### EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

## **PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK** 2019 - 2021



East Ayrshire Council Comhairle Siorrachd Àir an Ear







# Empowering and Engaging our Parents in East Ayrshire

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Foreword

It is my privilege to see every day examples of outstanding practice where schools and centres work with parents and carers to improve outcomes for our children and young people. This framework consolidates this work into constructive and positive guidance to support this practice to be consistent across East Ayrshire.

As we lead the way on empowering schools and centres, we will do this most effectively when we empower and engage all of our stakeholders and parents and carers are key to this work.

By embedding the strategies outlined in this Framework we will continue to build on the many successes and achievements within our Education Service and ensure we meet the needs of the communities we serve.

#### **Councillor Fiona Campbell**

Cabinet member with responsibility for Skills and Learning

I am delighted to support the vision of the Council's Parental Engagement Framework. As a Council we recognise and continue to harness the strengths, talents and skills of our communities with the acceptance that engaging with parents and carers is fundamental in order to achieve this.

When engaging and supporting parents, we share the ethos of the framework at every opportunity and encourage this practice to become embedded in everything we do to ensure the best possible outcomes for our children and young people. In doing this, we are re-affirming the Councils commitment to ensuring parents/ carers, children and young people are at the heart of everything we do.

Councillor Elena Whitham Cabinet member with responsibility for Housing and Communities As the Chair of East Ayrshire's Parent Council Steering Group and a parent myself I am delighted to support the Council's Parental **Engagement Framework. I** am a passionate advocate that parents are the most important influence in their child's life and therefore share the vision of this Framework. I am also delighted to see children, young people and parents' voices are reflected within the Framework as this demonstrates the Council's vision.

I am aware there are many challenges faced by parents and I am pleased East Ayrshire will continue to commit to engaging and supporting parents and this Framework is an excellent addition to the wonderful work already taking place.

#### Jackie Livingston

East Ayrshire - Parent Council Chair



# Introduction and Strategic Context

"Parental involvement and engagement relies on the principles of trust and collaboration, good conversations and emotional bonds". ('Learning Together' – Scotland's national action plan on parental involvement, parental engagement, family learning and learning at home 2018 – 2021).

"East Ayrshire Council recognises that parents are the first and ongoing educators of their children and they should know them best. The promotion of parental involvement and partnership working is therefore a key priority within the Education Service. EAC are committed to raising attainment and will support schools and families to close the attainment gap by promoting the involvement and engagement of parents in the education of their child".

**East Ayrshire Council Community Plan (2015 – 2030)** acknowledges this, highlighting that; "Children and young people, including those in early years and their carers, are supported to be active, healthy and to reach their potential at all life stages".

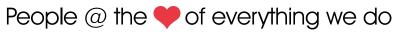
The Education Service Improvement Plan 2018 - 2021 contributes to each of the three main themes of the Community Plan, our activity is predominately focused on the Economy and Skills Delivery Plan 2018-19 but is also aligned to shared objectives within the Safer Communities and Wellbeing Plans. Education Service Improvement Plan 2018 - 2021

The purpose of the Parental Engagement Framework is to provide support and guidance for all practitioners, in order to ensure we are empowering and engaging our parents in East Ayrshire.



As part of the Council's Transformation Strategy – The FACE of East Ayrshire Council is based on the top four attitudes and values that emerged from our workforce consultation. FACE sets out how we will do our jobs and serve our communities as a Council and as individuals. It will feature in the way we recruit people, how we review and develop our people, how we engage and support our communities and how we work with each other on a daily basis.

East Ayrshire Council is committed to using innovative and creative approaches to service development, delivery and by empowering members of our communities, young and old, to live happy, healthy, connected and fulfilling lives...with the core value of;



East Ayrshire Council's asset based approaches and positive practices seek to harness a change in culture and this is reflected in this Parental Engagement Framework, in order to ensure that people, relationships and connections are key to unlocking the skills and talents of our parents/carers to further support children and young people to be the best they can be.

This approach has been further endorsed by East Ayrshire's Transformation Strategy 2017 – 2022: Closing the Gap by working towards a fairer, kinder and connected East Ayrshire, putting people at the heart of everything we do. This Parental Engagement Framework reflects the principles of the Strategy; focusing on kindness, tackling poverty, reducing inequality and building connected communities.

The overall aim of the Framework is to provide information, resources and local supports in order to fully engage and inform parents and carers within our communities and it was important to ensure parents' and carers' views were reflected and embedded throughout this Framework.

### Did you know?

Under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; Article 5, (Parental guidance):

Governments should respect the rights and responsibilities of families to direct and guide their children so that, as they grow, they learn to use their rights properly. The Convention does not take responsibility for children away from their parent and give more authority to governments. It does place on governments the responsibility to protect and assist families in fulfilling their essential role as nurturers of children.



# Equalities

This Framework recognises the fact that due to ever changing family dynamics, parental engagement comes in many forms. Many children and young people face a number of barriers which impact on their ability to succeed, this may include disadvantaged groups such as kinship carers, disabilities, Looked After and Accommodated Children and families affected by parental imprisonment. It is therefore important to ensure that parental engagement provides the necessary supports that are adapted to the needs and wishes of parents/carers. This is supported by the GIRFEC principles and includes support and guidance for parents/carers <u>GIRFEC Principles</u>.

This Framework endeavours to prevent discrimination and protect the rights of individuals as set out under the Equality Act (2010) in respect of the nine protected characteristics, i.e.: age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

The Fairer Scotland Duty, Part 1 of the Equality Act 2010, came into force in Scotland from April 2018. It places a legal responsibility on particular public bodies in Scotland to actively consider ('pay due regard') to how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socioeconomic disadvantage, when making strategic decisions. <u>The Fairer Scotland</u> <u>Duty</u>.

## Did you know?

Under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; Article 18, Both parents share responsibility for bringing children up and should always consider what is best for them. Governments should provide services to help parents, especially if both parents work.

# National Agenda

This document has taken into consideration a number of national policies and documents, which includes;

**Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)** is the national approach in Scotland to improving outcomes and supporting the wellbeing of children and young people by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports them and their parent(s) to work in partnership with the services that can help them. (Scottish Government) <u>GIRFEC</u>

**The National Improvement Framework (NIF)** sets out Scotland's vision for the future: 'Excellence for all and equity for children and young people'. It works towards realising the Scottish Government's ambition for Scotland to be the best place to grow up. This Framework has 6 key drivers, one of which is Parental Engagement, which states, "parental and family engagement is a key factor in helping all children achieve the highest standards whilst reducing inequity and closing the attainment gap. Family learning encourages family members to learn together, fostering positive attitudes to lifelong learning'. <u>National Improvement Framework</u>

**'Learning Together' – Scotland's national action plan on parental involvement, parental engagement, family learning and learning at home 2018 – 2021**. The plan is based on the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child. It is recognises the central role of the family, in the child's learning and development. A central theme which is at the heart of this plan is relationships based on trust, mutual respect and collaboration. (Scottish Government) Learning. Together

**The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015** provides a legal framework that promotes and encourages community empowerment and participation. It seeks to empower communities, giving them more of a say in how public services are planned and delivered. The Act has a specific focus on community engagement to achieve greater control and influence by communities in decision making. It seeks to empower communities through the ownership of land and assets and by strengthening their voice in identifying needs and appropriate responses. https://www.gov.scot/policies/community-empowerment/

The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 provides a framework to ensure that parents have the opportunity to express their views and have these taken into account on policy matters affecting the education of their children. It makes provision for all parents to be a member of the Parent Forum at a school and to have their view represented to the school, local authority and others through a representative Parent Council for the school. Parental Involvement Act (2006)

The Scottish Attainment Challenge focuses on achieving equity in educational outcomes, with a particular emphasis on closing the poverty-related attainment gap by ensuring every child has the same opportunity to succeed. The Scottish Government has committed to ensuring every child achieves the highest standards in literacy and numeracy and has the right range of skills, qualifications and achievements to allow them to succeed regardless of their background or circumstances. This document also has a specific focus on parents and their involvement in supporting their children's education. Scottish Attainment Challenge

# Developing this Framework

This Framework highlights that parents are by far the most important influencers and carers of children. Taking this into account, this document will consider;

- What is parental engagement?
- Parental engagement consultation
- Creating positive relationships
- Ensuring equal opportunities
- How to encourge and support volunteering and upskilling
- Framework focus and expectations
- How to access training and support

To ensure this framework focuses on local need and engagement, consultation took place with parents across a broad range of sectors including education, community and third sector as well as utilising social media platforms. Stakeholders and the third sector who play an integral part in developing services for children, young people and families provided examples of good practice in action, which are featured throughout this Framework.

This Framework will be embedded at the heart of all services across East Ayrshire Council; providing a commitment to nurturing a culture of positive relationships that build on the strength and capacity of parents through a supportive, trusting and collaborative approach.

### Did you know?

Building the strengths and capacities of parents and families is a key action in the Wellbeing theme of East Ayrshire's Community Plan:

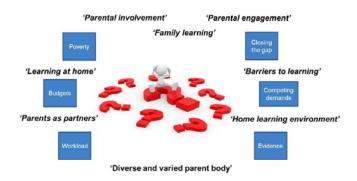
- National Outcome 5: Children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed
- Local Outcome: Children and young people, including those in early years and their carers, assisted to be active, healthy, nurtured and included.

