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Piaskowski K (Karen)

From: Christina Docchar [chrdoc@bps.org.uk]
Sent: 27 May 2005 11:03
To: Parental Involvement Bill
Subject: Parents' Involvement consultation

This email has been received from an external party and
has been swept for the presence of computer viruses.

To whom it may concern

I have pleasure in attaching a response to this consultation prepared by the British Psychological Society
Scottish Division for Educational
Psychology and the Education Section. The Society welcomes the
opportunity to participate.

The British Psychological Society is the learned and professional body, incorporated by Royal Charter, for
psychologists in the United Kingdom. The Society has a total membership of over 42,000 and is a
registered charity.

The key Charter object of the Society is "to promote the advancement and diffusion of the knowledge of
psychology pure and applied and especially to promote the efficiency and usefulness of members by
setting up a high standard of professional education and knowledge".

The Society is authorised under its Royal Charter to maintain the Register of Chartered Psychologists. It
has a code of conduct and investigatory and disciplinary systems in place to consider complaints of
professional misconduct relating to its members. The Society is an examining body granting certificates
and diplomas in specialist areas of professional applied psychology. It also has in place quality assurance
programmes for accrediting both undergraduate and postgraduate university degree courses.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like further information
or further input. The response information form will be faxed through
later this morning.

Yours sincerely

C M Crawshaw C Psychol AFBPsS
Chair, Professional Practice Board

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The
British
Psychological
Society

The British Psychological Society

Response to: Making the difference - Improving Parents' Involvement In Schools: A Consultation On A Draft Bill

The Society broadly welcomes the current proposals for involving parents in schools. There is a large body of literature within education and educational psychology that supports the principle of parental partnership and the current proposal has much to commend it in terms of the flexibility it offers with regard to local variation. However, there are a number of overall concerns that we wish to highlight, as they shape the responses to the questions below.

Firstly, while we appreciate the necessity of local variation, we would wish some clear guidance on the core functions of parents' forums. The obvious challenge is to see an increase in parental participation without those who may wish to participate being daunted by a long list of statutory functions. Therefore, we feel clear guidance on some *core* functions may help in this regard, particularly since there is some vagueness on how this proposal would increase the parental participation. It is likely that the school context itself and general attitudes towards parents is going to be critical in this regard. We would suggest that a pilot study is conducted prior to legislation so that the strengths and barriers within the proposal can be evaluated.

A second issue is that of transparency. There is a danger that without transparent constitutional arrangements then the parent forum could seem like a closed shop to the wider parent group. This of course is contrary to the overall aim of the legislation. It is our view that transparency and openness should be central to the forums and fairness in representation needs to be ensured. In this regard it would be practical to offer several models of how a forum could be constituted, with parts that could be tailored for local contexts. This minimum standard should ensure that the representatives on the forum are accountable to the wider parent body. It is with this same thought in mind that the absolute freedom of the forums to run themselves needs to have some parameters. We also feel that it is imperative that any complaints procedure should be robust enough to handle a wide range of complaints dealing with not only local authority issues, but also issues raised by individual parents who wish to complain about the forum in their school. Our general view is that one general complaints procedure to cover all aspects of education would be simpler, otherwise there could be separate systems covering this proposal as well as Additional Support Needs, appeals to exclusion and others.

The third concern is one of workload. The proposal places duties on the education authority that seem broadly reasonable. However, we would be concerned if the local authorities all chose for these duties to be added to the workload of the head teachers. While it may not be the remit of the legislation to cover this aspect, we consider that parents' forums could require significant amounts of support, whether from an administrative point of view or from other workload issues. We feel it would be beneficial if there were some guidance on how a local authority would achieve this, such as through employing specific officers for the task, rather than a simple offer of financial support. Such an officer could enable a possibly less confident group of parents become more at ease with the duties and processes.

Response to consultation questions:

Question	BPS response
1.	Agree
2.	Don't know if SPIs are required or even useful in moving this forward
3.	Don't know if this is the best mechanism
4.	Agree, so long as national agreed guidelines form core
5.	Do not agree. Transparency, accountability and fairness mean some prescription is required. This could be in the form of models that are proposed with sections that can be tailored.
6.	Agree, although we would like to see more detailed proposal on what practical support would be made available
7.	Agree fully
8.	Agree
9.	Similar to question 5, we would like to see constitutions that are centrally devised, with core components and elements which can be tailored
10.	Broadly agree, but we would wish to see a transparent mechanism to allow parents to remove individuals that were co-opted.
11.	Looked after children could be represented by: a) Social Work representation b) Children nominate representatives themselves c) Foster carers and other professional carers to be able to put themselves forward.
12.	Agree
13.	We think it in the interest of increasing parental participation to allow parents that are non-members to attend as observers at any time. We also feel that the Head Teacher (or their nominee) should have the right to attend, as one core function should be that it is a forum for two way dialogue between school and the parent community
14.	Add core function: it is a forum for two way dialogue between school and the parent community
15.	Agree, however we would wish to see a guideline and mechanism for when dialogue strays into areas in which no satisfaction is reached by either party (school or forum).
16.	Agree
17.	Agree
18.	Agree – consider a post holder such as a Support Officer.
19.	Agree, although we would have concerns about the potential for increased workload and what may be judged reasonable.
20.	Need more detail – this part is somewhat vague. Clear accountability and good practice across Scotland would be beneficial. The exact nature of parents' forum involvement would need to be given more detail.
21.	While parental forum involvement for senior positions is welcomed broadly, we would like to see accountability for head teacher recruitment and appointment to remain with the education authority.
22.	Agree, as stated above we would also wish this complaints procedure to be streamlined and simple, cover a wide range of educational duties and functions and also be able to handle complaints about parents' forums from other parents.

Nick Balchin and Susie Turner
Scottish Division of Educational Psychology

With contributions from Lynne Rogers of the Education Section.

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Piaskowski K (Karen)

From: Christina Docchar [chrdoc@bps.org.uk]
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parentinvolve.doc
(163 KB)

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C M Crawshaw C Psychol AFBPsS
Chair, Professional Practice Board

(See attached file: parentinvolve.doc)

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RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM: 286

Please complete the details below and return it with your response. This will help ensure we handle your response appropriately. Thank you for your help.

Name: Dr Martin Crawshaw

Postal Address: 48 Princess Road East, Leicester LE1 7DR

- 1. Are you responding: (please tick one box)
 - (a) as an individual go to Q2a/b and then Q4
 - (b) **on behalf of** a group/organisation x go to Q3 and then Q4

INDIVIDUALS

- 2a. Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in Scottish Executive library and/or on the Scottish Executive website)?

Yes (go to 2b below)
 No, not at all We will treat your response as confidential

- 2b. Where **confidentiality is not requested**, we will make your response available to the public on the following basis (please tick one of the following boxes)

Yes, make my response, name and address all available
 Yes, make my response available, but not my name or address
 Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address

ON BEHALF OF GROUPS OR ORGANISATIONS:

- 3. The name and address of your organisation **will be** made available to the public (in the Scottish Executive library and/or on the Scottish Executive website). Are you also content for your **response** to be made available?

Yes x
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SHARING RESPONSES/FUTURE ENGAGEMENT

- 4. We will share your response internally with other Scottish Executive policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for the Scottish Executive to contact you again in the future in relation to this consultation response?

Yes x
 No

