	74	75
Teachers	36	18	19	20	20
Prefects	8	15	21	27	25
No Monitors	8	1	0	0	0
<i>N</i>	176	237	238	241	222
	Secondary School Roll				
	1-200	201-500	501-800	801-1000	1001+
SECONDARY SCHOOLS					
Janitors	77	76	63	55	70
CCTV	18	38	49	55	66
Playground Supervisors	41	5	4	3	5
Classroom Assistants	36	14	8	11	13
Teachers	32	33	49	63	59
Prefects	18	5	22	11	20
<i>N</i>	22	21	49	38	64
Base: all respondents. School roll data from Scottish Executive (2003).					

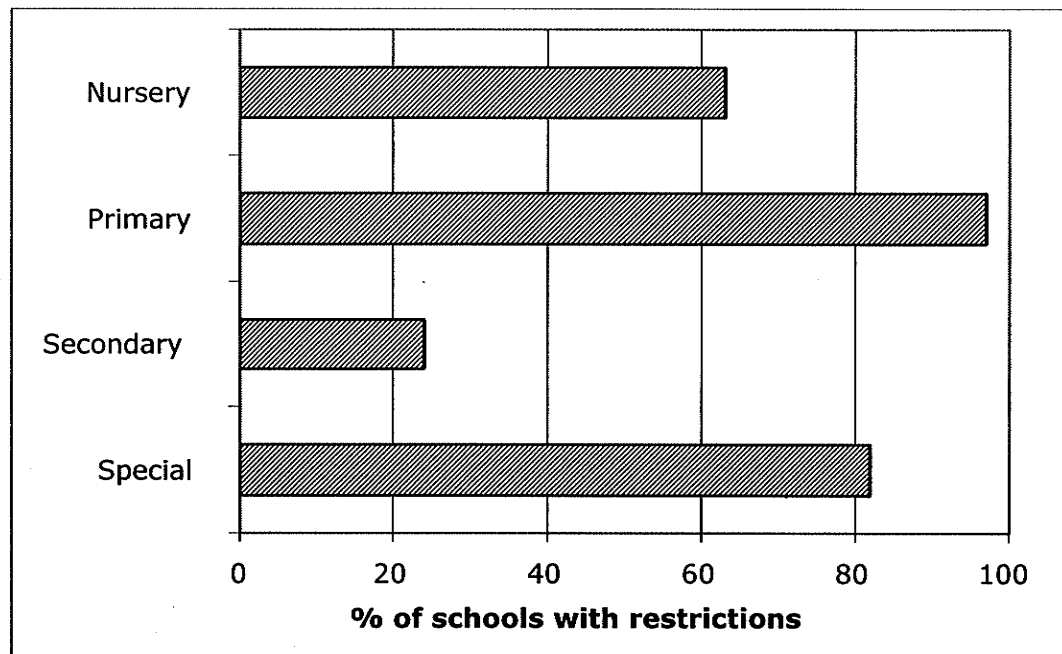
- 8.24 In both primary and secondary schools, larger schools are more likely to have CCTV. Playground supervisors and classroom assistants are more likely to supervise in larger primary schools, but are more likely to supervise in smaller secondary schools. On the other hand, teachers are more likely to supervise in smaller primary schools, but also in larger secondary schools. Having no monitors is more common in smaller primary schools.

SCHOOL GROUNDS RULES

Inclement weather

- 8.25 The temperate climate of Scotland brings wet and windy weather which shapes the character of school grounds and can present problems (e.g. danger posed by blowing debris in strong winds) or exacerbate existing problems (e.g. water logging of pitches on grounds which already have poor drainage). These problems are more acute in the peripheries of northern Scotland. Restricting pupils' access to school grounds, or parts of grounds, is one way of keeping them dry in wet weather and avoiding damage to grass pitches.
- 8.26 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* highlighted that there is significant variation across age stages and sectors in restrictions on school grounds use in inclement weather (Figure 8.2). Virtually all primary schools place restrictions on pupils (97%), as do a large majority of special schools (82%). However, 37% of nursery schools place no restrictions on school grounds use in inclement weather and only 24% of secondary schools have restrictions (24%).

FIGURE 8.2 RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF SCHOOL GROUNDS INCLEMENT WEATHER, BY SCHOOL TYPE



- 8.27 Table 8.5 shows restrictions by type of school. Restriction on going outside in bad weather varies by type of school, with 79% of primary schools, 61% of special schools, 28% of nursery schools and 6% of secondary schools keeping children inside. Restricting children from access to grassed areas in bad weather is most common in primary schools (55%).

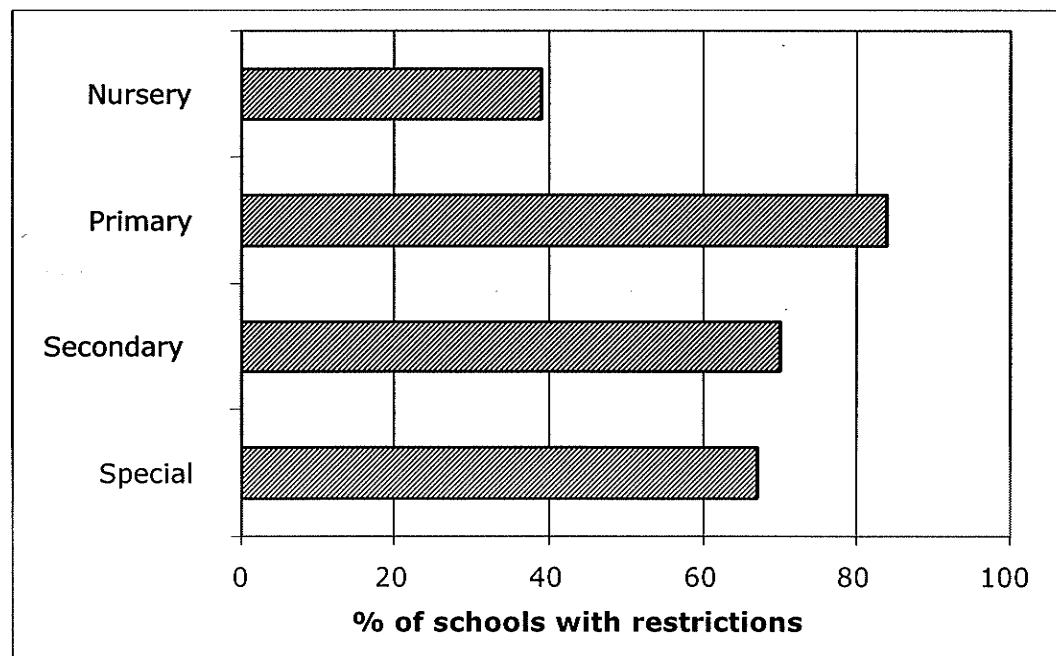
	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
RESTRICTIONS	%	%	%	%
Not allowed to use grass	24	55	20	26
Not allowed outside	28	79	6	61
Other	16	5	3	10
N	500	1145	197	90

Base: all respondents.

Forbidden areas

- 8.28 As noted earlier in the report, and as found by McKendrick et al (2000) in relation to other children's spaces outside schools, society's concern to provide safe environments for children can lead to restrictions on children's use of space.
- 8.29 Many schools have invested considerable resources in improving school grounds and the subsequent management may involve placing restrictions on children's independent access. The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* collected information on whether schools enforced restrictions on access to school grounds during break times and, if so, on which of nine area types (see Table 8.6 for full list).
- 8.30 The majority of schools forbid children from accessing parts of their school grounds during break time; 84% of primary schools, 70% of secondary schools and 67% of special schools (see Figure 8.3). The average number of areas from which pupils are forbidden ranged from 0.8 (nursery schools), through 1.1 (secondary schools) and 1.8 (primary schools) to 2.0 (special schools).

FIGURE 8.3 AREA RESTRICTIONS IN SCHOOL GROUNDS, BY SCHOOL TYPE



It should be noted that adults always accompanied nursery level children in school grounds at break times.

- 8.31 Table 8.6 shows the areas where access was restricted by each type of school. Preventing access to car parks is commonplace. Twelve percent of primary schools prevent access to planted areas, and smaller numbers of each type of school restrict access to sports fields, food growing areas, marsh areas, water features, and wildlife areas.

	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
AREA RESTRICTIONS (IF HAVE AREA TYPE)	%	%	%	%
Food growing area	1	3	2	2
Planted area	3	12	8	8
Marsh area	1	3	2	6
Water feature/area	2	5	6	5
Wildlife area	1	5	3	5
Sports fields	2	5	8	1
Car park	28	70	60	47
Other hard surface area	3	2	1	4
Other age-group's playground	6	31	6	17
Other	10	9	2	18
<i>N</i>	<i>458</i>	<i>1131</i>	<i>201</i>	<i>85</i>

Base: all responding schools with restrictions on access to particular areas. It should be noted that adults always accompanied nursery level children in school grounds at break times.

- 8.32 Thirty-one percent of primary schools restrict access to playground area which are set aside for children of 'other' ages, compared to only 6% of secondary schools and 17% of special schools.

SUMMARY	
8.33	The extent of segregation, monitoring and restrictions on access to school grounds undermine the simplistic portrayal of school grounds as a "children's space". Virtually all school grounds are monitored during school breaks; most schools are monitored outside school hours; most forbid children from accessing parts of their school grounds during break time; most enforce extra restrictions in inclement weather; segregation of school grounds is a feature in one half of Scotland's primary schools; and most have a behaviour code. Many primary schools segregate their grounds in some way. Thus, school grounds are spaces in which children's use is closely controlled and regulated by adults who are charged with their responsibility.
8.34	Regulation is marginally more prevalent in primary schools. Notably, behaviour codes for school grounds play and the enforcement of restrictions on access to, and use of, school grounds in inclement weather is common in primary schools.
8.35	More generally, however, there is considerable variation in the way in which school grounds are regulated across school types. Monitoring of grounds during school break times, for example, is highly variable across school types with janitors being used more in primary and secondary schools, assistants being common in nursery, primary and special schools, and teachers being used more in nursery, secondary and special schools.

CHALLENGES IN SCHOOL GROUNDS

The most common location for bullying ... was the playground.

(Mellor, 1990)

- 9.01 The increasing demands placed upon school grounds, and the costs and inconvenience of some out-of-school hours activity (Audit Commission, 2001) make managing school grounds a particular challenge. Evaluation research has highlighted dissatisfaction with school grounds in light of these demands and pressures; the majority of (62%, albeit from a small sample of 24) of head teachers recently surveyed considered that their school's facilities were inadequate for physical activity and sport (sportsotland, 2004).

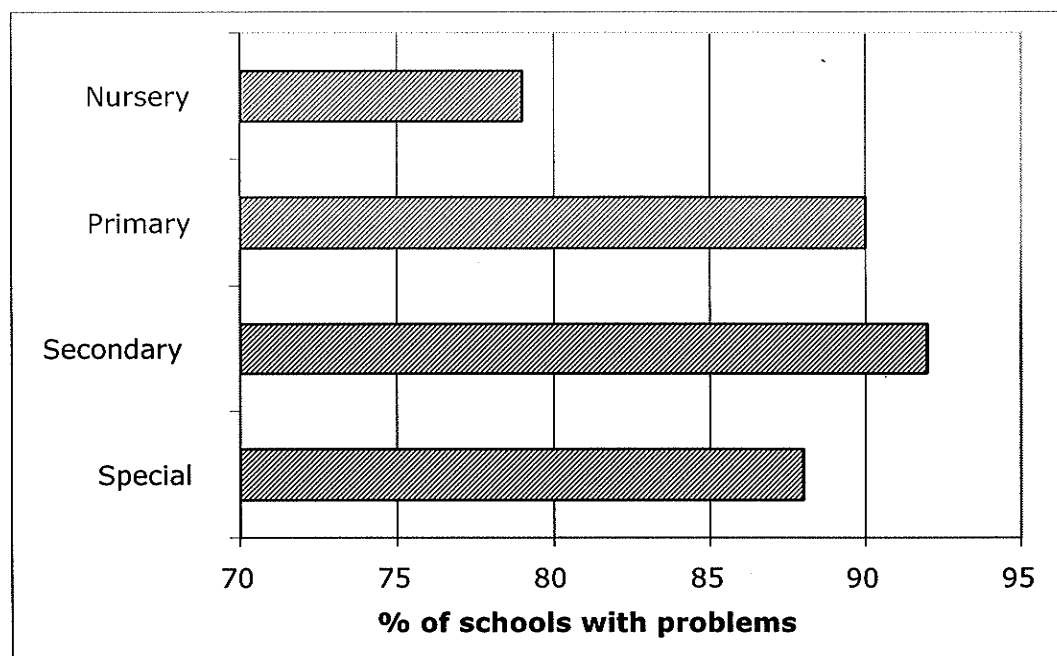
PERCEIVED PROBLEMS IN SCHOOL GROUNDS

- 9.02 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* asked respondents about problems encountered in school grounds. Respondents were given a list of 14 potential problems and asked to identify those that were problems in their school grounds; thereafter, respondents were asked to state the **main** problem in their grounds. It should be acknowledged however that play professionals, and other professionals working with children, may be more inclined to view the less tangible 'system', or 'climate of concern' as being the major problem with school grounds. As Ball (2002, 8.1) remarks, "... the crucial societal problem of playgrounds ... relates less to safety ... *per se*, than to the issue of how to realise for children the full range of social, physical, emotional and cognitive benefits associated with play". Indeed, the shift in mindset that this would involve is considerable if we were to concur with Ball that this should involve "the learning experience gained from exposure to modest risk".

Overview

- 9.03 On average, respondents noted 2.6 problems per school ground; 13% considered that there were no problems in their school grounds.
- 9.04 Nursery schools reported fewer school grounds problems than other school types (Figure 9.1). Thus, 21% of nursery schools, 10% of primary schools, 8% of secondary schools and 12% of special schools were reported to have no school grounds problems.

FIGURE 9.1 PROBLEMS IN SCHOOL GROUNDS, BY SCHOOL TYPE



9.05 Table 9.1 provides a breakdown by school size. The smaller schools tend to have fewer problems in their school grounds.

