

Education, Children & Families Committee

10am, Tuesday, 11 December 2018

Edinburgh Learns: Learning Together Framework for Parental Engagement and Involvement

Item number	7.9
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	
Council Commitments	29 , 33 , 34 and 45

Executive Summary

Scottish Government policy to improve education and life chances for all is detailed through each of the four national improvement priorities and updated annually in the National Improvement Framework (NIF).

The need to raise attainment, particularly for those living in poverty, is articulated through each of the 'drivers' of the NIF and is at the forefront of all activity for Schools and Lifelong Learning.

Headteachers need clear guidance and processes in place to ensure they can maintain or improve the delivery of education.

'Edinburgh Learns', the strategic framework of documents covers each of the key themes regarded as central to raising attainment and ensuring equity, namely

- Equity for Learning
- Improving Quality in Learning (Quality Improvement)
- Health and Wellbeing
- Teaching and Learning,
- Learning Together (Parental Involvement and Engagement)
- Pathways for Learning (Developing the Young Workforce)
- Inclusion

Edinburgh Learns: Learning Together

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Education, Children and Families Committee is asked to:
 - 1.1.1 Approve the Edinburgh Learns Framework: Learning Together, contained in Appendix 1
 - 1.1.2 Ensure impact of this framework by requesting an annual update report from the Edinburgh Learns Strategic Group for 'Learning Together'

2. Background

- 2.1 The Standards in Scotland's Schools (2000) Act has placed a duty on local authorities and schools to produce a plan and report on the delivery of education, particularly with regard to raising attainment.
- 2.2 To ensure that schools support the wider political aim of a fairer society, specific actions are now also required to improve outcomes for those living in poverty. The Education Act (2016) further details the content of school and education authority plans, which includes steps to reduce inequalities of income and address the four national improvement priorities.
- 2.3 Engagement with children and families is a key component documented within all contemporary policy and guidance. Actively listening to the views of stakeholders during self-evaluation and improvement planning strengthens the system and results in service delivery which is more responsive to need.
- 2.4 All strategic and improvement planning within Schools & Lifelong Learning developed during the Year of Young People and beyond, makes explicit reference to gathering and acting on the views of all stakeholders. This Framework has been developed in partnership with schools, officers, partner organisations and parents.
- 2.5 It should also be noted that educational delivery is going through a significant period of transformational change, with the introduction of Regional Improvement Collaboratives and the proposed Headteachers' Charter.
- 2.6 Within this culture of change, The City of Edinburgh Council 'Edinburgh Learns' Frameworks have been devised to provide clear guidance for Headteachers and officers. These describe best practice in service delivery, governance, and accountability, thus mitigating the impacts of change and providing reassurance to

elected members and stakeholders that standards in Edinburgh schools will be maintained or improved.

3. Main report

- 3.1 The National Improvement Framework is the main policy for Scottish Education setting clear goals and timelines for implementation. It identifies Parental Engagement as a key driver in improving outcomes for children.
- 3.2 The recent Scottish Government report, Learning Together, provides rich information and a series of actions designed to support schools and parents in working together.
- 3.3 The term ‘Learning Together’ summaries the twin definitions of Parental Involvement and Engagement, which are
 - 3.3.1 Parental Involvement - how parents can get involved in the life and work of their child’s school.
 - 3.3.2 Parental Engagement – how parents interact with their children’s learning.
- 3.4 The purpose of the Edinburgh Learns Framework is to ensure excellence and equity in parental involvement and engagement within our schools. It is written to ensure that all staff who work with children and young people see the importance of engaging and working with parents, and
 - that schools have the capacity and skills to support parental involvement;
 - that involvement is monitored and evaluated;
 - that effective communication is in place between home and school;
 - that parents can see how their involvement is influencing school improvement;
 - that all parents are provided with appropriate opportunities to be involved, whatever their ability, background, or interest, to participate in the design, delivery and evaluation of the services and facilities that impact on their children
- 3.5 All Edinburgh Learns Frameworks are based on research. Learning Together is most heavily influenced by the work of Dr Joyce Epstein, John Hopkins University, who has identified six types of involvement. None is better than any other: all are equally valid, and families are likely to engage in different ways at different points. These are
 - Parenting
 - Communicating
 - Volunteering
 - Learning at home
 - School decision-making
 - Collaborating with the community

- 3.6 In common with all other Edinburgh Learns frameworks, a strategic group has been convened which will oversee the implementation of this workstream. Members represent all stakeholders including parents, learners, and partners. The group will also consider new research, guidance, insight into effective practice, and the results from self-evaluation activities and audits on Learning Together.
- 3.7 The framework also provides School Improvement Planning templates. Once schools have completed an audit, SIP templates can be personalised for inclusion in School Improvement Plans.
- 3.8 While there is no mandate for schools to implement any or all of the guidance contained within the suite of Edinburgh Learns documents, schools will discuss the Learning Together guidance with their Parent Councils before the end of the school session. This will support the Improvement Planning cycle.

4. Measures of success

- 4.1 The Framework contains guidance on how schools should identify key performance indicators.
- 4.2 All schools and centres should create, and keep under review, a policy which details their approaches to support 'Learning Together.'
- 4.3 The Quality Improvement Officer with responsibility for Learning Together will support and/or signpost schools and centres that wish to develop provision around Learning Together.
- 4.4 Parent and Carer surveys which record levels of satisfaction will be scrutinised by the Learning Together strategic group and reported the Education, Children and Families Committee annually.

5. Financial impact

- 5.1 The recommendations in this report have been assessed in relation to financial impact. No financial impact has been noted.

6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 The recommendations in this report have been assessed in relation to risk, policy, compliance and governance. Subsequent legislation may alter the council's position and agency in regard to some of the improvement actions.

7. Equalities impact

- 7.1 The recommendations in this report have been assessed in relation to equalities and human rights and no negative impacts have been found.

8. Sustainability impact

- 8.1 The recommendations of this report are focused on ensuring sustainability for Edinburgh's children and families. No negative impacts have been found

9. Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 Extensive consultation will be required to ensure that each of the Frameworks are fully compliant with other policies and supported by LNCT.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0051/00515736.pdf>
10.2 [National Improvement Framework](#)
10.3 [Learning Together](#)

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11. Appendices

- 11.1 Appendix 1 Edinburgh Learns: Learning Together

APPENDIX 1

EDINBURGH LEARNS

Learning Together: Parental Involvement and Engagement December 2018

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Definition of parental involvement and engagement

For the purposes of this document, the term 'parent' refers to parent/carer/adult responsible for the care of the young person and the term 'school' refers to early learning centre/nursery school/ primary school/secondary school/special school.

Parental involvement describes ways in which parents can get involved in the life and work of their child's school. Parental engagement is about parents' interaction with their children's learning. Schools and partners can play a vital role in supporting families to do this effectively by:

- enabling ongoing, two-way communications between home and school;
- supporting parents to contribute to school improvement and making decisions that affect the school;
- using the skills of parents to enrich the curriculum where appropriate; and
- providing opportunities for families to come together and engage with learning.

Aims & Rationale

The purpose of our strategy is to ensure excellence and equity in parental involvement and engagement within our schools. It will ensure:

- that we have the capacity and skills to support parental involvement;
- that involvement is monitored and evaluated;
- that effective communication is in place between home and school;
- that parents can see how their involvement is influencing school improvement;
- that we provide appropriate opportunities to involve all parents, whatever their ability, background or interest, to participate in the design, delivery and evaluation of the services and facilities that impact on their children
- that all staff who work with children and young people see the importance of engaging and working with parents.

Research and data

Research found that:

- 'parents need clear, specific and targeted information from schools.'
- 'parents valued the school, consulting them and respecting the views they expressed.'
- 'the impact of parental engagement programmes on children's literacy is greater than for any other curricular area.' **Goodall et al (2011)**

Research has also shown that 'parental involvement in children's education from an early age is associated with educational achievement. In addition, it has been found that the more intensely parents are involved, the more beneficial the achievement effects.' **[Growing Up In Scotland Study May 2012]**

Framework

Dr Joyce Epstein, John Hopkins University, has identified **six types of involvement** which encompass the many ways in which families may support their child's learning and engagement with school. None is better than any other: all are equally valid, and families are likely to engage in different ways at different points.

- **Parenting:** promote and foster parenting skills to develop home environments that support children as learners
- **Communicating:** establish regular and meaningful two-way communication between home and school
- **Volunteering:** welcome, value and recruit parental support and assistance in school activities
- **Learning at home:** support families/parents to play an integral role in assisting student learning
- **School decision-making:** include parents in school decisions and develop parent leaders and representatives
- **Collaborating with the community:** identify and use community resources and services to strengthen schools, families and student learning and development



Roles, remits and responsibilities

To support parental involvement and engagement, parents:

- support effective two-way communication with the school
- can feel confident that their views will be listened to
- can expect to be given every opportunity to be involved in their child's education and learning and engaged in school activities.

To support parental involvement and engagement, Parent Councils:

- promote effective dialogue and consultation between school staff and the parent body
- promote opportunities for equality and diversity in the Parent Council
- take an active role in decision making for school improvement.

To support parental involvement and engagement, Headteachers:

- ensure that all staff treat parents as partners in the education of their child
- ensure there is effective stakeholder engagement and consultation on school policy and development
- ensure parents have access to a specific named member of staff who has an overall view of their child's individual progress and can give information relevant to attainment, achievement and personal and social development.

To support parental involvement and engagement, the Chief Education Officer:

- provides advice and information to parents on national and local authority issues to ensure continuous improvement in the implementation of parental engagement
- ensures that senior managers respond to issues raised by parents timeously and ensures that parental consultation is enacted at all levels
- ensures that Parent Councils are supported by providing advice and appropriate finance.

Quality assurance and governance

To check that systems and processes are delivering the necessary improvements, the following arrangements will be incorporated into the work of the Schools and Lifelong Learning Service:

- The Parental Engagement Strategic Group will meet each quarter to monitor progress, make recommendations for future actions, and report to the Chief Education Officer.
- This group, chaired by Senior Manager, Inclusion, comprises:
 - Headteachers from each sector
 - Quality Improvement Officer (Parental Engagement)
 - Family Learning representatives
 - Parent representatives
 - Parent Council representatives

The CEC Parental Engagement Strategic Group will report to the South East Alliance, Regional Improvement Collaborative on areas for improvement as detailed in the SEIC Annual Plan.

The CEC Parental Engagement Strategic Group will also share information with the Children's Partnership Group and Education Committee as appropriate.

Planning for parental involvement and engagement

To effectively ensure parental involvement and engagement, Headteachers will incorporate the following key features into Standards and Quality and Improvement Planning:

- use of Parental Involvement and Engagement advice to support short/medium/long-term targets in their Improvement Planning cycle; and
- views of all stakeholders to better inform actions.

Headteachers and senior leaders will complete the full self-evaluation of their school and use it, in conjunction with all other evidence, to plan for improvements in parental involvement and engagement. They will:

1. identify the desired **outcomes**;
2. identify appropriate **interventions**;
3. state how impact will be **measured**.

1. Identify outcomes:

Agree and define three key aspects...

Who is going to experience change – *Practitioners? Head Teachers? Learners? Parents/Carers?*

What is going to change in the short term? – *Motivation? Knowledge? Awareness? Understanding? Attitudes? Thinking? Perceptions? Opinions? Aspirations? Confidence?*

AND What is going to change in the medium or long term? – *Practice? Actions? Behaviour? Policies? Content? Processes? Provision? Decision-making? Partnerships? Attainment/Benchmarks?*

How 'the what' is going to change – *Increased? Decreased? More/less? Raised? Lowered? Improved? Enhanced? Higher quality?*

2. Identify interventions:

Agree and define possible interventions which will support the achievement of the desired outcome, considering:

targeting groups of parents for specific interventions;

identifying and supporting parents to support other parents;

allocating funding for activities aimed at improving parental engagement;

identifying a member of staff with responsibility for parental engagement;

inviting parent representatives to be on all School Improvement Groups.

3. Identify how impact will be measured:

This ensures appropriate baseline measures and intended gains in the short, medium and long term. This is best emerging practice and can be worked towards.

