

Strategic Framework for:

Parental Involvement, Parental Engagement, Family Learning and Learning at Home

Section 4

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4. Roles, responsibilities and legislation

4.1 General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTC Scotland)

[Professional Standards](#) for Scotland's Teachers were refreshed and restructured in 2021. They describe teacher professionalism in Scotland, in particular, 'teachers' way of being'. The Standards highlight professional values of social justice, trust and respect, and integrity as central to what it means to be a teacher in Scotland.

Under the [Public Services Reform \(General Teaching Council for Scotland\) Order](#) (2011), the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTC Scotland) determines what constitutes a recognised teaching qualification for individuals seeking registration as a school teacher. GTC Scotland may make such provision about the education and training required to attain such a qualification as they consider necessary.

4.2 Initial Teacher Education (ITE) providers

Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in Scotland is provided by universities and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in partnership with schools and local authorities. Each of the partners has particular priorities, roles and responsibilities as have been highlighted in documents such as Teaching Scotland's Future (2010), Teaching Scotland's Future – National Partnership Group: Report to Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning (2012) and the National Implementation Board STEC/ADES National Framework Agreement for Partnership in the Early Phase of Teacher Learning (2013).

The overall aim of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes is to prepare student teachers to become competent, thoughtful, reflective and innovative practitioners, who are committed to providing high quality learning for every learner. These programmes must align with the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education's requirements and ensure that student teachers meet the requirements of the Standard for Provisional Registration (2021), which is part of the GTC Scotland's suite of Professional Standards. The Standard for Full Registration (2021) is a mandatory requirement for registration with GTC Scotland.

4.3 Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)

'The Scottish Social Services Council Code of Practice for Social Service Workers sets out clear standards of professional conduct and practice that social service workers must meet in their everyday work' ([SSSC website](#)). Being registered with the SSSC means that practitioners are part of a professional workforce similar to teachers and nurses. Practitioners can show that they have the skills and knowledge gained through their qualification and this will help to increase their own self-confidence and the confidence the public have in them. National standards of practice are set through SSSC Codes which practitioners should follow in their daily work.

4.4 Scottish Government

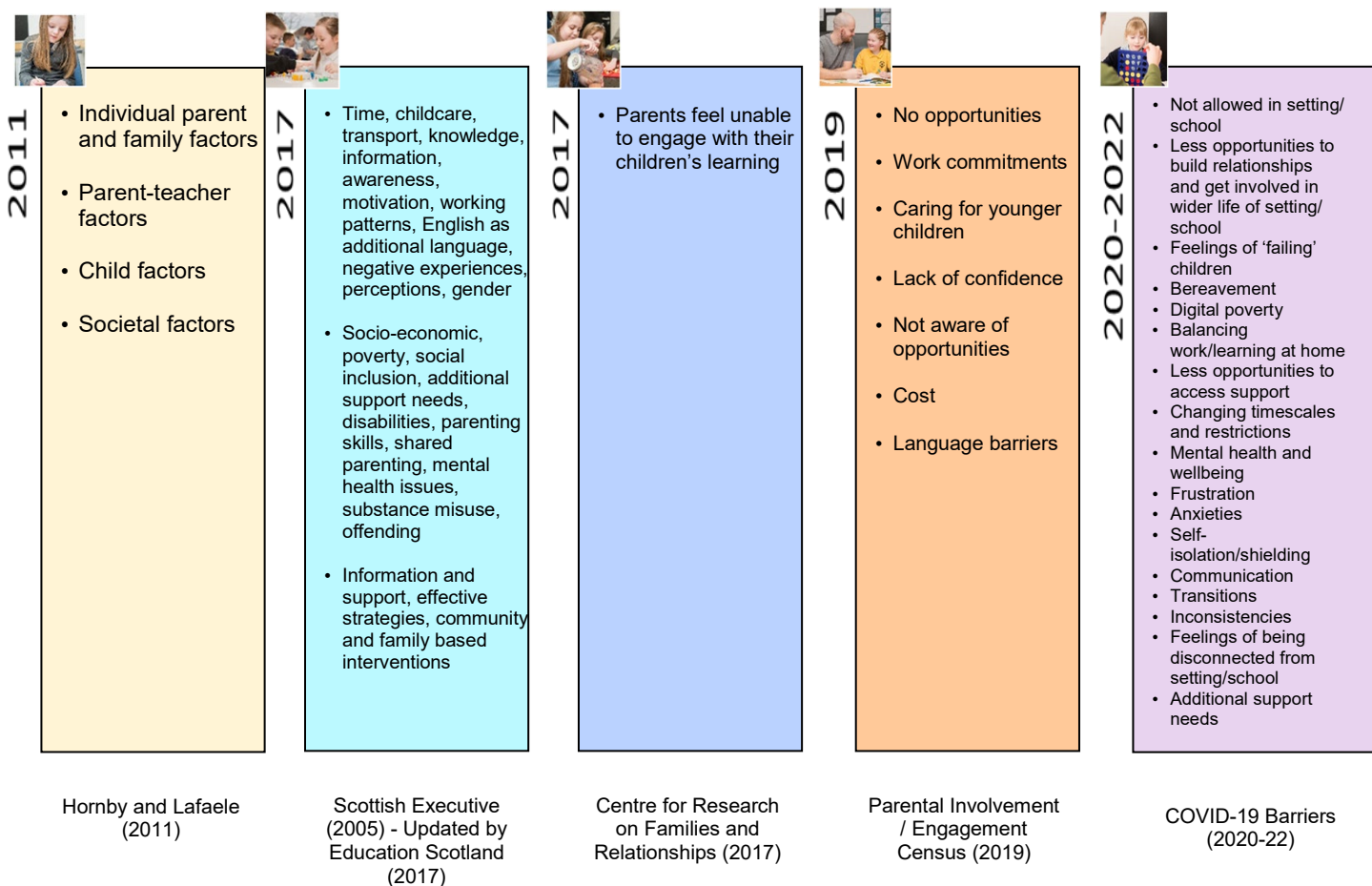
The Scottish Government is the devolved government for Scotland and has a range of responsibilities that include: the economy, education, health, justice, rural affairs, housing, environment, equal opportunities, consumer advocacy and advice, transport and taxation.

