

Dear Honourable Legislative Councillors,

We would like to respond to two major points raised by the ESF regarding the Committee Stage Amendments in their letter dated 22 November 2007 (LC Paper No. CB(2)430/07-08(01)):

1. *That ESF's mission statement already reflects ESF's commitment to the education of children with special educational needs (para 1.2).* Since the mission statement contains an explicit reference to ESF's commitment to the education of SEN children, we argue that it makes perfect sense to reflect such commitment in the Objects of the Foundation so as to maintain consistency.
2. *That a SEN parent representative be elected by ALL ESF parents to "promote unity", as "creating and keeping up-to-date an electoral roll for SEN parents would be administratively complex and time-consuming (para 3.3).* We believe that the SEN(Special Educational Needs) parent representative in the Board of Governors should be elected by SEN parents but not all parents. Unity is achieved on the basis of respect, understanding and acceptance rather than undue intervention. Mainstream parents have little understanding of SEN issues so we see little reason why they should be involved in the election of a SEN parent representative. We also find it very hard to believe that ESF does not maintain an up-to-date list of the SEN students and parents, making it "administratively complex and time-consuming" to run an election of a SEN parent representative, SEN is not as ill-defined a domain as argued by the ESF. It is axiomatic that all students who are registered in the Learning Support Centre (LSC) and IN (Individual Needs) unit of ESF schools as well as those in Sarah Roe School have special educational needs, and any one of these parents can be elected to be a SEN parent representative. The argument that ESF does not have an up-to-date list of SEN students (and their parents) is untenable, as we believe ESF must have an up-to-date database of students registered in all their Learning Support Centres and Individual Needs units as well as the Sarah Roe School.

We hope the above responses to the arguments provided by the ESF can help our discussion move forward. We look forward to another fruitful meeting on 1 December.

Best regards,

A group of KGV SEN parents.

28 November 2007.