



# Parents as partners

## in their children's learning

February 08

Issue No: 3

- **Phew!**

Well, the Christmas season is over, along with all the accompanying Christmas concerts, nativity plays, parties, discos, panto visits and general end of term festivities. As well as enjoying many of these events, parents have also helped with many of them - so to all of you, a very sincere thank you.

- **What about Parent Councils?**



Yes, it's finally happened - all over Highland, parents have been beavering away to set up their new Parent Councils. The result? Almost all schools have Parent

Council constitutions in place, and most of them now have their new Parent Council up and running. There are lots of encouraging reports coming in from Head Teachers indicating that many more parents have volunteered to get involved in the Parent Council, many of them having never previously been involved in either a School Board or PTA. Several schools ran an opening social for parents, with lots of parents coming and also signing up to volunteer for all sorts of things.

- **A date for the diary ...**

Plans are underway for a conference for Parent Council members on **Saturday 12 April 2008**. This should be a great opportunity to meet parents from other schools in Highland, share

ideas, and go away enthused at what your Parent Council could be like.

The venue will be the **Drumossie Hotel in Inverness** - look out for further publicity in the coming weeks, but in the meantime, put the date in your diary now!

- **A wee reminder ...**

If your school had a PTA which has now either disbanded completely or become a sub-committee of the Parent Council, there needs to be a final (minuted) meeting of the PTA stating that they are disbanding - and that information needs to be communicated to the Scottish Parent Teachers Council in Edinburgh. (I recently received from the SPTC a list of Highland schools where, according to SPTC records, there are still active PTAs, but I know that many of them are no longer functioning as independent PTAs). Please note that it is crucial that this step is taken **in order not to compromise insurance arrangements for Parent Councils**.

- **Parent Council funding**

Have you remembered to close the School Board bank account and set up a new Parent Council bank account? All the relevant paperwork was sent out to Head Teachers in August, so

you should have received the information you need to get things going. If you can't track down the paperwork, you need to contact your local Area Education, Culture & Sport office where the paperwork came from in August. *Remember - if you don't provide the Area office with your bank account details, you won't receive the funding for your Parent Council!*

- **Parenting Ideas Newsletter**

You might be interested in having a look at Australian Michael Grose's *Parenting Ideas* website. Over the last 20 years, Michael has written 7 books, had countless TV and radio appearances, and delivered thousands of seminars worldwide on parenting. His website is well worth a look - you can subscribe to a free weekly email newsletter which often contains gems. You'll find it at: [parentingideas.com.au](http://parentingideas.com.au)



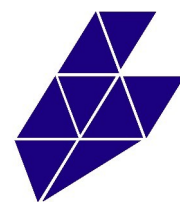
Michael Grose



- **Cyberbullying**



One of the issues parents are increasingly worried about is cyber bullying and the safety of children using the internet. There are a number of helpful websites dealing with this subject. Here are a couple you might find useful :



**The Highland Council**  
Comhairle na Gaidhealtachd

SERVING The Highland Community



[www.respectme.org.uk](http://www.respectme.org.uk)

**respectme**  
Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service

- this website has an excellent section on cyberbullying, and they

also offer a free helpline for youngsters who are being bullied on 0800 44 1111.



[www.besafeonline.org](http://www.besafeonline.org) - this is a website written by parents for parents on the safe use of the internet, and includes *10 Golden*

*Rules* such as -

- Get to know the services and websites that your child uses.
- Use the internet as a family activity and, if possible, keep the computer in a family room rather than in a child's bedroom.
- Try not to use the PC or internet as an electronic babysitter.

- **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)

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Learning & Teaching Scotland:

[www.ltscotland.org.uk/parentsaspartnersinlearning/tookit](http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/parentsaspartnersinlearning/tookit)

- **And finally ...**

If you have any queries relating to Parental Involvement, Parent Councils etc, please ring Moira McCarrell (01463 702075) or drop her an email: [moira.mccarrell@highland.gov.uk](mailto:moira.mccarrell@highland.gov.uk)