

Parents as Partners

The purpose and role of Parent Councils



Parents make a real difference

Parents and carers are the most important influence throughout a child's education and parental involvement in learning makes a real difference to children's achievements.

Everyone benefits (children, parents and teachers) when parents and schools work effectively together to support learning.

What are Parent Councils for?

Parent Councils help parents and carers to become more actively and effectively involved in their children's learning. They were established under the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 in recognition of the important role that parents can play, both in their own children's learning, and in the life of a school.

Parent Forum is the collective name for every parent, carer or guardian at a school. The Act gives each school's Parent Forum the right to set up a Parent Council.

Both Act and Guidance can be found on the Parents' page of the Scottish Government website: www.scotland.gov.uk/Parents.

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 parents and carers
- Encourage links between the school, parents and carers, pupils, pre-school groups and the wider community

Parent Councils are designed to be flexible – to ensure they can effectively represent their own school community and interests. It is for parents to decide what is most important for their Parent Council to work on.

Parent Councils can:

- Provide a voice for parents in schools and in their local authority on issues that are important to them and their children
- Help the school to understand how to most effectively involve parents in their children's learning and in the life of the school
- Support the school and Headteacher in developing strong home/school partnerships
- Support the school in its development and improvement, and in understanding and making links with the wider community
- Capture the unique and varied skills, interests, knowledge and experience that parents can offer

Parent Councils provide an opportunity for parents to get involved in ways that suit them, and to support their school in getting the best education for all the pupils.