

How good
is our school?

E
SELF-EVALUATION SERIES

Partnership with parents

Partnership with parents

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HM Inspectorate of Education

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How **good** is our **school**?

Introduction

This document is one of a series of guides to self-evaluation which builds on the advice given in the publication *How good is our school?* (2002 edition).

This guide should be used to evaluate the quality of parental partnerships and is designed for use by teachers, managers, education support services, parents and the bodies that represent them. It highlights effective ways in which schools¹ can work in partnership with parents², for example to support their children's learning. It stresses the importance of ongoing partnerships to improve parental understanding of how schools work and what teachers do, and schools' understanding of parents' role as the first educators of their children. The guide is intended to evaluate the quality of partnership arrangements. It is essential that parents are active participants in the evaluation process. High quality partnership arrangements will provide parents with good opportunities to express their views and perceptions and raise issues that are important to them and also provide parents with a better understanding of how the school can best help them to support their children at home.

Parental involvement in education

There is considerable agreement that parental involvement in education has a positive influence on children's learning. By working closely together, schools and parents can develop children's attitudes to learning and ensure that children achieve their full potential. Effective parental involvement provides teachers with a clearer understanding of children's home circumstances and personal achievements and increases parental understanding of what children are learning, how well they are achieving and how they can support learning in the home environment. Clear channels of communication will ensure that the school and parents can respond quickly and effectively to emerging issues and concerns.

In the most effective partnership arrangements, parents will have a central role to play in supporting key aspects of the school's work and contributing to the decision-making process. Partnerships are at their most effective when schools treat parents equally, regard their views as important, taking these fully into account and where parents recognise that this is the case. This will happen when parents and school staff are committed to partnership working and have a clear understanding of their respective roles.

¹ Throughout this document, the term 'school' can be taken to include pre-school centres, primary, secondary and special schools.

² Throughout this document, the term 'parents' should be taken to include foster carers, residential care staff and carers who are relatives or friends.

Schools should fully engage with all parents. Parents can be reluctant, or find it difficult to engage with schools for a wide variety of reasons. Parents may have had a negative experience of school themselves. Parents may have language or sensory difficulties which could prevent them from engaging easily with their children's school. Non-resident parents who have parental rights and responsibilities might not receive regular communications from schools. Parents can be busy people who have a raft of competing priorities in their lives. Schools need to seek out and engage these parents in the life and work of the school.

A Curriculum for Excellence (2004)

Ambitious, excellent schools (AES) highlighted the importance of parental involvement, for example in setting high expectations for young people. It stressed the important role of parents in working with schools to identify relevant and challenging improvement priorities. *A Curriculum for Excellence* stressed that the curriculum should complement the important contributions of families and communities in enabling the young people of Scotland to develop as:

- successful learners;
- confident individuals;
- responsible citizens; and
- effective contributors.

In implementing *A Curriculum for Excellence*, effective partnership arrangements will enable schools to build on children's learning and achievements, within and beyond school. The opportunity for teachers and parents to engage in a curriculum from 3-18 can only enhance the commitment of partnership in education. High quality partnerships will increase parental involvement and support the key principles of *A Curriculum for Excellence* by:

- taking greater account of the close partnerships developed with parents at the nursery stage;
- ensuring the experiences of children from the pre-school stage are mirrored and built on in P1;
- ensuring consistent support and encouragement at school and at home and actively involving parents in supporting learning;
- taking account of children's wider experiences as well as using skills and experiences which parents may have to enhance the curriculum in and out of school;
- building effectively on prior learning and achievement;

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- taking greater account of the views and aspirations of parents and children;
- taking greater account of home circumstances and experiences;
- sharing information about learning effectively between school and home; and
- ensuring that school activities take account of learning outside school and that parents value what is being learned and are involved in supporting their children.

Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act (2006)

The policy framework for parental involvement can be summarised as follows.

