



# the National Parent Forum of Scotland

NEWSLETTER

August/September 2011

From the National Parent Forum of Scotland: Welcome to the first Parent Council Newsletter of the new school year. It is written by parents for parents – we hope you will find it useful and informative. Please share the newsletter with as many parents as possible, perhaps by email or on your school website. The Useful Contacts section may be particularly helpful. News updates on the latest developments in Scottish education will also be of interest.

Partnership-working is a strong theme of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). One year on from the start of the Curriculum for Excellence journey, parents are getting to grips with the changes and opportunities brought by Curriculum for Excellence. To help you with this, the National Parent Forum is taking 'Curriculum for Excellence – One Year On' as the theme for its second annual conference. We have been contributing in other ways over the past 18 months – asking for information for parents, working in partnership with a variety of national education bodies to ensure that parent voices are heard. You can read more about our achievements in the following pages.

As the national representative body for parent councils, the National Parent Forum of Scotland welcomes your views, experiences and success stories. We would be delighted to hear from you via the contact details below. Your feedback on education, or the challenges faced by parent councils, or just on the content and format of this newsletter, along with your parent council news, would be much appreciated.

With all best wishes,

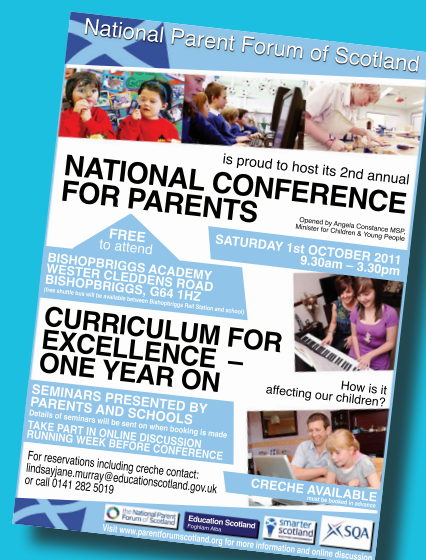
Iain Ellis,  
Chair, National Parent Forum of Scotland  
[Chair@parentforumscotland.org](mailto:Chair@parentforumscotland.org)

## National Parent Forum of Scotland

### National Parent Conference, 1 October 2011

Following the success of our first conference in 2010, the National Parent Forum of Scotland are busy organising this year's conference, 'Curriculum For Excellence – One year On'. The event is free and open to all parents/carers (booking necessary). It will take place on 1 October, 9.30am to 3.30pm at Bishopbriggs Academy in East Dunbartonshire. Angela Constance, the Government Minister for Children and Young People, will open the Conference and take your questions.

To book a place, please contact [lindsayjane.murray@educationscotland.gov.uk](mailto:lindsayjane.murray@educationscotland.gov.uk) or call 0141 282 5019. A crèche is available (booked in advance).



## *...Online Conference Alternative, 24 September–1 October*

In addition to our Conference at Bishopbriggs on 1 October, we are offering an online event to parents who can't attend and who have questions they would like to submit. This will open on 26 September and run to 1 October at <http://www.engageforeducation.org/2011/06/national-parent-forum-of-scotland/>

You have to be logged in to leave a comment. Just click 'log in'; if it is your first visit, click 'register' and follow the registration process. We will get answers to your questions from Ministers, Education Scotland, the Scottish Qualifications Authority and Scottish Government. Here is a short url to take you to the same page <http://bit.ly/rumxibt>.

## *National Parent Forum Business*

Our parent representatives from local authority areas meet four times a year to discuss current issues and to decide actions. We also have a number of busy sub-groups which attend meetings, make consultation submissions and provide a parental perspective on topics such as Curriculum for Excellence (we have a parent rep on the CfE Management Board), Additional Support for Learning. Lists of our reps, of our sub-groups and of the national committees and working groups on which our reps sit are available on

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/NPF/general-blogs/>

Please do contact your local representative if your parent council wishes to raise agenda items, share good practice or if you seek information. Our meetings for 2011-12 are: 3 September 2011 in Glasgow, 26 November in Edinburgh, 3 March in Glasgow.

## *Parent Council News*

### *Additional Support for Learning and Parent Councils*

How can your parent council effectively involve and represent parents of children with additional support needs? Our Additional Support for Learning sub-group has been working with Scottish Government and Enquire, the national advice service for families of those with additional support needs. Together, we are

- Gathering information on good examples of how parent councils can be inclusive and supportive
- Raising awareness about important legislative changes

Our contribution to the April newsletter of Enquire includes a range of practical suggestions about how to make your parent council as inclusive as possible. It can be found on (<http://enquire.org.uk/20100622/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/EnquireWithin34.pdf>). How do you and your school work together to ensure that diverse parental voices are heard? Please share your ideas with us and we will publish them in future editions of this newsletter.

Recent changes to the Additional Support for Learning Act place new obligations on schools and on local authorities to ensure that

parents have access to information, support and mediation. This includes providing information about Enquire. Contact details for all these services should now be made available on school and local authority websites and in school handbooks.

The Enquire website has further details about the legislative change. It also lists the contact details for local authority Additional Support for Learning Officers who are a key point of contact if queries and concerns can't be resolved within your local school. A new one-page summary on 'Steps to Avoid and Resolve Disagreements' is available at (<http://enquire.org.uk/20100622/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/steps-to-resolving-disagreements.pdf>).

Let us know how you communicate with all the parents in your school – what works best? Many parent councils find this a challenge, especially in high school. Please email us via [enquiries@parentforumscotland.org](mailto:enquiries@parentforumscotland.org).

For independent and impartial advice on additional support for learning issues, contact Enquire via [www.enquire.org.uk](http://www.enquire.org.uk), 0845 123 2303 or email [info@enquire.org.uk](mailto:info@enquire.org.uk).

# Curriculum for Excellence Update

## Sharing information with parents

Schools are increasingly engaging with parents on Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) by holding events and by sharing information. Some of this engagement has been initiated or organised and supported by parent councils which is great. If you wish to circulate more CfE information to your parent forum, you may wish to access the CfE resources which include the latest factfiles on CfE: Literacy, Numeracy, Transitions and Outdoor Learning. The National Parent Forum was involved in preparing several of these factfiles, and initiated the most recent fact file in response to parental requests for an overview of CfE key terms. You can find all of these fact files and this Overview at <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/Parentzone/cfe/index.asp>

In addition, a factfile on 'CfE and Community Learning and Development – Improving Life Chances' sets out some of the opportunities for partnership working between schools, colleges and community educators. Parent Councils, particularly at secondary school, may wish to meet local community learning and development officers or college representatives to discuss these opportunities.

If you would like to see CfE in action, there are videos available on [www.youtube.com/view\\_play\\_list?p=763E55700ADBC35F](http://www.youtube.com/view_play_list?p=763E55700ADBC35F)

Our rep on the Curriculum for Excellence Management board, Joanna Murphy, wrote a letter in June to all parent council chairs via their schools, updating you on the work of the Board and on the CfE Overview of Terms. Joanna's letter can be found on <https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/glowblogs/NPF/general-blogs/>

## Curriculum for Excellence Management Board and the Senior Phase

Schools across Scotland are already planning ahead for the Senior Phase (S4 to S6 in 2013/14) of Curriculum for Excellence. Creative and innovative ideas are being developed to ensure the delivery of pupil 'entitlements' to a 'coherent' curriculum, qualifications and a broad education, skills for learning, life and work, personal support and a positive destination after school. These 'entitlements' are set out clearly in the latest statement from the Curriculum for Excellence Management Board [http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/publications/c/publication\\_tcm4662740.asp?strReferringChannel=understandingthecurriculum&strReferringPageID=tcm:4-619619-64](http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/publications/c/publication_tcm4662740.asp?strReferringChannel=understandingthecurriculum&strReferringPageID=tcm:4-619619-64). The statement answers a number of queries which parents may have: how can diverse learning opportunities be delivered? When will young people sit exams? When will subject choices take place? This is likely to be of interest to parents of current S1 and S2s, and primary and pre-school children.



## ***Education Scotland***

On 1 July 2011, Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS), HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE), the National Continuing Professional Development Team and the Scottish Government's Positive Behaviour Team came together to create a new executive agency, Education Scotland.

Education Scotland is now the new national development and improvement agency for education. It will provide support and challenge to the education system from early years to adult learning. Priorities are: Curriculum for Excellence; identifying and sharing good practice and innovation; undertaking independent external evaluations of educational provision (eg of schools, nurseries, pre-school centres, local authorities, community education partners); policy development and support; professional development.

Education Scotland is planning to engage with partners to discuss how their services should be developed and re-designed for the future. We will keep you informed as to how parents will be involved in this process.

## ***New Inspection Framework***

Education Scotland are introducing a revised model for school inspections from August 2011. The new model follows extensive consultation which attracted almost 2000 responses, around one-quarter of whom were parents who took part in either focus groups or returned questionnaires. Parents were also represented by the National Parent Forum of Scotland and the Scottish Parent Teacher Council on the HM Inspectors' external reference group for the inspection review. HM Inspectors' response to the consultation, together with the report by the independent consultants who conducted the consultation, is available at <http://www.hmie.gov.uk/AboutUs/InspectionResources/>

This link also provides the 'Arrangements for Inspecting Schools in Scotland' document which was published on 11 August.

Section 8 of this document sets out how parents are involved in inspections and includes details on the enhanced role of the chairperson of the Parent Council in inspections.

## ***Commission on Rural Education***

The National Parent Forum of Scotland will be represented on the Commission on Rural Education by Shetland member, Bob Cree-Hay. He will join head teachers, experts and local authority representatives. The Commission will look at: the delivery of rural education, maximizing attainment and sharing good practice, how rural education can support rural communities, addressing funding issues as well as reviewing the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

## ***Qualifications and Curriculum for Excellence***

An e-leaflet for parents which sets out the qualifications relating to Curriculum for Excellence can be found on the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) website at [http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files\\_ccc/CfE\\_Parents\\_Leaflet.pdf](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/CfE_Parents_Leaflet.pdf). The leaflet sets out how existing qualifications will be revised (Access, Highers and Advanced Highers) and new qualifications (National 4 and National 5) will be introduced in line with Curriculum for Excellence. A further guide, 'New National Qualifications – from Design to Delivery' (<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/46322.html>), explains the development and the timetable for delivery of the new qualifications.

## ***Useful Contacts Box***

**National Parent Forum of Scotland**  
[enquiry@parentforumscotland.org](mailto:enquiry@parentforumscotland.org)

**Enquire** - the national advice service in Scotland for additional support for learning  
[www.enquire.org.uk](http://www.enquire.org.uk)

**Education Scotland** – more detailed information on Curriculum for Excellence  
<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk>

**Parentzone** – information for parents on all aspects of children's learning  
[www.ltscotland.org.uk/parentzone](http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/parentzone)

**Scottish Qualifications Authority** – for the latest information on qualifications  
[www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)