

Dundee City Council: Education Department

Validated Self Evaluation Template

Theme: PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT IN CHILDREN'S LEARNING (PRE-SCHOOL AND PRIMARY)

Background:

There have been appropriate policies and strategies in place for many years and much good work has been done, by a number of agencies and Councils Departments, to empower and support parents in Dundee. Recently, in line with a shift in national focus, the emphasis has been on 'Getting it Right' in Early Years. The focus is now on strengthening the strategic direction and developing a coherent and co-ordinated approach which supports parents to be effectively involved in their children's learning. The recently formed, Early Years Collaborative provides a context for much of this work.

The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 covers three broad levels of engagement with parents. Key areas covered by the Act are: Learning at home, Home/School Partnership, Parental Representation. In order to comply with the Act and taking account of national priorities such as GIRFEC and The National Parenting Strategy, specific actions are outlined in the current Education Service Plan.

Education Service Plan 2012 -2017

Intermediate Outcome 4a: Ensure Effective and Efficient Partnership Working

Projects:

- i continue to review and improve parental engagement;
- ii review and extend the opportunities for pupils' views and opinions to be heard; and
- iii continue to support the implementation of effective integrated working across agencies and with parents.

Lead Officers include: Director of Education, Head of Service, Education Managers, Quality Improvement Officers, Parental Involvement Officer, Development Officers, Family Information Service Co-ordinator, Advice, Information & Support Manager. Family Support Officers are to be appointed by 1 August 2013. The lead Education Group is the IPAA Communication and Consultation Group.

At a time of efficiency savings, it is important to be reassured that all resources are being deployed effectively and are having an impact as well as demonstrating value for money. The Validated Self-Evaluation (VSE) process will focus on the information that parents receive and how this supports them to participate in their children's learning. For the purposes of this exercise the following specific areas will be scrutinised to assess how effectively parents are supported to be involved in their children's learning.

What were we evaluating?

- How information shared with parents has helped them to understand their important role in supporting children's learning.
- Which kinds of shared information have impacted most on parental engagement and on children's learning

What is working well?

- Parental engagement and involvement as a priority for Education Department.
 - Commitment of SMT to support parents to support their children's learning at all levels from pre-birth to adult learning.
 - Evidence of resource realignment to support this priority eg the enhancement of core resource through the appointment of Family Support Workers
- Impact of Early Years Collaborative, ICS, Lochee Pathfinder, Being a Parent in Dundee (BAPID) etc
 - Improved mapping of interventions which has resulted in a decrease in duplication and clear identification of gaps in services to parents
- Strong evidence of a wide range of high quality engagement activities with positive impact at project/operational level.
 - A well regarded Parental Engagement Team and committed and dedicated staff at all levels
 - An ethos of learning from each other and the development of learning communities around Parental Involvement. Sharing practice through web-site, showcases and meetings
 - Data from projects and other operational work being used well to inform future work
 - Emphasis on the involvement of parents in children's learning rather than only pastoral involvement
 - Engagement activities designed to meet the needs of specific groups of people and support many vulnerable families
 - Partnership working at project level within the Education Department is good. Interventions such as DEPS input to parents across the city have been very positively received and parents involved certainly feel more confident and better informed. They tell others and so the engagement is strengthened. They can build upon this confidence and increased knowledge about child development to be further engaged in their children's learning. One of the key principles behind DEPS input is that the parents are given the opportunity to take responsibility for these events and to shape the way forward in their school.
 - Beginnings of Community Learning Partnerships show promise
 - High levels of satisfaction expressed by parents through Focus Groups, surveys and low numbers of complaints
 - Parents and pupils feel empowered through opportunities to work together, being consulted and informed

What do we have to do next?

Aspect for development	What do we have to do? (what do we actually have to develop / revisit / improve?)	What are the resource implications? (human / practical / financial)	Who will take this forward? (who will take the lead / what is the timescale?)	What will improvement look like? (how will we measure this?)
<p>Improve linkage between priorities, strategic plans and funding streams at all levels</p>	<p>High level discussions with senior officers and elected members to identify how the National Agenda can be translated into unambiguous messages which lead to changed behaviours. Consider issues of deprivation , poverty etc and triangulate data and evidence of impact of current policies Clarify the place of BAPID within the strategic plans</p> <p>Ensure that data gathered at operational level informs discussions around Single Outcome Agreements</p>	<p>No additional cost financially</p> <p>Existing staff to engage in discussion</p>	<p>Senior Officers Heads of Service</p> <p>A revised and clear articulation of strategies and plans to be outlined to all staff November 2013</p>	<p>Clear linkage of plans at all levels within Council and with partners. Linkage described in a joint vision.</p> <p>A balance between universal and targeted support and appropriate allocation of resources</p> <p>Employee Survey, Focus Groups/ surveys of parents and staff to check consistency of understanding</p>

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Partnership working towards shared outcomes across and beyond the Council	Develop a shared understanding of the breadth of Parental Involvement with partners outwith the Council through joint CLPL HT Seminar to explore a shared understanding of key aspects of Parental Involvement such as enablement and empowerment Build on and share good practice	With parents, plan a seminar or series of workshops to explore what creates the most effective parental engagement. PIO to lead. Minimal costs to run workshops.	Heads of Service, Managers, QIOs, PIO Early Years Collaborative (EYC) Parents are keen to be involved in seminars and other engagement activities to explore how they can be empowered to support their children's learning Review May 2014	Strengthened partnership working based on a common understanding of key aspects of Parental Involvement Improved consistency of expectations and outcomes
	Use data to clearly define specific groups of parents with whom to work and intended outcomes for each intervention stage of the developments	No financial implications	Heads of Service, Managers, QIOs, PIO Information Analysis Officer Education Department and Partner staff at operational level	A wide range of groups of parents having specific needs met through targeted work which is based on agreed outcomes.

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<p>Selection, use and analysis of data in ways which inform policy and lead to improvement</p>	<p>Ensure that all plan the ways in which work will be evaluated at an early</p> <p>Through CLPL, develop a shared understanding of the range of evidence sources and data which can contribute to improvement</p> <p>Increase use of data which may be held by partners.</p> <p>Consider the use of evaluation and improvement methodologies as used in the EYC and VSE</p>	<p>No financial implications</p> <p>Use Review and Planning days to undertake some of this work</p>	<p>Information Analysis Officer, QIOs</p> <p>BAPID group which has planned to develop a toolkit to measure outcomes and give a richer set of data than is currently available</p> <p>Heads of Service QIOs Partners Elected members Senior Officers All staff</p>	<p>Focus groups, surveys</p> <p>Consistent and coherent policies across and beyond the Council which inform work which can be measured in terms of impact and outcomes.</p> <p>Workstreams informed by careful analysis of data and integrated evaluation.</p> <p>All projects will be clear from the outset how the impact will be measured. Data held by partners will be taken into account in this analysis</p>

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	<p>Use carefully selected qualitative and quantitative evidence to demonstrate added value and sustainability in a climate of efficiency savings</p> <p>Make the Plan Do Review cycle more robust.</p>		<p>Review May 2014</p>	<p>Effective tracking of children and young people to inform early intervention at all stages.(links with MCMC theme)</p> <p>Measured and tracked through department improvement plans</p>