Engagement of children, young people and parents/carers in the development of services for children and families in Edinburgh

Education, Children and Families Committee

8 March 2012

1   Purpose of report

1.1   This report covers some of the range of service user engagement activities across Children and Families. It presents findings from a large scale survey of parents and pupils, highlights key developments in young people's participation and links developing service user engagement with Customer Service Excellence accreditation. It indicates where progress is being made and identifies areas for development and improvement.

2   Main report

2.1   Children and Families engages with service users and communities in a wide range of ways, from annual self-evaluation surveys to consultations on specific issues to ongoing engagement forums such as Parent Councils and Local Youth Forums at the local level and the Consultative Committee with Parents and the Edinburgh Youth Issues Forum at the citywide level. Large scale surveys include the Growing Confidence Pupil Well-being Questionnaire which over 11,000 primary school pupils have completed this year, the anti-bullying survey of P6 and 7 and S2 pupils which over 4,000 pupils completed, the parent/carers school self-evaluation survey which around 2,500 parents completed and the self-evaluation survey of secondary school pupils which over 3,300 pupils have completed this year.

Pupil surveys

2.2   This year's annual pupil self-evaluation survey was completed by 3,335 secondary pupils whilst 11,300 primary pupils have completed the Growing Confidence Pupil Well-being Questionnaire (see appendix 1 for details of last year's survey results).

2.3   In the secondary school survey, almost all pupils agreed with the statement:
        - Staff expect me to take responsibility for my work in class (92%)

2.4   Mos**t** pupils agreed with the following statements:

- I am getting along well with my school work (86%)
- I get help when I need it (82%)
- staff encourage me to do the best I can (79%)

2.5   71% of pupils agreed with the statement, 'School makes a positive difference to my life'. The lowest response was to the statement, 'The pupil council is good at getting improvements made in school (39%). Findings feed into schools' development planning.

Pupil/Student Councils

2.6   The 'Developing the Pupil Voice' Student Council Conference on 1 April 2011 involved student councils from 20 secondary schools across Edinburgh. 121 delegates took part. The conference celebrated student councils; shared ideas and practice; and explored how to make student councils more effective. This year's conference will focus on arts and creative learning in the curriculum and will be held in March.

Scottish Youth Parliament

2.7   10,228 young people voted in the Scottish Youth Parliament elections in 2011, a 104% increase in turnout from the last elections in 2009. 31 candidates stood for election – a 44% increase from the previous election. The campaign won the award for 'best use of social media by a public sector organisation' at the UK-wide 'Some Comms Awards'. It also won the Grand Prix award, singling it out as the 'best of the best' of all entries. The Service Plan target for the next elections in 2013 is 12,000.

2.8   The Edinburgh Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament meet regularly to keep each other informed of local work such as constituent surveys on relevant issues, to plan campaigns and identify future work to be undertaken. The Edinburgh MSYPs attend the three Scottish Youth Parliament national sittings each year and debates were heard on two motions submitted by Edinburgh MSYPs at the October 2011 sitting.

Engaging with vulnerable young people in social work services

2.9   A multi-agency short life working group is currently addressing how to increase the involvement of children in decisions about their lives**.** The group has held a staff focus group and will shortly be consulting with young people. The group will report on findings to the Quality Assurance Subgroup of the Child Protection Committee.

2.10   The Young People in Care Council (formerly the LAAC Reference Group) enables looked after young people to have a collective voice. The group has participated in consultations on throughcare and after care, and budget savings and has produced a DVD on key staff and their roles. The group has also produced a DVD and taken part in a seminar for elected members on Corporate Parenting.

Parent/carers survey

2.11   2,464 parents and carers completed the 'Children and Families Self-Evaluation survey – views of parents and carers' survey in June 2011 (see appendix 2 for details). This represents a 15% increase on the previous year's survey. Almost all respondents agreed that:

- My child enjoys learning at school (95%)
- My child feels safe at school (94%)
- The school helps my child to be more confident (92%)

2.12   Overall findings across the different sectors are very positive. Parents and carers remain overwhelmingly satisfied with their children's experience at school.

2.13   Each participating school has already been sent a report on the feedback from its parents/carers. This feedback will help schools to take parents/carers' concerns into account when planning for the future.

2.14   The response to the statement: 'The school asks for my views' is unchanged from last year at 75% agreeing. Overall responses on parental involvement are positive in an area which is widely recognised as challenging. Nevertheless the responses show that there is room for improvement in this area.   Findings have fed into schools' development planning and informed the forthcoming parental engagement strategy.

Consultative Committee with Parents and Parental Engagement Development Group

2.15   The Consultative Committee with Parents provides an opportunity for elected members, parents, head teachers, the Convenor and Director of Children and Families to debate and discuss issues and shape policy in Edinburgh. It is a consultative committee of the Council. The CCwP meets every six weeks. As well as meeting in a committee format, there are three meetings per school year to which all Parent Council chairs are invited.

2.16   The Parental Engagement Development Group (PEDG**)** has engaged parents, head teachers, CLD staff, early years staff and others in 'roadshow' discussions across Edinburgh on parental engagement. The group's final workshop took place in November at Wester Hailes Education Centre, where about 80 parents, heads and other staff discussed key issues which have emerged form the roadshows: communication, training and development needs, partnership working, pupil voice, and engaging with all parents. The feedback from the roadshows will inform the development of a new parental engagement strategy.

Edinburgh People's Survey

2.17   Data from the Edinburgh People's Survey shows a high and improving level of satisfaction with nursery (from 68% in 2007 to 81% in 2011), primary (from 74% to 84%) and secondary (from 66% to 77%) schools on the part of Edinburgh residents.

Customer Service Excellence

2.18 Progress is being made on Customer Service Excellence accreditation. Three areas are in the advanced stages of working towards CSE accreditation: the Education Welfare Service, Family and Community Support, and Planning and Performance. The results of pre-assessments, which involve an in-depth analysis of each area's self-evaluation in relation to customer service, will inform when the areas will be able to go forward for full accreditation.

2.19 The teams involved have developed their customer engagement across the range of customers: service users (voluntary and involuntary) and internal customers within the department and across the Council. The national Customer Satisfaction Measurement Tool, developed by the Improvement Service, has been adapted and used by Family and Community Support and the Education Welfare Service.

What's working well

2.20 A consistent approach to self-evaluation is becoming embedded across schools with feedback from stakeholders a key part of the self-evaluation process. This includes surveys of pupils, parents/carers and staff. The surveys are based on the HMIe pre-inspection surveys of pupils, parents and staff. The Growing Confidence Pupil Well-being Questionnaire is used to survey primary school pupils. There are still some issues regarding participation by some schools in the surveys. Further analysis of school self-evaluation surveys by race/ethnicity, gender and disability has been carried out and shared across the department.

2.21 **Edinburgh Youth Issues Forum** engages young people with decision-makers, including elected members and partner agencies. The forum's new structure of committee-style meetings alternating with young people's themed events is engaging more young people and in a more meaningful way than previously. Young people's themed events have taken place on job opportunities and employability, and on health. Feedback from the events has been worked on by relevant officers and re-presented to the committee in a 'You said, we did' format. The job opportunities and employability event won the Director's Award for Outstanding Achievement at last year's Children and Families Achievement Awards with the judges' comment -'young people engaged in creative solutions to some of our most challenging problems'.

2.22 The Youth Issues Forum recently ran a budget summit consultation event for young people. Thirty young people took part, generating and prioritising about 70 different suggestions on how services could be maintained, developed or improved. The suggestions have been fed into budget planning.

2.23 The next themed event will be held in March and will be on Local Youth Forums. The following event will be on young people and community safety.

2.25 The **anti-bullying survey** this year was extended to include P6 and 7 pupils, as well as S2 pupils. 4291 pupils completed the survey, an increase 1477 on the previous year. 73% of pupils agreed with the statement that 'my school is

good at dealing with bullying' – a slight increase on last year. The data is currently being analysed and reports will be sent to each school. The findings are also shared with Heads of Service and QIOs and CPD sessions are offered on anti-bullying.

2.26 **Survey Monkey** is being used increasingly across the department to consult with service users, partner agencies and staff. A wide range of surveys are underway at any one time, providing a wealth of easily accessible feedback.

2.27 **Areas for development/improvement:**
- Achieve Customer Service Excellence accreditation for the teams in the first phase, for schools and the rest of the department;
- Review the first year of the Edinburgh Youth Issues Forum (Service Plan target – 90 young people participating in the forum);
- Increase participation by schools in self-evaluation surveys (Service Plan targets – 60 primary schools using PWQ in 2011/12; 90% of secondary schools participating in pupil survey);
- Develop a more strategic approach to the use of Survey Monkey and consultation – extending responsibility in a managed way, developing consistent approaches, encouraging service areas to anticipate survey needs in advance and identifying gaps;
- Extend the use of the 'You said, we did' approach to feedback to stakeholders on the results of engagement activities;
- Develop a strategic and safe approach to the effective use of social media within Children and Families;
- Continue to support the development of pupil/student councils in schools.

2.28 **Key messages:**
- Engaging with service users is a key priority for services across Children and Families.

- Survey information continues to show that pupils, parents/carers and Edinburgh residents in general are very positive about our services.

- Feedback from our service users identifies key strengths and areas for improvement.

3 Financial Implications

3.1 None.

4 Equalities Impact

4.1 Equalities considerations are central to engagement activities. Analysis of surveys includes a breakdown of responses by ethnicity, gender and disability. This has led to the identification of actions and improvements to address issues and has been reported to the Children and Families Equalities Monitoring Implementation Group.

5 Environmental Impact

5.1 There are no adverse environmental impacts.

6　Recommendations

6.1　The Committee is asked to note progress in the area of engagement of service users and to agree to receive an annual update on the engagement of children, young people and parents/carers in the development of services for children and families.

Gillian Tee
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Appendices	1. Pupil self-evaluation survey – key findings 2. 2010/2011Parent/carer Survey Findings 2011
Contact/tel/Email	David Maguire Tel. 0131 529 2132 david.maguire@edinburgh.gov.uk
Wards affected	All.
Single Outcome Agreement	
Background Papers	

Pupil self-evaluation survey – key findings 2010/2011

The survey was conducted during the autumn and spring terms of 2010/2011. Schools were asked to select a sample of their pupils to participate in the survey (for the primary sector, only P4 –P7 pupils were sampled). In total 3,366 responses were received with 67% from Secondary pupils (see table 1). A further 8,500 primary school pupils completed the Growing Confidence Pupil Well-being Questionnaire (findings from this survey will be reported separately). Those schools which were the subject of an HMIE inspection or follow-through inspection were not asked to take part in the survey.

The proportions of male and female respondents are similar, at 44% and 46% respectively. 77% of respondents reported that they are white and 13% reported that they are from other ethnic groups.

Table 1: Responses by sector

	No. of responses	No. of schools
Primary	1092	29
Secondary	2248	22
Special	13	4
Not known	13	-
Total	3366	55

The **majority** of the pupils responded **positively** (either strongly agree or agree) to all of the 19 survey statements (see table 2).

Almost all respondents agreed that:
- Staff expect me to take responsibility for my own work in class

Most agreed with:
- I am getting along well with my school work
- I get help when I need it
- Staff encourage me to do the best I can
- Staff make sure that pupils behave well
- I have adults in school I can speak to if am upset or worried about something
- The school is helping me to become more confident
- Staff and pupils treat me fairly and with respect
- I feel safe and cared for in school
- Staff listen to me and pay attention to what I say
- I enjoy learning at school
- I find it easy to talk to staff and they set a good example

The majority agreed with:
- I know what out-of-school activities and youth groups are available in my local area
- Staff are good at dealing with bullying behaviour
- I take part in out-of-class activities and school clubs
- Staff talk to me regularly about how to improve my learning
- The school encourages me to make healthy-food choices

- The pupil council is good at getting improvements made in the school
- I have a say in making the way we learn in school better

Pupils were very clear that staff expect them to take responsibility for their own work in class. They feel that they can get help when they need it and staff make sure that pupils behave well. Nearly 40% of pupils **strongly agreed** that they have adults in school they can speak to if they are upset or worried about something.

However, around **one third** of pupils **did not feel** that the pupil council is good at getting improvements made in the school; that they have a say in making the way they learn in school better; or that the school encourages them to make healthy-food choices. These views are particularly evident in secondary schools.

Primary pupils responded **more positively** than secondary pupils to almost all survey questions (see table 3). About 80% of primary pupils agreed that the pupil council is good at getting improvements made in the school, while only about 40% of the secondary pupils agreed. Over 80% of primary pupils agreed that the school encourages them to make healthy-food choices and that staff are good at dealing with bullying behaviour, compared with over 50% of secondary pupils.

Both primary and secondary pupils were very positive about getting help when they need it or getting along well with their school work. The same proportion of primary and secondary pupils (92%) agreed that staff expect them to take responsibility for their own work in class.

More information on the survey, including findings broken down by neighbourhood and sector, is available on request.

Outcomes of the survey and points for action
Overall findings across primary and secondary schools are positive with the majority of pupils responding positively to all of the survey statements. Primary pupils are more positive than secondary pupils.

Each participating school will receive a report of responses from their pupils. These responses will be able to feed into improvement planning in schools.

The two lowest positive responses for secondary pupils are to the statements:
- I have a say in making the way we learn in school better; and
- The pupil council is good at getting improvements made in the school

At only 41% either strongly agreeing or agreeing, these are the statements that secondary pupils are **least likely to agree with** (the respective figures for primary pupils are 70% and 82%). Both statements relate to the issue of **pupil voice,** the first in the context of teaching and learning, and the second in the context of school improvements and decision-making. Both areas are integral to the Curriculum for Excellence.

It is clear that schools and Children and Families should do more to encourage pupils to be heard in the classroom and in school life in general – and should listen more to what they say. Work is currently underway to support student councils in secondary schools – a city-wide conference involving pupils, teachers and centrally-based staff

will be held in early April. The conference is being jointly planned and delivered with young people involved in student councils. The findings of this conference, and best practice examples of student council involvement in getting improvements made, should be circulated widely and included in CPD opportunities for schools on supporting student councils.

Another area of concern is encouraging pupils to make healthy food choices. Whilst 80% of primary pupils agree that schools encourage them to eat healthily, the figure drops to 53% for secondary pupils. Schools have a responsibility under the Schools Health Promotion and Nutrition Act to promote healthy eating and all school meals comply with government standards. A range of initiatives are underway – from promoting main meal healthy options to providing healthy food that mirrors high street products but comply with health standards. The Development Officer, Hungry for Success will explore the possibility of linking with specific pupil councils to promote healthy eating.

This summary will be shared with all schools and throughout Children and Families. It will feed into the department's service planning and self-evaluation processes.

Parent/carer Survey Findings 2011
Nursery, primary, secondary and special schools across the city were asked to invite a sample of parents/carers to complete the survey by June 2011. Those schools which were inspected by HMIE were not asked to participate in this year's survey. In total, 2,464 valid responses were received, an increase of 318 on the 2010 survey (see table 1). 88 establishments participated in the survey, an increase of 22 on 2010. 74% of responses were from primary parents/carers, and 80% of respondents were female.

Table 1: Number of responses and schools for each sector

Sector	No. of responses	No of schools
Nursery	46	7
Primary	1,818	60
Secondary	523	14
Special	68	4
Not known	9	3
Total	2,464	88

Key findings
The **majority** of parents/carers responded positively (either strongly agree or agree) to all of the 14 survey questions.

Almost all respondents agreed that:
- my child enjoys learning at school
- my child feels safe at school
- the school helps my child to be more confident
- my child is treated fairly at school
- overall, I am happy with the school

Most agreed that:
- my child's learning is progressing well in relation to these targets
- the school is well led
- the school sets suitable targets for my child's learning
- I feel staff really know my child as an individual and support them well
- the school keeps me well-informed about my child's progress
- the school asks for my views

The majority agreed that:
- my child benefits from school clubs and activities provided outside the classroom
- my school has the resources it requires to deliver a high quality education to its pupils
- the school takes my views into account

Citywide Findings
Overall, parents/carers were satisfied with the schools. In particular, over 90 per cent of the parents/carers agreed (including strongly agree) that their child enjoys learning

at school, feels safe at school, and is treated fairly. They felt the school helps their child to be more confident.

One of the main issues where the parents/carers were less satisfied appears to be communication between the parents/carers with the schools. .

The other two statements with less positive responses are: 'My child benefits from school clubs and activities provided outside the classroom' (71% agree or strongly agree) and 'My school has the resources it requires to deliver a high quality education to its pupils' (67% agree or strongly agree). The response for each was similar last year. Again the response is higher for the nursery, primary and special sectors than for the secondary sector.

Given the current constraints on budgets it is perhaps unsurprising that some parents/carers have concerns about resources. Despite this, a clear majority agrees with both statements.

The survey findings will be discussed with heads and with the Consultative Committee with Parents with a view to developing an action plan to address the issues raised.

The **Parental Engagement Development Group** has engaged parents, head teachers and others in 'roadshow' discussions on parental engagement over the past year. The findings of these discussions – on communication, training and development, partnership working, pupil voice and engaging with 'hard to reach' parents – will be shared at a conference this autumn and will inform the new parental engagement strategy. It is hoped that by sharing information on key areas of concern, background research and examples of successful practice, we can improve parental engagement.