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**REPORT TO: EDUCATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 6 DECEMBER 2006**

**SUBJECT: SCOTTISH SCHOOLS (PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT) ACT 2006**

**BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to advise the Committee that the Scottish Executive has issued a commencement notice for the implementation of the provisions of the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act. It indicates when the different sections of the Act will be commenced and offers indicative timescales for transitional work to implement the Act over the coming year.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section E1 of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to the exercising of the functions of the Council as Education Authority.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

**2.1 Committee is asked to note that:-**

- (1) the timescale for the implementation of the Parental Involvement Act;**
- (2) the issue of a "toolkit" on parental involvement and Guidance on the Act to schools and parents by the Scottish Executive.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 received Royal Assent on 14 June 2006. From 12 September 2006 there is a general duty on Scottish Ministers and education authorities to promote the involvement of parents in their own child's education and in schools generally. There is also a duty on education authorities to begin the work of preparing for the establishment of Parent Councils which will come into being from August 2007.

3.2 The provisions within the Act will be commenced in three stages:

- from 12 September 2006 a general duty is placed on Scottish Ministers and education authorities to promote parental involvement; and the provisions necessary to enable the work of preparing for the establishment of Parent Councils;
- from 1 January 2007 repeal of sections of the Education ( Scotland) Act 1980 and the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 to suspend the requirement to advertise principal teacher posts nationally (already suspended until February 2007); and
- from 1 August 2007 implement other sections of the Act, including those relating to the education authority strategy for parental involvement; complaints procedure and provisions relating to the establishment and operation of Parent Councils and the abolition of School Boards.

3.3 The Scottish Executive also launched a “toolkit” to provide parents and staff in education authorities and schools with a practical resource to support and develop partnership with parents/carers in all aspects of children`s learning.

3.4 The Act aims to modernise and strengthen the existing framework for supporting parental involvement. It introduces:-

- a duty on Scottish Ministers and education authorities to promote parental involvement;
- a duty on each education authority to prepare a strategy for parental involvement; and
- a new system of parent representation through Parent Councils.

3.5 The Act requires each education authority to prepare a strategy document setting out their policies for parental involvement. The strategy must cover the authority`s duties to:

- promote the involvement of parents in the education provided by the school to their child and to pupils generally at their child`s school;
- promote the establishment of Parent Councils;
- give advice and information to Parent Councils and support their operation;
- give advice and information to parents generally; and
- establish a complaints procedure for representations under the Act.

In developing or reviewing the strategy, each education authority must seek and take account of the views of all those with an interest in the authority`s implementation of its duties, or its complaints procedures. This includes parents, Parent Councils, pupils and other stakeholders the authority considers appropriate.

3.6 Some of the key issues which the strategy will cover include:-

- Equal opportunities

- Barriers to parental involvement
- Looked after children
- Non-resident parents and other parents/carers
- Placements outwith the local authority
- Integrated children`s services
- School standards and performance
- Aims and objectives for schools
- Complaints procedure

3.7 The Act indicates that there are three main ways that parents can become involved in supporting their children`s learning:-

- Learning at home
- Home/School partnership
- Parental representation

3.8 A Parental Involvement Strategy Group has been established by Educational Services to oversee the change process. The group is involved in organising initiatives to promote parental involvement and is developing parental involvement guidelines for schools. These guidelines will form part of the Council`s strategy for parental involvement in their children`s learning, which will be based around existing good practice in early years, schools and through home/school partnership links.

A newsletter to all staff in Moray schools and a communication from the Scottish Executive on the commencement of the Act are included as **Appendices 1 and 2** to this report.

#### 4. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) **Corporate Development Plan/Community Plan/Service Improvement Plan**

The Council`s Corporate Development Plan 2004-07 identifies raising standards of attainment and working with learners and their parents as priorities. The Educational Services Improvement Plan 2005-08 identifies the development of an authority strategy for the involvement of parents in their children`s learning as a priority for raising attainment.

(b) **Policy and Legal**

The Council has a legal duty to implement the provisions within the Act within the timescale set.

(c) **Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)**

The Council has received an allocation of £16,400 to support the implementation of the Act during 2006-07. The Scottish Executive will make further funding available for 2007-08.

