



# the National Parent Forum of Scotland

## Welcome to the NPFS Summer E-News Update

Our last newsletter of this school year. A word from our new Chair:

Following our AGM on June 4th I am pleased to have become the new National Parent Forum of Scotland Chair. Anyone who has met me will know how passionate I am about parental involvement in education. Parents have an enormous part to play both at home, in partnership with their school and the rest of the community and I will promote that in any way I can. I would like to thank the outgoing Chair, Iain Ellis, for his enormous contribution to the parental landscape in Scotland. We all owe him a great deal and we are very happy he will remain with us as a Local Area Representative for West Dunbartonshire.

The NPFS is celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Parental Involvement Act by embarking upon a Scotland-wide review (see below for more details). We will also continue with our representation of parents' interests at the highest level in education and you can be sure that we will always speak out for parents and our young people.

Over the summer holidays we will be strengthening our relationships with key government and education partners and hopefully getting out and about to some local events to meet up with parents and chat about their hopes for their children. A big "Good Luck" to all our young people waiting for results over the summer and watch our website for Results Day information in August.

We have plenty of events, focus groups and other engagement opportunities in development for this review year - keep an eye on the NPFS website, Twitter and Facebook for all the latest. Please get in touch with us if there is anything you need help with, or wish to discuss: we will be available all summer. Looking forward to sharing more with you in August. Have a fab summer.  
Joanna Murphy, Chair

### Update to parents on National Improvement Framework

When the National Improvement Framework was launched in January this year, we produced a [nutshell](#) to help explain the new initiative. The detail of the framework is being consulted on widely and we are a partner in the development of all areas of the framework. Over the summer we will be working with the Government on the Framework, it would be remiss of us to give you information which is not yet finalised. Rest assured we are constantly putting the needs and concerns of children and parents at the centre of the discussion.

### The First Minister's Reading Challenge

Scottish Book Trust is delivering an exciting new reading initiative for children aged 8 to 12 years on behalf of the Scottish Government. We believe that reading has the power to change lives and developing a love of reading in childhood can have a huge impact on educational attainment and future wellbeing. The First Minister's Reading Challenge aims to build on the work already taking place in schools across the country to encourage children to read widely, explore a range of books and develop a love of reading. The main focus of the Challenge is to encourage reading for pleasure and support schools, libraries and communities to build reading cultures.

For more information, please visit [www.scottishbooktrust.com/readingchallenge](http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/readingchallenge).

Our Falkirk Representative, Margaret Wilson sits on the advisory group for the reading challenge.

## IT'S THE YEAR OF THE DAD!

The NPFS is delighted to support the Year of the Dad, Are you passionate about fathers and their positive role in the family? Then please get involved in Year of the Dad – 2016's celebration of the difference a great dad can make in their families, communities and society at large. Organised by the charity Fathers' Network Scotland with Scottish Government funding and the support of a coalition of partner organisations, the Year of the Dad is an opportunity to accelerate culture change away from age-old stereotypes of mum as carer and dad as wage slave, and towards gender equality both in parenting and the workplace.

Research overwhelmingly shows that children are more likely to be smarter, healthier and happier if their dads are positively involved from the start. And children's voices were at the forefront of the emotive launch at Edinburgh Zoo in January, when a group of P6 pupils premiered their "[Song for Dad](#)". Do give it a listen and share with others, if you haven't already: it really captures the spirit of the celebration.

That spirit now needs to be reflected in everything from antenatal classes to employment practice, and the Year of the Dad is helping by telling stories of great dads, showcasing services and employers already showing best practice, and offering a plethora of online resources to those who want to make changes. Please sign up for more information about this positive campaign at: [www.yearofthedad.org](http://www.yearofthedad.org), where you can also find links to our social media and YouTube channels.

*By Nick Thorpe, Fathers Network Scotland*



## GIRFEC / CYPA

A lengthy debate was held in the Scottish Parliament on June 8th. Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education John Swinney has reaffirmed the Scottish Government's commitment to the Named Person service to support children and families. He also indicated that the government will refresh the guidance provided to professionals and the communication of the policy to the public.

The National Parent Forum of Scotland supports the principles of Getting It Right For Every Child as it echoes our own aim to help every pupil maximise their full potential.

We feel that partnership with parents is crucial to successful outcomes for all and feel that many parts of the Children and Young People Act support this.

Given that the Named Person, for a school-aged individual, will almost always be a staff member who is already known to the young person and their family, and in no way replaces or diminishes the role of parents, we feel this is a positive step to empowering individuals and communities to support our young people. We appreciate the range of parent views on the Act and, as with many other influencing factors on children's education, strive to get the facts communicated in a parent-friendly manner.



NPFS is conducting a review of the impact and success of the 2006 Parental Involvement Act and surrounding policy framework on involving and engaging parents.

Parents know the level of change in the education environment over the last ten years. When this is looked at alongside the shift in the dynamics of the Scottish population and advances in technology and information availability, it's time to ascertain if the Act is fit for purpose, and what recommendations we can put to parents, teachers, school leaders, local authorities and Ministers to try to ensure support from every level to give the young people of Scotland the tools they require to succeed. Over the next 9 months we will be engaging with parents and other stakeholders in many ways, please keep an eye on our social media to find out ways you can be involved.

## Could you get involved?

We currently have vacancies for representatives in the following areas: Angus, Argyll and Bute, Fife, Inverclyde, Midlothian, Moray, Scottish Borders and Stirling. Please contact us or your local authority's education department parental involvement officer for further information.

## Parents as Partners - 2016 Education Awards winner

The NPFS is always delighted to be involved in the judging of the Scottish Education Awards. This year was no exception and we saw some fabulous entries in many of the categories.

The Parents As Partners section is one which particularly resonates with us and in this year, the Year of the Dad, it was an inspirational group from South Lanarkshire who won the admiration of the judges. Promoting Roles of Father Figures ([PROFF](#)) is committed to providing opportunities for father figures to highlight the importance that positive male role models make to their children's future prospects. The PROFF group was established in November 2010 and consists of male carers and their children from the Calderside & John Ogilvie learning communities and is supported by the Home School Partnership staff from South Lanarkshire Council's Community Learning & Home School Partnership Service. We hope that they will inspire you to get involved this summer.



## Changes to Education Scotland inspections in August 2016

This week your school will have received a letter from Education Scotland detailing a range of new inspection models being rolled out next term. This will hopefully lead to a better response from Education Scotland and the schools involved. The inspection models to be introduced from August 2016 are: a Full inspection model, a Short inspection model, a Localised thematic model and a Neighbourhood model.

Education Scotland added that changes are being made to improve how we can better communicate inspection findings to parents. From August, a new format of report will be introduced. This will be a short letter which will highlight strengths and aspects for development. It will include a table indicating the school indicator grades. We are pleased that the National Parent Forum have worked with them on this approach and we are very supportive of these changes.



The inspection evidence gathered during the inspection process will be published online in a new and clearer format.

A key priority in developing these new models is to ensure that inspections do not result in unnecessary extra work for teachers and learners.

A number of our reps have been involved in the consultation on the future of inspections and we plan to bring you more information on this in the autumn.

## Contact Us

Join our database to receive E-News Updates, take part in our surveys, find out about upcoming events and other information from the National Parent Forum of Scotland by emailing us your contact details.

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