



the National Parent Forum of Scotland

September 2011

Dear Parent Council Chair

Update on Curriculum for Excellence

If you are like me, you will probably have already had your first Parent Council meeting of the new school year. You are likely to be well into discussing what you are going to do this session. I am sure Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) will still be a priority for you. As a parent of an S2 child, I know how important it is that we get quality information during this really important period of change. Also, as a Parent Council Chair, I want to make sure that parents' views are taken into account in our school and that parents get the information they need. This is why I am writing to you again now – to help you with the latest set of information on CfE that has come out for parents and to point you in the right direction of where you can get more.

As you may know, I sit on the CfE Management Board as the rep for the National Parent Forum of Scotland. It is real progress that we now have parent views on this Board alongside others in education ie teachers, Directors, Scottish Qualifications Authority, Education Scotland, Scottish Government, teachers etc. My role is to contribute constructively to the discussions as a parent, but with the interests of parents and children at the forefront of my mind always. The developments that I am going to share with you in this letter have all been agreed by the CfE Management Board.

When I wrote to you at the end of last term I intended to let you know about a few important actions that had been agreed at that time and that were being shared with Headteachers. I was aware at the time that this letter may get lost in the summer post – so apologies to those who have still not received their letter! Paper copies were sent to all schools addressed to the Parent Council Chair in June. You can find a copy of that letter at: http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/Images/Letter_from_Joanna_Murphy_tcm4-671099.pdf. I am also enclosing an updated copy of the latest factfile which was enclosed with that letter which is a handy summary for parents of Key Terms and Features in Curriculum for Excellence. Copies of this can be downloaded for parents in your school, or the link can be uploaded to your school website from parentzone - www.ltscotland.org.uk/parentzone/cfe.

New P7 Profiles

I mentioned in my earlier letter that there would be a new P7 Profile introduced from 2012. Here is a bit more detail on this. As of this school year, P7 Profiles will be introduced. This will be a summary of a pupil's best achievements throughout the year e.g. Awards, particularly strong pieces of work, examples of work that show that a pupil has made real progress in or out of the classroom. The profiles will be of particular relevance when pupils are making the transition from P7 to S1 as they will provide a valuable record of a child's

progress. Further profiles for other stages i.e. S3 will be introduced over the next couple of years. The profile is different to the report which you discuss with your child's teacher at the end of the year and also different from the report card. The report includes information on areas for your child's development and next steps in learning. The profile is a statement which publicly recognises your child's best achievements. Advice and early examples of profiling are being made available to teachers through the Curriculum for Excellence website. You may wish to take a look at this or perhaps ask your Headteacher at your next Parent Council meeting how profiles will be introduced in your school, and what information will be given to parents to explain them.

Support for new Qualifications

Here is some more information on the new Qualifications. As you know, new National Qualifications are being introduced from 2013/14 onwards, with Standard Grades and Intermediates being phased out and replaced by new National 4 and National 5 qualifications. I have been reassured by the progress reports at the Management Board which show that the development of the qualifications is on track and, in fact, every Secondary school will shortly be receiving a paper copy of the draft specifications for National 4 and 5. These are already available online, and provide information on the aims, and expected outcomes and assessment standards for each course. It is worth noting that these build on the Experiences and Outcomes, issued to all teachers in April 2009, on which learning and teaching in the broad general education is based. The Scottish Qualifications Authority, which is developing the new qualifications, is meeting with Headteachers from November to discuss the new quality assurance arrangements for the new qualifications and will provide advice and support where necessary. Education Scotland will also co-ordinate targeted support for every Secondary school which identifies a need for help in preparing for the new qualifications. More support and information is also being prepared to help teachers engage with parents, and directly for parents to further explain the changes. You can get much more detail on the national qualifications to share with parents in your school at <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/46161.html>.

On behalf of the NPFS, I will continue to keep you up to date on any important developments in relation to CfE. The reps on NPFS are all volunteer parents just like you and your parents on your Parent Council. With 32 Parent Council area reps we already get a good idea of what is important to parents. We want to ensure that the views that we take to the CfE Management Board and the many other national groups that we are now involved in, are the views and issues that are important to parents and that are in the interests of all children. See www.parentforumscotland.org for more information on our 2nd Annual Conference on CfE and the different national groups that we sit on.

You will agree that a lot is going on so I hope you find this letter helpful in keeping up to date. If there are more developments, be assured that I will keep you informed.

Best of luck for keeping on top of it all this term!

Joanna Murphy.

Joanna Murphy
enquiries@parentforumscot.org
cc. all Headteachers