

Parents as Partners

The purpose and role of Parent Councils

Parents make a real difference

Parents and carers are the first and ongoing educators of their own child(ren). Parental involvement in the life and work of the school along with parental engagement in their child's learning makes a real difference.

Children and young people benefit when parents, schools and other partners work together to support learning.



What is the parent forum and the Parent Council?

Parent forum is the collective name for every parent or carer at a school. The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 gives each school's Parent Forum the right to set up a Parent Council.



The Parent Council is a group that is selected to work on behalf of all parents on educational matters that are of importance to all. They do not get involved in individual matters relating to pupils, families or school staff. It may be possible to draw a general issue for consideration by the Parent Council from a specific concern without making reference to the specific concern e.g. What is the school's homework policy? What is the school's Anti-Bullying Policy? All individual matters should be referred to the Headteacher.

Parent Councils were established under the Parental Involvement Act 2006 in recognition of the important role that parents can play, both in their own children's learning, and in the wider life of a school.

What does the Parent Council do?

Under the 2006 legislation the role of the Parent Council is to:

- Support the school in its work with pupils
- Represent the views of all parents and carers
- Encourage links between the school, parents, carers, pupils and the wider community



Parent Councils are designed to be flexible and to ensure that they can effectively represent their own school community and interests.

Parent Councils:

- Work in partnership with the school to decide on the key priorities to take forward
- Provide a voice for parents in schools and in their local authority on issues that are important to them
- Improve the school's understanding of how to engage parents in their children's learning and in the life of the school
- Support the school to develop strong home/school partnerships
- Communicate regularly with the Parent Forum to both hear their views and keep them informed
- Support improvement by discussing the school's strengths and areas for development from a parental perspective
- Help make links with the wider community
- Capture the unique and varied skills, interests, knowledge and experience that parents can offer



Gathering and sharing parents' views

Each school community is unique and there is a wide range of educational issues on which parents may wish to contribute their views. These may include:

- How the school communicates with parents
- Tapping into parents' skills, experiences and expertise to enhance learning experiences
- Supporting [transitions](#) between key stages such as early learning and childcare settings to primary.
- Discussing the secondary school learning opportunities including available courses and exam performance
- Reviewing and refreshing school policies
- Local issues and any significant changes such as moving to a new school building
- Developing the School Handbook.

The Parent Council is a key group during the school inspection process and members will be invited to meet with a member of the inspection team. Further information can be found [here](#).

The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 and Guidance can be found on the Scottish Government website: www.scotland.gov.uk/Parents.

November 2019