# What is Parental Engagement why does it matter?

Considerable research has been undertaken to ascertain why involvement is important and the perceived barriers. This is highlighted in the Engaging Parent and Families: <u>A toolkit for practitioners</u>', where parental engagement and parental involvement are defined as:

'Parental involvement is about supporting pupils and their learning. It is about parents and teachers working together in partnership to help children become more confident learners'. Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act. Guidance, 2006

"Parental engagement can be considered as active involvement in learning. Such learning can take place in a variety of settings including early learning and childcare settings (ELC) or schools, the community, through family learning and at home". (Goodall and Montgomery, 2014)



East Ayrshire Community Plan 2015-30 recognises that successful community planning is based on meaningful, sustained and effective engagement with local people and communities. In order to support this, Parental Engagement, Community Engagement and Community Empowerment is fundamental. East Ayrshire Community Plan

**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 and the interaction and mutual development that can occur as a result of that interaction. Learning Together' Scotland's National Action Plan on Parental Involvement, Parental Engagement, Family Learning and Learning at Home 2018 – 2021

#### 'Parental engagement is building strong relationships, based on mutual respect'

### "Parental engagement is relationships, relationships, relationships"

#### Engaging parents and families

Parental engagement in their children's learning can significantly impact on achievement. There are three main ways that parents can actively support their children's learning:

- Parental engagement for learning.
- Parental engagement through learning.
- Parental engagement about learning.

#### Element I - Involving all parents

All children and young people benefit from the interest and involvement of their parents, it is important to make sure that all parents have opportunities to be involved in their children's learning and education.

Parents, like learners, are diverse. Effective inclusive practice will ensure that <u>barriers</u> to participation are removed for parents and that inclusion and equality are promoted. Information and resources about inclusion and equalities, including a self-evaluation exercise are available on <u>Engaging Parent and Families: A toolkit for</u> <u>practitioners'. Section 3: involving all parents</u>

#### Element 2 - Learning at Home

From the moment they are born, children begin to absorb information and make sense of their world. As well as providing the basics for growth and development: food, comfort and security, parents also provide stimulation through everyday activities, games, rhymes and language that help a child to learn. Many of these activities are part of everyday life – preparing and eating meals together, doing the washing, shopping, watching TV, visiting friends and family – but for young children they are opportunities for discovery and learning. Engaging\_ Parent and Families: A toolkit for practitioners'. Section 3: involving all parents

Element 3 - Home/school/partnership settings Children have the right to be supported by their parents as they grow and develop (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Successful partnership working depends on the development of mutual trust and respect between practitioners and parents. Engaging Parent and Families:A toolkit for practitioners'. Section 3: involving all parents

Both practitioners and parents agree that the basis for developing positive relationships is good communication. The language used in all communications with parents should be free of educational jargon or terms, easy to read and understand. In order to consider the diverse parent community in your local area this self-evaluation exercise is really useful <u>self-evaluation</u>

#### Element 4 - Parental representation

The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 also provides a framework to ensure that parents have the opportunity to express their views and have these taken into account on policy matters affecting the education of their children. It makes provision for all parents to be a member of the Parent Forum at a school and to have their view represented to the school, local authority and others through a representative <u>Parent</u>. <u>Council</u> for the school.

### Element 5 - Family Learning and community connections;

Supporting, equipping and building capacity amongst Scotland's parents to capitalise on children's opportunities for learning is key in raising attainment and closing the poverty-related attainment gap. A family learning approach can also be a catalyst in helping adults take up adult learning and training opportunities, gain employment or attain new skills. This in turn positively impacts on children's individual attainment, their aspirations and personal learning journey.

#### **Community Engagement**

Community Engagement is about building positive relationships with our communities, based on a shared understanding of local needs, issues and priorities. It involves respectful dialogue between all participants to create the right environment to achieve positive outcomes. The Engaging our Communities Framework is our Community Engagement Framework based upon the National Standards for Community Engagement.

In East Ayrshire **Community Engagement** is defined as;

- Informing To provide the community with balanced information to enable them to understand issues, problems alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.
- **Consulting** To listen to community views and gather feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions. Consider their input and feedback results.
- **Involving** To work directly with the community throughout a process to ensure that concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and taken into consideration.

- **Collaborating** To work with the community on each aspect of decisions to be made, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solutions.
- **Empowering** To place the final decision in the hands of the community. This approach empowers communities to make the decision and take control of projects and service delivery.

#### The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act

**2015** provides a legal framework that promotes and encourages community empowerment and participation. It seeks to empower communities, giving them more of a say in how public services are planned and delivered. The Act has a specific focus on community engagement to achieve greater control and influence by communities in decision making. It seeks to empower communities through the ownership of land and assets and by strengthening their voice in identifying needs and appropriate responses.

Taking all this into account, Engagement in itself is essential to ensure our children, young people and families are listened to.

### Benefits for the child

**Learning and Behaviour** – increased attendance, reduced summer learning loss.

Health & Wellbeing – improvement in self-confidence/ self-esteem,

Life Skills – improvement in interpersonal communication and relationship skills, increased attendance at community based opportunities, engagement in volunteering opportunities

**Sense of Belonging** – increased networks, enhanced sense of worth, feeling valued, decrease isolation

Research tells us that engaging parents/carer can have a significant impact on a child's overall wellbeing, "Decades of research in the behavioural and social sciences have produced a rich knowledge base that explains why some people develop the adaptive capacities to overcome significant adversity and others do not. The single most common finding is that children who end up doing well have had at least one stable and committed relationship with a supportive parent, caregiver, or other adult". **EAC Relationship Framework**.

In order to demonstrate the importance of "why parental engagement matters" we gathered the thoughts of some children and young people from across East Ayrshire:

For children and young people who have a parent/carer that is **engaged**, they told us;

- "I feel ok when my mum gets involved with the School. I also feel excited when my mum gets involved". P7 pupil
- "My mum loves joining in with the things in my school, sometimes she even comes on trips with us. I love her being there". P6 pupil
- "My mum is always interested in seeing what I do and what I will be doing in the future, I'm happy that she makes the effort to come to all open evenings and she even joined in the cooking sessions with my brother at Centrestage, we all enjoyed that". S4 pupil
- "It make me feel secure when my mum is involved in school events & that she cares about me & my future". S2 pupil
- "It makes me feel better about school" SI pupil
- "I love when my dad comes into the school. He comes to everything and everybody knows him. It makes me feel happy". P5 Pupil
- "I wasn't happy to begin with as I thought I'd be embarrassed but it's good that my mum is interested in the things I'm doing and she knows all the teachers now and they know her so it's easier for me to talk to them. She was a bit annoying when she was doing the PiP because she kept coming home telling me what she had done that day". SI Pupil

It is evident from these comments that an engaged parent/carer has a significant impact on their child' overall wellbeing. Therefore it is imperative that we do all we can to engage, empower and support parents to participate in the child's school and community interests.

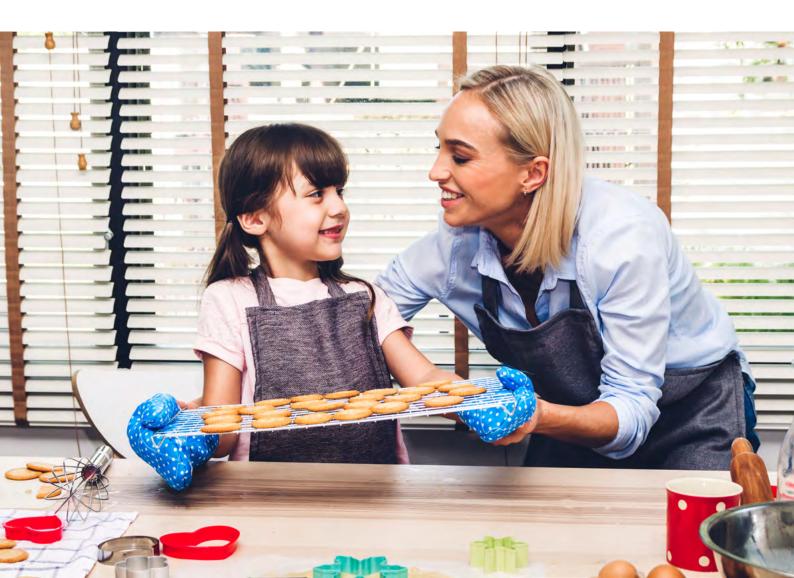
#### Benefits for schools and communities...

**Thriving Communities** – improved confidence, talents and skills, reduced antisocial behaviour, improved educational performance, reduced parental isolation, enhanced mental wellbeing and an increased sense of belonging and family learning.

Active Citizenship – parents accessing community based sessions/classes/groups, parents engaging in Parent Councils, parents' evenings and school based support and an increase in engaging in volunteering opportunities.

**Closing The Poverty Related Attainment Gap** – increased adult literacy skills, improved interpersonal communication and relationship skills, increased understanding of child's individualised needs. From the results of our stakeholder consultation, it was evident that engaging parents is a key priority:

- "Without engaged families the impact of our involvement is dramatically reduced. The more involved the people closest to the child are, the more significant the impact of our service".
- "It helps parents to understand how we are supporting them and their children and keeps them on board so that they can support their child appropriately".
- "Develops positive relationships, shows the work of the centre, empowers parents and makes them feel included"
- "Parents/carers are essential partners for our service and we cannot work in isolation so require the families to be an active part of any interventions we provide for the children and young people".



# Parental Consultation

#### From April to September 2018 we consulted with parents/ carers from across East Ayrshire.

- Community Setting Shopping centres , local events, National events
- 3rd Sector Leisure facilities, HMP Kilmarnock, community play forum
- EAC wide Schools, home link visits, parent's nights, play@home sessions, parent drop in sessions, summer programme, holiday programmes NHS –family services.
- Social media, twitter and Facebook.

Parents were asked to provide one word which summarised parental engagement, we have transferred the most popular words into a wordle graphic, highlighted below;



Parents cited work commitments, requiring more information and finance as the three main barriers to engagement. Reflecting on positive engagement, parents/carers noted having established a good relationship with their child's school as well as forming positive engagement with community clubs.

Further guidance from the National Parental Engagement and Involvement Census will provide evidence of the effectiveness of the framework going forward.

#### **Parental Representation**

"**Parent Councils** help parents and carers to become more actively and effectively involved in their children's learning. It is recognised that parents play an important role both in their own child's learning and in the life of their school". About Parent Councils

Examples of how Education can continue to encourage and support Parent Councils include:

- Providing specific help to establish new Parent Councils;
- Training for Parent Council members to enable them to fulfil their role;
- Funding to support the work of Parent Councils
- Consulting with parents in various ways on school and authority issues.



# Relationships

East Ayrshire Council and the East Ayrshire Health & Social Care Partnership are committed to 'transforming our relationship with the communities we serve' and creating a culture of 'working with, rather than doing to' our communities. <u>EAC Relationships Framework</u>

"Better relationships with and between our communities will provide more positive and nurturing experiences for their children and young people growing up, whose first experiences with their families will be in their local community".

#### **Changing Perceptions**

The Children and Young People's (Scotland) Act (2014) is the statutory articulation of the GIRFEC policy framework. This enshrines a Rights Based approach to all of our activity and interactions with children, young people and their families.

Recent consultation document on the above Act states:

We are committed to addressing the challenges faced by children and young people who experience poor outcomes throughout their lives. To do this, we need services that are child-centred, responsive and joined up. Children and young people deserve services that can intervene more effectively and earlier in their lives and that listen and take full account of their views. Achieving this involves a programme of change that is not limited to any one service, but embraces a change in the culture and practice of all services that affect the lives of children, young people and their families.

#### When good relationships are in evidence parents told us;

- "The head teacher has made the school children so happy and she is very kind with people if they are worried or have things on your mind and I would go straight to her"
- "Communication between the school and home has helped us support our sons to remain motivated with their education. It allows us to continue the learning at home where we can continue with fun activities".
- "Massively. Head teacher has made a big difference to the school & community. Also with any problems you can go straight to her".
- "I have become involved in my child's nursery. Have made lots of friends via this and given son wider range of friends".
- "The kids really enjoy parent participation at after school programmes".

#### Where parents are involved with community groups, they told us;

- "As a family we feel part of the community"
- "Gave us more quality time together but allows my son to benefit from friends his own age".
- "You feel comfortable taking your children to things run by community organisations, as you trust the people who run them".

### Case Study - Changing Perceptions; Bellsbank PS & ECC

Having had a focus on parental engagement over the past three years, staff perceptions of what parental engagement looked like and what their obligations were in supporting this agenda have notably changed. Looking back to when we started our journey even the idea of visiting a pupil in their home seemed like a far out idea, the teachers job is to teach in the classroom after all, isn't it? The idea of having parents and carers in the classroom supporting learning was perhaps understandably uncomfortable. Now, things have changed. Teachers do visit pupils at home where appropriate and now see the value in this, visiting a family home says that you care enough to take the time. Parents come into our nurture provision on a weekly basis to participate in activities with their child, parents and children learning together. Involving parents in supporting learning at school is slowly becoming normalised and the mindset of teaching staff has changed, teachers are now mindful of involving parents where at all possible, working together in partnership. Donald Currie, Head Teacher



### Case Study - Home Link; Loudoun Academy Parents in Partnership

Parental Engagement has been on the School Improvement plan for the last couple of years and we wanted the parents, teaching staff and pupil support staff to have better relationships to enable more fluent communication between school and home. The perceptions of many parents was what they remembered from their own experiences in school, some of which were negative so this was the first barrier we had to overcome.

Throughout the programme the parents participated in class lessons within every department in the school which gave them a whole different perspective of how schools are now teaching the children as well as life skills sessions delivered by partner agencies which gave them tools to deal with various situations they may find themselves in. This empowered the parents to understand the curricular subjects which therefore has an impact on their relationships at home with their children. They now understand the terminology the children are using which allows them to have more of an active role in their child's education and learning.





# Case Study - Home Link; Loudoun Academy Parents in Partnership continued

Once relationships formed between parents and school staff the parents feel comfortable being within the school environment. Parents are seen regularly within the school, supporting activities, meeting with pastoral care staff out with parent's evenings but most importantly communicating better with school in general. The current educational policy landscape places significant importance of parental involvement and engagement within the life of the school. This is articulated in great depth in the likes of 'Learning together', 'Empowering schools', How good is our school', and of course the National Improvement Framework

Evidence has demonstrated that children and young people who have at least one parent or carer engaged in their education achieve better exam results, higher retention rates and smoother transitions between nursery, primary and secondary schools. They are also more likely to: attend school more regularly, have better social skills; have improved behaviour, adapt better to school and engage more in school work, have better networks of supportive relationships, have a better sense of personal competence and be more likely to go on to further or higher education.

