



Improving Lives Together
Ambition | Compassion | Integrity



Education Service

Parental Involvement and

Engagement Strategy

2023-2026



Introduction

This strategy outlines Perth and Kinross Council (PKC) Education Service (ES) commitment to delivering the best possible outcomes for children and young people in partnership with parents as identified within [Education \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#), [Scottish Schools \(Parental Involvement\) Act 2006](#), and the [National Improvement Framework](#) .

This document is for all those who work with children and young people across Early Learning and Childcare (ELC), Primary and Secondary sectors and for other partners of Perth and Kinross Council. It should support partnership with parents to help to ensure that every child and young person achieves the best they can in ELC settings, at school and beyond.

[Learning together: national action plan on parental involvement, engagement, family learning and learning at home 2018 - 2021](#) sets out a vision for parental involvement and engagement and takes account of national and international evidence base as well as policy and practice expertise across the Scottish education system. It provides a national vision but allows for local and community innovation and flexibility. The guiding vision is that every parent and family should be supported to be involved and engaged in their child's education throughout their learning journey.

[Tayside Strategy for Parents 2019-2024](#) identified the following four areas as improvement priorities to help to deliver the vision for parental involvement and engagement.

- Parents have access to good quality information that supports them make informed choices, plan for, and meet their family's needs.
- Communities are inclusive, understand children's needs and support families to thrive.
- Families have access to effective services that are delivered by a skilled and confident workforce that value the role of parents.
- Policies that affect family life are supportive and deliver positive outcomes.

This strategy also takes account of the PKC responses in the biannual parental involvement and engagement census May 2022. This is the parental engagement survey that is sent out every two years at the direction of the Scottish Government. This helps to support improvement at a local level and monitor progress at a national level.

Partnership working and collaboration with relevant services will be central to the successful implementation of the improvement plan, and key to delivering outcomes relating to [Whole Family Wellbeing](#) and [The Voice of the Infant, National Practice Guidelines and Infant Pledge \(2023\)](#).

Our Vision

Perth and Kinross (ES) values parents as partners in their child's learning and recognises that parental involvement and engagement should be embedded within policies, strategies, and practices in every setting.

"A Perth and Kinross where everyone can live life well, free from poverty and inequalities" (Perth and Kinross Council, Corporate Plan, 2022/23 to 2027/28).

Our Improvement Aims

Our aims take account of the Scottish vision in Learning Together for parental involvement and engagement, family learning and learning at home from pre-birth to age 18 with the aim to:

- ensure that parents are supported to be fully involved in the life and work of their children's early learning and childcare setting or school.
- encourage and support collaborative partnerships between practitioners, parents, and families.
- provide the right support and information to enable parents to engage in their child's learning and understand children's rights.
- improve information sharing about and expand access to family learning opportunities which meet the needs of children and families.
- improve the efficiency of all communication between practitioners, staff, parents, and families.
- improve the skills and knowledge of leaders, front-line practitioners, and support staff.

The key principles which inform effective parental involvement and engagement are guided by the needs and interests of children and their families. Parents are recognised as the primary educators of their children and so positive relationships built on mutual trust, respect and effective partnership are required to achieve positive outcomes. Parental responsibility also includes supporting the wellbeing of their child. This is reflected in the principles identified in Learning Together and the Tayside Strategy for Parents 2019-2024.

We aim to embed the following essential features of effective, high quality parental involvement and engagement in our improvement plan.

- Recognition of Article 5 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which respects the responsibilities and rights of parents and families to guide their children.
- A nurturing ethos that embeds the strong supportive relationships between families, practitioners, and senior leaders.
- Good communication with parents and across services.
- Collaborative, open, and honest working partnerships that ensures children and young people benefit from the support, skills and knowledge of their families and education professionals.
- Support which meets the needs of parents and families to engage with their children's education and addresses the barriers that prevent some parents accessing or feeling included in services, ensuring that we recognise the individual circumstances within families.

Parents as Partners

The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 gives parents the right to receive information about their children's learning, to be represented and have their views heard and expressed. It places a responsibility on local authorities to improve parental involvement in three ways - parental representation, home-school partnerships and learning at home.

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement describes the ways in which parents can get involved in the life and work of the setting. Parental involvement includes activities such as participation in the work of the parent council, parental representation in the development of the vision, policies or improvement plans of the setting and other key decisions. It also describes involvement of parents in recruitment of senior staff and opportunities for volunteering.

Parental Engagement

Parental engagement is recognised in the National Improvement Framework as one of seven key drivers in achieving excellence and equity in Scottish education.

Parental engagement is about parents' and families' interaction with children's learning. Providing opportunities, supporting, and building capacity for parents to capitalise on children's learning experiences is key in raising attainment and closing the poverty related attainment gap. Parents have an important role to play in helping their child's learning and development at home but also in settings and the wider community.

Family Learning

Family learning encourages family members to learn together as a family with a focus on intergenerational learning. It is an approach to engaging families in learning that has an impact on the whole family. It recognises the important contribution of the extended family including the involvement of grandparents and of other significant adults in a child's or young person's life. Family learning activities can also be designed to enable parents to learn how to support their own child's learning.

[Family Learning Framework](#) is a tool which outlines the purpose and principles of family learning to support a consistent and structures approach to family learning provision in Scotland. It outlines the purpose and principles of family learning to support a consistent and structured approach to family learning provision in Scotland.

Learning at Home

This is the learning which happens in the home, outdoors or in the community when children and young people are not in settings or engaging remotely with education staff.

Conventionally this has accounted for 85% of a child's time which offers a significant opportunity for learning. Learning at home can take place through everyday activities that families already do and can overlap with aspects of organised or active learning activities. Parents are entitled under the Parental Involvement Act (2006) to receive information and support to help develop their child's learning at home and in the community.

Coronavirus Pandemic

The coronavirus pandemic has had a significant impact on all aspects of Scottish education, and parental involvement and engagement is no different.

The infection control mitigations that were in place as children and young people returned to schools and ELC settings prevented parents from accessing buildings. This resulted in limited or no opportunities for parents to engage in activities that had previously been available such as in person meetings, volunteering, and visits to classrooms for shared learning experiences.

Practitioners, children and young people and families used creative ways to continue to communicate and learn with each other during this time. There is a need to ensure the benefits of using digital ways to connect with families is not lost and families continue to feel connected and confident engaging with settings and supporting their child's learning.

What we know about Current Good Practice

This strategy sets out a clear expectation and sense of direction for all settings in delivering high quality opportunities for parental engagement, involvement, and family learning. It recognises what is already working well in Perth and Kinross and sets out the key improvement themes for the next three years.

There are many examples of good practice in settings across Perth and Kinross that demonstrate the principles and overarching vision set out in this document. Some examples are detailed below.

Parental Involvement

- Every parent of a child in school in Perth and Kinross is a member of their school's Parent Forum. The Parent Council is made up of members of the Parent Forum and should represent parents' views. The Parent Council is a formal link between parents and the school's Leadership Team and the Local Authority. The Local Authority supports Parent Councils through consultation, training, funding, and advice.
- The Chairperson of each Parent Council is invited to meet the Executive Director of the Education Service and the Senior Management Team twice a year to represent parental views across the whole Authority.
- Representatives from Parent Councils are involved in the recruitment of Head Teachers.

Parental Engagement

- All schools and ELC settings have access to electronic platforms to share information with parents about their child's progress in learning. This has made information about children's learning more accessible for parents. A range of digital platforms are used to communicate information to parents including parent portal, virtual learning environments, and the Microsoft 365 suite.
- Education settings deliver induction meetings and workshops for parents to inform them about children's learning.
- Education settings are sensitive to family groupings to enable all parents to have the same access to information.

Family Learning

- Families have some opportunities to learn together at events and sessions organised by settings.
- Family learning practitioners provide support for family learning within ELC settings, primary schools, and communities.
- Community Link Workers and Community Learning Assistants support young people and families both in school and in the community to improve their lifestyle, health, and wellbeing. They work collaboratively with Local Authority services, identifying and responding to need through locality plans, school plans and research data.

Parental Involvement and Engagement Census

The Parental Involvement and Engagement Census 2022 data highlighted the following, as areas that parents overall were satisfied with:

- school staff are approachable and can be contacted within school opening hours.
- school staff respond helpfully to questions and comments.
- parents are kept well informed about their child's learning.
- the cost of school activities is affordable.

What we need to do to improve

The Parental Involvement and Engagement Census 2022 data highlighted the following areas where parents overall felt more could be done:

- involve parents in consultations about improvement priorities.
- provide feedback from parent council.
- increase opportunities for and information about family learning.
- improve information for parents about how to help their child learn at home.
- provide support for parents to understand children's rights.
- increase opportunities for helping or volunteering which has been limited over the past two years by infection control mitigations.

As a result, we will:

- Continue to build on and strengthen relationships between all families, practitioners, and senior leaders.
- Continue to support settings to be open and encourage the involvement of parents in the work they do.
- Continue to provide useful information for parents to ensure they are well informed including information about ways to help with their child's learning at home and to support parents' understanding of children's rights.
- Increase opportunities for family learning and improve the sharing of information about family learning opportunities with families and settings.
- Continue to identify and reduce barriers to parental involvement and engagement.

Measuring Success

Raising attainment and ensuring high aspirations will continue to be a priority to drive up standards, reduce inequity and close the attainment gap. We will have a consistent and sustained focus on improving partnerships with parents to secure positive outcomes for children, young people, and families.

We will regularly collate and analyse information and feedback from parents to assess the extent to which we are making good progress, where good practice can be shared and extended and how we can address areas for improvement. The three-year improvement plan detailed below will be reviewed annually and will consider responses of biannual parent survey in 2024.

Conclusion

Perth and Kinross Council, Education Service, is committed to improving outcomes for all children and families across the Authority. The PIE Strategy lays the foundations for the Service to work in meaningful partnership with parents/carers, school and setting leaders, and other key stakeholders to drive forward the identified improvements. Close monitoring

of the Strategy will ensure it continues to meet their needs of parents, carers, children, and young people.

The Improvement Plan that follows will underpin our work and it allows The Service to meet the expectations as laid out in Learning Together, The National Action Plan for Scotland (2023) and the outstanding actions from the Tayside Strategy for Parents (2019-2024).

Roles and Responsibilities

Schools and settings will

- Give due consideration to the PKC PIE Strategy over the next three years.
- Incorporate elements of the Strategy into their self-evaluation and improvement planning processes.
- Ensure parents and carers are made aware of the Strategy and are meaningfully involved in its implementation.

The Local Authority will

- Regularly monitor the implementation of the Strategy.
- Measure the impact of the actions within the Strategy on outcomes for children and their families.
- Make any required changes to the Improvement Plan during the implementation period of the Strategy to ensure it continues to remain fit for purpose.

Improvement Plan 2023-2026

Essential Features referred to in Improvement Plan

1. Recognition of Article 5 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which respects the responsibilities and rights of parents and families to guide their children.
2. A nurturing ethos that embeds the strong supportive relationships between families, practitioners, and senior leaders.
3. Good communication with parents and across services.
4. Collaborative, open, and honest working partnerships that ensures children and young people benefit from the support, skills and knowledge of their families and education professionals.
5. Support which meets the needs of parents and families to engage with their children's education and addresses the barriers that prevent some parents accessing or feeling included in services.

What do we want to achieve?	Essential Feature	How will we get there?	Key personnel	Evidence and measures
ELC staff will be trained in Solihull approaches by Dec 2026 to support strong relationships.	2	Five new Solihull trainers in place. Deliver one Solihull training programme per month. Solihull training is a mandatory feature of induction for all new ELC staff.	Parenting and Family learning team lead Solihull Trainers	95% of ELC staff trained in Solihull approaches. Training evaluation data Register of completed trainees. New induction materials in place. Minute of meetings.
ELC staff will be confident in using the Solihull approach to support families.	2	Establish termly Solihull in practice networks.	Parenting and Family learning team lead Solihull Trainers	Ongoing evaluation and records of network meetings Ongoing evaluation from staff regarding confidence in using the Solihull approach.
Most primary school staff and targeted secondary staff will be trained in the whole	2	Design a four-year roll out programme to schools that have identified Solihull	Solihull trainers	Register of completed trainees.

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<p>school approaches to Solihull.</p>		<p>training as a priority for improvement.</p> <p>Deliver whole school Solihull training as per programme.</p> <p>Five new Solihull trainers from schools will be in place.</p>		<p>Training evaluation data</p>
<p>Settings will broaden volunteering opportunities for families.</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>Share volunteering information and good practice, including national framework information, across settings.</p> <p>Settings will review volunteering arrangements to broaden experiences that have been constricted because of the pandemic.</p>	<p>Quality Improvement Team</p> <p>Officers supporting PIE</p> <p>Senior management in settings</p>	<p>Survey responses from schools and settings on volunteering opportunities.</p> <p>On-going self-evaluation by settings.</p> <p>Data from biannual survey indicates that 52% of parents agree that there are opportunities for them to help or volunteer in their child's school or setting. (2022 data 32%)</p> <p>Increased numbers of volunteers in schools and settings</p>
<p>Increase parental engagement across settings.</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>Gather baseline information on barriers to parental engagement.</p> <p>Gather and share case study examples of highly effective parental engagement.</p> <p>Schools and settings will meaningfully involve parents in ongoing self-evaluation and</p>	<p>Senior management in settings</p>	<p>By June 2026, 100% of schools and settings in Term 4 visit survey state that they involve parents in the self-evaluation process (2023 data 28%)</p> <p>90% of parents in the 2026 biannual PIE survey state agree that the school or setting seeks their views and opinions on school policies. (2022 data 36%).</p> <p>76% of parents in the 2026 biannual PIE survey agree that their views help the school or setting to decide on</p>

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		improvement planning activities.		the priorities in their improvement plan. (2022 data 26%) Scrutiny of improvement paperwork from schools and settings.
Families will have access to appropriate family learning experiences.	2, 3, 4, 5	<p>Create a directory of suggested family learning experiences including those that can be provided by the setting and those provided in partnership with others.</p> <p>Promote the directory and the importance of family learning in relevant documentation and through development sessions for managers.</p> <p>Encourage and support schools to plan and deliver family learning experiences.</p>	Parenting & Family Learning Team	<p>Directory of family learning is available for all settings.</p> <p>Setting self-evaluation returns.</p> <p>38% of parents in the PIE biannual survey state that their child's school or setting offers a selection of family learning activities. (2022 data 18%)</p> <p>All schools and settings have an appropriate programme of family learning in place.</p> <p>Family learning feedback evaluations from parents and children.</p>
Practitioners have access to professional learning to support them with parental involvement and engagement and family learning.	3,4,5	<p>Share good practice across settings. Include case studies of effective practice in communications (newsletters and social media).</p> <p>Identify most relevant training for practitioners to</p>	ES Learning and Development Team	<p>Number of case studies gathered.</p> <p>Minutes of meetings.</p> <p>Training offer is publicised on the ES learning hub.</p> <p>Key themes from quality improvement activity collated and analysed.</p>

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		<p>support family learning.</p> <p>All lead trainers to consider barriers and adjustments for families as appropriate.</p> <p>Practitioners will access PIE and family learning professional learning opportunities as offered by national bodies.</p>		<p>Number of case studies shared.</p> <p>ES learning hub evidence, for example, site usage, training evaluations.</p>
<p>School and ELC settings have access to, are promoting and using an identified online resource for parents.</p> <p>Parents will have access to useful information about how to help their child.</p>	3,5	<p>Work with appropriate council services to create an online resource.</p> <p>Promote online resource to parents through settings' communications and wider social media.</p>	<p>Service Manager</p> <p>Information Officer</p>	<p>Monitor parent access to the online resource.</p> <p>Data in biannual survey shows 15% improved parent satisfaction in the information available to them about how they can help their children. (2022 data 50%)</p>
<p>Parents have access to a forum (parents panel or equivalent).</p> <p>The majority of parents use the forum to provide them with a voice which is helping to inform decisions, policy and practice relating to them and their children.</p> <p>Parent Councils use the forum to consult</p>	3,4,5	<p>Create an online tool that facilitates consultation with parents and carers.</p> <p>Promote the online tool to support parents to be regularly consulted regarding areas that are connected to education, children, and families.</p>	<p>Service Manager</p> <p>Information Officer</p> <p>Sector representatives</p> <p>ES - Research Analysis and Performance</p>	<p>Online tool is in place.</p> <p>School data shows improved parental engagement in consultation using the new forum.</p> <p>Data in biannual survey shows a 15% improvement in parent satisfaction around the school seeking their views and opinions on school policies. (2020 data 36%)</p>

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<p>and feedback to parents around the work of the parent council.</p>				
<p>An increasing number of parents indicate that they understand their children's rights.</p>	<p>1,3</p>	<p>Develop materials for promoting children's rights with parents across all sectors. Ensure material take account of ASN legislation.</p> <p>All schools and ELC settings will share information with parents about children's rights.</p>	<p>Quality Improvement Officer with remit for UNCRC</p>	<p>Materials developed and shared with schools and settings.</p> <p>Parent Council Chair Forum</p> <p>Data in biannual survey shows 10% improvement in parent satisfaction in the school helping them to understand their child's rights. (2022 data 40%)</p>