

Renfrewshire Council : Education and Leisure Services

Policy on Parental Involvement

1. Introduction

1.1 The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 outlines the duty within the act to:

- involve parents in their own child's education and that provided by a school to its pupils generally;
- give advice and information to parents in respect of their own child;
- promote the establishment of parent councils in schools and support their operation; and
- establish a complaints procedure for their duties under the act.

1.2 The involvement of parents in their own child's education and the education provided by the school to its pupils generally depend on effective engagement with parents through:

- supporting learning at home;
- developing strong partnerships between home and school; and
- encouraging parental representation in the school generally and in the appointment of senior staff in particular.

1.3 Within recognised good practice, parents have a central role both as partners in their children's learning and in the wider life and work of the school. The school makes use of parents' skills and knowledge to contribute to developing this role and to developing links with the local community.

2. Policy Framework

2.1 The fundamental importance of the entitlement of the individual child to be supported in learning and in personal and social development is central to the policy and complements our policies on the Education of Looked After Children and Young People and Pupils with Additional Support Needs.

2.2 Also relevant are policies on reporting to parents, homework, learning and teaching (Curriculum for Excellence), equalities and customer care/handling complaints.

3. School Arrangements

3.1 There are three main ways parents can get involved in supporting their children's learning:

- Learning at home: Parents are the first and ongoing educators of their own children and, as such, receive information and support to help develop their child's learning at home, in the community and at school;
- Home / school partnership: The school must be open to the involvement of parents in the work it does and it should find ways of providing information that helps parents engage with it and their children's education;
- Parental representation: The act provides a framework for ensuring that parents have the opportunity to express their views and have these taken into account on policy matters affecting the education of their children. It makes provision for parents to be a member of the Parent Forum at a school and to have their views represented to the school, education authority and others through a representative parent council for the school.

3.2 The school has a variety of methods for sharing information and communicating with parents which makes two-way communication more effective and makes it easier for parents to know what is going on and to keep in touch, for example, through:

- phone calls and text messaging;
- letters and newsletters;
- face to face informal contact;
- e-mails and websites; and
- parent information evenings and parent workshops.

3.3 Parents should be able to contribute useful information on their children's progress to the school. The effective, two-way sharing of information is essential to a partnership which fully empowers parents in supporting children's learning.

3.4 The school's commitment to overcoming barriers to parental involvement is embedded in current good practice through:

- the role of the homelink service;
- approaches to facilitation and mediation;
- the role of the English as an additional language team;
- the role of the community learning and development service; and
- joint working with key partners.

3.5 The process for the transfer of information between local nurseries and primary schools and the strong relationship with partner nursery providers will support effective engagement with parents of children coming into primary education.

3.6 The school acknowledges the duty to promote and support the involvement of all parents, including those who do not live with their children or whose children are educated outwith Renfrewshire.

- 3.7 Parental representation continues to be important to promote the principles of parental involvement . The school will continue to develop its partnership with the parent forum, the parent council and the parents' association.
- 3.8 The parents of children enrolled in a school who are under school age are automatically members of the parent forum of the primary school. The head teacher and parent council of the school in question will be responsible for promoting contact with parents of prospective pupils.
- 3.9 We recognise that barriers to parental involvement include disability and the constraints of available time. Schools and support services will work with parents to overcome these barriers to achieve parental involvement which contributes to the best outcomes for our children and young people.

4 Impact Assessment

- 4.1 The policy has the potential to impact on race, disability and gender equality.
- 4.2 CLAD will continue to provide classes for adults for whom English is a second or other language.
- 4.3 The school will continue to find innovative ways of tailoring services to parents with disabilities to encourage their involvement in their children's learning.
- 4.4 The school and the home link service will continue to provide opportunities and encouragement for fathers to be involved in their children's learning.

5. Monitoring and Review

- 5.1 The school improvement planning process recognises the importance of promoting parental involvement, supported by approaches to self-evaluation.