

## **PE1603/AA**

SPTC Letter of 13 January 2017

As a membership organisation for parent groups in Scottish schools, SPTC is committed to supporting effective parental engagement with schools and their children's education. We provide a range of services to parents, including a helpline for information and advice. We are contacted by parents on this and similar topics occasionally.

Visits to school by the armed forces and active engagement of young people in cadet groups is an emotive subject for many parents, who feel the armed forces are more active in areas of social deprivation and are targeting more vulnerable and impressionable young people.

SPTC's perspective around parental engagement is that schools should be obliged to work closely with the families of their pupils to ensure parents and carers are closely involved in making decisions which affect their children in school. For that reason, we believe any proposed armed forces recruitment activity must be subject to detailed consultation, and the view of parents listened to and respected. Where parents have strong feelings against forces recruitment, then schools should not provide opportunities for the armed forces to recruit in a school.

Recruitment to the armed forces cannot, in our view, be compared to recruitment from typical employers: a typical job does not assume risk to life and limb and possibly mental health also. For this reason we do not believe armed forces recruitment can be treated in the same way as other career opportunities.