

## Melrose Primary Draft Consultation Policy

### Introduction

This document sets out a proposed policy for managing consultations in Melrose Primary School. This outlines the process and timescales that will be followed for consultations.

A proposal for change requiring consultation may come from:

- Scottish Borders Council (SBC) on a issue of national or local policy (e.g. the school term and holidays)
- Melrose Primary School
- Melrose Parent Council

### Management of Consultations

#### Stage 1: Initial Parent Council Discussion

All proposals for consultation will come to the Parent Council in the first instance. The Parent Council will then discuss the need for and approach to consultation on a case by case basis. The Parent Council will give their views on the likely impact of the proposals and discuss the style and content of communication with parents and carers.

#### Stage 2: Communication with Parents and Carers

Where a proposal for consultation comes from either SBC or the Parent council the Parent Council will send a letter to every parent / carer informing them of the consultation. Where the proposal comes from the School the Head Teacher will send a letter to every parent / carer informing them of the consultation. This letter will state the:

- subject of the consultation and who initiated it
- background to / reason for the proposal
- approach to the consultation (e.g. written responses required, parent meetings, feedback mechanisms)
- timing of the consultation (28 day minimum period) and the closing date for responses
- where parents/ carers can get more information

This letter will be sent through school bags. In addition, the consultation will be promoted in the next issue of the school and Parent Council newsletters and placed on the school and Parent Council website. The School or Parent Council may publicise the consultation at a school event, parents evening, or organise a separate meeting if the Parent Council feels this is appropriate.

A reminder will be sent to all parents/carers towards the end of the consultation period using one of the following: a reminder letter in school bags, 'Groupcall', notice boards and/or a message at the school gates.

#### Stage 3: Return of Responses

Where a consultation comes from SBC the usual approach would be for parents/carers to respond directly to SBC. In some cases the Parent Council may prepare a standard response letter for parents/carers to use should they wish (e.g. on proposals that affect the level of the school budget). In some cases the Parent Council may also respond directly to SBC on behalf of the Parent Forum.

Where a proposal comes from the School or the Parent Council the response should be returned to the School Office.

#### Stage 4: Collation and Analysis of Results

Where a proposal comes from the school or the Parent Council a written summary will be produced. The summary report will show the key issues raised, the number and percentage of parents/carers that responded and the number and percentage in favour and against (where appropriate).

The summary report and any proposals for change as a result of the consultation will be discussed at the next scheduled Parent Council meeting.

#### Responsibility for Decision

Where there are a range of views the authority to take a decision will rest with the body proposing the change (i.e. the Parent Council or the School). It will be the responsibility of that body to demonstrate how parents/carers views have been taken into account and outline any changes to the consultation proposals as a result of responses received. Where there is a difference in the views of parents/carers a decision will be taken on the basis of the majority view expressed by parents/carers in the responses received.

Where the consultation comes from the School the Parent Council will not vote on it as the consultation will represent the views of parents / carers.

The recommendations for change and decisions proposed will be sent to every parent/carer through school bags. In addition, these will be published in the next issue of the school and Parent Council newsletters and placed on the school and Parent Council websites.

Where parents/carers are unhappy about the outcome of a consultation they can make a direct appeal to the body proposing the change (either SBC, the School or the Parent Council). The Parental Involvement Strategy Complaints Policy also exists for handling complaints.

#### Timescales

There will be at least 28 days for the consultation period. If the consultation period spans a holiday then the period will be extended by the period of the holiday. If a consultation has to span a summer break, communications will go out before Melrose Festival week and reminders sent out in the new school year.