

# Working with our Parents as Partners

E-Bulletin Nov 2016

[Learning at Home – Home & school partnership – Parental Representation](#)

*To improve learning outcomes for all.*

*To reduce inequalities in outcomes for children, young people and families.*

*To support the development of sustainable communities.*

In what has been a very busy few months, the following provides an update on current national reviews and how locally we are supporting and encouraging parents to understand and share their views.

## **In June 2016, the Scottish Government launched their new delivery plan “Delivering Excellence & Equity In Scottish Education”**

Within Aberdeenshire Council, a report has been shared with our Education, Learning & Leisure Committee which reflects the Scottish Governments aspirations and how we intend to approach this plan.

***A link to the committee report can be found here:***

<http://committees.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/committees.aspx?commid=274&meetid=18292>

To reflect this document in September, a consultation document entitled ‘**Empowering Teachers, Parents and Communities to Achieve – A Governance Review**’ was launched.

**What is it?** The Governance Review is seeking views on how education (from early years through to secondary schools) is run.

**Why are we doing it?** The Scottish Government is committed to making significant progress in closing the attainment gap within this parliament and to substantially eliminate it within a decade. We want to deliver excellence and equity for all children and young people across Scotland:

- Excellence through raising attainment: ensuring that every child achieves the highest standards in literacy and numeracy, set out with Curriculum for Excellence levels, and the right range of skills, qualifications and achievements to allow them to succeed; and
- Achieving equity: ensuring every child has the same opportunity to succeed, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

Government want to empower teachers, parents, children and communities to drive improvement in education. They believe that the best people to decide the future of our communities are the people who live in those communities.

**How?** The governance review asks questions across 5 key areas:

1. Empowering teachers, practitioners, parents, schools and communities
2. Strengthening 'the middle' – how teachers, practitioners, schools and other local and regional partners work together to deliver education – including through encouraging school clusters and the establishment of new educational regions
3. A clear national framework and building capacity in education
4. Fair funding – learner-centred funding
5. Accountability

**What next?** The questions and more information can be found at:

[www.gov.scot/educationgovernancereview](http://www.gov.scot/educationgovernancereview) We would invite parents to discuss these questions with their Headteacher at your next Parent Council meeting.

Maria Walker, Director of Education Children's Services along with Heads of Service and Elected members continue with their engagement meetings on 15<sup>th</sup> Nov at Peterhead Academy where Parent Council Chairs can ask questions around this.

**Or Register for a Ministerial Engagement event at <http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/the-scottish-government-11347530550> taking place in Aberdeen on 24<sup>th</sup> Nov '16.**

## **GIRFEC – Getting it right for Every Child**

Getting it right for every child and young person is a national policy to help all children and young people grow, develop and reach their full potential. Its focus is to improve outcomes for children and their families based on a shared understanding of their wellbeing.

### **What does GIRFEC mean for you and your children in Aberdeenshire?**

In Aberdeenshire our ambition for our children is clear: we want Aberdeenshire to be the best place in Scotland for children and young people to grow up. We want them to be loved and cherished, safe and healthy, and to enjoy being young. – It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, after all.

We believe that joining up children's services – with children's wellbeing at the heart of that approach – will help us achieve that ambition. That's where our getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) approach comes in.

GIRFEC isn't an extra thing people have to do. It's a way for those who support children to work differently, making sure they are all on the same page. Where needed, GIRFEC links day-to-day work in education, health, policing, social work and the voluntary sector – in fact any public or voluntary organisation whose staff come into contact with children. It makes it easier for those different organisations to communicate consistently with each other, and with children and young people.

GIRFEC provides a structure that helps people to work in the same way, using the same terminology, and allows discussions with the child and their family to focus on what is good in a child's life, and what might need attention or support.

For more information on any aspect of GIRFEC please visit [www.girfec.aberdeenshire.org](http://www.girfec.aberdeenshire.org)

## Working with our parents as partners...Sharing information

### Supporting your child's learning

- Support your child's play and outdoor learning experience.  
<http://www.ltl.org.uk/scotland/resources.php>
- Parentzone offer some great ideas for supporting your child's learning at home:  
<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone/learningathome/whatcanidoasaparent/index.asp>
- Does your child have dyslexia? – Evenings where Information and practical advice to support your child's learning have been organised with the first at Longside Primary on 23<sup>rd</sup> Nov: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/dyslexia-practical-information-advice-for-parents-young-people-tickets-28862064211>
- Dyslexia Scotland North East: <https://taking-the-hell-out-of-homework.eventbrite.co.uk>

### Understanding Education "Jargon Buster"

- Education has many abbreviations, acronyms and terminology– what does it all mean? This term, see attached list of education acronyms!

### Communication

- This year primary schools in Aberdeenshire aim to talk with parents to improve on how we report on children's progress. When you read your child's report card what is it telling you? Are there other ways you would find more useful to learn about what your child is learning? Contact your Headteacher or Parent Council to find out how you can share your thoughts.
- Many Parent Councils have set up a Closed Facebook page to enable communication with the wider parent forum. Top tip: use this to share information only and disable commenting. For further advice contact [donna.wilson@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:donna.wilson@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)
- Education Scotland provides a quarterly E-Bulletin for parents. Click on the link below, select News for parents and carers. You only need an email address.  
<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/newsandevents/emailupdates/>
- Do you parents/families that do not have English as a first language? Aberdeenshire Councils EAL team can offer translators and translations to ensure information is accessible to all. Contact: [Sandra.Jackson@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:Sandra.Jackson@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)
- School websites – do you need support/training to ensure your school website is fit for purpose? Email: [schoolwebsites@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:schoolwebsites@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

## Working with our parents as partners...Sharing the good practice

### Learning at Home

Homework tasks that ask the child to teach parents about things they have learned.

Home Learning – tasks which engage and develop skills. Advice to help parents understand Numeracy skills and how to support their child:

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone/learninginscotland/curriculumareas/mathematics/glossary.asp>

Home Learning – how to support reading at home (all ages)

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone/learningathome/supportingliteracy/index.asp>

LITERACY tasks for young children: <http://www.readwritecount.scot/>

LIBRARIES & Literacy: Book Week Scotland runs from 23rd – 29th November. This is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate books and reading – visit your local library and find out about the range of events taking place and remember as a member you can access resources at home!

<https://online.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/apps/events/search.asp?categoryID=&areaID=&startDateSearch=&endDateSearch=&strSearch=Library+Events&Submit=Search>

### Home & School Partnership

Developing Young Workforce: Using the skills and knowledge your parents have to support skills for work activities and events.

Open afternoons/whole days to allow time for parents to see classrooms and be led by their children who can share their learning.

Supporting children with ASN: The library service have worked in partnership with many schools and young people to offer skills for work learning experiences in their branches. Contact [Sharon.jamieson@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:Sharon.jamieson@aberdeenshire.gov.uk) for more info.

Family Learning: Contact your Community Learning team who will have adult learning sessions along with trained staff that could support partnership projects.

### Parental Representation

Working with PUPIL VOICE: Introduce a parent rep on the pupil council which could lead to projects being supported by parent volunteers along with fundraising efforts.

Parent Council meetings alternating with some taking place during the day/immediately after school or evenings.

Secondary schools facilitating Parent Council or Headteacher led focus meetings in other locations (i.e. feeder primaries)