Examples:

Short term	Medium term	Long term
Increased practitioner knowledge/awareness/skills	Practice is more effective	Practice is highly effective
Parent surveys show that the majority of parents are satisfied with the level of involvement they have with the school.	Surveys show that most parents are satisfied with the level of involvement they have.	Surveys show that almost all parents are satisfied with the level of involvement they have with the school.
The views of the Parent Council are taken into account in school improvement planning.	All parents have an opportunity to provide feedback on school improvement planning priorities.	Parents are represented on all school improvement groups throughout the session.
A few parents attend school events other than Parents Evenings.	An increasing number of parents attend and volunteer to assist at school events.	The majority of parents take an active part in the life of the school.

Professional learning

To maintain a clear, research based focus on ensuring equity of access and provision for all, Headteachers and senior leaders will ensure that all staff, including support staff, access regular, appropriate training. In many cases this forms key learning for staff and is documented in Professional Review and Development conversations. Professional learning can include:

- Collaborative Practitioner Enquiry
- Improvement Methodology
- Professional/Teacher Learning Communities
- Shadowing & acting up experiences
- Courses, academic study & professional development

Appendix 1: Local Authority Action Plan

Priority	Parental Involvement and Engagement	Overall Responsibility	City of Edinburgh	
Outcomes	To ensure excellence and equity in parental involvement and engagement within our schools.			
Tasks	By Whom	Resources	Impact/ Progress	Measure
The authority will promote the use of current local and national policies, frameworks & toolkits. The authority will report on progress to the Scottish Government.	Senior Education Managers Headteachers	Supporting Parents and Carers 2017-20 (CEC), Education Scotland Toolkit, Learning Together Action Plan (SG), Edinburgh Learns: Learning Together (CEC)	National requirements will be met. Local practice will be current and compliant.	<i>% schools using the guidance and recording an improvement in parental involvement and engagement</i>
Consult parents annually on their school involvement and engagement.	D Maguire	Parent survey	Parents are consulted on the nature of their involvement and engagement.	<i>% positive feedback from parents</i>
Convene locality meetings and CCwP	M Plant	Time and place to meet	Parents feel represented and consulted.	<i>% positive feedback from parents</i>
Parent representatives to sit on Education Committee and Parental Engagement Strategy Group	Parent Council representatives	Time and place to meet	Parents' views are heard. Parents contribute to decision making at authority level.	<i>% parents who report that their views have been heard</i>
Authority policies and documents are parent-friendly. Authority website is current and informative.	Parental Engagement Strategy Group Comms team	CEC website Meeting times Dedicated officer time	Policies and documents are accessible.	<i>Positive feedback from parents Decline in parental enquiries</i>
Ensure effective arrangements for dealing with parental complaints.	Children and Families Advice and Complaints	School staff and officer time	Parental complaints are dealt with appropriately and timeously.	<i>Reduction in number of parental complaints</i>
The authority recognises and celebrates the support of parents.	Parental Engagement Strategy Group	Council website	Parents feel their time and effort is recognised.	<i>Positive feedback from parents</i>
Parents will be involved in the recruitment of HTs and senior officers.	Senior Education Managers	HT policies and protocols	Parents are involved in key appointments.	<i>Evaluation of parental involvement in recruitment</i>
Ensure that parental involvement and engagement is embedded in school improvement planning.	Senior Education Managers	Guidance on School improvement planning SQIPs	Schools are working to improve parental involvement and engagement.	<i>% SQIPs with parental involvement and engagement activities planned</i>



<p>The authority will continue to work with local and national partners to promote and share practice and to identify opportunities for collaboration.</p>	<p>Senior Education Managers</p>	<p>RIC Connect Education Scotland Scottish Government</p>	<p>Parental involvement and engagement continues to improve through current and innovative practice.</p>	<p><i>% schools indicating improvements in parental involvement and engagement</i></p>
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Appendix 2: Sample school action pages

