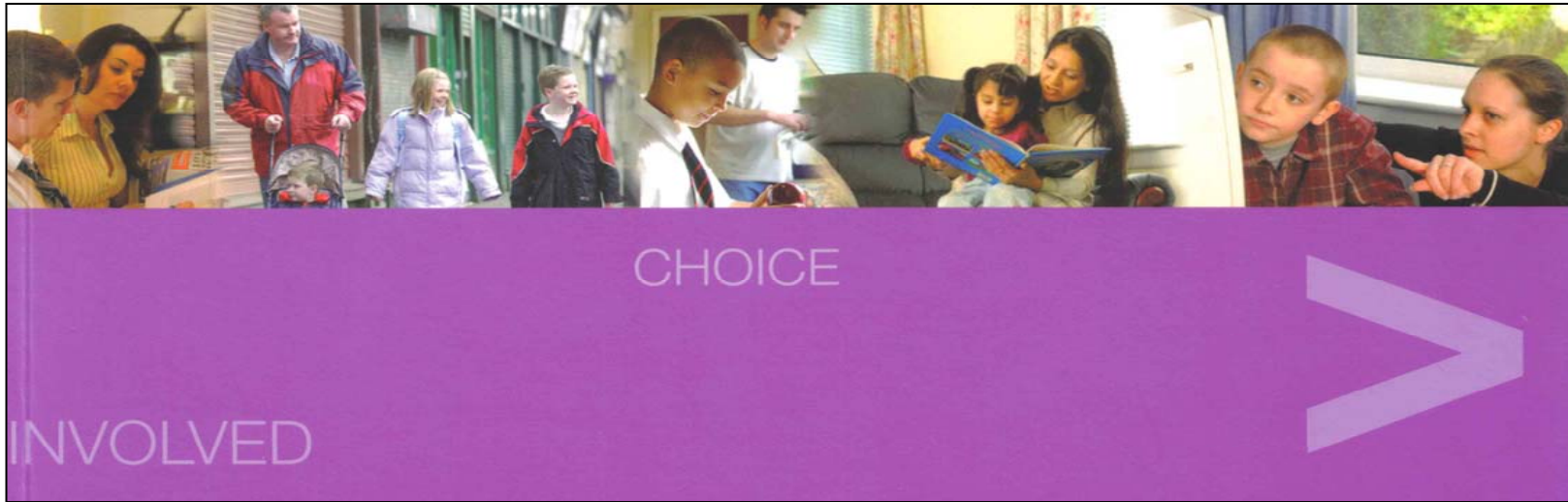


Parents as partners in their children's learning



Parental Involvement Act





Overview

- Parental Involvement Act
- Parent Councils
 - Job of Parent Councils
 - Job of Local Authority and Headteacher
 - Consultations and timescales
- Where do we go from here?





Parental Involvement Act

What does it mean and where has it come from?

- Act received royal assent in June
- Places duties on Scottish Ministers to promote parental involvement
- Places requirement on authorities to develop a strategy to promote parental involvement
- Act covers many areas





Links with Other Legislation

Education Authorities should also consider their duties under other relevant legislation eg –

- Education (Scotland) Act 1980
- Standards in Scotland's Schools etc (Scotland) Act 2000
- Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004
- Children (Scotland) Act 1995





Benefits for Children

- Easier for children to learn when encouraged at home
- They will do better when parents are involved
- Access to more activities when more adults help
- Concerns can be dealt with quickly
- Children are happy when their parents enjoy school events





Benefits for Parents

- Their children do better
- They are more able to help and encourage
- They have more information about their child's education
- Builds parent's confidence and skills
- Benefits of positive relationships between parents and the school
- Reassurance that children are receiving good education





Benefits for the School

- Parent's skills complement teacher's skills
- More activities
- Improved attainment and behaviour
- Good ideas to support the children
- Teachers can talk through ideas for developing plans for the school
- Parents can give advice on reaching other parents





Benefits for the Education Authority

- Wider range of ideas and experience
- Feedback on how policies and education provision work in practice
- Able to discuss plans and ideas for education developments
- Helps to ensure education policies link well with other policies and provision
- Helps meet parental and family needs





What do we mean by Parental Involvement?

- Act recognises 3 broad levels of engagement with parents:
 - Learning at home
 - Home/school partnership
 - Parental representation





Who do we mean by Parents?

“Parent” includes guardian and any person who is liable to maintain or has parental responsibilities (within the meaning of section 1 (3) of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995) in relation to, or has care of a child or young person

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When things go well!!!

Examples of “What it looks like when things go well”

- School is a welcoming place
- Opportunities for parents to meet with teachers
- School events/activities take account of any specific cultural or religious festivals
- Parents are able to get actively involved
- School is aware of any particular difficulties
- Activities make it easy for families to take part





Next Steps for Falkirk Council?

- Scottish Executive Guidance / Toolkit
- Seek views of all interested parties when developing strategy / complaints procedure
- Mapping support for parents
- Look at barriers to involvement
- Look at Additional Support Needs





What are the timescales?

- Draft the strategy document and complaints procedure between January-June 2007
- Discuss with Parent Councils in August 2007
- Make any necessary changes
- Implement strategy and complaints procedure





Any Questions So Far?

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Parent Forums and Parent Councils

- Parent Forum – if you are the parent of a child at that school – you are automatically a member of the Forum
- The Parent Forum can choose whether to be represented by a Parent Council and how the Parent Council is set up (not one size fits all)





When do the new Parent Councils start?

- School Boards will continue as normal until 31 July 2007
- Parent Councils will start on 1 August 2007
- PAs/PTAs are not affected (or are they?)





What will a Parent Council do?

- Supporting the school in its work with pupils / partnership with the school
- Representing the views of parents
- Promoting contact between the school, parents, pupils, providers of nursery education and the community
- Reporting to the Parent Forum





What will a Local Authority do?

- Promote the establishment of Parent Councils
- Support Parents Councils to work for the good of the school (finance, information, training)
- Consult and communicate with Parent Councils





How will the Headteacher and school help?

- Promote ethos of welcoming parents into the school and encourage good communication in a variety of ways
- Include strategy for parental involvement in the School Development Plan
- Advise Parent Council or Parent Forum on any matter falling under their remit
- Attend Parent Council Meetings
- Report to the Parent Council and Forum annually on the school's performance and their ambitions for the school





Anything else?

- The Parent Council can make representations to HMIE on any matter once they have consulted the headteacher and the local authority
- The Parent Council can choose their own name e.g. Friends of X School





What happens next in your school?

- Set up a meeting to bring together a working party to discuss options for the new Parent Council or do you want to do this another way?
- Consult the Parent Forum on what they think the Parent Council should look like (do they want a Parent Council at all / joint Parent Council with another school?)
- Ask the pupils for their views.
- Use the TOOLKIT.
- Ask us for help and advice.





What happens next? (tonight)

- Talk in groups about what your Parent Council could be e.g.
 - how many members
 - how are they elected
 - how often does the Council meet
 - do you want to co-opt additional members etc using TOOLKIT materials
- Discuss how to take it forward in your school
 - any volunteers to be contact representatives?





What happens next in the local authority?

- We tell all parents that they are members of the Parent Forum
- We tell all parents that we are preparing a scheme (making a plan) to set up a Parent Council in their school (unless they do not want us to).
- We will ask the Parent Forum to vote on the draft scheme once we have it from the working party.





Any Questions?

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Remember this does not have to happen overnight!!

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