

REPORT TO: Education Committee

MEETING DATE: 11 June 2019

BY: Depute Chief Executive (Resources & People Services)

SUBJECT: Parental Engagement Strategy 2017-2020 Evaluation

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update on the evaluation of the Parental Engagement Strategy 2017.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Parental Engagement Strategy was launched with parents and schools in September 2017 and demonstrates the commitment by East Lothian Council to improve the quality and extent of parents' involvement in their child's learning and the important role they play in their child's education and school community.

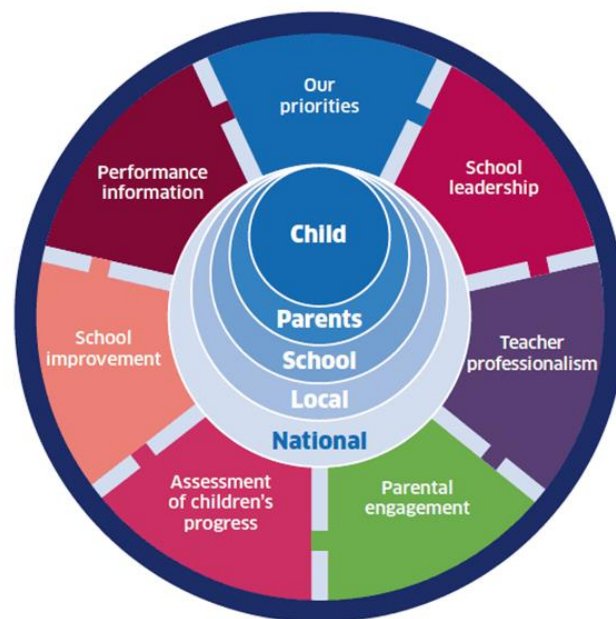
- 3.2 During February 2019, two closely aligned surveys, attached as Appendix 1, were created based on each of the six themes in the Parental Engagement Strategy 2017.

- Welcome
- Communication & Involvement
- Engagement in Child's Learning
- Family Learning
- Parent Councils
- Complaints Procedures

The surveys were developed to evaluate the view of each school and their parent council and a slightly shorter survey on the views of each school's parent forum on the implementation and impact of the Parental Engagement Strategy 2017.

- 3.3 114 responses were received to the school and parent council survey in total across all schools.

- 3.4 2846 responses were received from the parent survey across all school settings (representing 28% of the parent population), a positive indication of parental engagement in this evaluation.
- 3.5 The responses from all three stakeholder groups were collated by school into a single comparator statistical report to enable schools and parent councils to triangulate how well the aims of the Parental Engagement Strategy were now embedded in the school. This will also allow schools to identify areas for improvement and opportunities for parents and schools to work together to foster positive partnerships that are key to securing the best outcomes for our children and young people in line with the National Improvement Framework parental engagement strand.



- 3.6 Schools and parent council members were asked to identify an example of good practice in their schools for each of the six strands of the Strategy. This data will be used by the Education Department Parental Engagement Officer to promote sharing of good practice across all schools. Examples of good practice included:

- Parent members on all of a school's improvement groups;
- Working out ways of engaging with parents to include those who feel more distant from the school;
- Monitoring attendance at all family events, including the array of family members attending so that staff can understand family dynamics and get to know those who are important in the lives of pupils. This helps to plan programmes and events that maximise wider engagement around the child. Feedback is used to make each event more accessible;
- Creating a parent and pupil friendly version of the School Improvement Plan and Standards & Quality Report to enable more parents to have more of an insight into what the school are planning in an accessible format.

- The Parent Council actively offering a variety of ways to become involved to suit parents commitments and modelling a positive relationship with the school as a team, working together for families.
- 3.7 Parents had the opportunity to give their general feedback at the end of the survey and this has been shared with Head Teachers to follow up where necessary.
- 3.8 A statistical report and parental comments for each school were circulated to the Head Teacher on 1 May 2019 to discuss with the Chair of the Parent Council. Following that discussion, the themes emerging from the views of all stakeholders will be discussed at a future Parent Council meeting and any actions required included in the School Improvement Plan.
- 3.9 The positive impact of the Parental Engagement Strategy 2017 were strongly demonstrated in parental responses. Of all parents responding:
- 87% feel a warm welcome in our schools;
 - 69% feel encouraged to participate in the life and work of the school;
 - 71% feel communication is clear and have adequate notice of events;
 - 68% feel the school supports them to engage with their child's learning at a level they feel comfortable with;
 - 70% feel encouraged and supported to become involved in the Parent Council to ensure a wide variety of views are represented.
- 3.10 The National Improvement Framework identifies 13 key goals for Parental Involvement and Engagement as identified in the joint Scottish Government / COSLA "Learning Together" National Action plan. This will include steps to strengthen guidance, develop training and support materials and to improve the links between home and school. The toolkits associated with the Learning Together action plan have been shared with schools and parent councils to assist them to address areas for improvement.

Some common areas for improvement identified through this evaluation include:

- Improving school websites so they are easier to use and all documents/calendars of events are in one place;
- The opportunities for family and intergenerational learning;
- Raising awareness of adult literacy and numeracy classes to support family learning;
- Promoting to the wider parent forum ways to contribute to the school improvement planning and self-evaluation processes;
- Creating opportunities for more parents to feel involved in planning their child's transition to the next stage of schooling.

- 3.11 The contribution of the East Lothian Association of Parent Council Members and schools in promoting the engagement of parents with the survey is recognised and greatly appreciated.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None.

5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on equality, the environment or economy.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial – none associated with this report. The parental views expressed through this survey will be part of the wider data set used by schools to determine school priorities.
- 6.2 Personnel - none.
- 6.3 Other – none.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Parental Engagement Strategy 2017
https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/download/12712/parental_engagement_strategy
- 7.2 School/Parent Council Survey question set
- 7.3 Parent Survey question set
- 7.4 National Improvement Framework – Learning Together: Scotland’s national action plan 2018-2021
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/learning-together-scotlands-national-action-plan-parental-involvement-parental-engagement/>

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DATE	23 May 2019

Parental Engagement Strategy Evaluation Survey – February 2019

Question Set for Parents

WELCOME

1. All parents / carers are given a warm welcome in our school
2. Children and siblings are welcomed at parents' evenings
3. I am given opportunities to discuss and agree with staff what may be put in place to support my individual needs
4. I feel encouraged to participate in the life and work of the school

COMMUNICATION & INVOLVEMENT

5. All communication from the school is clear
6. The school gives adequate notice of events
7. Ways for me to respond to communications is clearly explained every time
8. The school makes clear to me how I can contact the school with concerns
9. The school website is easy to use and contains key documents for me to read (i.e. School Handbook, School Improvement Plan, Calendar of Events)
10. The school makes the involvement of parents / carers a priority
11. The school offers opportunities to be involved in the life of the school that is comfortable, supportive and inclusive and not necessarily always involving me coming into school

ENGAGEMENT IN CHILD'S LEARNING

12. The school supports me to engage with my child's learning at a level I feel comfortable with
13. The school highlights ways I can support my child to learn and how to support them at home with their studies
14. The School involves me in planning my child's transition to the next stage of schooling
15. The school clearly communicates the details of transition programmes (including any enhanced transition for additional support needs)
16. SECONDARY ONLY: The school helps me to support my child through course selection and option choices, providing clear information in a variety of ways so I feel informed and enabled

FAMILY LEARNING

17. The expectation of my input to learning is clear from my child's teachers
18. The school provides opportunities for grandparents / significant family members to learn together
19. The school works with partners (i.e. Outdoor Learning, Support from the Start) to promote and provide family learning opportunities, taking into account my varied needs
20. The school considers how to share resources creatively to increase Family Learning opportunities in their local area cluster
21. The school publicises the availability of Adult Literacy and Numeracy classes to support family learning
22. The school builds relationships with all parents to overcome barriers to family learning, to help all parents to feel confident about seeking support

PARENT COUNCIL

23. East Lothian Council provide adequate training opportunities for office bearers of the parent council to carry out their roles effectively
24. All parents / carers are encouraged and supported to become involved in the Parent Council to ensure a wide variety of views are represented
25. Parents / carers have been fully involved in school self-evaluation and the school improvement process this session
26. The Parent Council has a direct impact on increased parental engagement

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

27. Parents / carers are confident that any concerns / complaints will be acted upon in an effective and timely manner

Parental Engagement Strategy Evaluation Survey – February 2019

Question Set for Schools and Parent Council

WELCOME

1. All parents / carers are given a warm welcome in our school
2. Children and siblings are welcomed at parent / carer consultations
3. Parents / carers will be given opportunities to discuss and agree with staff what may be put in place to support their individual needs
4. Non-resident parents are provided with the same information as the resident parent, as appropriate
5. Parents / carers are encouraged to participate in the life and work of the school
Please give an example of good practice in your school regarding this strand of the Parental Engagement Strategy:

COMMUNICATION & INVOLVEMENT

6. All communication from the school is clear
7. The school gives adequate notice of events
8. Ways for parents / carers to respond to communications is clearly explained every time
9. The school makes clear to parents / carers how they can contact the school with concerns
10. The school website is easy to use and contains key documents for parents / carers to read (i.e. School Handbook, School Improvement Plan, School Calendar of Events)
11. The school makes the involvement of parents / carers a priority
12. The school offers opportunities to be involved in the life of the school that is comfortable, supportive and inclusive and not necessarily always involving parents / carers coming into school
Please give an example of good practice in your school regarding this strand of the Parental Engagement Strategy:

ENGAGEMENT IN CHILD'S LEARNING

13. The school supports parents / carers to engage with their child's learning at a level they feel comfortable with
14. The school highlights helpful ways a parent / carer can support their child to learn and how to support them at home with their studies
15. The school involves parents / carers in planning their child's transition to the next stage of schooling
16. The school clearly communicates the details of transition programmes (including any enhanced transition for additional support needs)
17. The school monitors attendance at parents' evenings and feedback received
Please give an example of good practice in your school regarding this strand of the Parental Engagement Strategy:

FAMILY LEARNING

18. The expectations of parents / carers input to learning is clear from my child's teachers
19. The school provides intergenerational opportunities for families to learn together

20. The school works with partners (i.e. Outdoor Learning, Support from the Start) to promote and provide family learning opportunities, taking into account the varied needs of parents / carers
 21. The school considers how to share resources creatively to increase Family Learning opportunities in their cluster
 22. The school publicises the availability of Adult Literacy and Numeracy classes to support family learning
 23. The school builds relationships with all parents / carers to overcome barriers to family learning, to help all parents / carers to feel confident about seeking support to address any barriers to support a child's learning
- Please give an example of good practice in your school regarding this strand of the Parental Engagement Strategy:

PARENT COUNCIL

24. East Lothian Council provide adequate training opportunities for office bearers of the parent council to carry out their roles effectively
25. All parents / carers are encouraged and supported to become involved in the Parent Council to ensure a wide variety of views are represented
26. Parents / carers are trained to recruit senior school managers in our school
27. Parents / carers have been fully involved in school self-evaluation and the school improvement process this session
28. The Parent Council has a direct impact on increased parental engagement

Please give an example of good practice in your school regarding this strand of the Parental Engagement Strategy:

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

29. Parents / carers are confident that any concerns / complaints will be acted upon in an effective and timely manner
 30. The school monitors complaints received
 31. All school staff are aware of the ELC Complaints Procedures
 32. All school staff are aware of the escalation process in school for concerns / complaints raised and ensure they are dealt with effectively
- Please give an example of good practice in your school regarding this strand of the Parental Engagement Strategy: