

# Education, Children and Families Committee

**10am, Tuesday, 7 December 2021**

## **Learning Together - Parental Engagement, Parental Involvement, Family Learning and Learning at Home**

**Executive/routine  
Wards  
Council Commitments**

### **1. Recommendations**

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1.1 The Education, Children and Families Committee is asked to:

- 1.1.1 Note the update regarding Learning Together: Parental Engagement, Parental Involvement, Family Learning and Learning at Home.
- 1.1.2 Agree the next steps as outlined in section 5.
- 1.1.3 Agree to receive further annual reports on Learning Together: Parental Engagement, Parental Involvement, Family Learning and Learning at Home

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# Report

## Learning Together - Parental Engagement, Parental Involvement, Family Learning and Learning at Home

### 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1 This report provides a summary of the actions taken over the last 12 months to improve the ways in which schools work with families to improve learning and achievement both in school and in everyday life.
- 2.2 There is evidence of active Parent Councils and Parent Groups to support school/ELC involvement and further improvement. Most schools reported that they have strengthened their relationships with parents and carers during the last eighteen months. Schools have been responsive to the needs of families and implemented a wide range of improvements using self-evaluation data to remove barriers to pupil participation during the second lockdown. Almost all schools used surveys, online tracking systems to identify families who required support with remote learning. By tracking pupil engagement, and having supportive conversations with families, schools were able to tailor their approaches by setting specific objectives.

Next steps are identified in the report

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 This report provides the members of the Education, Children and Families Committee with a summary of the key outcomes in relation to Learning Together within the City of Edinburgh schools for the academic session 2020-21.
- 3.2 Key Findings from the Family Support Mapping and Parental Consultation 2020, completed by 2,424 parents and carers, found 64% of all parents and carers reported that there had been positive outcomes for their families during the lockdown period. Equally, the same number (64% or 1,551 parents/carers) reported that it had been very or quite challenging. 36% of Parents and carers felt grateful for the extra, unpressured time together with their children, being more involved with school learning and being supported by schools with regular communication. 28% of the parents and carers who completed the survey had received support from their children's schools.

- 3.3 The Parent Council Chair Survey (May 2021) identified an increase in parents and carers attending virtual Parent Council Meetings and Locality Meetings by up to 66%. Parents and carers had a good awareness of Locality Meetings and the Consultative Committee with Parents (CCwP) and their purpose, generally viewed as opportunities to share information and discuss areas of common concern. The survey highlighted barriers to engaging through these forums, suggestions for future enhancement and areas for ongoing support.
- 3.4 The Family Learning in Edinburgh Report, published in May 2021, by Community Learning and Development Lifelong Learning service in partnership with primary schools found Family Learning has been effective in:
- 3.4.1 Building the capacity of parents to engage in with their children in learning
  - 3.4.2 Supporting parents to understand the value of engaging in play and learning

## **4. Main report**

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- 4.1 Staff from 34 primary schools and early years centres are currently taking part in Edinburgh Learns Learning Together professional learning which involves self-evaluating their practice to create an action plan which will develop either parental engagement, parental involvement, family learning or learning at home. Good practice from Early Years, Primary and Secondary setting is being shared at each meeting from Foxcovert Early Years Centre, Forthview Primary School and Currie Community High School.
- 4.2 Support from Children and Families and Family Learning staff is ongoing to support practitioners in their use of self-evaluation evidence to effect change. Impactful practice will be shared and celebrated widely with parents and services in June 2022 at community events and four Sway presentations, one for Parental Engagement, Parental Involvement, Family Learning and Learning at Home.
- 4.3 Training is scheduled for probationers and modern apprentices on the importance of building partnerships with parents and carers and of supporting their children's learning. Learning@home training is currently being offered to parents and carers.
- 4.4 During session 202-2021 The Parental Engagement Strategy Group reviewed the Learning Together framework bringing it in line with current national expectations. The group is made up of parents, Head Teachers, Early Years staff, a representative from Connect and Officers for Adult Learning, Family Learning and Children and Families. The framework will be communicated to all stakeholders this session. The Framework is made up of four aspects Parental Engagement, Parental Involvement, Family Learning and Learning at Home. The framework provides a clear definition of what aspect is. The Learning Together Board's Action plan, SWOT analysis and targets have been organised under each of these headings. These actions are being trialled on a primary school website on their parent/carer page. Parental feedback will be used to create a guide for all schools to adopt.
- 4.5 The Parental Engagement Strategy Group and the Learning Together Board meet regularly and are taking forward the recommendations of the Parent Council Chair Survey (May 2021):

#### **4.5.1 Communication of CEC Parental Involvement framework**

Information about the Parental Involvement framework has been updated on the Council website <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/parental-engagement/parent-groups>

The framework was shared with new Parent Council Chairs in October 2021 showing how their voice is represented from the Parent Forum to the Education Children and Families Committee. This information has been shared with all parent councils to increase awareness of Locality Operational Groups and the Consultative Committee with Parents (CCwP).

This information will be shared with parents and carers who have children who attend early years centres to ensure they are aware of the framework and the process of raising concerns.

#### **4.5.2 Locality Meeting Format and Approach**

A Parents' and Carers' Communication Group, made up of nine Parent Council Chairs and Council Officers, has been established. Its focus is to improve communication between schools, Parent Council and parents and carers.

Locality Meetings have been set up for Special schools and for parents and carers with children in mainstream schools with additional support needs.

#### **4.5.3 Induction for New Parent Council Chairs**

A formal induction process has been established in September 2021 in partnership with Connect. Input from Annmarie Procter, Equalities Lead, was provided to increase awareness of equalities and to ensure representation of all parents' & carers' voices on schools' councils.

A buddying system has been started pairing a new Chair with an experienced Chair, within each Learning Community, where possible.

#### **4.5.4 Learning Community/ Cluster Links**

The Parental Engagement Strategy Group has proposed Parent Council Chairs attend the May 2022 Learning Community Planning Day to jointly review and plan for school improvement with Head Teachers. The option for Parent Council Chairs to meet together will also be offered to support and build working relationships between parents and school councils.

### **4.6 What's working well**

Following the review of School Standard and Quality Reports, data from a sample of primary and secondary parental questionnaires, the Digital Learning Survey, the Family Support Mapping and Parental Consultation 2020 and Parent Council Chairs Survey has identified the following practice as working well:

- 4.6.1 Positive relationships and high levels of trust between schools, parents/carers and partners.

- 4.6.2 Increased range of digital solutions used by all schools to improve parental engagement in children's and young people's learning.
- 4.6.3 Involvement of some pupils and parents in creating and reviewing school vision, values and aims relevant to the context of the school within its community.
- 4.6.4 Centrally co-ordinated parenting programmes for targeted families delivered in schools including:- Peep Learning Together online sessions, Incredible Years, Read, Write, Count Initiative, Triple P, Teen Triple P training and Mindroom sessions.
- 4.6.5 Capacity and skills of school staff and partners to support parental involvement and engagement.
- 4.7 Collaborative strategic planning between schools, early years and lifelong learning. This has included the development and implementation of staff professional learning and training for parents and carers.

## **5. Next Steps**

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- 5.1 Build on partnerships developed to include parents and carers in school renewal planning, including PEF spending and reducing the cost of the school day. This will be achieved by involving all parents and carers in the process of school improvement and ref barriers to learning.
- 5.2 Work together with parents and carers to plan family learning that takes account of the impact of the pandemic on families and communities.
- 5.3 Develop parents/carers knowledge and understanding of their child's learning.
- 5.4 Developing opportunities for families to learn together in shared activities designed to support parents/carers to learn about their child's learning.
- 5.5 Analyse the findings from the national Parental Involvement Census and draft an action plan/recommendations in response.

## **6. Financial impact**

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- 6.1 Learning Together is funded within current budgets.

## **7. Stakeholder/Community Impact**

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- 7.1 Data from a sample of primary and secondary parental questionnaires, the Digital Learning Survey, the Family Support Mapping and Parental Consultation 2020, the Parent Council Chairs Survey and from a review of schools' Standards and Quality Reports shows partnership working across sectors has continued to improve as

schools have worked with other agencies to ensure the best outcomes for learners and families.

- 7.2 Schools have created a family agreement where all families committed to actively engaging in the school's equity and inclusion work, including specific steps to build a strong anti-racist practices. Schools have supported the continuity of anti-racist practice at home and beyond school, through the development and delivery of relevant resources and programmes for all families. Schools have begun building the capacity of Parent Councils members, in their role as community leaders and ambassadors, to engage the larger parent body in developing anti-racist practices.

## **8. Background reading/external references**

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- 8.1 Engaging Families in Learning – A thematic inspection of family learning  
<https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/what-we-do/inspection-and-review/chief-inspector-report/national-thematic-inspections/engaging-families-in-learning-a-thematic-inspection-of-family-learning/>
- 8.2 Engaging parents and families - A toolkit for practitioners  
<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/engaging-parents-and-families-a-toolkit-for-practitioners/>

## **9. Appendices**

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- 9.1 Appendix 1 Learning Together Framework (draft September 2021)
- 9.2 Appendix 2 Learning Together Board Action Plan

## Appendix 1

### Learning Together Framework (draft September 2021)



## Learning Together

### Parental Involvement and Engagement

#### Working Together with the Community

ELCs and schools will use community resources and services to strengthen schools, families and children and young people's learning and development. They will:

- \* support and promote collaborative activities
- \* Use partnership and community resources to enhance the curriculum.

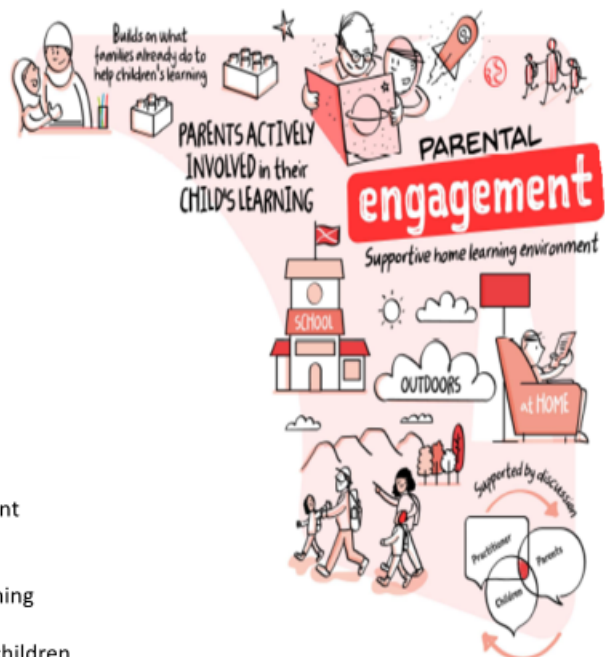
#### Communicating

ELCs and schools will develop regular and meaningful communication between home and ELC/school by:

- \* providing clear and regular communication from school to home
- \* making sure parents and carers know the different ways they can contact / communicate with the school
- \* making good use of information technology and school website.

**Parental Engagement:** supportive home learning environment  
Parents and carers actively involved in their child's learning

- Builds on what families already do to help children's learning
- At home, outdoors and at school
- Supported by discussion with practitioners, parents and children





## Parenting

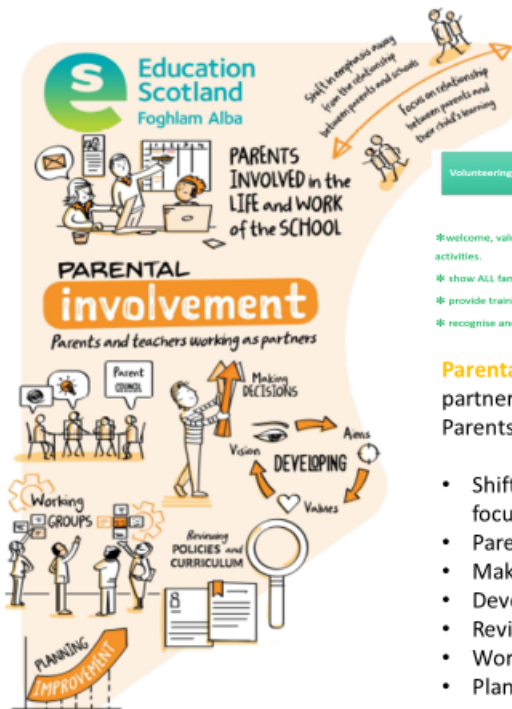
ELCs and Schools will promote and encourage parenting skills to develop home environments that support children as learners by:

- \* developing a skilled and welcoming staff who build strong, respectful relationships with all parents and carers.
- \* giving opportunities / inviting families to come together and engage with their children's health and wellbeing, play, learning and community.
- \* helping parents and carers feel confident about their ability and skills to meet the daily demands of their parenting role.
- \* offering professional support for families including those who want help and support with wellbeing concerns and/or additional support needs.
- \* supporting parents and carers to access study, work and community life.

### Family Learning: Families learning together

Shared activities are designed to enable parents to learn how to support their child's learning

- Intergenerational learning
- Aspirations
- Needs led
- Adult learning
- Meaningful and planned
- Inclusive
- Progression



## Volunteering

ELCs and schools will:

- \* welcome, value and actively invite parental support and help for school activities.
- \* show ALL families that their time and talents are welcome and valued.
- \* provide training for volunteer work as needed.
- \* recognise and celebrate the efforts/contributions of volunteers.

### Parental Involvement: Parents and carers and school/ELC staff working as partners

Parents and carers involved in the life and work of the school

- Shifting emphasis away from the relationship between parents and schools to focusing on relationships between parents and their child's learning
- Parent Council
- Making decisions
- Developing vision, values and aims
- Reviewing policies and curriculum
- Working groups
- Planning improvement

## School Decision-Making

ELCs and schools will include parents and carers in school decision-making. Schools will also provide opportunities to develop parent/carer leaders and representatives by:

- \* developing an active Parent Council that is representative of the wider parent body.
- \* involving parents involved in improvement planning and decision making at all levels.
- \* supporting networks for families to link with parent representatives.



## Learning at home

ELCs and schools will support families/parents to play an essential role in helping their children's learning by:

- \* providing the homework policy (schools only) and schedules to families.
  - \* providing information about homework activities (schools only) and activity / skills ideas for younger children.
  - \* Support families to take part in activities available in ELC/school or on-line.
- If learning needs to take place at home, ELC/schools will provide support for families. Please contact the Head of Centre or Head Teacher for support with digital learning.

## Learning at Home: everyday activities


The learning which happens in the home, outdoors and/or in the community



- Including organised or active learning opportunities







## Appendix 2 Learning Together Board Action Plan



Theme	<p><b>Parental Engagement- Learning Together</b></p> <p><b>Parental Involvement:</b> Parents and carers and school/ELC staff working as partners</p> <p>Parents and carers involved in the life and work of the school</p> <p><b>Parental Engagement:</b> supportive home learning environment</p> <p>Parents and carers actively involved in their child's learning</p> <p><b>Family Learning:</b> Families learning together</p>
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	Shared activities are designed to enable parents to learn how to support their child's learning  <b>Learning at Home:</b> Everyday activities  The learning which happens in the home, outdoors and/or in the community		
Owner	Marie Lyon		
Engagement Dates			
Young People	Parents	Community	
	December 2021	December 2021	
Board and Committee Dates			
Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
		25 March 2021	8 June 2021 2pm
6 September 2021	6 December 2021	7 March 2022	5 June 2022
 <b>Parental Involvement:</b> Parents and carers and school/ELC staff working as partners			
Strengths	Involvement of parents and carers in creating/reviewing school vision, values and aims. Committed Parent Council and Parent Groups to support school/ELC involvement and improvement. Increase in pupils' engagement as a result. Benefits to parents and carers' wellbeing. Benefits to whole community as reflexive to meet community need. Parent led survey to gather Parent Council Chair data to improve practice.		
Weaknesses	Equitable representation of parents on Parent Councils and other school groups. Involvement in improvement planning is not equitable. Involvement of parents in decision making regarding PEF/cost of the school day in all schools.		
Opportunities	Support Parent Councils to ensure that they are representative of their wider parent body. Involve all parents and carers in improvement planning and decision making at all levels. Support networks for families to link with parent representatives. Develop partnership working.		

<b>Threats</b>	Lack of parental involvement will impact on pupil attainment and achievement.
	<b>Parental Engagement:</b> supportive home learning environment
<b>Strengths</b>	<p>Improved focus on and support for improving pedagogy.</p> <p>Providing clear and regular communication from school/ELC to home and from home to school/ELC.</p> <p>Due to the pandemic and both lockdowns school/EYC are aware of and sensitive to family socio-economic circumstances, challenges and barriers. Staff work directly with families to improve home school/ELC links and provide practical support.</p>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<p>Lack of City wide data from <b>all</b> parents and carers on what they want and how they would like to be involved.</p> <p>Poverty barrier to engaging all families.</p> <p>Overlap with other strategic areas –equalities and equity , learning, teaching and assessment, financial support and advice etc.</p> <p>47% of parents and carers in the Family Support Mapping and Parental Consultation 2020 Survey don't know how to access support. (61% of parents and carers wanted support to access financial support).</p>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<p>Effective use of information technology and school websites.</p> <p>Use of partnership and community resources to enhance the curriculum.</p> <p>Further develop a suit of CLPL opportunities for all staff.</p>
<b>Threats</b>	<p>Parents and carers' lack of access to resources/support.</p> <p>Communication problems e.g. misunderstandings.</p>
	<b>Family Learning:</b> Families learning together
<b>Strengths</b>	<p>Recognition of diversity.</p> <p>Centrally co-ordinated programmes for parents delivered in communities including transition.</p> <p>Capacity and skills to support parental involvement and engagement.</p> <p>Positive relationships between parents and carers and school/ELC staff.</p> <p>Increasing variety of approaches used by schools to improve parental engagement in children's learning.</p> <p>Family learning in some schools/ELC is beginning to improve outcomes in terms of attainment and achievement.</p> <p>Increase in pupils' engagement as a result of family learning.</p> <p>A small number of parents and carers engaged in family learning are gaining new skills and qualifications leading to employment.</p>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<p>Supporting EAL families.</p> <p>Unconscious bias with staff and parents with the most disadvantaged families to be developed.</p> <p>CLPL for staff to develop partnership working with parents.</p>
<b>Opportunities</b>	Provide opportunities for all families to come together and engage with their children's health and wellbeing, play, learning and community.


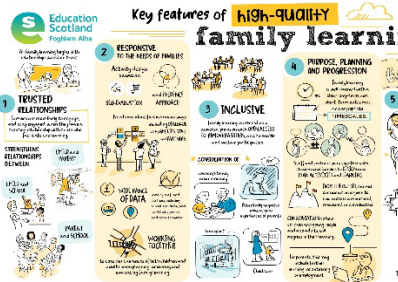

	<p>Ensure all parents and carers feel confident about their ability and skills to meet the daily demands of their parenting role.</p> <p>Offer professional support for families including those who want help and support with wellbeing concerns and/or additional support needs.</p> <p>Support parents and carers to access study, work and community life.</p> <p>Build on current approaches to develop ways to meaningfully engage parents and carers in the life and work of the school/ELC.</p> <p>Involve parents and carers in curriculum design and evaluating the impact of curriculum change</p> <p>Further strengthen parental involvement of parents in their child's learning.</p> <p>Recognise and celebrate the efforts/contributions of volunteers.</p>
<b>Threats</b>	Lack of parental involvement will impact on pupil attainment and achievement.
	<b>Learning at Home:</b> Everyday activities
<b>Strengths</b>	<p>Simplifying e-journals for families to support home learning.</p> <p>Parental contribution to education during the first and second lockdowns.</p>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<p>in-equality of pupil engagement due to family circumstances.</p> <p>Poverty barrier to engaging all families.</p>
<b>Opportunities</b>	Provide information about homework activities (schools only) and play experiences for younger learners.
<b>Threats</b>	Lack of parental involvement will impact on pupil attainment and achievement.
<b>Baselines</b>	<p><b>Targets</b></p> <p>A focus on removing barriers to learning caused by socio-economic challenges. This includes providing children and families with a network of support through an effective multi-agency approach. With additional experiences and opportunities to participate in a range of extra-curricular activities including sport, outdoor learning and personal achievement.</p> <p>Review and adapt target intervention and approaches to costs associated with the school day.</p> <p>Three Year Plan: Year 1: blue, Year 2: orange, Year 3: purple</p>
<b>Parental Involvement</b> 	<p>Shift emphasis away from the relationship between parents and schools/ELC to focusing on relationships between parents and their child's learning.</p> <p>Develop appropriate opportunities to involve all parents and carers to join in the design, delivery and evaluation of the services and facilities for their children: Build on partnerships developed to include parents and carers in school/ELC development, and renewal planning including curriculum rationale.</p> <p>Involvement of parents in decision making regarding PEF/cost of the school day in all schools.</p>

	Implement Parent Council Chair Survey recommendations.
<b>Measuring success</b>	<p>Parents and carers can see how their involvement is making a difference to ELC/school improvement.</p> <p>Increased % of schools indicating improvements in parental involvement and engagement.</p> <p>Increased % of parents and carers satisfied or better with their involvement and engagement in their children's learning.</p> <p>Parents' views represent a broader understanding of the range of ways they can support their children's learning.</p> <p>Increased % of parents who report that they are confident in supporting their children's learning in a range of ways.</p> <p>Increased % of schools reporting meaningful parental consultation on PEF spending.</p>
<b>Parental Engagement</b> 	<p>Provide support for schools on use of self-evaluation data to engage with all parents and carers: Build on what families already do well to help children's learning.</p> <p>Use of Plain English for parents and carers in school communication and having communication available in a range of languages.</p>
<b>Measuring success</b>	<p>Normalising support making it easily accessible to all-not needing to ask for help.</p> <p>Uptake and % use of the Engaging with Parents and Families Education Scotland Toolkit and Scottish Attainment Challenge Self-evaluation resource, updated September 2020: Sections g) Parental engagement, h) Collaborating with partners and i) Cost of the school day.</p>
<b>Family Learning</b> 	<p>Developing opportunities for families to learn together in shared activities designed to support parents to learn about their child's learning.</p> <p>Work together with parents and carers to plan family learning that takes account of the impact of the pandemic on families and communities and builds on what families do to support family learning.</p> <p>Signpost support for all families including BAME families, single parents, parents with children with ASN and families living in poverty.</p> <p>Develop and deliver structured family learning programmes, which lead to meaningful accredited and non-accredited outcomes for parents and carers.</p>
<b>Measuring success</b>	<p>All staff working with children and young people understand how important it is to engage and work with parents and carers and delivering family learning appropriate to their needs.</p>

	<p>Parents' views represent a broader understanding of the range of ways they can support their children's learning.</p> <p>Increased % of parents who report that they are confident in supporting their children's learning in a range of ways.</p> <p>Assess % uptake of CLPL.</p> <p>Increased participation in school, cluster and locality family learning on offer.</p>			
<b>Learning at Home</b> 	<p>Develop and deliver learning opportunities for families, co-constructed with partners. Target those living in the most disadvantaged communities.</p> <p>Remove barriers to enable all families to participate.</p>			
<b>Measuring success</b>	<p>Increased participation in learning opportunities on offer.</p> <p>Increased % of parents who report that they are confident in supporting their children's learning in a range of ways at home, outdoors and in the community.</p>			
<b>Action-Improvement</b>  <b>Producing Top Tips for schools/ELC and parents and carers link into framework- same number for each aspect(for sharing/ identifying strengths and weaknesses).</b>		<b>Owner</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Parental Involvement</b> 	<p>Career long Professional Learning for school/Early Learning Centre staff. Target probationers and Modern Apprentices.</p> <p>Develop a Parental Involvement and Engagement Strategy include guidance for parents and carers, include examples of good practice. (Involve parents and carers)</p> <p>Liaise with Digital Learning Team and wider Council groups to create a list of Top Tips for communication with parents that consider EAL, literacy issues</p> <p>Agree follow-up actions from the Parent Council Chair Survey, May 2021</p>	<p>Special schools Charlotte Chiswick</p> <p>Strategic Working Group</p> <p>Connect</p>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>: Formal induction process for new PC Chairs</li> <li>: Set up a buddying system pairing a new Chair with an experienced Chair</li> <li>: Increase awareness of Locality Operational Groups and Consultative Committee with Parents (CCwP)</li> <li>: Offering attendance at meetings as face to face or virtually, where possible.</li> <li>: Learning Communities/ Cluster model working-linked to training/family learning and learning at home</li> <li>: Regular communication-use of social media</li> </ul>			
<b>Parental Engagement</b> 	<p>Develop use of the Engaging with Parents and Families Education Scotland Toolkit  <a href="https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/engaging-parents-and-families-a-toolkit-for-practitioners/">https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/engaging-parents-and-families-a-toolkit-for-practitioners/</a>          and Scottish Attainment Challenge Self-evaluation resource, updated September 2020: Sections g) Parental engagement, h) Collaborating with partners and i) Cost of the school day</p> <p>Use of the four aspects of the Parental Engagement Framework on all documents/policies and school websites and on a new Council website for parents.</p> <p>Education Scotland Survey to be administered October 2021-January 2022</p>	<p>Sheila Scott to add to East Craigs PS Website</p>		



	 <p>CLPL for school/ELC staff. Target probationers and Modern Apprentices.</p> <p>Well planned progressive family learning delivered across clusters and locality area.</p>			
	<p>Design and plan experience for learners with parents and carers.</p> <p>Recognition and celebration of achievements.</p>			
<b>Action-Maintenance</b>		<b>Owner</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Notes</b>
	<p>National Improvement Framework Parental Engagement – Improvement Priorities for 2020</p> <p>Key improvement activity in 2020 will be taken forward across 13 key goals as identified in the joint Scottish Government/COSLA <a href="#">"Learning Together" National Action plan</a>.</p> <p>Parental Involvement and Engagement Census in the 2020/21 academic year, and every two years thereafter.</p> <p>There were a number of key actions that came out of the new census including the need to review and strengthen statutory</p>			

	<p>guidance relating to the 2006 Scottish Schools Parental Involvement Act, and to continue to refresh the content of the ParentZone Scotland website.</p> <p>Gather and analysis data from school's parental surveys issued during 2000-2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>:identify themes</li> <li>:action taken by schools</li> <li>:identity support/strategies to take forward actions</li> <li>: share key results back with parents and carers so that they know their voices have been heard.</li> </ul>			
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