

916

**Piaskowski K (Karen)**

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**From:** Susan Jack [benijack@onetel.com]  
**Sent:** 07 June 2005 18:05  
**To:** Parental Involvement Bill  
**Subject:** 916

\*\*\*\*\*  
This email has been received from an external party and  
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Attached please find my questionnaire, hope you find it useful.  
Regards  
S Jack

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### **Respondee information form**

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

Name: Susan Jack

Address: Wester Upper Urquhart, Gateside, Fife KY14 7RW

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

1. Are you responding as:

an individual?  X  
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  X  
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  X  
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  X  
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, and I would also extend this to schools and teachers.

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

Yes. Is there a clear view on why parents are not involved in their child's education at the moment? Knowing why this is not happening, as much as we would like, will help point in the right direction for preparing strategies.

***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?**

No. I think this will lead to less parental involvement and participation as it sounds so vague and without any real focus. It would be much better to review and reform the current system to bring Boards more up to date and reflect parents concerns in the National Debate. Parent Forums sound like a lot of work just to agree a structure in the first place. They also sound like they would have no real effective powers to be involved in the school management and ethos, and are likely to end up as Talking Shops. Better to improve on the recognised structure we have now to make it more appealing and flexible to parents, without removing its rights and responsibilities. I don't think the structure is the problem, just how it comes over to parents, and how much the parent group is supported as a valuable asset by the Head.

**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, unless all parents are going to be on the forum, there will have to be some form of election. If you leave this entirely to the parents to decide it will cause arguments. A list of possible election procedures could be given to choose from according to the size of the school.

**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?**

Yes, it is also going to be essential that Heads have a duty to facilitate parent forums/ School Boards and to support them in each school.

**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?**

No. Composite Forums within a school will lead to confusion as to which Forum should be consulted and will lead to division between groups of parents and make it difficult for Heads to deal effectively with parent representation.

I would also not support Forums for a cluster of schools as each school has an individual identity and requires it's own Forum or Board to focus on its requirements and local situation.

**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?**

Yes. This must be mandatory for every school whether they ask for help or not.

**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. This is vague and as constitutions are legal documents, it is too much work to ask parents to make this up. A list of options must be provided.

**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 be in the majority, but be able to co-opt on community members.

**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?**

A representative could act as a parent.

**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, but the forum would need the Head to advise on all aspects of Child Protection at meetings.

**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?***

No. The Head must be present at all meetings otherwise there is no point in the group. How can you be effective if it is just a group of parents talking? The group must be in partnership with the Head to work together for the benefit of the school and children. Councillors should attend when invited. On balance the status quo should be retained.

**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?***

1. Yes. These all sound OK, I would make them obligatory. I would add that the Forums should reply to Education Authorities draft education policies and their views be taken into account.

**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?**

No, this is far too vague. You must give guidelines otherwise these groups won't know where to start and may go off at a tangent.

**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, this would be the preferred option.

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

Yes. I would also make it a duty to consult Forums on educational policy and strategy.

**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?**

They have to have at least the same as school boards.

**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.

**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, providing parents are still involved in the process..

**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.**

Parents must remain involved in the senior appointment 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?**

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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Edinburgh  
EH6 6QQ

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