



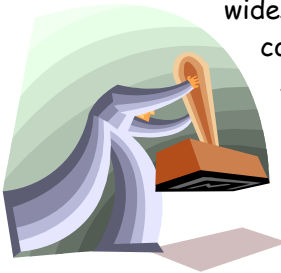
# Parents as partners in their children's learning

October 06

Issue No: 1

## ● Bill receives Royal Assent

Well, it's finally happened - following widespread national consultation, the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Bill finally received Royal Assent in June 2006, is now an Act, and was launched at a national conference on 12 September 2006. The Act is now partially in force, but will not take effect fully until August 2007.



## ● What's it all about?

The Parental Involvement Act aims to do several things -

- ✓ It aims to help parents become more involved with their child's education and learning.
- ✓ It places duties on Scottish Ministers and education authorities to promote parental involvement, and so education authorities need to prepare a strategy for parental involvement.
- ✓ It introduces a new system of Parent Councils to replace the current School Boards, aiming to make it easier for parents to express their views.

To help achieve these aims, all parents will now automatically be members of the Parent Forum at their child's school, and will be entitled to have a say in what happens at the school.

## ● What does being a member of the Parent Forum mean?

Members of the Parent Forum can expect to -

- get information about what their child is learning.
- get information about events and activities at the school.
- get advice / help on how they can support their child's learning.
- be told about opportunities to be involved in the school.
- have a say in selecting a Parent Council to work on behalf of all parents at their school.

*'The new law is really a once in a generation chance to take a fresh look at how parents are involved in their children's learning and education.'*

Robert Brown, Deputy Education Minister

## ● What is a Parent Council?

The role of a Parent Council is to -

- support the school in its work with parents
- represent the views of all parents
- encourage links between the school, parents, pupils, pre-school groups and the wider community
- report back to the Parent Forum

## ● So what happens now?

2006-07 is a 'transitional year', during which time local authorities, schools and parent bodies will be working towards developing a strategy for parental involvement, and also moving from the current School Board / Parent Teacher Association arrangements to new Parent Forum / Parent Councils. In preparation for these changes, an Implementation Team has been set up to oversee the work required during the year. Look out for more information about how your school's Parent Council will be set up between now and July 2007.

## ● Implementation Team

- **Moira McCarrell**, Lead Officer
- **Suzann Barr**, Chair of Charleston Academy School Board
- **Julie Barton**, Management Support Officer, Skye & Lochalsh
- **Bill Couston**, Area Education, Culture & Sport Manager, Sutherland
- **Gavin MacLean**, HT Glen Urquhart High School
- **Ewan McCreath**, Youth Voice representative
- **John Ritchie**, Area Education Manager, Ross-shire
- **Shirley Stevenson**, HT Culbokie Primary School
- Advisor from Corporate Services

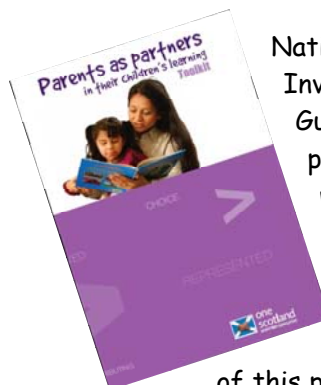
## ● Communication, communication, communication.....

One of the keys to success in implementation of the Parental Involvement Act is communication, so a number of things are planned -

- This is the first of a series of Parents as Partners newsletters for schools and parents.
- A series of Head Teachers briefing meetings are planned for early November.

- The next round of Area parental consultation meetings will take place early in the new year.

## ● To help you.....



Nationally, a Parental Involvement Toolkit and Guidance pack has been prepared - all of which was launched at the recent national conference. All schools should now have received 3 copies of this pack during the past week or so, for the Head Teacher, School Board, and PTA. Please ensure that these are passed on to the relevant people, and do order more copies if that would be helpful.

*'We want children to get the most from their education and we know that to achieve this, parents need to get involved. We want to build on the good work and strong relationships that already exist, so that even more parents feel welcome in school.'*

Robert Brown, Deputy Education Minister

## ● Useful contacts

Parentzone: [www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk](http://www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk)

BBC Parents: [www.bbc.co.uk/schools/parents](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/parents)

Parent Network

Scotland: [www.parentnetworkscotland.org.uk](http://www.parentnetworkscotland.org.uk)

## ● In the meantime...

We'll keep you fully informed as progress is made, but in the meantime, if you have any queries relating to Parental Involvement, please ring Moira (01463 702075) or drop her an email: [moira.mccarrell@highland.gov.uk](mailto:moira.mccarrell@highland.gov.uk).