

### Section 1 – introduction

This Strategy sets out how we at Bell's Brae wish to encourage all parents/carers to be involved in their child's learning in ways that are right for their family. It reflects the aims and expectations of the Shetland Islands Council Children's Services strategy for Parental Involvement and Parental Engagement (May 2018).

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

### Section 2 – 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

**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.

As a school we will evaluate the effectiveness of this strategy by using the quality indicators of 'How Good is our School?' and 'How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare?' as well as the toolkit for learners 'How Good is OUR school?'

### Section 3 – Types of Parental Involvement and Parental Engagement

This section defines the six types of parental involvement and provides information on what parents/carers can expect at Bell's Brae Primary School.

#### Parenting

**Help families to create home environments to support children as students, including family support programmes, home visits and parent education.**

- The Bruce Family Centre provides support to families. Where appropriate and with the appropriate consent school staff have referred learners and families to ensure that they receive the relevant support.
- A number of outside agencies attend our Learner Led Event to provide support and information to families.
- Some families have benefitted from targeted support from Additional Support Needs staff through home visits and joint co-ordinated plans.

#### Communicating

**Communicate with families about school programmes and student progress through effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications.**

- We try to use clear and jargon-free language.
- A range of systems are in place: email, up to date website, newsletters, interim reports, end of year reports, Learner Led Event, Parent/teacher apt, diaries, information boards, review meetings.
- An open door policy is in place.
- We respond to parents/carers promptly.
- Communication is in place for resident and non-resident parents.
- We try to use the most convenient means of communication.

#### 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.**

- We seek parental volunteers to assist with outings.
- We have an 'adult helpers in school policy'.
- We seek parents to share career information and work expertise at assemblies.
- Parents/carers kindly volunteer to assist with social events.

#### Learning at Home (and Family Learning)

**Involve families with their children in learning activities at home, including homework and other curriculum-related activities and decisions.**

- A range of homework tasks encourage Family Learning
- Read, Write and Count homework in P4-7 promotes Family Learning
- Snow Day sheets and Family Choice Boards encourage Family Learning
- Family fun nights, Coffee Mornings and other social events are organised for families.
- Curriculum sessions for P1 parents to share information on how children can be supported in their learning.
- Individual Educational Plans/Play Plans are developed with parents and include ways of supporting learning at home

#### 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.**

- There is an active Parent Council

- The Parent Council meet once every term.
- The Parent Council Facebook page is kept up to date
- Parent Council members influence school policies and practices
- The Parent Council fundraise for school trips and equipment
- The Parent Council organise social events for families such as a Halloween party and a Christmas party.

#### 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.**

- We follow authority policies on GIRFEC, Managing Inclusion and Child Protection.
- Programmes of transition are in place between settings.
- Strong working relationships are in place with NHS, police, social services and the voluntary sector.
- Several links exist with local businesses to enhance learning and teaching, provide knowledge of local work places and possible future careers.
- Learners showcase their skills and talents in the community through performances and volunteering.
- We seek feedback from partner agencies on their role in meeting our school's vision, values and aims

### Section 4 – 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 Bell's Brae this will be the child's Class Teacher, a Depute Head Teacher or the 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)

### Section 5 – Roles and Responsibilities

Some specific responsibilities are listed here.

#### Parents/Carers

- Parents/carers should take an active interest and supportive role in their child's learning both in school and at home.
- Parents/carers should regularly communicate with school staff regarding their child's education in a manner which is respectful and appropriate.

- Parents/carers should keep abreast of what is going on in the school by reading school emails and visiting the school website.

#### Parent Council

- 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;
- Parent Councils should actively seek membership.

#### School Staff

- 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;

#### Other agencies

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 school.

### All

In order to ensure the best outcome for all learners everyone within the school community should always demonstrate the school values:

- Caring
- Nurturing
- Learning
- Inclusive
- Resilience
- Respectful
- Responsible
- Confidence
- Healthy
- Safety
- Enjoyment
- Co-operative

**Adult Helpers Policy**  
**Introduction**

The Shetland Schools Service actively encourages the involvement of parents/carers 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/carers are involved, children do better in their education.

