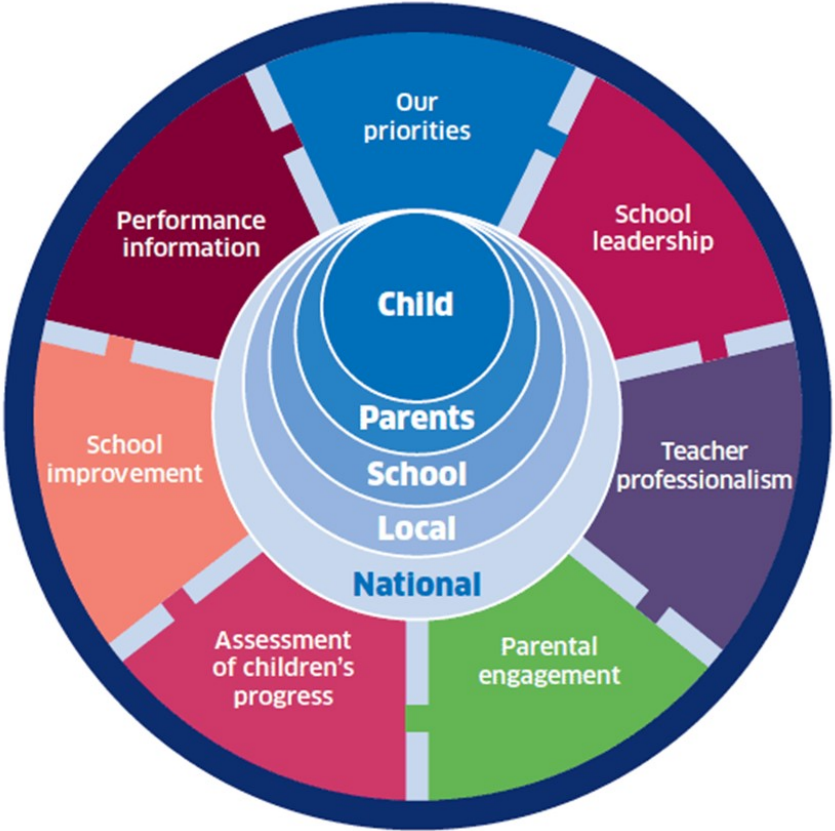


Education Service

Parental Involvement and Engagement Strategy 2021-2024



August 2021



Clackmannanshire Council

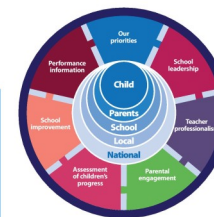
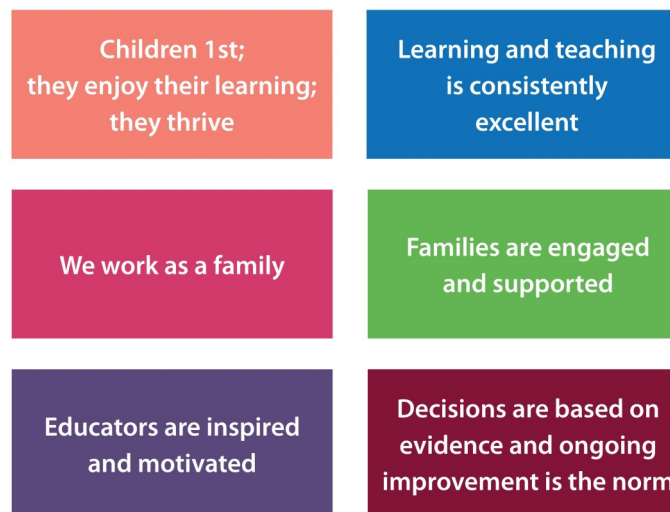
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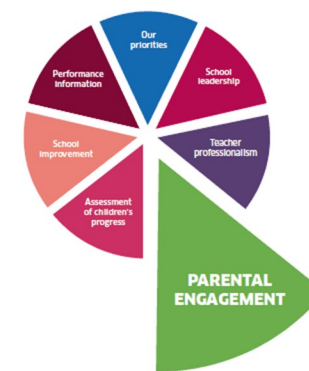
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Education Service - 6 Big Goals



Parental Engagement

This covers parental and family engagement in the learning of children and young people, as well as parental involvement in the life and work of school. Parental engagement focuses on ways in which parents, carers and families can best be supported to develop the skills and confidence to engage in, and encourage, their children's learning in school and in everyday life. Schools and partners can play a vital role in supporting families to do this effectively and with confidence.



Education: Improvement Framework and Plan 2021

Introduction

Parents, carers and families are by far the most important influences in a child's life. Their support plays a vital role at all stages of education. Parental involvement and engagement in their child's education, both in early learning settings and in school, has a big influence on children and young people's confidence, achievement and attainment. The active involvement and empowerment of parents and carers can help create a learning community in which children and young people can engage positively with educators and their peers - particularly important as we recover from the Covid-19 pandemic.

In Clackmannanshire, we will continue ensure that parents and carers are welcomed to be actively and meaningfully engaged in their child's learning and life at school, because when schools and families work together, the outcomes for children are better. Early Learning and school communities will help families to support their children to learn in school and at home.

This Parental Involvement and Engagement Strategy, following on from the original strategy published in April 2018, demonstrates the ongoing commitment by Clackmannanshire Council education service to improve the quality and extent of parent and carers engagement in their child's learning and underline the important role they play. Through this strategy we can continue to build on existing good practice and encourage further opportunities for parents, carers and schools to work in partnership through strong, mutually respectful relationships. Parental involvement and engagement includes, but is not limited to -

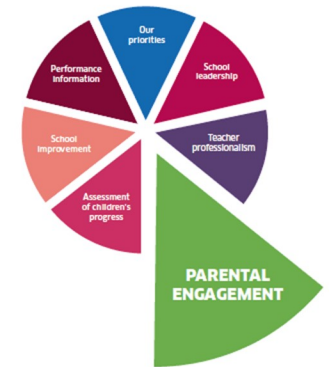
- parents and carers being welcomed as active, empowered partners in the education and wellbeing of their children,
- parent and carer representation on Parent Councils or associations,
- involvement in school self-evaluation activities and processes, planning and improvement,
- support for parents and carers to continue their child's learning at home, remotely, and in the community,
- schools and Early Learning settings providing Family Learning opportunities and,
- parents and carers volunteering to help with fundraising activities or by sharing skills and knowledge to enrich the curriculum.

The Scottish Government published their Learning Together action plan in 2018 and it is currently undergoing a refresh in the light of challenges and opportunities created by the Covid-19 pandemic. This strategy takes account of that work and the likely refresh in focus of the Learning Together plan to set an ambitious agenda to improve further Parental Involvement and Engagement in Clackmannanshire post Covid-19 pandemic.

This strategy sits within a framework of planning and reporting including the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan produced by the Clackmannanshire Community Planning Partnership and the Children's Services Plan. It reflects the structure and actions included in the People Service Business Plan and the NIF (National Improvement Framework) Plan.

I would like to thank the parents, carers, head teachers and council officers who contributed to the refresh of this strategy, taking account of the views of a range of stakeholders. We will evaluate and review this strategy every year in line with the improvement cycle of the National Improvement Framework and refresh it every three years to take account of new legislation, developing practice in this area and local and national context.

Cathy Quinn, Chief Education Officer Interim



"Parents, carers and families are by far the most important influences in a child's life."

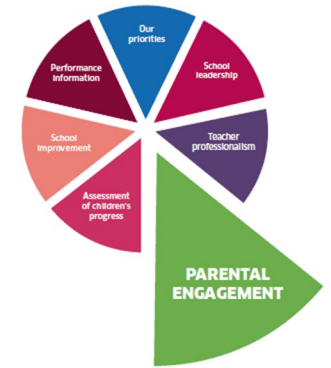
Guidance on the Scottish Schools
(Parental Involvement) Act 2006

Glossary

Parent: Parent refers to the mother or the father of a child or young person, or to any foster carers, relatives or friends who have been given responsibility for looking after or bringing up a child or young person. We will use the term 'parent' or 'parents' to refer to all parents and carers throughout this document.

Schools: This strategy is for schools, early learning and childcare settings and Parent Councils with the involvement other partner providers of Clackmannanshire Council. The term school may be used throughout this document to refer to a range of settings.

ASN (Additional Support Needs): Children and young people who require additional support, in order to help them make the most of their school education and to be included fully in their learning.



Abbreviations used throughout this strategy

CC - Clackmannanshire Council

S - Schools

EL&C - Early Learning and Childcare

P - Parents and Carers

PC - Parent Council

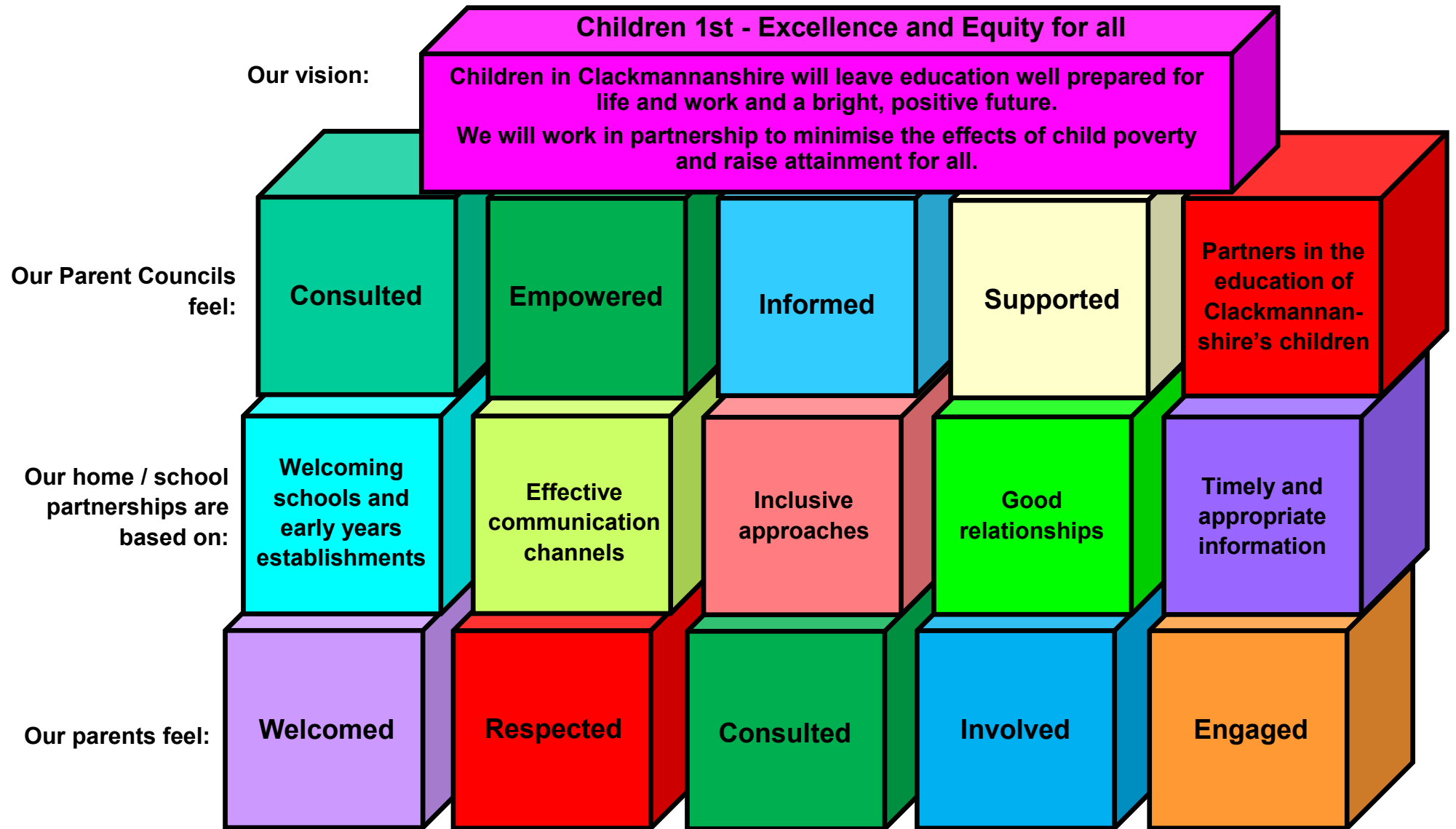
Why is Parental Engagement important?

“The available international evidence confirms that parental involvement and engagement in children’s learning supports improved attainment and achievement.”

Family learning encourages family members to learn together, fostering positive attitudes to lifelong learning. We want to improve and increase the ways in which parents, carers and families can engage with teachers and partners to support their children and increase the voice of parents and carers in leading improvements within schools.”

2018 National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan for Scottish Education.

Our Clackmannanshire Vision for Parental Involvement in Schooling and Parental Engagement in Learning



Welcoming and Removing Barriers

All parents can expect to be warmly welcomed by staff in our schools and Early Learning establishments and actively encouraged to participate in the life and work of the school and Early Learning establishment in ways which suit their family circumstances and valued as partners in the education of Clackmannanshire's children.

What we want to achieve	Who is responsible?	How we will do it?	When we will do it	What impact will this have?
We will build respectful relationships, built on trust, to underpin school and parent partnership.	CC, S, ELC, P, PC	Parents and staff will engage positively to co-create a mutually respectful, supportive relationship built on trust.	During the life of this strategy and beyond	All parents and staff will work together to get the best possible outcome for children and young people.
Parents and families can be welcomed by the school using online, virtual means as well as face to face.	S, ELC, P, PC	Schools can offer online, virtual tours of the school to parents and 'Meet the Teacher' sessions. Parent Councils can invite parents to attend virtual Parent Council meetings.	During the life of this strategy and beyond	Parents have options in how they engage with the school and Parent Council.
Parental engagement in Clackmannanshire will take into account any barriers to involvement for families.	CC, S, ELC, P	Schools will offer parents the chance to discuss and agree what is needed to support them to get involved - this may include offering meetings at different times of the day, online meetings, phone calls, open door policy etc.	During the life of this strategy and beyond	All parents have equitable opportunities to be involved in their child's education.
All parents are welcomed to be involved and engaged in their children's education.	CC, S, ELC, P, PC	Schools will support parents to be equitably involved in their child's education - this includes - non resident parents, parents in prison, in the armed forces or who have physical or learning disabilities, or other protected characteristics*, or have deprived or challenging family circumstances.	During the life of this strategy and beyond	Barriers preventing parents from getting involved are overcome.

* The **characteristics** that are protected by the Equality Act 2010 are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- marriage or civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- sexual orientation

Welcoming and Removing Barriers - cont'd

All parents can expect to be warmly welcomed by staff in our schools and Early Learning establishments and actively encouraged to participate in the life and work of the school and Early Learning establishment in ways which suit their family circumstances and valued as partners in the education of Clackmannanshire's children.

What we want to achieve	Who is responsible?	How we will do it?	When we will do it	What impact will this have?
Parent volunteers will be welcomed to support school activities and share their skills - when the time is right and in a Covid-safe manner	CC, S, EL&C, P, PC	Parents who volunteer will have a clear role descriptor and be members of the PVG Scheme if deemed necessary.	During the life of this strategy and beyond	Parent volunteers will contribute to and enhance the learning outcomes of children in the school.
	CC, S, EL&C, P, PC	Volunteers will be supported by a designated member of staff in school or EL&C.	During the life of this strategy and beyond	Parent volunteers will be clear about their role and supported to carry it out appropriately.

Measures

- Clackmannanshire's Parent Census
- School Inspections and Pre-Inspection Questionnaires
- Number of Volunteers
- Level of Complaints

Communication and Information

Our schools will communicate information to parents that is easily understood, accessible and timely and uses the appropriate media. Parents know which methods of communication they can choose to use and which enable them to engage with their child's learning and build a good relationship with the school.

What we will do	Who is responsible?	How we will do it?	When we will do it	What impact will this have?
Schools will communicate information to parents in a variety of easy to read, accessible, and timely ways making best use of digital technology developed due to Covid-19.	CC, S, EL&C, P, PC	Schools will communicate in a variety of ways which may include: school website/blog, Twitter, Class DoJo, School App, e-mail, text message, newsletter, snapshot jotters, sharing learning meetings (virtual and face to face), attainment trackers, Meet the Teacher (virtual and face to face), drop in sessions, open door policy etc.	During the life of this strategy and beyond	Parents will know how to access information about the school in an accessible way that gives them time to plan for events and activities.
Schools will co-create with parents, a Parent Communication Strategy* which outlines the ways schools and parents communicate information.	S, EL&C, P, PC	Schools will consult and collaborate with parents on creating a *Parent Communication Strategy showing which methods the school uses to communicate, how often and how parents can access information on particular topics or contact the school.	During the life of this strategy and regularly updated thereafter	Parents will know what communication they can expect from the school, where to find out information they need and how they can contact the school.
Education Service can signpost parents to sources of support such as those provided by partner agencies e.g. Mental Health, health and wellbeing support.	CC, S, EL&C, PC	The Education Service, Schools and Parent Councils can share information with parents on support provided by partner agencies and how parents and families can access that.	During the life of this strategy and beyond	Parents will know who best to contact for information and support for their children and family.

An exemplar Communication Plan/Strategy* is available on the Connect members only area of their website. It covers -

- **Who** the target audience for communication is e.g. staff, pupils, parents or partners etc.
- **What** the messages are / what we want to communicate
- **How** we are going to communicate the message
- **When** we are going to communicate and how often e.g. monthly update on last Friday of the month
- **Who** is doing the communication tasks and who will respond to communication feedback



Communication and Information Cont'd

Our schools will communicate information to parents that is easily understood, accessible and timely and uses the appropriate media. Parents know which methods of communication they can choose to use and which enable them to engage with their child's learning and build a good relationship with the school.

What we will do	Who is responsible?	How we will do it?	When we will do it	What impact will this have?
Websites / blogs will contain key information for parents from Early Years through to Secondary School including information about additional support needs.	CC, S, EL&C	School / Early Years websites / blogs will make key documents available to parents including the School Handbook, School Improvement Plan, Standards and Quality Report and PEF plans and include links to other useful information and organisations.	During the life of this strategy and regularly updated thereafter	Parents will be able to openly access key information about their child's educational establishment.

Measures

- Website / blogs hits and engagement with other social media
- Attendance levels at Parents Evenings and Meet the Teacher events including virtual events
- Parent Council feedback
- Clackmannanshire's Parent Census
- School Inspections and Pre-Inspection Questionnaires

Empowering Parents - Parent Voice

Parents can expect to have the opportunity to express their views on a regular basis and have these taken into account on matters affecting the education of their children, the school's arrangements for promoting parental involvement and other matters or issues of interest to parents. Parents are members of the Parent Forum at a school and have a right to be involved in school decision making. The views of all parents can be represented to the school, education authority and others, via an independent Parent Council. Parents are also involved in matters such as school improvement planning as well collaborating on any other relevant topic.

What we will do	Who is responsible?	How we will do it?	When we will do it	What impact will this have?
Schools will consult parents about plans affecting their child's education.	CC, S, EL&C, P, PC	Parents are involved in consultation, decision making, improvement planning and reporting via the Parent Council / Parent Council Forum meetings, surveys, focus groups, HMI / Care Commission inspections and other school consultations.	During the life of this strategy and beyond	Parents participate in consultations about the school and their views influence any decisions made and future plans of the service. 'you said, we did'.
Schools will ensure parents are collaborative partners in the creation of the School Improvement Plan (SIP).	S, EL&C, P, PC	Schools and parents will co-create the School Improvement Plan and help set priorities for the year ahead, including PEF expenditure.	During the life of this strategy and beyond	Parents views will help to shape school improvement priorities and PEF expenditure for the coming year.
Schools will publish the School Improvement Plan on the school website and create a shortened, parent friendly version if necessary.	S, EL&C	All parents will be informed that the SIP is accessible on the school website (may be in a shorter, parent-friendly version) and available from the school on request.	During the life of this strategy and beyond	Parents will know where to find information about the key aspects of the school's improvement aims.
Schools will publish the school handbook annually with appropriate input from parents and the Parent Council.	S, PC	The school handbook must be produced collaboratively with the Parent Council.	During the life of this strategy and beyond	The school handbook contains useful information for parents.

Empowering Parents - Parent Voice

Parents can expect to have the opportunity to express their views on a regular basis and have these taken into account on matters affecting the education of their children, the school's arrangements for promoting parental involvement and other matters or issues of interest to parents. Parents are members of the Parent Forum at a school and have a right to be involved in school decision making. The views of all parents can be represented to the school, education authority and others, via an independent Parent Council. Parents are also involved in matters such as school improvement planning as well collaborating on any other relevant topic.

What we will do	Who is responsible?	How we will do it?	When we will do it	What impact will this have?
Clackmannanshire Education Service will survey parents regularly on their views about the education their children receive.	CC, S, EL&C, P	A regular Parent Census will gather the views of parents. The results will be analysed and inform improvement planning.	During the life of this strategy and regularly updated	Parents can feedback their views in the Parent Census.
Clackmannanshire Education Service will help parents understand their child's rights under the UNCRC.	CC, S, EL&C, P	Information sessions and materials are being developed both nationally and locally to inform and support parents on what UNCRC means for their child.	During the life of this strategy and beyond	Parents will understand their child's rights and be enabled to guide, support and care for them.

Measures

- Feedback from parents in school surveys
- Parent Council feedback
- Clackmannanshire's Parent Census
- School Inspections and Pre-Inspection Questionnaires

Engagement in Children’s Learning at home and in school or nursery

Parents will be supported and encouraged to become actively engaged in their child’s learning at school, at nursery, at home and in the wider local community. Engagement should be based on trust and relationships - always with the interests of the children first and foremost.

What we will do	Who is responsible?	How we will do it?	When we will do it	What impact will this have?
Schools will engage with parents to support a positive learning environment at home and at school.	S, EL&C, P	All school staff will support parents to be engaged in their children’s learning and find inclusive ways and tools such as Google Classroom, See-Saw, E-learning Journals, materials and resources, Parent Workshops, You-Tube videos, homework tasks, and digital platforms etc. to help parents do this with confidence.	During the life of this strategy and beyond	Parents will feel supported by the school to continue their children’s learning at home.
Schools will ensure that families face no socio-economic barriers in supporting and engaging with their children’s learning.	S, CC, P	Schools will implement Clackmannanshire Council’s education service Poverty Strategy and continue to support families to access online learning technology and connectivity.	During the life of this strategy and beyond	Children living in poverty are not disadvantaged in their learning.
Schools and families will work together to plan successful transitions drawing on good practice in virtual transitions which took place during the Covid-19 pandemic.	S, EL&C, P	Schools will involve parents and pupils in transition programmes and events including enhanced transition for children with additional support needs.	During the life of this strategy and beyond	Families feel supported and informed through the transition process.

Measures

- Attendance levels and feedback from Parents Evenings, Meet the Teacher, Course Choice and Transition events - some may be virtual
- Parent Council feedback
- Clackmannanshire’s Parent Census
- School Inspections and Pre-Inspection Questionnaires

Family Learning

Clackmannanshire Council recognises the importance of Family Learning whether it is talking, playing or reading with children or more formalised Family Learning activities in school or in the local community. Our schools will work with partners to promote, support, and provide Family Learning opportunities, taking into account the diversity of parents and children.

What is Family Learning?

Family Learning encourages family members to learn together as and within a family, with a focus on intergenerational learning. Family learning activities can also be specifically designed to enable parents to learn how to support their children's learning. "Family learning is a powerful method of engagement and learning which can foster positive attitudes towards life-long learning, promote socio-economic resilience and challenge educational disadvantage." (Family Learning Network, 2016).

What we will do	Who is responsible?	How we will do it?	When we will do it	What impact will this have?
Schools work with families to identify Family Learning needs.	CC, S, EL&C, P	Schools will consult parents about Family Learning opportunities they would like to see offered and that they would like to participate in.	During the life of this strategy and beyond	Family Learning offered by schools addresses identified needs, is relevant to families and encourages participation.
Schools work with partners to provide Family Learning opportunities.	CC, S, EL&C, P	Schools will work with partners in their cluster, across Clackmannanshire and nationally to co-create and offer Family Learning opportunities.	During the life of this strategy and beyond	Partners help schools deliver relevant and impactful Family Learning.
Schools promote Family Learning opportunities to parents.	S, EL&C, PC	Schools will advertise and promote Family Learning opportunities using the most appropriate and effective communications methods ensuring all parents are informed.	During the life of this strategy and beyond	Parents know what Family Learning is on offer at their child's school.
Clackmannanshire Council will liaise with school-based family leads to gather current practice on Family Learning.	CC, S, EL&C	Clackmannanshire Council will gather and share good and developing Family Learning practice in each establishment.	During the life of this strategy and regularly updated	We will gain an overview of the Family Learning offered and identify and share good and developing practice.

Measures

- Range of Family Learning opportunities offered
- Attendance levels and feedback from Family Learning events
- Clackmannanshire's Parent Census
- School Inspections and Pre-Inspection Questionnaires

Parental Representation / Parent Councils

Clackmannanshire Council and our schools will continue to promote the role and operation of the Parent Council and will provide support and training to enable the office bearers to carry out their roles effectively.

The principal responsibilities of the Parent Council, as contained in the Parental Involvement (Scottish Schools) Act 2006, are as follows -

- supporting the school in its work with pupils
- representing the views of parents
- promoting contact between the school, parents, pupils, providers of nursery education and the community
- reporting to the Parent Forum.

We will promote and support Parent Councils in every one of our schools, and a representative parent group in our Early Years establishments. All parents will be encouraged and supported to become involved in the Parent Council to ensure a wide variety of views are represented. Senior Managers and Head Teachers in Education will consult and work collaboratively with Parent Councils on important matters affecting children's education and schools.

What we will do	Who is responsible?	How we will do it?	When we will do it	What impact will this have?
Clackmannanshire Council will continue to support Parent Councils; and Head Teachers in their role as Adviser to the Parent Council.	CC, S, PC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council will offer, via Connect (SPTC), training sessions on Parent Council related matters, an advice service and public liability insurance etc. • The Council will continue to support a Clackmannanshire-wide Parent Council Chairs Forum - some meetings will continue to be virtual - and discuss service-wide topics such as education budget setting etc. 	During the life of this strategy and beyond	Parent Councils will feel confident and supported to carry out their role with access to information, training, advice and a forum where their voice is heard and helps shape the way forward for the service.
Schools will continue to support Parent Councils to meet, virtually and/or face to face, to fulfil the requirements of their constitution.	S, PC	Schools will support Parent Councils with the use of appropriate technology to enable virtual meetings and/or mixed with Covid-safe, face to face meetings when these resume.	During the life of this strategy and beyond	Parent Councils continue to meet and discharge their responsibilities under the Parent Involvement (Scottish Schools) Act 2006.

Parental Representation / Parent Councils Cont'd

Clackmannanshire Council and our schools will continue to promote the role and operation of the Parent Council and will provide support and training to enable the office bearers to carry out their roles effectively.

The principal responsibilities of the Parent Council, as contained in the Parental Involvement (Scottish Schools) Act 2006, are as follows -

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- reporting to the Parent Forum.

We will promote and support Parent Councils in every one of our schools, and a representative parent group in our Early Years establishments. All parents will be encouraged and supported to become involved in the Parent Council to ensure a wide variety of views are represented. Senior Managers and Head Teachers in Education will consult and work collaboratively with Parent Councils on important matters affecting children's education and schools.

What we will do	Who is responsible?	How we will do it?	When we will do it	What impact will this have?
Parents, most often members of the Parent Council, are supported to participate in the recruitment of senior staff.	CC, S, PC	Parents will be supported to be an active participant and carry out their role in the recruitment of senior school staff.	During the life of this strategy and beyond	Parents feel confident to carry out their role in the recruitment of senior school staff.
Parents from under represented groups are encouraged to join their Parent Council.	S, PC	Schools will support Parent Councils to invite parents, particularly from under-represented groups, to join the Parent Council at any time during their child's schooling.	During the life of this strategy and beyond	Parent Councils are representative of the Parent Forum.

Measures

- Attendance levels and feedback from Clackmannanshire's Parent Councils and Parent Council Forum
- Participation and feedback from the recruitment and selection process
- Clackmannanshire's Parent Census
- School Inspections and Pre-Inspection Questionnaires

Complaints

Clackmannanshire Council has a complaints handling process, refreshed in 2021, which has been agreed by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). Parents can be confident that any complaints will be acted on in an effective and timely manner - initially at first point of contact with the school or service. Any more serious, complex complaints will be investigated and responded to by Senior Managers within the Education Service.

What we will do	Who is responsible?	How we will do it?	When we will do it	What impact will this have?
Ensure that parents are aware of the Clackmannanshire Council's complaints process	CC, S, ELC	Include links to Clackmannanshire's complaints handling process on school & E&LC websites.	During the life of this strategy and beyond	Parents will know the process for making a complaint.
	CC	Update the complaints information for parents leaflet and post it on the Clackmannanshire Council website.	During the life of this strategy and updated thereafter as needed	Parents will know the process for making a complaint.

Measures

- Analysis and number of complaints
- Learning from complaints to avoid similar issues in future

References to other sources of information

- **National Improvement Framework and improvement plan 2021**
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/2021-national-improvement-framework-improvement-plan/>
- **Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006**
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2006/8/pdfs/asp_20060008_en.pdf
- **Learning Together: national action plan on parental involvement, engagement, family learning and learning at home 2018 – 2021**
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/learning-together-scotlands-national-action-plan-parental-involvement-parental-engagement/>
- **An Empowered System - Empowerment of Parents**
<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/an-empowered-system>
- **Engaging Parents and Families - a toolkit for practitioners**
<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/engaging-parents-and-families-a-toolkit-for-practitioners/>
- **How Good Is Our School - 4th edition (HGIOS4)**
https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/Frameworks_SelfEvaluation/FRWK2_NIHeditHGIOS/FRWK2_HGIOS4.pdf
- **Family Learning Framework**
<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/FamilyLearningFrameworkApril18.pdf>
- **Parent Councils**
<https://www.clacks.gov.uk/learning/parentcouncils/>