- The recognition of the vital role that parents play in their children's education.
- The need for clearer recognition of parental expectations.
- Increased opportunities for parents to express their views and raise issues that are important to them.
- The need for parents to be taken seriously and to get acceptable responses to requests and questions.
- The development of partnership arrangements which are parent friendly and which take account of parental wishes, availability and circumstances.
- The right for parents to decide how the Parent Council in their school or nursery should be organised.
- The right for the Parent Council to have information on matters of interest to them and the right of individual parents to have information on their own child's education.

The impact of increased partnership and parental involvement will result in:

- greater understanding of family and community issues that may affect children's learning;
- greater understanding of how schools can best meet the needs of children, parents and the wider community;
- closer links between the school and parents;
- an increased understanding of how parents can support their children's learning; and
- confidence that the partnership arrangements take full account of local circumstances.

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Arrangements for parental involvement that are put in place to meet the expectations of parents and the school are best when they emerge through full discussion. Decisions taken with the active involvement of parents will be based on an important shared understanding of the local situation. That will ensure the agreed arrangements work well for all parents, no matter what their circumstances. For example, it will enable parents to have the information they want, at the right time, with the right level of detail and in the right format. Parents will have opportunities to share their skills with the school and be able to approach parents' representative groups to discuss or raise issues. As a result, all parents can be involved in ways that make a difference to their children and to the work of the school and receive appropriate support and encouragement in doing so.

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National Priorities

Effective partnerships can make an important contribution towards meeting the National Priorities in school education. These contributions can be summarised as follows.

1. To raise standards of education for all in schools.	Well-informed parental involvement can have a significant effect on children's achievements throughout their schooling. Schools and nurseries should maximise opportunities to reach out and engage with parents and help them support their children's learning.
2. To establish effective teaching and learning environments.	Teachers need to take account of learners' experiences and achievements out of school when setting high expectations for learning.
3. To promote equality and help every learner benefit from education.	Schools need to ensure that all parents have opportunities and appropriate advice to help them support their children's learning. Schools should work actively with parents to encourage all learners to value diversity and challenge stereotypes in the local, national and world-wide contexts.
4. To work with others to teach learners respect and the duties and responsibilities of citizenship.	Parents and families are the most important influences on children's lives. Parents, learners, staff and the wider community should work in partnership to develop all areas and aspects of citizenship.
5. To equip learners with the skills, attitudes and expectations necessary to prosper in a changing society.	Effective partnerships can help parents to raise their children's aspirations and expectations, and can also develop children's and their own engagement in lifelong learning.

The Role of self-evaluation

This self-evaluation guide will help you to evaluate your current practice and identify strengths and areas for further development. A range of support materials is available for schools and parents to complement the content of this self-evaluation guide (Appendix 2). Working together, schools and parents can use the resources to identify ways of improving the quality of partnerships and level of parental involvement.

The workpads in the guide have been prepared to assist you to assess current strengths and areas for improvement. A range of approaches and sources of information should be used to collect evidence. For example, first-hand evidence from questionnaires and interviews with key stakeholders will ensure that the views of parents and others are collected thoroughly and systematically. It is very important to collect the views of all parents, including those who have little or limited contact with the school. This will ensure that the views of all parents are taken into account and will make sure that their needs are met.

