

# Parent Council Newsletter

## January 2010



2010 is already underway and, if you are like me, you will have taken the chance to ponder on what we have achieved in the past year. My view is that we are developing a system of parental involvement in Scotland that we should be proud of – one which allows for far more parents to have a voice in their own school, in their own local authority and now an opportunity for that voice to be made and heard nationally with the setting up of a National Forum for Parent Councils and parents. I have seen lots of encouraging evidence of progress over the past year. Much of this is down to the dedication and hard work of Parent Council members.

Across Scotland, there are more efforts being made to support Parent Councils and also to help parents in their own areas find out more about what is going on in their schools. I see a greater variety of Parent Council events and learning festivals for parents across Scotland. There are also good examples of local involvement and consultation emerging. East Lothian, for example, has parent representation on a number of strategic groups where important decisions are being taken, including their Curriculum for Excellence Implementation, Financial Advisory Scrutiny and their Strategic Budget Group. Parent Councils are also increasingly organising themselves independently, whether in Cluster areas, or across Authorities or within their own Authority. Some authorities have Parent Council representation on their Education Committee, and others are considering how this could possibly work in the future. However, consultation and partnership still needs to be addressed further.

I know that schools and Parent Councils like to hear about what is going on around the country and we are therefore organising a second set of Sharing Events for 2010, this time in partnership with HMIE. The first event will be held on 20 March with a particular focus on Curriculum for Excellence. Details are included in the flyer with this newsletter.

This is an exciting time for Scottish Education. I hope the foundations for parental involvement, that we have all worked hard to establish in the past couple of years, will stand us in good stead to cope with the challenges ahead. To keep you up to speed, we have included information in this newsletter on some of the most important developments - read more on Curriculum for Excellence, Glow, and the new National Forum. I hope you will find it interesting and helpful. Please let me know if you want us to cover anything in future newsletters.

All the best for a busy and productive 2010.

Lorraine Sanda  
National Parental Involvement Coordinator



curriculum for excellence  
building the curriculum 4  
skills for learning, skills for life  
and skills for work

- > SUCCESSFUL LEARNERS
- > CONFIDENT INDIVIDUALS
- > RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS
- > EFFECTIVE CONTRIBUTORS

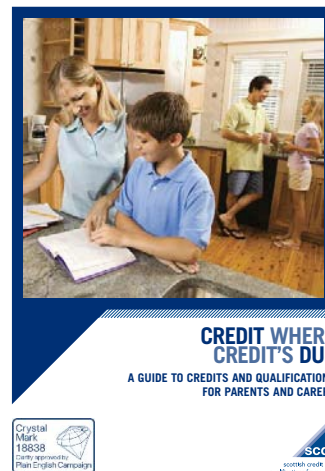


## Update on Curriculum for Excellence

All schools and early years establishments are now taking forward implementation of Curriculum for Excellence. From August 2010 all children will experience and benefit from the changes. Pupils who go into S1 at this time will be the first to take new qualifications in Literacy and Numeracy in 2012-13, and new National 4 and 5 Qualifications that will replace Standard Grades in 2013-14.

Learning and Teaching Scotland and the Scottish Government are working together on further guidance and support for staff and parents. The main developments that you may wish to be aware of and to discuss with your Head Teachers are:

- Parent Toolkit – this is a set of resources being sent to Headteachers to help their staff to share information with parents about Curriculum for Excellence. It will include a set of online materials as well as some print resources including leaflets and posters for schools to use at parent events. Information will also be sent to Parent Council Chairs. New information for parents is also being developed for the parentzone website.
- Assessment – the Curriculum for Excellence changes will be supported by a new assessment framework. Schools and education authorities will consider how their current assessment strategies link into arrangements for reporting to parents.
- National Qualifications – the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) have produced a leaflet about the new National 4 and National 5 Qualifications. [http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files\\_ccc/CfE.pdf](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/CfE.pdf) They are now setting up Curricular Area Review Boards for each subject area, including Literacy and Numeracy. These will look at how the new Qualifications should develop and will include representation from Business, Further Education, Universities, parents and others who have an interest in ensuring that the new Qualifications support Curriculum for Excellence and benefit Scottish learners. The SQA will test the new materials and have committed to having them available one year in advance of when any pupil will be put forward for any of the new qualifications.



We have also included with this newsletter a copy of a recent leaflet published by the SCQF\* setting how the new qualifications compare with the current qualifications framework.

For more information on Curriculum for Excellence, go to:  
<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/index.asp>

\*(Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework)

# Glow

Many of you may have heard about Glow <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/glowscotland/index.asp>, the Scottish Schools Intranet which connects Scotland's educators and pupils. It is funded by Scottish Government and managed by Learning and Teaching Scotland. Glow is designed to support educational development and has powerful online tools to work together safely, securely, at any location or time.

Glow is a tool to support delivery of Curriculum for Excellence, providing engaging technologies to get children excited about learning. It is too early to see yet how Glow will be used by local authorities to support parental involvement, but here are some of the indications:

- Individual schools can develop their own Glow site and could have a parent portal, with useful general information for parents on things like school holidays, policies, staff, and other key information
- The Parent Council in the school may have its own area within the school site to communicate, share its minutes, conduct surveys etc
- Individual class and subject teachers may share information about what children are learning to help parents support learning at home, homework tasks, exam preparation etc
- Eventually we may see information on absence, behaviour, reporting etc
- These school sites would only be open to parents who have a child at the school and as such the local authority would arrange for parents to be issued with a Username.
- In time, Parent Councils may also be able to communicate across an authority area and with other Parent Councils across Scotland



## Scottish Education Awards

Celebrate the success of Scotland's schools – nominate now for the Scottish Education Awards 2010!

The Scottish Education Awards 2010 were launched on Wednesday 16 December 2009 by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning Michael Russell MSP, at Mearns Primary School in East Renfrewshire, winners of a Scottish Education Award for Enterprise in 2009.

The Awards highlight the excellent work taking place in Scottish classrooms, celebrate schools and acknowledge the dedicated individuals who devote their lives to helping children and young people fulfil their potential. Entry to the Awards is open to all publicly funded schools, including secondary, primary, nursery and special schools.

Further details of the Awards and the new categories for 2010 can be found on the [Scottish Education Awards website](http://www.scottisheducationawards.org.uk) [www.scottisheducationawards.org.uk](http://www.scottisheducationawards.org.uk). Nominations are open until Friday 5 March 2010.

# Here For All Children

That was the feeling of Parent Council representatives from 30 education authorities who attended the inaugural meeting of the National Parent Forum on 21 November in Glasgow. The representatives ensured that the Forum got off to a very positive start, kicking off discussions and sharing their ideas and suggestions in a number of important areas. Messages of welcome and support were received from the Scottish Parent Teacher Council and the Scottish Muslim Parents' Association, as well as from Scottish Government, HMIE<sup>1</sup> and ADES<sup>2</sup>.



Delegates identified a range of issues which they saw as priorities and where there was a need for parents' views to be heard by Scottish Government, local authorities and others in education. These covered several broad themes:

- Funding/resources
- Communication
- Support for parents, children and Parent Councils
- Learning and Teaching Standards
- Curriculum

The delegates agreed to meet at least four times a year and the next meeting would be held on 6 March in Glasgow. In the meantime, they will consider a number of actions including how they will communicate with and seek views of Parent Councils and parents in their own local area. A fuller note on what was discussed at the first meeting can be read at [www.parentzonescotland.org.uk](http://www.parentzonescotland.org.uk)

## Keeping Informed

For regular updates and information on what is happening in education, you can subscribe to the Scottish Government Schools e-bulletin by visiting the website below <http://register.scotland.gov.uk/>

The bulletin carries topics such as news of current consultations, for example Scottish Government has recently launched a consultation to set up a national anti-bullying policy which you can access through the website <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/11/13154751/0>. The deadline for responses is 26th February.

The parentzone website <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/parentzone/> has news and information for parents as well. Resources can also be ordered by emailing [parentzone@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:parentzone@scotland.gsi.gov.uk).

<sup>1</sup> (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education)

<sup>2</sup> (Association of Directors of Education in Scotland)