Within Scottish Government, early learning and childcare is overseen by Early Learning and Childcare Directorate. Responsibility for parental involvement, parental engagement family learning and learning at home within Scottish Government for settings and schools, sits with the Directorate for Education Reform. During 2018, Scottish Government developed a national action plan which reoriented the national education system to focus on more effectively engaging parents. It was created in consultation with local authorities, teachers groups, national parenting organisations, partners and stakeholder groups.

The Learning Together National Action Plan provided the first national vision whilst still allowing for local and community voice, innovation and flexibility. The Plan highlighted the leadership of those who make a difference every day to children’s outcomes, namely, parents, families, teachers, headteachers, managers, early years practitioners and childminders, partners and relevant stakeholders. At the heart of the National Action Plan is the building of meaningful relationships between home, settings and schools. These relationships are based on trust, mutual respect and collaboration. The methodology of the plan was to promote the creation of collaborative relationships between Scottish Government, Education Scotland, national parenting organisations, practitioners, partner organisations, stakeholders, education non-governmental organisations, local authorities, settings and schools. Equity is the focus of the plan, and it is embedded across all goals and actions within it.

Every family can face barriers to getting involved in the wider life of the setting or school and in their children’s learning. Over the years, parents have identified barriers and factors that restrict their ability to be more involved in their child’s learning. These fluctuate from external barriers out with a parents’ control, to individual obstacles specific to personal life circumstances (Scottish Executive, 2005). External barriers restricting parents from supporting their children’s learning can be multifaceted. Individual barriers can result from a parent’s socio-economic circumstances such as poverty, working patterns, or social exclusion. Some parents also have personal assumptions about what their level of involvement or engagement in their child’s learning should be (Scottish Executive, 2005). Scottish Government, in close partnership with Education Scotland, national organisations, partners and stakeholder groups, work collaboratively to provide practitioners with the tools to address barriers and engage all families.

Figure 3: Timeline of barriers to involving and engaging parents and families



4.5 Education Scotland

Education Scotland is a Scottish Government executive agency charged with supporting quality and improvement in Scottish education and thereby securing the delivery of better learning experiences and outcomes for Scottish learners of all ages. The role of [Education Scotland](#) is to promote and offer guidance and support to practitioners, and others, in order that they can better support Scotland's learners.

The vision of Education Scotland is to achieve excellence and equity for Scotland's learners, with Scotland's educators. Education Scotland's mission is to work in partnership with stakeholders from initial teacher education establishments, local authorities, early career and established/fully qualified teachers and practitioners to secure sustained improvement in achievement and attainment for all learners, close the poverty-related attainment gap, and secure positive and sustained destinations for all learners, regardless of their age and where the learning takes place. Supporting and empowering educators to provide the best possible experiences and outcomes for Scotland's learners is key.

As an Executive Agency of Scottish Government, Education Scotland work closely with policy colleagues across Scottish Government. This is with a view to providing professional advice and expertise to inform policy development across the education sector.

4.6 Local authorities

Under the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act [Guidance](#) (2006), local authorities are required to take account of the training and development needs of staff and others working with learners, parents and families in their Parental Engagement Strategy (p50). They also have duties to:

- prepare a strategy to involve parents in their child's and their own education and that provided by a school to its pupils (p9);
- establish a complaints procedure (p17); and
- provide support to Parent Councils to enable them to operate and carry out their functions effectively (p24).

4.7 Schools

Within the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act [Guidance](#) (2006), schools must ensure that their Improvement Plan takes account of the local authority's strategy for involving and engaging parents. Schools should have a clear policy in place to support parents with their child's and their own education and learning (p19).

4.8 Inspection

The 'Scottish approach' to improvement in education is based on the premise that establishments and services take responsibility for the quality of education they provide and take action to secure continuous improvement. This is complemented by external evaluation carried out by HM Inspectors and other scrutiny and inspection bodies such as the Care Inspectorate.

The purpose of inspection of education provision is to support improvement by:

- providing assurance and public accountability for the quality of education;
- promoting improvement and building capacity; and
- informing the development of educational policy and practice.

HM Inspectors work in partnership with stakeholders in designing quality frameworks thus ensuring appropriate reference to parental involvement, parental engagement, family learning and learning at home. The quality framework is used by HM Inspectors to evaluate the quality of education provision as part of inspection. The quality indicators within the quality frameworks are also designed to enable providers to undertake self-evaluation leading to improvement.

Within the '[How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#)' (HGIOS4) and '[How good is our early learning and childcare?](#)' (HGIOELC) quality frameworks, there are specific quality indicators focusing on partnerships and family learning. The engagement of parents is inspected through the HGIOS4 quality indicator '2.7 Partnerships: Theme 3 Impact on Learners' and through HGIOELC quality indicator '2.7 Partnerships: Theme 3 Impact on Children and Families'. Family Learning is inspected through the choice quality indicator '2.5 Family Learning: Quality of family learning programmes' in HGIOS4 and HGIOELC. HM Inspectors evaluate engagement with parents, and the community is evaluated through a range of quality indicators. They also evaluate the impact partnerships have on learners, including how partnerships are impacting on the engagement of parents in their children's learning.

As part of inspection activities, HM Inspectors gather the views of learners, parents, staff and partners using online pre-inspection questionnaires. Parents are invited to give their views of the school using a pre-inspection questionnaire. The questionnaire invites parents to provide views through responses to a series of statements and they are also invited to give their own views on any aspect of the work of the school. Their views inform the inspection process, including the content of discussions that HM Inspectors will have with the school in a number of meetings. Parents are also given the opportunity to meet with a member of the inspection team. Additionally, HM Inspectors ask schools to arrange for them to speak to partners and other stakeholders, for example, local community leaders.

Joint inspections

Some inspections are undertaken jointly by inspectors from both Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate (formerly known as Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland). Each organisation have clearly defined responsibilities. Education Scotland's duties to inspect early learning and childcare settings derive from the [Education \(Scotland\) Act 1980](#). The Care Inspectorate has duties under the [Public Services Reform \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) (the Act) and the [Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland \(Requirements for Care Services\) Regulations 2011](#).

The Care Inspectorate is the official body responsible for inspecting standards of care in Scotland for the regulation of early learning and child care and childminders in Scotland. Inspections for regulation aim to drive continuous improvement and take action where circumstances deem this necessary.

During shared inspections of early learning and childcare, Care Inspectors use core quality indicators from '[A quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare](#)' self-evaluation framework.

The engagement of parents and carers is inspected through quality indicators '1.1 Nurturing care and support'; '3.1 Quality assurance and improvement are led well'; and '4.1 Staff skills, knowledge, and values'.

4.9 Early Learning and Childcare and Childminders

Reference is made throughout this Strategic Framework to the application of the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 across all sectors including early learning and childcare, primary, secondary, special and childminders. It should be noted that the application of the Act covers parents of children attending early learning and childcare provided in public primary schools - they are members of the school's parent forum and may join the Parent Council.

The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 does not apply to parents of children in ‘free-standing’ local authority nurseries or those attending early learning and childcare provided by a ‘funded partner’. Nonetheless, we would encourage early learning and childcare settings and childminders, currently not subject to the legislative requirements, to ensure that there are effective arrangements in place for parental involvement and parental engagement and that the key principles highlighted throughout the toolkit are adhered to.

4.10 Reflective questions

The following questions are provided to stimulate discussion and support improvement in practice. These are not intended to be prescriptive but may be useful as part of your self-evaluation journey.

- What evidence do we have that we are aware of the legislative responsibilities and frameworks around parental involvement, parental engagement, family learning and learning at home? How will we measure this?
- How effective are our approaches to reducing barriers to participation for children, young people and families? How do we know?
- In what way(s) are we able to demonstrate the impact of the approaches we use to engage children, young people and families? Give examples.