

Response ID ANON-NXJH-8HBF-Z

Submitted to **Empowering teachers, parents and communities to achieve excellence and equity in education: A Governance Review**
Submitted on 2017-01-05 14:16:36

About You

Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

Organisation

What is your organisation?

Organisation:

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

Publish response only (anonymous)

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government 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 Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Yes

Page One

1 What are the strengths of the current governance arrangements of Scottish education?

What are the strengths of the current governance arrangements of Scottish education?:

2 What are the barriers within the current governance arrangements to achieving the vision of excellence and equity for all?

What are the barriers within the current governance arrangements to achieving the vision of excellence and equity for all?:

3 Should the key principles below underpin our approach to reform?

Not Answered

Are there other principles which should be applied?:

4 What changes to governance arrangements are required to support decisions about children's learning and school life being taken at school level?

What changes to governance arrangements are required to support decisions about children's learning and school life being taken at school level?:

5 What services and support should be delivered by schools? What responsibilities should be devolved to teachers and head teachers to enable this? You may wish to provide examples of decisions currently taken by teachers or headteachers and decisions which cannot currently be made at school level.

What services and support should be delivered by schools? :

6 How can children, parents, communities, employers, colleges, universities and others play a stronger role in school life? What actions should be taken to support this?

How can children, parents, communities, employers, colleges, universities and others play a stronger role in school life? What actions should be taken to support this?:

7 How can the governance arrangements support more community-led early learning and childcare provision particularly in remote and rural areas?

How can the governance arrangements support more community-led early learning and childcare provision particularly in remote and rural areas?:

8 How can effective collaboration amongst teachers and practitioners be further encouraged and incentivised?

How can effective collaboration amongst teachers and practitioners be further encouraged and incentivised?:

9 What services and support functions could be provided more effectively through clusters of schools working together with partners?

What services and support functions could be provided more effectively through clusters of schools working together with partners?:

10 What services or functions are best delivered at a regional level? This may include functions or services currently delivered at a local or a national level.

What services or functions are best delivered at a regional level?:

11 What factors should be considered when establishing new educational regions?

What factors should be considered when establishing new educational regions?:

12 What services or support functions should be delivered at a national level?

What services or support functions should be delivered at a national level?:

13 How should governance support teacher education and professional learning in order to build the professional capacity we need?

How should governance support teacher education and professional learning in order to build the professional capacity we need?:

14 Should the funding formula for schools be guided by the principles that it should support excellence and equity, be fair, simple, transparent, predictable and deliver value for money? Should other principles be used to inform the design of the formula?

Should the funding formula for schools be guided by the principles that it should support excellence and equity, be fair, simple, transparent, predictable and deliver value for money? Should other principles be used to inform the design of the formula?:

15 What further controls over funding should be devolved to school level?

What further controls over funding should be devolved to school level?:

16 How could the accountability arrangements for education be improved?

How could the accountability arrangements for education be improved?:

Complaints are not explicitly mentioned in the consultation. They do, however, provide an important route for parents and children to raise concerns directly with the school or local authority and should form part of any accountability arrangement. When the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) was set up in 2002, the Scottish Parliament extended our role in education complaints. Our predecessor body did not have the ability to look at complaints about the internal management of schools. The Scottish Parliament decided we should be able to consider such complaints with some specific exclusions for certain subject areas (broadly these are around curriculum and discipline issues see schedule 4, paragraph 10 of the SPSO Act 2002). As the complaints standards authority, we have also created model complaints-handling procedures for the public sector. These help to ensure a consistent, positive response to complaints. This procedure also applies to complaints made in schools. Our jurisdiction, though, only covers schools which are under the management of an education authority. This means not all publicly-funded school provision is currently in jurisdiction. Although it should be noted that this is not always straightforward, for example if a local authority is providing a service using a grant-aided school that could bring some aspects of the service provision at that school into our jurisdiction.

We would suggest that when considering any changes to governance and structure it is important to consider any potential impact on the complaints process. In particular, there should be no reduction in the current ability of parents and children to complain to an independent complaints-handling organisation and to ensure that any complaints made to schools are covered by an appropriately straight-forward complaints procedure. In addition, the review of governance may represent an opportunity to consider whether those rights should be extend to all those receiving a publicly funded education. This would provide for an equal right to access the SPSO and mean that all publicly funded school provision would be subject to the same requirements to have appropriate complaints handling, recording and reporting arrangements in place.

17 Is there anything else you would like to add regarding the governance of education in Scotland?

Is there anything else you would like to add regarding the governance of education in Scotland?:

Evaluation

Please help us improve our consultations by answering the questions below. (Responses to the evaluation will not be published.)

Matrix 1 - How satisfied were you with this consultation?:

Please enter comments here.:

Matrix 1 - How would you rate your satisfaction with using this platform (Citizen Space) to respond to this consultation?:

Please enter comments here.: