

**Shetland Islands Council**  
**Children's Services**



**Strategy for Parental Involvement and**  
**Parental Engagement**

**May 2018**

## **Parental Involvement and Parental Engagement Strategy**

1. Introduction and Background
2. The benefits of Parental Engagement and Parental Involvement
3. Links to Policy, Legislation, and Strategic National Documents
4. Types of Parental Involvement and Engagement:
  - 4.1 Parenting
  - 4.2 Communicating
  - 4.3 Volunteering
  - 4.4 Learning at Home (and Family Learning)
  - 4.5 Decision-making (Parent Councils)
  - 4.6 Collaborating with the community
5. Complaints
6. Roles and Responsibilities
7. National Organisations
8. Conclusion

## **Appendices**

1. Parental Involvement and Engagement in *How Good is our School?* (4<sup>th</sup> edition) Quality Indicators
2. Review of the impact of the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006: Recommendations
3. Volunteer Helpers in Schools
4. SIC Complaints Leaflet
5. SIC Scheme for Appointing Head Teachers and Depute Head Teachers
6. Examples of Good Practice in Shetland

***“Parental involvement in a child’s learning has positive outcomes for the child, their family and their school, and helps to raise attainment.”***

*NPFS, Review of the impact of the Scottish School (Parental Involvement) Act 2006.*

## **1. Introduction**

The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 states: “Each education authority must prepare a document, to be known as their ‘strategy for parental involvement’”. The Act requires the strategy to include information about the Parent Forum and Parent Council, the duties of the education authority and head teacher to a Parent Council, the duties of the education authority to parents generally, and the Complaints Procedure. Each authority must review its strategy from time to time. Under the Education (Scotland) Act 2016, local authorities are required to publish their strategy for parental involvement and to publish an annual report on the activities it has undertaken in pursuance of the policies in the strategy.

The present Strategy builds upon Shetland’s Parental Involvement Strategy, which was agreed by Shetland Islands Council in 2010, and which has been updated twice since then to reflect changes to the recruitment and selection of Head and Deputy Head Teachers and changes in the council’s complaints procedure. The present Strategy provides a more robust framework that can be used by schools to inform their own policies on parental involvement and engagement.

This Strategy sets out how Children’s Services expects to work with other professionals to encourage all parents to be involved in their child’s learning in ways that are right for their family. The Strategy includes examples of practice that can help school communities with their own ideas. It includes recommendations of methods to reduce the barriers to parental engagement and sets out ways in which Shetland Islands Council will support its Parent Councils.

The term “parent” throughout this document includes any person who is liable to maintain or has parental responsibilities within the meaning of section 1(3) of the Children (Scotland) Act (1995), or has care of a child or young person. A child means a young person under the age of 18. “Family” includes any person who has parental responsibility for the child and any other person with whom the child has been living.

Scottish education has long recognised that parents are important partners with schools, and has encouraged the formation of a local school group to represent the views of its parents. School Boards were introduced in 1988 as part of the Government’s policy of encouraging parental involvement in schools. Their size and composition was laid down in the “School Board Regulations 1989”. They were only established when sufficient parent members were elected through contested or uncontested regular elections, or elections. School Boards were disbanded in 2007/8 and replaced with Parent Councils under the Scottish School (Parental Involvement) Act 2006, which relaxed the formal structure of the School Board and took away the requirement to hold elections. Parent Councils are able to agree their own constitutions and the mechanisms whereby people can be a member.

The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 remains the basis of the current approach to parental involvement. The 2018 Education Act is expected to place additional duties on schools with regard to parental engagement and to strengthen the role of Parent Councils.

## 2. The Benefits of Parental Involvement and Parental Engagement

“The more that parents engage in their child’s learning, the more likely it is that they will help raise their child’s attainment. What parents do with their children at home and throughout their education is much more significant than any other factor open to educational influence”  
Desforges, 2003

Goodall and Vorhaus, in their “Review of Best Practice in Parental Engagement” (2011) present their findings under three categories:

- School to home links;
- Support and training for parents;
- Family and community based interventions.

This Strategy expands on these categories and provides local examples and guidance of each in practice.

The Review states: “The more parents are engaged in the education of their children, the more likely their children are to succeed in the education system. School improvement and school effectiveness research consistently shows that parental engagement is one of the key factors in securing higher student achievement. Schools that improve and sustain improvement engage the community and build strong links with parents. Where schools build positive relationships with parents and work actively to embrace racial, religious, and ethnic and language differences, evidence of sustained school improvement can be found.”

***Parental involvement** is a common vehicle for bringing teachers and parents together in schools. Parent involvement programs tend to be directed by the school and attempt to involve parents in school activities and or teach parents specific skills and strategies for teaching and reinforcing tasks at home. With parent involvement, the emphasis is upon harnessing what parents can do to help the school realise its outcomes.*

Janet Goodall

***Parental engagement** is not the same as parental involvement. Engagement implies that parents are an essential part of the learning process, an extended part of the pedagogic process. This research has shown that the aspiration of raising achievement can only be fulfilled if parents are both involved in schools and engaged in learning.*

Janet Goodall

When parents are engaged, there are significant benefits for children and young people, as laid out in “Engaging parents and families: A toolkit for practitioners”. These are:

- It is easier for children and young people to learn when they get encouragement at home;
- They will attain and achieve more when their parents are involved;
- Children and young people get access to more activities in and out of settings when there are more adults to help;
- Any concerns in the school environment can be addressed more easily when parents and schools work together;
- They are happy when their parents are enjoying events in the setting.

The OECD, drawing on research by Epstein, concluded that “student learning is most effective when it is the result of a partnership between the school, teachers, parents and the community”.

Given the vast range of evidence that describes the impact of parental involvement and engagement on a young person’s achievement and attainment in school, it is vital that schools know and understand the mechanisms to encourage it. The main purpose of this Strategy document is therefore to set out recommendations that describe the different aspects.

Because of these clear benefits the Scottish Government and Education Scotland (HMIE) are increasingly emphasising the requirement of schools to demonstrate parental involvement, and make recommendations in various publications. These are listed in the following section, and the areas where parental involvement are included in the quality indicators of How Good is our School? 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (2015) (HGIOS?4) are set out at Appendix 1.

### **3. Links to Policy, Legislation, and Strategic National Documents**

#### **3.1 National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan for Scottish Education**

Key priorities of the current National Improvement Framework are:

- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children
- Improvement in children and young people’s health and wellbeing
- Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people

The National Improvement Framework has six drivers of improvement that work together to support the achievement of these key priorities. They are:

- School Leadership

- Teacher Professionalism
- Parental engagement
- Assessment of Children's Progress
- School Improvement
- Performance Information

Recent improvement activity associated with the driver on parental engagement includes:

- Education Scotland published a review of **family learning** in 2016 and published additional case studies on the National Improvement Hub in March 2018. It published "Family Learning Framework: Advice for Practitioners" in April 2018.
- Education Scotland introduced revised **pre-inspection questionnaires for parents** in January 2017. This will help improve the range and quality of the feedback from parents on their involvement in and satisfaction with their child's early learning and childcare setting or school.
- Education Scotland provided national guidance to help local authorities and school improve the consistency and quality of **reporting to parents** about their children's progress and achievement, in January 2017. In Shetland this was used to develop a parent reporting tool that schools can adopt.
- Education Scotland introduced detailed **reporting of school level information** through ParentZone Scotland in early 2018.
- The Scottish Government continued and extended its **national parental support campaigns and gifting programmes to parents and families** across Scotland, including Baby Boxes, Bookbug, PlayTalkRead and Read, Write, Count (providing advice and materials to parents to support their children's learning from an early age).

Further improvement activity for parental engagement promised in the National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan for Scottish Education includes:

- To write a **national Parental Engagement and Family Learning Action Plan** by June 2018 that will contain detailed next steps in relation to provision of guidance, workforce support, access to family learning, digital and research across 3-18.
- To embed evidence-based **family learning in the early learning offer** for families facing disadvantage.
- To work with local authorities and schools through **regional improvement collaborative** during 2018/19, to help them further develop approaches to parental engagement and family learning.
- To update the **Engaging with Parents and Families Toolkit** for practitioners by March 2019.
- To support **professional learning** on parental engagement locally and regionally by March 2019.

- To continue to promote and share good practice in family learning and parental engagement through local and regional activity and practice sharing on the **National Improvement Hub** by March 2019.
- To ensure that by 2019 every school has access to a **home to school link worker** to support parents and families who find it challenging to engage in their child's learning and feel excluded from the work and life of their child's school.
- To reposition key national parental support campaigns (PlayTalkRead, Read, Write, Count) within a newly refocused "**Parent Club**" approach, designed more closely around parent support with children's behaviour, practical support at home etc., in 2018 and beyond.

In addition, the NIF expects local authorities to consider cross-authority regional improvement strategies for parental engagement. In Shetland's case, that will mean collaboration with partner authorities within the Northern Alliance.

### **3.2 Review of the impact of the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006**

The National Parent Forum of Scotland, as the key national organisation representing parents, was tasked with reviewing the impact that the Act has made on young people and families. The review, published in 2017, found major improvements in the way that teachers and head teachers communicate with parents, and has made recommendations for actions to build on this for the Scottish Government and national agencies, for local authorities, and for schools. Appendix 2 summarises the recommendations.

The Scottish Government accepted all of the Review's recommendations and incorporated them in its paper "Education Governance: Next Steps".

Section 4 of this Strategy is structured around the six areas of parental involvement that were identified in the Review.

### **3.3 Education Governance: Next Steps.** *Empowering our teachers, parents and communities to deliver excellence and equity for all our children. June 2017*

The action points within this proposal to enhance parental engagement include:

***We will strengthen parental involvement by consulting, in autumn 2017, on legislative changes to strengthen, expand and improve the Scottish Schools Parental Involvement Act 2006 acting on the National Parent Forum of Scotland's review of the Act. This will:***

- ***strengthen the duties on schools to ensure that parent councils play a full part in the decision making of schools;***
- ***expand relevant aspects of the Act to involve parents from early years' settings;***

- ***provide a stronger focus on parental engagement in learning within the legislation;***
- ***improve and extend the duties on headteachers to engage the entire parent forum; and***
- ***include proposals to extend the links between parent councils and pupils.***

***We will ensure that every school, by 2019, has access to a home to school link worker to support parents and families who find it challenging to engage in their child's learning and feel excluded from the work and life of their child's school.***

The current position in Shetland is as follows:

- Pre-school home visiting teacher
- Home-link teacher
- Two part-time support workers

***We will strengthen parental and community engagement (this will be included in a consultation on the Education Bill in autumn 2017) by working with Scottish Parent Teacher Council (now renamed Connect) over the next year to learn from their Partnership Schools initiative to ensure that schools support parents to play an active part in school improvement.***

***We will strengthen school, parental and community engagement by requiring that every school, by 2019, has a teacher or professional who has responsibility for promoting parental, family and community engagement.***

In Shetland we offered training to school staff by the Scottish Parent Teacher Council (since renamed Connect) in October 2016 and again in October 2017. Shetland will continue to work with Connect with respect to training for schools and for parents via Parent Councils.

Following the "Education Governance: Next Steps" paper, the Scottish Government launched a consultation on proposals for a new Education (Scotland) Bill, which closed in January 2018. The responses relating to parental involvement were summarised by Scottish Government researchers as follows:

***In general, respondents were supportive of the broad areas for reform to the Scottish Schools (Parental) Act 2006. However, while there was support for the principles behind parental involvement, there was less support for legislation to enshrine this; and a number of respondents noted that schools already involve parents in decision-making.***

***While there was support for parental involvement and acknowledgement of the need to involve a wider range of parents, there were concerns that it is difficult to ensure that parents from a wide range of backgrounds***



*are involved, and some respondents commented that not all parents want to be involved.*

*Respondents noted the need for a range of communication channels, strategies and support for engaging parents.*

*There was also general support for the duties and powers in relation to apply to early learning and childcare settings.*

### 3.4 Other relevant legislation

Other legislation that supports parents and underpins Scottish education includes:

**[The Education \(Scotland\) Act \(1980\)](#)** An Act with specific reference to the provision of education by Education Authorities and the rights and duties of parents and functions of Education Authorities in relation to individual learners.

**[United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)** The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is an international statement of the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of children. It came into UK law in 1992.

**[Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000](#)** This Act is about the provision of school education specifically relating to children's rights and the duty of the education authority. As updated in

**[The Equality Act 2010](#)** This Act places a duty on schools and education authorities not to discriminate against pupils with protected characteristics including disabilities, sexual orientation and ethnicity. This includes admission to school, the way education is provided, access to a benefit, facility or service, and exclusion. They must not treat pupils with disabilities less favourably and must take reasonable steps to avoid putting these pupils at a substantial disadvantage. The duty related to aids and services means that, since September 2012, schools (including independent schools) have to make reasonable adjustments.

**[The Requirements for Community Learning and Development \(Scotland\) Regulations 2013](#)** This legislation places requirements on every local authority in Scotland to secure and co-ordinate the provision of community learning and development (CLD) in their area.

**[Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#)** This Act made provisions for many aspects of services and support for young people, including the rights of children, Children's Services planning by local authorities, adoption, Children's Hearings, looked-after children, and corporate parenting.

**Education (Scotland) Act 2016** This Act includes the requirement on local authorities to plan to reduce inequalities of educational outcome that are based on socio-economic and other disadvantages. It includes provisions which extend the rights of children with additional support needs: all children aged 12 and over who are able to have the right to be involved in decisions made about their education. The Act also establishes a process by which parents can request Gaelic Medium Primary Education (GMPE) from their education authority.

#### **4. Types of Parental Involvement and Parental Engagement**

The Review of the impact of the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 (NPFS, 2017) explains that: “Ideally, parental involvement leads to parental engagement. The movement between the two represents a ‘shift in emphasis, away from the relationship between parents and schools, to a focus on the relationship between parents and their children’s learning’ (Goodall and Montgomery, 2014).”

The review also points out that “Key research by Dr Joyce Epstein has identified six types of involvement for schools, families and communities as they work together to increase attainment.”, and that “Each is equally valuable and relevant, and may be more or less appropriate at different points in the school career of a young person.”

This section defines the six types of parental involvement and provides information to support practice by schools and the local authority, working in partnership with parents.

- 4.1** Parenting
- 4.2** Communicating
- 4.3** Volunteering
- 4.4** Learning at Home (and Family Learning)
- 4.5** Decision-making (Parent Councils)
- 4.6** Collaborating with the community

##### **4.1 Parenting**

The recommendations in the Review (page 16) are to “help families to create home environments to support children as students, including family support programmes, home visits and parent education.”

Provision in Shetland is summarised and found on the Shetland Islands Council’s website at:

[http://www.shetland.gov.uk/childrens\\_resources/bruce\\_family\\_centre.asp#parent\\_groups](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/childrens_resources/bruce_family_centre.asp#parent_groups)

The Bruce Family Centre provides a wide range of services, using a multi-agency approach.

The main functions of the Bruce Family Centre are to:

- Promote early intervention
- Facilitate childcare through the administration of Isles Haven Nursery and Islesburgh Out of School Club
- Promote positive parenting
- Support vulnerable children, young people and their families
- Promote play
- Support childminders

The relevant functions within Children's Services, Quality Improvement are:

- Support the education and development of children not attending school because of ill health or who are home educated
- Support pre-school children who have barriers to learning, either in a group or one to one setting, dependent on the needs of the child and family
- Support transition to nursery and school and work closely with families to ensure the smoothest possible journey into education.

The services provided by The Bruce Family Centre include:

- Parent Groups
- Triple P 'Positive Parenting Program'
- Play@Home
- Playvan
- Childminder Support
- Play Day

The services provided by Children's Services, Quality Improvement are:

- Home Link
- Pre School Home Visiting Service
- Information for parents of young people with additional support needs – the link to this is here:

[http://www.shetland.gov.uk/education/asn\\_home.asp](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/education/asn_home.asp)

Psychology of Parenting Programme:

NHS Scotland's "Psychology of Parenting Project" (PoPP) is aimed at improving the availability of high-quality evidence-based parenting programmes for families with young children who have elevated levels of behaviour problems.

Many national and local organisations provide support to parents about specific issues that they may have. They are listed on the Shetland Family Information Directory at:

## 4.2 Communicating

“Communicate with families about school programmes and student progress through effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications.”  
(Review, page 16)

It is also a recommendation of the review at point 34 that schools:

Communicate as effectively as possible: Schools should ensure that systems are in place for communicating with everyone in the parent forum, i.e. resident and non-resident parents (where appropriate), and those with protected characteristics and marginalised groups.

Children’s Services includes training for probationer teachers and new Head Teachers in Parental Involvement, and offers training to all other staff at other times. This training includes communication skills.

It is recommended that all recruitment interviews for teacher and support posts assess a candidate’s ability to communicate with parents.

- Communications with parents should be clear, jargon-free, specific and easily accessible for the whole Parent Forum. Schools in Shetland should co-opt a parent, or suggest a sub-group of parents from the Parent Council, to edit communications such as newsletters and standard letters to help ensure that they meet these criteria.
- A variety of methods and approaches should be used by schools to communicate with the parent forum, including face-to-face, traditional communication methods and digital media. More schools in Shetland are using technology such as Glow Blogs and Class Dojo to describe to parents what their children have been doing in school that day. These tools allow for photographs and comments about children’s learning to be shared in “real time”, and are welcomed by parents, who are able to leave comments, and to follow up with learning conversations at home.
- Consideration should be given to the best ways of communicating with parents who have difficulties with language and communication. Spoken communication should be encouraged where parents have literacy difficulties. Schools should have copies of their standard letters and handbooks translated into the most common languages that are in their school community.

Schools should ensure that parents know who to contact when they wish to discuss their child’s learning or wellbeing. They should provide a private space for such discussions and make sure parents are given adequate time

and support. Teachers and support staff should be briefed on communication skills and sensitivity.

Information on who to contact and how to contact them should be included in the school handbook with updates on staff changes issued.

The School Handbook template is found at:

[http://www.shetland.gov.uk/education/policies\\_guidelines\\_and\\_forms.asp](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/education/policies_guidelines_and_forms.asp)

- Consideration should be given to family circumstances, e.g. kinship care, looked-after children, parent(s) in custody, disabilities, employment patterns.

**Kinship care** is when a child is looked after by their extended family or close friends, if they cannot remain with their birth parents. ... Kinship care includes children who are looked after and are placed in a formal kinship care arrangement by the local authority.

'**Looked After Children**' are defined as those in the care of their local authority. These children may continue to be looked after at home, or the child is cared for away from their normal place of residence, by foster or kinship carers, prospective adopters, in residential care homes, residential schools or secure units. Local authorities have statutory corporate parenting responsibilities under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act (2014).

All Head Teachers in Shetland are aware of the children in these categories in their schools and discuss with them and their carers the best ways in which to communicate.

### 4.3 Volunteering

“Improve recruitment, training, work and schedules to involve families as volunteers and audiences at school or in other locations to support students and school programmes.” (Review, page 16)

Schools in Shetland welcome parents who wish to help, on a voluntary basis, in their child's school. Volunteering is an important contribution to parental involvement, and it helps those parents to develop relationships with the school that may lead to greater parental engagement.

Some schools periodically survey their parents to identify in what ways parents are able to volunteer. These activities include:

- Help in the classroom (this tends to be in nursery and primary settings);
- Support walking to and from school (walking buses);
- Support travel to and from swimming and assist pupils to organise changing in and out of swimwear;
- Help with school trips;
- Help with drama productions;

- Helping schools to deliver some of the curriculum about career information, and share their work expertise.

If a parent wishes to become a regular volunteer, they will be required to have a PVG (Protection of Vulnerable Groups) check, and to attend volunteer training sessions that are organised by the Council's Workforce Development Team.

Advice on volunteering can be found on the website of Connect (formerly the Scottish Parent Teacher Council) along with useful forms for the school and for the parent. See at <https://connect.scot/parent/volunteering>.

#### **4.4 Learning at Home (including Family Learning)**

"Involve families with their children in learning activities at home, including homework and other curriculum-related activities and decisions". (Review, page 16)

Edward Sosu and Sue Ellis (2014) write:

"Proven to have a positive impact on reducing the attainment gap are effective parental involvement programmes that focus on helping parents to use appropriate strategies to support their children's learning at home rather than simply seeking to raise aspirations for their children's education."

"Most effective is when parents use appropriate strategies to help their children learn at home. Parents from more deprived areas may have the same amount of time to help their children but their efforts are less effective. Strategies that are very effective include: providing a good space for homework, interesting books and effective strategies for tutoring their children."

"Studies showed that parental aspirations had very little to do with closing the attainment gap – what mattered was having the technical and social know-how to work effectively with their children."

It is clear that parents who help their children to learn at home are a crucial element in helping children to learn and to achieve more. However, not all parents understand this, and not all parents are able to achieve this. While it may seem straightforward to make a statement that implies that school staff can support parents to help their child to learn at home, many parents find it difficult to engage with the school and have barriers to engagement, and therefore barriers to learning how to help their child to learn. Connect (formerly the Scottish Parent Teacher Council) lists some of these as:

- Time, work patterns;
- Family life (caring responsibilities, money problems, relationship issues);
- Language and Literacy;
- Physical and mental health;
- Lack of confidence;

- Parents' opinion on their responsibilities as a parent;
- Their perceptions of their skills in mathematics, reading and writing and other subjects;
- Their aspirations and expectations;
- Reputation/history of the school;
- Culture;
- Their own experience of school.

Schools can indeed help parents to reduce these barriers to a certain extent. The Parentzone Scotland website has many leaflets that give parents ideas and methods, and can be found at:

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/learning-at-home>

Good practice includes:

- The clear and consistent goal for school based family and parent support activities should always be the improvement of children's learning;
- All school staff should receive training in parental engagement;
- Parental engagement with children's learning is effectively supported when parents receive clear, specific and targeted information from schools;
- Improving home school links can lead to improvements in completion of homework, learning behaviours and improved attendance.

Schools can work with other council services to support Family Learning.

