

Statement of Commitment

Parental Involvement in Education



Making a difference

Working together to support
children's learning

April 2009

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Learning and Teaching



Our strategy to assist parents and schools to work together in supporting children's learning

Parents as Partners



We would encourage everyone to use this strategy to help deliver the best possible learning experience for children and young people



Research carried out by Sacher in 2002 stated:

- *the younger the child, the greater impact parents have on their child's achievements;*
- *at age 7, parents have 5 times more influence than that of the school;*
- *at age 11, influence is more even between parents and school;*
- *at age 16, balance swings significantly towards school.*

Parents, carers and families are the most important influence on children's attitudes, behaviour and achievement and effective parental involvement will support this in a positive way.

1. Strategy for parental involvement

- 1.1 The purpose of the 'Strategy for Parental Involvement' is to improve both the quality and extent of parents' involvement in children's learning.
- 1.2 This 'statement of commitment' has been produced to summarise both what it is we are trying to achieve through the strategy and the message that parental involvement must be inclusive.

2. Supporting children's learning

- 2.1 In South Lanarkshire we recognise the important role that parents play in the education of their children. The involvement of parents in education is recognised as a crucial element in raising attainment through the support, help and encouragement given to children in the home and whilst they are at school.
- 2.2 Recognising that parents have an important role to play in their child's education, the Scottish Parliament passed in 2006, a new law called the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act.
- 2.3 The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 requires each education authority to promote the involvement of parents in school education and describes how this can be done through the preparation of a document, to be known as their "Strategy for Parental Involvement".
- 2.4 In South Lanarkshire, through our strategy for parental involvement, we wish to take this opportunity to develop further effective partnership arrangements between schools, parents and carers, and others who have responsibility for looking after children.
- 2.5 Schools share a common aim – to prepare young people as best they can so they can have a happy, useful, and fulfilling adult life. Parents have a key role to play along with schools in helping to achieve this aim.
- 2.6 By working together we can help children and also parents/carers to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. We want our children and young people to be happy, safe, nurtured, active, healthy, included, respected, responsible and given opportunities to achieve their potential. Children should be given every encouragement to give of their best and every opportunity taken to praise, recognise and celebrate their achievements.



3. Promoting parental involvement

What is it we are trying to achieve?

- 3.1 We wish to give parents/carers every opportunity to become more involved in their child's education.

For example, parents/carers should be;

- *welcomed and given an opportunity to be involved in the life of the school;*
- *fully informed about their child's education and learning;*
- *encouraged to make an active contribution to their child's learning;*
- *able to support learning at home;*
- *aware of their responsibility for the education and welfare of their child;*
- *aware of the aims and ambitions of the school;*
- *know how and where to raise concerns;*
- *supported if they wish to form a Parent Council;*
- *encouraged to work in partnership with their child's educational establishment.*

How can we achieve this?

- 3.2 There are a number of ways parents/carers can get involved in supporting their child's learning:

- *Parental representation:*

This enables parents/carers to have their views represented to the school, education authority and others through a representative Parent Council for the school.

- *Learning at home:*

The provision of information and guidance on how to support their child's learning at home.

- *Home/School links:*

The building of better links between the school and home which are aimed at improving children's learning and attainment.

- 3.3 A key element in engaging parents in the education of their child and the life of the school is effective communication – we recognise that the benefits build up over time and involve different methods. Effective communication engenders trust and respect and helps schools and parents/carers to work together to support children’s learning.

4. Making a difference to children’s learning

- 4.1 The Strategy for Parental Involvement is based around existing good practice found in South Lanarkshire nurseries and schools. We want to create an ethos in each nursery and school where parents/carers are encouraged and given every opportunity to become more involved in supporting their child’s learning.
- 4.2 The strategy covers the authority’s duties in relation to:
- *providing information to parents/ carers about what their child is learning and advice on how to support their child’s learning;*
 - *having an inclusive approach to parental involvement;*
 - *building successful partnerships that make parents feel they have a role to play in enhancing learning;*
 - *providing opportunities for parents to become involved in out-of-school learning activities;*
 - *identifying opportunities for parents to come together at school level and learning community level to share ideas and practice.*
- 4.3 A key question for everyone to ask is ‘how good is parental involvement in our school/establishment?’ This will enable schools, parents/carers and the local authority to work together using the HMIE framework to identify strengths and areas of improvement (see Appendix 1).



5. Working together

5.1 Working together we can make a difference. The learning triangle is carefully balanced with three equal components – pupils, teachers and parents. There is no doubt that when these components work effectively together educational, social and behavioural standards are raised and outcomes improved.

Outcome

Increased participation will lead to a better understanding of:

- *family and community issues*
- *how best to meet the needs of children, parents, and the wider school community*
- *how parents can support their children's learning*
- *how to further develop home school links and improve communications.*

5.2 The introduction of Curriculum for Excellence offers a great opportunity for staff to welcome parents as active participants in the life of the school/establishment.

6. Your views

6.1 If you wish to make comment or require information, please contact us on:

email: parents@southlanarkshire.gov.uk

website: www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk

Appendix 1

How good is our school? – The Quality Framework

Partnership with parents

How are we doing?

How do we know?

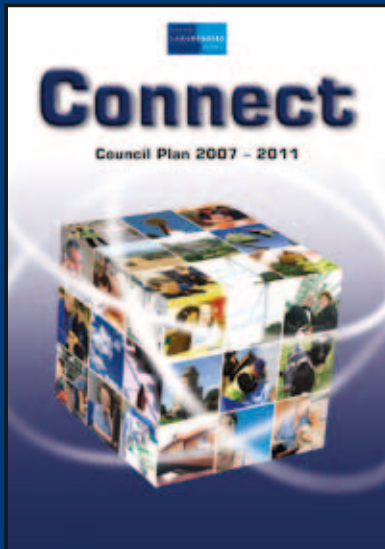
What are we going to do now?

The quality indicators used in HGIOS are:

- 2.2 The school's success in involving parents, carers and families
- 4.1 Working with and engaging with the local community
- 5.7 Partnerships with learners and parents

The following questions are designed to help identify things that are excellent, very good and possible areas for improvement.

Key questions
How welcoming is your school to parents?
How well does your school communicate with parents about children's progress, achievement and attainment?
How well does your school inform parents of children's progress in all aspects of school life?
How good is the exchange of information between your school and parents on issues relating to children's care and welfare?
How effectively does your school make full use of parents' knowledge and expertise to support the curriculum and the vocational guidance programme?
How effectively does your school develop the relationship between parents and relevant agencies?
How effectively does your school work in partnership with parents, professionals, key agencies and support workers?
How successfully does your school consult with parents and take full account of their views and concerns? How effectively do you communicate with all parents?
How well does your school survey parental views as part of your self-evaluation process?



For more information or if you want this information in a different format or language,
please phone 01698 454450 or email education@southlanarkshire.gov.uk

www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk