

National Parent Forum of Scotland Update - Autumn 2011

This update covers new information for parents/carers on changing qualifications, next steps for Curriculum for Excellence in schools, as well as an important opportunity for parents of children with additional support for learning needs.

The National Parent Forum of Scotland web site, www.parentforumsotland.org, includes details of their area representatives and lists the national bodies on which they sit. They are always delighted to [hear from parents](#) who wish to raise any issues or suggest ideas.

- **Building the National Parent Forum of Scotland Database**

The NPFoS are compiling a national database of parent contacts and parent council chairs, solely for their use on matters relating to parental involvement in education. If you would like to be included in this, please email tina@kristina.org.uk. The Minister for Children and Young People, Angela Constance, who gave the keynote speech at the NPFoS conference (see below), is keen to speak to a different parent council chair each week on the telephone. If you would like to take up this opportunity, please email [Tina Woolnough](#) at the above address, giving your name, your parent council and your phone number. Your number will not be used for any other purpose.

- **Successful Second National Parent Forum of Scotland Conference**

The second annual conference in Bishopbriggs Academy was attended by over 200 parent representatives. Workshops on teacher professional standards, Curriculum for Excellence in primary schools, sharing learning with parents, the new School Inspection framework, the Senior Phase of Curriculum for Excellence, the new National Qualifications and many more were offered. Feedback from parent attendees was brilliant: "It's been great hearing about the good practice that is going on. It also helps us to get used to the language of Curriculum for Excellence. We've also picked up lots of really useful ideas for encouraging parental involvement" (Marie McIntosh, Doune Primary School). Jill Kent of Charleston Academy said: "The sessions have been fantastic. The more I learn about Curriculum for Excellence, the better I feel about it".

- **Next Steps in Schools for Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)**

Joanna Murphy, the National Parent Forum rep on the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) Management Board, wrote recently to all parent council chairs via their schools. Joanna described the expectations of the CfE Management Board over the coming school year. New Primary 7 profiles will be introduced from 2012. These profiles, devised by schools and local authorities, will present a holistic record of a child's achievements, in

and outside school. They will differ from a school report which focuses on learning and they will be useful in supporting transition to high school.

Parent councils of secondary schools can also expect to hear an update about their school's plans for the Senior Phase (S4-S6) of Curriculum for Excellence. For example, the head teacher will be considering the shape of the school timetable, curricular planning, pupil choice and personalisation etc.

- **New Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Information for Parents**

The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) has issued a new information leaflet for parents, 'Qualifications are Changing'. It can be found at <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/46161.html>, along with a range of materials to help parents get to grips with the new qualifications. Secondary schools should now have paper copies of the draft specifications for National 4 and National 5 qualifications.

- **Technology for Additional Support Needs Parent Information Day: 12 November 2011, 10am-2pm, Moray House, University of Edinburgh, Paterson's Land, Edinburgh**

CALL (Communications, Access, Literacy, Learning), based at the University of Edinburgh, supports young people with additional support needs in Scotland to engage with Curriculum for Excellence using appropriate assistive technologies and tools.

Parents/carers are invited to an Information Day on **12 November 2011 from 10am-2pm** to see different technologies in action. This is a great opportunity to update parents/carers on current technological support for children with learning difficulties, eg support for removing barriers to reading in exams are being rolled out in schools (Heather Voice and Stuart Voice). Please book online at www.callscotland.org.uk/training. A charge of £10 is being made to cover the cost of materials and refreshments. CALL also runs a Technology Family Fun Day in late March/early April for children and parents.

- **Skills Development Scotland launches new web service for young people**

Skills Development Scotland provides career information, advice and guidance in a number of ways including in schools, online, face-to-face, in more than 50 advice centres and by phone. A new web service www.myworldofwork.co.uk which is designed to help people plan, build and direct their career throughout their lives was launched in August. 'My World of Work' features a careers A-Z, CV builder, course search, jobs search and hundreds of video clips of people talking about their jobs.

- **Useful Publications for Parents/Carers**

In response to parental requests, the National Parent Forum asked for a new Curriculum for Excellence Factfile - Overview of Key Terms and Features. This digest of CfE terms is now available on www.ltscotland.org.uk/parentzone/cfe.

Updated material to support parent councils in their roles and organisation will shortly be available at

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/parentzone/getinvolved/parentcouncils/resources/index.asp>.