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997

Piaskowski K (Karen)

From: Amanda Rees [amanda.rees@ndcs.org.uk]
Sent: 08 June 2005 14:05
To: Piaskowski K (Karen)
Subject: 997



Scottish executive
consultatio...

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Please find attached responsee information form from Ken Corsar, NDCS Scotland.

- <<Scottish executive consultation.doc>>
- > AMANDA REES
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- > The National Deaf Children's Society
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- > Registered Charity No 1016532
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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: Kenneth Corsar

Address: National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) 93 Hope Street, Glasgow G2 6LD

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 – clear evidence to show that children do better if parents are involved in their education.
But need measures to ensure consistency across Scotland
And need special measures to ensure adequate steps to involve parents of children with Additional Support Needs.

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

Yes – will help to ensure consistency and should be evaluated regularly and systematically by HMIE
Parents should also be consulted on/be involved in design of strategy.

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?

Proposal is acceptable and fits in with current planning procedures and timetable and so does not therefore add yet another burden unreasonably.

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?

Yes – local arrangements according to agreed local strategy should be desirable, provided steps are taken to ensure consistency.
New proposals will offer more scope to involve properly minority groups, such as parents of children with ASN.

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?

Agree – subject to inclusion in strategy and some evaluation regularly of effectiveness and representativeness of membership of Forum

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, but also with some coherent, over-arching system so that school clusters (eg learning communities) can share their efforts.

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?

Yes – as indicated in question 6

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, but role should be empowering and facilitating, and not overly directive.

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?

Yes, but again subject to evaluation for consistency. Some legal input may be necessary to avoid unnecessary complications or complexities.

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?

Membership should be confined to parents with opportunity to ask others to contribute as occasion demands but not to become full members. Issue of majority does not then arise.

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?

Where there is significant representation of looked after children, the recognised carer or key worker should for this purpose be classed 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, same rules to apply as defined in Protection of Children Act.

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 should have the right to attend, all others by 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?*

These are appropriate.
Special emphasis should be given to activities for involvement of parents with children who have additional support needs since they are often very much a minority.

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?

Reasonably happy with proposal but care must be taken that parent forum does not stray into confidential matters or matters of performance by teachers which is essentially an employment issue between manager (representing employee) and teacher (as employee).

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?

Agreed, the forum will need some support and reassurance and this clause would help provide that for the rare occasion on which the situation may arise.

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

Yes, agreed.

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?

Support will be necessary to allow the forum to function effectively as regards essential, core business. The forum should not be excluded from raising funds for other purposes.

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?

Essential

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 guidance nationally should be available as regards best practice in selection procedures and local arrangements should be evaluated by HMIE supplemented for the task by HR representatives with a record of success and achievement in industry. The new qualification for Headship will assist considerably in the selection 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.

Parent representation in the selection procedure should be guaranteed but not in the majority.

Reason - to include "consumer" input from independent stance.

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, essential and preferably with local access to independent mediation in the case of unresolved complaint or dispute. Ultimate referral to Ombudsman for local government should be maintained.

If you wish to reply electronically, please email your response by **Tuesday 7 June** to 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/.....

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 responses¹. 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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EH6 6QQ

E-mail: karen.piaskowski@scotland.gsi.gov.uk