"Taking part in sample classes helped to give an insight into, not only the subject matter, but also the way the classes are taught. Having met several of the teaching staff, I feel much more relaxed as I have familiar faces if I need to speak to anyone" Parent

"Our Parents in Partnership Programme has grown from strength to strength over the last two years, and has demonstrated significant impact as a direct result.

In a current political climate where schools are judged on hard statistical data, it is pleasing that we can demonstrate improvements in attainment and attendance as a result of the programme. However, and arguably more importantly, the soft factors are where the real gains have been made; relationships between parents/teachers/ pupils, open, transparent and effective two-way communication, and a willingness for parents to get directly involved in the life of the school.

The skills, experience and passion of our Home Link worker in the organisation and delivery of the programme has been absolutely pivotal in the success." Scott Robertson, Head Teacher







#### **Building Resilience**

Resilience can be defined as "Normal development under difficult conditions" (Fonagy et al. 1994)

The concept of 'Adverse Childhood Experiences' (ACEs) has gained significant traction within Scotland in 2018, both at a national and grassroots level. The ACEs framework provides a well-researched explanatory model for the link between negative exposures in childhood and negative outcomes in later life as well as for the intergenerational transmission of adversity. These experiences should not be viewed in isolation of the wider adverse community experiences that individuals and families can be exposed to. Poverty, hunger, inadequate housing as well as discrimination, community disruption and lack of opportunity, economic and social capital are all inextricably linked.

Taking this into account there are many further challenges that many families face, including domestic violence, parental abandonment through separation or divorce, a parent with a mental health condition, being the victim of abuse (physical, sexual and/or emotional), being the victim of neglect (physical and emotional), a member of the household being in prison and growing up in a household in which there are adults experiencing alcohol and drug use problems. (NHS Health Scotland)

In order to address and support our families, a key part of the awareness raising campaign across Scotland has been community-based screenings of 'Resilience: The Biology of Stress & The Science of Hope'. This hour long documentary covers the science of ACEs and explores possible solutions. The messages are portrayed in a way to make the science accessible to all. Screenings of the documentary are followed by a discussion panel. The Council has provided screening opportunities of the documentary for employees.

#### The Polishing the Diamonds Report – "Addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences in Scotland"

demonstrates the importance of parental engagement programme stating when "Tackling parental and family risk factors - parenting programmes offered universally but targeted to those in greater need with multiple risk factors supported and delivered by a range of sectors including education and health". <u>"Polishing the Diamonds" Report</u>

Scotland is already making great strides in tackling ACEs with the Scottish Government's recent justice plan <u>Justice</u> in <u>Scotland:Vision and Priorities</u> with Outcome 2 specifically focusing on – "**Prevention and early intervention,** improve wellbeing and life chances".

When children are exposed to adverse and stressful experiences, it can have a long-lasting impact on their ability to think, interact with others and on their learning. This Framework sets out the responsibility we all have to support our most marginalised parents, children and young people across East Ayrshire.

### Did you know?

Positive social interaction stimulates the production of oxytocin, a "feel-good" chemical that reduces stress and promotes growth and healing while enhancing your children's brain development

# Volunteering & Upskilling our Parents/Carers and Young People

It is widely recognised that volunteering has a positive impact on individuals, organisations and the wider community. Volunteering can be a powerful driver of personal, social, economic, cultural and environmental change. It can empower people to fulfil their potential, acquire new skills and knowledge, connect with others in a positive way but also build their capacity and creativity to contribute to the vibrancy of their own communities.

East Ayrshire Council's Volunteer Framework which was approved by Cabinet in October 2014 sets out the Council's commitment to involving and supporting volunteers, ensures that there is a consistent approach to volunteering across all services and ensures that all volunteering opportunities within the Council embrace diversity and promote equality and inclusiveness. There is also a commitment to addressing the barriers which may prevent some individuals from volunteering including low levels of literacy, concern about how volunteering could affect benefits claims, a criminal record, issues with providing appropriate referees or forms of identification for a PVG check, a drug or alcohol addiction or a mental health issue.

#### Part of the Council's commitment to supporting volunteering includes the ME2U programme.

ME2U is a unique and innovative partnership project which is changing the lives of local unemployed people within East Ayrshire. The project is very simple in its premise: individuals who would benefit from participating in a project designed to improve their work readiness are referred from a range of agencies. Following a recruitment process, those selected complete an 8 week programme comprising of two days per week volunteering within an educational establishment and two days per week within a community centre working towards four SCQF Level 4 & 5 modules delivered by Ayrshire College Community Tutors.

### ME2U Case Study - Kerry's Story

Kerry had been unemployed for 17 years since leaving education before participating on ME2U. She had her first child aged 20 and went on to have two more children. She had brought up her children on her own for a number of years and had been claiming JSA as a Lone Parent for two years since her youngest child started school.

Kerry completed an Introduction to Care course with Ayrshire College through Jobcentre Plus and was then successful in gaining a place on ME2U. She was really nervous at the start as she felt she had lost confidence and become isolated since her youngest child started school, however after a couple of days on the programme she started to relax and enjoy the experience. Having a purpose and something to do during the day was a big turning point for Kerry. She says 'being at home all day and having little money to spend was soul destroying.'

Kerry's ME2U placement was in the Art Department as a Classroom Assistant at Cumnock Academy. She took control of the cupboards ensuring the materials were stored and put away in an orderly manner as well as engaging with the pupils. The teaching staff really appreciated Kerry's support in the department and this helped build her confidence. Kerry has dyslexia and the staff were very supportive with her written work. At home the family's routine changed too and Kerry was now leaving the house in the morning at the same time as the children. She reflects now and realises that before ME2U she really didn't have a routine as she felt she had all week to do things. Kerry's children were proud of their mum and gave her their full support by taking more responsibility for chores at home. Her oldest children were pupils at Cumnock Academy and at first were a bit worried about their mum volunteering in the school however this was never an issue. Kerry made new friends and felt so much more positive about finding a job.

After ME2U Kerry received support from East Ayrshire Council's Essential Skills Service for her dyslexia. She was also referred to the Skills

Development and Employability Service to enable her to complete an 8 week placement at Bute House in Cumnock where she gained experience of home care for the residents. At the end of her placement she was offered a job and through her work was able to embark on her SVQ level 2 in Care.





# Parental Engagement: Focus and Expectations

Based on the Council vision and listening to what parents and carers have told us, the expectation is that this Framework will be embedded in practice, being the main driver for Parental Engagement across East Ayrshire.

What we will do	Focus	Expectations	Supporting documents
All parents can expect to be given a warm welcome across all sectors of Council and community based services and be actively encouraged to participate in the life and work of their child.	<ul> <li>Mutual respect, kindness, non-judgemental, trusting, collaborative approach.</li> <li>All staff to promote nurturing environments, and treat individuals with care, courtesy and fairness.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>FACE – Flexible, Approachable, Caring and Empowered.</li> <li>Challenge any behaviours likely to alienate or intimidate parents.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>EAC Relationship Framework</li> <li>EAC Parental Involvement Framework</li> <li>Transformation Strategy 2017-2022</li> <li>FACE</li> </ul>
Overcoming barriers to parental engagement	<ul> <li>Reduce parental isolation and increase parental engagement and expectations.</li> <li>From our local consultation parents and carers identified transport, ill health, finance, work commitments and lack of information as the main barriers to engagement.</li> <li>Ensure income maximisation for parents/carers</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>We will listen and aim to find sustainable solutions, working in collaboration to support parents and carers.</li> <li>We willsignpost parents/ carers to local partners who can provideadvice and support in relation to financial concerns/ matters.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>EAC Relationship Framework</li> <li>EAC Parental Involvement</li> <li>Framework</li> <li>The Cost of the School Day – Toolkit for Parent Councils</li> <li>Financial inclusion team https://eamoney.co.uk/ financial-inclusion-team. php</li> <li>Education Maintenance Allowance</li> <li>East Ayrshire Universal Credit Team</li> </ul>
Contributing to improvement planning and school evaluation.	• Parents/ carers are consulted on further plans e.g. school / centre improvement plans and self-evaluation.	<ul> <li>Individual plans incorporate the views of parent/carers and families.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li><u>How Good Is Our</u> School – 4th Edition</li> <li><u>How good is our Early</u> Learning &amp; Childcare</li> </ul>

Establishing effective practices for communication and involvement	<ul> <li>Ask parents and families what would work for them.</li> <li>Parents Council can help parents and carers to become more actively and effectively involved in their children's learning.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Avoid the use of jargon and acronyms.</li> <li>Communicate with easy to understand information; plain English.</li> <li>Increase engagement through text message, email and media preferred channel.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>EAC Relationship Framework</li> <li>EAC Parental Involvement Framework</li> <li>Transformation Strategy 2017-2022</li> <li>GIRFEC</li> <li>Council communication strategy</li> </ul>
Enabling parents to support their child's development	<ul> <li>Rights based - UNCRC rights respecting schools</li> <li>Solution oriented approaches</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Growth Mindset - Deliver a positive can do attitude</li> <li>Increase understanding of child's individualised needs</li> </ul>	EAC Relationship     Framework     EAC Parental     Involvement     Framework     Transformation Strategy     2017-2022     GIRFEC
Supporting parents to engage in Volunteering opportunities	• Using EAC Volunteering Framework developing opportunities for parents to be upskilled, included and supported.	<ul> <li>Identify and harness skills and talents of parents</li> <li>Assets based approach</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>EAC Volunteering Framework</li> <li>EAC Relationship Framework</li> <li>EAC Parental Involvement Framework</li> <li>Transformation Strategy 2017-2022</li> <li>CLD Framework</li> </ul>
Increase parents accessing community based sessions/classes/ groups	<ul> <li>Community connections and pathways</li> <li>Access to informative information</li> <li>Information available in schools and ECC</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Vibrant Communities events page</li> <li>Community led action plans</li> <li>Signposting</li> </ul>	EAC Relationship Framework      EAC Parental Involvement Framework      Transformation Strategy 2017-2022      Vibrant Communities web page      CLD Framework

Work in partnership with agencies across Education, Community and Voluntary sectors to promote and support family opportunities.	<ul> <li>Collaborative approach to build strong links between home, Early Childhood Centres, school and community settings.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>It is everyone's role to support parental engagement</li> <li>Share good practice</li> <li>Parental engagement is embedded within all improvement planning processes.</li> </ul>	Transformation Strategy 2017-2022     CLD Framework
Parents engaging in parent council, parent's evenings and school based support for parents/carers	<ul> <li>Increase expectations and aspiration of parent</li> <li>Build strong and open relationships with school / centre staff</li> </ul>	• A range of parents voices are heard across the community and are given empowerment to make decisions on issues that affect them.	Equalities     Cost of the School Day     Transformation Strategy     2017-2022     CLD Framework



# Local Policies, Guidance and Support

- Children and Young Peoples Service Plan 2017 2020 Children & Young People's Service Plan 2017 2020
- East Ayrshire Council website East Ayrshire Council
- EAC Education Service Improvement Plan 2018-2021 <u>EAC Education Service Improvement Plan 2018-2021</u>
- EAC Parental Involvement Framework Parental Involvement
- EAC Relationships Framework <u>Relationships Framework</u>
- EAC Volunteering Framework East Ayrshire Council Volunteering Framework
- Engaging Our Communities Framework Engaging Our Communities
- Vibrant Communities , Life skills and Inclusion Team Literacies and Learning

### **Resources to Support Family Learning**

- ALIS report Adult Literacies in Scotland 2020 (adult/parent dedicated support) Government policy ALIS Report
- BBC Bitesize (Literacy and numeracy activities to help child with homework) BBC Bitesize
- BBC Skillswise (Literacy and numeracy activities to help child with homework) BBC Skillswise
- The Big Plus <u>The Big Plus</u>
- National Literacy Trust <u>National Literacy Trust</u>
- Parent Club read, write, count Parent Club
- Scottish Book Trust Read, Write, Count <u>Scottish Book Trust</u>

### National Policies and Guidance

- Better Relationships, Better Behaviour, Better Learning (2014); Better Relationships, Better Behaviour, Better Learning (2014)
- Building the Ambition National Practice Guidance on Early Learning and Childcare and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 <u>National Practice Guidance</u>
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014; Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- Independent charity funded by membership, working with parents and educators, providing information, advice and training <u>Connect</u>
- Curriculum for Excellence (2004 and ongoing); <u>Curriculum for Excellence (2004 and ongoing)</u>
- Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) <u>Developing the Young Workforce (DYW)</u>
- Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009; Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009
- Education under the Equality Act 2010; Education under the Equality Act 2010
- Engaging Parents and Families: A toolkit for practitioners <u>A toolkit for practitioners</u>
- Growing Up in Scotland Growing Up in Scotland
- How Dad friendly is our School Fathers Network Scotland How Dad-Friendly Is Our School?
- How good is our school 4th Edition How Good Is Our School
- How good is our early learning and childcare <u>Early Learning & Childcare</u>
- Included, Engaged and Involved (2017) <u>Attendance in Scottish Schools part I</u>
- Included, Engaged and Involved (2017) Part 2: Included, Engaged and Involve (2017) Part 2
- National Parent Forum of Scotland National Parent Forum of Scotland
- National Parenting Strategy <u>National Parenting Strategy</u>
- National Standards for Engagement <u>National Standards for Engagement</u>
- Parental Involvement Act (2006) Parental Involvement Act (2006)
- Parenting Across Scotland Parenting Across Scotland
- Parentzone Scotland Parentzone Scotland
- Play Scotland "What is Play and Play work" Play Scotland
- "Polishing the Diamonds" Addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences in Scotland <u>"Polishing The Diamonds" Report</u>
- Pre-birth to Three Positive Outcomes for Scotland Children and Families Pre-Birth to Three
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) UN convention on the rights of the child
- Volunteering for all: <u>Our National Framework</u>
- Why Volunteering Matters Volunteer Scotland







