Parents' Perceptions of Parent Teacher Relationship Practices in Dutch Primary Schools – an exploratory pilot study

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Abstract

This paper presents the findings of a study examining parents' perceptions of parent-teacher relationship practices for 3 different types of primary schools with respect to children's special needs and the socio-economic status of these children. We compare parents' views from two special education schools, two at-risk schools serving low SES-children, and two mainstream primary education schools in the southern part of the Netherlands. The Epstein Model of Parental Involvement is used as the base for the theoretical framework. To uncover differences in the practices leading to coordinated home and school efforts in order to meet children's needs, a parental survey was sent out, and answered by 306 parents (response rate 50 percent). Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted among 27 parents. The results illustrate that parents and teachers in special education and at-risk schools are very much accustomed to 'two-way communication', in contrast to mainstream schools, and that this is valued highly by these parents. Furthermore, teachers in special and at-risk schools are more familiar with interacting with parents, involve them more in decision-making and more often coordinate homework practice with parents.

Keywords: *Parent teacher relationship, children with special needs, low-SES, primary education*

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The involvement of parents in a child's school career is extremely important for children's development, especially in primary school (Fan & Chen, 2001; Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). This holds specifically for low socio economic status (SES) children and children with special needs, such as a cognitive deficits or specific disorderly behaviour, as these students benefit even more from a stable school home environment that is interconnected by a good parent teacher relationship (Fantuzzo, MacWayne & Perry, 2004). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the European Commission also stress the importance of school and family partnerships to fight inequalities of educational opportunities for children, for example from undereducated homes (Heckman, 2008; OECD, 2012). This is underlined by the Dutch governmental policy on investing in educational partnerships in schools. In the southern part of the Netherlands, the region where this study was carried out, over 20% of the children come from low-income and undereducated families and are considered low-SES, compared to 9% state-wide (Statistics Netherlands, 2015)[4]. In this former mine district there is a persistent achievement gap. The academic outcomes of smart children from low-SES homes in this region are similar to average-intelligent children from high-SES homes (Jungbluth, 2014).

Despite the widely recognized importance of investing in home-school relationships within all Dutch educational domains, parental involvement in primary education is stagnating. The bi-annual Monitor Report Parental Involvement, an instrument used by the Dutch Ministry of Education to follow the development of parent involvement in all school sectors state-wide, shows that in 2014, 15% of the primary school teachers estimated that parents are not yet sufficiently involved in school. About one third of them, mostly teachers with only a few years of experience, indicated that they feel insecure about their ability to build strong relationships with parents, especially with parents from ethnic and cultural backgrounds that are different from their own. Compared to the Monitor Report two years before, parents are more critical in 2014 than they were in 2012 in their opinion about the schools' support for home-based learning activities. Furthermore, more parents consider the contact between them and the school to be insufficient (Bokdam, Tom, Berger, Smit & van Rens, 2014).

However, it is unclear if these generalized results hold for all types of schools and parents. Previous studies have pointed at strong impacts of schools' contexts and their relations with various groups of parents (Kessler-Sklar & Baker, 2000; Tett, 2004).

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[4] The low-SES children in this region are mostly ethnic Dutch children, not ethnic minority children. Here, language issues are often related to speaking a dialect, not a foreign language.

Furthermore, research has shown that parents with different ethnic and cultural backgrounds appear to differ with regard to types and levels of involvement (Lopez, Scribner & Mahitivanicha, 2001; Stanley & Wyness, 1999). For the population of children with special needs, parental involvement is obviously considered important, but only few studies address how parent advocacy and home-school collaboration in special education can be improved (Moriwaka, 2012). Research involving a comparison of the levels of parental involvement of children in the general population and of special education children is limited (McDonnall, Cavenaugh & Giesen, 2015), even more so within families of special education children from diverse backgrounds (Lasky & Dunnick Karge, 2011; Peetsma, Vergeer, Roeleveld & Karsten, 2001).

Therefore, this exploratory pilot study analyses parents' perceptions on parental involvement and parental-teacher relationships for three different types of schools: at-risk schools with a large share of low-SES children, special education schools and mainstream schools. The theoretical framework of the analysis is based on the Epstein Model of Parental Involvement (Epstein, 2011). The purpose of this study is (1) to uncover both differences and similar patterns of parent-teacher relationship practices in the three different school types and (2) to gain deeper insight into how strategies for strong parent-teacher relationships, leading to coordinated home and school efforts, are applied in different school types.

In doing so, our study contributes to the literature in making the comparison between parents' perceptions of parental involvement for the three types of schools and children and by showing how these schools differ from each other and can learn from each other.

In the remainder of this paper, we first discuss the theoretical framework of parental involvement that is used in this study, as well as the related literature. This is followed by the data and methods. Here we discuss the research setting, the participants and the used instruments (questionnaire and interviews) and methods. We then present the results, according to the five main themes identified in the theoretical framework. The last section discusses the findings.

Literature and Theoretical Framework

Parental involvement is considered an effective strategy to ensure children's academic and social-emotional success, as evidenced by several correlational studies, with the overarching benefit of parent involvement being increased academic performance (Hughes & Kwok, 2007; Bower & Griffin, 2011; Lee & Bowen, 2006)6. A strong parent-teacher relationship is

a prerequisite for parental involvement (Trumbull, Rothstein-Fisch & Hernandez, 2003). Together, in mutual trust and understanding, and in searching for agreement, parents and teachers create the ideal circumstances for learning and development of children. Parents realize that the future of their child not only depends on the teacher's work, but also on themselves as co-educators. This parental awareness results in a high level of confidence in the power of education (Ule, Zivoder & Du Bois-Reymond, 2015).

Additionally, parental involvement is particularly important for the educational development of lower socioeconomic status families (Dearing, Kreider, Simpkins & Weiss, 2006; Drummond & Sipek, 2004; Fantuzzo et al., 2004). For parents of children with special needs, strong teacher-parent relationships may be even more important. Whereas these parents usually are aware of their children's needs and difficulties, and are willing to support their development, they often lack knowledge about the special educational system and therefore leave decision-making about the best education for the child to the school (Elkins, Van Kraayenoord, & Jobling, 2003; Turnbull, Turnbull, Erwin, Soodak & Shogren, 2011).

For the theoretical framework we use the Epstein Model of Parental Involvement (Epstein, 2011). Epstein's model defines six types of involvement by parents, that are the key to successful school-family-community partnerships. These six types of involvement are 1) parenting, 2) communicating, 3) volunteering, 4) learning at home, 5) decision-making, and 6) collaborating with the community. As in this study we focus on the teacher-parent relationships in a school setting, the first and sixth type are left aside in our theoretical framework. Based on the work of Iruka, Winn, Kingsly and Orthodoxou (2015), Lasky and Dunnich Karge (2011), and Denessen, Bakker, Kloppenburg and Kerkhof (2009) we also focus on conditional aspects for building strong parent-teacher relationships such as searching for agreement and trust. This gives us five main themes as a theoretical framework for this study 1) searching for agreement and trust, (2) communicating, 3) volunteering, 4) learning at home, and 5) decision-making. These five main themes are discussed here and related to findings from the literature. The results will also be discussed for the five main themes separately.

Searching for agreement and trust

Building relationships is crucial for parental involvement. Teachers play a key-role in increasing parental involvement in school and at home (Bower & Griffin, 2011; Hill et al., 2004; Lee & Bowen, 2006). Teachers need to search agreement as to how they share their respective tasks and responsibilities with parents, and strive for shared expectations about how parents can effectively support their children at home (Iruka et al., 2015). Children have

the ability to learn more, when parents understand both school culture and the school's expectations regarding home learning activities. As a result, parents can support their children in an effective way. This leads to better learning outcomes (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Eberly, Joshi & Kozal, 2007).

Related literature shows that an open, helpful and friendly school environment is conditional for building relationships (Lasky & Dunnick Karge, 2011). For example, when teachers are responsive towards home language, respectful towards parents' role conceptions, and parents feel that they have a genuine interest in the child this contributes to a trustful parent-teacher relationship (Denessen et al., 2009).

Communicating

Epstein's communicating type of involvement concerns communication-oriented practices that bridge the gap between home and school.

From the literature, we know that parents are more likely to participate if frequent, clear, two-way communication is present (Lasky & Dunnick Karge, 2011; Bakker, Denessen & Brus-Laeven, 2007). However, Iruka et al. conclude that in general, parents and teachers do not have that high levels of communication (Iruka et al., 2011).

Volunteering

The volunteering type of involvement is focussed on involving parents as volunteers and/or audiences at the school. This does not only include stimulating parents to do so, but also preparing teachers to work with this group of parents. Patrikakou and Weinberg (2000), for example, have shown that when parents are asked to assist in learning activities at school, this affects their sense of competency in a positive way.

Learning at home

The learning at home type of involvement means that teachers should design home tasks such that parents are able to help with and talk about these tasks with their children. It also means that parents should be involved in academic learning of the children at home.

Teachers are expected to inform parents of effective strategies in the home environment (Epstein, 2011), to talk to parents about how they can assist their children, and to give them specific tasks to do with their children at home (Knopf & Swick, 2007). If parents and teachers work well together and parents read to their children at home and help with their homework, it has a positive effect on children's development (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Fan & Chen, 2001; Grolnick, Kurowski, Dunlap & Hevey, 2000; Hill et al., 2004).

Decision-making

The decision making type of involvement deals with decisions made about children's learning, school activities and school decisions. At the school level, parents should be included in for example school councils and parent organizations. At the individual level, parents should be involved in decisions made by teachers about the learning path for their child, not only informed about all decisions. This is also emphasized by the Dutch Ministry of Education, who considers schools and parents to be partners. They share information, support each other, and adjust their contribution in order to enhance children's learning, motivation and development (Ministry of Education, 2014).

Literature shows that teachers need to inform parents about the academic and social development of their child, and invite them explicitly and directly to school meetings (Bakker et al., 2007). Also, we know that the teacher's information about school tasks and school development of the student leads to an increasing sense of efficacy for parents, which in turn is positively related to parent involvement (Lopez et al., 2001; Waanders, Mendez, & Downer, 2007).

Data and Methods

Research Setting and Participating Schools

The study took place among six primary school in the southern part of the Netherlands. The schools were selected during the winter of 2014, based on school population and school size. A distinction was made between at-risk schools, mainstream schools, and special education schools. For all three school types, one small (less than 180 pupils) and one medium-sized school (between 180 and 300 pupils) was selected.

The two schools with a high level of low-SES children (children from undereducated families) are considered at-risk schools in our study. In these schools 20-40% of the children come from undereducated families. Almost 50% of the children have learning and/or behavioural difficulties, 20% of these children receives home support as well. The two mainstream schools serve average to high educated families and have less than 20% children with learning and/or behavioural difficulties. The two special education schools serve children with learning disabilities[5], who often have behavioural problems as well. The parent population of these schools is mixed.

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[5] In the Dutch school system, children with minor learning or behavioural difficulties are included in mainstream primary schools, whereas children with learning disabilities (IQ rate 50-90) or behavioural disorders attend special education schools.

Data Collection Methods

The study used a mixed-methods design, employing both a questionnaire study and a semi-structured interview. Data were collected in the second semester of the school year 2014/15.

Quantitative questionnaire

The parental questionnaire was based on the Parental Involvement Questionnaire, which was developed on behalf of the Dutch Ministry of Education. Unfortunately, there are no known psychometric specifications for this questionnaire. The questionnaire included 20 items on the five main themes of this study:

1) Conditional aspects for building parent-teacher relationships (searching for agreement and trust). The questionnaire contained a set of three questions about parents' role perceptions, whether the parent feels he/she can influence the child's performance, whether school and parents should work together to improve the performance, and if parents feel responsible for this (agreement). Furthermore, the questionnaire asked which aspects and acts in the school show whether parental involvement is important for the school and shows the schools' hospitality. This question had check boxes for the answer options, such as friendliness of the teachers, genuine interest in the child, people greeting each other, and having a little chat with the teacher (trust).

2) Communication. Another set of three questions was about how the school communicates with the parents, and whether the parents appreciate these ways of communication or would rather like to see other ways of communication. One of the questions was, for example, in what way parents prefer to be informed, with check boxes for the answer options, like by e-mail or newsletter, and what kinds of meetings they prefer, like parent-teacher meetings, walk-ins before or after school, and home visits. Other questions were whether the school guide is clear enough and whether teachers use understandable language.

3) Volunteering. The questionnaire contained four questions about which volunteering activities in the classroom and in school parents want to be involved in.

4) Learning at home. A set of six questions was about the parents helping the child at home, and in which way the school supervises and supports this process (for example by providing parents with small homework assignments that they can do with their child), and whether the parent feels the school supervises sufficiently in this.

5) Decision-making. The questionnaire contained one question about decision-making, whether the parent feels is his/her input is taken into account when discussing the child's performance.

(The remaining 14 questions in the questionnaire cannot be used in the light of our theoretical framework and are therefore left aside in this paper). All questions in the questionnaire were closed questions (often yes/no, in some cases a list of options of which all that were applicable could be checked), although there was room to add additional information. Parents needed about 20 minutes to fill out this questionnaire.

Response analysis

In spring 2015, the anonymous paper-pencil questionnaire was handed out to all parents that had at least one child at one of these six schools. This makes the unit of observation for the questionnaires the family, and the response analysis is based on the number of unique families within a school. Unfortunately, the questionnaire was focused on the content, and only few contextual characteristics were asked. As the questionnaire was anonymous, there is only one contextual characteristic that we can use for the response analysis, namely which language is spoken at home. In most cases, the answer is either Dutch or the local dialect.

In total, 319 parents filled in the questionnaire; 125 parents from mainstream primary schools, 111 from at-risk schools, and 83 from special education schools. The total response rate was 50%. The response rate per school varies between 29 and 62 percent. Mainstream schools on average have the highest response, and special education schools have the lowest response rate. However, there are large differences between schools. Furthermore, the share of families speaking Dutch at home also varies, between less than 15 and almost 75 percent. These numbers are comparable to the averages of each school, so the sample seems to be representative at least at this aspect.

Qualitative interviews

The interviews were conducted by undergraduate students in Pedagogy from Fontys University of Applied Sciences who were trained by the researchers. Altogether, 27 interviews were carried out, 11 with parents from mainstream primary schools, 8 with parents from at-risk schools and 8 with parents from special education schools. The selected parents represent the specific school population of every school (based on parental education level and share of children with special needs). Overall, 22 mothers and 5 fathers were

interviewed, 5 are from low-SES families, 15 from medium and 7 from high-SES families[6]. From the interviewees, 21 have children with special needs such as learning and/or behavioural issues, whereas 6 have children without learning or behavioural issues.

The research team developed the questions for the semi-structured parent interviews based on the theoretical framework of the study. The purpose of the interviews, in addition to the questionnaires, was to gain deeper insight into practices applied by schools with different populations, and to uncover practices of strong home-school relationships that lead to coordinated home and school efforts. In the first part of the interview, demographic data were gathered such as gender, age and education level of the parent, the number of children, their gender, names and grade, and data about children's learning and behavioural problems and special support. In the second part of the interview, parents were asked about how strong parent-teacher relationships were built, revolving around the five main themes of this study: 1) Searching for agreement and trust: We asked parents how teachers and parents come to agree with each other about reciprocal expectations and ambitions concerning the child's development, and how they share their respective tasks and responsibilities. We also asked parents how teachers and parents build a trustful relationship; 2) Communication: Parents were asked about the contact moments with teachers, and if a two-way communication with teachers is present, that is: communication in which the teacher is open-minded, asks input from parents and takes their topics into account. Related to this, we also asked which subjects are discussed and how conflicts arising from divergent perspectives about the child's needs are handled; 3) Volunteering: Parents were asked if they assist in educational practices or do other voluntary work in school; 4) Learning at home: We asked the parents about how teachers make sure that parents feel supported in their children's homework assistance, and 5) Decision-making: Parents were asked how teachers and parents discuss the child's development, and how teachers consult parents on child-related decisions, especially when it comes to special needs.

Data Analysis

Quantitative questionnaire

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[6] In this study we refer to low-SES families based on parental education level. Low: maximum of junior secondary vocational / pre-vocational secondary education; Medium: minimum secondary vocational education (including junior secondary education, senior general secondary education and pre-university education; High: minimum of tertiary education (including higher professional education and university education).

In order to analyse the questionnaire data we mainly use the categorical variable that indicates to which of the three school groups the parent belongs. We first present descriptive statistics per topic, of the answers to the questionnaire for each group separately. Next, we apply a multinomial logit regression per topic. This is a regression method where the outcome variable has multiple nominal categories. In our case, this is the variable type of school to which a parent belongs (at-risk, special education or mainstream). We basically estimate the probability that a parent who gives a certain answer to a certain question belongs to, for example, the group of at-risk parents, or rather the special education or mainstream parents. This type of regression allows us to simultaneously enter all the variables that belong to a topic from our theoretical framework in one analysis. In this regression, we do not only look at the difference between one variable for two groups, but we analyse the differences between the answers on all variables belonging to that topic at once, for all three groups at the same time.

The technical interpretation of the multinomial regression and the numerical results are explained in Appendix A. In the paper itself we simply describe whether certain variables are significantly different at the 5%-level between the types of schools.

Qualitative interviews

All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and split into fragments related to one of the five main topics, as mentioned above. Data were analysed 'within-site' and 'cross-site', following the method suggested by Miles and Huberman (1984) and Johnson & Christensen (2014). Interview fragments related to the five main themes have been summarized, labelled and categorized. Relevant findings are reported in the qualitative results section. In addition, qualitative data related to the main themes has also been retrieved from written comments by the respondents on the questionnaires. Result from these written comments are reported in the qualitative results section only if they are supplementary to the findings from the interviews.

Quantitative Results

Below we describe the quantitative results for the five main themes of this study. For each theme, we first describe the answers of the parents of the different types of schools for each of the questions from the questionnaire that belong to this topic. Next, we discuss whether the answers to these questions were significantly different between the three different types of schools, using a multinomial logit regression analysis. The results to the multinomial logit

regression are discussed into detail in Appendix A. Here we only discuss which variables are significantly different for the three groups.

Searching for agreement and trust

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics on the questionnaire items that are linked to the conditional aspects for building strong parent-teacher relationships (searching for agreement and trust). Table 1 shows that almost all of the parents agree that they are co-responsible for the school success of their child (97% agrees), that they as parents can influence their children's learning performance (99% agrees), and that school and parents need to cooperate, in order to facilitate children's learning process as much as possible (98% agrees).

In the questionnaire, parents were also asked whether certain school hospitality characteristics are present. The majority of parents agreed that school hospitality showed from the friendliness of the teachers (85%), a genuine interest of the teacher in the child (58%), whether teachers and parents greet each other (61%) and the openness of the school (65%).

Table 1 – Descriptive statistics questionnaire items on searching for agreement and trust

	at-risk schools			mainstream primary schools			Special education schools			Sign dif betw at-risk and mainstream	Sign dif betw at-risk and special education	Sign dif betw mainstream and special education
Agreement	n	Mean	st.dev	n	Mean	st.dev	n	Mean	st.dev			
Parent influences performance child?	110	0.99	0.10	124	1.00	0.00	81	0.98	0.16	No	No	No
Should schools and parents cooperate to improve performance child?	111	0.97	0.16	124	0.98	0.15	80	0.94	0.24	No	No	No
Parent co-responsible for performance child?	111	0.98	0.13	124	0.98	0.13	82	0.96	0.19	No	No	No
Trust	n	Mean	st.dev	n	Mean	st.dev	n	Mean	st.dev			
School hospitality characteristics												
Friendliness of the teachers	110	0.80	0.40	124	0.83	0.38	82	0.94	0.24	No	No	No
Good organisation at school	110	0.50	0.50	124	0.49	0.50	82	0.70	0.46	No	No	No
Genuine interest of the teacher in my child	110	0.45	0.50	124	0.55	0.50	82	0.80	0.40	No	Yes	Yes
School does as promised in school guide	110	0.38	0.49	124	0.27	0.45	82	0.57	0.50	Yes	No	Yes
Teachers, parents and children greet each other	110	0.56	0.50	124	0.63	0.49	82	0.63	0.48	No	No	No
Openness of the school	110	0.52	0.50	124	0.66	0.48	82	0.79	0.41	Yes	Yes	No
Parents feel at home among each other	110	0.11	0.31	124	0.25	0.43	82	0.24	0.43	Yes	No	No
Having a little chat with the teacher	110	0.60	0.49	124	0.48	0.50	82	0.40	0.49	Yes	Yes	Yes

1. Significant differences from multinomial logit regression at the 5%-level. All variables considered at the same time in one regression. Separate regressions for _agreement_ and _trust_.

The second half, from a vertical point of view, of Table 1 shows which of these differences are significant in the regression analysis. The analysis shows that none of the agreement variables are significantly different between the three groups. As for the trust variables, we see that the genuine interest of the teacher in the child is significantly higher for special education schools than for either of the others. Furthermore, special education parents believe that the school does as promised in the school guide significantly more than mainstream parents. At-risk school parents find the school significantly less open than either one of the other parents. Lastly, there are significantly differences between all three groups with respect to having a little chat with the teacher. This happens significantly more often in at-risk schools, followed by mainstream schools and lastly, special education schools.

Communicating

Table 2 shows that the most important source of information for all parents is e-mail (65%), followed by the parent-teacher meetings (61%), flexible meetings whenever they are needed (52%), and paper information letters (44%). Hardly any parent prefers communication via Facebook (3%), coffee mornings (5%), home visits (6%), or walk in moments before school starts (8%). Almost all parents believe that the information in the school guide is clear enough. However, there are differences between schools. Parents from mainstream schools rank website communication, general information evenings, fixed yearly meetings, flexible meetings, theme meetings for parents and walk-in meetings after school a lot higher than parents from the other two types of schools. Parents from at risk and special education schools score higher than parents from mainstream schools that they value receiving a paper information letter. At risk schools score extremely low in the preference for e-mails, and higher in their preference for paper letters and coffee mornings, compared with the other two school types.

Table 2 – Descriptive statistics questionnaire items on communicating

	at-risk schools			mainstream primary schools			Special education schools			Sign dif betw at-risk and mainstream	Sign dif betw at-risk and special education	Sign dif betw mainstream and special education
	n	Mean	st.dev	n	Mean	st.dev	n	Mean	st.dev			
How preferably informed by school?												
Digital: website	111	0.15	0.36	123	0.41	0.49	81	0.22	0.42	Yes	No	Yes
Digital: e-mail	111	0.37	0.48	123	0.84	0.37	81	0.77	0.43	Yes	Yes	No
Digital: Facebook	111	0.03	0.16	123	0.01	0.09	81	0.09	0.28	No	No	Yes
On paper: e.g newsletters	111	0.58	0.50	123	0.27	0.44	81	0.51	0.50	Yes	No	Yes
General parent information evenings	111	0.21	0.41	123	0.37	0.48	81	0.20	0.40	No	No	No
Fixed yearly moments for parent teacher meetings	111	0.53	0.50	123	0.73	0.44	81	0.54	0.50	Yes	No	No
Coffee mornings for parents	111	0.08	0.27	123	0.02	0.15	81	0.04	0.19	Yes	No	No
Theme meetings	111	0.15	0.36	123	0.32	0.47	81	0.11	0.32	No	No	No
Flexible meetings when needed	111	0.42	0.50	123	0.62	0.49	81	0.49	0.50	No	No	No
Teacher visiting at home	111	0.04	0.19	123	0.05	0.22	81	0.10	0.30	No	Yes	No
Walk-in 15 minutes before school starts	111	0.10	0.30	123	0.10	0.30	81	0.02	0.16	No	Yes	Yes
Walk-in 15 minutes after school ends	111	0.12	0.32	123	0.19	0.39	81	0.09	0.28	No	No	No
Text in school guide clear enough?	111	0.91	0.29	121	0.87	0.34	82	0.98	0.16	No	No	Yes
Teachers use understandable language to communicate with parents	110	0.55	0.50	124	0.62	0.49	82	0.67	0.47	No	No	No

1. Significant differences from multinomial logit regression at the 5%-level. All variables considered at the same time in one regression.

The second half (vertically seen) of Table 2 shows which of these differences are significant in the regression analysis. The analysis shows that mainstream parents significantly more often prefer communication via the website, while at-risk and special education parents prefer communication via e-mail. Special education also prefer e-mail more than at-risk schools, and Facebook more than mainstream schools. At-risk school parents prefer fixed yearly parent teacher meetings significantly less than mainstream schools, but prefer coffee mornings significantly more. On the other hand, special education parents prefer home visits significantly more than at-risk parents. Walk in moments before the school starts are preferred significantly more by at-risk and mainstream parents, compared with special education. Lastly, special education parents find the text in the school guide significantly more often clear enough than mainstream parents.

Volunteering

Table 3 shows that around 50% of the parents would like to volunteer at activities at school. Only a little more than 10% would like to volunteer in class or help children with homework in the school environment. These numbers are a lot lower for special education schools, except for helping other parents, here special education parents score higher than mainstream parents, but not than at risk parents. Apart from volunteering at activities, at risk parents are most willing to help at school.

Table 3 – Descriptive statistics questionnaire items on volunteering

	at-risk schools			mainstream primary schools			Special education schools			Sign dif betw at-risk and mainstream	Sign dif betw at-risk and special education	Sign dif betw mainstream and special education
	n	Mean	st.dev	n	Mean	st.dev	n	Mean	st.dev			
What more would you like to do at school												
Volunteering at activities	110	0.51	0.50	125	0.57	0.50	83	0.40	0.49	No	No	Yes
Volunteering in class	111	0.15	0.36	125	0.12	0.33	83	0.06	0.24	No	No	No
Helping with homework at school	111	0.20	0.40	125	0.10	0.30	83	0.07	0.26	No	Yes	No
Helping other parents	111	0.10	0.30	125	0.03	0.18	83	0.07	0.26	No	No	No

1. Significant differences from multinomial logit regression at the 5%-level. All variables considered at the same time in one regression.

The second part of Table 3 shows that special education parents significantly less often would like to volunteer at school activities, compared with mainstream parents, and significantly less often want to help with homework at school, compared with at-risk parents.

Learning at home

Table 4 shows that almost all parents indicated that they help their child with its homework (97%). However, when it comes to school support for home-based learning activities, there are differences between school types. Only just over 50% of the mainstream and at-risk school parents believe that the school is aware of what parents can and are willing to do at home, as opposed to 70% of the special education school parents. Only 55% of the mainstream school parents are satisfied about school support for home learning activities, as opposed to 75% of the at-risk school parents and 69% of the special education parents. Additionally, 71%, 82% and 78% of the parents from mainstream, at-risk and special education schools, respectively, indicate that they do get suggestions for home learning activities. From the parents of the special education schools in are study 89% answered yes to

the question, whether school gives the children small projects and practice booklets to take home, as opposed to 83% for both other types of parents.

Table 4 – Descriptive statistics questionnaire items on learning at home

	at-risk schools			mainstream primary schools			Special education schools			Sign dif betw at-risk and mainstream	Sign dif betw at-risk and special education	Sign dif betw mainstream and special education
	n	Mean	st.dev	n	Mean	st.dev	N	Mean	st.dev			
Do you help child at home practice for school?	110	0.98	0.13	120	0.96	0.20	81	0.99	0.11	No	No	No
Does school know about what you can and want to do at home?	110	0.53	0.50	117	0.54	0.50	80	0.79	0.41	No	Yes	Yes
Is teacher support for parents sufficient?	93	0.75	0.43	125	0.55	0.50	83	0.69	0.47	No	No	No
Do you get suggestions from teacher for home learning activities?	106	0.82	0.39	120	0.71	0.46	79	0.78	0.41	Yes	Yes	No
Does your child get small projects and booklets to take home?	109	0.83	0.38	123	0.83	0.38	80	0.89	0.32	No	No	No
Does the school expect you to help your child at home?	109	0.86	0.35	117	0.79	0.41	80	0.89	0.32	No	No	No

1. Significant differences from multinomial logit regression at the 5%-level. All variables considered at the same time in one regression.

The right hand part of Table 4 shows the significant differences between the variables. Here we see that special education parents feel that the school knows what the can and cannot do at home significantly more, compared with both other types of parents. On the other hand, at-risk parents get significantly more often suggestions for home learning activities, again compared with both other groups.

Decision-making

The parent questionnaire contained only one question with respect to this topic ("Do you feel like you are taken seriously by the teacher?"). Table 5 shows that almost all parents (96%) from all three school types feel they are taken seriously, with a bit lower number of parents from at risk school feeling that way. The right-hand part of Table 5 shows that these differences are not significant.

Table 5 – Descriptive statistics questionnaire items on decision-making

	at-risk schools			mainstream primary schools			Special education schools			Sign dif betw at-risk and mainstream	Sign dif betw at-risk and special education	Sign dif betw mainstream and special education
	n	Mean	st.dev	n	Mean	st.dev	N	Mean	st.dev			
Is parental input taken seriously when discussing child's performance?	101	0.92	0.27	124	0.98	0.15	81	0.98	0.16	No	No	No

1. Significant differences from multinomial logit regression at the 5%-level. All variables considered at the same time in one regression.

Qualitative Results

Below we describe the qualitative results for each of the five main themes of this study. Furthermore, we present illustrative interview fragments from the answers parents of the different types of schools gave, in some cases supplemented by results from the written comments.

Searching for agreement and trust

In the interviews, the parents were asked how teachers and parents come to agree with each other about reciprocal expectations and ambitions concerning the child's development, and how they share their respective tasks and responsibilities. In general, mainstream school

parents expect teachers to inform them more often about their child's behaviour, not only about school results. Four of them explicitly stated in the interviews that they expect teachers to be alert to the child's well-being and inform the parents about it. Like a mother with a son with Schisis (cleft), who finds it hard to accept that he looks different:

"He has to learn to cope with that, and that's difficult. But I always need to ask his teachers how he's doing. I don't understand all the signals about what he is experiencing at school; my son doesn't talk about it."

It is not always clear what parents from mainstream schools can expect from the school when it comes to the support of children with special needs. Children usually have a new teacher every year, and it depends on the teacher if special support is continued, as is illustrated by a mother with a specially gifted child, who stated, "In our situation, we have to find out at the beginning of every school year what is and what is not possible." In contrast to mainstream schools, parents and teachers in special education schools and at-risk schools seem to be used to talking about their ambitions and those of the teacher of their child, on a regular basis. A low-SES father, who participated with his wife and child in an early childhood intervention programme, puts it this way:

"School always explains the tests to us, and what the scores mean. My daughter has already been taking tests from the age of two! Sometimes I wonder if school is not pushing too much. Then again, when I see her results and her test scores now, I think, well, my child is going to be a professor! I have confidence in their work. I guess it's not the same as in my childhood days."

The special education schools in our study explicitly pay attention to acceptance processes for parents and children when it comes to having a disability or other constraints, which is important to finding a balance between the teachers' and parents' ambitions. The feasibility of development-related goals is often discussed.

We also asked parents how a trustful relationship is built. Parents from all school types argued that a good contact with the teacher begins by building a relationship *before* there are "things to discuss". The most illustrative examples in this matter came from parents from at-risk schools and special education schools. In ten (out of 16) parent interviews from these schools it is stated that a trustful relationship between parents and teachers is based on their mutual concern for the child, and, as a consequence, both parents and teachers can speak about anything. The following comment from the interview with a mother from an at-risk school was a typical response:

"A good relationship with the teacher is so important. I need to feel at ease with him or her, when I want to discuss something difficult. I have a 'click' with the teacher, the relationship is 100%. Honesty, openness. (…). I feel free to speak about anything."

Communicating

With respect to this type of involvement, the finding that regular, informal contact is conditional for building a relationship is confirmed by the parent interviews in all school types. However, special education parents are less able to meet teachers informally before or after school, because their children mostly get to school by special transport buses. These parents suggested having more back-to-school evenings with or without educational purposes. Mainstream school parents suggested teachers to be present in the courtyard before or after school regularly, since they are not allowed to walk into the classroom.

In discussing the topic of communicating more deeply, we asked parents whether there is actually a two-way communication in parent teacher meetings, in which the teacher is open-minded and takes parents' topics into account. Parent-teacher meetings in mainstream schools appear to serve mainly as means for schools to inform the parents about their child's development. Asking input from parents doesn't occur systematically, and social and academic aspects are often discussed in separate meetings Five parents mentioned that social aspects are discussed in October, but grades only in February, which is far too late according to these parents. Also, the conversations only last ten minutes, which nine (out of 11) parents consider to be too short. When parents are informed of their children's results, they don't always know what the tests results mean, as was mentioned by two parents.

In the previous section we argued that, when there is a trustful relationship, anything can be discussed. It appears to be very common for parents and teachers within special needs and at-risk schools to speak about problems and concerns. Eight parents admitted asking questions about how to raise their child, mostly special education parents. Parents are even used to teachers interfering with the children's home situation (e.g., "I know that when a child doesn't even have a pencil because mom and dad can't afford it, the teacher talks to them"), mostly at-risk school parents. When it comes to how conflicts arising from divergent perspectives about the child's needs are handled, parents from all school types argued that conflicts can be overcome when the relationship is strong. However, mainstream school parents are more likely to avoid conflicts if they are not in their child's interest, whereas some parents of special education schools and at-risk schools confess their own quite direct

behaviour to this matter (e.g., "When it comes to my daughter, I certainly don't keep my mouth shut!"). Interestingly, the teachers from special education and at-risk schools know how to handle this behaviour, as may be illustrated from a father from an at-risk school, who stated, "I always speak my mind, and they are aware of that at school. If my daughter is not doing well, it needs to be addressed, period! Basically, sometimes we agree, sometimes we don't. And that is okay".

Volunteering

Only three (out of 11) mainstream school parents indicated that they assist in school, in contrast to six (out of eight) at-risk parents, and four (out of eight) special education school parents. In the mainstream schools two interviewees volunteer as a member of the communication group, one is a member of the Codetermination Council. Three parents from at-risk schools, two of them low-SES, indicated to be a member of the Parent Council. One of them also teaches Dutch to students with a non-Dutch home language. One low-SES mother volunteers as a 'reading mom', one teaches computer skills. From the special education parents, two are a member of the Parent Council and two (from which one low-SES) indicated to volunteer as a reading mom.

Interestingly, the special education and at-risk schools in this study purposefully use the strategy of stimulating parents to volunteer in different kinds of school activities. When parents are asked to assist in learning activities at school, this affects their sense of competency (Partrikakou & Weisberg, 2000), which is illustrated by a 'reading mom' from an at-risk school, who commented, "It's so nice when the children of my extra reading class approach me in the schoolyard: 'You are coming on Friday, aren't you? I want you to read with me!' It is so (…), I can't describe it, (…) so rewarding, when they are happy when you come. It caresses your soul!"

Learning at home

Mainstream school parents are the most critical about home learning support, both in the written comments in the questionnaire and in the interviews. It is often not clear to them, what they are supposed to do at home and how they should do it. The major problem seems that homework is only discussed during the parent evenings and report card meetings, which parents consider insufficient. There is too little time to provide guidance and support, parents stated, and it is too easily assumed that they will understand. Several parents indicated that they want to learn how it should be done, because it is completely different from the way they

learned it in the past. Also, special assignments are necessary for the support of children with dyslexia.

Like mainstream school parents, also at-risk school parents are critical about home learning support. Four parents noted that they would like to receive more specific mathematical and reading tasks, because they don't understand the instructions for homework or the use of methods. Interestingly, from the interviews and the written comments on the questionnaire, parents from the at-risk school in our study appear to be very well aware of how their child is doing at school. They acknowledge the importance of taking notebooks home, so that the children can practice at home what they learned at school; and that the parent meetings are used to discuss in what respect parents can support their child at home. They indicate that coordination also takes place 'in passing', for instance during an additional conversation about negative results or during the open visiting hour for lower classes in the morning. Three interviewees with children in upper grades stressed that they liked the intensive support from the early childhood intervention programme (preschool) and the lower classes. Now, they still find their way to the classroom to attend mathematics lessons, stating, for example, "Because I have no clue how they do it". This may indicate that the great awareness of school functioning among at-risk school parents is helped by involving parents from the early beginning of their child's school carrier.

It seems that special education parents want to make an improvement in their home learning activities, and they need more explanation and concrete school exercises to do so. Moreover, these parents know how to maintain the balance: they want to practice with their child on a daily basis, but stress the importance of room for play and hobbies. They want to push their home learning activities only with respect to specific concerns and lack of progress in their children's development.

Decision-making

In the interviews parents were asked how teachers and parents discuss the social and academic development of the child, and how teachers consult them on child-related decisions. Interestingly, we found rather different patterns of parent-teacher discussions in the special education and at-risk schools, compared to the mainstream schools. All 16 interviewees from the special education and at-risk schools in this study indicated that social and academic development of the child are always discussed as one related issue, and ten of them mentioned that the teacher asks their opinion as a parent. Also, teachers explain test scores to parents, which was mentioned before, and ask them if everything is clear. On top of that, the

children participate in parent-teacher meetings when their future is discussed and academic decisions are taken. This helps families who feel insecure to benefit fully from the educational opportunities.

We also asked parents whether teachers make sure they understand how the special care for their child is organized and how they are involved in the decisions to be made (i.e., special training, special education) concerning their child. As mentioned before, mainstream school parents are somewhat critical about how schools cope with learning or behavioural issues. However, they are aware that schools are developing towards providing appropriate services to children with different needs, which is in line with inclusive education practices. A mother commented, "I think they know better now, how to support special needs kids. In our school team, several teachers are specializing in bullying, giftedness, and underachievement. You can tell that the quality of the team is improving, not that is was so bad before." In general, parents appreciate schools being honest about their possibilities to provide special care.

In the interviews with mainstream school parents we did not find so much inspiring examples of coordinated home and school efforts to meet children's needs, in contrast with the other two types of schools. In the special education and at-risk schools of our study, parents are not only informed about special care (procedures), but also consulted on this topic. They are involved in all aspects of the decision-making process with respect to the most appropriate education for their child. The teachers explain the different possibilities, so that parents can choose. Furthermore, they help parents to do their part of the programme at home. As a result, the child gets the proper support, both in school and at home. The following comments from parent interviews were typical responses: "My daughter is lucky to have a teacher who trains her to actually say something and not be withdrawn. And he helped us so that we can train her at home" and "He keeps asking how my daughter's treatment is going, even now she's not in his class anymore".

We also found several good examples from parents with high aspirations concerning their child's development in the special education schools, and from low-SES parents who have a great difficulty to understand the process of special care. In all these cases, the bond between parent and teacher is related to an ongoing process of sharing information and working together, in which the parent feels considered. Apparently, teachers from the special education and at-risk schools in this study are able to connect with diverse parents and to establish coordinated school-home efforts. A quote from a low-SES mother may illustrate how it works:

"First, I felt somewhat insecure when I had to fill in the paperwork [to achieve special care outside the school]. But by chance the teacher has a degree in dyslexia. And then the whole thing was put in motion: the teacher compared three treatments, explaining their ins and outs. Not only for my daughter's dyslexia, but also for her shyness. So she and I could choose where to go. (…) Moreover, I could ask anything I didn't understand and I did not have to watch my words."

Discussion

The study at hand examined parents' perceptions of parental involvement and parent-teacher relationship practices in three different types of primary schools with respect to children's special needs and socio-economic status. The purpose of the study was to uncover both differences and similar patterns of parent-teacher relationship practices, and to gain deeper insight into how strategies for strong parent-teacher relationships are applied in different school types.

It is remarkable that almost all parents in this study recognize the need to cooperate with school, whereas research shows that 15% of the primary school teachers state-wide consider parents to be not yet sufficiently involved in school (Bokdam et al., 2014). Apparently the view between teachers and parents on this is not the same. Also, parents consider themselves co-responsible for their child's school success and are convinced that they can influence its learning performance. However, it is not a common practice for teachers and parents in the mainstream primary schools in this study to talk about their ambitions and their respective role conceptions. As a contrast, the parents from the special education and at-risk schools seem to be used to talking about their ambitions and those of the teacher of their child, on a regular basis. In special education schools, also the feasibility of development-related goals is regularly discussed.

Although the conditional characteristics for trust are generally adequate in all three types of schools, both mainstream schools and at-risk schools can learn from special education schools where genuine interest in the child and openness of the school are applied best. These characteristics are not only conditional for parental involvement (Lasky & Dunnick Karge, 2011), but they are also conducive to building connectedness between parents and teachers. Informal conversations and unscheduled visits are important parent involvement practices in this matter, and these practices are specifically recommended for lower SES-parents in international research (Trumbull et al., 2003; Denessen et al., 2007).

Our study confirms that regular informal contact between parents and teachers is already part of the everyday practice in the at risk-schools, but also shows that parents from mainstream and special education schools, on the other hand, would like to have more opportunities to meet the teacher in an informal way than they have now.

Communication by e-mail is mostly deemed important by mainstream parents, whereas at-risk parents prefer information on paper, and special education parents prefer both email and information on paper, parent teacher meetings are considered important by all parents. Primary education parents indicate that in these meetings, teachers communicate mostly about academic achievement and social development of the child, but not so much about learning and behavioural issues, or problems (Bokdam et al., 2014; Iruka et al., 2011). We can only confirm this pattern that is found in the literature for the mainstream schools. In the at-risk and special education schools of our study, parents and teachers appear to speak about problems and concerns, even conflicts. In these schools, parents and teachers are very much accustomed to two-way communication, in which teachers ask input from parents and take their opinion into account. On top of that, involvement practices like visiting classrooms and asking parents to assist in learning activities are very common in the at-risk and special education schools, but not so much in mainstream schools.

Almost all parents help their children with homework tasks, in all three types of schools, but they all need the teacher to ensure that they feel supported in assisting their children in their homework. In all three school types parents feel the need to align their home-based learning activities with the foci of the school program.

Research findings on inclusive education practices suggest that it is a greater challenge for parents with children that need special support to establish a working relationship with the school, than for mainstream parents (Elkins et al., 2003). Our study illustrates that this is indeed the case for the mainstream primary schools, but not for the special education and at-risk schools. Teachers in the latter two types of schools appear to involve parents in all aspects of the decision-making process with respect to the most appropriate learning path for their child and inform them on effective strategies to assist their child at home, which leads to coordinated home-school efforts.

All in all, this study underlines the need for schools to choose parent involvement strategies that work with the population of their school, considering differences in cultural norms by socioeconomic status of their school population (Lee & Bowen, 2006; Bower & Griffin, 2011). From the strong parent teacher relationship practices, reported by parents in the interviews, it is evident that children's educational needs can best be met when

educational partnership is an ongoing process of parents and teachers connecting to each other, sharing information and working together from the very beginning of the child's school carrier. Teachers in mainstream schools may learn from these examples, especially regarding inclusive educational practice.

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Appendix A – Multinomial Logit Regression

Tables A1-A6 shows the results of the multinomial logit regression. In Tables A1-A6 the at-risk schools are the reference category. We only discuss the significant differences in this discussion. The multinomial logit regression shows whether the parents' perceptions are significantly different from one another for each question, while controlling for the answers of the other questions. The odds ratio describes the chance that a parent that gives a certain answer to a question belongs to the at-risk group or not. If the coefficient is positive, the special education or mainstream parents are more likely to give this answer. This results in an odds ratio above one. If the coefficient is negative, special education and mainstream parents are less likely to give this answer, and the odds ratio will be below one.

Searching for agreement and trust

In Table A1 we see that parents from special education schools are more than 6 times more likely than parents from at risk schools to mention that genuine interest of the teacher in their child, 2 times more likely to mention the openness of the school, and 5 times less likely to have a little chat with the teacher.

Table A1 also shows that parents from mainstream schools are 1.5 times less likely to mention doing as promised in the school guide, compared with at-risk parents. Furthermore, at risk parents are less likely to rate the openness of the school, and are more likely to feel at home among other parents. At risk parents are also more likely to have a little chat with the teacher compared with mainstream parents.

Table A1 – Regression results on questionnaire items on searching for agreement and trust

Variable	Special education			Mainstream		
	Coefficient	Odds ratio	p-value	Coefficient	Odds ratio	p-value
Constant	-0.737		0.064	-0.794		0.033
Friendliness of the teachers	0.876	2.401	0.122	0.118	1.126	0.748
Good organisation at school	0.033	1.033	0.933	-0.126	0.882	0.000
Genuine interest of the teacher in my child	1.797	6.031	0.000	0.399	1.490	0.224
School does as promised in school guide	0.607	1.836	0.125	-0.915	0.401	0.011
Teachers, parents and children greet each other	-0.475	0.622	0.228	0.162	1.176	0.609
Openness of the school	0.789	2.201	0.041	0.614	1.847	0.042
Parents feel at home among each other	0.868	-0.935	0.069	1.470	-0.430	0.001
Having a little chat with the teacher	-1.691	0.184	0.000	-0.845	0.430	0.008

At-at risk parents are the reference group

Table A2 shows no significant difference for agreement

Table A2 – Regression results on questionnaire items on searching for agreement and trust

Variable	Special education			Mainstream		
	Coefficient	Odds ratio	p-value	Coefficient	Odds ratio	p-value
Constant	0.390		0.010	-0.097		0.468
Parent influences performance child?	-1.141	0.319	0.188	-0.347	0.707	0.708
Should schools and parents cooperate to improve performance child?	-1.200	0.301	0.319	-0.675	0.509	0.586
Parent co-responsible for performance child?	-0.543	0.581	0.686	18.673	0.000	1.000

At-at risk parents are the reference group

Communicating

In Table A3 we see that parents from special education schools are about 5 times more likely to prefer e-mail, compared with parents from at-risk schools. Furthermore, they are significantly more likely to prefer the teacher visiting home, while they are 10 times less likely to prefer the walk-in-15 minutes before schools starts, again compared with at risk schools.

Parents from mainstream schools are significantly more likely to prefer e-mail and website, compared with at risk schools, but are 3 times less likely to prefer paper communication. Furthermore, mainstream parents are 10 times less likely to prefer coffee mornings for parents, compared with at-risk parents.

Table A3 – Regression results on questionnaire items on communicating

Variable	*Special education*			*Mainstream*		
	Coefficient	Odds ratio	p-value	Coefficient	Odds ratio	p-value
Constant	-0.614		0.629	1.663		0.314
Text in school guide clear enough?	1.906	6.729	0.111	-1.196	0.302	0.057
Digital: website	0.224	1.251	0.598	1.333	3.791	0.001
Digital: e-mail	1.687	5.404	0.000	1.965	7.137	0.000
Digital: Facebook	1.593	4.917	0.064	-2.367	0.094	0.082
On paper: e.g newsletters	0.214	1.238	0.550	-1.112	0.329	0.002
General parent information evenings	0.136	1.146	0.778	0.761	2.140	0.083
Fixed yearly moments for parent-teacher meetings	-0.089	-0.465	0.796	0.548	-1.730	0.120
Coffee mornings for parents	-0.918	0.399	0.374	-2.363	0.094	0.018
Theme meetings	-0.794	0.452	0.146	0.019	1.019	0.967
Flexible meetings when needed	0.175	1.191	0.614	0.374	1.453	0.280
Teachers use understandable language to communicate with parents	0.442	1.556	0.204	0.005	1.005	0.987
Teacher visiting at home	1.752	5.765	0.027	0.686	1.986	0.417
Walk-in 15-minutes before school starts	-2.351	-0.010	0.042	0.235	1.265	0.759
Walk-in 15-minutes after school ends	0.198	1.218	0.757	0.183	1.200	0.748

At-at risk parents are the reference group

Volunteering

In Table A4 we see that parents from special education schools are almost 3 times less likely than at risk parents to help with homework activities at school. There are no significant differences between mainstream parents and at risk parents.

Table A4 – Regression results on questionnaire items on volunteering

	Special education			Mainstream		
Variable	Coefficient	Odds ratio	p-value	Coefficient	Odds ratio	p-value
Constant	2.297		0.005	1.376		0.056
Volunteering at activities	-0.482	0.617	0.109	0.174	1.190	0.516
Volunteering in class	-0.701	0.496	0.204	-0.017	0.983	0.967
Helping with homework at school	-1.041	0.353	0.038	-0.728	0.483	0.071
Helping other parents	-0.226	0.797	0.685	-1.005	0.366	0.101

At-at risk parents are the reference group

Learning at home

In Table A5 we see that parents from special education schools are almost 12 times less likely than special education parents to get suggestions from the teacher for home learning activities. Furthermore, special education parents say significantly more often that the school knows about what the parents can and want to do at home. Also, mainstream parents are almost 4 times less likely than at-risk parents to get suggestions for home learning activities.

Table A5 – Regression results on questionnaire items on learning at home

Variable	Special education			Mainstream		
	Coefficient	Odds ratio	p-value	Coefficient	Odds ratio	p-value
Constant	-0.181		0.397	-0.010		0.963
Do you help child at home practice for school?	-0.533	0.587	0.432	-0.640	0.527	0.273
Does school know about what you can and want to do at home?	-0.088	0.915	0.889	-0.587	0.556	0.273
Is teacher support for parents sufficient?	-2.480	0.084	0.001	-1.360	0.257	0.025
Do you get suggestions from teacher for home learning activities?	0.822	2.276	0.127	-0.140	0.869	0.725
Does your child get small projects and booklets to take home?	1.705	5.503	0.232	0.783	2.189	0.457
Does the school expect you to help your child at home?	1.455	4.286	0.000	0.245	1.278	0.432

At-at risk parents are the reference group

Decision-making

In Table A6 we see that there are no significant differences at the 5%-level.

Table A6 – Regression results on questionnaire items on decision-making

Variable	Special education			Mainstream		
	Coefficient	Odds ratio	p-value	Coefficient	Odds ratio	p-value
Constant	0.163		0.286	-0.263		0.056
Is parental input taken seriously when discussing child's performance?	1.223	3.398	0.129	1.244	3.470	0.072

At-at risk parents are the reference group