The staff at Bell's Brae Primary School work positively to promote an ethos of partnership within our school. Such involvement by parents/carers 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 we have drawn up the following procedures:**

1. Adult Helpers Policy
2. Classroom Helpers Procedures for Teachers (appendix 1)
3. Classroom Helpers Guidelines (appendix 2)
4. Example School Letter / Volunteer Form for Helpers (appendix 3)

**1 Adult Helpers Policy**

*Disclosure Scotland*

When working with children it is imperative that the strictest standards of health and safety are maintained. The following is taken from the SIC's Policy on the Disclosure of Criminal Record Information 2006:

**Volunteers**

Where there is to be regular contact with children and in a supervisory capacity Enhanced Disclosure Checks **must be** done e.g. trips, assisting in the classroom, swimming. The grey area is around PTA/Parent Council activities such as coffee mornings, fetes etc where there is not necessarily direct supervision of children. Decisions to do Enhanced Disclosure 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?

***Guidelines For Using Outside Agencies And Visitors in schools: "Where a volunteer does not require a Disclosure Check, then arrangements should be made to treat the volunteer as an infrequent visitor to school, and the Schools Service Guidelines for Visitors to Schools 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.

### **Helpers in school: Procedures for staff**

In accordance with our policy, we welcome involvement in school life by parents/carers and other interested members of the community. The following procedures for staff should ensure that there is clarity as regards the roles and responsibilities of all involved, being mindful of Child Protection Procedures.

- Prior to a helper starting a session/sessions they will meet with a member of staff and be given a copy of our guidelines. The member of staff will talk them through the guidelines, discussing and answering any queries. The helper will be asked to sign an agreement acknowledging that they have read and agree to work within the guidelines laid down, particularly regarding confidentiality.
- A helper will be shown round the school, the staffroom, toilets, and break/lunch times will be explained. The helper will have the fire procedures and first aid procedures explained to them.
- A helper may be assigned a task with or without children within the school. If with children, the teacher will ensure that the group is of a manageable size. The teacher will explain any given task, being clear as to what is expected of the helper e.g. supervising a craft activity, tidying up at the end of the activity etc.
- Children will be expected to behave with courtesy and politeness and the teacher retains responsibility for discipline. The teacher will explain to the helper what the expectation of children's behaviour is, including the classroom code of conduct.
- A helper may be asked to do preparatory/secretarial type duties outwith the classroom. Such activities would usually be undertaken alone or with another helper, again the teacher will carefully explain what is required.
- At the end of a session involving a helper the teacher will express thanks on behalf of the school.
- A helper may only be left alone with a group of children if they have completed a Disclosure Check.
- A helper should not be left alone with a single child.



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

We welcome parents/carers 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.

## Becoming a Helper at School

*I would be interested in becoming a Helper in Bell's Brae 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.	
Supporting an after school club	
Other (please state)	

I would be willing to be PVG checked.	
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I already have a PVG	
Number (if known): -----	Date of check:-----

I am available on the following days and times:

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

Child's Name\_\_\_\_\_

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

Please give this to the Head teacher

### **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!

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

Printed name \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2

### 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)



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

### 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@spso.org.uk](mailto:ask@spso.org.uk)

“Get it right first time”

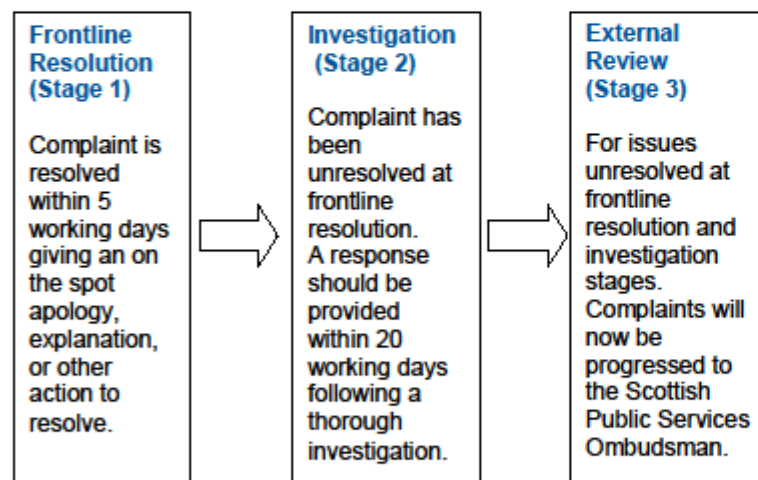
## How do I complain?

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

