Renfrewshire Council

To: **Education and Children's Services Policy Board**

On: **22 August 2019**

Report by: **Director of Children's Services**

Heading: **Parental Engagement in Family Learning**

1. Summary

1.1 This report summarises Children's Services 'Walking Together with Parents in Renfrewshire: Parental Engagement Strategy' (Appendix 1). This strategy is Renfrewshire's approach to parental engagement, involvement and family learning.

1.2 The strategy sets out the service's commitment to supporting and encouraging parental involvement in children's learning across our learning establishments, at home and to continue working together to build strong, trusting partnerships through the work of our service.

1.3 There are four strategic priorities included in this strategy. These are:

- develop a nurturing culture and ethos at all levels to encourage positive home-school relationships;
- support establishments to work in partnership to develop a range of high-quality opportunities for parental engagement, involvement and family learning within establishments and at home;
- develop opportunities for practitioners to access high-quality, evidence-based professional learning to maximise consistency of approach; and
- encourage all partners to explore creative, evidenced-based opportunities to support parent's in their child's learning within establishments and at home.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Education and Children's Services Policy Board is asked to note the content of the report and parental engagement strategy.

3. Background

3.1 In 2018, the Scottish Government launched a national action plan "Learning together: national action plan on parental involvement, engagement, family learning and learning at home 2018 – 2021" for parental involvement and engagement from pre-birth to age 18. This takes account of national and international evidence base and Scottish education system expertise. The action plan provides a national vision but allows for local and community innovation and flexibility.

3.2 Shortly after this launch, a working group was convened to re-fresh the parental engagement strategy in Renfrewshire. The group consisted of a range of stakeholders including:

- parents;
- head teachers;
- education managers;
- home-link;
- representatives from the National Parent Network Forum; and
- project leads with a remit in parental engagement

3.3 Taking cognisance of the key messages in the national action plan, the group met regularly to review evidence and best practice in our local context. A series of consultation activities including head teacher and parent conversations were hosted to ensure that the voices and opinions of those stakeholders were included in the development of the strategy.

3.4 The strategy recognises the vital role that parents play in the journey of their children and in the life of our schools and early years centres. Therefore, our approach in Renfrewshire is family-centred, needs-led and based on positive relationships.

3.5 "Walking Together with Parents in Renfrewshire" will support our learning establishments in their parental engagement journey. The strategy reflects our services commitment to ensuring that there is no poverty of aspiration, ambition or opportunity for Renfrewshire's children.

3.6 A plan on a page (appendix 2) will support this strategy along with a digital resource which will include links to national and local documents and best practice case studies.

4. **Progress**

4.1 A consultation and review process took place over a period of seven months which included key stakeholders. Comments were received and considered by the working group chair and project manager.

4.2 The strategy will be formally launched in September 2019.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** –*none.*

2. **HR & Organisational Development** – *none.*

3. **Community Planning** – *none*

4. **Legal** – *none.*

5. **Property/Assets** – *none.*

6. **Information Technology** – *none.*

7. **Equality & Human Rights**
The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. **Health & Safety** – *none.*