## Family Learning

"Family learning is a powerful method of engagement and learning which can foster positive attitudes towards life-long learning, promote socio-economic resilience and challenge educational disadvantage" (Scottish Family Learning Network, 2016).

Dr Bill Maxwell, in his foreword to the Review of Family Learning: Supporting Excellence and Equity (December 2016) wrote: "Done well, family learning helps close the attainment gap through breaking the inter-generational cycles of deprivation and low attainment."

Family learning is described in this review as: "encouraging family members to learn together as and within a family, with a focus on generational learning. Family learning activities can also be specifically designed to enable parents to learn how to support their children's learning." It reaches the most disadvantaged, helps to close the attainment gap, extends beyond the duration of the intervention and has an impact through the different age ranges.



The Review of Family Learning has several examples of family learning in Scotland that supports, for example:

- Transition from nursery to primary 1 through reading together;
- Intergenerational learning trips including indoor and outdoor activities to encourage fathers and male carers involvement and improve their confidence;
- Peep (Peers Early Education Partnership) Learning Together Programme and Peep Progression Pathway adult learning units, which formally recognise how parents/carers learn to help their child to develop and learn;
- Promoting the roles of father figures by helping them to become more involved in their child's learning;
- Family Clubs – healthy lifestyles and eating choices, play and being physically active together, developing relations and spending quality time together;
- Books for Bairns for families with children aged 2 ½ to 4 years old.

In April 2018, Education Scotland published “Family Learning Framework: Advice for Practitioners”. It is intended to help schools work with partners to plan, develop, deliver and evaluate family learning effectively at a local level.

Both these documents, and many additional case studies, can be found at [https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Pages/Search.aspx?k=family learning](https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Pages/Search.aspx?k=family%20learning)

In Shetland, consideration should be given especially to programmes that support learning in the areas of literacy, numeracy, and for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL).

The Bruce Family Centre offers a variety of parenting courses and support sessions that encourage parents to learn and to help their child to learn. These predominantly support parents who may have some of the barriers to involvement listed at 4.3 above and are found at:

[http://www.shetland.gov.uk/childrens\\_resources/bruce\\_family\\_centre\\_parenting\\_courses.asp](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/childrens_resources/bruce_family_centre_parenting_courses.asp)

Shetland College, through its Learning Centres, offers a variety of basic courses, which include essential skills, including communication, numeracy and computing skills. The full range of courses is here:

<https://www.shetland.uhi.ac.uk/courses/>

Adult Learning is part of the Council's Community Planning and Development Service. It works with adults and families to help make positive changes in their lives by helping to develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work in the following areas:

- Community based adult learning including evening and day classes, workshops, taster sessions and projects in partnership with others;



- One to one and group sessions in the core skills of numeracy, computing, communication, problem solving, and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL);
- Family learning and intergenerational learning.

### **Voluntary Action Shetland:**

"Voluntary Action Shetland seeks to respond to and support voluntary services in Shetland by meeting present and emerging needs, developing and promoting new ways of responding and encouraging people in Shetland to offer voluntary service to their community."

The organisation supports the provision of "the befriending scheme", supporting carers, peer education, various training, and provides classes for parents of children with additional support needs. For more information, go to:

<http://www.shetland-communities.org.uk/subsites/vas/what-we-do.htm>

### **Key Messages:**

Janet Goodall and John Vorhaus with the help of Jon Carpentieri, Greg Brooks, Rodie Akerman and Alma Harris (2010), suggested several key messages that should be considered when thinking about family and community based interventions. Some of them are:

- The evidence of the impact of family literacy, language and numeracy programmes on children's academic and learning related outcomes is extensive and robust, particularly in the case of literacy;
- Family literacy and numeracy programmes can have a positive impact on the most disadvantaged families, including the academic outcomes of the children;
- Giving parents written information containing simple, specific techniques for helping their children during parent reading yielded greater benefits than providing parents with more general information;
- Family literacy and numeracy programmes can have a positive impact on the most disadvantaged families, including the academic outcomes of the children.

## **4.5 Decision Making (Parent Councils)**

"Include families as participants in school decisions, governance and advocacy through parent-teacher associations (PTA), parent-teacher organisations (PTO), school councils, committees, action teams and other parent organisations." (Review, page 16)

Under the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006, the entire body of parents of any school is referred to as the Parent Forum. Provision is made in the Act for the establishment of Parent Councils to represent parents. It is

for the Parent Forum to decide whether to form a Parent Council, but education authorities are expected to encourage and help Parent Forums to do so. The Parent Council, in turn, is entitled to information and advice from the education authority in fulfilling its role.

The functions of a Parent Council fall broadly into four main areas:

- supporting the school in its work with pupils;
- representing the views of parents;
- promoting contact between the school, parents, pupils, providers of nursery education and the community;
- reporting to the Parent Forum.

The Parent Council should be consulted about major changes in school policies, school uniforms, lunches, curriculum change, school day changes, and school improvements. The 2018 Education Act is expected to place additional duties on schools with regard to parental engagement and to strengthen the role of Parent Councils.

Education authorities have a statutory duty to involve Parent Councils in the recruitment of head teachers and depute head teachers for their schools. Shetland Island Council's current procedures for this have been agreed with the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers. They can be found in Appendix 5.

**Parent Forum:** All parents who have a child attending a public school are automatically a member of the Parent Forum for that school. The Parent Forum may choose to be represented by a Parent Council.

**Parent Council:** The statutory body responsible for representing parents' views.

More detail can be found in the Guidance to the 2006 Parental Involvement Act at: <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/148166/0039411.pdf>.

Shetland Islands Council is committed to supporting each school's Parent Council in various ways. For example, the Council:

- Has a named Parental Involvement Officer to support Parent Councils;
- Provides for the school's Quality Improvement Officer to attend Parent Council meetings on invitation;
- Provides Parent Councils with funds to support its administrative functions and pays an honorarium to a clerk;
- Provides accommodation in its schools for Parent Councils to meet;
- Provides all Parent Councils with annual insurance from, and membership of, Connect (formerly the Scottish Parent Teacher Council);
- Offers regular training to Parent Council members;

- Invites members to take part in recruitment panels for Head Teachers and Deputy Head Teachers, and provides training for them to do so as required;
- Holds a meeting, twice per year, of all Parent Council chairs (or their representatives) to highlight local and national developments in education, to provide information on ways to encourage parental involvement and engagement, and to allow the participants to share their practice;
- Provides training opportunities for Head Teachers, school staff and Parent Council members on working with the Parent Council and on Parental Involvement and Parental engagement;
- Encourages schools to consult with Parent Councils and the Parent Forum on school improvement, prior to producing their annual School Improvement Plan;
- Consults with an “umbrella” group of Parent Council members from across Shetland on proposed changes to local education policy and delivery of its education function.

#### **4.6 Collaborating with the Community**

“Co-ordinate resources and services for students, families and the school with businesses, agencies and other groups, and provide services to the community.” (Review, page 16)

Janet Goodall et al (2010) has some key messages about the benefits that co-ordinating resources can bring. Some of the relevant messages are included here.

- “Partnership and multi-agency arrangements are an essential component of a comprehensive strategy for parental engagement;
- An evidence-based model that looks to build relationships across the family, the school, and the community can improve outcomes for low-income and socially and culturally marginalised families;
- Multi-agency arrangements enable schools to share information with partners, including the police, social services and the voluntary sector, and to draw on external expertise from agencies specialising in mental health, nursing and community activities;
- Schools are in a stronger position to respond to their communities when they receive information and data identifying how their performance compares with other schools and services. In the best practice local authorities and individual educational settings shared information effectively.”

Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) is the national approach in Scotland to improving outcomes and supporting the wellbeing of our children and young people by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports them and their parent(s) to work in partnership with the services that can help them. A leaflet that explains Shetland’s approach to GIRFEC is here:

[http://www.shetland.gov.uk/children\\_and\\_families/documents/ShetlandGIRFECParentsCarersLeafletV12.pdf](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/children_and_families/documents/ShetlandGIRFECParentsCarersLeafletV12.pdf)

Listed below are examples of the services that Shetland schools and the Quality Improvement Team are committed to working with:

- The home-link teachers;
- Children and Families Social Work team;
- Police Scotland;
- The Bruce Family Centre;
- NHS Scotland;
- Youth Services;
- Community Learning and Development;
- Adult Learning;
- Voluntary Action Shetland.

## **5. Complaints**

The Scottish Schools Parental Involvement Act 2006 requires the Parental Involvement Strategy to include information on the authority's complaints procedure for parents.

Shetland Islands Council Children's Services welcomes complaints about its service, as it sees them as opportunities to improve and to support good communication.

Complaints and concerns should always be made to those who are closest to the service delivery in the first instance, and as quickly as possible. In the case of schools this will be the child's class teacher or their Head Teacher, who will try to resolve the issue informally.

Shetland's schools use the Complaints Procedure of Shetlands Islands Council, which is on their website at:

[http://www.shetland.gov.uk/comments\\_complaints/documents/ComplaintsHandlingProcedure.pdf](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/comments_complaints/documents/ComplaintsHandlingProcedure.pdf)

A leaflet given summarising the procedure is at Appendix 4. It can also be found at:

[http://www.shetland.gov.uk/comments\\_complaints/documents/ComplaintsHandling-NewLeaflet.pdf](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/comments_complaints/documents/ComplaintsHandling-NewLeaflet.pdf)

## **6. Roles and Responsibilities**

The successful implementation of this Parental Involvement and Engagement Strategy, whereby children and young people benefit from their parents'

experiences, depends upon the actions of many people. This section outlines briefly the roles and responsibilities of Shetland Islands Council staff – those employed in schools, in the central team, those from other sections of the council, council members, and others.

Parents are the clients of Shetland Islands Council, Children's Services. The ground rules of good client care apply to any communication. For example, parents need to be listened to, and conversations need to be polite.

Some specific responsibilities are listed here. Individual schools and Parent Councils can use these to consider what needs to be improved at their school.

- The setting up of a Parent Council for a school, the engagement of a clerk, and the appointment of office bearers is the responsibility of the Parent Forum. Information on how to do this, how to develop a constitution and the roles of office bearers can be found on the website of Connect (formerly the Scottish Parent Teacher Council) at: <https://connect.scot/>
- Parent Councils should actively seek views from their Parent Forum before making representations to the school and/or Children's Services;
- Parent Councils should support schools to encourage parental involvement and engagement;
- Each school should have a parental involvement and engagement strategy that is developed in consultation with the Parent Council and Parent Forum;
- Head Teachers have a duty and a responsibility to attend Parent Council meetings;
- Head Teachers are advisors to the Parent Council;
- Head Teachers must consult with the Parent Council and the Parent Forum on an annual basis to inform the School Improvement Plan and should involve parents in shaping policy and services;
- All school staff should be approachable, calm and caring, and actively make themselves available at times when parents are in school;
- Teachers should be available by appointment to discuss parental concerns;
- School staff should ensure that their methods of communication with parents is direct and will reach those who may have communication barriers;

- School staff should attend training opportunities that help them to develop ways in which they can support parents to help their children to learn at home and increase their involvement in school;
- School staff have a responsibility to support parents to build their capacity to enable and encourage them to help their children to learn at home; The Parentzone website has some excellent resources at: <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/learning-at-home>
- School staff need to understand that some parents need more support to engage with their child’s learning and with the school, such as those who have English as an additional language and those who have children with additional support needs.
- Staff should have an appropriate shared understanding of GIRFEC;

Council staff from Youth Services, Community Learning and Development, Children and Families Social Work, the Library Service, the Bruce Family Centre, all play a part in supporting parental involvement and engagement, and should be encouraged to attend training with school staff and discuss how they can support the support the school. Organisations such as Skills Development Scotland, Shetland College of Further Education and the NAFC Marine Centre may also meet with parents directly to support career information and guidance, and can support parents.

## **7. National Organisations**

There are two national bodies that represent the interests of parents and can support Parent Councils, schools and local authorities to carry out their respective responsibilities with regard to parental involvement and engagement. Shetland enjoys an excellent relationship with both of these bodies, and has hosted events run by both.

### **a) The National Parent Forum of Scotland (NPFS)**

<http://www.npfs.org.uk/>

“The Forum works in partnership with national and local government and other organisations involved in education and child wellbeing issues to ensure that parents play a full and equal role in education. The overall aim is to help every child to maximise their potential through their school life.”

Specifically, the Forum:

- provides a parental perspective at both a local and national level with a view to ensuring that all children achieve the best educational outcomes;
- works in partnership with all education authorities across Scotland;
- works in partnership with national government;

- identifies common educational issues of concern across Scotland and raises these issues with the appropriate bodies;
- provides parental representation to any appropriate organisation within the educational sector across Scotland where Scottish educational policy is being designed or discussed;
- communicates with NPFS representatives, the educational community and the wider community on educational related issues

NPFS supports parents to get involved in their child's education by:

- running focus groups and online surveys for parents to have their say
- holding national and local events such as conferences and information days
- keeping parents up to date with the latest educational developments through their website, e-newsletter and social media channels
- supporting local parent councils by providing advice, information and practical help
- providing parent friendly information through the '...in a Nutshell' series. The full range of nutshells can be viewed on our publications guide." (Copied from NPFS website).

The National Parent Forum of Scotland has a representative from every local authority. Shetland's current representative, Fiona Nicholson, is Co Vice-Chair of the NPFS.

## **b) Connect (formerly the Scottish Parent Teacher Council)**

<https://connect.scot/>

Connect is an independent charity funded by membership. It does not receive any local authority or government grant funding. It provides information, advice and training relating to parental engagement in children's learning.

Connect's members are a mixture of Parent Councils, Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and other parent groups who pay for membership or have membership paid for them by their local authority. It also accepts parents, educators and students as individual members.

Shetland Islands Council is a member of Connect. Membership includes an insurance policy for each of our Parent Councils, access to useful leaflets for parents, training workshops for Parent Council members, advice on fundraising, and support for parents, schools and the local authority.

## **8. Conclusion**

Evidence from the regular visits to schools made by Quality improvement Officers demonstrates that generally the schools in Shetland have a very good relationship with their parents. This is evidenced by, for example:

- Very few complaints from parents about their children’s education;
- Almost all of Shetland schools have a Parent Council;
- Parent Councils in Shetland tend to be very active fund-raising committees that hold a range of events from summer fairs to coffee mornings and sales. These events encourage parent-teacher relationships in an informal setting, and encourage parents into schools;
- Many schools in Shetland enjoy a high level of parent volunteers in their schools, doing a range of activities including sharing their talents at in-school clubs and activity sessions;
- All schools invite parents to attend events and show-cases on a regular basis;
- Almost all schools hold a “show of work” (or similar event) so that children and young people can show their parents their work;
- Many parents help schools with gardening, planting trees, developing the school grounds and keeping a polytunnel;
- All schools work hard to develop a reporting system that is accessible for parents at all levels.

This list is impressive, and to be applauded. Most of these activities represent Parental Involvement, which builds important relationships between the school and parents, and helps parents to overcome barriers that they have about coming into the school.

Examples of recent good practice from Shetland schools are included at Appendix 6. These will be updated and added to at future reviews of this Strategy.

Schools in Shetland are in a very favourable position to build on these excellent activities and develop parental engagement in their child’s learning. Schools can use the information in this Strategy, its appendices and its links to resources, to help them to develop their own strategies that support parents and families to help their child to learn at home. They should refer to it when preparing the section on their own approaches to parental involvement and engagement in their School Improvement Plans.



## References

- *Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006: Guidance*. Scottish Government. 2006
- *Review of best practice in parental engagement*. Janet Goodall and John Vorhaus with the help of Jon Carpentieri, Greg Brooks, Rodie Akerman and Alma Harris. 2010
- *Engaging Parents in Raising Achievement: Do Parents Know They Matter?* Professor Alma Harris and Dr Janet Goodall. 2007
- *Closing the Attainment Gap in Scottish Education*. Edward Sosu and Sue Ellis. 2014
- *Review of Family Learning: Supporting Excellence and Equity*. Scottish Government. 2016.
- *How Good is Our School?* (4<sup>th</sup> edition). Scottish Government. 2015.



## Appendix 1

### Parental Involvement and Engagement in *How Good is our School?* (4<sup>th</sup> edition) Quality Indicators

Quality Indicator	Theme	Parental Involvement	Parental Engagement
1.1 Self-evaluation for school improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative approaches to self-evaluation</li> <li>• Analysis and evaluation of intelligence and data</li> <li>• Ensuring impact on learners' successes and achievements</li> </ul>	All staff, pupils, parents and partners are fully involved in improving the life and work of the school.	Parents invited to respond to a range of formal and informal self-evaluation activities. Sharing Insight data but identify with parents how to they can support raising attainment. Consider accessibility and innovative ways to reach the "hard-to-reach" parents. e.g Focus groups; liaise with cluster colleagues/partners; through informal/social events weave in engagement
1.2 Leadership of Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and young people leading learning</li> </ul>		What strategies are we using to develop resilience and confidence in our learners to lead their own and others learning? Are you engaging with parents?
1.3 Leadership of Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a shared vision, values and aims relevant to the school and its community</li> </ul>	Pupils, parents, partners and staff are all involved in the creation and ongoing review of the vision, aims and values of the school.	How do we ask parents to support the vision, values and aims?
2.2 Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rationale and design</li> <li>• Development of the curriculum</li> <li>• Learning pathways</li> <li>• Skills for learning, life and work</li> </ul>	Information outlining curriculum pathways for parents.	Focus groups with parent reps to support curriculum rationale and design.  Do we make best use of our parents to provide opportunities for young people to develop skills and achieve?

<p>2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning and engagement</li> <li>• Quality of teaching</li> <li>• Effective use of assessment</li> <li>• Planning, tracking and monitoring</li> </ul>	<p>Information relating to skills progression and assessment.</p> <p>Explanation of tracking and monitoring processes and support available.</p> <p>Reporting and parents evenings.</p>	<p>Engage with parents to ensure Tracking and monitoring are well-understood.</p> <p>Home Learning v Home work. Purpose?</p> <p>Explore the active engagement of parents (what info, training, input)</p> <p>Learners sharing their learning.</p> <p>What additional engagement could take place at Parents Evenings or instead of?</p>
<p>2.4 Personalised support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Universal support</li> <li>• Targeted support</li> <li>• Removal of potential barriers to learning</li> </ul>	<p>Children and young people and their parents/carers are fully involved in decisions about how their needs will be met.</p>	<p>Staff reflect on their own practice and work collaboratively with others, including parents, to build their capacity to meet the needs of all learners.</p> <p>How effectively do we involve parents to ensure learners benefit from the right support at the right time including next steps in learning, changes and choices?</p> <p>On receipt of targeted support do we undertake an evaluation with parents?</p>
<p>2.5 Family learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging families in learning</li> <li>• Early intervention and prevention</li> <li>• Quality of family learning programmes</li> </ul>	<p>Creative approaches are used to engage families.</p> <p>Almost all the children and their parents are included, participating, achieving and progressing very well in their learning. QI 2.3</p> <p>There is clear evidence that the life chances of those families experiencing particular challenges are being improved as a result of their engagement in family learning.</p> <p>Almost all learners report improvement in their health and/or wellbeing.</p> <p>Family learning is responsive to</p>	<p>Focus groups led by HT or staff targeting hard-to-reach parents.</p> <p>Offer parents a range of opportunities at different times/days to come in and discuss learning.</p> <p>Liaise and work with CLD teams.</p> <p>Consider whole-school HWB projects. Partnership working</p> <p>Aspirations and barriers to raising attainment – what is the home situation? Family learning is leading to</p>

		<p>identified needs.  Family learning promotes equality, fairness and diversity.  There is evidence that family learning is supporting families to minimise the impact of poverty on learning and achievement.</p>	<p>stronger home-school links which are improving outcomes for learners.</p>
2.6 Transitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrangements to support learners and their families</li> <li>• Collaborative planning and delivery Continuity and progression in learning</li> </ul>	<p>Children, young people and their parents and carers are actively involved in planning transitions. Children and young people are supported to make informed choices about the next phase of their learning, this includes: preparation for further and higher education; and the world of work and future careers.</p>	<p>How effective are the opportunities we provide for children and young people to discuss their progress with key adults in supporting continuity in learning at transitions?  To what extent do our processes for involving children and young people; parents, carers and families; and partners and other agencies ensure effective transitions for all learners?  e.g. careers advice for parents to support their child's decision making.  Parents have questions about transition as early as P6 – could we engage differently/sooner?</p>
2.7 Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The development and promotion of partnerships</li> <li>• Collaborative learning and improvement Impact on learners</li> </ul>	<p>The school consistently involves parents and carers in shaping policy and services to improve impacts. All parents/carers are fairly represented by the Parent Council and any views or complaints are acted upon in an effective and timely manner. If not, what are we doing to address this?</p>	<p>Staff support parents/carers to actively engage in their children's learning, attainment and achievement.  Partnerships have clear agreements where the purpose, aims, roles and responsibilities are clear and understood by all involved. e.g introduce a "Parents Charter".  The school and partners share skills, knowledge and experience and take part in joint professional learning opportunities. Consider input/training for parents hand in hand with staff?  How effectively do we support parents and carers to participate in, contribute to and understand their child's learning? How effectively do we communicate about progress, attainment and achievement?</p>

<p>3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wellbeing</li> <li>• Fulfilment of statutory duties</li> <li>• Inclusion and equality</li> </ul>		<p>How well do we communicate with parents, partners and learning across these key themes? How do we ensure there is an ethos and culture of inclusion, participation and positive relationships across the whole learning community?</p>
<p>3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attainment in literacy and numeracy</li> <li>• Attainment over time</li> <li>• Overall quality of learners' achievement</li> <li>• Equity for all learners</li> </ul>		<p>Attainment levels in literacy and numeracy are a central feature of the school's priorities for improvement and are raising attainment. – What role are we asking parents to have? How well are we capturing the impact of children and young people's achievements on our community? Can we ask for parental support?</p>
<p>3.3 Increasing Creativity and employability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creativity skills</li> <li>• Digital innovation</li> <li>• Digital literacy</li> <li>• Increasing employability skills</li> </ul>	<p>How well are learners' creative endeavours at home and in the community acknowledged and celebrated?</p>	<p>How well are we working with learners, parents and carers, employers, colleges and other partners to develop an effective approach to careers education which supports them into sustained positive destinations?</p>

## Appendix 2      Review of the impact of the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006: Recommendations

*Points are summarised and evaluated to consider the current position and what change, if any, is required in Shetland.*

### Recommendations for Scottish Government and national agencies

Recommendation	The current position	Change required and by whom
1. Consultation on significant amendments to the Act. Parent Councils retained and strengthened. Duties and powers related to parental engagement in children's learning to feature more prominently.	Commitment to consult on legislative changes to the Act have been made in the Education Governance: Next Steps. Empowering our teachers, parents and communities to deliver excellence and equity for all our children. June 2017	Consultation by Scottish Government in August 2017
2. As part of that consultation, legislation should be extended to settings that provide funded entitlement to early learning and childcare.	There is currently no obligation to include parents from early years settings, although the constitutions of some schools in Shetland enable this.	Consultation by Scottish Government in August 2017
3. All major Scottish Government policies, frameworks and strategies should take full account of the importance of parental involvement and engagement.	Ongoing	Local authority plans should also be reviewed to take full account of the importance of parental involvement and engagement.
4. The Scottish Government should work with key national partners to review and update the National Parenting Strategy in light of recent policy developments and frameworks.		Scottish Government
5. The Scottish Government and key national agencies should seek to work with national parenting organisations and parents in the development and review of publications relating to early years and schools.		Scottish Government

<p>6. The Scottish Government should ensure there is a measurable increase in parents' access to proven, evidence based family learning programmes and interventions that support improvements in learning at home.</p>	<p>In April 2018, Education Scotland published "Family Learning Framework: Advice for Practitioners" to help schools work with partners to plan, develop, deliver and evaluate family learning effectively at a local level.</p>	<p>A Family Learning Working Group has been established to review current provision in Shetland.</p> <p>Recommendation that Pupil Equity Funding plans include family learning.</p>
<p>7. As part of the Governance Review, the Scottish Government should ensure that parents are represented on any new regional boards.</p>		
<p>8. Governance and funding arrangements for education help to address the full range of barriers that prevent parents becoming more involved in their child's school, including financial or capacity reasons.</p>		<p>The Scottish Government should make clear that funding streams to schools may be to identify and raise awareness of the barriers to parental engagement and provide additional resources to encourage more parents to get involved and engaged in learning</p>
<p>9. Consideration of further legal or policy reforms to encourage and support parental leave and flexible working to allow parents to engage with their child's learning and related activities within the school.</p>	<p>Possible national scheme or charter</p>	<p>Scottish Government</p>
<p>10. The Parent Forum, including Parent Councils, should be fully included in a meaningful way and at a consistent level in decision-making processes in relation to key national initiatives and investment programmes, such as Pupil Equity Funding.</p>		<p>Guidance, training and support are required at a local level to build the capacity of parents and enable them to work on this with their school.</p>
<p>11. The National Parental Engagement</p>		<p>Evidence of key strengths and examples of</p>



Steering Group should be retained and its role should be strengthened as a working group helping to influence, challenge and guide national policies.		good practice within local authorities' parental involvement strategies gathered. Good practice case studies should continue to be shared on the National Improvement Hub and other platforms
12. The Scottish Government should review the effectiveness of the 'communicating with parents' section of the Additional Support for Learning code of practice.		Scottish Government
13. Guidance for practitioners on a range of parental engagement themes should be updated through the 'Engaging Parents and Families: A Toolkit for Practitioners'.		Scottish Government
14. Education Scotland should take further steps to promote the benefits and ways for parents to get involved in their child's learning.		Education Scotland through Parentzone and Parents as partners in their children's learning toolkit.
15. Education Scotland should involve the NPFS and national parent organisations in the ongoing review and monitoring of how the main self-evaluation frameworks are working in practice (the 'How Good is Our...' series).		Education Scotland should take further steps to ensure that parents play a meaningful role in the inspection process.  They should also be used to influence future policy developments, as well as to monitor parental views on involvement and engagement in children's learning.
16. Education Scotland should review its resources and information for parents across all sectors.		Education Scotland New easily accessible versions of resources for parents and practitioners should be developed where required.
17. The Scottish Government should provide dedicated funding to support parental engagement in its Digital Learning strategy, including infrastructure and continuing		Scottish Government, Education Scotland, schools and local authorities should work together to improve broadband access for learners and teachers in schools and the

professional development for staff.		wider community
<p>18. Initial teacher-training courses should have a mandatory element on parental engagement, policy, research and practice. Practitioners should have the necessary skills, knowledge and confidence to improve outcomes for children, young people and families. All early-learning and childcare qualifications have a mandatory element on parental engagement.</p>	<p>Shetland currently includes a day on Parental Engagement in its probationer induction programme, and includes a session in its new Head Teacher programme. It offered 6 hours of training from the SPTC (now renamed Connect) in Oct 2016 in-service, and again in Oct 2017. Key-note speech at 2017 in-service was on Parental engagement.</p>	<p>GTCS, National Parental Engagement Steering Group, initial teacher education providers, Scottish Social Services Council and SQA. Local authorities to ensure that all current practitioners have access to Continuing Professional Development on parental engagement.</p>
<p>19. The Scottish College of Educational Leadership should work with parenting organisations leading the 'Into Headship' qualification to ensure the parental perspective and parental engagement priorities help to shape the qualification and facilitation of relevant courses.</p>		<p>The Scottish College of Educational Leadership, parenting organisations Parental engagement should be a key element in any new leadership programme and continuous improvement training programmes. The new Excellence In Headship package should also fully support the parental involvement agenda and ensure that headteachers and staff are equipped to work with parents.</p>
<p>20. Scottish Government should fund new research on aspects of parental and family engagement</p>		<p>Scottish Government</p>
<p>21. The National Parent Forum of Scotland should publish a joint interim progress report with the Scottish Government, the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES) and relevant stakeholders by the end of 2018. A joint full progress report should be published by the end of 2019.</p>		<p>The National Parent Forum of Scotland, Scottish Government, the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES), relevant stakeholders</p>

## Recommendations to Local Authorities

Recommendation	The current position	Change required and by whom
<p>22. Local authorities should identify a parental involvement officer who can take forward parental involvement and engagement in an effective and co-ordinated way.</p>	<p>Included in the remit of a QIO from October 2017</p>	<p>Role to be fully supported and financed</p>
<p>23. Adequate funding for parental involvement and engagement is built into all policies, programmes and strategies to improve outcomes and increase attainment for children, young people and parents in line with the drivers of the National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan.</p>		<p>Director of Children's Services</p>
<p>24. Reasonable funding must be allocated to Parent Councils by all local authorities.</p>	<p>Adequate funding is currently allocated, via a grant application, that covers items as listed and a clerk.                      Training and information sessions are held twice yearly for the Parent Council chairs and members.                      Training delivered by Connect (formerly the SPTC) annually offered to all PC members.</p>	<p>Investigate the possibilities of allocating funds to Parent Councils without the requirement of them to complete a lengthy grant application.                       Training on digital media to enable Parent Councils to communicate more effectively and safely with the wider parent forum. These programmes should always be made available in a digital format to ensure wider access.                      SIC Workforce Development Team for i-learn</p>

		platform.
25. Raise awareness among parents on the procedures for recruiting senior school staff, and should continue to support parents to become involved in the recruitment process.	This is current practice within the recruitment of Head and Deputy Head Teachers	Continue.
26. Local authorities should include provision on enrolment forms to allow email addresses to be shared with the Parent Council.		Alter enrolment forms to include this. Can only be done with parents' permission. Check with data protection..
27. Comply with the requirement to prepare and publish details of activities undertaken regarding their parental involvement strategy. Ensure that parental engagement is included in the broader National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan reports.		Put the parental engagement strategy on the SIC's website provide a link to it from school websites. Ensure that there are measurable outcomes on parental involvement and engagement, and that progress is monitored.
28. Local authorities should encourage and facilitate the creation and running of a Parent Council and parent forum umbrella group in their local area.	There has been a parent discussion group where changes to the secondary curriculum and school day were discussed.	This group needs to re-form to enable consultation with them on all significant matters as well as attract parents who reflect the range of diverse and cultural backgrounds and family shapes present in the parent forum including non-resident parents and marginalised groups.
29. The SIC Education committee should have a parent member on the Education Committee who has full voting rights.		Discuss with chair of Education Committee in first instance. Wait until this is agreed by Scottish Government? Training will be required.

<p>30. Local authorities should support the Parent Councils within a learning community, including pre-5 settings, to meet regularly, so that best practice can be shared.</p>	<p>The QIO for Parental Involvement has been meeting twice per year with Parent Council chairs from across Shetland to encourage the sharing of best practice.</p>	<p>The QIO should now:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage Parent Councils to include a member from the school's pre-5 setting</li> <li>2. Encourage Parent Council cluster working in areas such as transition.</li> </ol>
<p>31. Local authorities should ensure that parents in all communities have access to family learning opportunities that meet their needs.</p>	<p>A Family Learning working group has been set up to consider what exists and what gaps may exist, and to consider what is required to support family learning.</p>	<p>Continue to meet and encourage a wider membership.</p>
<p>32. Local authorities should support schools to develop strategies to involve parents in the life and work of the school and engage in their children's learning.</p>	<p>Support has been given at Head Teachers' development days, at the new Head teacher induction programme, and in advice on school improvement planning.</p>	<p>These strategies should be part of the school's improvement plan.</p>
<p>33. Involve the National Parent Forum of Scotland and other national parenting organisations in consultation on any changes to SEEMiS functionality so that parents have an opportunity to help shape any improvements.</p>		<p>SEEMiS leads and QIO.</p>

## Recommendations to Schools

Recommendation	The current position	Change required and by whom
<p>34. To communicate with parents as effectively as possible.</p>	<p>All schools have systems in place for communicating with everyone in the parent forum.</p> <p>Guidance on methods, standard, and types of audience, of communication is clear in the Parental Involvement and Engagement Strategy.</p> <p>Contact mechanisms and people are clearly laid out in school handbooks and emphasised on school websites, newsletters and verbally.</p>	<p>Schools to check that these systems include resident and non-resident parents (where appropriate), those with protected characteristics and marginalised groups</p> <p>Emphasis communication methods to schools on a regular basis.</p>
<p>35. In partnership with communities, schools should provide a range of support appropriate to the needs of parents to help them engage with their child's learning.</p>		<p>Training to be given by QIO for Parental Involvement in partnership with Connect (formerly the SPTC) to support teachers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give parents opportunities to understand the way learning and teaching takes place in the classroom.</li> <li>• Support parents who are less comfortable in engaging with learning activities.</li> </ul> <p>QIO to investigate how schools can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with partners to provide additional support for parents with literacy, language and communication difficulties.</li> </ul>

