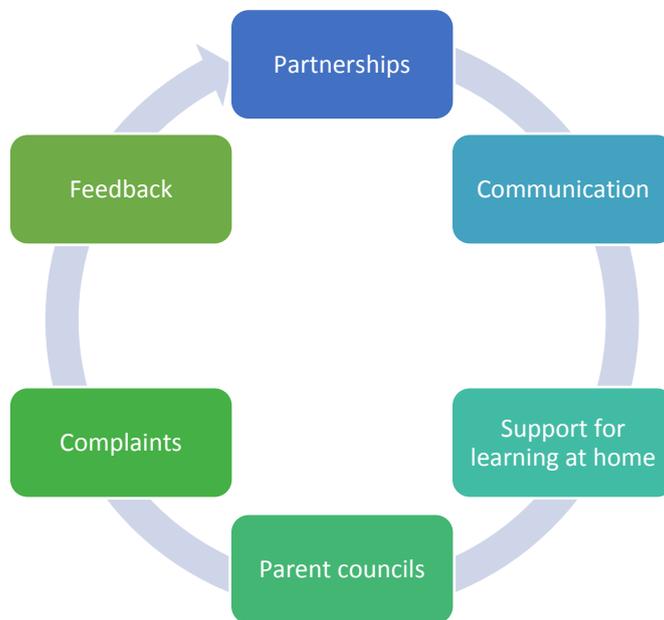




Argyll & Bute Council Parental Engagement Strategy 2019-2021



Introduction by Anne Paterson, Head of Education, Argyll & Bute Council

Our vision, set out in our *Our Children, Their Future*, is that we want Argyll & Bute to be the best place to grow up. We want young people and families to remain in this area, and be attracted to live here. A key part of that vision is to strengthen high quality partnership working and community engagement.

We recognise that most of a child's development takes place outwith our schools and early years' establishments and therefore the role of families and carers is critical to ensuring our children and young people succeed. We want to support families to engage meaningfully in their child's education.

This revised Parental Engagement Strategy¹ was created in consultation with a wide group of stakeholders and reflects our commitment to empower parents to become better involved with our schools and early years' establishments and better engaged with children's learning.

Key objectives

We have six key objectives for our schools and early years' establishments to support and improve parental engagement and promote family learning.

- ❖ **Develop strong partnerships with parents.**
- ❖ **Promote and support effective communication between schools, early years' establishments 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 Strategy.**

1. Partnerships

We are committed to building and developing strong partnerships with parents.

This means:

- All parents will be welcomed and actively encouraged to become involved with and participate in the life and work of the school and early years' establishment.
- Schools and early years' establishments will make developing partnerships with parents a priority in school improvement plans.

¹ The Parental Engagement Strategy has been revised in line with; Learning Together, Scotland's national action plan on parental involvement, parental engagement, family learning and learning at home 2018 – 2021. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/learning-together-scotlands-national-action-plan-parental-involvement-parental-engagement/pages/4/>

- Parents will be given opportunities to discuss and agree with school and early years' establishment staff any particular types of support to suit individual parents' needs and circumstances.
- Schools and early years' establishments will identify and reduce potential barriers to parents becoming involved with the life and the work of the school and early years' establishments.
- Parents will have opportunities to contribute to school and early years' establishments' improvement plans and policy development.
- Schools and early years' establishments will be asked to identify a member of staff to help promote and support parental engagement.
- We will seek to involve parents in the work of education committees through the creation of a Parental Engagement Advisory Group comprising of representatives from Parent Councils.
- We will identify a member of the central team to support the work of parental engagement and involvement across all schools and early years' establishments.

2. Communication

We are committed to providing useful information about children's learning and communicating effectively with parents.

This means:

- Schools and early years' establishments will communicate regularly with parents providing relevant and timely information about children's learning.
- Schools and early years' establishments will consult with parents about preferences for methods of communication.
- Schools and early years' establishments will consult with the Parent Council about the ways in which they report to parents on children's learning and progress.
- Non-resident parents will be provided with regular reports on their child's learning as agreed with the Head Teacher or Head of Establishment.

3. Learning at home

We are committed to providing opportunities for parents to share in their child's learning at home.

This means:

- Schools and early years' establishments will work with parents to decide how schools can support learning at home.
- Schools and early years' establishments will signpost parents to ways in which they can get support for family learning in the local community.
- Schools and early years' establishments will develop home learning policies in consultation with pupils, staff and Parent Councils.

4. Parent Councils

We are committed to supporting Parent Councils to ensure that they have sufficient opportunities to be involved with the life and work of the school and early years' establishments.

This means:

- Schools and early years' establishments will seek views of the Parent Council on the development of the school improvement plans and significant school policy development.
- Parent Councils will contribute to the recruitment of senior school staff.
- Parent Councils will be given an annual funding contribution by the local authority to support training.
- Parent Councils will be asked to ensure that they communicate their work to the broader parent forum.
- Parent Councils will be supported to recognise and overcome any barriers to parents becoming involved with the Parent Council.

5. Complaints

We are committed to help parents resolve any concerns or issues at the earliest opportunity.

This means:

- Parents can bring any concerns directly to their child's school or early years' establishment and can expect the school or early years' establishment to take steps to resolve the concern within five working days.
- Schools and early years' establishments will provide parents with a staff member to contact to resolve any concerns.
- If any parent is not satisfied with the way their complaint has been responded to, parents can make a formal complaint in terms of the Argyll & Bute Council complaints procedure which can be accessed at <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/do-it-online/comments-and-complaints>

6. Feedback

We are committed to seeking the views and opinions of parents about how we are engaging parents in their children's learning.

This means:

- We will consult with parents and representatives of Parent Councils in the creation and review of this Strategy.
- We will consult with the Head Teacher Advisory Group on the creation and review of this Strategy.
- We will provide parents with the opportunity of responding to a Parent Satisfaction Survey on an annual basis from 2020.
- We will review this Strategy every three years taking into consideration the feedback from the Parent Satisfaction Survey and any other representations.

Action plan

- ❖ Communication of this Strategy: a copy of this Strategy will be available to all parents and all schools and early years' establishments by April 2019.
- ❖ Head Teachers and Parent Council Chairs will be asked to ensure that this Strategy is discussed at Parent Council meetings and action taken to implement the key objectives by May 2019.
- ❖ All schools and early years' establishments will be asked to audit and evaluate their existing engagement with parents, Parent Councils and provision of support for family learning by June 2019.
- ❖ All schools and early years' establishments will be asked to develop their own Parental Engagement and Home Family Learning Strategy by December 2019.
- ❖ All schools and early years' establishments will be asked to nominate a member of staff to promote and support parental engagement and family learning by August 2019.
- ❖ A parent satisfaction survey will be sent to all parents to evaluate the impact of this Strategy and to request feedback by June 2020.
- ❖ All schools and early years' establishments will be asked to evaluate the progress and impact of their Parental Engagement and Home Family Learning Strategy by September 2020.
- ❖ This Strategy will be reviewed in March 2021.