Priority	Parenting	Overall Responsibility		
Outcomes	To promote and foster parenting skills to develop home environments that support children as students.			
Tasks	By Whom	Resources	Impact/ Progress	Measure
Develop a skilled and welcoming workforce that builds strong, respectful relationships with all parents and carers.	Families Headteacher Staff Partners Members of the community	CLPL Training opportunities School environment	Parents feel welcomed and confident in participating in activities in school or in the community.	<i>% families providing positive feedback</i>
Provide opportunities for families to come together and engage with their children's health and wellbeing, play, learning and community.	Families Headteacher Staff Partners Members of the community	Learning and activity programmes Community facilities Clubs PEF funded activities	Families engage in and benefit from a range of opportunities to come together. Families understand the value of engaging in their child's play and learning.	<i>% families engaging in activities offered % positive feedback from those involved Reduction in barriers to participation</i>
Help parents and carers feel confident in their ability and skills to meet the daily demands of their parenting role.	Parents and carers Staff Partners Members of the community	Parenting programmes and courses	Staff understand and share information with families on the range and benefits of support available.	<i>% parents accessing programmes and courses % parents indicating confidence in their parenting skills</i>
Ensure professional support and help is available for families where there are wellbeing concerns or additional support needs.	Staff Partners Members of the community	Early engagement 1:1 work Parenting programmes and courses	Families are supported to access services appropriate to their needs	<i>% families accessing services, programmes and courses % positive feedback from those involved</i>
Support parents and carers to access study, work and community life.	Families Staff Partners Members of the community	Information about employment, studying, local activities	Families are supported to access information about housing, benefits, and welfare issues.	<i>% families accessing services, programmes, and courses % families providing positive feedback about the information available</i>



Priority	Communicating	Overall Responsibility		
Outcomes	To establish regular and meaningful two-way communication between home and school.			
Tasks	By Whom	Resources	Impact/ Progress	Measure
Provide a welcome and supportive environment in school for parents.	Headteacher Staff Business manager	School fund	Parents feel welcomed and confident to come into school.	<i>% parents providing positive feedback</i>
Ensure all school communications are in parent-friendly language, and are available in parents' own languages where possible. Communicate to parents in a variety of ways, including social media, school website.	Headteacher Staff Business manager	Administrative procedures Social media accounts School website Interpretation service	Communication is clear, effective and easily accessible.	<i>% parents accessing information through different means % positive feedback from website users</i>
Contact parents regularly about their child's progress.	Staff	Reports Positive postcards Phone calls	Parents and young people are aware of progress in learning and in all aspects of school life.	<i>% parents providing positive feedback</i>
Provide a range of opportunities for parents to share their questions, views and knowledge. Respond to parents' concerns promptly.	HT Staff	Questionnaires Website Comments box Feedback slips Focus groups Parent Council	Parents questions, views and knowledge are gathered and responded to appropriately.	<i>% parents who report that their voice is heard</i>

Priority	Volunteering	Overall Responsibility		
Outcomes	To welcome, value and recruit parental support and assistance in school activities.			
Tasks	By Whom	Resources	Impact/ Progress	Measure
Encourage parents to help out at school events, clubs, activities. Identify interests, talents and availability of volunteers. Identify barriers to participation.	Parent Association Staff Business manager Year Heads	School fund Extra curricular programme Surveys to parents Safeguarding procedures	Enhanced relationship between school and parents. Wider range of clubs and activities offered.	<i>% parents assisting at events, clubs, activities</i>
Invite parents to assist as mentors, coaches, reading buddies, etc.	Staff Business manager Volunteer parents	Safeguarding procedures Training as appropriate	Parents feel involved in their child's learning. Parents work in partnership with the school.	<i>% parents assisting in school with learning</i>
Invite parents to provide information and support on employment based on their own experience, knowledge and skills.	Volunteer parents DYW staff Parent council	Parent body Time allocated within timetable ES toolkit	Increase in young people's understanding of the world of work. Parents are valued as part of the school community.	<i>% parents providing employment-related support</i>
Celebrate parental involvement and engagement in school.	HT Parent Council	Personal letters Newsletters Annual events	A culture of participation in the school community is fostered.	

