

77TH Annual Report 2024–2025



Contents

Our Vision	3
Our Mission	3
Our Ways of Working	3
Convenor's Report	4
Our Year	4
Membership & Member Services	6
Communications	7
Policy and Surveys	8
Connect's Contributions	9
In Conclusion	10

supporting partnerships in education

Our Vision

A Scotland where every child and young person thrives through empowered parental engagement in education.

Our Mission

To advance effective parental and family engagement, inclusion, and representation in every early years and school community for the thriving future of Scotland's children and young people.

Our Ways of Working

1. As advocates of parental engagement, we put children at the centre

Connect's approach is 'children at the centre and parents by their side'.

2. We're trailblazers

We'll lead change, embrace and encourage innovation, and promote best practice in parental and family engagement.

3. We match passion with reason

Evidence and parental insight underpins all that we do.

4. We add value

We're solutions orientated; when we identify challenges, we offer solutions.

5. We collaborate

We amplify our impact through partnership; we're a reliable partner and trusted adviser.

6. We're proactive

We proactively seek to make our vision a reality; we're courageous, create new partnerships, and campaign for change.

7. We're adaptable

Recognising that the world is constantly changing, we remain nimble, adapting to achieve our objectives and realise our vision.

Convenor's Report

In 2024-2025, we further enhanced our offer to our Connect Members as *MyConnect*, the online digital library, was developed. This fantastic, easy to use and accessible space for Members to find resources, recordings of our online Information Sessions, the *Quick Tips for Parent Groups* series of short films, templates and much more was prepared throughout 2025 for launch in August 2025.

In addition, engagement work throughout the year led to more parent groups and local authorities signing up for Connect Membership for 2025-26.

Our work on behalf of parents and carers was as busy as ever - individual support for our Members, new resources, surveys, consultations, online sessions and the creation of *Connect's Parent Podcast* to add to our offer to all.

Our Year

Connect is all about its Members - the amazing parents and carers who contribute so much to their school communities as committed volunteers. Connect is here to support its Members as well as to make sure parents' voices and experiences are heard by policy-makers and education leaders

The Connect team, comprising staff and volunteer directors, met for an away-day in Dundee in May, gathering to think about organisational priorities (see illustration right). Ofcourse, building partnerships and supporting our Members are always top of the list! We are proud of our responsiveness and our baked-in enthusiasm for our work. Feedback from Members and partners is essential and greatly appreciated. All contacts with Members, covering a myriad of topics and concerns, help us learn more about how to improve and enhance our offer to you.



This responsiveness and our willingness to act have enabled our relationships with Connect Members, local authority and national partners to develop rapidly in 2024-25.

Groundwork was laid for an increase in local authority members at the start of 2025-26 and Connect's influence - our ability to ensure parents' voices are heard with policy-makers and politicians - increased significantly.

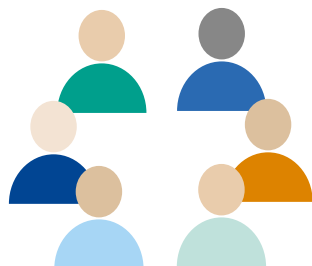
The work of the Scottish Assembly of Parents and Carers, hosted by Connect, expanded and progressed. The first cohort of volunteer Assembly members enthusiastically shared their experiences and views through focus groups and surveys, establishing the Assembly as a crucial means by which to hear parents' voices.

Our Year



From Gavin Yates, Executive Director:

'It's been a phenomenal first year for me with Connect. The Scottish Government's education reform agenda, setting up the Scottish Assembly of Parents and Carers, reaching out and making contact with parent groups, headteachers, our local authority partners and establishing good working relationships with policymakers and politicians at national level were early priorities for me. It's been a privilege to work with our dedicated volunteer directors and alongside our committed and passionate staff team. Relationships and positive communication really matter to me and I hope this is evident in Connect's work on behalf of parents, carers and parent groups. Connect's Members volunteer their time and energy to enhance and improve the school lives and educational experiences of children and young people. None of us could do what we do without you.'



A Connect Member's feedback:

'Connect supported us at a genuinely challenging moment for our parents' association. They provided practical help like attending meetings and clarifying expectations around our role. But just as valuable was the way they listened and stood alongside us as we worked through a difficult period in our relationship with the school. With Connect's guidance, we've come through that stronger, and our committee is back to doing what we do best: helping our school community to flourish.'



SCOTTISH ASSEMBLY OF PARENTS & CARERS

In 2024-2025, the 300+ members of the Assembly from all 32 local authorities contributed parents' views and perspectives on:

- Additional support for learning (leading to a major report)
- Education reform and parental involvement their firsthand experiences via a new series of powerful blogs
- and much, much more!

Assembly members also shared views on new visual identities (SQA), reducing class contact time (Scottish Government), the Centre for Teaching Excellence, communication with families about education reform (Scottish Government). The Assembly's social media following continues to grow and enews sign ups stood at 405. Visit [the Assembly's website](#).

Open to All: Connect's Offer to Parents and Carers

Building on Connect's offer to all parents and carers and further positioning Connect as the champion of parental engagement in Scotland, Connect offered 'open to all' partner sessions for parents and carers with Skills Development Scotland, Police Scotland, Volunteer Scotland and Skills Development Scotland.

These attracted high uptake from parents, carers and parent groups. This enables Connect to enhance our reputation and extend our reach to individual parents and carers. We also created more opportunities for parents and carers to sign up for our monthly enewsletter, boosting recipients.

A new discursive session on learning through play and kindergarten, *Talking Points for Parents*, was delivered with Upstart Scotland. *Talking Points for Parents* creates an opportunity for parents and carers to hear about and consider new ideas or aspects of Scottish education..

Connect's Parent Podcast launched with a podcast on Children's Rights, marking the first anniversary of the incorporation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child into Scottish law.

Membership and Member Services

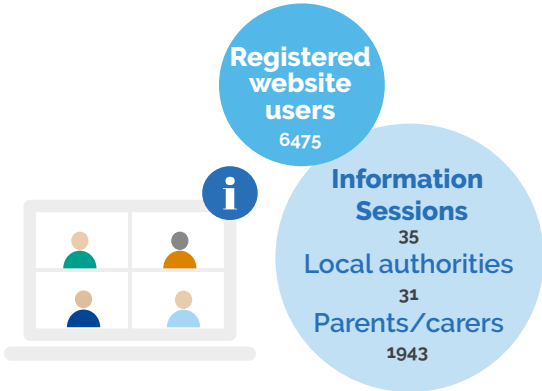
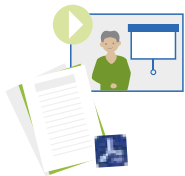
Connect successfully delivered 35 live online Information Sessions this year, attracting nearly 2000 parents, carers and parent group attendees, across 31 local authorities.

Popular core sessions for Members were *The Role of Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary*, *Social and Fundraising Events* and *Constitutions and AGMs*.. Onboarding sessions for new Members and an informal *Chat with Connect* for rural and small school members were added to our extensive programme.

The Kickstart package of support for new or rebooting parent groups was enhanced with on demand resources. Drop-in clinics for Members created an informal space for in-depth discussion and support. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. We are always delighted to [receive ideas](#) for improvement too!

Feedback from Members:

- 'Excellent access to online training and information tools'
- 'Very easy to deal with, knowledgeable, and dedicated.'
- 'So helpful being able to call for advice'
- 'I felt really well included'
- Quick replies and great advice'
- 'Sessions were friendly and welcoming'
- Membership makes such a difference.'



- 'Great to hear the views of other rural and small school groups'
- 'Value for money, accessible, and full of useful information.'

Type of Membership	2024-2025	2023-2024
Clubs & Organisations	15	17
Parent Councils inc local authorities (LA linked)	1947	1780
Parent Councils School & Self-funded	149	91
PTAs	102	93
TOTAL	2213	1984

Communications

We love to hear from parents and carers! Our communications platforms are a crucial part of Connect's services. We offer a wide range of resources, monthly eNewsletters, a termly 'round-up' newsletter for Members, as well as lively social media platforms. These provide opportunities for sharing information about Connect and Scottish education, supporting our Members and working with partners.

	Over 270 resources, including 26 Quick Tips films and over 40 recordings
	advice service by email (info@connect.scot) and telephone, plus Facebook Messenger advice service
	monthly eNewsletters (4339 subscribers, up 775)
	our termly newsletter Backchat (1482 recipients)
	4423 followers, up 394 on 2024-2025 1201 members of Connect's closed Facebook group for Members, Connecting Parent Groups (up 423)
	surveys (see overleaf)
	10,076 followers, down 532 on 2023-2024
	Our annual Members' leaflet
	40 recordings of Information Sessions, adding to our on-demand offer for the convenience of Members
	Over ten media statements and mentions on topics such as teacher workload, school attendance (Connect survey), behaviour in schools, parental confidence, Higher History, and more
	A dedicated X feed for educators (1521 followers)

**Figures in bold as at 31 July 2025.*

Resources for Connect Members and Social Media

In 2024-2025, the Connect team created over 70 new resources, bringing the total to over 270. With a focus on inclusion and accessibility, the resources included additional *Quick Tips* short films and some lovely new graphics-based resources which summarise and set out clearly advice and information for parent groups. Updating our resources about the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme proved to be an undertaking, as national guidance was changed and refined over several months. We were delighted to offer new guides and films about making the most of Connect Membership too.

The popularity and liveliness of our closed Facebook group for Members only, Connecting Parent Groups increased greatly in 2024-25. A new closed group, the [Rural and Small School Parent Group Network](#) enabled parents from those schools to support one another more easily too. The Connect team created lots of new accessible content in our *Top Tips* short films on YouTube, as well as launching our new podcast channel, Connect's Parent Podcasts We also launched on Bluesky and Instagram.



Policy and Surveys

As Scotland's long-standing independent parents' organisation and registered charity, Connect develops its policy positions in consultation with parents and carers and with partners. We do this through our parent surveys and through gathering views and ideas from our Members and partners eg on our Facebook page and through the Facebook closed group, through our helpline, via our live online Information Sessions and by email.

Connect's parent/carers surveys in 2024-2025 were characterised by good response rates and a renewed efforts from the expanded Connect policy team to make sure parents' experiences were shared with policy makers and those in positions to make changes. Education reform, behaviour in schools and attendance dominated the news agenda. The Scottish Government published national School Uniform Guidance, guidance on mobile phone usage in schools and its response to qualifications reform

In 2024-2025, we ran the following parent/carers surveys:



Connect's Parent/Carer Survey:
[Relationships, Rights and Communication - How is your Home-School Partnership Going?](#)
354 responses from **31** local authorities

Connect's Parent/Carer Survey:
[School Attendance: Hearing from Families about Supporting Children](#)
350 responses from **30** local authorities

Connect Parent/Carer Survey:
[Travel to School](#)
905 responses from **28** local authorities

Policy Work

It's been a busy year! Connect contributed to the following consultations and calls for evidence:

- The Scottish Parliament's Education, Children and Young People Committee Call for Views on the Restraint and Seclusion in Schools (Scotland) Bill
- The Scottish Government consultation on Schools - religious observance and religious and moral education
- The General Teaching Council for Scotland Fitness to Teach Rules
- The Scottish Parliament's Education, Children and Young People Committee's Call for Views on the Schools (Residential Outdoor Education) (Scotland) Bill
- The Scottish Parliament's Education, Children and Young People Committee Call for Views on the Education (Scotland) Bill.



Connect Out and About

Members of the Connect team met with:

- Parenting Across Scotland
- Bòrdna Gàidhlig
- Scottish Council of Independent Schools
- Place2Be
- Scottish Book Trust
- Audit Scotland
- Brilliant Club
- Shared Parenting Scotland
- Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills Jenny Gilruth
- Scottish Qualifications Authority
- SCQF
- Young Scot
- Children and Young People's Commissioner...and many, many more!

In 2024-2025, we met with many Member parent groups and local authorities such as

- Glasgow City Council
- Inverclyde Council
- Argyll & Bute Council
- Highland Parent Council Partnership
- South Lanarkshire Council
- North Lanarkshire Council
- Edinburgh City Council
- Fife Council...amongst many others!

Connect's Contributions

Connect participated in a wide range of working and reference groups and national boards:

Scottish Government

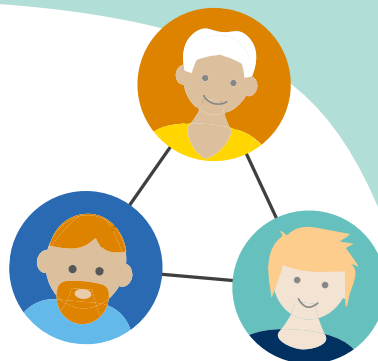
- UNCRC Awareness Raising Network
- Curriculum and Assessment Board
- Joint Strategic Board for Child and Family Mental Health Implementation Group - Awareness Raising and Promotion
- Parental Engagement Team
- Additional Support for Learning Project Board
- Qualifications Reform Working Group
- School Attendance Guidance Working Group
- Scottish Advisory Board on Relationships and Behaviour in Schools
- Mental Health in Schools Working Group
- Racism and Racist Incidents Working Group
- Additional Support for Learning Physical Environment Guidance - Steering Group Workshop
- Recording and Monitoring Shortlife Working Group
- Stakeholder Forum Framework for Inspection of Local Authorities

Other Partner Groups and Organisations

- Education Scotland/Care Inspectorate Shared Inspection Framework External Stakeholder Reference Group
- Education Scotland Curriculum Improvement Cycle Advocacy Forum
- PISA Stakeholder Reference Group
- Disclosure Scotland
- Volunteer Scotland
- SCVO Intermediaries
- BBC Scotland Education Broadcasting Council
- Scottish Parental Involvement Officer Network (SPION)

Connect provides the secretariat for the Scottish Parliament's Cross Party Group on Families Supporting Children's Learning:

This Cross Party Group (CPG) is comprised of MSPs and interested organisations. This year, it met twice and heard from Upstart Scotland, the Scottish Assembly of Parents and Carers and Parenting Across Scotland. Read more about the Cross Party Group [here](#).



We submitted written evidence to the Scottish Parliament's Education, Children and Young People Committee on:

- Proposed Restraint and Seclusion (Prevention in Schools) Member's Bill
- Scottish Parliament Education, Children, and Young People Committee Call for Views: Additional Support for Learning
- Scottish Parliament Finance and Public Administration Committee Call for Views: National Performance Framework: Inquiry into proposed National Outcomes.

Connect made a lengthy submission to the Scottish COVID-19 Inquiry to:

- Flag up the six parent/carer surveys we undertook during COVID and to make sure the voices of thousands of parents and carers are heard during the Inquiry
- Tell the story of COVID from a family perspective, showing the enduring impacts on the lockdowns and restrictions on children, young people and their parents/carers.

In conclusion

This Annual Report clearly shows that the Connect team remains as energised and committed as ever! As well as responding to our Members' needs, and becoming more active than ever in the Scottish education policy landscape, to make sure diverse parents' and carers' voices are heard, a number of significant organisational developments took place this year.

Intense progress was made on our new digital library for Connect Members, a dedicated and easy to use space with videos, templates, recordings, guides and more all organised by theme. With over 200 resources to support our Connect Members, preparing for the launch of *MyConnect* in August 2025 was no mean technical and design feat!

A staffing restructure enabled career progression for some of our team, as roles were redefined and clarified. You will see from this report that staff and Connect's fantastic volunteer directors work hard to ensure parents' experiences and views are heard in Scottish education. The Scottish Assembly of Parents and Carers has, through the efforts of its 300+ volunteer members, become an established and credible way for parents and carers to play their part in improving Scottish education. We remain proud to be Scotland's independent parents' organisation, supporting around 2000 Member parent groups, promoting parental involvement and family engagement and enabling parents' voices to be heard through our policy work and surveys.

the Connect team, Connect Board members, partner organisations - for the work you do. By focusing on meeting the needs and aspirations of children, young people and their families as they journey through Scottish education, we have a crucial shared endeavour and a common purpose.

Denny Henderson



CONVENOR



Staff and Board

There were a few changes to our team in 2024-2025.

Kristin Armour joined the staff as the Project Co-ordinator of the Scottish Assembly of Parents and Carers and Lydia McDonald was appointed as Policy Officer.

Connect board members Wendy Tubi and Lindsay Law stood down after many years of highly valued contributions. A massive thank you to Wendy and Lindsay!

'I'd like to thank you all - parent volunteers, the Connect team, Connect Board members, partner organisations - for the work you do... we have a crucial shared endeavour and a common purpose'

Our Memberships

Connect has membership of the following organisations:



connect

CONNECT IS A TRADING NAME OF SCOTTISH PARENT TEACHER COUNCIL

The Melting Pot, 15 Carlton Road, Edinburgh EH8 8DL
0131 474 6199 • info@connect.scot • connect.scot

 ConnectScot
 @connect_scot

THE SCOTTISH PARENT TEACHER COUNCIL IS A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE,
COMPANY NO SC151086 SCOTTISH CHARITY NO SC019168

77TH Annual Report 2024–2025