



the National Parent Forum of Scotland

NEWSLETTER

May/June 2012

From the National Parent Forum of Scotland:

Welcome to the third and final Parent Council newsletter of this school session. In this edition, we are delighted to share with you the latest news on the roll-out of *Curriculum for Excellence*, as well as information on important initiatives such as Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), and on the involvement of the National Parent Forum in a range of educational projects.

This has been an exceptionally busy year for all education partners. There has been lots of change and challenge for all of us. From across Scotland, our National Parent Forum reps are making very useful contributions both locally and nationally, ensuring that the parental voice is heard (visit www.parentforumscotland.org for a list of our reps and their roles). We have consistently asked that partners in education continue to share our focus on improving outcomes for all of Scotland's children and young people. This is what *Curriculum for Excellence* is all about. Please do get in touch with your local area rep. If you would like to join our national database, which will be used only for matters relating to the National Parent Forum, parental involvement and education, email us on enquiry@parentforumscotland.org.

Next session will be just as exciting for our children and young people, as their educational experiences develop their skills and their learning opportunities are enhanced. Please put our annual conference on 6 October in your diary. Feedback from parents from last year's event was excellent, with parents particularly enjoying the chance to share good practice, develop knowledge and skills, discuss concerns, problem-solve and collaborate in the true spirit of *Curriculum for Excellence*!

Have a good summer,

Iain Ellis

Chair, The National Parent Forum of Scotland
Chair@parentforumscotland.org

New National Qualifications Finalised

Two major milestones on the route towards implementation of the *Curriculum for Excellence* programme were delivered on 30 April. The Scottish Qualifications Authority published the final documents for the 197 new National Qualifications, providing teachers and lecturers with the mandatory course content and assessment requirements for every new course and the information required to deliver them. This was accompanied by new guidance and advice on implementing the new National Qualifications across a range of subjects and levels, published by Education Scotland. <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/nationalqualifications/index.asp>

New Information for Parents from the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)

The recently updated *Curriculum for Excellence* information leaflet on the new qualifications for parents and learners is now available on <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/46161.html>. The latest version sets out information on the new qualifications and coincides with the publication of the final documents for the new National Qualifications for teachers by the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

Aiming High!

The National Parent Forum of Scotland's 3rd Annual Conference, 6 October 2012, Bishopbriggs Academy, East Dunbartonshire

Planning for our conference in October, which is free and is open to all parents/carers, is well underway. In response to parental feedback, we will offer eight seminars, covering all stages of the learner journey, as well as seminars for children and young people. Following the success of last year's online event, we will again host an online conference in the week prior to the conference. Please see the next edition of the newsletter for further details and booking information or contact: LindsayJane.Murray@educationscotland.gov.uk.



National Parent Forum of Scotland News

We are seeking your views! If you would like to share your views, and those of your parent council, please do get in touch with us at enquiry@parentforumsotland.org.

Scottish Education Awards

Finalists for the Scottish Education Awards 2012 have been announced and we are delighted to report that the Chair of the National Parent Forum, Iain Ellis, is amongst the 51 nominees across 17 awards! Iain has worked tirelessly to promote parental involvement at local and national level, and now his local authority has rightly nominated him in recognition of his commitment. The Awards Ceremony is on 12 June in Glasgow – watch this space! The nominations illustrate the great work being done in schools across Scotland. Visit <http://www.scottisheducationawards.co.uk/about.asp> for more.

The Doran Review: Supporting Children with Complex Needs

We made our submission to the Doran Review into provision for children with complex needs following a lively parent consultation event in Bonnyrigg in March. After wide-ranging discussion, we gathered the views of 25 parents/carers of children with additional support for learning difficulties. Our Midlothian representative, Louise Gough, organised the informative and enjoyable evening. Parents appreciated the opportunity to share experiences, advice and information, as well as making their views known to the Doran Review group. The Doran Review is due to publish its findings to Scottish Government Ministers in July.

Giving Evidence

The National Parent Forum was invited to give oral evidence on 15 May to the Scottish Parliament's Education and Culture Committee on the annual progress report on Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009. This report gathers statistical information from local authorities on additional support for learning provision and need.

Additional Support for Learning

'A Plea from Parents' resource for professionals
We have compiled 'A Plea from Parents' which asks professionals who work with families of children with additional support for learning needs to observe some simple kindnesses and courtesies in their contact with parents. This handy checklist will ensure that meetings and communication are as constructive as possible and contribute to positive relationships for all concerned. View it at <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/NPF/2012/03/15/additional-support-needs-supporting-children-young-people-and-their-families/>

The National Parent Forum of Scotland at The Scottish Learning Festival 2012

We are delighted to be hosting a discussion event on 'Parents as Partners - Working Together to Deliver Curriculum for Excellence' at the Scottish Learning Festival in September.

We hope that attendees will sign up for our event which will showcase some success stories, such as a Fairtrade Community Cafe and a World of Work marketplace event for S4s, where schools have tapped into parental time, skills and support to deliver rewarding experiences for children and young people.

REP REPORTS

Outdoor Learning

Our National Parent Forum rep for outdoor learning, Jason O'Flynn, reports on the recent meeting of the Outdoor Learning Network: "The purpose of the Outdoor Learning Network is to bring together partners to deliver high quality outdoor learning for children and young people. This meeting looked at outdoor learning in Scotland and invited members to agree a set of objectives. Visit these at <http://www.outdoor-learning.org/Portals/0/Region%20Documents/Scotland/iolScot.nnol.mar2011.pdf>. A presentation on GLOW, Scotland's national intranet for schools, and online CPD communities, demonstrated how advancing technology can help teachers. There were some presentations from schools with excellent practice in outdoor learning: Susan Semple, Tynecastle High School, Edinburgh and Louise Gordon, Port Moak Primary School, Perth & Kinross."

One Planet Schools

This inspiring initiative, which brings together sustainable development, global citizenship education and outdoor learning, will be rolled out in Scottish schools. The National Parent Forum has a rep on the Government One Planet Schools (OPS) working group. Its goal is "to deliver priorities in Scottish education including raising personal values, attainment, improving behaviour, inclusion and health and well-being. A cross-curricular 'whole school approach' is central to schools moving in the direction of One Planet Schools. It is important that OPS is not seen as an add-on to the school curriculum, but is embedded in the culture, values and attitude of the school." Visit <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/curriculum/ACE/OnePlanetSchools> for more information on the working group.

Curriculum for Excellence update

Additional Resources to Support Secondary Schools

Mike Russell, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning, recently announced extra *Curriculum for Excellence* support for secondary schools to help them prepare for the next stages of implementation. Two additional in-service days will be held by the end of the 2012/13 school year to focus on S3 profiling and the new qualifications. Additional funding of £3.5m is being provided to the local authorities for the move from the Broad General Education in S1 to S3 to the introduction of the new courses for the National Qualifications in S4.

New films – impact and benefits of *Curriculum for Excellence* (CfE)

In response to parents' requests for more information to illustrate *Curriculum for Excellence* in action, the Scottish Government has published four new short films on the **Engage for Education** website about *Curriculum for Excellence* impacts and benefits. Learners, parents and teachers describe their CfE experiences in their own words. Three films feature the early years, primary and secondary sectors respectively, and the fourth combines all sectors. View them at <http://www.engageforeducation.org/cfefilms>



Broad General Education

Education Scotland has just issued the first in a new series of guides for school staff on *Curriculum for Excellence*. It covers Broad General Education and looks at key issues being considered by secondary schools as they plan their provision for the broad general education at the S1 to S3 stages. A version for parents/carers is being prepared but in the meantime you can **click here** to view the briefing.

A New Curriculum for Excellence Website for Children and Young People

BeXcellent (www.beXcellent.org.uk), a new website which sets out information on *Curriculum for Excellence* for young people, has been launched by Children in Scotland and the Scottish Youth Parliament.

BeXcellent offers an easy-to-understand approach to the new curriculum and the personalised, creative learning it promotes. The site features a simple guide to the new curriculum, as well as activities designed to stimulate independent learning and new ways of thinking. It is hoped that the site will also act as a useful resource when the qualifications associated with CfE are fully implemented. Visit the website for details of a competition for young people which closes on 18 June!



Involving Parents

Revision Help Now!