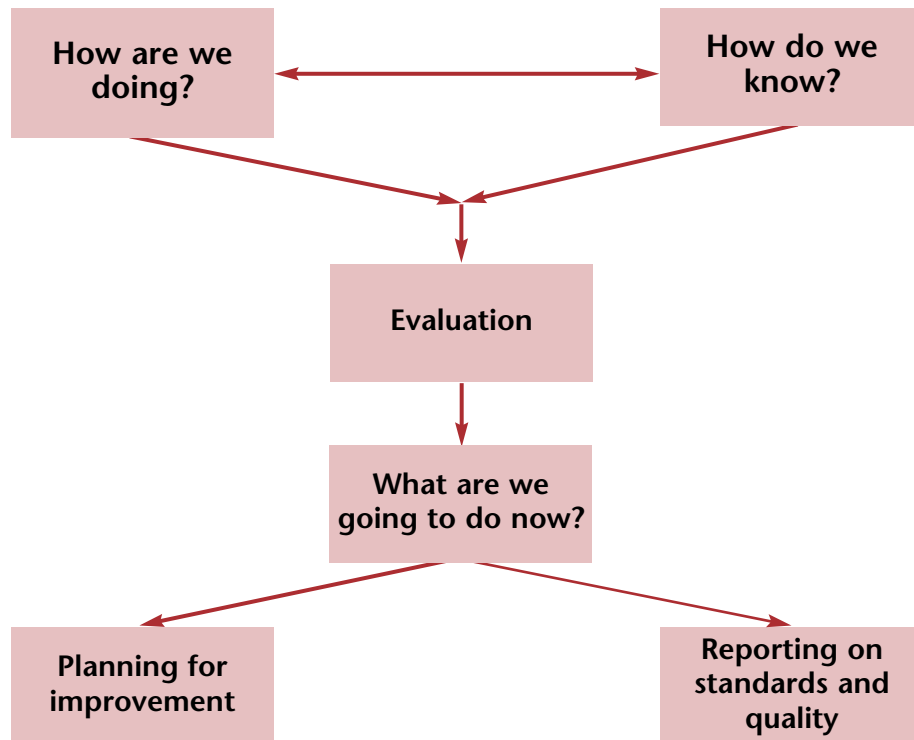
Involving parents fully in these processes will help to promote and build effective communications and partnerships between the school and home. Through discussing and agreeing priorities for improvement, schools and parents can ensure that children's learning and achievements are enhanced and that the school's overall effectiveness is increased.

This guide:

- asks key questions derived from themes within selected indicators from *How good is our school?*;
- looks at how evidence can be captured from more than one source in order to provide a robust basis for evaluations; and
- encourages staff to reflect upon and weigh up the strengths and areas of improvement from observations in order to come to an overall evaluation of the quality of provision.

You can then use the evaluations and evidence to plan for improvement and to report on the standards and quality of what you have found.

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How **good** is our **school**?

The following provides a helpful basis for summarising the evidence considered for evaluating the relevant indicators from *How good is our school?*.

Note down the sources of evidence on which you are basing your evaluation in the boxes below.

↓

People consulted:

↓

Documentation and resources reviewed:

↓

Direct observation undertaken:

↓

Data analysed:

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Fill in your record of the strengths and areas for improvement for each of the quality indicators using the grids on the following pages.

In the box below, note the overall evaluation for each of the indicators.

Key question	QI from <i>How good is our school?</i>	Overall evaluation
How well does your school communicate with parents about children's progress, achievement and attainment?	3.5	
How well does your school inform parents of children's progress in all aspects of school life?	3.6	
How good is the exchange of information between your school and parents on issues relating to children's care and welfare?	4.1	
How effectively does your school make full use of parents' knowledge and expertise to support the curriculum and the vocational guidance programme?	4.3	
How effectively does your school develop the relationship between parents and relevant agencies?	4.8	
How effectively does your school work in partnership with parents, professionals, key agencies and support workers?	5.1	
How welcoming is your school to parents?	5.1	
How successfully does your school consult with parents and take full account of their views and concerns? How effectively do you communicate with all parents?	5.4	
How well does your school survey parental views as part of your self-evaluation process?	7.2	

