



Fordbank Primary and Flexible Learning Resource

Parental Involvement and Engagement Strategy

Policy statement

Education Scotland provide the following definitions of Parental Involvement and Parental Engagement:

'The term parental involvement relates to the involvement of parents and carers in the life and work of the early learning and childcare setting or school. This can include parent representation on Parent Councils or associations, involvement in establishment self-evaluation and improvement work, and volunteering with fundraising activities or by sharing skills and knowledge to enrich the curriculum.'

'The term parental engagement most commonly refers to parental (and family) engagement in their children's learning.

The term "parent" used in this policy refers to any person who has parental responsibilities for the child.

Key features of successful parental engagement

- A common understanding of what parental engagement is/is not and its value amongst all staff
- Strong relationships as the basis for parental engagement and supporting engagement out with the formal learning environment
- Parental engagement should not only be an ELC or school wide initiative but also 'led from the top', with senior leaders taking an active role in supporting parental engagement with learning
- Partnerships which go beyond the boundaries of the establishment; should see themselves at the heart of their wider communities
- The planning of support for parents is decided in consultation with parents

What do we want to achieve?

At Fordbank Primary, we recognise that parents and families must be valued, supported and empowered to be engaged in their children's lifelong learning journey. This means improving and strengthening the ways in which we engage with parents and families and ensuring they are at the centre of decision-making processes about their children's learning. We welcome parents as active participants in the life of the school and encourage parents to express their views and ensure their views will be listened to.

Background and legislation

Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 places duties on schools to help parents to be involved with their children's education and learning and encourages parents and carers to express their views on education.

Education Scotland's 'Review of Family Learning Supporting Excellence and Equity' (Dec 2016) highlights that family learning programmes support parents to increase their individual skills, knowledge and confidence. This in turn helps parents support their child's development as well as their own personal opportunities for learning, training and employment. It also states that embedding family learning across education, health and socio-economic policies is crucial to closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

Whilst, The National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan (2018) builds upon parents' involvement in the life of their children's schools and encourages parental engagement where parents are truly involved in their children's learning.

Key principles

Our approach to strengthen parental involvement and representation in the life of schools is based on the following key principles:

- Improve attainment and achievement by recognising parents and carers as the primary educators of their children.
- Provide the right support to enable them to engage with their children's learning journeys.
- Remove barriers which limit the involvement and engagement of specific groups of parents.
- Recognise the parent forum who have a statutory right to be involved in school decision making.
- Be flexible and use creative approaches to engage and involve parents and carers.

To achieve these aims we will:

- Improve professionals' understanding and skills in parental involvement, parental engagement and family learning via CLPL sessions.
- Ensure that there is a wide range of creative, meaningful and successful approaches to engage with parents.
- Support parents to engage in effective dialogue regarding their children's learning and progress and have opportunities to access practitioners around how their child can be best supported.
- Provide family learning opportunities which meet their needs, reflect their circumstances and include shared approaches and tools to support continued learning at home, removing additional barriers to these where they exist.
- Provide resources that they need to assist them in engaging with their children's learning including home learning and study skills resources.

Involvement in the life of the school

- We listen to your views.
- We include you in decisions we make.

Engagement in your child's learning

- We invite you in to take part in learning with your child.
- When your child does well, we celebrate with you.
- When your child needs support, we plan with you.

We work with you in a lot of different ways. It is important that we know what works best for you and your family.

Communicating:

We communicate in lots of different ways at Fordbank Primary.

We will work with you so that you know:

- What your child is learning
- How they learn
- How well they are learning.
- How you can be involved and included.

Our school will use:

- School Newsletters
- Seesaw App
- Email
- We will meet with you to have learning conversations. These share important information about how well your child is doing and will help us work better together.

Learning at Home:

We will help you to support your child's learning at home.

- We will help you with ideas of how you can help your child at home with homework or other activities, decisions, and planning for learning.

Family Learning:

- We will help all families with knowledge that will support learning wherever this takes place.
- Staff will support parents/Carers to take part in their children's learning in school, and outside of school, to help your child reach their potential.

Decision Making:

Parents/Carers being involved in decisions.

- We will include parents in decisions on how the school works with parents and pupils. The Parent Council is an example of this.

Collaborating with the Community:

We work with local community partners to support the families and the school.

- The school will look to find people who can give resources and services locally that will help the school, children and families with learning and teaching.

Volunteering

Recruit and organise parent help and support

We welcome volunteers to our school because we believe that this can offer Parents/Carers and the wider family, the opportunity to be involved in something interesting and rewarding.

When parents and the school work together, children do better.

The better the information the school gives to parents, the more the parents can support their child's learning and the school.

Information that parents share with the school can help teachers progress the learning of the children.