

2018  
2019

# connect

supporting partnerships in education

## About Connect Membership

Welcome to your Connect Members' leaflet! Connect, formerly Scottish Parent Teacher Council, is the only national membership organisation and charity for parents and carers with children at school. Each year, thousands of parents and carers contact us for services, advice and information. We are here to support our Members, to gather parents' views and experiences and to continue to shape, and lobby for, high quality family engagement in children's education.

### Keep in touch!

Our contact details are:

info@connect.scot

0131 474 6199

www.connect.scot



ConnectScot



@connect\_scot

Like and follow us to receive the latest news from Connect and the world of Scottish education.

Sign up for our eNewsletters here <http://bit.ly/connectenews>.

**Connect works to connect parents and educators to improve children's learning and lives.**



### Connect Membership Benefits

Membership of Connect gives you, your Parent Council/PTA and other parents at your school many benefits. These include:

- being part of a Scotland-wide parents' community dedicated to helping parents have real engagement in their child's school and education
- three membership levels to choose from, so you can pick the insurance cover and benefits that are right for you and your parent group
- free online/face-to-face information sessions to help your parent group to work well and resolve everyday issues
- exclusive access to the Members' area of the Connect website and all of its resources
- the opportunity to receive our termly Backchat newsletter and regular eNewsletters - please sign up for these!
- the chance to take part in our Parents' Voice surveys
- the ability to influence policy at Connect and beyond!

### We are here to help you!

We have over 100 fantastic information leaflets and resources for Parent Councils and PTAs. Written in response to Members' queries and requests, these highly-regarded resources are available on our website [www.connect.scot](http://www.connect.scot). Please register on the website to access them.

We run popular and helpful Information and Training sessions for parent groups across Scotland - please join us at one!

We also respond to parents' requests for advice and information about education by telephone, email and Facebook. See our contact details (left) for all the ways you can reach us - we love to hear from you.

## Listening to Parents

Keeping in touch and listening to what you have to say is the most important thing we do.

Our Parents' Voice online survey group is a crucial part of this. Parents' Voice is open to any parent; the surveys are short and should take no more than a few minutes to complete. Sign up via our website if you would like to join

<http://bit.ly/ConnectPV>.

Recent surveys have been on:

- proposed changes for a new Education Act
- bullying, with respectme
- the impact of financial hardship on children's learning
- Primary 1 National Standardised Assessments
- proposed changes to the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme
- school travel with Sustrans.

The results of each survey are published on the website and have resulted in powerful reports, in which the sometimes painful experiences of parents are given an important platform. You can find recent reports here

<http://bit.ly/connectsurveys>.

We always keep your details confidential.

## Could you be a Connect Director?

Are you a parent or carer involved in your child's education? Motivated by parent politics? Then you should consider joining the Board of Connect! As a small charity, our Directors are vital in making sure we provide the right services to parents and carers whose children are at Scottish schools.

Distance is no barrier – we use technology to make sure Directors who live around the country can participate in online discussions and attend meetings remotely if necessary.

We need parents and teachers to ensure we represent the interests of parent Members, inform discussions and help make policy. Connect is the only independent charity in Scotland providing parent-friendly advice and information to all, as well as giving a parental perspective to policy makers and media.

Being a Director is more than just a title – they attend regular meetings, participate in working groups, comment on policy and business issues and take on the legal responsibilities of charity trustees and company directors. Just email or phone for an informal chat to find out more.

## Information and Training sessions

Members can take part in one of our free Information and Training Sessions. Some are online and others are led by our friendly and knowledgeable Regional Advisors. Check out our Information & Training Sessions leaflet for more details.

Many local authorities have Group Membership of Connect which covers all Parent Councils in these schools. Then, we often work in partnership with the local authority and with parents to plan which sessions to run.

Comments from participants include:

***'Very informative and a lot of useful information to take away'***

*'Your enthusiasm for supporting parents and Parent Councils is inspirational'*

***'I really enjoyed everything, learning new ideas, meeting new people'***

*'Excellent - upbeat, informative and very helpful.'*

If you have 3 or 4 star Membership, you can host one or more Information & Training Session – just email [training@connect.scot](mailto:training@connect.scot).

## Easyfundraising

Connect has joined forces with easyfundraising to help our Members raise money for their parent groups in a simple and effective way. **easyfundraising** is the UK's leading good-cause shopping site, and it has helped educational groups raise over £12million. Many of our Members already use **easyfundraising**. If you register your group with **easyfundraising** through our Connect homepage, on top of the funds your group receives, **easyfundraising** will donate an extra 20% of those funds to Connect. It won't cost you any extra and we in turn will use those funds to provide more services to our Members. Register your parent group here <http://bit.ly/connecteasy> and follow the steps to get started.



# Our Membership Model



Our one star Membership is suitable for individual parents, students or educators only.



Two star Membership is for groups that don't get involved in fundraising or events. It includes:

- online training workshops
- basic insurance (Public and Employer's Liability insurance)
- access to the Members' area of the website
- the opportunity for your group to nominate a parent or teacher to the Board of Connect.



Three star Membership will suit most parent groups. It includes the benefits of 2 star membership plus a comprehensive package of membership-linked insurance benefits. Members receive:

- free information & training sessions
- Fidelity & money insurance
- Personal Accident cover for helpers
- All Risks cover for items you buy for the group or school
- Public Liability cover for up to five activity groups or clubs.



Four star Membership gives you all of the benefits of 3 star and more. For very active groups, it includes:

- Extended Public Liability for stall holders and entertainers
- Additional Public Liability Cover if your Parent Council/PTA runs 6 or more activity clubs/groups
- access to Connect's PVG services
- specialist advice from our insurance broker on managing major events.

	Access to member website info	Connect board nominations	Online training and surgeries	Connect training sessions p.a	£10m Public Liability insurance	£10m Employers Liability	Up to £5k Fidelity, £250k money insurance	Up to £25k Personal Accident insurance	£10k All Risks insurance cover	£10m Public Liability cover for activity groups/clubs	£10m EPL for stallholders / entertainers	Connect as PVG Intermediary Body
 Two Star Membership	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓					
 Three Star Membership	✓	✓	✓	2 Sessions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Up to 5 clubs		
 Four Star Membership	✓	✓	✓	2 Sessions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	6+ clubs	✓	✓

## The Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme

Connect Members often contact us with queries about the Protection of Vulnerable Groups scheme. There is confusion about how the disclosure system works and whether it is appropriate to use the PVG Membership Scheme for parent group volunteers. We are happy to help with all PVG queries.

Connect is an Intermediary Body for Volunteer Scotland, so if your group has four star Membership and your volunteers need to join the PVG Scheme, we can deal with all the paperwork and liaise with Disclosure Scotland and Volunteer Scotland on your behalf.

**Groups can upgrade to four star Connect Membership - email us on [info@connect.scot](mailto:info@connect.scot).**

## Insurance Q&As: See [www.connect.scot](http://www.connect.scot) for more

**Q: We're planning to have a bouncy castle at our fete, but we want to make sure our insurance would cover us. Can you help?**

**A:** 3\* and 4\* Connect members have insurance cover for events and activities such as this, as part of their Connect Membership. However, you need to remember that you cannot insure against accidents! The public liability element of your insurance covers against claims for incidents that happen **as a result of negligence only** – in other words, if someone is injured because you failed to take proper measures to operate the inflatable safely. If you are planning to have an inflatable at your event, you **MUST** do a risk assessment and adhere to our *Guidelines for Bouncy Castles & Inflatables* leaflet <http://bit.ly/connectinflatables>.

**Q: We're holding a barbecue at our school summer fair and the headteacher says we need a Food Hygiene Certificate. Is this true?**

**A:** If you are cooking food on school premises or in the grounds (such as a barbeque), you do not need a Food Hygiene Certificate for your Connect membership-linked insurance to be valid, although of course you should follow best practice in preparing and cooking food. However, the local authority can require you to have one as a condition of the school let if, for instance, you are using the school kitchen. Check the conditions of the let. See our *Some Golden Rules of Catering for Parent Councils and PTAs* leaflet <http://bit.ly/connectcatering>.

**Q: We're organising a fundraising car wash on school grounds. Does our Connect membership-linked insurance cover us for negligent damage to the cars?**

**A:** Car washes are covered for 3\* and 4\* Members in your membership-linked insurance. As with all activities, you should carry out a risk assessment to make sure you are taking reasonable precautions to avoid damage to vehicles. See our risk assessment resources <http://bit.ly/connectrisk1> and <http://bit.ly/connectrisktemplate>.

## About Connect

### Background

Connect was formed 70 years ago to campaign for parental involvement in education. We continue to champion this cause, working to make family engagement in children's learning as good as it can be. Connect is a charity and a limited liability company with a Board of Directors.

### Funding

Our income comes from membership fees, from around 2000 parent groups like yours. Membership fees pay for the office staffing and the Regional Advisor team, office space and equipment, our website, our resources for parent groups and for running Information and Training sessions for parents. Of course, it also pays for membership-linked insurance which we buy on behalf of our Members.

### Staff

Connect's staff team is small and is totally focused on helping parents to be involved in their child's education. Our office team is based in Edinburgh and is responsible for the organisation of all parts of our work. We also have a team of enthusiastic Regional Advisors around the country. They lead our Information & Training Sessions for parent groups so if you take part in one of these, you'll meet at least one of our lovely team!

