



SCOTTISH SCHOOLS (PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT) ACT 2006

GUIDANCE AND DUTIES

The Parental Involvement Act includes duties and responsibilities for local authorities, schools and headteachers, and Parent Councils. We have set out the key duties and responsibilities below.

Key Points For Education Authorities

1. Parental Involvement Strategy

Each local authority is required to produce a strategy for parental involvement and this should cover the authority's duties to:

- Involve parents in their child's education using three levels of engagement - learning at home, home/school partnership and parental representation
- Give advice and information to parents for their own child
- Promote the establishment of Parent Councils and support their operation
- Establish a complaints procedure
- Advise parents of school performance data
- Advise parents of pre-school provision (early learning and childcare/nursery)

The strategy should detail how the local authority will:

- Promote equal opportunities
- Consider the barriers some parents face in getting involved with their child's learning and support them to overcome these challenges through joint working with other services
- Link with wider policies for supporting children and families, for example, children with additional support needs
- Meet the needs of looked-after children and their parents/carers
- Make arrangements for involving parents who do not live with their children

2. Parent Forums/Parent Councils

The education authority should ensure all parents with children attending or about to start at school are aware of what membership of the Parent Forum means.

- The education authority must provide support to Parent Councils so they can operate and carry out their functions effectively
- The local authority must allocate reasonable funding so a Parent Council may:
 - meet its administrative expenses

- cover expenses for training of its members
- meet other costs incurred in carrying out its functions under the Act
- The education authority must involve the Parent Council in the appointment of a headteacher/DHT and this involvement should extend throughout the appointment process; training should be offered to Parent Council representatives

Key points for schools and headteachers

- The headteacher should make sure the school takes account of the local authority's parental involvement strategy
- The school's objectives should include the involvement of a pupil's parents
- The headteacher and staff should make every effort to reach out to parents who may find it difficult to engage with their child's learning
- The headteacher and staff must be available to give advice and information to parents
- The headteacher has a right and a duty to attend, or to be represented at, meetings of the Parent Council
- The headteacher (or their representative) attends PC meetings in an advisory capacity and should give advice and information to the Parent Council on any matter falling within their area of responsibility
- The headteacher must report at least once a year to the Parent Council

Key points for parents and Parent Councils

The definition of *parent* includes guardians and any person who has parental responsibilities or care of a child or young person

- Every parent has the right to be:
 - involved in their child's education and learning
 - welcomed as active participants in the life of the school, and
 - encouraged to express their views on school education generally and work in partnership with the school.
- All parents/carers with a child at a school are members of the Parent Forum
- Parents have the right to make reasonable requests to the school for advice and information
- Parents have a right to be involved in school inspections
- The Parent Forum decides on what sort of representative body (Parent Council) they want for their school; they can also decide how it works and what it is called
- The Act sets out a range of functions for Parent Councils which fall broadly within the following four areas:
 - supporting the school in its work with pupils
 - representing the views of all parents
 - promoting contact between the school, parents, pupils, providers of nursery education and the community
 - reporting to the Parent Forum
- The Parent Council (and parents) should be involved in the development of the School Improvement Plan and Standards & Quality Reports

- The Act requires that most/the majority of members of the Parent Council must be parents/carers at the school and the chair must always be a parent with a child at the school. The Parent Council may co-opt others in the school and wider community onto the committee
- In denominational schools, the Parent Council must invite the relevant church or denominational body to nominate a representative to be part of its membership
- The Parent Council has a right to be involved in the recruitment of headteachers and senior members of staff
- The Parent Council should seek the views of parents on its work, including school policy and school handbooks

You are welcome to use information from this resource. However, if you do, please acknowledge Connect. We welcome your comments and feedback.

January 2022

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