



## SUMMER 2025

Welcome, Connect Members, to *Backchat*, one of your exclusive Connect Membership benefits! This term's edition of round-ups includes:

- [Latest News from Connect](#)
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We are here to support Connect Members - [email us](#) if you need advice or information about running your parent group. The Connect team is delighted to report that 28 local authorities (out of a possible 32) have signed up for Connect Membership for all their Parent Councils for 2025-26. As we near the end of this school year, we're keen to gather feedback and testimonials from you - please complete [this form](#) or email [feedback@connect.scot](mailto:feedback@connect.scot) if you have views to share! As well as informing the services we deliver for Connect Members, feedback also appears in our Annual Report! If you'd like to inspire others, please complete our [Success Stories template](#) and we'll publicise your achievements. We wish everyone a happy summer break. Have a look at the [end of year reel](#) from our Executive Director, Gavin Yates too!

*Please DO share this newsletter with parents, carers and staff in your school community, but ask them NOT to unsubscribe or they will unsubscribe your group! Backchat is one of your group's important Connect membership benefits.*

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## Latest News from Connect



## CONNECT SCHOOL ATTENDANCE SURVEY

We know how complex and challenging it can be for families if children and young people feel unable to go to school. Our [latest survey](#) for parents and carers looks at the possible reasons behind this and focuses on the help and support that is (or isn't) offered. We'd love to hear from you about your child's school attendance, whatever that looks like, and we'd especially like to hear from families for whom this is, or has been, difficult. Please share [the survey link](#) with the parents and carers at your school! Closes 7 July.

## CONNECT MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

We have two main types of members - local authority-funded members (when local authorities pay for their Parent Councils' Connect Membership) and self-funded parent group members. The latter includes PTAs, Parent Councils outwith the 28 local authorities and other types of parent-run groups (eg parent-run sports, music, swimming and breakfast clubs). For self-funded groups, it's membership renewal time - please check your inboxes! Membership runs from 1 August to 31 July. Local authority-funded Parent Councils will receive their Membership Packs automatically in August.



## DISCLOSURE SCOTLAND & PVGs

More clarification about 'power and influence' in the context of child protection has been provided by Disclosure Scotland in the [tailored advice for parent groups](#).

This has been done with new case studies. Parent group involvement in school policies and making funding decisions in themselves do not require members to be PVGed. Read Connect's webpage which lists [Volunteer Scotland resources](#), if your group decides it does need some of its volunteers to be PVGed.

**Disclosure**  
SCOTLAND



## Information Sessions & Events

Click the links below to book your free places on Connect's live online Information Sessions for next term!

- [Welcome to Connect Membership](#) 2 Sept
- [New to Parent Councils: Induction](#) 9 Sept
- [Organising Social and Fundraising Events for Parent Groups](#) 16 Sept
- [Easyfundraising](#) 23 Sept
- [Role of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer for Parent Groups](#) 30 Sept
- [Parent Group Drop-In Clinic](#) 7 Oct.

**Sessions run from 8-9pm unless otherwise stated. Please book via the button below.**

**NOTE:** View recordings of all recent Information Sessions [here](#).

**READ MORE AND BOOK YOUR PLACES NOW!**

## Connect Reports and Resources

### ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING: AN INTRODUCTION TO JARGON AND ACRONYMS

This amazing new resource has been a labour of love for the Connect team! Designed to help parent groups and parents/carers to navigate the complicated world of additional support for learning jargon and language, it is a living document. So if you'd like additions or changes to be made, email [info@connect.scot](mailto:info@connect.scot).



### CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Share and view Connect's recorded Information Session on [UNCRC: The Role of Families and Parent Councils](#). Children's rights should be front and centre of services for children, including education. Parents and carers, and Parent Councils have a crucial role as advocates of their child's rights. Essential viewing! Find out more about Rights Respecting Schools in Scotland [here](#). Read a [summary of the UNCRC Rights](#).



### CONNECT AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE GARDEN PARTY

### NEW RESOURCES

- *Questions for Parent Councils to Ask about School Improvement Planning* on the [School Improvement Planning for Parent Councils](#) webpage
- *Encouraging a Softer Approach in Parent Group Constitutions* on the [Constitutions Pack](#) webpage.
- *New to Connect Membership: Getting Started* which includes a how-to guide for registering on the Connect website.

## MY CONNECT DIGITAL LIBRARY

Next term, we will be rolling out *MyConnect*, our new digital resource bank for Connect Members. With its user-friendly layout, it will give access to films, templates and guides to support your group, all organised by topic. Watch this space!

Connect's Executive Director, Gavin Yates, attended a Royal garden party in June on behalf of Connect, along with a number of other Scottish organisations.

## NEW FILMS FOR MEMBERS

We're delighted to share new films in the *Quick Tips for Parent Groups* series.

Log in [here](#) to view them:

- *Getting Started*
- *Parent Group Meeting Agendas*
- *Parent Group Fundraising*
- *The Difference between Parent Councils and PTA Groups*
- *Parent Group Communications*
- *Succession Planning for Parent Groups*
- *School Transitions for Parent Groups*
- *School Improvement Planning for Parent Councils*.

# Connect Focus

Here's a round-up of some of Connect's recent meetings and invites!

## MEETINGS

- Scottish Parental Involvement Officers Network (SPION)
- Regular catch-ups with Member local authority parental involvement officers
- North Lanarkshire Council Parent Consultative Group
- Fife Council Parent Forum
- Scottish Government (SG) School Attendance Working Group
- SG Racism and Racist Incidents Network
- SG Joint Strategic Board for Child and Family Mental Health Implementation Group
- SG Advisory Group on Relationships & Behaviour in Schools
- SG Additional Support for Learning Project Board
- Disclosure Scotland
- Scottish Government Curriculum and Assessment Board
- Education Scotland: Curriculum Improvement Cycle Advocacy Forum
- BBC Education Broadcasting Council for Scotland.

## EVENTS

- Connect's Away Day for Staff and Board Members
- EIS Conference
- Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations Research Conference.



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## Education News

### EDUCATION REFORM

At the time of writing, the Education (Scotland) Bill is being debated in the Scottish Parliament. This Bill proposes that the SQA is replaced by a new body, Qualifications Scotland, and that an independent Inspectorate of Education is established. Read more about the Bill [here](#). Check out Connect's social media platforms for the latest news on the education reform proposals! [Curriculum, Qualifications and Assessment Reform - Progress to Date and Next Steps](#) was published this week too.

### RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION

The Scottish Parliament's Education, Children and Young People Committee is [seeking views](#) by 11 July on the Restraint and Seclusion in Schools (Scotland) Bill which has been lodged by Daniel Johnson MSP. Connect will submit a response.

### SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE PUBLISHED

New guidance on *Fostering a Positive, Inclusive and Safe School Environment* has been published. Connect [welcomed the guidance](#) but called for more resources to support schools with implementation.

### CALL FOR VIEWS

The Scottish Government has lodged its Children (Withdrawal from Religious Education and Amendment of UNCRC Compatibility Duty) (Scotland) Bill with the Scottish Parliament. It is at Stage 1 and the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee is [calling for views](#) on the Bill. Connect will be making a submission. The deadline is 1 September.

### RACISM AND RACIST INCIDENTS

The Scottish Government has published [Addressing Racism and Racist Incidents](#) interim guidance for schools.

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## Blog Spot

**Kristin Armour, Project Co-ordinator of the Scottish Assembly of Parents and Carers, shares her personal reflections on working with parents and carers**

*The Scottish Assembly of Parents and Carers is made up of hundreds of parent and carer Members from across Scotland. Connect hosts the Assembly.*



I've found my purpose - helping parents be heard in the conversations that shape our education system. For too long, I've watched families struggle to navigate a system that wasn't built with their children in mind. From my early days working in an autism-specific services to later roles in older people's care services, I've come to realise that what drives me is not just Additional Support Needs — it's the urgent need for deep, structural reform. Reform that centres people, not systems. Voices, not paperwork.

Recently, I have had the honour of working directly with parents and carers whose top priority is to make the system work better for children with ASN. I've been privileged to support members of the Scottish Assembly of Parents and Carers who are dedicated to this mission, and it's been one of the most meaningful experiences of my professional life.

These parents aren't just contributors to a process — they are the process. They bring raw honesty, rich insight, and relentless passion to every discussion. They know the system inside out because they've lived it: the late-night battles for support, the endless forms, the phone calls, the missed milestones, and the quiet grief of watching their children be misunderstood. And still, they show up — for their own kids and for so many others.'

[READ MORE HERE](#)

## easyfundraising for Connect Members

A purple banner for easyfundraising. On the left, the easyfundraising logo is above the text '8,000 ways your parent-run group can fundraise'. To the right of the text is a piggy bank icon. Further right is a grid of 18 retailer logos: amazon.co.uk, ebay, JUST EAT, Etsy, JOHN LEWIS, Argos, TESCO, Sainsbury's, M&S, screwfix, moonpig, Booking.com, trainline, Boots, Dunelm, SPORTS DIRECT, currys, and '+8,000 other retailers'.

Easyfundraising offers your parent-run group 8000 ways to fundraise. Sign your group up to easyfundraising, and you will receive free donations from over 8000 online retailers every time your parents, staff or school community shop. It's a way of receiving ongoing donations while people complete their normal shopping! Find out [more](#).

**Join our closed  
Facebook group for  
Connect Members!**

[JOIN NOW](#)

Our closed Facebook group for Connect Members is a space where parent groups can share knowledge and ask each other questions. Join the Facebook group now by answering all three questions.





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