	Primary School Roll				
	1-35	35-99	100-199	200-299	300+
	Secondary School Roll				
	1-200	201-500	501-800	801-1000	1001+
HAVE MANY PROBLEMS (4-11)	%	%	%	%	%
Primary Schools	11	22	37	42	36
<i>N</i>	176	237	235	238	220
Secondary Schools	5	36	43	41	33
<i>N</i>	22	22	49	39	64

Base: responding primary and secondary schools reporting 4-11 problems in school grounds. School roll data from Scottish Executive (2003).

Perceived problems

9.06 The range of problems experienced is shown in Table 9.2 below. The most prevalent problem in Scottish school grounds is vandalism, which was reported to be a problem in 36% of secondary schools, 40% of primary, 44% of nursery and in 56% of special schools. Other main school grounds problems identified by a substantial proportion of schools are: maintenance, lack of variation in surfaces, inadequate (or lack of), CCTV and lack of space.

9.07 In addition to these problems, which are found across the various types of school, there are some which are characteristic of particular sectors:

- The poor quality of sports pitches is a particular problem in primary (35%) and secondary schools (43%);
- Lack of school grounds supervision is identified as an issue in 20% of secondary schools and 8% of primary schools but is not significant in nursery or special schools;
- Accidents are seen as a problem in almost twice as many primary schools (14%), compared with other school types (e.g. 6% of special schools reported this to be a problem of their school grounds); and
- Intrusion from others is a problem in 34% of secondary schools but 'only' 20% of special schools, 14% of primary schools and 13% of nursery schools.

	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
ALL PROBLEMS	%	%	%	%
Vandalism	40	44	36	56
Arson	5	6	3	12
Lack of use by nursery	5	17	11	17
Maintenance	32	38	22	26
Lack of surface variation	27	35	22	26
No/inadequate CCTV	26	28	24	35
Noise	2	1	1	2
Lack of supervision	2	8	20	1
Bullying	0	7	8	6
Accidents	7	14	8	6
Theft	8	1	2	7
Lack of space	18	22	21	16
Intrusion from others	13	14	34	20
Poor quality sports pitch	6	35	43	21
Other	9	9	8	10
<i>Base (N=)</i>	504	1137	205	89
Base: all respondents reporting problems in school grounds.				
Problems included under 'Other' were: lack of sport field, drainage, dog fouling, topography and litter.				

9.08 Respondents were also asked to identify the **main** problem in their school grounds. Responses are summarised in table 9.3 below.

	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
MAIN PROBLEMS (IF ANY)	%	%	%	%
Vandalism	26	22	8	43
Arson	*	0	0	0
Lack of use by nursery	1	2	3	0
Maintenance	17	14	18	18
Lack of surface variation	15	12	3	4
No/inadequate CCTV	4	4	2	6
Noise	*	0	0	0
Lack of supervision	1	3	7	0
Bullying	0	1	1	0
Accidents	1	2	1	0
Theft	1	0	0	1
Lack of space	15	13	15	8
Intrusion from others	3	2	10	0
Poor quality sports pitch	2	14	26	7
Other	14	10	7	13
<i>N</i>	356	979	163	72

Base: all respondents identifying 'main' problem in school grounds. There was a high non-response rate to this question, possibly indicating that respondents who identified more than one problem saw them as of equal importance.

Main problems

- 9.09 Vandalism is the biggest single problem for nursery (26%), primary (22%) and special schools (43%). Vandalism is reported to be the main problem in 'only' 8% of secondary schools.
- 9.10 Poor quality of sports pitches emerged as the greatest concern for 26% of secondary schools.
- 9.11 Other notable main problems were: maintenance, lack of space, lack of surface variation, and intrusion from others.

Accounting for school grounds problems

- 9.12 Vandalism and problems with intruders are more likely to be a school grounds problem in those schools whose grounds are used as a short cut, hang-out or right of way. For example, vandalism is a problem in 67% of school grounds that are used as a short cut compared to 39% of those school grounds that are not used as a short cut.
- 9.13 Concern about underuse for teaching, is more common in schools that use their grounds less frequently for physical education and 'other learning' and for those schools with less diversity in area-types and features. For example, a quarter of schools which are used 'rarely' or 'not very often' for physical education consider underuse of grounds in teaching to be a problem, compared to only 5% of schools which use their grounds 'very often' or 'all the time' for physical education. There is no relationship between concern about underuse for teaching and school roll.

- 9.14 Schools without a grounds maintenance policy are more likely than those with such a policy to consider that grounds maintenance is a problem (40% and 34%, respectively).
- 9.15 Larger schools are more likely to report problems with a lack of surface variation in their school grounds. For example, 42% of primary schools with at least 300 pupils have problems with surface variation, compared to 24% of primary schools with 35 or fewer pupils.
- 9.16 Smaller primary schools are less likely to be concerned about the lack of CCTV; 6% of primary schools with 35 or fewer pupils, compared to 33% of primary schools with at least 300 pupils.
- 9.17 The smallest primary schools are least likely to have a problem with the 'lack of space' in their grounds; 13% of primary schools with 35 or fewer pupils, compared to 27% of primary schools with at least 300 pupils.

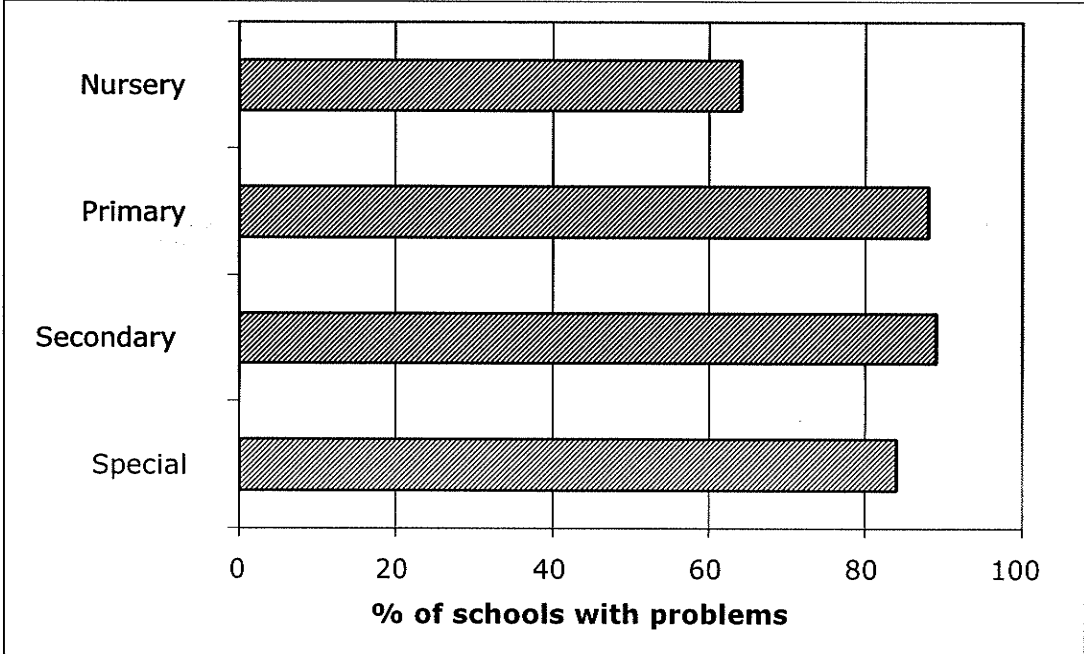
CAR PARKING PROVISION AS A PROBLEM

9.18 Car parking congestion outside schools has emerged as a local environmental and social problem in recent years. The problem reflects, primarily, concerns for child safety and quality of the residential environment. The survey sought views on car parking from the perspective of schools, asking respondents to identify which from a list of 7 potential problems were deemed to be problems with car parking in their grounds.

Overview

- 9.19 Fewer problems relating to car parking were reported for nursery schools (average of 1.5 per school), compared to special (2.3), secondary (2.4) and primary schools (2.5). Eighteen percent considered that there were no problems with car parking in their grounds.
- 9.20 Most schools reported problems with car parking, 64% of nursery schools, 83% of special schools, 88% of primary schools and 89% of secondary schools) (Figure 9.2).

FIGURE 9.2 CAR-RELATED PROBLEMS IN SCHOOL GROUNDS, BY SCHOOL TYPE



- 9.21 Although school size has no bearing on whether secondary schools have problems with car parking in their grounds, larger primary schools are significantly more likely than smaller primary schools to have such problems (Table 9.4).

		Primary School Roll				
		1-35	35-99	100-99	200-99	300=
PROBLEMS	Problems	71	85	91	93	97
	No Problems	29	15	9	7	3
<i>N</i>		174	236	234	238	219

Base: all primary school respondents reporting problems in school grounds. School roll data from Scottish Executive (2003).

Nature of problem

- 9.22 Table 9.5 outlines the main results by type of school. A 'lack of car parking spaces for parents' (71%) and 'inadequate dropping off/picking up areas' (66%) feature as a problem for the majority of all school types. 'Lack of car parking spaces for staff' (49%) and 'child safety' (43%) are also common problems, with 'car park design' (27%) and 'loss of grounds to provide car parking' (12%) being less significant. It should be noted that schools may also experience car-parking problems **outside** their grounds which would not be included in their response to the survey.

	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
CAR-RELATED PROBLEMS (IF ANY)	%	%	%	%
Inadequate dropping off/picking up area	34	62	63	44
Lack of car parking spaces for parents	41	65	59	52
Lack of car parking spaces for staff	25	44	46	53
Child safety	25	40	35	28
Loss of grounds to provide car parking	6	11	11	9
Design of car park	14	24	29	40
Other	6	4	2	6
<i>N</i>	503	1131	205	85

Base: all respondents reporting problems with car parking.
 'Other' problems noted included lack of car park, parking behaviour and sharing with others.

- 9.23 The prevalence of problems is broadly comparable across school types, although some problems are more characteristic of particular types of school. For example, car park design is much more of a concern for special schools with 40% expressing concern, compared to 29% of secondary schools, 24% of primary schools and 14% of nursery schools. Similarly, the lack of car parking spaces for staff is of greater

concern in special schools (53% expressing concern, compared to 46% of secondary schools, 44% of primary schools and 25% of nursery schools).

- 9.24 Child safety is a concern in 40% of primary and 35% of secondary schools. However the lack of car parking spaces for staff is of more concern (44% of primary schools and 46% of secondary schools report this as a problem).
- 9.25 Schools with car parks are more likely than those without to report that child safety is a problem (36% with, compared to 31% without).

SUMMARY

- 9.26 The types of problems reported cover both those concerned with protecting grounds (vandalism, maintenance, CCTV) and the poor quality of grounds (lack of surface variation, quality of sports pitches). Car parking is also a particular problem that manifests itself in a number of guises. There are problems that are generic to most school grounds (e.g. vandalism, lack of CCTV, lack of surface variation and poor maintenance). Similarly, the lack of car parking spaces for parents and the inadequacy of dropping off/picking up areas are fairly common car-parking related problems.
- 9.27 The likelihood of problems emerging is closely identified with the character of school grounds. Thus, those grounds which are used as short-cuts and spaces in which people 'hang out' after school hours are more likely to have problems with vandalism; those schools without a maintenance policy for their grounds are more likely to be troubled with maintenance problems in their grounds; and the larger the school, the more problems that are reported.
- 9.28 The poor quality of sports pitches is more of a problem in primary and secondary schools than nursery or special schools; problems caused by intrusion from others and a lack of supervision are more keenly felt in secondary schools; and problems related to car parking provision for parents are reported to be more of a problem in both primary and secondary schools.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND SCHOOL GROUNDS

I have just rediscovered [the *Scottish School Grounds Survey*] which I put to one side because ... the list of areas possible in a play area depressed me. However, I now think that it is important that you are informed of the poor provision in some areas. The Unit is located in the building of a mainstream secondary Primary School. Our pupils are pre 5 SEN. A small uneven tarmacadamed area has been fenced off for us. Access is by a small flight of steps. There are no areas for planting. We take the children out when we can but the area is depressing. It is very awkward to take playroom equipment outside as we have to carry it along the hall. We are fortunate in that we are surrounded by grassy areas with some trees. The Head of the school is very happy that we use this area, but as it is open and not fenced in, it is not safe for our wee ones.

(Survey Respondent, Unit for children with SEN in
Primary School, Glasgow)

CONTEXT

- 10.01 The preferred setting of the Scottish Executive for the education of children with special educational needs is in mainstream schools, although special schools continue to fulfil a key role in the Scottish education system for those disabled children for whom mainstream education is unsuitable. One increasingly common compromise between total inclusion and outright separation has been the introduction of Special Educational Needs units in mainstream schools.
- 10.02 Results from special schools and special educational need (SEN) units have been included throughout this report allowing direct comparison with schools that are defined according to their age stage. In this chapter, issues which pertain directly and exclusively to children with SEN are explored.

SCHOOL GROUNDS INCLUSION STRATEGY

- 10.03 The survey collected information on whether or not schools had a school grounds inclusion strategy. While such a strategy would be expected to be broader in focus than SEN, it is a measure of the extent to which schools are concerned with inclusion issues.
- 10.04 Twenty-six percent of schools in Scotland reported that their school had a school grounds inclusion strategy. Rates are comparable across school types, ranging from 29% for nursery schools to 19% for secondary schools (Table 10.1).

	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
GROUNDS REFERRED TO IN INCLUSION STRATEGY?	%	%	%	%
Yes	29	26	19	25
No	35	51	73	64
No inclusion strategy	36	23	8	12
<i>N</i>	383	1030	170	77

Base: all respondents. There was a high non-response rate to this question: 4% 'no response', 12% 'don't know'

- 10.05 The two authorities in which reference to school grounds in inclusion strategies is most common are Midlothian (45%, 9 of 20 schools) and Stirling (38%, 9 of 24 schools). The authorities in which schools are least likely to refer to school grounds in their inclusion strategy are Shetland (8%, 2 of 24 schools), Eilean Siar (14%, 4 of 29), North Ayrshire (16%, 5 of 32) and South Ayrshire (17%, 4 of 24).
- 10.06 Although caution must be taken when interpreting data on special schools at local authority level due to small sample sizes, the following paragraphs outline the main differences emerging.
- 10.07 In nursery schools we find that in Eilean Siar and Highland almost none of the responding schools refer to school grounds in their inclusion strategy (none of 10 responding nursery schools in Eilean Siar and only 1 of 18 in Highland). Nursery schools most likely to refer to school grounds in their inclusion strategy are found in Aberdeenshire (44%, 12 of 27), Falkirk (44%, 4 of 9), North Ayrshire (44%, 4 of 9), Renfrewshire (46%, 6 of 13) and West Lothian (42%, 5 of 12).
- 10.08 In primary schools we find particularly low levels in Aberdeenshire and North Ayrshire (12%, 1 of 15 and 5%, 1 of 19 respectively) with higher levels in Eilean Siar (92% 11 of 12), Stirling (47%, 7 of 15) and West Dunbartonshire (53%, 8 of 15).
- 10.09 Low cases hamper analysis for secondary schools, although it should be noted that no responding schools in 14 local authorities reported reference to school grounds in their inclusion strategy and that Lanarkshire appeared to be the part of the country in which these were least prevalent, i.e. such reference was reported in none of the eleven secondary schools in North Lanarkshire and in only one of the twelve secondary schools in South Lanarkshire.

