



Parental Participation in Schools

2000 - 2001

Guidance to Parents and Carers

Statement of Principle

Falkirk Council Education Services recognise, value and actively support the central role of parents in the education of their children.

Education's overarching policy document is entitled "Learning to Achieve". The emphasis placed on parental participation is strongly embedded in the principles of this policy.

In order for schools to be most effective in providing the best opportunities for all children the participation of parents is of great importance.

Falkirk Council Education Services promote parental involvement in the life of schools, which in turn allows for parental partnerships to be developed. The strengthening of such a commitment is seen as a vital factor in securing the future success of a quality provision of education for children at all stages.

It is recognised that the role of parents is often carried out by care-givers, grandparents and other significant adults in children's lives, and wherever possible they are included in parental participation activities.



Survey on Parental Participation

A recent survey conducted throughout the Authority showed common trends already established in the following areas of parental participation:

- Home-school links
- Assessment and reporting on pupil achievements
- The role of parents and carers in schools, including in classrooms
- The involvement of parents and carers in school self-evaluation and inspection
- Parental involvement in the education of children with special educational needs
- The involvement of parents in school projects, eg outdoor garden development, healthy eating promotions

Annual Parents' Conference

One way in which Falkirk Council Education Services promote the importance of parental participation is through its Annual Parents' Conference at which parents and carers can find out about current policies and practice. Parents and carers have an opportunity to raise issues and voice their opinions at these conferences.

Schools in Falkirk Council welcome contact with parents and carers regarding any aspect of their provision. Meetings with staff and visits to the schools can be arranged at the convenience of all concerned.

Examples of Good Practice in Falkirk Council

Team of Interested Parents (TIPS)

This scheme involves a group of parents willing to participate in the consultation process responding to national, local and school documents. Parents can do this in their own time and this allows working parents to become involved in the life of the school.

Homework/Home Study Policy

Parents and carers are involved in devising and implementing a school homework policy. The opinions of parents and carers are valued and acted upon.

Parent Workshops

Many different forms of daytime and evening workshops are operating where parents and carers can update their understanding of the current approaches to the curriculum and can find out ways in which they can support their children's learning.

Parents' Input to School Development Plans

A small group of parents and carers provide useful information and expertise to the process of development planning, particularly in areas such as school safety/security and promoting positive behaviour. Other areas where specific skills and expertise are identified can be supported by parental involvement. This involvement will be extended further in the near future.

Parents' Rooms

Many schools provide an area or a room for parents and carers to use for a variety of purposes such as meetings with staff and other professionals or parent groups.

Out of School Hours Learning (OSHL)

As the scope of Out of School Hours Learning expands more and more parents are becoming involved in assisting with the running of clubs at the end of the school day and in holiday periods, as well as other activities. Interested parents and carers should contact their local school.

Adult Learning in Schools

Adult learning opportunities are available in all schools. Interested adults should contact the Headteacher of their local schools. A good example is Denny's Wider Access to School Project (WASP) where adults in the community are encouraged to attend school for daytime formal and informal learning activities. Leisure classes and school classes can be accessed. Comfortable lounge facilities are available.

Invitation to Parents and Carers

If you are interested in becoming involved in any of the activities outlined in this leaflet or have any other contributions you wish to offer, please contact your local school for further information. Your support will be welcomed, valued and will make a difference.

Falkirk Council Education Services support parents and carers in their participation in their children's learning and raising their achievement by encouraging them to:

- Develop links with their school and children's guidance teacher
- Attend parents' meetings regularly and respond to advice
- Support school functions and activities
- Be active members of School Boards
- Encourage, monitor and sign homework
- Discuss school work in the home
- Participate in adult learning projects (eg WASP and ALIS in this Council)
- Support family literacy projects - parents and carers as prime educators
- Offer personal support to out of school hours activities/childcare strategy
- Encourage their children's participation in study support, Easter and Summer schools
- Take part in curriculum workshops
- Support the school's positive behaviour policy.