

# PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2022 - 2025

Parents & Families as Partners

Inverclyde  
council

Inverclyde Education Services

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# Introduction



## **Ruth Binks, Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development**

Inverclyde Council recognises Parents, Carers and families are the most important influences in a child's life. We know that parental involvement and engagement in early learning and school influences a pupil's achievement and wellbeing and when this happens effectively can have a significant impact.

This revised strategy seeks to build on the Scottish Government's vision for parental involvement and engagement as set out in the Learning Together National Action Plan. At a local level, parental involvement and engagement in early learning and school has great importance within the delivery of Inverclyde Children's Services Plan and our overall work over the last 7 years as an Attainment Challenge local authority, as we continue to evolve systems and approaches to support families to engage in the learning of their children.

This strategy has been informed by the recent national questionnaire, with a clear focus on realising local and national priorities. Inverclyde Council is committed to improving the quality of parental involvement and engagement throughout all stages of their child's development and to overcome barriers preventing families from engaging with their child's school.

# Terms and Definitions (explaining what we mean)

Evidence gathered in response to the consultation on the review of The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 Scottish Parliament 2006 suggests that 'there was confusion and a general lack of understanding among parents and staff about the difference between homework and the concept of learning at home'. Similarly, parents' own educational experiences, knowledge, skills and abilities are a major influence on the development of their own children's learning. Using definitions from Education Scotland's Engaging Parents and Families, A Toolkit for Practitioners Section 1: Background and Definitions, this strategy seeks to clarify definitions of 'Learning at Home' and 'Family learning'.

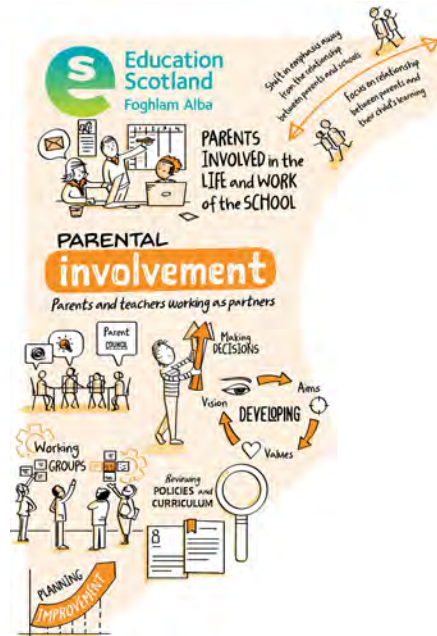
## Parent, Child and Family

The term 'parents' in this document refers to people with parental responsibilities (within the meaning of section 1(3) of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995) and others who care for or look after children or young people. A person with 'parental responsibilities' refers to someone with the rights and responsibilities that parents have in law for their child. Individual family units will comprise a wider range of people who might also contribute to a child's learning at home.

For the purposes of support for children and families, 'child' means a person under the age of 18 years.

'Family', in relation to a child, includes any person who has parental responsibility for a child and any other person with whom the child has been living (Children (Scotland) Regulations, 1995).

Defining **parental involvement** and **parental engagement** is a challenge. Regardless of whether parents are involved with the life of the establishment or engaged in their children's learning, they can make a positive difference. An increase in engagement will illustrate a 'shift in emphasis, away from the relationship between parents and establishments, to a focus on the relationship between parents and their children's learning' (Goodall and Montgomery, 2014).



## Parental Involvement

Parental involvement describes the ways all parents can get involved in the life and work of schools and/or early learning and childcare settings. Parental involvement includes activities such as:

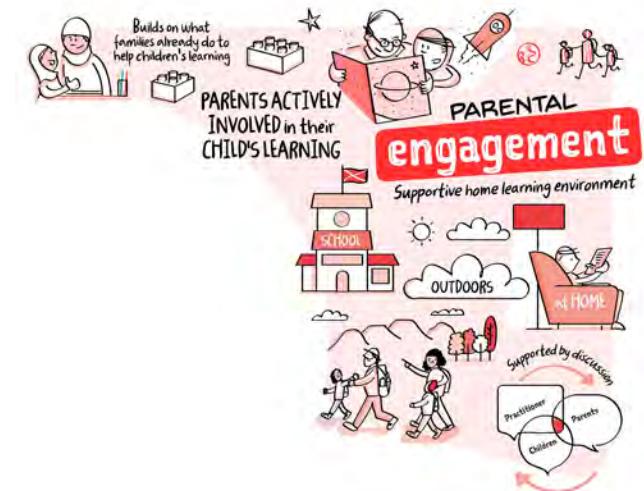
- Being actively involved in parent councils
- Parents having their voices listened to when developing local and national policies, improvement plans and key decisions
- Involvement in the life and work of the establishment: be that early learning and childcare setting, schools or other settings: for instance through volunteering opportunities
- Parents helping their child with homework or keeping track of children’s work
- On-going, two-way communication between home and the school or early learning and childcare setting.

## Parental Engagement

Parental engagement is about parents actively and meaningfully engaging in their child’s learning. Parental engagement is about parents’ and families’ interaction with their child’s learning.

It can take place in a variety of settings including early learning and childcare, schools, at home, through family learning and also in the community. When we refer to Parental Engagement within this document, we are also talking about Family Learning and Learning at Home.

We acknowledge that what happens out-with the school or early learning and childcare setting has a huge impact on a child’s learning, and a holistic approach to a child’s needs is required. This document seeks to promote the fact that parents are responsible for making decisions or suggestions about their child’s health, wellbeing and education, and they should lead on this with the support of educators and professionals.



## Learning at Home

Learning at home is the learning which happens in the home, outdoors or in the community. It can take place through everyday activities that families already do and can overlap with aspects of organised or active learning activities such as in school neighbourhood wellbeing cafes, after school cooking clubs, and all the other activities within the wider school community that help to build positive relationships within the school and across the community by building social experiences as shared learning opportunities. When families feel part of the community and are supported in these relationships via school - families engage, children learn and relationships are embedded. Some families can be supported with learning at home through a family learning approach.



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## Home Learning Environment

*'A growing body of research suggests that good parenting skills and a supportive home learning environment are positively associated with children's early achievements and wellbeing'. (Economic and Social Research Council, 2012)*

Research shows that a good home learning environment has a strong impact on attainment and wellbeing. It encourages positive attitudes towards learning and develops curiosity and confidence. It encompasses everything within the home and the time that a child spends engaging outside.

These include:

- Availability of toys and books
- Outings
- Having space and time to learn, and most importantly,
- People who provide the love, security, encouragement, conversation and positive role models to their child to help them thrive.

Parental support of *'learning within the home environment.....makes the maximum difference to achievement'* and raising attainment more than parents supporting school activities (Harris and Goodall, 2007).

## Family Learning

Family learning encourages family members to learn together as and within a family, with a focus on intergenerational learning. Family learning activities can also be designed to encourage parents to better understand how to support their children's learning. *'Family learning is a powerful method of engagement and learning which can foster positive attitudes towards life-long learning, promote socio-economic resilience and challenge educational disadvantage'* (Scottish Family Learning Network, 2016)

Education Scotland have published a number of documents, reports and case studies on the [National Improvement Hub](#) and further practical resources on [Parentzone Scotland](#).



## Community Learning and Development

*'Community learning and development (CLD) is a field of professional practice that enables people to identify their own individual and collective goals, to engage in learning and take action to bring about change for themselves and their communities. It uses a range of formal and informal methods of learning and social development with individuals and groups in their communities'*. (Standards Council Scotland, 2018). CLD includes youth work, community based adult learning, family learning and community development. It empowers people of all ages to work individually or collectively to make positive changes in their lives and in their communities, through learning, personal development and active citizenship. The programmes and activities are developed in partnership with communities and participants.

## Third Sector

*'The third sector, which includes charities, social enterprises and voluntary groups, delivers essential services, helps to improve people's wellbeing and contributes to economic growth. It plays a vital role in supporting communities at a local level'*. (Scottish Government).

The third sector workforce offer specialist expertise, an ability to engage with families in a meaningful way, including vulnerable groups and a flexible and innovative approach. When working in partnership, these skills support families to achieve their goals as well as accessing community venues such as church and community halls. For some families these venues are less intimidating and allow easier access to provision at a reduced cost.

# Background Information

This strategy was reviewed across session 2021-2022 and updated accordingly. A range of stakeholders contributed to the consultation. The participants who engaged in the consultation and template used can be found in Appendix 3.

Inverclyde Council recognises that children and young people develop greater self-confidence and achieve more within their learning when supported by establishments and families working effectively together in partnership. The importance of parental engagement within the education process is acknowledged in current 3 -18 educational research and is a central focus of recent Scottish Government education thinking.

Inverclyde Education Services produce an annual authority improvement plan which outlines the focus for the improvement and strengthening of parental engagement and seek to ensure that all schools / Early Learning Centre (ELC) settings reflect these priorities in their own annual improvement plans and in the self-evaluation processes used. Schools / ELC settings will evaluate stakeholder engagement as part of this planning for improvement process. As part of their review processes, schools are able to gather evidence to support their evaluation of HGIOS4 Quality Indicators of 2.5 - Family Learning and 2.7 - Partnerships. ELC settings use HGIOELC Quality Indicators of 2.5 - Family Learning and 2.7 - Partnerships to support their evaluations.

Schools / ELC settings are expected to report the progress being made in this aspect within their annual Standards and Quality reports. Copies of the school / ELC setting Standards and Quality Report and Improvement Plan are published on our school / ELC websites. A number of our schools / ELC settings also produce family friendly versions of this report. The authority plans and reports are placed online on the Inverclyde Council website to maximise access to this information.

Inverclyde Community Learning and Development also carry out evaluation of provision within Learning Communities using the quality indicators within How Good is our Community Learning and Development? (HGIOCLD). These indicators reflect the context within which community learning and development partners operate. The quality indicators focus specifically on the impact of community learning and development provision and will include work with young people, adults and communities. As part of ongoing evaluation, evidence is gathered from a number of partners to support the evaluation of HGIOCLD Quality indicators of 2.1 Empowered communities, 2.2 Lifelong learning, 2.3 Improving life chances, 3.2 Partnership working.



# Legislation and Policy Underpinning Strategy

You will find links to documents in the 'Reference Documents and Helpful Links' section of this strategy.

At the time of writing this strategy, reviews of the statutory guidance for the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 (the Act) and the Learning Together National Action Plan on Parental Involvement, Engagement, Family Learning and Learning at Home 2018 – 2021, are ongoing. This strategy is based upon current legislation and will be subject to change in the future.

The 2006 Act highlights a number of duties that schools and local authorities must respond to. These can be summarised easily by focusing on the three main aspects identified in the act:

- **Home-school Partnerships:** Schools should encourage the open involvement of parents in their work and provide information that helps parents engage with the school and their child's education.
- **Learning at home:** Schools should encourage parents to help their child's learning at home, in the community and at school.
- **Parental representation:** Parents are automatically regarded as members of the Parent Forum at a school and have the right to have their views considered and reflected through a representative Parent Council for the school.

Parent/carer involvement and engagement is one of the key drivers for educational change identified in the National Improvement Framework (NIF), containing expectations of increased opportunities for parents and families to engage with teachers and other community partners to support their children and an increased voice of the parents in school improvement processes. This strategy provides advice to both schools and parents on the expectations from Inverclyde Council Education services of a strengthened partnership between schools and parents.



Learning at Home



Home/School Partnership



Parental Representation

# Aims and Outcomes

After review, Inverclyde Education Services' aims remain relatively unchanged and reflect the three strands of the Act. Through the development of strengthened school, ELC and parent partnerships across all of our educational establishments, our authority aims seek to ensure that parents are:

- 1. Fully informed about their children's education and learning.**
- 2. Welcomed and involved in the life of their child's establishment.**
- 3. Able to support their child's learning and to participate fully in a range of family learning Opportunities**
- 4. Encouraged to express their views and take part in decision making.**
- 5. Opportunities for the voice of the parent to be heard through involvement in forums for discussion and debate on education policy.**

In order to achieve these aims, Inverclyde schools are encouraged to revisit and review their understanding of each of the three key aspects above and to ensure that the legislative duties contained in the Scottish Schools Parental Involvement Act 2006 are also maintained.

The Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) and the allocation of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) directly to schools, provide opportunities for schools to further strengthen involvement with parents, in partnership with other agencies and in providing new resources. The Inverclyde Attainment Challenge has clear references to the importance of Parental Engagement and Family Learning within the key drivers of the project.

Workforce Development and upskilling of all staff working with parents and families will continue to be integral to the success of the strategy.



Following an evaluation of the previous strategy, the following outcomes were identified.

## 1. Fully informed about their children's education and learning.

### Information and support

Key to ensuring that parents are engaged in their child's learning and are involved in the wider life of the setting/school is effective communication.

Parents require and are provided with information on:

- Establishment activities and events.
- The curriculum and home learning activities.
- The progress being made by their own child in their learning.

Establishments will provide this information in many ways, through Meet the Teacher/ Practitioner events, newsletters, telephone, text and email messaging, establishment websites and other social media. Inverclyde establishments also provide opportunities for parents to be involved in parent workshops, information events and curriculum discussions, both face to face and online. Increasingly, due to the impact of Covid, establishments make creative use of digital approaches to ensure effective communication. In using such a varied range of digital tools and platforms we are able to engage with families in ways which are easier, more accessible and less demanding of their time and resources.

Parents' evenings and pupil reports provide parents the opportunity to ensure that they have a clear understanding of the progress that their child is making in their learning and provide a focus for direct discussions. The authority and establishments remain committed, even with the challenges that recent lockdowns have brought, to ensuring that parents receive, on a regular basis, information which allows them to best support their child's learning. We will continue to explore and develop ease of access to information through digital approaches such as Parent Portal and provision of an Online Parents Evening solution to bring about improvements in the ease and frequency with which families can engage with schools. In addition to removing barriers associated with time and travel, it will also offer benefits related to privacy.

## Post School Transition

The qualification offer and employment landscape is ever changing. There is a huge variety of qualifications on offer in school and in partnership with West College Scotland and this will continue to evolve. The routes into employment are also varied and now go beyond leaving school to go into employment, college or university. Over the coming years we will be looking to engage with parents and pupils to better understand the information needed to support post school transition. Our school Developing the Young Workforce Coordinators will play a key role in engaging with parents and pupils to better understand what information is needed and then will look to develop resources to share what the different routes that are available to young people to ultimately enter the labour market. We will also be looking to improve the information and support around the pathways available to young people with Additional Support Needs.

### 2. Welcomed and involved in the life of their child's establishment.

Staff will work to maintain, to rebuild and to establish new relationships with parents by providing opportunities for parents to visit establishments again, to volunteer to become involved in the work of the establishment again and to ensure that their settings are welcoming, accessible and inclusive.

### 3. Able to support their child's learning and to participate fully in a range of family learning opportunities learning at home.

Many examples of effective 'Learning at Home' activities can be found across the education establishments in Inverclyde, and establishment staff and Parent Councils are encouraged to come together to share ideas and practice. Regular discussion of these approaches are also shared at leadership meetings, particularly to support learning during lockdown, and will continue to be built upon in the future.

The authority will continue to work with partners, parents, Parent Councils and establishments to support further development of learning at home activities and organise workshops which allow families to explore how they can best support their child's learning. The authority will support further expansion of digital engagement through implementation of the Inverclyde Digital Strategy and development of learning materials through the Inverclyde Digihelp site <https://bit.ly/3tiTndE>, both of which specifically target provision of digital access and learning at home opportunities.

## Mental Health

A number of services support parents and pupils in relation to the mental health and wellbeing agenda. All education establishments offer nurturing environments and curricular experiences to promote wellbeing. For a small group of pupils the Inverclyde Community Mental Health and Wellbeing programme can offer support alongside the work of Action for Children in leading the Wellbeing Project, which can be signposted to parents by education staff. The latter project offers support for children and young people from the age of 5 to 25.



Healthy Minds is an awareness-raising resource that supports the implementation of the NHSGGC Mental Health Improvement Frameworks. It aims to promote basic awareness and understanding of mental health and covers a variety of topics that can impact people's mental health and wellbeing. It was purchased for all schools to raise awareness of mental health with parents with a view to them having a greater understanding of themselves and how their mental health state impacts on them and as a knock on effect, on their children. The roll out was led by the MH focus group. We plan to re-visit the resource over the next three years, baselining its use, providing training for schools with a further measure of impact in time.

The Mental Health focus group also promote the National Health Service 5 Steps to Wellbeing and will be continuing to do so over the next 3 years. Plans in moving forward include awareness raising with parents to promote a common, pro-active language across schools and communities, to allow parents to both support their child's mental health and take action with regards to their own mental health.

## Family Learning

In partnership with colleagues from Barnardo's, Community Learning and Development employees and other agencies, Inverclyde Council will continue to develop and support activities which allow partners and establishments to provide parents with opportunities to be involved in family learning opportunities, including Adult Learning and Literacies learning opportunities and training, thus addressing issues of isolation and encouraging parents back.

Inverclyde establishments continued to promote and support parental engagement, involvement and family learning throughout Covid, with examples of good practice being shared through West Partnership storyboards which can be found in Appendix 4. Further storyboards from across the West Partnership can be accessed through this link [Resources – The West Partnership](#).

Further examples of good practice when developing engagement, learning at home and family learning across the Inverclyde area include:

- One to one outreach support for families to engage with home learning.
- One to one support for parents to attend meeting and reviews, Team Around the Child meetings and parents' evenings.
- Cygnets Programme to assist parents in their responses and interaction with children who have an ASD diagnoses.
- Seasons for growth groups to assist parents to manage their own and their children's loss and change.
- Clear signposting towards the 'Topics in a nutshell' and other appropriate literature in order to help parents understand and support their child's learning. <https://www.npfs.org.uk/downloads/>
- Parental participation in non-curricular out of school activities to build relationships and inform parents of methods to learn together with their child through programmes such as Families Connect, Steps to School, Coaching and Modelling workshops, Family Learning Clubs.
- Continued participation in children's learning during the holiday period through Family Fun Clubs across various communities in Inverclyde.
- Building parental confidence and self-esteem to encourage them to engage in their children's learning offered through the Steps to Excellence Programme.
- Encouraging parents to participate in reading to their children for enjoyment, through accessing the pop up libraries that are available in some schools and encouraging parents to join the library and participate in specific reading programmes, such as "Reading for Pleasure", delivered by Inverclyde Libraries in partnership with Community Learning and Development.
- Signposting to a range of learning opportunities, including Further Education, Training or employment opportunities to best meet identified need.
- The Inverclyde Community Learning and Development Youth and Adult Literacies team on-site delivery within school settings, embedding learning opportunities in literacies for young people and parents, helping to maximise the development of skills, outcomes and accreditation opportunities.

*'The entitlement to a continuous focus on literacy and numeracy is echoed in the Scottish Government's Literacy Action Plan. This plan provides a strategic commitment to improving standards of literacy across the continuum of learning. It also ensures there is better co-ordination and partnership across Government and its partners, to focus on learner priorities and encourage collaborative working'. (Adult Literacies in Scotland 2020: Strategic Guidance)*

Education Scotland shared examples of good practice gathered through consultation with parents, education professionals and identified in Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) school inspections. These are highlighted in Appendix 1.

#### 4. Encouraged to express their views and take part in decision making.

#### 5. Opportunities for the voice of the parent to be heard through involvement in forums for discussion and debate on education policy.

##### **Parental representation**

In order to encourage and support parental representation, Inverclyde Education Services have identified one of their Education Officers (EO) who has responsibility for parental engagement. This EO, Elaine McLoughlin, can be contacted at the education offices on **01475 712850**.

In addition, the authority also provides increased opportunities for representatives of the Parent Council to come together in regular discussions around education developments, operational issues and other community issues. This forum is regarded as the parent consultative group for Inverclyde Education Services.

A parent representative is included on the Inverclyde Council Education Committee, consulting with and providing feedback to the representatives of our Parent Councils. There is an open and transparent process used in the selection of this representative. Information on this can be obtained by contacting Inverclyde's Education Services.

The authority also have representation on the National Parent Forum of Scotland. Parent Councils are also members of Connect, providing advice and training to parents across Inverclyde.

This EO will continue to promote effective parental engagement, encourage the sharing of good practice across the authority, organise parents' events and activities and provide support for the Parent Councils. The EO will also ensure that ongoing parental surveys are carried out to ensure that parental views are reflected in the development of education policy.

## Parent Councils

We will support all schools to establish and to maintain Parents Councils.

Following guidance set out in the Scottish Schools Parental Involvement Act 2016, these may vary in size and organisational structure but each should establish their own constitution. The membership involves representatives of the wider parent forum and in some cases also includes nominated representatives of the wider school community and linked Early Learning and Childcare establishments.



A Parent Council will include some or all of the following:

- Supporting the work of the school.
- Involvement in the school improvement and planning processes.
- Contributing to participatory budgeting debate and deliberation.
- Gathering and representing parents' views to the head teacher, local authority and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIe).
- Promoting contact between the school and their local community.
- Involvement in the appointment of permanent head teachers and depute head teacher posts.
- Fundraising and organising events.
- Encouraging parental volunteers to come forward to support the work of the school.

Inverclyde Council supports the Parent Councils by providing them with:

- Annual financial support to enable the Parent Council to operate.
- Membership of Connect which in turn provides insurance for the activities of the council.



- Ensuring that Inverclyde has a parental representative on the National Parent Forum of Scotland and that this representative has the opportunity to liaise with Parent Councils.
- Access to additional funding to support cluster activities which build and encourage parental engagement.
- Advice on the operation of the Parent Council and any related matters, including provision of a support pack and annual checklist.
- Making available and supporting engagement with the new Education Scotland Parent Council resource.
- Regular training events and opportunities to meet with senior officers from Education.
- Opportunities to meet and share good practices.

### **Secondary Curriculum**

We have recently seen a number of reviews into Scottish Education, particularly around the Senior Phase. We have also undertaken our own review of the Senior Phase in partnership with the Association of Directors of Education Scotland and Education Scotland. We are now looking to progress improvements in the offer we have to Senior Phase young people as a result of our own review and action plan but also linked to the national changes that we will see. We will be looking for parent and pupil voice to be at the forefront of our discussions and decisions as we seek to implement local and national changes to improve the secondary curriculum.

### **Involvement in the Appointment of Senior Staff in Schools**

Inverclyde Council fully involve representatives of the Parent Council in the permanent appointment of head teachers and depute head teachers. As part of this process, the Education Officer Team provides training for parents in the specific guidance involved in the appointment of Inverclyde Council employees.

The authority also encourages the wider involvement of the parent forum when candidates are being given an opportunity to visit the school prior to interview.

## Complaints Procedure

Inverclyde Council has a clearly defined process for responding to complaints which can be viewed on the council website. <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/council-and-government/complaint>

Inverclyde Council recognises that there may be occasions when parents wish to indicate concerns about the level and quality of the education service provided. Many of these concerns or complaints can be dealt with at establishment level and parents are encouraged to contact the establishment in the first instance to try to overcome the concerns or matters that have been considered appropriate to progress to a complaint.

In the event of the issue not being resolved or if a parent contacts the council directly, the processes indicated on the Council's website will be followed and the parent will be contacted by an officer of the council. In some instances a complaint may be referred back to the establishment to investigate as they will understand the issue better.

The volume, nature and frequency of complaints are monitored by the Council and the information gathered is used to improve the service.

## Gathering Parental Views and Removing Barriers to Parental Engagement

The Education Officer Team have sought to gather parental opinion and views in a number of different ways. These have included parent meetings and discussion groups, participation in surveys and questionnaires such as the Parental Involvement and Engagement National Census of 2019 and of 2022, parental involvement working groups, Parent Council meetings and parental involvement in Education Scotland school inspections and authority school reviews. Inverclyde Council will carry out similar parental evaluations on an annual basis with a summary of the key messages being included in future Standards and Quality reports.

In addition, Inverclyde Education Services follow government guidelines regarding consultation with parents on aspects which have a major impact upon families. This has included aspects such as timings of the school day, school catchment areas, placing request processes, school estate rebuilding/refurbishment and the temporary decant of schools.

Improvements in the availability and access to social media and use of online communications systems have presented schools and Inverclyde Education Services with the ability to widen and strengthen these consultation processes.

In February 2022, a large scale national parental involvement and engagement census involving parents across all of our schools was carried out. The results of this survey are contained in Appendix 2.

The outcome of this consultation highlighted the following areas for development:

- Although most of those who responded to our census are aware of the Parent Council within their child's school and shared that the majority are in touch with the wider parent forum each year, parents indicated differences in how often and how well informed they are on the work of the Parent Council.
- Delivery of activities that allow families to learn together has been impacted by the pandemic. The majority of parents who responded to our census indicated that they are not aware of opportunities for families to learn together and that they have not participated in this type of activity.
- Parents welcome general information about the school, information about what their child is learning and how their child is progressing, and information on how they can support learning at home. Most feel that contact regarding general information is enough, but the majority of those who responded shared that they would benefit from further engagement regarding what is being learned, what progress is being made and how they can further support the learning at home.
- The majority of parent council members who responded shared that they help to develop the school improvement plan. However, when all parents were asked if schools sought the views and opinions of parents to inform school policy and improvement, less than half felt that they did.

Inverclyde Education Services will support these areas for development by:

- Encouraging school Parent Councils to review their operational structures and communication strategies, to revisit their constitutions and to share what is working well for them in order to support others. Training and resources will be provided to support this.
- Effectively working in partnership with our Family Support Worker service, CLD, establishments and parents, we will offer a suite of interventions focused on the promotion of Family Learning opportunities resulting in increased engagement leading to improved outcomes for children and families.

- Inverclyde Community Learning and Development, Adult Learning and Literacies, and the Youth and Community Team will work in partnership with school colleagues, partners, parents and young people to identify needs that will impact on all areas of life, to support achievement and attainment. Learning opportunities will be developed from parent, young person and school and partner feedback. These learning opportunities will be contextualised to maximise upskilling of both parent and young person, leading to increase in self-confidence, self-belief and self-esteem as well as equipping both parents and young people with functional literacies skill sets that support them to make informed decisions, engage with lifelong learning opportunities, that will lead to successful, active and achieving individuals, family members and citizens.
- Continuing support for learning at home and access to information on individual pupil progress through staff training, parent workshops and the development of digital approaches.
- Continuing to deliver regular training to school staff, probationers and parents which support and encourage strengthened parental involvement, engagement, family learning and learning at home.
- Consulting with officers, school leaders and Parent Councils on the involvement of parents in school improvement planning processes. Support and advice will then be shared.

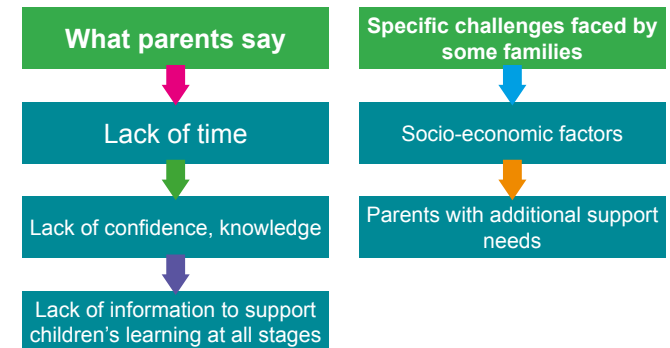
The majority of our parents who responded to our census would welcome further opportunities to be involved in the life of the school. Educational research and the results of our 2022 Census evidences that parents identify a range of barriers which hinder or discourage their involvement with their child's school. These encompass a complex mix of issues, some related to their own negative experiences of school, low self-esteem or lack of confidence. Others relate to specific difficulties around the organisation of school activities, such as timing within the day, clashes with work commitments, challenging family circumstances or physical barriers to accessing the activities due to disability issues.

The authority is committed to working with establishments and Parent Councils to continue to develop effective approaches which will overcome these barriers.

Examples of the approaches which can be used are:

- Providing opportunities for parents to meet with staff at a venue which is accessible to parents with a disability.
- Alternative methods for the provision of Parents' Evenings are presently being explored, one option being video appointment. The authority is committed to ensuring that communication approaches continue to meet the needs of parents.
- Providing access to secure and up to date establishment websites.

- Providing access to Parents Portal which will give information to parents using data held by school. This includes access to contact details, reports for some schools and attendance. This will benefit parents and families by providing better, quicker access to information.
- Reviewing and adapting the language used by staff when linking and communicating with parents. Appendix 6 highlights core, best practice communication principles.
- Offering parenting courses where appropriate.
- Welcoming families into family based activities and events.
- Providing a range of family learning opportunities across the academic year and during school holiday periods.
- Working in partnership with Inverclyde Library Services to provide other family learning opportunities.
- Offering alternative opportunities for parents to meet with staff in response to specific work commitments.
- Communicating effectively with parents by providing information in a variety of formats.
- Encouraging parental volunteering opportunities.
- Recognising parents' engagement in supporting their child's learning.
- Providing communication with bilingual parents through the development of the Groupcall Messenger system.
- Providing language support wherever possible at Parents' Evenings for those with language communication difficulties.
- Working in partnership with community learning and development workers and home school partnership workers to support the development of family learning opportunities to increase parental engagement.
- Working with other agencies to support families with specific issues.
- Providing access for staff and probationers to workshops and courses which support the development of strengthened parental partnerships and which focus on breaking down barriers for parents.



## Support for Parents of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Children

Although current legislation does not necessitate the formation of a Parent Council for ELC standalone establishments, the authority will continue to ensure that parents are involved in their child's education and learning. We recognise the many examples of strong parental partnerships which have been established in our ELC establishments and will continue to support the parental engagement opportunities and the learning at home approaches being used. Many of the virtual approaches developed through the COVID pandemic will continue to be offered.

We will continue with the implementation of Learning Journals across the Authority to give parents an ongoing opportunity to comment on their children's learning, to add information on learning at home and to be in regular contact with their child's keyworker.

The authority gathers parental opinion as part of their establishment reviews. This enhances the regular gathering of parental opinion within ELC settings.



## Supporting Families with Children who have Additional Needs

Inverclyde Council is committed to supporting and involving parents. Under the Education (Additional Support for Learning) Scotland Act 2009, parents of a child with additional support needs can request assessment of and information about their child's needs and how these are to be met. Inverclyde Council is committed to supporting and involving parents in these processes and establishments will ensure that parents receive a response to any such requests.

The authority also acknowledges that parents have a pivotal role if care experienced children are to have the opportunity to succeed. Inverclyde Council will continue to work together with parents of care experienced children, foster carers and others with parental responsibilities to encourage them to support their children's education. As a normal part of these processes, the authority will also ensure that all relevant information relating to the child is provided to both parent and carer unless the Child's Plan specifically states otherwise.

In keeping with legislative expectations derived from the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act (2014 and updated 2019) parents play a key role in transitions of children and young people. In legislation transition from an early year's environment, for a child with additional support needs, must take place at least six months prior to transition. From the primary to secondary sector and secondary to post school transition planning must start at least twelve months prior to transition.

## Equal Opportunities

The authority has policies in place to ensure that no parent is discriminated against on grounds of race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, language, faith or belief or age. Wherever possible, the authority will put in place positive measures to remove any discrimination either direct or indirect, intentional or unintentional.

## Links to Inverclyde Council Parenting Strategy

Inverclyde Council Education Services is committed to working with partners to strengthen support for families. The 2015 – 2017 Inverclyde Health and Social Care Partnership review and subsequent report on ‘Parenting and Family Support Services’, identified a range of universal and targeted supports which have been developed over many years. The authority recognises the importance of these activities continuing to be developed and expanded.

# Referenced Documents and Helpful Links

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>Parental Involvement <a href="#">Act</a> 2006 and Statutory <a href="#">Guidance</a></p>  | <p><a href="#">National Parenting Strategy (2012)</a></p>                          |
| <p><a href="#">School Handbook Guidance (2012)</a></p>                                       | <p><a href="#">Adult Learning in Scotland, A Statement of Ambition (2014)</a></p>  |
| <p><a href="#">Review of the Impact of the Parental Involvement Act (2006) 2017</a></p>     | <p><a href="#">Scottish Attainment Challenge</a></p>                             |
| <p>How Good is our... Frameworks</p>   | <p><a href="#">National Improvement Framework</a></p>                            |



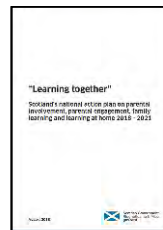
National Standards for Community Engagement (2016)



Empowering teachers, parents and communities to achieve Excellence and Equity – A Governance Review (2017)



Learning together: National Action Plan 2018-2021



Getting it Right for Every Child (2008)



Family Learning Review (2016)



Family Learning Framework (2018)



Parent Council Resource



Review of Learning at Home (2018)



|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><a href="#"><u>A Research Strategy for Scottish Education (2017)</u></a></p>                                      | <p><a href="#"><u>Engaging parents and families a toolkit for practitioners</u></a></p>  |
| <p><a href="#"><u>The Promise</u></a></p>    | <p><a href="#"><u>The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child</u></a></p>   |
| <p><a href="#"><u>West Partnership Families and Communities Self- Evaluation for Improvement Framework</u></a></p>  | <p><a href="#"><u>Family Learning Wakelet</u></a></p>  <p>Family Learning wakelet</p>   |
| <p><a href="#"><u>Learning at Home Wakelet</u></a></p>  | <p><a href="#"><u>Family Learning Padlets</u></a></p>   |

Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000

The Parental Involvement in Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher Appointments (Scotland) Regulations (2007)

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act (2010)

Pupil Equity Funding

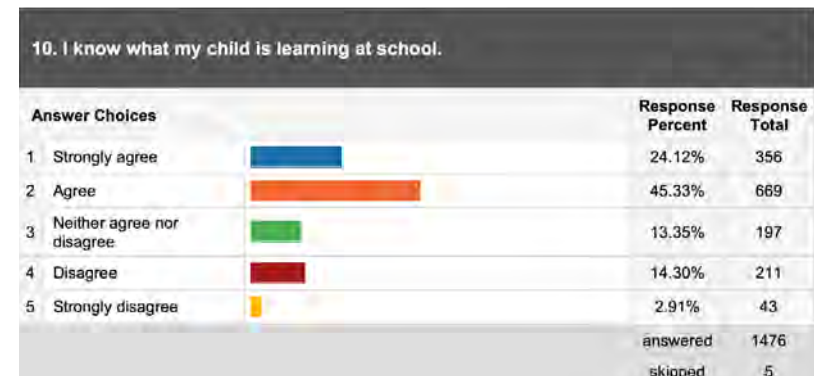
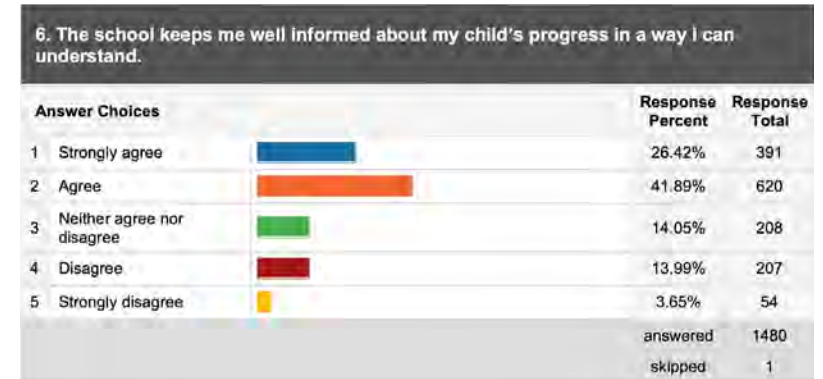
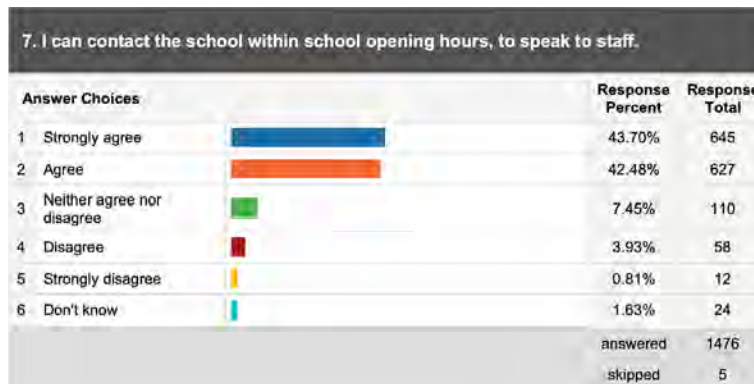
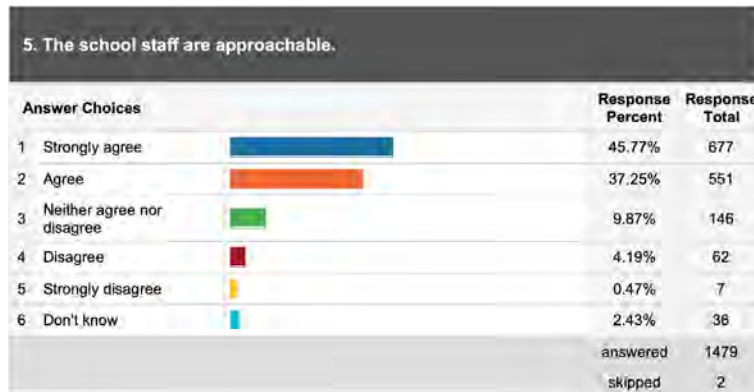
# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Examples of ‘Learning at Home’ Activities

| Examples of Learning at Home – From practitioners   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Learning at home/homework activities:</b></p> <p>Family challenges/challenge cards, adventures with Teddy, board games, shopping, Lego building, STEM challenge, pick and mix homework, sacrament preparation, model making, newsletter, PowerPoints on favourite/interesting things, cake decorating – taking photographs, 100 things to do before you’re 13, transition teddy, trips, woodland walks, numeracy/ literacy bags, cook at home bags.</p> | <p><b>Sharing learning:</b></p> <p>Nurture groups, Maths recovery lessons (with children), child led workshops, outdoor learning, stay and play, open afternoons, homework fun challenges, primary 1 home learning reading block, class assemblies, careers day, talk time homework, shared learning exercises (Art/IT – practical), open days, home visits, celebrating what parents already do - sharing across the wider school community, directory of parental skills.</p> |
| <p><b>Families learning together:</b></p> <p>Family learning events or homework club, PEEP/ Bookbug, parental reading programme, photography club, outdoor learning, cooking, crafts, work with fathers, Gardening groups, family nurture projects.</p>   | <p><b>Decision making:</b></p> <p>Reviewed reading policies, review and planner, tracking achievements, personal learning planning, target setting, GIRFEC review meetings.</p>   |
| <p><b>Helping parents:</b></p> <p>ESOL, L@H guidance – leaflets, parent packs, workshops, videos, cafes, home-link worker, parent mail/text messages, homework clubs, notes of intended learning.</p>   | <p><b>Communication methods:</b></p> <p>Show my homework, website, Twitter app, homework app, Glow, RM Easimaths, leaflets, learning logs, e-portfolios, learning letters, learning logs, e-portfolios, learning letters, consultations, social media, e-learning journals.</p>   |

| Examples of Learning at Home – School Inspection Findings   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Learning at home/homework activities:</b></p> <p>Home learning bags, building on achievements from home, homework tasks with family members, Ted’s adventures at home, home-link initiatives, STEM, travelling dolls, lending library.</p>                | <p><b>Sharing learning:</b></p> <p>Class reward system, home-school sharing of achievements, child led workshops – informative learning opportunities provided by teachers.</p>                                     |
| <p><b>Families learning together:</b></p> <p>Family homework group, Parent-child homework club.</p>   | <p><b>Decision making:</b></p> <p>Parents are encouraged to support learning through parents meetings, working with the school to address issues, target setting in user friendly language.</p>                     |
| <p><b>Helping parents:</b></p> <p>Stay and play sessions, parental workshops, open days, special events, planned support for parents on supporting reading at home, written materials on what child is learning, information booklet on supporting at home.</p> | <p><b>Communication methods:</b></p> <p>Online learning journals, daily conversations, interactive online resources, blog, learning profiles, home-school diaries, text messages, noticeboards and photographs.</p> |

## Appendix 2: Parental Involvement and Engagement Census 2022 Summary



11. The school provides me with useful information about how I can help my child learn at home.

| Answer Choices               | Response Percent | Response Total |
|------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Strongly agree             | 18.62%           | 275            |
| 2 Agree                      | 35.95%           | 531            |
| 3 Neither agree nor disagree | 21.73%           | 321            |
| 4 Disagree                   | 19.36%           | 286            |
| 5 Strongly disagree          | 4.33%            | 64             |
|                              | answered         | 1477           |
|                              | skipped          | 4              |

12. The school seeks my views and opinions on school policies.

| Answer Choices               | Response Percent | Response Total |
|------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Strongly agree             | 13.08%           | 193            |
| 2 Agree                      | 28.46%           | 420            |
| 3 Neither agree nor disagree | 32.45%           | 479            |
| 4 Disagree                   | 21.48%           | 317            |
| 5 Strongly disagree          | 4.54%            | 67             |
|                              | answered         | 1476           |
|                              | skipped          | 5              |

13. My views help the school to decide priorities in the School Improvement Plan.

| Answer Choices               | Response Percent | Response Total |
|------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Strongly agree             | 8.92%            | 132            |
| 2 Agree                      | 24.19%           | 358            |
| 3 Neither agree nor disagree | 37.97%           | 562            |
| 4 Disagree                   | 14.26%           | 211            |
| 5 Strongly disagree          | 3.92%            | 58             |
| 6 Don't know                 | 10.74%           | 159            |
|                              | answered         | 1480           |
|                              | skipped          | 1              |

14. How often does the school get in touch with you to provide information on what your child is currently learning about?

| Answer Choices           | Response Percent | Response Total |
|--------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Weekly                 | 14.48%           | 214            |
| 2 Monthly                | 13.80%           | 204            |
| 3 Once every term        | 39.04%           | 577            |
| 4 Once every school year | 9.68%            | 143            |
| 5 Never                  | 14.34%           | 212            |
| 6 Don't know             | 8.66%            | 128            |
|                          | answered         | 1478           |
|                          | skipped          | 3              |

15. How satisfied are you with the number of communications you get from the school on what your child is currently learning about?

| Answer Choices                      | Response Percent | Response Total |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Contact is too often              | 0.68%            | 10             |
| 2 Contact is enough                 | 47.83%           | 707            |
| 3 Contact is not quite often enough | 30.58%           | 452            |
| 4 Contact is not often enough       | 20.91%           | 309            |
|                                     | answered         | 1478           |
|                                     | skipped          | 3              |

16. How often does the school get in touch with you to provide information on how your child is progressing with their learning?

| Answer Choices           | Response Percent | Response Total |
|--------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Weekly                 | 3.12%            | 46             |
| 2 Monthly                | 6.98%            | 103            |
| 3 Once every term        | 61.22%           | 903            |
| 4 Once every school year | 16.07%           | 237            |
| 5 Never                  | 5.90%            | 87             |
| 6 Don't know             | 6.71%            | 99             |
|                          | answered         | 1475           |
|                          | skipped          | 6              |

17. How satisfied are you with the number of communications you get from the school on how your child is progressing with their learning?

| Answer Choices                      | Response Percent | Response Total |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Contact is too often              | 0.27%            | 4              |
| 2 Contact is enough                 | 44.96%           | 664            |
| 3 Contact is not quite often enough | 35.07%           | 518            |
| 4 Contact is not often enough       | 19.70%           | 291            |
| answered                            |                  | 1477           |
| skipped                             |                  | 4              |

18. How often does the school get in touch with you to provide information on ways to help your child continue learning at home?

| Answer Choices           | Response Percent | Response Total |
|--------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Weekly                 | 12.41%           | 183            |
| 2 Monthly                | 11.12%           | 164            |
| 3 Once every term        | 23.46%           | 346            |
| 4 Once every school year | 8.75%            | 129            |
| 5 Never                  | 26.10%           | 385            |
| 6 Don't know             | 18.17%           | 268            |
| answered                 |                  | 1475           |
| skipped                  |                  | 6              |

19. How satisfied are you with the number of communications you get from the school on ways to help your child continue learning at home?

| Answer Choices                      | Response Percent | Response Total |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Contact is too often              | 0.48%            | 7              |
| 2 Contact is enough                 | 46.73%           | 685            |
| 3 Contact is not quite often enough | 29.60%           | 434            |
| 4 Contact is not often enough       | 23.19%           | 340            |
| answered                            |                  | 1466           |
| skipped                             |                  | 15             |

20. How often does your child's/ children's school get in touch with you to provide general information about the school?

| Answer Choices           | Response Percent | Response Total |
|--------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Weekly                 | 34.92%           | 515            |
| 2 Monthly                | 32.41%           | 478            |
| 3 Once every term        | 15.86%           | 234            |
| 4 Once every school year | 3.05%            | 45             |
| 5 Never                  | 6.10%            | 90             |
| 6 Don't know             | 7.66%            | 113            |
| answered                 |                  | 1475           |
| skipped                  |                  | 6              |

21. How satisfied are you with the number of communications you get from your child's/children's school on general information about the school?

| Answer Choices                      | Response Percent | Response Total |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Contact is too often              | 2.03%            | 30             |
| 2 Contact is enough                 | 73.29%           | 1081           |
| 3 Contact is not quite often enough | 15.80%           | 233            |
| 4 Contact is not often enough       | 8.88%            | 131            |
| answered                            |                  | 1475           |
| skipped                             |                  | 6              |

22. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The school gives me the information I need to support my child's learning.

| Answer Choices               | Response Percent | Response Total |
|------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Strongly agree             | 15.62%           | 231            |
| 2 Agree                      | 33.47%           | 495            |
| 3 Neither agree nor disagree | 24.61%           | 364            |
| 4 Disagree                   | 20.15%           | 298            |
| 5 Strongly disagree          | 6.15%            | 91             |
| answered                     |                  | 1479           |
| skipped                      |                  | 2              |

23. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The cost of participating in school activities and events is affordable.

| Answer Choices               | Response Percent | Response Total |
|------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Strongly agree             | 22.22%           | 328            |
| 2 Agree                      | 42.41%           | 626            |
| 3 Neither agree nor disagree | 30.08%           | 444            |
| 4 Disagree                   | 4.27%            | 63             |
| 5 Strongly disagree          | 1.02%            | 15             |
|                              | answered         | 1476           |
|                              | skipped          | 5              |

24. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: My child's school helps me understand my child's rights.

| Answer Choices               | Response Percent | Response Total |
|------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Strongly agree             | 15.23%           | 225            |
| 2 Agree                      | 35.14%           | 519            |
| 3 Neither agree nor disagree | 32.23%           | 476            |
| 4 Disagree                   | 13.41%           | 198            |
| 5 Strongly disagree          | 3.99%            | 59             |
|                              | answered         | 1477           |
|                              | skipped          | 4              |

25. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I am confident that if I need to contact my child's school, they will respond helpfully to my questions and comments.

| Answer Choices               | Response Percent | Response Total |
|------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Strongly agree             | 41.37%           | 611            |
| 2 Agree                      | 38.93%           | 575            |
| 3 Neither agree nor disagree | 10.56%           | 156            |
| 4 Disagree                   | 4.06%            | 60             |
| 5 Strongly disagree          | 3.52%            | 52             |
| 6 Don't know                 | 1.62%            | 24             |
|                              | answered         | 1477           |
|                              | skipped          | 4              |

26. Does the school have a Parent Council?

| Answer Choices | Response Percent | Response Total |
|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Yes          | 78.88%           | 1165           |
| 2 No           | 2.37%            | 35             |
| 3 Don't know   | 18.75%           | 277            |
|                | answered         | 1477           |
|                | skipped          | 4              |

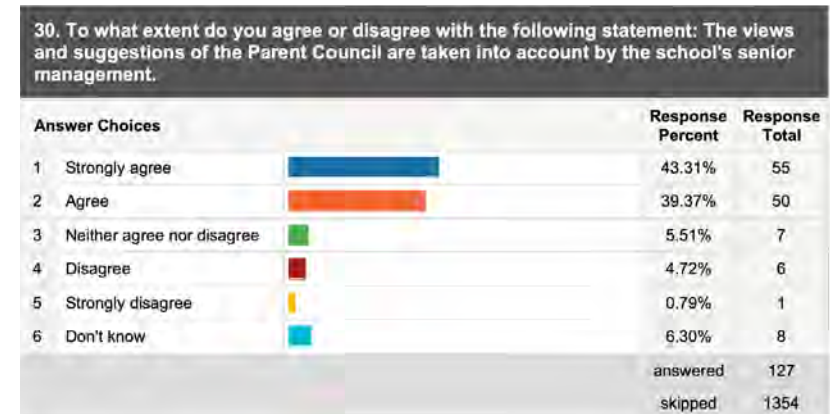
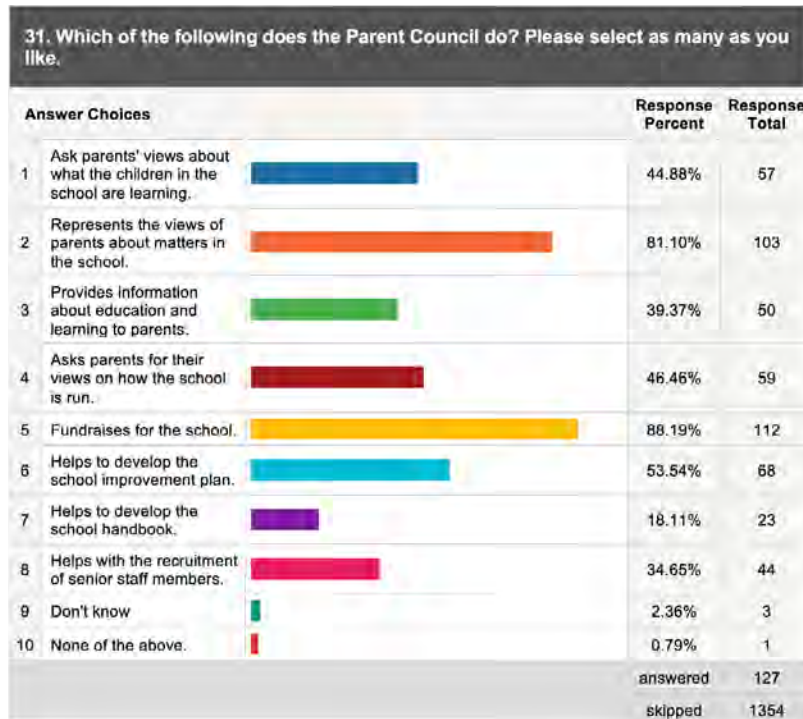
27. How often does the Parent Council get in touch with you?

| Answer Choices       | Response Percent | Response Total |
|----------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Once a week        | 2.00%            | 23             |
| 2 Once a month       | 22.57%           | 260            |
| 3 Once a school term | 26.13%           | 301            |
| 4 Once a school year | 7.73%            | 89             |
| 5 Never              | 41.58%           | 479            |
|                      | answered         | 1152           |
|                      | skipped          | 329            |

28. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The information I receive from the Parent Council is useful.

| Answer Choices               | Response Percent | Response Total |
|------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Strongly agree             | 9.38%            | 109            |
| 2 Agree                      | 23.58%           | 274            |
| 3 Neither agree nor disagree | 31.76%           | 369            |
| 4 Disagree                   | 7.23%            | 84             |
| 5 Strongly disagree          | 4.13%            | 48             |
| 6 Don't know                 | 23.92%           | 278            |
|                              | answered         | 1162           |
|                              | skipped          | 319            |





33. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The school is making me aware of the Family Learning opportunities.

| Answer Choices               | Response Percent | Response Total |
|------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Strongly agree             | 7.46%            | 110            |
| 2 Agree                      | 23.41%           | 345            |
| 3 Neither agree nor disagree | 22.12%           | 326            |
| 4 Disagree                   | 25.58%           | 377            |
| 5 Strongly disagree          | 9.16%            | 135            |
| 6 Don't know                 | 12.28%           | 181            |
|                              | answered         | 1474           |
|                              | skipped          | 7              |

35. Thinking about your involvement in the life of the school, would you like to be:

| Answer Choices                  | Response Percent | Response Total |
|---------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 A lot more involved           | 13.13%           | 194            |
| 2 Slightly more involved        | 44.05%           | 651            |
| 3 Neither more or less involved | 41.88%           | 619            |
| 4 Slightly less involved        | 0.47%            | 7              |
| 5 A lot less involved           | 0.47%            | 7              |
|                                 | answered         | 1478           |
|                                 | skipped          | 3              |

37. If there is anything preventing you from being more active in the life of your school, is this because: Please select all that apply

| Answer Choices                              | Response Percent | Response Total |
|---|------------------|----------------|
| 1 There are no opportunities                | 16.00%           | 131            |
| 2 Work commitments                          | 62.15%           | 509            |
| 3 Care of younger children                  | 16.24%           | 133            |
| 4 Lack of confidence                        | 9.40%            | 77             |
| 5 I was not made aware of the opportunities | 27.35%           | 224            |
| 6 Cost                                      | 1.34%            | 11             |
| 7 Lack of internet connection               | 1.34%            | 11             |
| 8 Language barriers                         | 0.37%            | 3              |
| 9 Other reason(s)                           | 28.69%           | 235            |
|   | answered         | 819            |
|   | skipped          | 662            |

34. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I have taken part in Family Learning activities. This is where parents/carers and children learn together.

| Answer Choices               | Response Percent | Response Total |
|------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Strongly agree             | 6.04%            | 89             |
| 2 Agree                      | 18.94%           | 279            |
| 3 Neither agree nor disagree | 24.92%           | 367            |
| 4 Disagree                   | 36.05%           | 531            |
| 5 Strongly disagree          | 14.05%           | 207            |
|                              | answered         | 1473           |
|                              | skipped          | 8              |

36. Would you say there is anything preventing you from being more active in the life of your school?

| Answer Choices | Response Percent | Response Total |
|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Yes          | 55.31%           | 818            |
| 2 No           | 44.69%           | 661            |
|                | answered         | 1479           |
|                | skipped          | 2              |

38. Overall, how satisfied are you with how the school engages with you?

| Answer Choices                      | Response Percent | Response Total |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 Very satisfied                    | 25.05%           | 370            |
| 2 Satisfied                         | 37.03%           | 547            |
| 3 Neither satisfied or dissatisfied | 18.21%           | 269            |
| 4 Dissatisfied                      | 13.54%           | 200            |
| 5 Very dissatisfied                 | 5.89%            | 87             |
| 6 Don't know                        | 0.27%            | 4              |
|                                     | answered         | 1477           |
|                                     | skipped          | 4              |

## Appendix 3: Review of 2018-2021 Strategy Consultation Template

### We consulted with:

Parent Council Representatives

Establishments across ASN, Early Learning and Childcare, Primary and Secondary settings

Attainment Challenge Lead

Partners including Educational Psychology, Community Learning and Development, Barnardo's, Speech and Language Team, Libraries

Education Officers and Early Years Manager

Complaints Officer

### Inverclyde Parental Involvement and Engagement (PIE) Strategy – Review 2021/ 2022

**Why do we need one?** We are required by law – the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 – to produce a PIE strategy for the local authority. We have a current strategy, which was published in 2018, and you can see it here:

<https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/education-and-learning/parental-involvement/parental-involvement-strategy>

We are required to refresh the Inverclyde PIE Strategy every three years and take into account the Scottish Government's 'Learning Together' action plan when drawing up our local strategy.

**Key areas in the strategy** – Inverclyde establishments were encouraged to revisit and review their understanding of each of three key aspects, that is, home-school partnerships, learning at home and parental representation, and to ensure that the legislative duties contained in the Scottish Schools Parental Involvement Act 2006 were also maintained.

Below is the list of current key area headings in the local strategy. Underpinning these headings, are specific actions that Inverclyde Council services, schools, ELC, Parent Councils and parents can take to bring about further improvement.

**Consultation** – your comments and suggestions will influence the refresh of the Inverclyde PIE strategy. Please do not feel that you need to comment on every section, just where you feel you have a contribution.

| Area Heading  | Outcomes  | What have we been successful in achieving and what do we still need to do? Are these actions still relevant and should they remain in the strategy? Suggestions for future actions? |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Fully informed about their children's education and learning</b>                             | <p>Parents receive, on a regular basis, information which allows them to best support their child's learning.</p> <p>Support and involve parents of children with additional support needs in the process of assessment and sharing information about their child's needs and how these are to be met.</p> <p>Continue to work together with parents of looked after children, foster carers and others with parental responsibilities to encourage them to support their children's education.</p>   |   |
| <b>Welcomed and involved in the life of their child's setting</b>                               | <p>All parents can expect to be welcomed into our establishments, actively encouraged to participate in the life and work of the establishment and valued as partners in the education of Inverclyde's children.</p>  |   |
| <b>Able to support learning at home and to participate fully in family learning activities.</b> | <p><b>Home Learning</b></p> <p>Support the development of home learning activities and organise workshops which would allow families to explore how they could best support their child's learning.</p> <p>Continue to support the development of learning materials specifically targeting home learning opportunities.</p> <p><b>Family Learning</b></p> <p>In partnership with colleagues from Barnardo's, Community Learning and Development (CLD) employees and other agencies, continue to develop and support activities which would allow parents to be involved in family learning, including Adult Learning and Literacies learning opportunities and training.</p> |   |

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
|  | <p>Carry out parental evaluations on an annual basis with a summary of the key messages being included in Standards and Quality reports.</p> <p><b>Parent Councils</b></p> <p>Provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual financial support to enable the Parent Council to operate.</li> <li>• Membership of Connect, providing advice and training to parents across Inverclyde.</li> <li>• Access to additional funding to support cluster activities which build and encourage parental engagement.</li> <li>• Advice on the operation of the Parent Council and any related matters.</li> <li>• Regular training events and opportunities to meet with senior officers from Education.</li> <li>• Advice on how best to communicate with their Parent Forum, including information on the use of social media.</li> <li>• Opportunities to meet and share good practices.</li> </ul> <p>Encourage parent councils to revisit their constitutions and to share successful recruitment processes.</p> <p>Identify and share successful activities which promote family learning, learning together and community learning.</p> <p>Consult then share advice with school leaders and Parent Councils on the involvement of parents in school improvement planning processes.</p> <p>Deliver regular training to school staff and parents which would support and encourage strengthened parental engagement.</p> |  |
|--|---|--|

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
|   | <p>Inverclyde CLD, Adult Learning and Literacies, and the Youth Team identify needs that would impact on all areas of life, to support achievement and attainment. Learning opportunities developed from feedback to upskill parent and young person and to equip them with functional literacies skill set.</p> <p>Involvement in the appointment of senior staff in schools Fully involve representatives of the Parent Council in the appointment of Heads and Depute Heads and provide training for parents. Also encourage the wider involvement of the parent forum when candidates are being given an opportunity to visit the school prior to interview.</p> <p><b>Complaints Procedure</b><br/>Provide a clearly defined process for responding to complaints which can be viewed on the council website. Parents can be confident that any complaints will be acted on in an effective and timely manner.</p> |  |
| <p><b>Parental Representation</b></p> <p><b>Involved in forums for discussion and debate on education policy.</b></p> | <p>Provide opportunities for representatives of the Parent Council to come together in regular discussions around education developments and operational issues. Include parents of early years' children as part of our Parent Council representatives meeting.</p> <p>Ensure that Inverclyde has a parental representative on the National Parent Forum of Scotland and that this representative has the opportunity to liaise with Parent Councils.</p> <p>Ensure that parent representative is included on the Inverclyde Council Education Committee, consulting with and providing feedback to the representatives of our Parent Councils.</p>  |  |
| <p><b>Anything else?</b></p>  |   |  |

## Appendix 4: Examples of effective parental involvement, engagement, family learning within Inverclyde.

### Moorfoot Primary School

#### The West Partnership presents:

#### Moorfoot Primary School, Inverclyde

#### Maintaining family learning culture during COVID19

*This storyboard details how Moorfoot Primary continue to promote and support parental involvement in the life of their school. We hear about how the team responded to the Covid19 pandemic by changing their practice to further use digital technology to engage with parents.*



#### What was the problem?

Over a number of years Moorfoot Primary has been developing more effective ways of engaging with families to help them support their children's learning and raise attainment. The school had used Joyce Epstein's 6 types of parental engagement as a framework for improvement. As part of this improvement, an online learning blog had been set up in September 2019 to provide parents with high quality online resources to give them insight into the methodologies and practices used in Moorfoot Primary. The blog had proved very popular. With lockdown in place it seemed even more important to build on sharing learning with parents who were supporting home learning.



#### What happened?

Using digital technology meant that more parents were being reached. The school Twitter account reached 1900 followers. There were increased numbers of parents interacting with the webinars and videos and more than 100 people regularly responding to Microsoft forms as they could be easily and anonymously accessed. Families reported feeling supported as they could easily find practical support to help them support their children's learning in an easily accessible digital space. Videos rather than written information or even face to face events seemed to better meet the needs of busy, working parents. The school is in discussion with partner agencies such as Inverclyde Communication Outreach Service (ICOS) in creating videos about autism to share with parents. There were also examples of parents contributing to videos, with some sharing tips about how to support home learning.



#### Why is this important?

Research has demonstrated the importance of family learning and parental involvement on attainment and learner experience. Positive relationships between home and school have also been found to correlate with positive learner experiences and attainment. Moorfoot wanted to continue their work on parental involvement.



#### Aims of the change to practice

The project had a number of aims:

- 1) To continue with the strategy to increase parental engagement despite Covid 19 restrictions, work commitments or personal time constraints.
- 2) To use digital technology to continue to provide all parents with high quality online resources that help them support their children's learning.



#### What did you do?

The team explored how they could adapt their practice using Epstein's parental engagement model (italicised here). For *parenting* there was a focus on offering a better transition family experience by sharing webinars and videos that helped familiarise families and children with the school and staff. For *communication* a weekly SWAY newsletter was developed in partnership with a focus group of parents. Written reports were replaced with more informal termly teacher-parent phone calls. As *volunteering* was impossible within the school, parents were invited (and continue to be invited) during the Education for Work event to share videos or attend pupils online Q & A sessions to talk about work experience. To meet Epstein's *learning at home* criteria, webinars and videos were offered to upskill parents in getting involved in the learning. For example, live Maths sessions were held to support parents in supporting their children. The parent forum was also involved in *decision making* through collecting feedback via a Microsoft Form attached to every weekly newsletter. *Collaboration with the community* was enhanced via the weekly Friday assembly recorded and shared with the whole community.

#### What are the key points you have learnt?

The team have identified a number of key lessons learnt. Firstly, the team believe that building and sustaining relationships was the core driver of all the work. Using Epstein's model of parental engagement provided an effective framework to build these relationships. Secondly, the team note that a diverse use of digital platforms (YouTube, school website, sways, Twitter and Facebook) was useful, but note that having one central point of contact was helpful. The school used a ThingLink noticeboard as a location where parents could access all information. Thirdly, the team placed importance on being transparent with feedback. The team found value in highlighting negative and positive feedback before sharing how they would respond in the weekly newsletter. Fourthly, the team believed that regularly gathering anonymous feedback from parents via a Microsoft Form normalised the process of parental evaluation.



#### What next for the project?

The team have identified a number of future steps. Firstly, they intend on continuing to review the parental engagement strategy against Joyce Epstein's model of parental engagement. The team also intends on using digital technology to further involve parents in supporting the curriculum. This could, for example, support children with developing online interview skills and making and sharing videos.



The West Partnership thanks: Elyse Buchanan of Moorfoot Primary  
For more information contact: (INELG590@glow.sch.uk)

## Appendix 4: Examples of effective parental involvement, engagement, family learning within Inverclyde.

### St Ninian's Primary School

#### The West Partnership presents: St Ninian's Primary, Inverclyde Moving Transitions Online



The storyboard details how St Ninian's Primary, in Inverclyde, adapted to the pandemic in order to maintain positive transitions for pupils entering the school from its feeder nurseries. We hear how the school put in place digital solutions to maintain transitions activities while also encouraging parental engagement.

##### What was the problem?

Every year St Ninian's gains new pupils from up to 11 feeder nurseries. Traditionally, transitions had involved a lot of in-person interaction with incoming children, their families and with other members of the school community. In person parent workshops and the schools buddy programme, where P7 pupils act as mentors to incoming pupils, could no longer take place due to social distancing procedures.



##### Why is this important?

Positive transition experiences have been linked to wellbeing, attainment and also appear to be correlated with reduced pupil and parental anxiety. Positive transitions are therefore key to avoiding dips in attainment and wellbeing. Maintaining the schools transitions activities was important to ensure the wellbeing and learning of pupils and their families.



##### Aims of the change to practice

The project had one overarching aim:

- 1) To change practice in order to maintain effective transitions experiences for pupils and their families



##### What did you do?

St Ninian's begins its transitions process in the August the year before pupils enter the school. Fortunately, when the pandemic took hold in spring 2020, the school had already developed relationships with incoming pupils and their families. Underpinning their response to the pandemic was a desire to continue applying the 5 C's that are critical for ensuring positive transitions (*Communication, Consistency, Culture, Collaboration, Child-centred*). In the first instance, the school had a phone call with each family to ensure they were meeting the needs of their community. To remotely support families, the team developed a range of digital resources that would help inform pupils and their wider families of what to expect with their future school. The school developed a YouTube channel, with the first video posted in April 2020. Incoming pupils and their families could watch a Primary 1 virtual tour video to get a better understanding of what to expect in the following year. A number of videos were created to raise awareness of the environment both inside and outside of the school. The school also found digital solutions in Sway and a virtual map. The Sway was used to accessibly send out important information to families, while the virtual maps were again used to build awareness of the school environment and layout.

##### What happened?

The school's use of videos developed over time. After developing virtual tours, the school also encouraged their older pupils to create supportive videos. P6 pupils were matched with incoming pupils to act as buddies that would ease the transition into P1. The schools YouTube videos have had significant engagement, with the Primary 1 virtual tour receiving just over 1300 views. When regulations allowed, pupils and their families engaged in socially distanced school visits. Small groups of 6 entered the school in June 2020 and had a chance to see the classroom and their future teacher. By August, when the transitions process for the following cohort began, the school continued with socially distanced early visits to the school. The school featured on both CNN and ITN news as an example of how schools were coping with social distancing measures. For both transitions cohorts, the school made sure that pupils with additional support needs were given extra visits to build awareness of the school layout. The school sent out surveys to better understand the needs and experiences of families through the transitions process.



##### What are the key points you have learnt?

The team at St Ninian's have identified a number of key lessons from their change to practice. Firstly, they acknowledge the importance of communicating with parents and ensuring active involvement of parents in transitions programmes. Secondly, the team note the value of reflecting on practice from the first lockdown. The nature of the pandemic meant that a number of practices were being undertaken for the first time. This meant the school could learn a lot about what worked, what didn't and how practices could be used or modified in the future. Thirdly, the school recognised the importance of digital platforms as spaces that allowed for transitions practices to continue.



##### What next for the project?

Going forward, the school intends to continue using small group sessions as part of transition induction events. They are also motivated to continue developing their online and digital content, which has been well received thus far. The team have begun this process in recent transitions work, where enrolment once again took place online. The team created an interactive Sway document which included short videos and links to the schools YouTube channel. The team are keen to explore opportunities for meeting live online if it would be helpful for families in the transitions process after the pandemic. The school is also open to sharing practice with others and learning from their colleagues across our region.



The West Partnership thanks: Lesley McCabe and Siobhan Currie of St Ninian's Primary  
For more information contact: [gw10mccabelesley@glow.sch.uk](mailto:gw10mccabelesley@glow.sch.uk) and [INMVS574@glow.sch.uk](mailto:INMVS574@glow.sch.uk)



## Appendix 4: Examples of effective parental involvement, engagement, family learning within Inverclyde.

### Inverclyde Communications Outreach Service (ICOS)

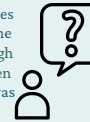
### The West Partnership presents: Inverclyde Communication Outreach Service Facilitating Online Transitions

The storyboard details how the Inverclyde Communication Outreach Service (ICOS) adapted to the pandemic in order to maintain enhanced transitions for pupils with additional support needs. We hear how service quickly adapted to changes on the ground before working towards policy/strategy changes at a local authority level.



#### What was the problem?

Prior to the pandemic, the ICOS team had established an enhanced transitions programme for pupils and families with a range of social communication differences. In the year before the pandemic, 60 children had gone through the programme which supports the transitions between early years, primary and secondary. The programme was delivered mainly in person, meaning the pandemic significantly disrupted those who were going through the programme in 2020.



#### What happened?

The remote activities that the team put in place were used during the initial phase of lockdown. When regulations allowed, the team facilitated access to the empty campuses of schools during the summer period. Feedback from families was positive and the team believes the blend of remote activities and in-person tours allowed them to provide enhanced transitions. After the initial transition in August, the team continued providing transitions activities with their pupils with additional support needs. The team believed this to be especially important during socially distanced education. The team were also keen to take what they had experienced on the ground to formulate strategic guidance. From their experiences they wrote new guidance for transitions at every level and also considered how the lessons from their enhanced transitions could inform transitions more universally.



#### Why is this important?

Positive transitions has been positively linked to wellbeing, attainment and also appears to be correlated with reduced pupil and parental anxiety. Research on pupils with additional support needs has found that for 'children with ASN, supported and enhanced transitions are beneficial' (Cantali, 2019). Enhanced transitions are therefore key to avoiding dips in attainment and wellbeing.



#### Aims of the change to practice

The project had a number of aims:

- 1) To maintain enhanced transitions in response to social distancing
- 2) To provide a 'near-as-normal' transitions experience that met the needs of pupils and parent
- 3) To ensure standardised practice across the authority



#### What are the key points you have learnt?

The team have identified a number of key learning points from their change to practice. Firstly, the informal networks set up by parents despite the impact of social distancing has been invaluable. Secondly, the delivery of effective transitions required a collaborative approach where a number of organisations worked well together (school, ICOS, support services).



#### What did you do?

The ICOS team had begun meeting with families in Jan 2020. Four meetings had happened before the pandemic made social distancing methods necessary. The team made sure they kept in contact with families by phone as an initial response to social distancing requirements. The team then used door step visits as a way of meeting in person while operating within social distancing regulations. The team collectively identified the needs of their families and considered ways of meeting these needs using technology. The team set up a Teams space for pupils and encouraged the pupils to share the information with their parents. The team first created a PowerPoint presentations with information for each school that was involved in transitions. At a later date the team used photos and videos of each school in order to build up an idea of what the school environment might be like. The team also created weekly transitions activities that were to be completed at home. School 'passports' were also developed, giving pupils key information about the school environment.

Thirdly, the team believe that their transitions approach led to the informal development of digital skills amongst participating pupils and parents. Fourthly, the team believe it is important to apply what they have learnt from this process to transitions more broadly. They have begun putting this into practice, working to ensure equity for all pupils, this is reflected in recently created authority-wide guidance.

#### What next for the project?

The team believe they will continue with some of their new practices post-covid. For example, the team believe they will continue to get value out of walk and talk meetings with parents in the future. As mentioned above, the team plan to develop to further enhance current transitions planning. The team are interested in adopting the work of Renfrewshire Council, who have used flipbooks for transitions, as a way of passing on information accessibly.



The West Partnership thanks: Jan Spence of Inverclyde Communication Outreach Service: (INJAS802@glow.sch.uk)

## Appendix 4: Examples of effective parental involvement, engagement, family learning within Inverclyde.

### King's Oak Primary School

## The West Partnership presents:

### King's Oak Primary, Inverclyde

### Maintaining family learning culture during COVID19

*The storyboard details how the team at King's Oak in Inverclyde adapted to the pandemic in order to maintain a positive family learning culture. We hear how the school used a holistic approach to meet the needs of their families during a time of great uncertainty.*



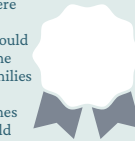
#### What was the problem?

In recent years, King's Oak Primary School has made a concerted effort to ensure a culture of family learning at their school. The school's family hub aims to provide inclusive experiences for all. Given that most of the activities of the school and family hub took place in person, the social distancing measures relating to the pandemic meant that alternate modes of delivery were required.



#### What happened?

Recently, the team has had good levels of engagement from many families. By tracking engagement they were also able to provide specific support to families with low engagement. In the summer of 2020, the school provided a number of achievement opportunities for pupils and their families that were well received. These include the 'mighty Oakers superheroes' - a remote version of activities that would normally be completed in the summer hub, and the family skills challenge - where staff would ask families to complete a challenge. A number of pupils were encouraged to complete various award programmes (John Muir award, SQA Personal Achievement Gold Award Level 2). The team also encouraged a number of activities that meet the CfE responsible citizen capacity. For example, the school delivered a P6 community kindness campaign and also took part in an intergenerational garden project. The team also ran community-building activities like weekly quizzes and bingo - events that would consistently attract 12-15 families per week. This is ongoing.



#### Why is this important?

Research has demonstrated the importance of family learning and parental involvement on attainment and learner experience. Positive relationships between home and school have also been found to correlate with positive learner experiences and attainment. The positive work done by King's Oak prior to COVID19 had to be maintained to ensure a culture of family learning was retained.



#### Aims of the change to practice

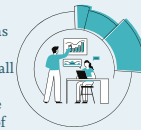
The project had a number of aims:

- 1) To continue to understand the wellbeing of children and needs of families on a remote basis
- 2) To continue developing relationships and building new ones between the school and home
- 3) To continue a positive culture around family learning in socially distanced ways



#### What are the key points you have learnt?

The team have identified a number of key points from their change to practice. Firstly, the team quickly identified the need to reflect on 'what worked and what could be done better'. This was particularly important during the second lockdown. Secondly, the team noted that using all available tools to communicate effectively with families was of utmost importance. Thirdly, the team noted that the wellbeing and motivation of staff was key. The team identified the need to build on individual strengths within the team and also knew when to use external partners to best deliver their work.



#### What did you do?

Staff at King's Oak had to rethink several areas of delivery due to social distancing. Instead of pausing activities all together, the team worked to consider how remote alternatives could be achieved. This occurred across a number of areas. Firstly, the team identified ways of communicating with families in order to identify their needs and keep them up to date with the latest information. Secondly, the team drew on partnerships with CLD and health and social care where appropriate. One of the earliest interventions of the team was to work with CLD to disseminate learning packs. To overcome anxieties about entering a school building to pick up the learning packs, the team delivered bags in a way that adhered to social distancing. Thirdly, the team considered how they could best support families in learning remotely. The team produced 'how to' videos to explain how to use various pieces of digital technology. Fourthly, the team considered how they could deliver a number of socially distanced activities that would keep the relationship between home and school active. Finally, the team also considered how they could ensure a positive transitions experience for those families entering P1.

#### What next for the project?

As it is unlikely that we will instantly return to delivering education in a pre-covid form, the team intends to continue their holistic approach to family learning in ways that adhere to up-to-date guidance. The team intends to continue identifying the needs of their pupils and families before putting into practice solutions to the difficulties caused by the pandemic. Family learning is a key element of the culture of King's Oak Primary, and one that they would like to continue to improve upon.



The West Partnership thanks: the King's Oak Staff Team  
For more information contact: (inkingsoak@glowscotland.onmicrosoft.com)

## Parental engagement - Case Study- NIH

### Moorfoot Primary School and Garvel Deaf Centre – Inverclyde Council

Over the last few years, all children have been taught British Sign Language (BSL) from the start of their nursery placement through to Primary 7, with a view to improving communications and relationships amongst all pupils. As children shared their learning about BSL at home with their parents and families, they too were interested in learning more about deaf culture.

Arrangements were put in place for adults to learn BSL free of charge at sessions run by a BSL tutor and supported by parents of deaf pupils from Garvel Deaf Centre. Outreach classes are held in a community setting for any parents or families who are unable to travel to the school.

BSL has been incorporated and is celebrated across the school including at assemblies, concerts and the school blog.

This has resulted in:

- Increased parental engagement in children’s learning amongst hearing and deaf parents and their families
- Parents feel listened to and involved in the wider life of the school and community
- Greater access to deaf adults, deaf peers and deaf role models both in school and across Scotland
- Improved relationships between children and parents, and reduced frustration and anxiety at home
- Greater deaf awareness and a shared understanding amongst hearing parents, families and pupils
- Improved communications with hearing parents of deaf children, deaf parents of hearing children and deaf parents of deaf children
- Parents are regularly accessing and engaging with the online workshops on the school’s learning blog
- Improved relationships and friendships between hearing and deaf children
- Improved children’s experiences of school and learning
- Increased appetite amongst pupils to learn about different cultures and how to sign in other languages
- Closer working with cluster secondary school
- Greater links with the wider community and partnerships with national deaf organisations
- Parents having continued their learning and progressed to qualifications in BSL
- Parents of hearing children using BSL as part of their job to communicate with members of the community

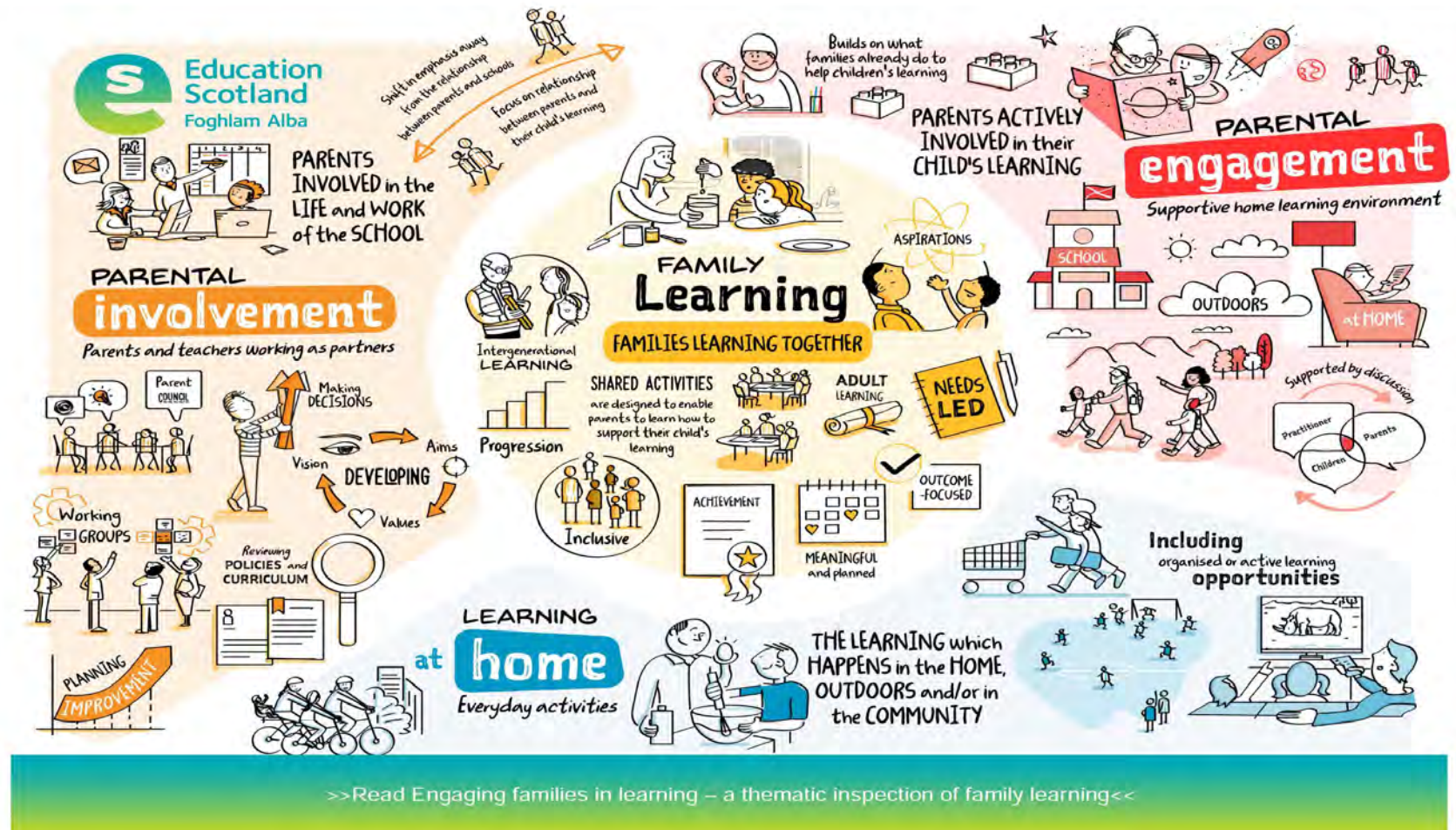
Sketchnote - Inverclyde CLD - Highly Effective Family Learning - November 2019



**Appendix 5: Engaging families in learning – A thematic inspection of family learning**

Sketchnote - Identifying family learning, parental involvement, parental engagement and learning at home.


Consider: Where are you? What are you doing well? Where could you improve?



## Engaging families in learning – A thematic inspection of family learning

### Sketchnote - Key features of high-quality family learning


Consider: Where are you? What are you doing well? Where could you improve?



# Key features of high-quality family learning

### 1 TRUSTED RELATIONSHIPS


All family learning begins with relationships based on trust.



Families are more likely to engage, and stay engaged, when they have a trusting relationship with those who facilitate the learning.

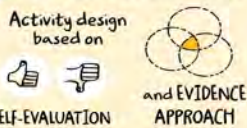
**STRENGTHENS RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN**

- CHILD and PARENT
- CHILD and SCHOOL
- PARENT and SCHOOL




### 2 RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS OF FAMILIES


Activity design based on SELF-EVALUATION and EVIDENCE APPROACH



Needs are identified in various ways including DIALOGUE with FAMILIES, STAFF and PARTNERS.




**WIDE RANGE OF DATA** used by staff and partners, including school level data, and local demographic and socio-economic



**WORKING TOGETHER**

to consider the needs of both children and adults when planning, delivering and evaluating family learning.




### 3 INCLUSIVE

Family learning is offered as a universal provision with OPEN ACCESS TO REMOVE BARRIERS, and to enable and sustain participation.

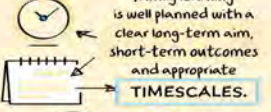
**CONSIDERATION OF:**

- Levels of literacy and numeracy
- Potentially negative educational experiences of parents
- Transport
- Childcare



### 4 PURPOSE, PLANNING AND PROGRESSION

Family learning is well planned with a clear long-term aim, short-term outcomes and appropriate **TIMESCALES.**




Staff and partners work together with children and families to **DESIGN** and **PLAN** ACTIVITIES and **LEARNING**

**FROM THE OUTSET**, careful consideration is given to how success is monitored, measured and evaluated.

**CONSIDERATION** to how children and young people, and also adults, will progress in their learning

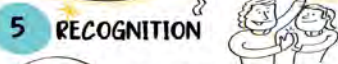
For parents, this may include further learning, volunteering or employment



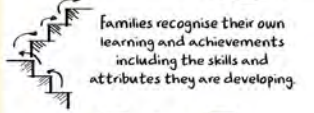
### 5 RECOGNITION

## ACHIEVEMENT


The **ACHIEVEMENTS** children and their parents are recognised and celebrated.



Families recognise their own learning and achievements including the skills and attributes they are developing.



**RECOGNISED AWARDS AND QUALIFICATIONS ARE USED TO ENHANCE FAMILY LEARNING.**



>>Read Engaging families in learning – a thematic inspection of family learning<<

## Appendix 6: National Improvement Framework Parent Communication Principles

All communication activity relating to parents, carers and families should be based on some core best practice principles. The following principles, which were developed in partnership with parent organisations, capture good practice, as demonstrated by head-teachers and teachers across Scotland on a day-to-day basis.

### Simplicity and Clarity

- Every effort to communicate with parents and carers - every leaflet, conversation and news release - should be simple, relevant, straightforward and jargon-free.

### Transparency

- Parents should receive comprehensive, honest, factual answers to their questions.
- Be prepared to clarify misunderstandings.

### Relevance

- For parents, this is about improving their child's education. It is not about implementing a performance framework. The audience should drive what is said and how it is said. Focus on "what am I interested in for my child?" and "what does this mean for my child?" not "what does this mean for Scottish education?"
- Focus on the themes and issues which are relevant to parents.
- Concentrate on making the themes and principles that lie at the heart of the framework come alive for parents and families
- Be conscious of the different needs and preferences of parents and ask them how and when they would like to communicate.

### Partnership

- Aim to develop all documents, guides, video and audio content in collaboration with parents and/or parent organisations.
- Communication should not be a one way street; it should focus on creating the opportunity for dialogue and discussion.

### Flexibility and Adaptation

- Be conscious of the multi-faceted nature of the parent community. In particular, be aware that some parents face additional barriers to engaging and communicating. Some of the most prominent are likely to be related to language, ethnic background, disability. A further additional barrier may be a parent or carer's perception of schools and education, informed by their own experience when they were young. Frame the way that you communicate with this in mind.
- Consider equalities issues in detail and seek to co-develop your approach with parents and families.

### Timeliness

- Communication should be timed to fit in with the lives of parents and to fit in with the school calendar.