SCHOOL GROUNDS SEGREGATION

- 10.10 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* collected information on two aspects of segregation – by time and space – for pupils educated in Special Educational Needs units in mainstream schools.
- 10.11 There was little evidence of school grounds segregation in special schools, with 97% of respondents reporting that children with SEN used school grounds at the same times as other pupils and only 7% of respondents reported that part of their school grounds were set apart for particular groups of pupils.
- 10.12 Indeed, among special schools and SEN units, there was much less evidence of school grounds segregation on the grounds of ‘special educational need’, as there was on the grounds of age; a third of the nineteen primary school units which shared school grounds with secondary school pupils reported segregated grounds, while 66% of nursery classes in primary or secondary schools reported that their pupils had their own grounds which were set apart from those of older pupils.

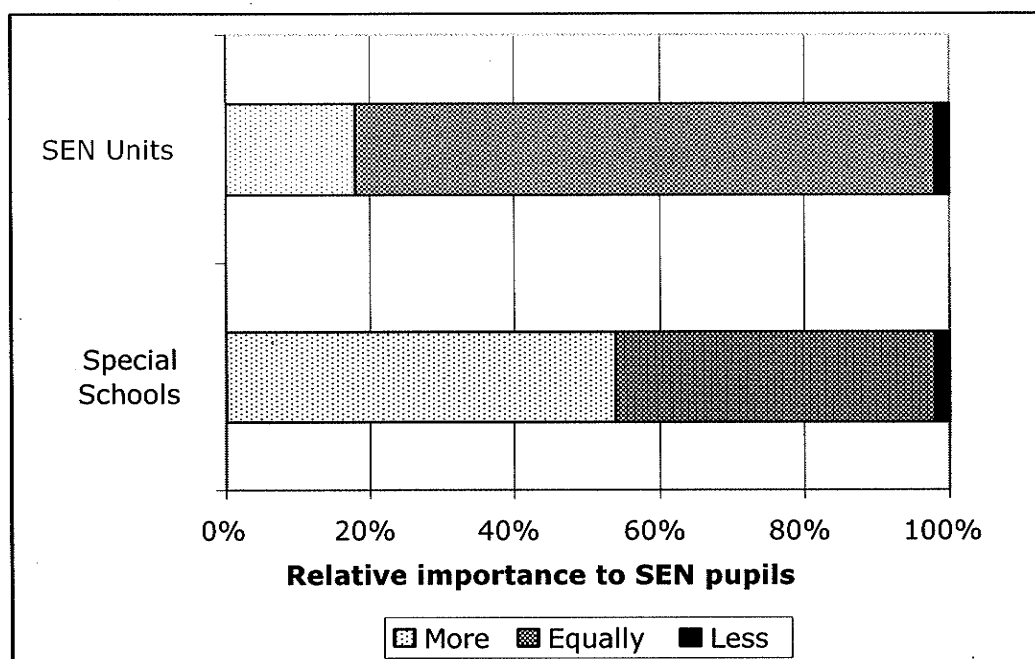
INTEGRATION THROUGH PLAY

- 10.13 Respondents in special schools and in SEN Units in mainstream schools were asked to estimate the proportion of pupils with SEN who mixed with other children in school grounds at break times. More than half of respondents reported that all of the pupils with SEN mixed with others through play, with one quarter reporting that “almost all” pupils with SEN mixed with other pupils in school grounds play.
- 10.14 Of the six local authorities for which survey returns were received from at least ten special schools or SEN units, only Glasgow is found to have an above average level of “all or almost all” SEN pupils mixing through play (91%, or 10 of 11). On the other hand, only 27% (3 of 11) in the Borders, and 65% of those from Fife (13 of 20) reported that “all or almost all” of their SEN pupils mixed with others through school grounds play.

RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL GROUNDS TO PUPILS WITH SEN

- 10.15 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* asked respondents in both special schools and Special Educational Needs units in mainstream schools to express their opinion on whether or not school grounds are more important to pupils with SEN, relative to those who did not have SEN.
- 10.16 There is a marked difference of opinion across modes of provision (Figure 10.1). Although virtually no respondents considered grounds to be less important to pupils with SEN (2%), a large majority of respondents from SEN units in mainstream schools considered school grounds to be of equal importance to SEN and non-SEN pupils (80%); the majority of respondents from special schools considered school grounds to be more important to pupils with SEN (54%).

FIGURE 10.1 THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL GROUNDS TO PUPILS WITH SEN, BY SEN SCHOOL TYPES



10.17 Although caution must be taken when interpreting data on SEN education at local authority level due to small sample sizes, more special schools than mainstream schools reported that school grounds are relatively more important to children with SEN than to other children (71%, compared to a Scottish average of 32%). All schools from four local authorities (albeit with very low numbers of special schools) also reported that school grounds are relatively more important to children with SEN. On the other hand, all schools from three local authorities (albeit with very low numbers of special schools) reported that school grounds are not relatively more important to children with SEN, as did 82% of SEN schools from Aberdeen City (9 of 11), 80% from Aberdeenshire (16 of 20), 89% from Dumfries and Galloway (16 of 18) and 76% from Fife (16 of 21).

ACCESSIBILITY

10.18 The *Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001* (SENDA) legislation requires that education institutions provide a non-discriminatory environment, a key aspect of which pertains to accessibility. The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* asked respondents (in both special schools and Special Educational Units within mainstream schools) about the extent to which school grounds were accessible to SEN pupils

10.19 Seventy-two percent in both sectors reporting that their grounds are “fully” accessible (Table 10.2). However, this is the basic standard required of school grounds and far from being a strength, concern should be raised at, and attention paid to, the sizeable minority of school grounds that are judged only to be “mainly” accessible (28%).

	Special School	SEN Unit	ALL SEN
THE ACCESSIBILITY OF SCHOOL GROUNDS TO PUPILS WITH SEN	%	%	%
Fully	72	72	72
Mainly	28	27	27
Inaccessible	0	1	1
Base (N=)	89	127	216

Base: special schools and SEN unit respondents. Data are drawn from the full-length surveys in special schools and insert surveys for Special Educational Needs Units in mainstream schools.

10.20 Although caution must be taken when interpreting data on special schools at local authority level, there would appear to be some variation across local authorities with regards to accessibility of school grounds. Full accessibility is more widely reported in Glasgow (73% or 16 of the 22 SEN schools), Fife (86% or 19 of the 22 special schools) and Aberdeenshire (80% of 16 of the 20 special schools). All schools from a further six local authorities (albeit with low numbers of special schools) also reported that their grounds were fully accessible. On the other hand, the grounds of 13% of special schools in the City of Aberdeen (4 of 13 special schools) and 44% of special schools in Dumfries and Galloway (8 of 18 schools) are reported not to be fully accessible.

SUMMARY

- 10.21 Comparisons between special schools (for children with SEN) and those schools which are defined according to age stage (schools from which children with SEN have traditionally been excluded) were considered for each theme in the *Scottish School Grounds Survey* and findings are presented throughout the report. Additionally this chapter considered issues that pertain directly and exclusively to children with SEN.
- 10.22 Only 26% of schools make an explicit reference to school grounds in their inclusion strategy.
- 10.23 The majority of school grounds are reported to be fully accessible, but it should be noted that this leaves 28% which are not “fully accessible”.
- 10.24 There is little segregation of grounds on account of SEN, and school grounds play is characterised by integration of SEN and non-SEN pupils.
- 10.25 Responses indicate that school grounds are considered to be particularly useful in special schools, especially in stand-alone special schools.

DEVELOPING SCOTLAND'S SCHOOL GROUNDS

I am very keen to develop our playground and would appreciate any help. It is hard to remain enthusiastic on your own.

(Survey Respondent, Nursery School, Glasgow)

We have just set up a joint project with the Nursery class to develop a sensory garden within their fenced off area and we are really looking forward to this joint venture taking off.

(Survey Respondent, Nursery School)

- 11.01 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* considered the extent to which school grounds featured in development planning, whether or not schools had a maintenance policy for their grounds and different facets of school grounds improvement projects.

PLANNING

- 11.02 Development planning is now a key element of school management in Scotland with the “central plank of implementation” being the school estate management plan for each local authority (Scottish Executive/COSLA, 2003, p.9). This plan is conceived as a live management tool that facilitates planning, implementation and monitoring.
- 11.03 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* asked respondents to indicate whether their school had a development plan and, if so, to say whether school grounds were seen as a main, high, or low priority or were not included in the plan.
- 11.04 On the whole, school grounds are described as either a low priority (27%) or are not referred to at all in school development plans. Thirteen percent of schools describe school grounds as a main priority with an additional 27% describing their grounds as a high priority.
- 11.05 However, there is significant variation across age stages with a higher priority being accorded to school grounds for younger age-stages (Table 11.1). Thus, 58% of nursery schools report that school grounds are either a main or a high priority in their development plan, with only 15% making no reference to school grounds. Among secondary schools 76% report that their school grounds are either a low priority or not referred to at all in their development plan.

	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
	%	%	%	%
Main priority/issue	23	11	5	4
High priority/issue	35	25	17	33
Low priority/issue	21	28	35	23
Grounds not referred to	15	33	41	35
No development plan	6	3	1	6
<i>N</i>	495	1115	196	84

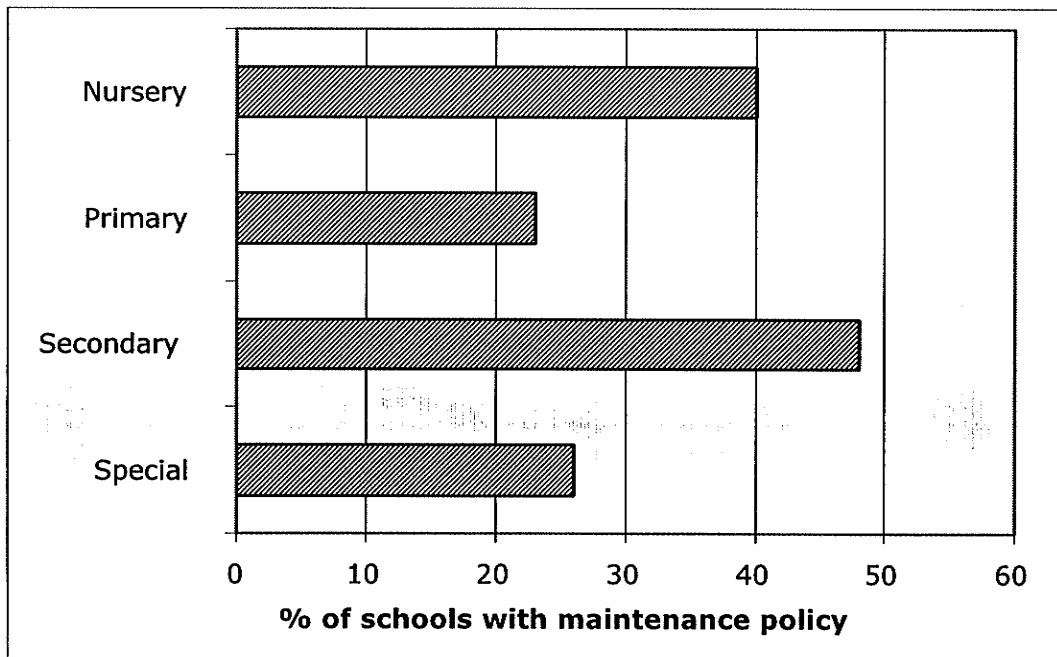
Base: all responding schools.

11.06 There is an association between the inclusion of school grounds in school development plans and the likelihood of school grounds being seen as useful for: curriculum learning, sport and physical activity, and play.

MAINTENANCE

11.07 Maintenance emerged as one of the main school grounds problems reported by schools. However only a minority of schools reported having a maintenance policy. As Figure 11.1 demonstrates, there are wide differences across types of school with almost half of secondary schools having such a policy (48%), compared to 40% of nursery schools, 26% of special and 23% of primary schools.

FIGURE 11.1 POSSESSION OF A MAINTENANCE POLICY, BY SCHOOL TYPE



Data is drawn from the full-length surveys.
There was a high non-response rate to this question (2% no response, 8% 'don't know')

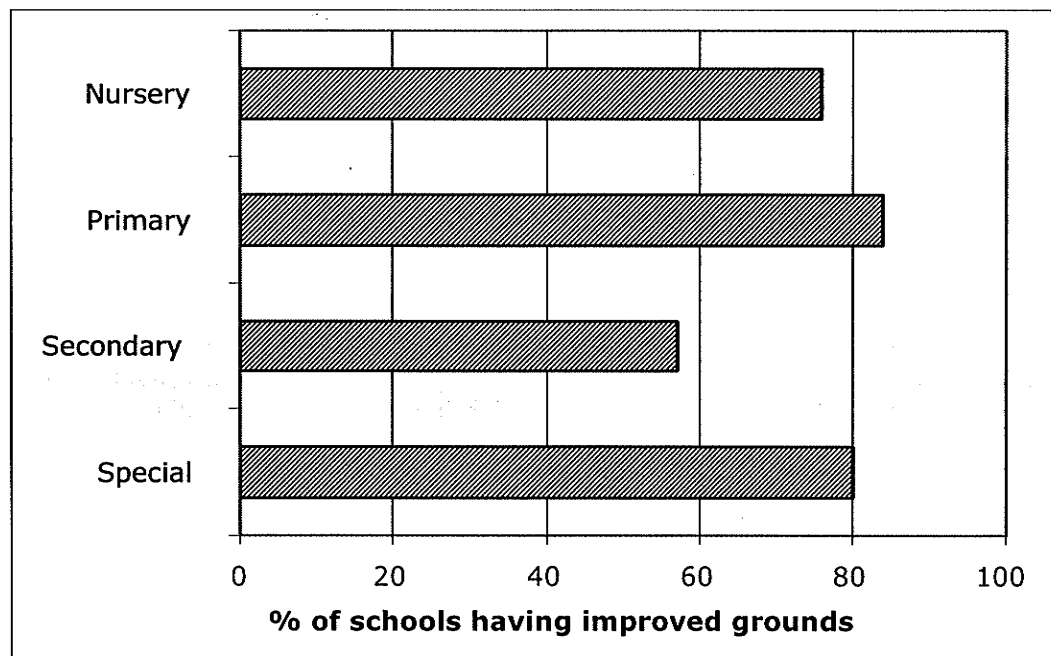
IMPROVEMENTS TO SCHOOL GROUNDS

- 11.08 In addition to supporting schools on how to use their grounds, *Grounds for Learning*, in common with their sister organisation *Learning Through Landscapes* south of the border, lend support to schools that wish to improve their school grounds. These organisations have developed an eight stage 'process of change' to promote best practice in use and development of school grounds within a membership service that provides detailed advice on a range of grounds-related subjects. In addition funded support is available through tailored projects.
- 11.09 The range of organisations and individuals lending support to such activity has increased in recent years. *Grounds for Learning* maintains an active network of school grounds 'professionals' and in addition to its advice and support service offers accredited training for school grounds professionals and CPD courses for teachers across Scotland.
- 11.10 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* ascertained the proportion of schools which had already taken steps to improve their grounds and, for those which had, canvassed information on the project's time-span, ground coverage, start date, focus, instigator, motivations, funding sources and involvement of pupils.

Overview

- 11.11 The majority of all types of school reported having already made improvements to school grounds (75%), although the extent of activity varied markedly by sector with 84% of primary schools reporting improvement work, compared to 80% of special schools, 76% of nursery schools and 'only' 57% of secondary schools (Figure 11.2).

FIGURE 11.2 MADE IMPROVEMENTS TO SCHOOL GROUNDS, BY SCHOOL TYPE



Data is drawn from the full-length surveys. There was a high non-response rate to this question (11%)

- 11.12 Throughout the survey it has been clear that there are substantial differences in responses from encapsulated nursery classes compared with nursery schools on a

range of issues. However, nursery classes in primary schools were as likely as nursery schools to report making improvements to their school grounds (74% and 76%, respectively).

Time Frames

- 11.13 Improvement projects can comprise specific projects, on-going work or specific projects that require on-going work thereafter. Although the full range of project time frames is reported to have been undertaken for each school sector, it is found that nursery school improvement work tends to be on-going (80% of improvement projects), primary school work is as likely to a specific project, as it is to be on-going or a specific project which requires on-going work (30%, 35% and 35% respectively), while specific projects are more characteristic of secondary schools (72%) and special schools (91%).
- 11.14 The majority of school grounds improvement work is of recent origin, particularly in secondary schools and nursery schools where 74% and 70% respectively of improvement work had been undertaken within the four years prior to the survey being undertaken. The majority of improvement work in primary schools was also of recent origin (59% within four years); in contrast most improvement work in special school grounds was long standing (54% having started at least five years ago).

Ground Coverage

- 11.15 School grounds improvement projects extend to the whole of the school grounds in 17% of all schools but there is significant variation across school types as shown in Table 11.2. In nursery schools projects were equally likely to cover all (25%), most (26%) or a small part (23%) of school grounds, in contrast to special schools, primary schools and secondary schools in which development projects are more likely to cover a 'small part' of the grounds.

	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
COVERAGE	%	%	%	%
All	25	10	6	11
Most	26	25	11	28
Small part	23	49	38	41
None	26	17	45	20
<i>N</i>	493	1127	202	85

Base: all responding schools.

- 11.16 This data seems to be shaped by the size of grounds in that it is more likely that all of the grounds will be improved when these grounds are smaller (nursery schools tend to have smaller grounds than primary schools, which in turn have smaller grounds than secondary schools). We find, for example that 60% of projects in the smallest secondary schools (up to 200 pupils) cover 'most' of the school grounds, compared to only 20% of those taking place in the largest secondary schools (with over 1000 pupils).
- 11.17 The survey results give an insight into the nature of improvement projects, which are summarised in Table 11.3 below.

TABLE 11.3 NATURE OF IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS, BY SCHOOL TYPE				
	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
FOCUS, TOP 5	%	%	%	%
Play	56	57	19	53
Appearance of grounds	49	50	29	37
Plant growing	48	49	20	44
Wildlife area	19	25	6	22
Sports	7	15	27	15
<i>N</i>	501	1135	202	88
INSTIGATOR, TOP 5	%	%	%	%
Head Teacher	55	74	39	68
Pupils	10	45	18	20
Teacher	27	31	19	45
Parents	16	20	3	8
PTA	3	22	6	8
<i>N</i>	502	1137	204	87
MOTIVATIONS, TOP 5	%	%	%	%
Enhance appearance	53	63	33	45
Improve play resources	57	56	25	52
Enhance curriculum	59	38	18	54
School identity/ethos	26	51	29	38
Improve behaviour	11	42	11	25
<i>N</i>	503	1134	203	89
PUPIL INVOLVEMENT, TOP 5	%	%	%	%
Planning	30	66	28	40
Using	51	52	25	56
Designing	19	56	22	34
Maintaining	36	44	17	42
Fund raising	27	35	9	9
<i>N</i>	493	1130	193	86
FUNDING, TOP 5	%	%	%	%
School fundraising	37	46	16	4
Project grant	35	43	26	3
PTA	9	40	7	17
Education department	20	22	24	20
Main budget	28	18	15	14
<i>N</i>	498	1131	203	86
Base: all respondents.				

Project Focus and Underlying Motivations for Improvement

11.18 The questionnaire asked about both the focus of the work and the underlying motivation for improvement work. These two can be closely related; indeed, in some instances they are as one, e.g. focus on sports is the reason of improving sports resources. However, the association is not always clear – e.g. enhancing sports

provision for the underlying reason of tackling problem behaviour is one of reasons for Scottish Executive investment in sporting infrastructure (Scottish Executive, 2002b) – and hence it is useful to address the project focus and underlying motivation as separate issues.

- 11.19 The focus of improvement categories were: food growing, plant growing, wildlife area, wild area, wooded area, sports, play, transport and appearance of grounds.
- 11.20 The options used to describe the motivations for the improvements were developed from the six categories outlined by Kenny (1996). Four of Kenny's options were included: to improve behaviour; improve play facilities; improve safety; and to enhance appearance of school. The other two (attract wildlife and improve natural heritage value) were not included. Finally, four new categories were added: to enhance the curriculum, to improve sports resources, to involve the community and to foster school identity/ethos.
- 11.21 Most school ground improvement work is reported to have more than one focus.
- 11.22 The project focus which was most common across all schools is appearance of grounds (the focus for 49% of nursery, 50% of primary, 29% of secondary and 37% of special school projects).
- 11.23 Project themes that involved 'nature' (food growing, plant growing and wildlife areas) featured less prominently in secondary schools. For example, 48% of nursery school projects involved plant growing, compared to 20% of secondary school projects; and 25% of primary school projects concerned wildlife areas, compared to 6% of secondary school projects.
- 11.24 Similarly, while a substantial proportion of projects in nursery, primary and special schools involved play (56%, 57% and 53%, respectively), only 19% of secondary school projects had a play focus (35%). In contrast, 27% of secondary school projects focused on sport but this was less common as a focus in projects in other types of school.
- 11.25 When motivations are examined, it is found that three-quarters of all schools gave between two and five reasons for introducing their school grounds improvement project.
- 11.26 The number of reasons given vary by type of school with secondary schools tending to report fewer reasons and nursery and primary schools giving a wide range of reasons for undertaking the project (almost a third of primary and nursery schools gave at least five reasons).
- 11.27 'Appearance of area' featured among the motivations for many schools (ranging from 63% of primary schools to 45% of special schools).
- 11.28 The variation in motivation by sector is striking.
- Enhancing the curriculum through school grounds improvement work was a reason provided by 18% of secondary schools, 38% of primary schools, 54% of special schools, and 59% of nursery schools.
 - Improving play resources school grounds improvement work was mentioned by 25% of secondary schools, but was more prevalent in special schools (52%), primary schools (56%) and nursery schools (57%).
 - Improving safety through school grounds improvement work was a concern for around a quarter of primary, secondary and special schools (29%, 22% and 29%, respectively), but almost half of nursery schools (45%).

- Improving behaviour was given as a reason for school grounds improvement work in 42% of primary schools, in 25% of special schools, and 11% of secondary schools and nursery schools.
- Improving sports resources was a motivation for school grounds improvement work in 49% of secondary schools, but around one in ten nursery, primary and special schools (11%, 16% and 10%, respectively).
- Fostering a school identity and/or ethos was a motivation for school grounds improvement work in 26% of nursery schools, 29% of secondary schools, 38% of special schools and 51% of primary schools.

Instigator

- 11.29 Casey (2003a) recognises that individuals may be catalysts for school ground development projects, but suggests that a “whole school approach” is vital to the success of initiatives.
- 11.30 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* asked respondents to identify which from a list of ten groups/individuals had initiated their school grounds improvement project: head teacher, teacher, PTA, school board, parents, pupils, councillors, local education department, community group, professionals. On average two to three people were involved in instigating developments.
- 11.31 Teachers and, in particular, head teachers were commonly involved in initiating school grounds improvement projects. Across all schools, 85% of projects were initiated, at least in part, by head teachers and two-fifths involved the work of teachers. Teachers were more prominent among the driving forces for improvement work in special schools (57%, compared to 38% in mainstream schools).
- 11.32 With the exception of teaching staff and professionals (who featured as minority instigators across all school types), there was considerable variation in the contribution of different parties to instigating school ground improvement projects across school sectors:
- Community and local institutions – councillors, local education authority and ‘other’ community groups - featured more prominently among the motivating forces for secondary school grounds improvement projects. For example, the local education authority featured as a motivating force for 31% of secondary schools but only a tenth of nursery, primary and special schools (9%, 10% and 12%, respectively).
 - Parents – both informally and formally (PTA) – were most active in initiating school grounds improvement work in primary schools (22% of whom noted the involvement of PTAs – furthermore, 20% noted the involvement of parents outwith PTAs).
 - School boards contributed to the initiation of school grounds improvement work in 21% of primary and 19% of secondary schools but only a tenth of special schools and 1% of nursery schools (where school board are much less common).
 - Most significantly, pupils contributed to the start of school grounds improvement work in 45% of primary schools, 18% of secondary schools, 20% of special schools and 10% of nursery school projects.

Pupil Involvement

- 11.33 Pupil involvement in school grounds improvement projects was explored in greater detail. Respondents were asked to indicate which roles were performed by pupils. The top five were planning, using, designing, maintaining and fund raising.
- 11.34 The extent of pupil involvement in school grounds improvement projects varies significantly across school types. Pupils are most involved in primary school projects, with an average of 4 roles for pupils being identified per project.
- 11.35 Across all schools pupils were involved to a substantial degree in planning, using grounds, and maintaining. However, as might be expected, there was substantial variation between types of school in the nature of pupil involvement.
- Whereas pupils were involved in the planning stage in 66% of primary school projects, this true for less than half of other types of school.
 - Similarly, pupils were involved in the design stage in 56% of primary school projects but in only 22% of secondary, 34% of special schools and 19% of nurseries.
 - Pupils using school grounds on completion of the improvement work was mentioned as a pupil role in 25% of secondary schools projects, 52% of primary schools, 51% of nursery schools and 56% of special schools.
 - Similarly, maintaining the school grounds following improvement work was less characteristic among secondary schools pupils (17% of secondary schools, compared to 36%, 44% and 42% for nursery, primary and special schools respectively).
- 11.36 Other pupil roles also show variation by type of school.
- Pupils were most likely to have initiated projects for primary school grounds and least likely to initiate projects for nursery school grounds.
 - Younger age stage schools were most likely to report that their pupils contributed to fund raising efforts (27% of nursery schools and 35% of primary schools); contributions were less widespread in secondary schools (9%) and special schools (9%).
 - While 25% of nursery schools involved pupils in the construction stage, over a third of pupils contributed to construction in other school sectors.
 - Twenty-five percent of primary schools involved pupils in managing project work compared to 20% of SEN schools, 15% of secondary schools and 9% of nursery schools.

Funding

- 11.37 Respondents were asked to provide information on funding sources used to support school grounds improvement. Most schools used more than one source of funding. The main sources and variation by type of school are shown in Table 11.3 above.

Barriers

- 11.38 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* asked respondents to identify which, from a list of eight problems, prevented them from taking a more active interest in their school grounds. The potential barriers listed were: lack of time, lack of money, lack of whole school support, lack of community support, lack of skills within school, difficulty accessing expert advice and support, more pressing concerns, and content with present efforts.

- 11.39 On average the number of barriers mentioned was two, with slightly more emerging for primary schools and slightly less for nursery schools.
- 11.40 The two main barriers to school grounds improvement work in each school sector are a 'lack of time' and a 'lack of money'. On the whole these are mentioned cited as barriers in, respectively, one half (52%) and two thirds (69%) of schools. However, this varies by type of school (Table 11.4). 'Lack of time' is given as a reason in 35% of nursery schools, 41% of secondary schools, 51% of special schools (51%) and 62% of primary schools.

	Nursery	Primary	Second.	Special
BARRIERS TO IMPROVEMENT, TOP 4	%	%	%	%
Lack of money	62	71	70	64
Lack of time	35	62	41	51
More pressing concerns	11	32	32	26
Difficulty accessing expert advice and support	17	21	12	26
<i>N</i>	<i>430</i>	<i>1016</i>	<i>185</i>	<i>73</i>

Base: all respondents. There was a non-response rate to this question of 6%

- 11.41 Lack of support from within the school, lack of support from the wider community and lack of skills from within the school do not feature prominently among the barriers to school grounds improvement work in each school sector.
- 11.42 There are, however, some sector-specific barriers to school grounds improvement work that should be acknowledged.
- 21% of primary schools and 26% of special schools note difficulty in accessing expert advice and support (this is also a problem for one in ten nursery and secondary schools)
 - 32% of primary and secondary schools report that they have 'more pressing concerns', as do 26% of special schools and 11% of nursery schools.
 - 23% of nursery and 20% of secondary schools consider that they already expend an appropriate level of interest and effort in their school grounds in contrast to 16% of special schools and 7% of primary schools.

SUMMARY

- 11.43 Although school grounds are accorded a low priority in development planning and although most schools (70%) do not have a school grounds maintenance policy, the extent to which schools have improved their grounds in recent years tends to suggest that they are important to schools. Three-quarters of schools in Scotland had improved their grounds through improvement projects, although this was less common in the secondary school sector (57%).
- 11.44 Improvement projects are multi-faceted with regards to motivations, instigators, project focus, pupil involvement and sources of funding. However, there are features that are common to improvement projects across school types. Thus, most projects

are of recent origin, most seek to 'improve the appearance of school grounds', and head teachers typically instigate improvement projects.

11.45 There is considerable variation across sectors in the nature of school grounds improvement projects. Notably, pupils are less involved in secondary school projects; parents are more likely to instigate projects in primary schools; community and education authorities are more likely to instigate projects in secondary schools; curriculum learning is most likely to be a reason for improvement work in nursery schools; fostering school identity and improving the behaviour of pupils is most associated with primary schools; improving sports resources is most typical of secondary schools; and whereas most nursery projects are described as 'on-going', most special school and secondary school improvement work tends to focus on a specific project.

11.46 The main barriers to improvement are reported to be lack of time and money.

CONCLUSION

In the past, school grounds have often been regarded as something of a 'Cinderella' – it's now time to do something about this.

(Trudi Sharp, [Head of School Estates Branch, Scottish Executive] 2004, p.5)

FURNISHING AN UNDERSTANDING OF SCOTLAND'S SCHOOL GROUNDS

12.01 The *Scottish Schools Grounds Survey* collected information from almost 2000 state sector schools in Scotland. Surveys were completed by schools from each of the 32 local authorities in Scotland, and from each type of school (nursery, primary, secondary and special). The survey has resulted in the compilation of the largest and most comprehensive dataset on state sector school grounds in Scotland.

12.02 Findings were structured around nine themes:

- *Scotland's School Estate*, (school roll, age of school, ownership of grounds in the community, grounds development (loss of land) and grounds sharing);
- *Character of School* (area types, specific features and perception of school grounds size);
- *Provision for Sports in School Grounds*, (active school grounds play, playing field provision, use of grounds for organised sports, use of grounds for community sport and their potential as a resource for physical education and movement);
- *Extra Curricular Use of School Grounds*, (use of school grounds at break-times and outside school hours, prevalence of pre- and post- school childcare and club activity, and general use of grounds outside school hours);
- *School Grounds as a Learning Resource*, (participation in educational projects which utilise grounds, perceived usefulness of school grounds for learning, use of school grounds to address learning in different skill fields, and the frequency with which grounds are used);
- *Regulation and Monitoring in School Grounds*, (prevalence of behaviour codes, and management of use of, school grounds' space at break times);

- *Challenges in School Grounds*, (general school grounds problems and specific issues pertaining to car parking);
 - *Special Educational Needs and School Grounds* (inclusion strategies, segregation/mixing, relative importance and accessibility of school grounds play for children with Special Educational Needs); and
 - *Developing School Grounds*, (extent of reference to grounds in development planning, maintenance policies, and aspects of school grounds improvement projects).
- 12.03 The *Scottish Schools Grounds Survey* has generated a range of key baseline facts about the character of school grounds and has established an understanding of how these grounds are used and viewed as a learning resource.
- 12.04 Findings from the survey can be used to inform the work of the project partners and to engage a series of broader debates pertaining to schools, children and young people, communities and society in Scotland.
- 12.05 This conclusion interprets the main findings and provides recommendations, with the aim of informing national debate on how to target resources more effectively, support new initiatives and establish best practice in Scotland's school grounds.

PROMOTING LEARNING, PLAY AND SPORT IN SCHOOLS GROUNDS

School Grounds Partnership

- 12.06 The *Scottish Schools Grounds Survey* has demonstrated the value of a collaborative approach to researching school grounds. First, it has shown a single survey can be used to collect data on play, sport, and learning in Scotland's school grounds. This is both cost efficient for those sponsoring the research and time efficient for those asked to provide this information on behalf of schools. Secondly, consideration of a wide range of issues in a single survey allows for these issues to be examined in a more comprehensive way, taking account of related factors.
- 12.07 The results demonstrate that school grounds are highly valued by schools as a resource for curriculum learning, sport and play but that there is substantial scope to further enhance awareness, understanding and use of this resource.
- 12.08 It is clear that the value of school grounds extends beyond their functional utility as a resource for learning, play and sports. For example, improving school grounds can be an important element of strategies to tackle problem behaviour in primary schools and, more generally, are part of developing school identity and ethos.
- 12.09 A consistent finding was the inequality between those educated in nursery classes (within primary and secondary schools) and those educated in nursery schools. Nursery classes were:
- less likely to have access to a range of area types and features in their grounds;
 - more likely to judge their grounds to be "too small";
 - less likely to use their grounds for physical activity; and
 - less likely to use their grounds to support learning in each of the 3-5 curriculum fields.
- 12.10 The findings provide data which is relevant to debates on optimum school size. Smaller schools tend to have more diversity in terms of features (such as seating area, water feature, sculpture, bird table, playground markings). The likelihood of school grounds being valued as a curriculum learning resource and as a sports resource are not associated with school roll; smaller primary schools tend to use

their grounds more frequently for physical education and to support learning in each of the 5-14 curriculum fields, and they report fewer problems with their grounds, compared to larger schools. These findings suggest many smaller schools, which have been developed appropriately, should be valued for the richness of their school grounds.

- 12.11 The survey provides data which furthers an understanding of the character of Scotland's school grounds. This data could be used for marketing and planning school grounds developments. For example, data on features and area types possessed might strengthen the arguments of individual schools seeking to develop their grounds in a particular way (e.g. if a primary school was not one of the 78% of primary schools in Scotland with painted playground markings, it might help to draw attention to this point). On the other hand, commercial suppliers and local authorities may be able to use aggregate data on demand for features and area types (e.g. 60% of secondary schools desire more outdoor sheltered areas in school grounds). It is clear that there is a high level of demand for diversification in area types and features.
- 12.12 Greater diversity in school grounds features and area types was associated with higher levels of active play in school grounds and greater appreciation of grounds as a resource for curriculum learning. Further support for diversification comes from the finding that a third of schools reported the 'lack of variation in school grounds surfaces' to be a problem of their grounds.
- 12.13 Three-quarters of school grounds in Scotland have already been improved through school grounds development projects. The two main barriers faced in each school sector were considered to be 'lack of time' and 'lack of money'.
- 12.14 The survey demonstrates the value of a co-ordinated approach to school grounds. One focus for this would be to promote school grounds as a particular category of greenspace (Greenspace Scotland, 2004). Such an approach is particularly appealing as it promotes an holistic approach to school grounds.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* should be used to propose a two-tier list of (i) key indicators (ii) thematic indicators, which would serve as measures for monitoring and target-setting in Scotland's school grounds. These indicators should be transparent, robust and facilitate self-evaluation. They would be of value to local authorities and the Scottish Executive and should include information on the size and character of school grounds in Scotland. This would follow the lead taken by the Department for Education and Skills and would afford the potential to monitor change, or the lack of change, in the condition, use and perception of school grounds in Scotland. The development of a school grounds strategy (either for Scotland as a whole, or for individual local authorities) would require the availability of such data.
- 2 The results from the *Scottish School Grounds Survey* should be used to raise awareness among those responsible for school grounds that size of grounds is not a barrier to developing a rich and diverse schoolscape.
- 3 Consideration should be given to using derelict areas or wasteland as a focus for a campaign to target school grounds improvements, using to the full any opportunities to promote sustainable practice and support biodiversity.

- 4 The need for schools to include their grounds in development planning should be highlighted. School grounds were not referred to in development plans in 30% of schools, and considered a low priority in terms of development planning by a further 27%.
- 5 The School Premises Regulations should be reviewed and enforced to ensure there is adequate provision for school grounds for various purposes including sport and physical activity.

FURTHER ENQUIRY

- i In further school grounds research, particularly for areas of investigation where subjective assessments are required (such as perceived problems), it would be worthwhile to obtain views from other key stakeholders, such as teachers, support staff, directors of education, members of school boards, janitors, local residents and, of course, school pupils.
- ii More detailed research on school grounds' area types and features should be undertaken using a case study approach. More detailed information on the size of areas and the quality and character of area types and features would provide greater depth of understanding and give an opportunity to highlight good practice.

Learning

- 12.15 One aim of the survey was to ascertain whether there was evidence to support the case for greater use and development of school grounds as a resource for learning. There is evidence of school grounds being used for formal (curriculum), and informal learning, but they are not being used and developed to their full potential as a resource across the whole curriculum – formal, informal and hidden. Therefore, it could be argued that school grounds should be more prominent in debates on the future of education in Scotland.
- 12.16 The survey demonstrates the importance of school grounds as a learning resource with a substantial proportion of school grounds development projects giving 'enhancing the curriculum' as one of the key motivations. The results show that school grounds are used to support learning in a wide range of curriculum fields across all types of school and that those school grounds that have a wider array of area types and features are more likely to be valued as a curriculum learning resource.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6 Consideration should be given to ways of promoting equity in the use and provision of school grounds for curriculum learning across the sectors, and to address differences found between encapsulated and stand alone providers. In particular, further investigation should be undertaken to identify how nursery class grounds could be improved.
- 7 Research findings may reflect current perception rather than real understanding of educational opportunities offered by school grounds. This poses the question of whether enough is currently being done across all sectors to raise awareness and understanding of the potential value of school ground as a curriculum resource. Existing barriers should be challenged and opportunities explored.

- 8 The reasons for existing lower participation in school grounds educational projects in secondary and SEN schools need to be addressed, and ways of developing opportunities for these sectors explored.
- 9 There is a need to explore opportunities to promote diversity of area types and features in school grounds as this is clearly linked to their value as a curriculum resource.

FURTHER ENQUIRY

- iii Schools which consider their grounds too small are less likely to use them as a learning resource. Further analysis could identify whether it is the size of ground that discourages an outdoor focus or whether the main barrier is lack of awareness/experience.
- iv Restrictions on children's access to certain areas of the school grounds may limit the value of school grounds as a resource for formal and informal learning and play. The impact of accessibility on learning and play should be considered in more detail to provide best practical guidance.
- v Further research should be undertaken to examine the ways in which school grounds are being developed and used to enhance their value as a learning resource.
- vi The data gathered looked at how schools perceived the value of their school grounds to deliver the formal and informal curriculum. More information is needed particularly regarding the hidden curriculum of school grounds, and how this can support or detract from a positive school ethos. This would require a more pupil-centred approach.

Play

- 12.17 Scotland's school grounds afford ample opportunities for play at break times and outside school hours. However, there is considerable variation across local authorities and school type in the nature and utilisation of this resource.
- 12.18 The survey demonstrates the importance schools place on providing for play in school grounds: a high proportion of development projects focus on play, and high levels of demand are expressed for play features in school grounds.
- 12.19 It was found that higher levels of provision of play features and equipment were associated with higher levels of active play in school grounds and that views on the "play value" of school grounds were directly and positively associated with the range of play features and equipment in school grounds.
- 12.20 However, it should be questioned whether the desire for fixed play equipment expressed by schools, particularly in the nursery and primary sectors, adequately reflects children's play needs in school grounds. More work is required to raise awareness that a wider variety of resources can encourage active and imaginative play for all ages and across all sectors, and promote good practice for inclusive play (Teresa Casey, 2003b).
- 12.21 Almost a fifth of respondents did not provide data on the whether their pupils with special educational needs integrated with 'other children' at break time (19%). This may indicate a lack of awareness of the importance of social interaction at break times. There may be merit in exploring this specific issue, as part of a wider based enquiry into social interaction at break times.

FURTHER ENQUIRY

- vii Further school grounds research should be undertaken on social interaction at break times.
- viii The value of other features and area types in school grounds - outdoor shelters or wooded areas for example, that act as a catalyst for play, needs further enquiry and promotion of their play value for children.
- ix Children's perception of their school grounds as a resource for play, taken across all ages and sectors, needs further enquiry, in order to have an inclusive approach to best practice and design. The drop off in perceived active play in older children has implications for children's health and well-being, and needs further analysis, particularly from a child's perspective.

Sport

- 12.22 Schools have been given a key role in the drive to increase levels of physical activity among children and young people in Scotland. The survey provides insights into current use, current resource base, and challenges faced in using school grounds as a resource for sport, physical education and physical activity. School grounds are used extensively for both curricular and extra-curricular sport and physical activity. There are some significant regional variations in provision and participation.
- 12.23 The high level of 'active play' among primary school children at break times should be acknowledged. On the other hand, the low levels of activity observed for pupils in secondary schools heightens the importance of school-based initiatives to support active lifestyles among teenagers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10 Consideration should be given on how to support the development of higher levels of physical activity in schools, particularly secondary schools.
- 11 Consideration should be given to how best to respond to the expressed demand by secondary schools for synthetic sports pitches. The level of demand is high (67%) and relatively much higher in secondary schools than in other school types.
- 12 The findings from the *Scottish Schools Grounds Survey* should be used to support the need for adequate provision for sports fields in new build schools.

FURTHER ENQUIRY

- x Consideration should be given to commissioning supplementary research or granting permission for research to develop the dataset by adding a classification of whether secondary schools are within the catchment areas of Social Inclusion Partnership areas. This would allow for the results of the *Scottish School Grounds Survey* to be used to provide baseline information relevant to the *Sport 21* targets.
- xi Further research should be undertaken to understand the reasons why the poor quality of sports pitches was judged to be a particular problem in primary (35%) and secondary schools (43%). The importance of this issue is heightened given the potential role of sports pitches in meeting community needs and suggests that this issue should be considered as part of a community sports development strategy.

- xii Further research should be undertaken on sports pitch availability in primary schools. Half of Scotland's primary schools possess their own sports pitch. The reasons why the 'other half' do not possess a sports pitch – and the prospects for providing sports pitches among these schools – would be worthy of further consideration.
- xiii Further research should be undertaken on the grounds lost to secondary schools, 19% of which have lost grounds in the last 10 years, with 10% losing playing fields. It is important to ascertain whether the area lost is a threat to the resource base, or whether lost ground was surplus to requirements.
- xiv Further research should be undertaken to examine the relationship between in-school and out-of-school activity patterns. The suggestion that active play in school grounds should be included in the analysis of the extent to which physical activity targets are being achieved among children raises the question of the extent to which active play in school grounds compensates or merely replicates out-of-school patterns of physical activity among children.

POLICY AND PRACTICE IN SCOTTISH SOCIETY

Nature of education

- 12.24 The future of education in Scotland has been debated extensively in recent years. School grounds have been marginal to these debates; at most, the value of school grounds has been implicit. The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* makes explicit the contribution of school grounds to learning in Scottish schools. Thus, the survey helps to clarify what might be expected of school grounds if they are to contribute effectively to a modern education system in which "... all schools have the right facilities, ... are well designed, well built and provide a flexible environment which continues to meet future needs" (Scottish Executive, 2003a, p.4).

FURTHER ENQUIRY

- xv The issue of afternoon breaks should be reviewed. One in ten schools have an afternoon break. It would be interesting to explore the reasons for having such a break and whether there is an evidence base to support it on pedagogic grounds. Such a study should include an examination of the effects of the length of breaks (including morning and lunchtime breaks) on the nature of activity undertaken.

Scotland's school estate

- 12.25 The much-heralded school buildings programme is currently re-building or substantially renovating many schools in Scotland. This commitment to modernise Scotland's school estate is to be applauded. However, as we have found in debates on the future of education in Scotland, the implications for school grounds are not made explicit.
- 12.26 Although the majority of schools have grounds that are perceived by respondents to be proportionate to need, a substantial proportion of schools – almost a third – consider that their grounds are "too small". Furthermore, 'lack of space' was seen as a problem in almost a quarter of Scottish schools.
- 12.27 Maintenance of school grounds is reported to be a significant problem in Scotland's schools and attention should be paid to why such a significant proportion are concerned with this issue. The finding that schools with their own grounds maintenance policy are less likely to report maintenance to be a problem in their

school grounds tends to suggest that introducing school grounds maintenance policies may contribute toward tackling this problem.

- 12.28 In new build schools, maintenance is often arranged under separate contract, which may restrict opportunities to develop grounds for educational benefits.
- 12.29 The extent to which schools vary by size within nursery, primary, and secondary schools, the uneven distribution of school size across local authorities and the wide differences between smaller and larger schools, is demonstrative of the wide diversity in Scotland's school estate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* finding that school grounds are widely used for the purposes of curriculum learning should be used to campaign for a broadening of *Scottish Executive Education Department and School Estates Division* to focus on the school campus (buildings and grounds), rather than the current, more limited, focus on school buildings.
- 14 Flexibility should be provided within the maintenance policy where this is contracted out (for example PPP schools), to give schools the ability to influence and shape the nature of their school grounds for educational benefit over the lifetime of the contract.

FURTHER ENQUIRY

- xvi Given the importance of grounds to learning, sport and play, consideration should be given to commissioning supplementary research to examine the significance of grounds lost to development in more detail.
- xvii Local authorities using PPP should be encouraged to consider the implications for school grounds, *at each stage of the re-development process*. Anecdotal evidence included with questionnaire returns by survey respondents, suggests that the proposed redevelopment of schools is a significant reason for not developing school grounds as a learning resource in the interim period.
- xviii Local authorities should be encouraged to clarify the responsibilities for school grounds maintenance and, in particular, the role accorded to schools. One in ten respondents did not provide data on whether their school grounds had a maintenance policy (10%). Subsequent research should also clarify the author of maintenance policies for school grounds, i.e. the school or local authority.

School staffing

- 12.30 The McCrone report (Scottish Executive, 2003a) discharged teachers from non-teaching based grounds duties. A wide range of adults now share responsibility for supervising school grounds activity. In order to facilitate and enrich break time activity in school grounds, it may be necessary for classroom assistants and playground supervisors to undertake dedicated training, particularly if Casey's assertion that play in schools should be at the centre of a framework for inclusion is to be realised (Casey, 2003b).
- 12.31 Evidence of uneven use of school grounds to support the curriculum across different curriculum fields tends to suggest that there is untapped potential which could be realised through training.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 15 Local authorities should be briefed on the need to incorporate play-related training into the staff development of classroom assistants and playground supervisors. Such training would address issues such as safety, but would also raise awareness of the importance of play, the value of risk and best practice for adults in facilitating play.
- 16 Local authorities should be encouraged to undertake staff development work with teachers, which would demonstrate the potential of using school grounds in learning. Such staff development could draw upon exemplars of good practice and may be indicative of a supporting role for organisations such as *Grounds for Learning*.

FURTHER ENQUIRY

- xix. Further school grounds research should examine the implications of the McCrone report on school grounds development projects. It may be reasonable to assume that teachers will be less motivated to initiate or become involved in projects that do not have a curriculum focus, as McCrone has led to relief of responsibility for these matters. This may lead to a narrowing of focus for improvement projects (curriculum learning becoming more prominent).

Schools and their communities

- 12.32 Competing visions of the school and its community have been promoted in recent years. On the one hand, schools are seen as a community resource (as encouraged through *Integrated Community Schools*). On the other hand, there is a desire to protect schools and pupils from undesirable threats from the community (as evidenced by the use of CCTV). Resolving these tensions would allow a more coherent vision of the school and its community to be promoted.
- 12.33 School-community relations tend to focus on the school campus, i.e. the extent to which the wider community is encouraged or discouraged from using school buildings and grounds. The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* suggests that there may be merit in broadening the focus of enquiry to reflect on the significance of school ownership of off-site sports pitches and schools maintaining grounds in the community, which is most prevalent in northern rural/island Scotland.
- 12.34 In addition to formal use by community organisations, school grounds are used in a range of ways outside school hours. Secondary school grounds are used much more frequently and in a much greater range of ways than primary schools.
- 12.35 Although the financial cost to Scottish schools of vandalism has fallen in recent years, vandalism is still reported to be prevalent and is the main problem in many of Scotland's schools. The finding that vandalism appears to be more of a problem when school grounds are used informally outside school hours should be acknowledged.
- 12.36 It will not always be possible for schools to 'extend' their grounds. Yet, at present only 5% of schools in Scotland are responsible for grounds outwith the school campus.

FURTHER ENQUIRY

- xx Future school grounds research should be undertaken into the nature of community use of school grounds. The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* provides headline data on the incidence of grounds sharing with community organisations. Given the wider significance of community-school interactions

under the *Integrated Community Schools* initiative and national strategies to make Scotland more physically active, there would be merit in furthering understanding of the nature of community use of school grounds. In particular, it would be helpful to understand why community groups use school grounds in only an eighth of primary schools and why grounds sharing is more common in rural areas.

Community transport and planning

- 12.37 Schools are considered to have a role to play in facilitating 'safer' journeys to and from school. School grounds, as the transition zone between the journey to school and school itself (e.g. as a dropping-off point), must be considered in community transport and school travel planning. The findings of the survey suggest that there is a need to reconsider the nature of the 'school transport' problem and thereafter to promote a transport strategy that has children to the fore.

FURTHER ENQUIRY

xxi Sustrans and other agencies concerned with promoting safer journeys to and from school should be encouraged to explore the reasons why three-fifths of schools in Scotland report that they 'do not have' and 'do not want more' bike racks. Although a fifth of schools in Scotland report a need for more bike racks, the overall findings will be a cause for concern for those concerned with promoting more sustainable journeys to and from school.

Sustainability

- 12.38 In addition to their potential to facilitate more environmentally sustainable forms of transport, school grounds are considered by activists to be a valuable resource which could be used to foster environmental awareness and stewardship among young people.
- 12.39 With their natural links to outdoor education, school grounds are a readily available resource for environmental education. Demos has argued that new ways should be found "to facilitate environmental education through out-of-school learning and green school design" (Thomas and Thompson, 2004, p.3). The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* provides data which helps understand the extent to which schools currently encompass school grounds elements (such as recycling facilities) which would be expected to be integral to the design of a 'green school'.
- 12.40 Three-quarters of schools in Scotland report that they 'do not have' and 'do not want more' recycling facilities. Similarly, few schools are interested in having a compost heap.

FURTHER ENQUIRY

xxii This baseline survey provides useful input to, and one possible measure of the impact of, the Eco Schools programme. If the survey is repeated after a period of time it could provide a useful indicator of local authority efforts to implement recycling and sustainable practice within the school community.

xxiii Further consideration needs to be given to the measurement of sustainability of school grounds projects as this is a key element of success.

Biodiversity

- 12.41 School grounds have the potential to contribute to schemes that promote environmental stewardship, such as *Eco Schools*, *Forest Schools* and *Local*

Biodiversity Plans. The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* provides baseline information on the area types and features that are found in Scotland's school grounds.

- 12.42 Within the wider debate on sustainable (school grounds) development, is a specific concern to support and enhance biodiversity. Although the *Scottish Biodiversity Strategy* acknowledges that "children ... experience more firsthand learning about biodiversity in the open spaces around them" (Scottish Executive, 2004), there has been insufficient exploration of the contribution of school grounds to this national agenda. Organisations such as Grounds for Learning and Eco Schools have a role in developing this. The findings of the survey could clarify the potential contribution of school grounds to Local Biodiversity Action Plans. This, in turn, might be viewed as a step toward the higher goal of recommending standards for biodiversity in Scottish school grounds in Scotland. Baseline data on area diversity in school grounds could be used to inform these standards.
- 12.43 Findings from the survey suggest that school grounds size need not be a barrier to area type diversity, which will include natural areas that support wildlife.
- 12.44 Individuals and organisations (including Local Biodiversity Plan officers, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Scottish Natural Heritage, and others with a remit to promote biodiversity) will have an interest in the natural resource value of school grounds. The survey gathered data on natural area types, such as woodland, and features, such as bird boxes, which are likely to support biodiversity. Of note was the prominence of trees as the most commonly occurring feature in Scottish school grounds. This survey highlights the potential for further enhancing natural resources within school grounds.
- 12.45 Consideration could be given to using derelict areas or wasteland as focus for a campaign to target school grounds improvement. A significant minority of schools reported that they had derelict areas or wasteland in the grounds. These areas may be naturally diverse and could make a significant contribution to local biodiversity as well as having intrinsic educational value.
- 12.46 The finding that 5% of schools already maintain grounds in the community is suggestive of a potential role for schools in supporting – and possibly enhancing – biodiversity in their local communities.
- 12.47 The survey found that nursery schools expressed the greatest demand for 'landscape' area types. This may be indicative of a stronger role for nursery schools in Local Biodiversity Action Plans, but also of a need to promote the use and appreciation of landscape and biodiversity across other school sectors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

17 Findings should be shared with Scottish Executive Biodiversity Group, the Local Biodiversity Action Plan network, Eco Schools and other partners in the field, in order to highlight the significant role school grounds play in providing opportunities to support biodiversity, and the support available to promote best practice, with the underlying concern that hard surface areas still dominate the school grounds landscape.

FURTHER ENQUIRY

xxiv The desire by schools who already have a good number of area types to want more suggests that exposure to diversity (which will include natural area types) enhances appreciation of their benefits. The role for raising awareness and understanding of these benefits should be explored, both from the point of view of child and adult.

xxv Current information provided to schools on biodiversity needs to be assessed in order to enhance advice that supports the role schools can play in promoting biodiversity, as well as furthering understanding of biodiversity across the whole curriculum.

Inclusion

- 12.48 School grounds are an important space for those concerned to promote an inclusive society in Scotland. However, the survey found that 28% of school grounds used by special schools and SEN units were judged only to be “mainly” accessible for pupils with SEN.
- 12.49 Those responding from special schools considered that school grounds were relatively more important to pupils with SEN than to those without SEN.
- 12.50 Almost a fifth of respondents (from SEN units in mainstream schools) did not provide data on the whether their pupils with special educational needs integrated with ‘other children’ at break time (19%). This may suggest a lack of awareness pertaining to break time activity, or it may suggest a specific lack of awareness into issues pertaining to SEN pupils.
- 12.51 Most primary school grounds are segregated by age group, with larger schools more likely to have such segregation.

FURTHER ENQUIRY

- xxvi Consideration should be given to using the survey to contribute toward social inclusion debates in Scotland. It would be helpful if a measure of community well-being was included in the analysis of the dataset in order to inform understanding of the extent to which all children have access to a quality school grounds environment in Scotland.
- xxvii Future school grounds research should explore whether or not segregation by age changes behaviour and whether de-segregating school grounds may lead to a more inclusive environment at break times. It might be most interesting to explore this for primary schools with a population of between 100 and 200 pupils (which are equally divided between those with segregated grounds and those whose grounds are not).

Children and society

- 12.52 It has been argued that the way in which authorities manage school grounds is indicative of the status of children in schools/society (Titman, 1994). Similarly, many of the issues that concern children in wider society also impinge upon school grounds.
- 12.53 The wide range of ways in which children have been involved in school grounds development projects reinforces the potential of children to be considered as active citizens in their schools.
- 12.54 There are inequities in access to school grounds across age stages. The restrictions placed upon pupil’s access to school grounds during break times are most stringent in primary schools.
- 12.55 The low proportion of schools reporting bullying to be a problem in their school grounds (less than ten per cent) tends to contradict expert knowledge that suggests that the issue is more prevalent in schools. However it may be that schools did not report bullying as a problem in response to the questionnaire as they considered the problem to be under control or being addressed effectively.

- 12.56 The redevelopment of school grounds raises interesting questions in light of Titman's contention that school grounds are perceived by children to be children's space (Titman, 1994). On the one hand (and as Titman suggests) developing school grounds might enhance children's self-esteem in that children may perceive this to be an indication of adults valuing them (and their needs). On the other hand, the possibility of school grounds being transformed to facilitate curriculum learning and the increasing regulation of children's use of school grounds could be perceived as an attempt by adults to take over their space.

FURTHER ENQUIRY

xxviii School ground behaviour codes are commonplace throughout Scotland's schools. Future school grounds research should ascertain the extent to which children and young people are empowered or constrained through these codes, i.e. the extent to which they are envisaged as 'active citizens' or as a group to be controlled and regulated.

xxix The reasons why schools restrict access to certain areas of the school grounds needs further enquiry - whether this is due to real or perceived risk, poor grounds design, inadequate outdoor shelter and clothing, or behaviour issues and supervision reasons.

xxx In accordance with Article 12 of the *United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child* (United Nations, 1989), further research should seek to engage children to ascertain their perspectives on the issues raised in this report.

CONCLUSION

The *Scottish Schools Grounds Survey* demonstrates that school grounds are valued and used as a resource for curriculum learning, sport and play. However, there are many ways in which school grounds, and the ways in which they are used, could be improved and developed. The findings of this study highlight a range of issues for consideration by policy makers and practitioners.

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ANNEX 1: RESEARCH DESIGN

- A1.01 To meet the objectives of the project partners, SPIU proposed a school census, to be completed by the head teacher (or equivalent/nominee). A survey was considered to be a robust means of providing key and baseline data on the nature and use of school grounds in Scotland.
- A1.02 Having consulted published literature and research on school grounds, SPIU drafted a questionnaire for primary schools. Amended versions of the primary schools questionnaire were drafted to tailor the questions to meet the particular needs of other school age-stages (nursery schools and secondary schools) and educational needs (Special Educational Needs).
- A1.03 Insert surveys were used for schools with more than one age-stage or an age-stage and Special Educational Needs. See para 1.08 below for more information. Insert surveys were devised for nursery classes, encapsulated primary level education and Special Educational Need Units.
- A1.04 The surveys were piloted in Midlothian District Council in May 2003 and minor amendments were made to the questionnaire. The final primary school version can be found in Annex 2.
- A1.05 The questionnaires were distributed at the end of the 2002/03 school year or the start of the 2003/04 school year, reflecting the preferences of the Director of Education (or equivalent).

SAMPLING FRAME

- A1.06 The sampling frame was all schools managed by local authorities (secondary schools, primary schools, nursery schools and special schools) and private sector establishments which had entered into a partnership agreement to provide nursery level education.
- A1.07 The Scottish Executive Education Department provided data on primary, secondary and special schools (school rolls (September 2001), and addresses (August 2002)). Data on nursery level education was based on information collected by the Scottish Executive in September 2001.
- The following data was provided for each school (Primary, Secondary and Special): local authority area, sector (local authority or independent), unique school code, mail address, telephone number, fax number, roll and whether the school had an integrated Special Educational Needs unit. This data permitted identification of state sector schools and the classification of schools according to age state and provision of Special Educational Needs. This data is now available on-line (Scottish Executive Education Department, 2004).
 - The following data was provided for stand alone providers of nursery level education: local authority area, association with local authority (local authority owned or Partnership Agreement), whether or not centre was attached to a Primary School, unique nursery code and mail address.
- A1.08 The Scottish Executive Education Department datasets highlighted the need to be sensitive to the range of educational provision within education establishments. In particular, 1055 primary schools were providing nursery level education through nursery classes and there were almost as many Special Educational Needs units in attached to secondary schools as there were stand-alone special schools. For this reason, the decision was taken to use insert surveys to obtain responses on issues for which school grounds experience might be expected to differ among different populations within the same educational establishment.

A1.09 An initial review of the basic dataset provided by the Scottish Executive Education Department, suggested that Scotland's state-sector school estate comprised:

- 2567 providers of nursery level education (including 1512 nursery-level only establishments),
- 3324 providers of primary level education (3294 primary schools and 30 primary/secondary schools),
- 388 providers of secondary level education (358 primary schools and 30 primary/secondary schools),
- 199 providers of 'Special Needs' education (including 153 stand alone special schools and 46 stand alone Special Educational Needs units).

These estimates were revised downward following a data quality check (A1.10, A1.14).

A1.10 The Scottish Executive Education Department datasets were used to generate address labels for the postal survey. However, some problems were encountered in using this data.

- 92 surveys (2%) were returned unopened by the Post Office on account of "addressee unknown"; 55 of these were from providers of nursery level education, 27 from primary schools, 5 from secondary schools and 5 from special schools. More than half of the surveys returned were from Edinburgh District Council (53 surveys), with surveys from a further 16 local authorities being returned unopened.
- Similarly, a small minority of schools returned survey inserts explaining that they did not deliver the type of education to which the insert referred. Thus, the datasets comprised some errors which may have reflected recent changes in Scotland's school estate (for example, changes in Partnership Agreements at nursery level, or the rationalisation of Scotland's school estate in light of demographic changes).
- Some double entries were found in the dataset.
- No telephone contact numbers were presented for providers of nursery level education. This limited the use of follow-up telephone calls as a strategy to contact non-respondents.

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

Consent and Endorsement

A1.11 The survey had the support of the Association of Education Directors in Scotland which was informed of the survey at the outset and agreed to contact members to ask for their support in facilitating the research in their local authority.

A1.12 The survey had the support of Education Directors (or their equivalent) in Scottish local authorities. Each Director of Education granted permission for SPIU to survey head teachers in their local authority area and the vast majority also provided a letter of endorsement which was sent to head teachers alongside the survey.

A1.13 Head teachers (or their equivalent) were asked to arrange for the completion of the survey on behalf of their school. Survey respondents were provided with a project information sheet, endorsement letter from their Director of Education (or their equivalent), survey (and insert where appropriate) and stamped addressed envelope.

Distribution

A1.14 The Scottish Executive Education Department's key information on Scotland's school estate, permitted classification of schools into eleven types for the purpose of survey distribution. Final distribution of surveys and inserts was as follows.

- 1425 stand-alone providers of nursery level education (local authority and partnership)
- 1115 stand-alone primary schools
- 176 stand-alone secondary schools
- 183 stand-alone special schools or Special Educational Needs units (special schools and SEN Units)
- 821 primary schools with nursery classes
- 66 primary schools with Special Educational Needs units
- 13 secondary schools with primary classes
- 169 secondary schools with Special Educational Needs units
- 159 primary schools with nursery classes and Special Educational Needs units
- 11 secondary schools with nursery classes and primary classes
- 6 secondary schools with nursery classes, primary classes and Special Educational Needs units

A1.15 Surveys were posted to schools addressed for the attention of the 'head teacher'.

A1.16 Reminder notices were sent to schools that had not returned their survey by the deadline. These reminder notices set a new return date for surveys.

SURVEY CONTENT

A1.17 The main (full-length) surveys were presented as a 4 page, A4 sized booklet. Insert surveys were presented as a 1 page, 1 side, A4 sheet.

A1.18 The full-length questionnaires were structured into eight sections: background information, character of grounds, planning and school grounds, school grounds as a resource, rules and monitoring, problems, use of grounds and improvements. See questionnaire in Annex 2.

A1.19 The questionnaires were adapted for each school type to ensure relevance but there was a strong common core of questions that were asked in all full-length surveys. Further detail on this can be obtained from **sportscotland** or the author if required.

A1.20 Insert surveys focused on issues which were not 'whole school' issues and, therefore, those for which differences between age-stages would be significant. The key issues addressed in the insert surveys were as follows.

- Whether or not school grounds were segregated by age stage or educational need.
- Whether or not separate grounds were available to age stages and, if so, perceived adequacy of the size of grounds, features, area types, utility as a learning resource, frequency of use in teaching and whether improvement had been made to grounds .

SURVEY RESPONSE RATE

- A1.21 The response rate to the pilot stage was 30%. There was significant variation by age stage with rates of 47% (Nursery), 60% (Primary) and 29% (Secondary) providing a satisfactory return. However, the response rate for special schools was a concern (1 return from 7 distributed). On the whole, however, the response rate was deemed to be acceptable and variations in response rate were considered to reflect the perceived importance of school grounds to learning across age stages (e.g. higher returns for primary schools than secondary schools).
- A1.22 At 47%, the overall full length survey response rate (main and pilot stages) was significantly higher than the pilot stage, comprising 36% for providers of nursery level education (518 surveys returned), 53% for primary schools (1148 surveys), 52% for secondary schools (207 surveys) and 47% for special schools (90 surveys).
- A1.23 The insert survey response rate (main and pilot stages) was 45%, comprising 49% for providers of nursery level education (493 surveys), 51% for primary schools (19 surveys) and 32% for Special Educational Needs units (129 surveys).
- A1.24 Response rates for the main stage for local authorities ranged from 28% (Edinburgh and Stirling) to 63% (East Ayrshire and South Lanarkshire).
- A1.25 Response rates provided an adequate sample size to facilitate analysis by school type, school size (roll), local authority and age of school, and multivariate analysis of most school types within local authority areas, e.g. comparing primary schools in East Ayrshire and primary schools in South Lanarkshire.

RESPONSE RATE, SURVEY QUESTIONS

- A1.26 On the whole, the response rate to individual survey questions was highly satisfactory. The median for positive response rate (not "missing" or responding 'don't know if eligible to complete question) for the whole survey was 97%, with a mean positive response rate of 95%.
- A1.27 The question with the lowest response rate was age of school. Seven per cent left the question unanswered and 17% responded that they did not know when their school was built.
- A1.28 A significant minority of respondents did not provide a positive response to three further questions:
- 19% of respondents did not answer the question on the integration of pupils with special educational needs and 'other children' in school grounds play.
 - One sixth of respondents either did not complete (4%) or responded that they did not know (12%) when improvements to their school grounds commenced.
 - Almost a sixth of respondents either did not complete (4%) or responded that they did not know (12%) if school grounds were referred to in their 'inclusion strategy'. This may reflect a low level of awareness in the school's/local authority's approach to inclusion.
- A1.29 Furthermore, around a tenth of respondents did not provide responses to four further questions.
- 11% did not provide a response to the question asking if they had started to improve their school grounds.

- One in twelve respondents did not know whether their school had a school grounds maintenance policy (8%), with a further minority (2%) not responding to this question.
- 9% did not respond to the question asking them whether their school participated in any educational projects (such as *Safe Routes to Schools*).
- 9% of respondents who identified problems in their school grounds, did not identify their most significant problem.

A1.30 Caution is taken when interpreting and using this data in this report. However, it should be stressed that the patterns of responses to the vast majority of questions was highly satisfactory.

ANALYSIS

A1.31 The preparation of the *Scottish School Grounds Survey* database was a complex process, comprising fifteen stages. Further detail is available from **sportscotland** or the author.

A1.32 The Scottish School Grounds database was analysed using SPSS.

CRITICAL REVIEW

A1.33 The *Scottish School Grounds Survey* database is a resource which could be used to further understanding of school grounds in Scotland (and, with careful interpretation, beyond Scotland). Response rates exceeded expectations for a survey of this ilk and returns were high facilitating analysis by school type (age stage and educational need), school size (roll), local authority and age of school.

A1.34 Some specific limitations should be acknowledged.

- The delivery of nursery level education currently requires the state sector to reach Partnership Agreements with many private sector providers who do not have any 'school grounds'.
- The understanding of 'organised' outdoor sport could be clarified to distinguish between activity undertaken through physical education and the extra-curricular use of school grounds for sporting activity by after-school clubs and community groups. However the main purpose of this question was to obtain an understanding of what sports could be undertaken using the available facilities and this was achieved.
- The introduction of new programmes and initiatives (Health Promoting Schools, etc.) implies that any future list of project involvement would require an extended list of options.
- The questionnaire does not ask for information on school ground size, either in its totality, or its sub-total by area type. It was decided that this would be difficult for many schools to provide and could affect response rates.
- The questionnaire does not ask for information on the quality and nature of school ground area types, e.g. whether grassed areas are prone to flooding or well-drained, flat or undulating, etc.
- Data on school's daily timetable should acknowledge that some schools operate a division of break-times for age-stages.
- Data on school ground development should acknowledge that some schools have undergone more than one phase of development.

A1.35 There were few instances where a very high proportion of respondents provided a common response in the “Other” category that was not presented as a fixed response option. However, subsequent research on specific themes may wish to extend the list of fixed response options to include the following additional responses which were repeated by several respondents (percentage of valid respondents in parenthesis).

- *Sharing Grounds.* After School Clubs (3%), LEA/Health Board (1%), Church (0.7%) and residence of owner (0.6%)
- *Project Participation.* Sport (8%), Health Promoting School (2%) and Grounds for Learning project (1%)
- *Organised Sports.* Sports for pre-school (2.5%), 10 Pin Bowling (1.8%) and Lacrosse (0.7%)
- *On Site Sports Pitches.* Netball (3%), all-weather surface (1.3%) and grass (1.4%)
- *Area Types, Have.* Soft play surface (5.5%) and Bark (0.7%)
- *Monitoring Playground Out of School Hours.* Users with whom ground share (2.3%), Police (1.2%), Senior Management Team (1.2%) and neighbourhood (1%)
- *Monitoring Playground at Break Time.* Senior Management Team (9%)m Special Educational Needs Assistant (2.3%) and Administrator (1%)
- *Weather Rules.* Extreme weather proviso (4%), Clothing proviso (2%) and avoiding bark area (1%)
- *Areas Forbidden From in Inclement Weather.* Restriction on numbers using grounds (2.4%), Grass (1.5%), specified area (1%), always accompanied (1%)
- *Playground Problems.* Lack of sports fields (2%), Drainage (1.5%), Animal fouling (1%), Topography (1%) and Litter (1%)
- *Car Park, Problems.* No car park (2%), Parking behaviour (0.5%) and Sharing with others (5%)
- *Improvement Project, Focus.* Seats (2.3%), Safety (1.5%), Storage (1%) and Sensory garden (1%)
- *Improvement Project, Idea for.* ‘Other unspecified worker’ (2%) and Funders (1%)
- *Improvement Project, Barriers to.* Ownership of grounds (2%), Limited grounds to develop (2%), Closure of school pending (1.8%) and Other work being undertaken in school (1.5%)
- *Respondent.* Manager/owner (5%), Playleader (1.5%), Administrator (1.2%) and SEN Assistant (0.8%).

A1.36 Such limitations as do exist do not compromise the *Scottish School Grounds Survey* and can be accounted for in analysis.

ANNEX 2: SAMPLE SURVEY (PRIMARY SCHOOL)

[The following text is extremely faint and illegible, appearing to be a list of names or data points.]

1st National Census of Scottish School Grounds



sportscotland
widening opportunities • developing potential • achieving excellence

You have been asked to complete the survey for

PRIMARY SCHOOLS

There are three styles of questions

1. Add answer (**very few questions**)
2. Circle one answer (**many questions**)
3. Circle all answers that apply (**many questions**)

Please provide one answer for each question, unless the question ends with the italicised request for you to “(circle all answers that apply)”

Please complete this survey and return to us using the pre-paid envelope.

About Your School

1	When was your school built?	
	(Write year in box)	
	Don't know	88

2	Has your school lost any land to building development in the last 10 years?	
	No	1
	Yes, Playing Fields	2
	Yes, Other School Grounds	3
	Yes, Playing Fields & Other School Grounds	4
	Don't Know	88

3	With whom do you share your school grounds? (<i>circle all answers that apply</i>)	
	Playgroup	1
	Nursery school	2
	Other Primary school	3
	Secondary school	4
	Special school/SEN unit	5
	Community organisation	6
	Other (circle & describe)	66
	No-one	77

4	Please provide information on your school timetable (give times or leave blank, e.g. if no break)	
	Start Breakfast Club	
	Start School Day	
	Start Morning Break	
	End Morning Break	
	Start Lunch	
	End Lunch	
	Start Afternoon Break	
	End Afternoon Break	
	End School Day	
End After School Club/s		

5	Which, if any, of the following is your school involved with? (circle all answers that apply)	
	Safe Routes to Schools	1
	Eco-schools	2
	Active Primary School	3
	Other (circle & describe)	66
	None	77

Character of Grounds

6	Relative to your school roll, are your school grounds	
	Much too small	1
	Too small	2
	About the right size	3
	Too large	4
	Much too large	5
	Don't Know	88

7	Do you have separate playgrounds for older and younger children?	
	Yes	1
	No	2
	Don't Know	88

8	Which, sports are played as ORGANISED OUTDOOR ACTIVITY in your school grounds in PE, or by AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS or by COMMUNITY GROUPS? (circle all answers that apply)	
	Athletics	1
	Basketball	2
	Cricket	3
	Football, 11-a-side	4
	Football, 7-a-side	5
	Football, 5-a-side	6
	Hockey	7
	Netball	8
	Rounders	9
	Rugby	10
	Shinty	11
	Tennis	12
	Other (circle & describe)	66
		None

9	How many of the following sports pitches you have in ON-SITE school grounds (add NUMBER of pitches for each type)	
	Grass pitches	
	Blaes/mineral pitches	
	Synthetic grass pitches	
	Cricket wicket	
	Tennis courts	
	Athletics track	
	Other (circle & describe)	66
	No on-site sports pitches	77

10	Please provide details of how many of the following sports pitches you have in OFF-SITE grounds which belong to the school (add NUMBER of pitches for each type)	
	Grass pitches	
	Blaes/mineral pitches	
	Synthetic grass pitches	
	Cricket wicket	
	Tennis courts	
	Athletics track	
	Other (circle & describe)	66
	No off-site sports pitches	77

11	Which of the following do your school grounds have? (circle all answers that apply)	
	Food growing area	1
	Plant growing area, in ground	2
	Plant growing area, containers	3
	Inner courtyard	4
	Wooded area (cluster of trees)	5
	Grass sports pitch	6
	Synthetic grass pitch	7
	Grass area, not used for sport	8
	Blaes/mineral sports pitch	9
	Car park	10
	Hard surface playground	11
	Sheltered area	12
	Pond or Marsh	13
	Areas of 'wild' grass	14
Derelict area/wasteland	15	
Other (circle & describe)	66	

12	Which of the following would you say your school needs MORE of? (circle all answers that apply)	
	Food growing area	1
	Plant growing area, in ground	2
	Plant growing area, containers	3
	Inner courtyard	4
	Wooded area (cluster of trees)	5
	Grass sports pitch	6
	Synthetic grass pitch	7
	Grass area, not used for sport	8
	Blaes/mineral sports pitch	9
	Car park	10
	Hard surface playground	11
	Sheltered area	12
	Pond or Marsh	13
	Areas of 'wild' grass	14
Derelict area/wasteland	15	
Other (circle & describe)	66	
None of the above	77	

13	Which of the following features are part of your school grounds? (circle all answers that apply)	
	Bike racks	1
	Seating areas	2
	Outdoor shelter	3
	Picnic area/tables	4
	Specific parent waiting area	5
	Murals	6
	Sculptures	7
	Other Artwork (not 6 & 7)	8
	Sandpit	9
	Painted playground markings	10
	Temporary playground markings (e.g. chalking)	11
	Fixed Play equipment	12
	Non-fixed play equipment	13
	Tree/s	14
	Pond/water feature	15
	Bird box/table	16
	Wildlife habitats	17
	Wildflower area	18
	Nature trail	19
	Bins	20
	Compost heap	21
	Other Recycling facility	22
	Weather station	23
	Equipment storage facility	24
Other (circle & describe)	66	
None of the above	77	

14	Which of the following would you say your school needs more of? (circle all answers that apply)	
	Bike racks	1
	Seating areas	2
	Outdoor shelter	3
	Picnic area/tables	4
	Specific parent waiting area	5
	Murals	6
	Sculptures	7
	Other Artwork (not 6 & 7)	8
	Sandpit	9
	Painted playground markings	10
	Temporary playground markings (e.g. chalking)	11
	Fixed Play equipment	12
	Non-fixed play equipment	13
	Tree/s	14
	Pond/water feature	15
	Bird box/table	16
	Wildlife habitats	17
	Wildflower area	18
	Nature trail	19
	Bins	20
	Compost heap	21
	Other Recycling facility	22
	Weather station	23
	Equipment storage facility	24
Other (circle & describe)	66	
None of the above	77	

Planning and School Grounds

1 5	To what extent have school grounds been referred to in your development plan?		
	Main priority/issue	1	
	High priority/issue	2	
	Low priority/issue	3	
	Not at all	4	
	Plan not yet written	5	
	Don't know	88	

1 6	Does your school have a 'code of conduct' or set of rules for playground behaviour?		
	Yes	1	
	No	2	
	No, but being planned	3	
	Don't know	88	

1 7	Does your school have a 'school grounds maintenance policy'?		
	Yes	1	
	No	2	
	Don't Know	88	

1 8	Are your school grounds referred to in your inclusion strategy?		
	Yes	1	
	No	2	
	Have no 'inclusion' strategy	3	
	Don't Know	88	

School Grounds as Resource

1 9	How useful are YOUR school grounds as a CURRICULUM LEARNING RESOURCE?		
	Not at all useful	1	
	Quite useful	2	
	Very useful	3	
	Essential	4	
	Don't know	88	

2 0	How useful are YOUR school grounds as a RESOURCE for SPORT/PHYSICAL ACTIVITY?		
	Not at all useful	1	
	Quite useful	2	
	Very useful	3	
	Essential	4	
	Don't know	88	

2 1	How useful are YOUR school grounds as a PLAY RESOURCE?		
	Not at all useful	1	
	Quite useful	2	
	Very useful	3	
	Essential	4	
	Don't know	88	

2 2	Which pupils make most use of school grounds in learning? (circle all answers that apply)		
	P1 - P3 (Infant)	2	
	P4 - P5 (Middle)	3	
	P6- P7 (Senior)	4	
	All use to same degree	12	
	Don't Know	88	

2 3	Are your school grounds being used to support learning in these curriculum areas? (circle all answers that apply)		
	Religious and moral education	11	
	Personal & social development	12	
	Environmental, Science Studies	31	
	Environmental, Social Studies	32	
	Environmental, Technological	33	
	Mathematics	21	
	Language	22	
	Expressive Arts, Drama	41	
	Expressive Arts, Art and Design	42	
	Expressive Arts, Music	43	
	Physical education	51	
	ICT	61	
	None of the above	77	
	Don't Know	88	

2 4	How often are YOUR school grounds used during teaching time for PHYSICAL EDUCATION / GAMES?		
	Never	1	
	Rarely	2	
	Not very often	3	
	Quite often	4	
	Very often	5	
	All the time	6	
	Don't know	88	

2 5	How often are YOUR school grounds used during teaching time for OTHER learning (NOT physical education/games)?		
	Never	1	
	Rarely	2	
	Not very often	3	
	Quite often	4	
	Very often	5	
	All the time	6	
	Don't know	88	

Rules and Monitoring

2 6	Who monitors the playground outside school hours? (circle all answers that apply)		
	No-one	77	
	Janitors	1	
	Security guards/company	2	
	CCTV	3	
	Neighbours/Local residents	4	
	Other (circle & describe)	66	

2 7	Who monitors the playground during playtime/lunchtime? (circle all answers that apply)		
	Janitors	1	
	Security guards/company	2	
	CCTV	3	
	Playground Supervisors	4	
	Classroom Assistants	52	
	teachers	62	
	Parents/Volunteers	7	
	Prefects	8	
	Other (circle & describe)	66	
	None of the above	77	

2 8	How, if at all, are children restricted from using the school grounds in inclement weather? (circle all answers that apply)		
	Not allowed to use grass	1	
	Not allowed outside	2	
	Other (circle & describe)	66	
	No restrictions	77	

2 9	From which parts of the school grounds, if any, are children forbidden from visiting some during play/lunch time? (circle all answers that apply)		
	Food growing area	1	
	Planted area	2	
	Marsh area	3	
	Water feature/area	4	
	Wildlife area	5	
	Sports fields	6	
	Car park	7	
	Other hard surface area	8	
	Other age-group's playground	9	
	Other (circle & describe)	66	
	No restrictions	77	

Problems with Grounds

3 0	Which of the following are problems within your school grounds? (circle all answers that apply)		
	Vandalism	1	
	Arson	2	
	Lack of use in teaching	3	
	Maintenance	4	
	Lack of variation in surface	5	
	No/inadequate CCTV	6	
	Noise	7	
	Lack of supervision	8	
	Bullying	9	
	Accidents	10	
	Theft	11	
	Lack of space	12	
	Intrusion from others	13	
	Poor quality of sports pitches	14	
	Other (circle & describe)	66	
	No problems	77	

3 1	Of all the problems listed in Q30 which is the biggest problem for your school grounds? (Write in number from Q30)	
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3 2	Which of the following are problems with car parking? (circle all answers that apply)	
	Inadequate dropping off/picking up area	1
	Lack car parking for parents	2
	Lack car parking for staff	3
	Child safety	4
	Loss of grounds to provide car parking	5
	Design of car park	6
	Other (circle & describe)	66
	None of the above	77

Use of School Grounds

3 3	On a typical day, how many pupils would be involved in ACTIVE play in the playground?	
	All	1
	Almost all	2
	Most	3
	About half	4
	Less than half	5
	Don't know	88

3 4	Are your school grounds used outside school hours?	
	Yes	1 Go to 35
	No	2 Skip to 36
	Don't Know	88 Skip to 36

3 5	If answering YES to Q34, how and by whom are your school grounds outside school hours? (circle all answers that apply)	
	School, curricular activity	1
	School, extra-curricular activity	2
	After-school clubs	3
	Community, organised sport	4
	Community, organised group (BBs Duke of Edinburgh, etc)	5
	Community use, non-organised sport	6
	Community use, space to hang-out	7
	Public right of way	8
	Short-cut	9
	Other (circle & describe)	66
	None	77

Improvements

3 6	Does your school maintain grounds in the community?	
	Yes	1
	No	2
	Don't know	88

3 7	Has your school already started to improve its school grounds?	
	Yes	1 Go to 38
	No	2 Skip to 46
	Don't Know	88 Skip to 46

3 8	Which of the following best describes these improvements to your school grounds?	
	Specific Project	1
	On-going work	2
	Project and on-going work	3

3 9	When did your school start to improve the school grounds? (Write year in box)	
	Don't Know	88

4 0	How much of the school grounds do the improvements cover?	
	All	1
	Most	2
	Small part	3
	Don't know	88

4 1	What is the focus of your work? (circle all answers that apply)	
	Food growing	1
	Plant growing	2
	Wildlife area	3
	Wild areas	4
	Wooded area	5
	Sports	6
	Play	7
	Transport	8
	Appearance of grounds	9
	Other (circle & describe)	66

4 2	Who instigated the improvements? (circle all answers that apply)	
	Head Teacher	1
	Teacher	2
	PTA	3
	School Board	4
	Parents	5
	Pupils	6
	Councillors	7
	Local Education Authority	8
	Other Community Group	9
	Professionals	10
	Other (circle & describe)	66
	Don't Know	88

4 3	What were the motivations for the improvements? (circle all answers that apply)	
	Enhance curriculum	1
	Improve sports resources	2
	Improve play resources	3
	Improve behaviour	4
	Improve safety	5
	Enhance appearance	6
	Involve community	7
	Foster school identity/ethos	8
	Other (circle & describe)	66
	Don't Know	88

4 4	In what ways were pupils involved? (circle all answers that apply)	
	Initiating	1
	Planning	2
	Fund raising	3
	Designing	4
	Constructing	5
	Managing	6
	Maintaining	7
	Using	8
	Other (circle & describe)	66
	Don't Know	88

4 5	How has your school funded these improvements? (circle all answers that apply)	
	Project Grant	1
	Prize Award Winners	2
	Local Education Authority	3
	PTA	4
	School Fundraising	5
	Local Business	6
	Main Budget	7
	Other (circle & describe)	66
	Don't Know	88

4 6	Which of the following, if any, prevent you from taking a more active interest in your school grounds? (circle all answers that apply)	
	Lack of time	1
	Lack of money	2
	Lack of whole school support	3
	Lack of community support	4
	Lack of skills within school	5
	Difficulty accessing expert advice and support	6
	More pressing concerns	7
	use an appropriate level of interest/effort in our school grounds	8
	Other (circle & describe)	66

For the Record

4 7	Who completed this survey? (circle all answers that apply)	
	Head Teacher	1
	Acting Head Teacher	2
	Depute Head Teacher	3
	Assistant Head Teacher	4
	Teacher	
	Senior/Principal Teacher	5
	Teacher	61
	Janitor	7
	Playground Monitor	8
	Classroom Assistant	9
	Other (circle & describe)	66