**(d) Consultations**

Officers of Educational Services, the Chief Legal Officer, and Deborah Brands, Principal Accountant, have been consulted in the preparation of this report and are in agreement with the relevant sections.

**5. CONCLUSION**

**5.1 The Council's Strategy will be developed during this session and this will be the subject of consultation with all stakeholders and Parent Councils when these are set up in August 2007.**

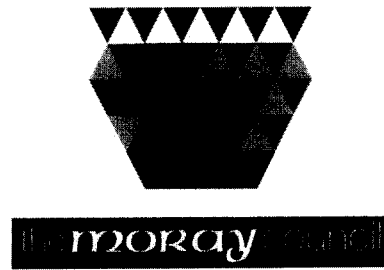
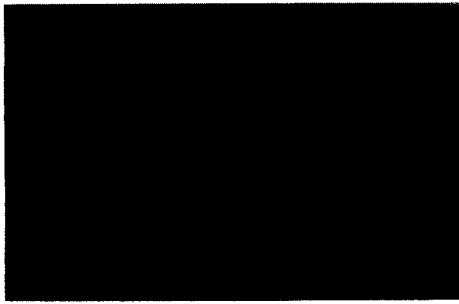
Author of Report: John Trodden Quality Improvement Officer  
Background Papers: The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 -  
Guidance  
Parents as Partners in their children`s learning- Toolkit

Ref: DMD/JR/Reports/Ed Com/6 December 2006/Scottish Schools  
(Parental Involvement) Act 2006

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Designation: Director of Educational Services

Name: Donald M Duncan



## **Parents as Partners in their children's learning**

Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement Act) 2006: Briefing Note:  
November 2006

For: all staff working with children in Educational Services, Schools and Pre- school Providers.

### **Purpose of the Parental Involvement Act**

The Parental Involvement Act aims to improve the quality and extent of parents' involvement in their own child's learning and in education and schools more generally. It modernises and strengthens the framework for supporting parental involvement. It places duties on Scottish Ministers and education authorities to promote parental involvement. It also introduces a new system of Parent Councils to replace School Boards.

The Act outlines three areas where parents should be supported and encouraged to be more involved in their child's learning.

- At home – Providing parents with information on what their children are learning at school and how this can best be supported at home
- At school – Providing parents with opportunities to contribute to the life of the school eg by helping out in the classroom, or assisting at school events.
- In a more formal way – Deciding what kind of parent representation the schools should have

## **Parental Involvement Strategy**

Every local authority must develop a Parental Involvement Strategy, in consultation with all key stakeholders, by August 2007. This must cover how the local authority will:

- Promote the involvement of all parents in the education provided by a school to their child and to pupils generally at their school
- Give advice and information to parents
- Promote the establishment of Parent Councils
- Give advice and information to Parent Councils and support their operation
- Link with professionals other than school staff who might be involved supporting parents eg Community Learning and Development, Home/School Workers, Health and Social Workers etc
- Take account of the needs of looked after children
- Consider the needs of parents who do not live with their children
- Ensure the strategy promotes equal opportunities
- Establish a complaints procedure in respect of the local authority's functions under the Act.

## **Parent Forum**

As of 12 September 2006, every parent in a school is automatically a member of the "Parent Forum". A letter informing all parents of the changes will be sent out through schools by mid November 2006. As a member of the Parent Forum, parents 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 become involved in the school
- Have a say in selecting a Parent Council to work on behalf of all parents at the school

## **Parent Council**

Parent Councils will be recognised in law as of August 2007. Parent Councils will replace School Boards, so School Boards will no longer exist as of this date. The role of the Parent Council is to:

- Work in partnership with the Headteacher and staff to support the school
- 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

All parents will be given the opportunity to shape the Parent Council for their school.

Educational Services has a duty under the Act to promote the establishment of, and provide support for the operation of, Parent Councils. This includes reasonable funding for administrative expenses and training for members.

### Timescales for Transition period – September 2006– August 2007

September 2006 Guidance from the Scottish Executive and the accompanying Toolkit issued to assist parents and local authorities with implementation of the Act. As of September, The Moray Council has a legal duty to promote parental involvement and to start preparing for the establishment of Parent Councils in schools.

October–December 2006 Educational Services to inform all parents, schools, pre-school providers, and relevant staff of key aspects of the Act.

Educational Services and Headteachers to review existing arrangements for giving advice and information to parents, to update their measures of standards of performance and review school development plans and objectives to ensure they meet the provisions of the Act.

Parental Involvement Strategy Group to continue development work on the Authority`s guidelines on parental involvement. The group is currently looking at issues regarding parent volunteers in schools as part of the development of home– school partnerships. This work will be subject to full consultation later in the year and will provide a starting point for discussions with

Parent Councils next session to determine the Authority`s Strategy for Parental Involvement.

Working Groups begin to be identified in schools to consider how to involve parents in setting up Parent Council.  
Consultation events/opportunities.

The Authority, on request, is supporting HTs and schools, school boards and PTAs by providing information and discussion sessions to clarify aspects of the new legislation and consider the way forward. The first of these, for all Moray School Board Representatives was held at Milne`s High School on Wednesday 1 November 2006.

January- April 2007 Parent Councils – Constitutions, selection/nominations, make-up of working groups etc agreed at school level.

June 2007 Parent Councils ready for August 2007

August 2007 Education Services begins practical discussions with Parent Councils on funding, training, duties etc

For further information contact:- John Trodden QIO, tel. 01343 563289  
(john.trodden@moray.gov.uk)

**SCOTTISH SCHOOL (PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT) ACT 2006:  
COMMENCEMENT STAGES**

**12 September 2006**

Section 1	Ministerial and education authority duties to promote parental involvement in school education
Section 5	Parents of pupils at a school formally become the Parent Forum. Education authority to promote establishment of new Parent Councils
Section 6 (1)-(6)	Scheme for establishment of a Parent Council – requires an education authority to notify Parent Forum of intention to prepare a scheme for the establishment of a Parent Council. Depending on wishes of parents, a scheme is then prepared, including a constitution for the Parent Council.
Section 7	Restrictions as to the composition of a Parent Council – requires that members to be from the Parent Forum, unless the Council’s constitution allows co-option of other members; and, where appropriate, a denominational representative.
Section 12	Duties of education authority to parents generally - requires an education authority to respond to reasonable requests for advice and information from parents in relation to their child’s education.
Section 16 (1)-(7) & (13)-(14)	Allows Parent Forums in two or more schools to agree to establish a Combined Parent Council
Section 19	Guidance – Scottish Ministers' powers to issue guidance to which education authorities (and in time, the new Parent Councils) must have regard
Section 20	Interpretation – expressions used in the Act and in the 1980 Act have the same meaning, except that “pupil” includes a child who is under school age only if that child is in attendance at a primary school (whether or not in a nursery class in such a school).
Section 21	Transitional provisions etc. – allows Ministers to make orders of a transitional, transitory or saving nature as they consider necessary.
Section 22	Orders and regulations - are made by way of statutory instrument.
[Section 24	Short title and commencement, was commenced on Royal Assent on 14 June 2006]

## **1 January 2007**

Section 23 (To the extent necessary to repeal sections 87A & B of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 and section 50 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003)

## **1 August 2007**

Section 2 New education authority duty to prepare a "strategy for parental involvement" in consultation with Parent Councils and others

Section 3 Ambitions and objectives for a school – school development plans to take account of the strategy for parental involvement and to include objectives for the school which include parental involvement, and ambitions.

Section 4 Review of school performance – authorities, when reviewing the quality of education schools provide, to include the extent of parental involvement.

Section 6(7)-(10) Allows new Parent Councils to come into being

Section 8 Functions and powers of a Parent Council, etc.

Section 9 Attendance of headteacher at Parent Council meetings

Section 10 Financial powers of a Parent Council

Section 11 Duties of education authority to a Parent Council etc.

Section 13 Headteacher's report to a Parent Council, Combined Parent Council or Parent Forum

Section 14 Procedures for appointment of headteacher or deputy and participation of a Parent Council

Section 15 Complaints procedure

Section 16 Allows Combined Parent Council to come into being

(8)-(12) & (15-16)

Section 17 Allows members of a Parent Forum in a school involved in a Combined Parent Council to withdraw and establish a Parent Council for their own school

Section 18 Abolition of School Boards

Section 23 Repeal of references in other Acts to School Boards and to the School Board (Scotland) Act 1988.

**SCOTTISH SCHOOL (PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT) ACT 2006: POSSIBLE IMPLEMENTATION TIMESCALE**