Priority	Learning at home		Overall Responsibility	
Outcomes	To support families/parents to play an integral role in assisting student learning.			
Tasks	By Whom	Resources	Impact/ Progress	Measure
Promote the relevance and importance of real life learning at home to parents and staff.	Headteacher Staff Parents	ES toolkit CEC Supporting Parents and Carers School website	Parents feel confident in supporting their children with home-based learning. Staff feel confident to set varied styles of homework tasks.	<i>% parents actively involved in supporting their child with learning at home</i>
Create opportunities for parents to learn alongside their children.	Headteacher Staff Parents	ES toolkit CEC Supporting Parents and Carers School website In school events and training	Parents feel valued as partners in their child's education.	<i>% parents accessing and attending learning events</i>
Encourage creativity in learning at home eg: use of videos and photos as evidence of work.	HT Staff Parents	School communications Groupcall Social media	Parents feel confident in supporting their children with home -based learning	<i>% parents accessing home-based learning opportunities</i>
Ensure that support and training is in place for parents to learn about the curriculum.	HT Staff Parents	In school events and training Information leaflets School website	Parents have an increased knowledge of their child's education.	<i>% parents attending in school events and training</i>

Priority	School decision making	Overall Responsibility		
Outcomes	To include parents in school decisions and develop parent leaders and representatives.			
Tasks	By Whom	Resources	Impact/ Progress	Measure
Promote the role and function of the Parent Council.	CEC HTs Parent Councils	CPGs Connect (SPTC) ES Toolkit Section 4	Parents feel confident that they can take their views to the Parent Council and that their views will be fairly represented.	<i>% parents whose views are taken to Parent Council.</i>
Ensure that support and training is in place to enable parents to carry out their Parent Council roles effectively.	CEC HTs Parent Councils	Recruitment training. CPGs Connect Other training as appropriate	Parent Council members are confident in taking an active part in school decision making processes and in representing the views of the wider parent body.	<i>Feedback from Parent Council members</i>
Involve parents in annual school improvement planning.	HTs	SQIP planning meetings. Parent summary document. Suggestions box..	The SQIP takes account of the views of parents and all stakeholders.	<i>% parents taking part in improvement planning in different ways</i>
Seek the views of parents on all aspects of school life, including learning and teaching.	CEC HTs	Authority's biannual parent survey. HMI surveys. School/year group surveys. Feedback slips on SQIP summaries, reports, newsletters, focus groups.	The views of the wider parent body are gathered and analysed annually and are acted upon as appropriate.	<i>% parents providing positive feedback</i>
Encourage adequate representation of parents from across the diversity of the school community in decision making processes. Involve parents in policy development, working groups and allocation of PEF.	Parent Councils HTs Classroom teachers		Parents feel included in the decision making processes in the school.	<i>% parents represented on School Improvement Groups, Parent Focus Groups, School Committees, recruitment panels.</i>

Priority	Collaborating with the community	Overall Responsibility		
Outcomes	To identify and use community resources and services to strengthen schools, families and student learning and development.			
Tasks	By Whom	Resources	Impact/ Progress	Measure
Identify resources within the community for potential collaboration eg: local library, residential homes, retailers.	Headteacher Staff Parent Council and wider parent body Pupil Council	Parental feedback Community facilities and services	Parents are included in the process of exploring potential resources within the local community.	<i>% parents involved in consultation</i>
Draw up guidelines for working with community partners.	Headteacher Staff Business manager Parent Council	PVG Disclosure Scotland forms Service level agreements as required	There are clear guidelines for establishing, planning and evaluating collaborative working.	<i>Number and range of collaborative opportunities</i>
Publicise opportunities for partnership working in school and in the community. Meet with potential community partners. Construct database.	HT Staff Parent Council Partners	School website Posters/leaflets Presentation at school events School funds	Wider community is welcomed into school in a meaningful way.	<i>Number and range of collaborative opportunities</i>
Identify and plan collaborative projects. Evaluate impact as part of planning cycle. Showcase successful collaborative initiatives.	HT Staff Parent Council Wider parent body Community partners Pupils	Time and space to meet Location for showcase event PEF funding if appropriate	Productive, meaningful partnerships established in the community. Development of cooperative skills. Opportunity to share and celebrate success.	<i>Number of parents and partners involved in collaborative projects, and feedback</i>