<p>36. The Parental Involvement legislation should develop principles to underpin the duties and powers contained elsewhere in the Act. Schools should follow the existing legislation for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School handbook development;</li> <li>• Appointment of head teachers and depute headteachers;</li> <li>• Promote Parent Councils and other less formal opportunities for involvement;</li> <li>• Consult regularly with parents and provide a variety of opportunities for parental involvement and engagement.</li> </ul>	<p>Schools do currently follow the school handbook guidance Schools currently use a template developed by the council's solicitor.</p> <p>Schools and the Children's Services currently follow the procedures for parental involvement in the appointment of headteachers and depute headteachers.</p>	<p>Schools need to ensure that the handbook is The school handbook should be produced in consultation with the Parent Council.</p> <p>Schools should promote the role and function of the Parent Council as well as other less formal opportunities for parents to be involved in the life and work of the school.</p> <p>They should consult regularly with parents, and provide and promote a variety of opportunities to include and involve all members of the wider parent forum.</p>
<p>37. Schools should provide parents with effective strategies to support children's learning at home and in the community. Help should be given to broaden parents' understanding of what learning at home is and can be (including the parents of children and young people who require additional support for learning). Schools should take an evidence-based approach to the setting of homework and supporting learning at home.</p>	<p>Some schools have surveyed parents and pupils in respect of homework.</p> <p>Some schools actively support parents to help their children at home.</p>	<p>Schools need to develop a parental involvement and engagement strategy that reflects the corporate parenting, family learning and parenting strategies of the local authority as part of a progression for learning at home.</p> <p>Schools should gather evidence of the impact of homework.</p>
<p>38. Schools should work in partnership with Parent Councils, headteachers, staff, pupils, relevant stakeholders and partners to influence significant additional funding budgets devolved to schools</p>	<p>Some schools have worked with their parent councils when developing plans for their Pupil Equity Funding and Attainment Challenge Funds.</p>	<p>All schools should develop an agreed approach to working with their Parent Council.</p>





## Appendix 3

## Volunteer Helpers in Schools

### School - Adult Helpers

Children's Services in Shetland actively encourages the involvement of parents and other members of the community in enhancing experiences of children and young people within its schools. It is recognised in The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006, that when parents are involved, children do better in their education.

The staff at ..... School work positively to promote an ethos of Partnership within our school. Such involvement by parents and other members of our community, appropriately directed will benefit the whole school community, both enriching the curriculum and encouraging a wider understanding of schools and the education system in general.

**To ensure the health, safety and enjoyment of everyone involved the following procedures should be used:**

1. Volunteers in school Guidelines
2. Classroom Helpers Procedures for Teachers
3. Classroom Helpers Guidelines
4. Example School Letter / Volunteer Form for Parents

### Volunteers in School Guidelines

#### Volunteers:

- It is an offence for an individual to do, or seek or agree to do, regulated work of the type from which they are barred
- It is an offence for an organisation to knowingly recruit an individual who is barred to do regulated work of the type to which the barring relates

Where there is to be **regular** contact with children and in a supervisory capacity Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Checks **must be** done. A PVG check helps to ensure that those who have regular contact with children and protected adults through paid and unpaid work do not have a known history of harmful behaviour. Examples of regular contact include school trips, assisting in the classroom, helping with swimming. Decisions to do PVG Checks for these events should be based on Risk Assessment, with the key questions being:

- Do helpers have unsupervised contact with children, other than their own?
- Are these activities regular?

Where a volunteer does not require a PVG Check, then arrangements should be made to treat the volunteer as an infrequent visitor to school, and the school's procedures for visitors to the school should be used".

## **Responsibility and Discipline:**

The role of the helper is one of support to the class teacher. However, the teacher remains responsible for all pupils. While the teacher may delegate some authority to the helper, for example within a group work situation, ultimate responsibility for discipline lies with the teacher at all times. We expect children to behave with the same respect and politeness to any visitors/helpers in the school, as they would staff members.

## **Confidentiality:**

It is essential that all helpers appreciate and support the necessity for confidentiality. Discussion on the guidelines surrounding conduct and confidentiality must take place prior to helpers spending time in school. In addition to this helpers must sign a "helpers in school" agreement, detailing that they have read and understood the guidelines.

Involvement of helpers in class is an optional arrangement and as such will be undertaken only if the individual class teacher feels comfortable about doing so. As this arrangement is by mutual agreement, both staff and helpers should be aware that it can be terminated at any point should this be felt necessary.

We are keen to ensure that time spent in school by helpers is as enjoyable and beneficial as possible. We endeavour to involve helpers as fully as possible in school life whilst ensuring safe boundaries for all involved.

## Becoming a Helper at School

I would be interested in becoming a Helper in ..... School in the following way(s)

	Tick
A single visit to discuss an item of interest or offer a particular skill e.g. what life was like when a grandparent was a child, helping plant trees, helping with a coffee afternoon etc.	
Secretarial type duties – photocopying, helping with displays etc.	
Gardening	
Baking / craft activities.	
Assisting with school trips.	
Other (please state)	

I would be willing to have a PVG check.	
---	--

I already have an Children’s Services Disclosure Check	
Number (if known): _____	Date of check: _____

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **Helpers in School: Procedures for Volunteers**

We welcome parents and friends to become involved in school life, particularly to share interests, experiences or skills with the children.

To ensure the health, safety and enjoyment of everyone involved we have drawn up the following guidelines:

Do:

- sign in when you arrive at school
- ensure you are clear as to your role and that you have discussed the activities to be carried out with a teacher and filled in a “Helpers” form

- work at the children's level – both in conversation and in physical size
- discuss the task in hand and keep the children focussed
- encourage children to adhere to class/school rules
- help children finish and tidy up after a task
- direct a child to the teacher if you are unsure of something
- encourage independence, use questions such as “what do you think you should do next?”
- encourage children to work quietly, reinforce this by using a quiet voice yourself
- encourage children to move quietly and calmly within the school without running

Don't:

- take individual children out of the room and never accompany them to the toilet
- help a child change their clothes whilst alone with them
- hold on to or strike a child
- reprimand a child verbally or physically – if you are unhappy about a child's behaviour alert the teacher

If at any time you are in any way uncertain as to what is expected of you or how to deal with a child or situation do not hesitate to approach the teacher immediately.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

It is of extreme importance that everyone working within the school adheres to strict standards of confidentiality – what you see or hear in school regarding any child should remain within the confines of the school. However, we ask if you hear or see anything of a sensitive nature (from or about any child) which causes you concern, please discuss it with the teacher or Head Teacher before you leave.

As stated previously these guidelines are to ensure the health, safety and enjoyment of all concerned. If you feel that you can work within these guidelines, please fill in and sign the form below.

Thank you for being involved and participating. We hope you enjoy helping us!

---

I have read, understand and agree to work within the School Guidelines for “Helpers in School”

Signature:

Print Name:

Date:



### Other useful leaflets from SPTC

- SPTC advice on the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Membership Scheme for Parent Councils and PTAs
- Model child protection policy (Parent Council/PTA volunteers)
- Model child protection agreement form for helpers in a paid/unpaid post
- Registering with CRBS
- Safety at Fundraising Events
- Running a disco – advice on safe practice

You are welcome to use information from this leaflet however, if you do please acknowledge SPTC.

### About SPTC

You may be interested to know that we offer our members a range of benefits including our membership insurance scheme which covers:

- Public Liability
- Personal Accident
- Fidelity Guarantee
- Employer's Liability
- Extended Public Liability for hired-in entertainers
- All Risks (for equipment purchased by the PTA/Parent Councils)
- Short-term all-risks insurance for special events

April 2013

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SPTC, Mansfield Traquair Centre, 15 Mansfield Place, Edinburgh, EH3 6BB  
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## **A Model Child Protection Policy for Parent Council/PTA paid/unpaid staff**



***Please note that when referring to a paid/unpaid member of staff this means a person who takes up a post on a regular basis (for example to run a club) which has a job/role description, responsibilities and probably defined hours.***

The *(insert name of the organisation)* aims to ensure that any children and young people are protected and kept safe from harm while they are with paid/unpaid staff in this organisation. In order to achieve this we will ensure our staff are carefully selected, supervised, screened and trained where necessary.

### **Selection**

All potential paid/unpaid staff for "childcare" posts with our organisation will complete an application form.

All short-listed applicants to a paid/unpaid post will be asked to provide references and these will always be taken up prior to confirmation of an appointment.

If necessary, an interview will be held.

### **Screening**

Applicants for "childcare" posts will be asked to join the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Membership Scheme. In certain circumstances paid/unpaid staff may take up a role before the membership application process is completed.

### **Training**

The successful applicant will be given an overview of the organisation to ensure they know its aims and values. When necessary, training and support will be provided on an ongoing basis.

### **Supervision**

- All paid/unpaid staff should operate a system of mutual supervision at every event, ie every adult should make sure that other adults are acting appropriately and are not placing a child or themselves in a risky situation.
- The work of the paid/unpaid staff member will be reviewed on an annual basis. Annual reviews will be minuted and copies made available to the paid/unpaid staff member.
- The *(insert name of the organisation)* shall hold an incident book and it must be used to record any incidents which take place in the course of normal duties. If any inquiries are raised at a later date then the incident book will be used as evidence.

The *(insert name of the organisation)* will ensure that all paid/unpaid staff are aware of this child protection policy and they will be asked to sign the policy agreement form.

The *(insert name of the organisation)* will comply with the requirements of the PVG (Act) in that:

- We will not knowingly allow anyone who is barred from working with children, or is under consideration, to work in a paid/unpaid post with our organisation.
- We will make a reference to Disclosure Scotland if an individual harms a child or puts a child at risk of harm. If necessary, the police will also be informed. The Parent Council/PTA may take the decision to remove the person from their post or they may leave of their own accord.



Appendix 3



Mansfield Traquair Centre,  
15 Mansfield Place,  
Edinburgh, EH3 6BB  
Telephone: 0131 474 6199  
Email: [sptc@sptc.info](mailto:sptc@sptc.info)  
Online: [www.sptc.info](http://www.sptc.info)

**CHILD PROTECTION AGREEMENT**

The following person wishes to help at events organised by:

.....

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

Tel No: .....

Email:.....

**Declaration**

I have read the Child Protection Policy of the above named organisation and agree to all the terms in that policy. I am not on the list of those barred from working with children.

Print Name:.....

Signed: .....

Date: .....



## Appendix 4

### Contact us



Please use the numbers listed in this leaflet to contact the relevant department.



Complaint forms are available from all Council departments



Copies of the formal procedure are also available online at [www.shetland.gov.uk](http://www.shetland.gov.uk)



You can fill in our complaints form online at: [www.shetland.gov.uk/comments\\_complaints](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/comments_complaints)

### What can I do if I'm still not satisfied?

You can choose at any stage to take your complaint directly to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) which is an independent and impartial organisation who will make enquiries and find out if anything can be done to put things right.

Before taking up your complaint, the Ombudsman is likely to make sure that the Council has had a reasonable opportunity to resolve it first. Contact details are:

**Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)**  
4 Melville Street  
Edinburgh  
EH3 7NS

Tel: 0800 377 7330    Text: 0790 049 4372  
Fax: 0800 377 7331    Email: [ask@spsso.org.uk](mailto:ask@spsso.org.uk)



## Who do I contact if I want to complain?

“Get it right first time”

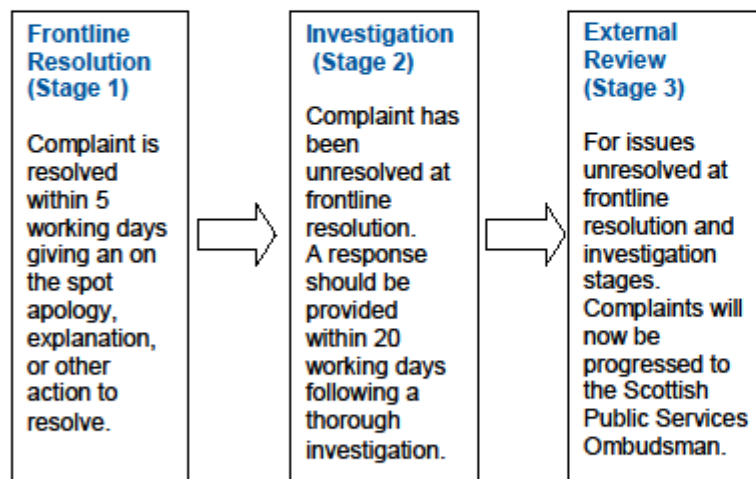
## How do I complain?

You can complain in writing, by phone or in person to the Council department concerned.

## Our aims

- ✓ To deal with complaints fairly, efficiently and effectively and improve customer satisfaction as a result
- ✓ To ensure that all complaints are handled in a consistent manner throughout the organisation
- ✓ To feed back customer comments

## The complaints process



## Community Health and Social Care Complaints

Anyone receiving care services from us has the right to complain either direct to the Care Inspectorate or to us.

The Care Inspectorate's contact details can be found on their website: <http://www.scswis.com/> or telephone 0345 600 9527

Please dial code 01595 unless otherwise stated

**Chief Executive:** 8 North Ness, Lerwick ZE1 0LZ. Tel: 744500

**Children's Services:** Hayfield House, Lerwick, ZE1 0QD. Tel: 744 000

**Children and Families – 744400**

**Children's Resources – 744000**

**Psychological Services – 745588**

**Schools – 744000**

**Shetland Library – 743868**

**Sports and Leisure – 744000**

**Community Health and Social Care Services:** Upper Floor, Montfield, Burgh Road, Lerwick, ZE1 0LA. Tel: 743697

**Adult Services – 744308**

**Community Care Resources – 744400**

**Criminal Justice – 744449**

**Mental Health – 744345**

**Occupational Therapy – 744319**

**Corporate Services:** 8 North Ness, Lerwick ZE1 0LZ. Tel: 744570

**Finance – 744681**

**Development Services:** 8 North Ness, Lerwick ZE1 0LZ. Tel: 744940

**Housing – 744360**

**Planning – 744293**

**Community Planning & Development – 743888**

**Economic Development – 744940**

**Shetland College – 771000**

**Transport Planning – 744886**

**Infrastructure Services:** Gremista, Lerwick ZE1 0PX. Tel: 744800

**Environment & Transport Operations – 744100**

**Environmental Health and Trading Standards – 745250**

**Ferry Operations (Sella Ness) – 01806 244 232**

**Harbour Master and Port Operations (Sella Ness) – 01806 244 200**

**Roads – 744866**

**Waste Management & Energy – 745250**

## **Appendix 5:**

### **Shetland Islands Council Recruitment and Selection Policy Scheme for Appointing Head Teachers and Depute Head Teachers**

#### **Statement of Policy**

Shetland Islands Council is committed to achieving equality of opportunity in the recruitment and selection of Head Teachers and Depute Head Teachers.

All those who take part in the recruitment and selection of staff will be aware of the Council's policies in this regard and have received training.

Every job applicant will be made aware of the Council's policy through the Recruitment Charter, sent to each applicant.

This scheme is to supplement the 2016 Recruitment and Selection Policy and should be read in conjunction with those procedures.

#### **Legislation**

Section 14 of the new Scottish Schools (Parent Involvement) Act 2006, and the Parental Involvement in Head Teacher and Depute Head Teacher Appointment Regulations 2007 made there under came into force on 1 August 2007.

The new requirements/duties regarding appointment of Head Teacher and Depute Head Teacher posts is set out in section 14 of the 2006 Act. Section 14 requires all Local Authorities to:-

1. Have a recruitment scheme for Head Teacher and Depute Head Teacher posts.
2. Notify Parent Councils and the Scottish Ministers of the Scheme.
3. Involve parents in the scheme.

#### **Proposed Scheme**

When preparing a strategy for making relevant appointments, Children's Services must consult with any Parent Council established for the school and have regard to those views.

On receiving written resignation from either a Head Teacher or a Depute Head Teacher the following key stages should apply:

A member of the panel/Quality Improvement Officer linked to the school should make contact with the Chair of their Parent Council (where one is in existence) to discuss the appointment procedures. A member of the panel/Quality Improvement Officer should discuss appointment strategies with the Parent Council, in regard to the following possibilities, where appropriate:

- Redeployment of an existing employee into the vacant post. Following consultation with the Parent Council the post of Head Teacher may be filled by redeploying to that post an existing Head Teacher currently employed elsewhere, or that the post of Depute Head Teacher be filled by redeploying to that post an existing Depute Head Teacher currently employed elsewhere.

- Temporary transfer or Acting Up offer to existing staff member.
- When preparing a job and person specification for relevant appointments, the Schools Service must consult with any Parent Council established for the school and have regard to those views. There are generic Person Specification and Job Profiles, in line with the The Standards for Leadership and Management, which includes the Standard for Headship, The Standards for Leadership and Management lay down the foundations for professionalism and leadership required by all head teachers. It is a framework for aspiring head teachers and identifies key qualities that are required to succeed as an experienced head teacher.
- The Standard for Headship will become a prerequisite for all new head teachers in Scotland from 2019.
- They should also discuss the requirement to ensure that candidates meet the qualities and experiences described in the Standard

Where the appointment of a new Head Teacher is the preferred option, arrangements should be made for Parent Council members, and those assisting it in discharging its functions, to receive training on recruitment and selection procedures and interview skills, and subsequently, for them to be involved in the whole of the recruitment process, as outlined below. The training will include familiarisation with the GTCS' standards for leadership and management. A Recruitment form – request to fill a vacancy form will be completed and submitted for approval to the Director of Children's Services.

### **Advertising**

Vacancies for Head Teacher and Depute Head Teacher posts will be advertised nationally. The usual publication will be the Times Educational Supplement Scotland and the Shetland Times, unless otherwise agreed with the Parent Council.

### **Short Leet**

Children's Services must invite a Parent Council established for the school to participate in the preparation of a short leet of candidates. This does not apply, when Children's Services decides following consultation with the Parent Council, that the post of Head Teacher be filled by redeploying to that post an existing Head Teacher currently employed elsewhere, or that the post of Depute Head Teacher be filled by redeploying to that post an existing Depute Head Teacher currently employed elsewhere.

Short leeting must be carried out by the panel members who will conduct the interview. The short leet will be drawn up by evaluating the information provided in the application forms against the criteria set out in the Person Specification. The forms provided in the procedural guidance should be used for this purpose. All interviews will be conducted in a fair and consistent manner and must be structured and systematic.

The Council has determined as part of the Equality and Diversity Policy that if a disabled applicant meets the minimum stated requirements they will be guaranteed an interview. When two candidates are equally suited for the post, one being disabled, the disabled candidate should be appointed.

### **Appointment Panel Membership**

Children's Services must set up an appointment panel to consider the short list of candidates prepared and to make recommendations to Children's Services, Quality Improvement for the appointment of a person to fill the post.

The Parent Council has a right to be represented on the appointment panel (but they don't have to), and where they wish to be represented, at least one third of the membership of the appointment panel must comprise of:

- (i) A parent member (or members) of that Parent Council; or
- (ii) A person who is not a member of the Parent Council may at the request of the Parent Council, assist it in discharging its functions in connection with the appointment process.
- (iii) A combination of (i) and (ii).

The normal panel membership will be as outlined below.

Where a relevant appointment is for a Head Teacher, the appointment panel must be chaired by the Director of Service, and in her absence by the Executive Manager of Quality Improvement.

For a Head Teacher post, normal panel membership will comprise:

The Director of Children's Services (chair of the panel)  
The Executive Manager of Quality Improvement  
Two Parent Council members or their representatives  
Head Teacher, not from any school from which there are applicants for the post

Where a relevant appointment is for a Depute Head Teacher, the appointment panel must be chaired by the Head Teacher of the school or the acting Head Teacher. However Children's Services can decide that it is inappropriate for the acting Head Teacher to chair the appointment panel.

For a Depute Head Teacher Post, normal panel membership will comprise:

The Head Teacher, or Acting Head Teacher (chair of the panel);  
The Quality Improvement Officer linked to the school;  
Two Parent Council members or their representatives.

The chairperson of an appointment panel has a casting vote in relation to any recommendations to be made to the Children's Services, Quality Improvement, concerning a relevant appointment.

## **Final Selection**

The interview selection procedure for a Head Teacher will normally include the following assessment tools:

- A practical exercise, for example, where the candidate is asked to prioritise and explain how she/he would handle several scenarios;
- A pre-set presentation lasting approximately ten minutes;
- A formal interview with a set of questions, but with the flexibility to ask probing and exploring questions to each candidate as appropriate;
- A systematic scoring mechanism is recommended, but appointment should be by panel consensus, and the chair shall have a casting vote in relation to any recommendations to be made to the authority concerning an appointment.

There should be the opportunity within the above process for arrangements to be made with members of the Parent Council (other than those who are on the panel) to be available to show candidates around the schools and answer any questions about the school community and area, usually prior to the interview taking place.

## **Conflict of Interest**

No person who has a material interest in or relating to any matter to be considered under this Scheme may participate in the short list procedure, or sit on an appointment panel. A person will not be deemed to have a material interest in terms of the paragraph above by virtue of chairing an appointment panel under the provision made in that regard.

## **Review Date**

This policy will be reviewed again in March 2019 in line with the review date of Shetland Island's Council's Recruitment and Selection Policy, or sooner if there is a change to relevant legislation.



## **NESTING PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### ***Putting school at the centre of the community***

#### **What's on offer?**

- *Mother & Toddler sessions on Thursday afternoons.*
  - *Open door policy for parents.*
  - *Encouraging parental and community involvement in school tasks.*
  - *Allowing parental influence on curriculum.*
- *Space available for events such as gallery nights for local artists.*



At Nesting Primary School the ethos is very much about community involvement. Head Teacher, Kate Coutts, has tried to capitalise on that unique Shetland community tradition. However, nurturing this natural community spirit does require effort and a willingness to trust and relinquish power to the community. Mrs Coutts explained that the school had to actively go out to build the bridges between it and the community.

The Nesting school hosts the local Mother and Toddlers group which encourages the

informal meeting between this group and school staff, pupils and parents. The school has a very active Facebook page which posts daily. The school's most successful post was showing the bouncy bands (to help with fidgeting legs!) on the desk legs, which received 35,000 hits. The school also has a second page 'Tab Nabs Fae Nesting' providing links to the research behind how the school operates for parents



to view.

