

**PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY PAPER**

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**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide for consideration a copy of the Education Service revised Parental Engagement Strategy 2019-2021.
- 1.2 The Parental Engagement Strategy 2019-2021 has been revised in line with feedback from consultation with a wide range of stakeholders including parents, Parent Council members, teachers, Head Teachers and other partners such as representatives from the Educational Psychology team and Youth Services.
- 1.3 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:
- a) Note the continued commitment of the Education Service to enhance and further develop opportunities for parental engagement in all of our schools, in the context of the Scottish Government's policy position in regard to the development of a National Action Plan.
  - b) Agree the revised Parental Engagement Strategy 2019-2021 as set out in Appendix 1.

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### 2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. The purpose of this report is to provide for consideration a copy of the Education Service revised Parental Engagement Strategy 2019-2021.
- 2.2. The revised Parental Engagement Strategy 2019-2021 was drafted following a review in March 2018 of the 2016 Parental Involvement Strategy and was developed in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders and developed in line with “Learning Together”, Scotland’s national action plan on parental involvement, parental engagement, family learning and learning at home 2018-2021.
- 2.3. Research consistently demonstrates that where parents are involved with their children’s education and learning, both at home and in partnership with the school, their children do better and achieve more. These benefits can be long-lasting and extend to better health, better relationships and improved employment prospects<sup>1</sup>.
- 2.4. Parents have a key role as prime educators and carers of their children. By working in partnership, schools and parents can develop children’s attitudes to learning, helping to ensure that children achieve their full potential. This partnership working will also provide schools with a clearer understanding of children’s home circumstances and personal achievements.
- 2.5. Effective parental engagement helps parents to understand what their children are learning, how well they are doing and how they can support learning in the home environment. Good communication will allow schools and parents to respond quickly and effectively to emerging issues and concerns.

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<sup>1</sup> “The more engaged parents are in the education of their children, the more likely their children are to succeed in the education system.” (Goodall and Vorhaus 2011)

### 3.RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:

- a) Note the continued commitment of the Education Service to enhance and further develop opportunities for parental engagement in all of our schools, in the context of the Scottish Government's policy position in regard to the development of a National Action Plan.
- b) Agree the revised Parental Engagement Strategy 2019-2021 as set out in Appendix 1.

### 4.0 DETAIL

- 4.1. In September 2016 the Community Services Committee approved the Parental Involvement Strategy which set out how the Education Service would support schools to help parents to become involved in their child's education within the context of the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006, the National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education and the Education (Scotland) Act 2016.
- 4.2. Ensuring high quality partnership working through increased parental engagement and participation is one of the key objectives of the Education Vision and Strategy *Our Children, Their Future*.
- 4.3. In December 2016 the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills John Swinney MSP launched the 2017 National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan for Scottish Education. The National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education sets out the Scottish Government's vision, priorities and drivers of improvement. A key driver of improvement within the National Improvement Framework is parental engagement since research shows that engaging parents in their child's learning improves children attainment and achievement.
- 4.4. In November 2017 the Scottish Government published the document "Empowering Schools – A Consultation on the provisions of the Education (S) Bill" in which it is stated that the Scottish Government "*will include provisions in the Education Bill to make the existing legal duties in relation to parental involvement clearer and stronger, to reflect the transfer of responsibilities to Head teachers through the Head teachers' Charter and to encourage stronger collaboration between school leaders and parents.*"
- 4.5. The Scottish Government have also intimated that following recommendations resulting from the National Parent Forum of Scotland's review of the impact of the Parental Engagement (Scotland) 2006 Act, the Scottish Government's intention to strengthen, modernise and extend the provisions of the 2006 Act, ensuring that as Head Teachers and teachers are empowered, so also are parents empowered to engage in their child's education.

- 4.6. The Scottish Government has now published The National Action Plan on Parental Engagement and revised Education (S) Bill, in August 2018 and February 2018 respectively.
- 4.7. It is the context of these national policy developments that the 2016 Parental Involvement Strategy was reviewed and revised at the review date of March 2018 following consultation with a wide range of stakeholders. Further revisions were completed in January 2019 after the publication of The National Action Plan on Parental Engagement and feedback from stakeholders namely the Head Teacher's Advisory Group, National Parent Forum for Scotland representative and Parent Councils.
- 4.8. The revised Parental Engagement Strategy 2019-2021 seeks to provide for the aims recommended by education legislation and policy as detailed above and seeks to implement the spirit of strengthened partnership through parental engagement as envisaged in *Our Children, Their Future*.
- 4.9. The proposed Parental Engagement Strategy 2019-21 has six objectives for schools, namely:
- Develop strong partnerships with parents.
  - Promote and support effective communication between schools and parents.
  - Provide support and encouragement for learning at home.
  - Support and promote the role of Parent Councils.
  - Provide a clear route for parents' concerns and complaints to be resolved.
  - Seek views and respond to feedback from parents about this policy.
  - It is proposed that a number of actions will take place in school sessions 2018-2019 to communicate and implement the Parental Engagement Strategy 2019-2021 as set out in the action plan detailed in Appendix 1.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 The revised Parental Engagement Strategy 2019-2021 will enable parents, schools and the Education Service to work together in a more effective manner.
- 5.2 Through working together and the sharing of knowledge, parents, schools and the Education Service will be able to help support children to reach their full potential.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Policy – This report links directly to Outcome 3 and 4 in the Argyll and Bute

Single Outcome Agreement (Education Skills and Training Maximises Opportunities for All).

- 6.2 Financial – none
- 6.3 Legal – Meets the statutory requirements as prescribed by the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement Act) 2006 and the Education (Scotland) Act 2016.
- 6.4 HR – none
- 6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty – Meets aims by reducing inequalities of outcome caused by socioeconomic disadvantage.
  - 6.5.1 Equalities – none
  - 6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – This will support with closing the excellence and equity gap
  - 6.5.3 Islands – none
- 6.6 Risk – The performance of Education in Argyll and Bute can significantly enhance or detract from the Council’s reputation and attractiveness as an area to work and live in.
- 6.7 Customer Service Customer Service – Parental engagement is integral to the National Improvement Framework for Schools.

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11<sup>th</sup> February 2019

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 Parental Engagement Strategy 2019-2021