9. **Procurement** – *none.*

10. **Risk** – *none.*

11. **Privacy Impact** – *none.*

12. **Cosla Policy Position** – *not applicable.*

13. **Climate Risk -** *none.*

List of Background Papers

(a) Background Paper 1 – none

LJ/LMcA/LG
13 August 2019

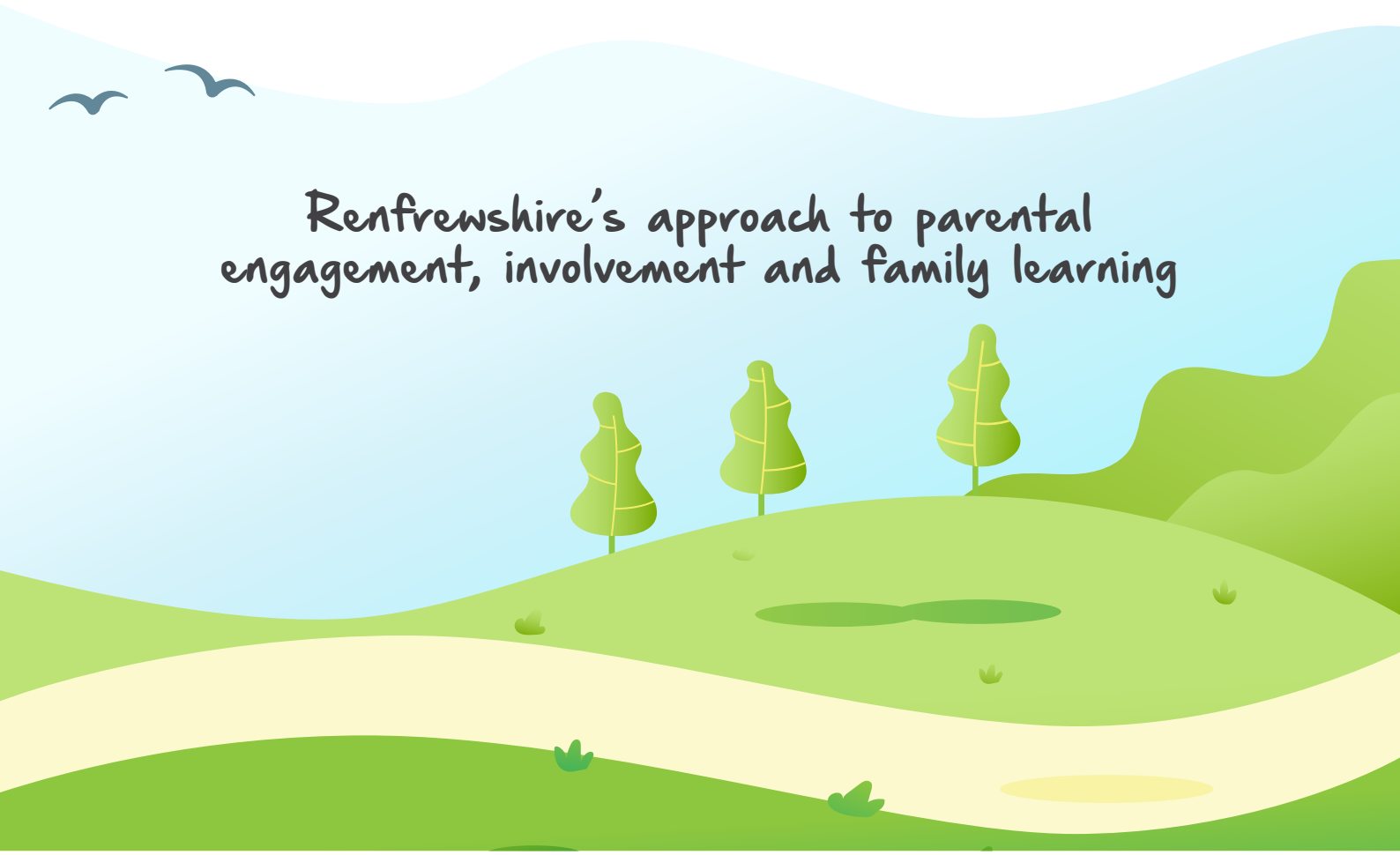
Author: **Lauren Johnston**
Project Manager
Lauren.johnston@renfrewshire.gov.uk
0141 618 4023

Appendix 1

WALKING TOGETHER

WITH PARENTS IN RENFREWSHIRE

Renfrewshire's approach to parental engagement, involvement and family learning



CONTENTS

WALKING WITH PARENTS IN RENFREWSHIRE 3

1. INTRODUCTION 3

2. DEFINITIONS 4

3. WHO IS THIS FOR? 5

4. RENFREWSHIRE'S PRINCIPLES + AIMS 5

5. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 5

6. EVIDENCE BASE 6

7. LEGISLATION 7

8. COMMUNICATION 7

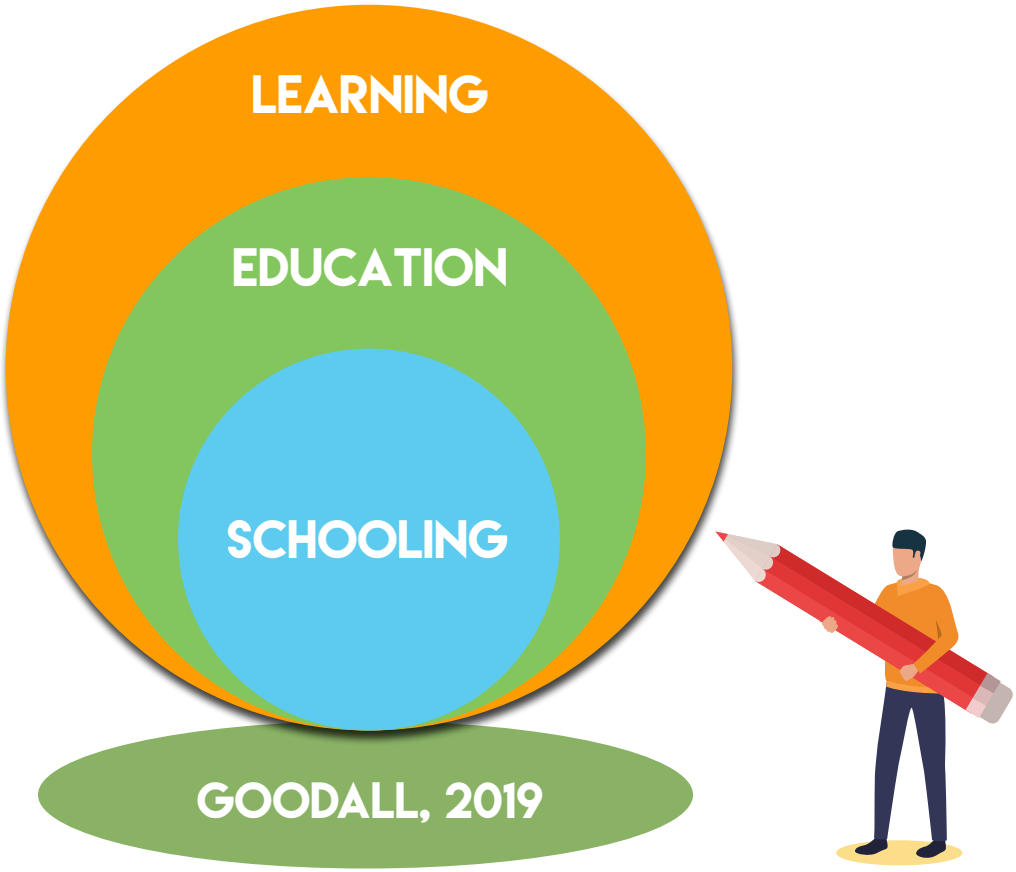
9. PROMOTING EQUALITY + EQUITY 7

CONCLUSION 8

WALKING TOGETHER
WITH PARENTS IN RENFREWSHIRE

1. INTRODUCTION

Children's Services in Renfrewshire has a strong relationship with parents and carers. We recognise the vital role that parents play in the journey of their children and in the life of our schools and Early Years Centres. This strategy sets out our commitment to supporting and encouraging parental involvement in children's learning across our education establishments and at home (see Goodall diagram) and to continue working together to build strong, trusting partnerships through the work of our service.



2. DEFINITIONS

In line with **Learning Together: Scotland's national action plan on parental involvement, parental engagement, family learning and learning at home 2018 – 2021**, consultation with the strategy group has led to the following agreed definitions of key terms used in this strategy.

CHILD/CHILDREN

When the strategy refers to "children" or "child" it means a person under the age of 18.

PARENT(S)

"Parents" means anyone with parental responsibilities and others who care for or look after children or young people. We recognise the important role of grandparents, kinship carers, foster parents, wider family, separated parents and corporate parents. The term "parents" and "parents and carers" are therefore used interchangeably.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parental Involvement describes the ways in which parents can get involved in the life and work of the early learning and childcare setting or school or in the ways that parents can get involved in "schooling".

Parental Involvement includes:

- Representation in the development of policies and improvement plans
- Volunteering opportunities
- Help with homework or keeping track of children's work and on-going, two-way communication between home and school or early learning and childcare setting.

PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT

Parental Engagement is about parents' and families' interaction with their child's learning.

It can take place in the home, at school or in the community. Where it takes place is not important. The important thing is the quality of the parent's engagement with their child's learning, the positive impact that it can have the interaction and mutual development that can occur as a result of that interaction.

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 designed to enable parents to learn how to support their children's learning.

LEARNING AT HOME

Learning which happens in the home, outdoors or in the community. It can take place through everyday activities that families already do and can overlap with aspects of organised or active activities.

3. WHO IS THIS FOR?

- Parents across Renfrewshire
- All staff working in Renfrewshire Council education establishments
- Council members and any other partners with a role in increasing and improving parental involvement in education

4. RENFREWSHIRE'S PRINCIPLES + AIMS

Our approach in Renfrewshire is family-centred, needs-led and based on positive relationships. Learning takes place in a range of ways and environments including in the home and wider community. Therefore, in order to meet the key aims of this strategy, it is essential that all partners work together.

5. WHAT ARE THE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES?

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	WHAT IS THE EXPECTED IMPACT?	HOW WILL WE MEASURE THIS?
Continue to develop a nurturing culture and ethos at all levels to encourage positive home-school relationships	Parents feel comfortable approaching staff in their child's establishment and feel their views about their children's learning are listened to and considered.	» Parental Involvement and Engagement survey » Inspection Report data » Case Studies » Quality Improvement Framework visits
Support establishments to work in partnership to develop a range of high-quality opportunities for parental engagement, involvement and family learning within establishments and at home	Establishments will develop a shared approach to parental engagement, involvement and family learning. Parents feel increasingly confident that their views help establishments to decide priorities in the school improvement plan. Parents and establishments work together to ensure opportunities for parents to engage with their child's learning within the school, home or community.	» Quality Improvement Framework visits » Parental Involvement and Engagement survey » Standards and Quality Reporting » Pupil Equity Fund plans and principles checklist
Develop opportunities for practitioners to access high-quality, evidence-based professional learning to maximise consistency of approach	Practitioners will demonstrate increased skill and confidence in implementing and supporting parental engagement, involvement and family learning within their establishments and communities.	» Teacher confidence surveys and professional learning evaluation » Quality Improvement Framework visits » School Self Evaluation and Improvement Planning » Standards and Quality Reporting » Case Studies
Encourage all partners to explore creative, evidenced-based opportunities to support parents in their child's learning	Parents, practitioners and partners will have access to effective and creative practice case studies from across Renfrewshire. A central digital hub will support parental engagement and access to relevant documentation and materials to increase opportunities to work together and share expertise and knowledge.	» Quality Improvement Framework visits » Digital resource usage » Parental Involvement and Engagement survey

◄ FEEDBACK TO ESTABLISHMENTS, PARENTS AND PARTNERS ►

EVIDENCE BASE

WHAT DOES THE EVIDENCE SAY?

Why parents matter in learning...

To inform our strategy, a review of the evidence and literature base was conducted. In addition to being a key driver in the National Improvement Framework, the evidence shows:

Around 80% of the difference in how well children do at school depends on what happens outside the school gates
(Rasbash et al, 2018)

Parental involvement programmes that focus on helping parents to support their children's learning at home have a positive impact on reducing the poverty related attainment gap (Sosu and Ellis, 2014)

Children tend to succeed where families are 'supportive and demanding' therefore creating a 'culture of much higher expectations for young people, both in our homes and in our schools'
(House of Commons, 2014)

Providing a 'stimulating learning environment outside school can be crucial for children's educational achievement, as well as for their social and emotional development'
(Save the Children, 2013)

There is a recognition that the early years environment and parental engagement predicts level of attainment in upper primary school
(Sylvia et al, 2008)

LEGISLATION

Our approach in Walking with Parents in Renfrewshire is underpinned by the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 and Learning together: Scotland's national action plan on parental involvement, parental engagement, family learning and learning at home 2018–2021. This Scottish Government plan sets out a vision for parental involvement and engagement for the next three years and covers the journey that a child takes from pre-birth to age 18.

COMMUNICATION

Effective communication lies at the heart of the trusting relationships that exist between parents and establishments across Renfrewshire and underpins our approach to parental engagement. In line with the Scottish Government's National Improvement Framework Parental Communication Plan, all communication with parents should be based on the following core principles:

- Simplicity and Clarity
- Transparency
- Relevance
- Partnership
- Flexibility and adaptation
- Timeliness

PROMOTING EQUALITY AND EQUITY

(EDUCATION SCOTLAND,2017)

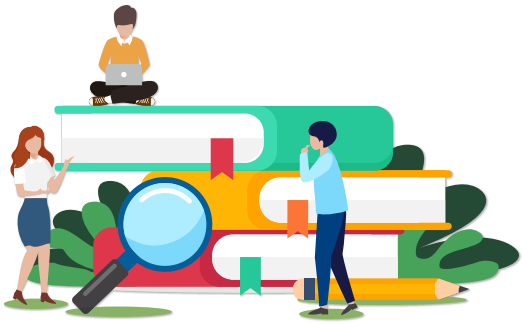
EQUALITY

Equality is the removal of discrimination, disadvantage, inequality and / or barriers which can affect people on the grounds of the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

EQUITY

Equity means treating people fairly, but not necessarily treating people the same. Equity in education means that personal or social circumstances such as gender, ethnic origin or family background are not obstacles to achieving educational potential and that all our children are well supported to secure wellbeing, skills for learning, life and work and the best possible post-school destination.