Nesting has promoted giving a sense of control and ownership to the Parent Council. They have their own website and email address for communications and also have complete control of money raised. Kate Coutts has to go the parent council when the school requires money for something and explain why they need it.

Parents are asked to help out if they can. Post-it notes are placed on the notice board in the school describing what help is needed, and parents take one if they are able to help. This could be anything from grass cutting to photocopying to sharpening pencils. Kate Coutts explained that all parents get involved and some who potentially could become socially isolated become regulars for completing these tasks.

Parents have also been involved in activities such as the building of the Mud Hut and Literacy Shed for the Attainment Challenge. Parents' opinions are sought on further activities and they are encouraged to come forward with any ideas or skills they have which may influence the curriculum. The school also offers spaces for activities for adults such as an art gallery.

### **Quality Indicators:**

#### *Features of highly-effective practices*

- Creative approaches are used to engage families.
- Almost all the children and their parents are included. Participating, achieving and progressing very well in their learning.
- Family learning is leading to stronger home-school links which are improving outcomes for learners.
- The School's learning pathways take account of key features of the local community

#### **Top Tips**

1. *Think about both prevention and support and robustly monitor and evaluate everything you do.*
2. *Consider how you can get midwives and health visitors involved—they will be the first contact parents have with the system.*
3. *Remember parents can help design and deliver services through being peer mentors.*
4. *Support everyone through universal interventions—it will help you pick up on those who need more specialist help.*
5. *Don't forget the importance of inter-parental relationships—regardless of whether the couple is together or not.*

## ***BRAE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT: The Family Room***



### **Quality Indicators HGIOS 4:**

#### ***Features of highly-effective practices:***

- ***Creative approaches are used to engage families.***
- ***Family learning is leading to stronger home-school links which are improving outcomes for learners.***
- ***Staff support parents/carers to actively engage in their children's learning, attainment and achievement.***

When a space became available in Brae Primary department, Depute Head Teacher Billy Forsyth had a plan for what to do with it. Aided by a successful bid to the Innovation Fund Mr Forsyth went about transforming the space into The Family Room. The new room's focus is encouraging activities such as reading, singing or the use of nursery rhymes with pre-nursery children. These sort of activities can positively impact on a child's abilities, especially on early vocabulary development. It is therefore hoped that encouraging the use of these facilities will give children the best possible chance to succeed.

The Family Room has a library of excellent quality books that Mr Forsyth has amassed from charity shops! These are lent freely with the only stipulation being if the book is lost another is provided in its place. Soft play toys and cushions make the room inviting and cosy. Events are also held in The Family Room, such as the popular Bookbug sessions, with staff members now trained to provide these.

The onus here is very much about giving the adults the skills to undertake activities with their children. These are not lessons, but the provision of examples and ideas for them to use at home, such as the use of character voices for books, or puppets to

animate the story.

The creation of this space has also impacted on the school in that reading for enjoyment has taken a higher profile across all primary classes.

To reach as many people as possible sessions are advertised on Facebook, SIBC, the School website and in cluster schools. Mr Forsyth also plans to give the area's Health Visitor laminated cards with information about the service to provide to parents of young children in the area on her visits. The room constantly evolves, as Mr Forsyth and the staff develop their ideas and evaluate what is working well.

### **What's on offer?**

- Open Tuesday afternoons and Wednesday mornings aligning with nursery times.*
- Library of age appropriate books that are freely lent without a set return date.*
- Bookbug sessions and other activities such as baby massage and sign language sessions.*
- Provide soft play and age appropriate toys.*
- Tea and coffee facilities supplied for parents/carers.*



### **Top Tips**

1. Think about both prevention and support and robustly monitor and evaluate everything you do.
2. Consider how you can get midwives and health visitors involved—they will be the first contact parents have with the system.
3. Remember parents can help design and deliver services through being peer mentors.
4. Support everyone through universal interventions—it will help you pick up on those who need more specialist help.
5. Don't forget the importance of inter-parental relationships—regardless of whether the couple is together or not.



# **HAMNAVOE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

## ***Internet Safety Evening***

### ***What was on offer?***

- Families were invited to the school for an evening of learning about on-line safety;
- Children went into two of the classes, and were divided by age – primary 1 to 4 and primary 5 to 7;
- Adults had a separate learning session to their children;
- Representatives from the local police delivered the adult session;
- Local authority trainer on Child Protection delivered the children's session, along with the school's teachers;
- A local IT specialist was on hand to check devices for parental controls and give advice;
- Home bakes and coffee afterwards!

On 13 February 2017 Hamnavoe Primary School in Burra invited all of its families to attend an evening that was designed so that everyone could hear the messages about keeping children safe on-line at the same time. The local community police representative and her colleagues gave a hard-hitting presentation to the parents on the following:

- The dangers of real-time chat rooms – there is even a nursery-aged chat room;
- The importance of being net-aware – using safe sites to do searches;
- The growing incidences of children sharing videos of themselves naked on-line;
- The fact that a child as young as eight can be charged for on-line offences, and that will stay on their record for ever;
- Causing a young child to look at nude photographs is now against the law.

The growing number of incidences of miss-use of the internet, to the harm of children and young people is extremely concerning. It is clear that messages on how to protect children need to be heard as a family, so that discussions can continue at home, and the families can be supported when incidents occur and know what actions, if any, to take, and to know that the school has the contacts to support them. Almost all families attended and the feedback was extremely positive. Not only did the families learn a huge amount about on-line safety, but they enjoyed their evening.



### ***Quality Indicators:***

#### ***Features of highly-effective practices***

- Creative approaches are used to engage families, especially fathers;
- Family learning is leading to stronger home-school links which are improving outcomes for learners. QI 2.5 – Family Learning;
- Collaborative Learning and improvement impact on learners. QI 2.7 – Partnerships
- Developing positive relationships across the whole community. QI 3.1 – Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion.

### ***Top Tips:***

- Give families plenty of notice;
- Do school work prior to the invitation with the children so that they can explain the event to their parents;
- Use parents as a resource – one of the parents was the community police officer that delivered the adult session;
- Plan well and discuss desired content with presenters early on;
- Provide opportunities for parents to talk together – coffee and homebakes at the end were important.

# ***AITH JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL EARLY YEARS***

## ***Dad Day***

### ***What was on offer?***

- Dads (or Grandads, uncles, or male friends of the family) came into nursery on the Friday before Father's Day;
- Nursery children showed their Dads around;
- They went to the library for story reading;
- They chose a favourite book for Dad and child to read together.



In May 2017 Aith Early Years invited Dads, or other close family male members into the nursery for a play session. The children showed their Dads around the nursery and then took them to the school library, where the librarian led a book-bug session, in which the Dads took part. The aim of this session was to bring books alive, so increasing the enjoyment of reading and creating positive reading experiences. The librarian explained how the library is the link-centre for the school in that every pupil will use the library, and as they move from nursery up the school, all the way to secondary 4. The library is always a familiar place, no matter what transitions are being made.

The children were able to choose a book that their Dads could read to them in the library.

All the Early Years staff were on hand for conversations about how learning at home can be supported, and to embed the message that reading is crucial to help children to learn vocabulary and language.

When they returned to the nursery, the children gave their dads the gifts they had made for Father's Day. The children loved the session, and no doubt it was a topic of conversation at home.

Encouraging Dads to come to the school, meet staff and engage with their child's learning at nursery enables a good relationship with education and learning as their child progresses through the school.

Feedback from one family:

*"I love that xxxx is part of a nursery that makes sure the dads feel involved in what's being done. It is so lovely to have a day set aside for them to come in and have some quality time with their children"*

### **Quality Indicators:**

#### *Features of highly-effective practices*

- Creative approaches are used to engage families, especially fathers;
- Family learning is leading to stronger home-school links, which are improving outcomes for learners.

### **Top Tips:**

- Give plenty of advance notice so that time off work for fathers can be requested if needed;
- This was not the first activity that encouraged parents to come into the nursery. There were already good relationships with the families, which had been developed over time;
- When open days or activity days are offered, it is generally mothers who attend. Father's Day makes a super reason to invite Dads in, which helps them to feel comfortable about coming into the school and be part of the child's learning.





# ***SANDWICK JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL***

## ***Parental Engagement and Family Learning***

### ***Reading for Enjoyment, Club Time and Open Literacy Sessions***

#### **Reading for Enjoyment**

#### **Key points:**

- The school wanted to emphasise the importance of reading in their primary and early years departments;
- This work began with a 'sponsored read' in term 1 which was jointly led by a parent who had a child in early years and an interest in books;
- Parents were encouraged to go into classes – some read to the whole class, some read to small groups and some read to one child. Parents were given the opportunity to sign up for this at a parents' evening.

*A child is never too young to enjoy being read to!*



- Throughout the whole year, the school encouraged reading through school library promotion and development, book events, updating reading group methods and materials, providing advice to parents, promoting Bookbug sessions and setting up a lending library in the early years department;
- One teacher conducted an action research project on reading for enjoyment, including an initial questionnaire for children and a later follow-up survey – pupils reported an increase in enjoyment, especially in Second Level. Bookbug attendance almost trebled during the project period.

## Club Time

### Key points:

- Club Time took the place of Golden Time;
- A variety of clubs are run in school time and are designed to be skills-based, for example developing skills in problem solving; encouraging creativity and using logic;
- The school encouraged particular parents to get involved to share skills and areas of interest;
- There have been a range of clubs, including pupil council, Lego challenge club, Community Stars and eco committee;
- One club stands out as being particularly successful for a parent who joined the Walking Club for six weeks, led by a teacher and a representative from NHS Health Promotion. The parent's involvement in the club helped to boost confidence, improve communication and address feelings of social isolation brought about by various personal circumstances.

## Open Literacy Sessions

### Key points:

- P2/3/4 opened their doors each week for literacy open sessions;
- Parents signed up to come into school and support small groups in spelling, literacy games, practical activities and reading;
- Feedback from these sessions was very positive and there are plans to continue and develop further sessions;
- Parental engagement through open sessions allowed more structured involvement where parents did not need to present to a whole class or require specialist skills, thus promoting inclusion.

# **BALTASOUND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY**

## ***Bookbug Sessions at Nordalea Care Centre***

### ***What was on offer?***

- BJHS's librarian runs a weekly Bookbug session in the school's library, and it was suggested that these also took place in Nordalea, Unst's care centre;
- Both children and parents attended, along with residents and service user's from across Unst;
- Books were read to all, but also songs were sung and lycra games were played, and all in attendance got involved in some form or another;
- Nordalea kindly provided tea, coffee, juice and biscuits, which were enjoyed by all after the session;
- The session also provided a chance to socialise across generations.

This form of community exposure was a really beneficial experience for all involved, and we received some extremely positive feedback from parents, service users and the staff at the care centre. So much so, some parents said they left with a real sense of happiness, and the care centre staff have asked us when we can organise another session!

### ***Quality Indicators:***

#### ***Features of highly-effective practices***

- Family learning is leading to stronger home-school links which are improving outcomes for learners. QI 2.5 – Family Learning;
- Collaborative Learning and improvement impact on learners. QI 2.7 – Partnerships
- Developing positive relationships across the whole community. QI 3.1 – Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion.