

**Respondee information form**

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

Name: Jane Carr-Gomm

Address:

Title of consultation: **MAKING THE DIFFERENCE – INVOLVING PARENTS BETTER IN SCHOOLS**

1. Are you responding as:

- an individual? \*
- on behalf** of a group or organisation?

2a. INDIVIDUALS:

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

- Yes \*
- No

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 Scottish Executive to contact you again in the future in relation to this consultation response?

- Yes \*
- No

**MAKING THE DIFFERENCE – INVOLVING PARENTS BETTER IN SCHOOLS**

**CONSULTATION QUESTION TEMPLATE [ FOR PARENTZONE]**

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

Yes I agree although believe that my education authority already supports parental involvement in schools.

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

Yes

***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?***

Yes

**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?**

I do not agree that parental involvement should be decided by the local school. This would lead to a system where each school would have a different arrangement/ in fact no system at all. Different arrangement in each school would create difficulties for local authorities to improve parental involvement.

**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  
Although the election process is cumbersome, if the first passed the post system is acceptable for MSP and local government it is acceptable for School Boards.  
If parents are unwilling to stand for election on school boards are they the right people for the job, after all the parents on the school Board have to represent others and must be able and willing to communicate with

**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?**

LA should support each School Board, not parental forums which I do not agree with.

**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?**

School Boards should be able to combine to form SB clusters for certain reasons however joining together of more than one SB on a permanent basis is unlikely to meet the needs of both/all schools and likely to distance parents rather than encourage more to become involved. Cluster SB is less likely to create the feeling of ownership amongst parents.

**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?**

SB currently operate successfully in a number of authorities. Where SB are lacking these authorities/schools should come to observe SB where they are effective - East Dunbartonshire is an excellent example.

I do not agree with Parental Forums.

**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 I do not agree.

getting parents to become involved in School Boards is difficult without burdening them further with compiling a constitution. Equally I would not be happy that each Ed. Auth. determines own constitution - unity is essential across Scotland.

**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?**

Parents should always be in the majority, but the involvement of others by co-option also has benefits.

**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?**

they should have representation from the professionals who look after them.

**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

**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?***

Headteacher must attend every meeting otherwise the parent body will quickly become ineffective.  
Councillor and others through invitation.

**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?***

Do not agree with parental forums

**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?**

Agree with this more open-ended approach although the representatives should not deal with issues affecting themselves/their own child.

there should be limitations as we as parents must understand that professionals in education must ultimately be advisors and decision-makers.

**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?**

Yes

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

Yes

**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?**

Yes

**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?**

Yes as is currently the case

**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 but the involvement of parents on the interview panels should remain.

**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.**

**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?**

Yes

If you wish to reply electronically, please email your response by **Tuesday 7 June** to [parentalinvolvementbill@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:parentalinvolvementbill@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

Or please return it to the following address:

Parental Involvement Bill

Schools Division

Area 2B

Victoria Quay

Edinburgh

EH6 6QQ

## **Confidentiality**

Copies of all responses received will be placed in the Executive library and will be available to the general public. Responses will also be made available to the public on the Scottish Executive website. The views expressed may be quoted or referred to in any future review of responses. **If you do not wish your responses to be made public, please ensure that you indicate clearly that all or part of your response is to be treated as confidential.** Confidentiality will be strictly respected. We will still count confidential responses in any statistical analysis and your views will of course be taken into account in the same way as for non-confidential responses.

## **Electronic publication and additional copies**

This publication and a summary leaflet designed for parents are available via the internet at [www.scotland.gov.uk/.....](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/.....)

Several copies of this consultation paper have sent to each school. Summary leaflets have also been sent to all schools for onward distribution to parents. If you would like additional copies or if you would like this document in another format or language or more copies please contact us on 0131 244 1860. We will try to accommodate your wishes.

## **The Scottish Executive Consultation Process**

Consultation is an essential and important aspect of Scottish Executive working methods. Given the wide-ranging areas of work of the Scottish Executive, there are many varied types of consultation. However, in general Scottish Executive consultation exercises aim to provide opportunities for all those who wish to express their opinions on a proposed area of work to do so in ways which will inform and enhance that work.

While details of particular circumstances described in a response to a consultation exercise may usefully inform the policy process, consultation exercises cannot address individual concerns and comments, which should be directed to the relevant public body. Consultation exercises may involve seeking views in a number of different ways, such as public meetings, focus groups or questionnaire exercises.

Typically, Scottish Executive consultations involve a written paper inviting answers to specific questions or more general views about the material presented. Written papers are distributed to organisations and individuals with an interest in the area of consultation, and they are also placed on the Scottish Executive web site enabling a wider audience to access the paper and submit their responses<sup>1</sup>. Copies of all the responses received to consultation exercises (except those where the individual or organisation requested confidentiality) are placed in the Scottish Executive library at Saughton House, Edinburgh (K Spur, Saughton House, Broomhouse Drive, Edinburgh, EH11 3XD, telephone 0131 244 4552).

The views and suggestions detailed in consultation responses are analysed and used as part of the decision making process. Depending on the nature of the consultation exercise the responses received may:

- indicate the need for policy development or review
- inform the development of a particular policy
- help decisions to be made between alternative policy proposals
- be used to finalise legislation before it is implemented

If you have any comment about how this consultation exercise has been conducted, please send them to:

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