Useful revision tools to help young people who are sitting exams are available from BBC Bitesize (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/learning/bitesize/standard/> or <http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/learning/bitesize/higher/>). Advice for parents about supporting their children can be found at http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/parents/helping_with_exams/ or Parentzone

Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)

You may have heard of 'Getting It Right For Every Child' (GIRFEC) in your school or local authority. GIRFEC is an over-arching approach being promoted by the Scottish Government to ensure that everyone gets it right for every single child in Scotland. GIRFEC is designed to be used with families, nurseries, schools, healthcare, social work, law enforcement, housing, as well as some support services for adults. It's a way for professionals like teachers and health visitors to work together to support families and take action when they need to, at the earliest signs of any difficulty.

GIRFEC focuses on a child's well-being to help decide whether they are safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, responsible, respected and included. If a child is doing as well as possible, they are more likely to grow up to become the responsible citizens, effective contributors, confident individuals and successful learners which are at the heart of *Curriculum for Excellence*. Find out more about GIRFEC at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People>

Literacy

Event: Reading – What's My Role?

Education Scotland has organised an information event on 16 June from 10am to 3pm at the Glasgow Hilton for parents who are keen to find out more about supporting their children's reading. The keynote speaker is Nicola Morgan. Contact Margaret McGuinness on 0141 282 5064 or by email (margaret.mcguinness@educationscotland.gov.uk) or [click here](#) to register.

Engaging Parents

Children in Scotland is inviting parent councils to take part in a survey about parental engagement. Responses will feed into a new guide which will reflect diverse ways of keeping parents informed and involved. Children in Scotland would like to hear from as many parent councils as possible about their experiences. Please complete the survey at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/EngageTheParentForum> by Friday 18 May 2012.

Action on Literacy

The Scottish Government's Literacy Action Plan, published in October 2010, aims to raise standards of literacy for all from the early years to adulthood. The Standing Literacy Commission, chaired by Sir Harry Burns, Chief Medical Officer, was established to oversee implementation of the actions contained within the plan. The Commission, which now has a rep from the National Parent Forum, will provide an interim report to Ministers on the Plan in the autumn. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/curriculum/ACE/LiteracyActionPlan>

Early Years

'Every Day's a Learning Day' consists of two books produced by Education Scotland for parents/carers of children aged 0-6. Aiming to help parents support their child's development in the crucial areas of health and wellbeing, literacy and numeracy, this resource highlights the many excellent day-to-day learning opportunities that exist within daily experiences such as washing the dishes, preparing a meal or doing the shopping. The books will be distributed through the Scottish Book Trust's Bookbug programme. Parents of new babies will receive their copy of the 'Birth to 3' book from their health visitor. The second book (for parents of children aged 3-6 years) will be issued when their child turns 3 and starts nursery. To view or download them, visit www.educationscotland.gov.uk/everydaylearning (a Gaelic language version is included).

ENABLE Scotland

ENABLE Scotland is holding the next in its series of 'Parents Together' events on Thursday 31 May in Glenrothes, Fife from 9.15am – 3.00pm. This event is for parents and unpaid carers of children and young people with additional support needs. There will be information stands, workshops, and complementary/beauty therapy 'taster sessions'. A free crèche will be available but places must be booked by 22 May. Lunch and refreshments will be provided.

Help with Gaelic homework

If you are ever stuck with Gaelic homework, help is at hand! Live Help, which is hosted by Stòrlann, can be found on www.gaelic4parents.com, offers a homework support service for parents of children in Gaelic education. This service is open from 5.30pm to 7.30pm Monday to Thursday, during term time. The website has recently been redeveloped to improve accessibility and there is now no need for logins or passwords. Available on the site are audio files of children's books for download or listening to in live streaming including the Gaelic Storyworlds reader series which children use in primary school. You can also access a wide range of books, stories and rhymes by mobile phone.

Useful Contacts Box

National Parent Forum of Scotland –
enquiry@parentforumscotland.org
www.parentforumscotland.org
<http://twitter.com/parentforumscot>

Enquire – the national advice service in Scotland for additional support for learning
www.enquire.org.uk

Education Scotland – more detailed information on *Curriculum for Excellence*
www.educationscotland.gov.uk/

Parentzone – information for parents on all aspects of children's learning
www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone/

Scottish Qualifications Authority – for the latest information on qualifications
www.sqa.org.uk