Renfrewshire Council is committed to delivering equality and equity for all children and families. Key contributors and partners have been consulted and involved in the creation of this strategy and it invites parents to work in partnership with schools to help all children achieve the highest of standards whilst reducing inequity, closing the poverty-related attainment gap and improving attainment for all. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of this strategy process.



CONCLUSION

For more information on any aspect of this strategy, or to view case studies and resources from across Renfrewshire, please **scan a QR code** for the digital resource.

SCAN ME!
For Teaching & Non-Teaching Staff
(Glow account required)

SCAN ME!
For Parents & Partners

Walking Together with Parents Working Group	
Ryan Miller	Chair (Education Manager)
Lauren Johnston	Project Manager
Michael Harker	Principal Educational Psychologist
Hollie McClintick-Greene	Educational Psychologist
Kay Quinn	Parent
Ross Rob	Parent
Wilma Leburn	Development Officer
Zoe Inglis	Development Officer
Lisa Fingland	SP&PD Manager (Children)
Dorothy MacPhee	Adult Services & Literacies Manager
Linda Berry	Headteacher
Michelle Welsh	Headteacher
Grant Crawford	Depute Headteacher
Julie Caldwell	Early Years and Childcare Officer
Fiona Nicholson	National Parents Forum
Linda Bell	Homelink
Jessica Dradge	Parents in Partnership Coordinator
Emma McGill	Attainment Advisor
Janyce Graham	Project Manager
Rebecca Scullion	Support Officer

WALKING TOGETHER WITH PARENTS IN RENFREWSHIRE

Renfrewshire's approach to parental engagement, involvement and family learning

INTRODUCTION

Children's Services in Renfrewshire has a strong relationship with parents and carers. We recognise the vital role that parents play in the journey of their children and in the life of our schools and Early Years centres. This strategy sets out our commitment to supporting and encouraging parental involvement in children's learning across our education establishments and at home and to continue working together to build strong, trusting partnerships.

RENFREWSHIRE'S APPROACH

- Family-centred
- Partnership working
- Needs-led
- Based on positive relationships

WHAT WE WILL DO

Parents will feel **comfortable** approaching staff in their children's establishment and feel their views about their children's learning are listened to and considered.

Parents will feel increasingly **confident** that their views help establishments to decide priorities in the school improvement plan.

Parents and establishments will **work together** ensure there are opportunities for parents to engage with their child's learning within the school, home or community.

Establishments will develop **a shared approach** to parental engagement, involvement and family learning.

Practitioners will demonstrate increased **skill** and confidence in implementing and supporting parental engagement, involvement and family learning within their establishments

WHAT ARE THE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES?

#1 CONTINUE TO DEVELOP A NURTURING CULTURE AND ETHOS

#2 SUPPORT ESTABLISHMENTS TO WORK IN PARTNERSHIP

#3 DEVELOP OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

#4 ENCOURAGE ALL PARTNERS TO EXPLORE CREATIVE, EVIDENCED-BASED OPPORTUNITIES

WHAT DOES THE EVIDENCE SAY?

Around 80% of the difference in how well children do at school depends on what happens outside the school gates (Rasbash et al, 2018)

Parental involvement programmes that focus on helping parents to support their child's learning at home have a positive impact on reducing the poverty related attainment gap (Sosu and Ellis, 2014)

There is a recognition that the early years environment and parental engagement predicts level of attainment in upper primary school (Sylvia et al, 2008)

PROMOTING EQUALITY AND EQUITY

(EDUCATION SCOTLAND, 2017)

EQUALITY

Equality is the removal of discrimination, disadvantage, inequality and/or barriers which can affect people on the grounds of the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

EQUITY

Equity means treating people fairly, but not necessarily treating people the same. Equity in education means that personal or social circumstances such as gender, ethnic origin or family background are not obstacles to achieving educational potential and that all our children are well supported to secure wellbeing, skills for learning, life and work and the best possible post-school destination.

CONCLUSION

For more information on any aspect of this strategy, or to view case studies and resources from across Renfrewshire, please scan a QR code for the digital resource.

SCAN ME! FOR TEACHING & NON-TEACHING STAFF (GLOW ACCOUNT REQUIRED)

SCAN ME! FOR PARENTS & PARTNERS