

# respondee information form

Please complete the details below and attach it with your response. This will help ensure we handle your response appropriately:

Name: DALE A HAIGH

Consultation title: **Making the difference – Improving parents' involvement in schools**

**1. Are you responding as:** (please tick one box)

(a) an individual?

(go to 2a/b)

(b) **on behalf of** a group or organisation?

(go to 2c)

**2a. INDIVIDUALS:**

Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in SE library and/or on SE website)?

Yes (go to 2b below)

No, not at all

**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



**2c. ON BEHALF OF GROUPS OR ORGANISATIONS:**

Your name and address as respondees **will be** made available to the public (in the SE library and/or on SE website). Are you content for your response to be made available also?

Yes

No

**3. SHARING RESPONSES/FUTURE ENGAGEMENT**

We will share your response internally with other SE 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 SE to contact you again in the future in relation to this consultation response?

Yes

No

**MAKING THE DIFFERENCE - INVOLVING PARENTS BETTER IN SCHOOLS  
CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Question 1: Do you agree with the placing of a new duty on education authorities to promote parental involvement?**

No - there are many initiatives running already, with ample opportunities for parents involving themselves

**Question 2: Do you agree that education authorities should be required to prepare new Strategies for Parental Involvement (SPIs)?**

No - we are in danger of wasting resources.

**Question 3: Do you agree that incorporating these Strategies in existing Annual Statements of Education Improvement Objectives and School Development Plans (as set out in the 2000 Act) is the right way for education authorities to set out their intentions? Or should this be done in some other way?**

No - the schools already interact (in my experience) very well. The initiative should be applied to the individual citizen! Are you doing your duty?

**Question 4: Do you agree that the current system of parental representation i.e. School Boards should be replaced by a more flexible system of parent forum, as decided locally by the parents, in a way which best suits them and their school best?**

No - the existing system is open, fair, accountable, stable (where there is parental interest) and most importantly has a constitutional position

**Question 5: The Bill does not prescribe the means of appointment to the new forums (elections to Boards are mandatory) but provides for parents to decide this locally. Do you agree?**

No - this leaves us very vulnerable to vested interests, particular, religious, political and ethnic pressure groups

**Question 6: Do you agree that education authorities should have a new duty to promote the establishment of a parent forum in each school and to support their operation?**

No Not a duty - but a facilitatory role

**Question 7: Should the Bill provide for 'composite' parent forums where this is the preferred option of parents in each school in a combined school or cluster of schools?**

There is a danger of loss of local contact but even at present school Boards get together to share ideas or approach the education authority.

**Question 8: Do you agree with the proposal for the involvement of education authorities to get the initial parent forum off the ground? If not, what alternative would you suggest?**

No a potential waste of resources - it has got to be the parents that want to do it!  
The education authorities can help/facilitate by providing training (as Angus does currently)

**Question 9: The draft Bill leaves the forum's 'constitution' to be determined locally, either by the parents or initially under the education authority scheme. Do you agree with this approach? If not, what alternative would you suggest and why?**

No - will make for unstable, unfair and potentially 'exclusive' structures  
see the answer to (5)

**Question 10: Do you agree that membership of a parent forum should be confined to parents (the broad definition) of children attending the school or individuals co-opted by the parent forum? Should parents always be in the majority?**

yes

**Question 11: Do you have a view as to how the needs of looked-after children should be addressed and catered for in the Bill?**

The school, the Education Authority and voluntary parent - ie "the community" will look after the interests of these children.

**Question 12: Do you agree that the Bill should not result in parent forum members being subject to automatic disclosure checks but that members, like any other parent, should only be checked when engaging in activities defined under the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003?**

Yes - it is difficult to get parent involved as it is. The disclosure check process is in danger of collapsing existing parental involvement.

**Question 13: On balance, do you agree that 'rights of attendance' for certain non-members of a parent forum should not be a part of the new arrangements? In other words do you agree that non-members of the parent forum should attend only by invitation or do you believe the headteacher should have the right to attend, with the councillor or other individual by invitation?**

They need to open.

- the head teacher (or deputy) should be there!
- elected members (councillors etc) should be free to attend - keeps things open, fair, above board.
- any member of the school community (teacher or parent) can attend - Not vote! but see what is best done!

**Question 14: Do you consider these functions appropriate to parent forums? Would you suggest removing or adding any, or making some obligatory and others optional?**

**Question 15: The Bill has been drafted to allow the parent forum to find out and report the views of parents in the school on any matters which are of interest or concern to them. Do you agree with this open-ended provision or would you suggest defining the areas of interest more restrictively?**

I want everything open for view or discussion unless of a personal or confidential nature.

**Question 16: Do you agree that the Bill should designate parent forums as 'agents' of the education authority for the purpose of their dealings with third parties, and that the issue of insurance should be looked into further? Or do you take an alternative view?**

**Question 17: Are these the appropriate obligations to place on education authorities in relation to their working with parent forums?**

Education Authorities need a clearer and more direct obligation to listen to and follow the comment of the Parents

**Question 18: Do you agree with the provisions requiring education authorities to provide financial support or support in kind to parent forums or would you suggest alternative arrangements?**

With reason, use of premises, stationary  
even some travel (local)

**Question 19: Do you agree with the proposed duty on education authorities to provide advice and information to individual parents on request, on matters relating to the education of their children?**

Swed this is available now?

**Question 20: Do you agree that education authorities should be enabled to replace the current system of appointing headteachers and deputy headteachers with more modern, flexible processes and procedures?**

Yes - although more importantly  
assessment / replacement of existing non performing staff.

**Question 21: If you do not agree that the principle of parental involvement should be retained by the involvement of parent forums in the new senior appointments processes, please give your reasons.**

It is important that parents are involved in this process

**Question 22: Do you agree with the proposal to require education authorities to establish complaints procedures in relation to the way they exercise their functions under the Bill?**

**Please remember to complete the SSBA's 2 additional questions on page 3**

**Please return your response by 31 May 2005 to –**  
Scottish School Board Association  
Newall Terrace  
Dumfries  
DG1 1LW