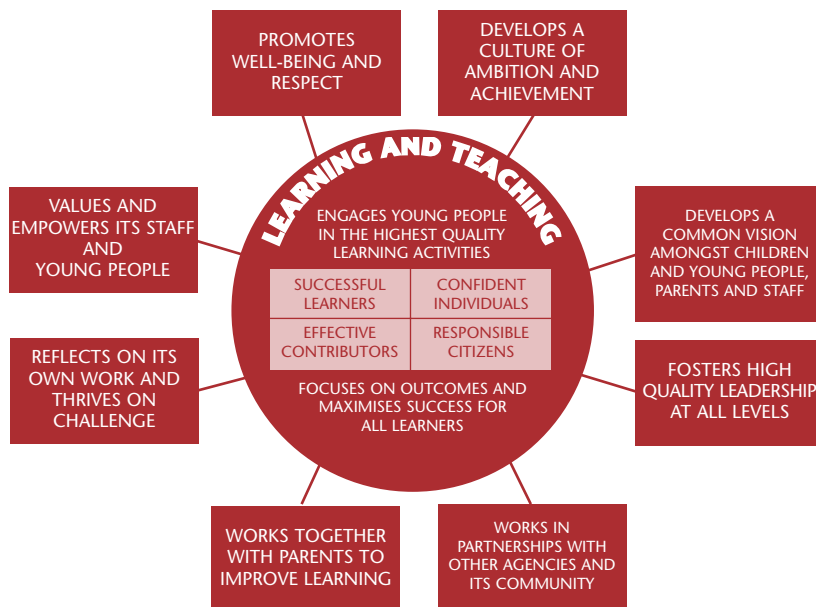
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The Journey to Excellence

Not all schools are at the same starting point with regard to self-evaluation. Some schools have a strong sense of their strengths and weaknesses and a track record for improvement. These schools are ready to aim for excellence.

In March 2006, HMIE published practical advice to those schools and pre-school centres which were ready to aim for excellence. This publication, *How good is our school?: The Journey to Excellence*, HMIE 2006, uses 10 dimensions which describe the features of an excellent school.

The 10 Dimensions of Excellence



One of these dimensions focuses on **Working with parents to improve learning**. Schools may find it helpful to explore the key features of this dimension as they improve their partnerships with parents. Detailed information can be found in *How good is our school?: The Journey to Excellence*, pages 75-81.

Dimension 6

- Developing parents' support for their children's learning
- Active involvement of parents in school activities
- Collaboration and representation

Quality indicators and work pads

Introduction

The following pages focus on selected indicators and themes from *How good is our school?*. This section consists of work pads for use to evaluate the quality of your partnership with parents. Each activity highlights the key questions for you to ask, and provides space for you to record strengths and areas for development. Schools should ensure that parents are involved as partners in the process, so that the evidence takes full account of the extent to which parents feel involved in the life and work of the school and in their children's learning. Evaluations and sources of evidence should be shared openly to reinforce that parents are listened to, are taken seriously and are able to influence decisions. In addition, plans to address identified areas for development should be agreed and shared with parents.

Assessment This indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *Assessment methods and arrangements for recording* • *Judgements made in the course of teaching* • *use of assessment information*

Good practice	Key questions	Evidence	
		Strengths	Areas for development
<p>Information about learners' attainment, progress and broader achievements should be shared with parents. Schools should strive to ensure that parents understand both the information and its implications. Schools use a variety of assessment procedures. They need to ensure that parents understand the purpose of different forms of assessment and that terminology is well explained.</p> <p>Schools need to make sure that learners' progress, their strengths and development needs are shared with parents in a way that enables parents to support their children's further progress. The use of information and communications technology (ICT) is increasingly helping schools to report attainment information more flexibly to parents. Schools should ensure that the detail given, and the frequency of reporting, is in line with parents' needs.</p> <p>Parents will have their views on their children's progress in learning, and what their needs are. Schools should make it easy for parents to communicate that information to key school staff and have clear methods for doing this.</p>	<p>How well do we explain to parents the different kinds of assessment procedures used in school, and their purposes?</p> <p>How effectively do we share and explain information on learners' progress and next steps to parents?</p> <p>How effectively do we listen and respond to how parents would like to receive information on their child's attainment and progress?</p> <p>To what extent are parents able to give their views on the quality of the assessment information we provide and on how their children are progressing?</p> <p>How aware are we about the child's learning outside of school and key influences on it?</p> <p>To what extent do we make sure parents are able to use the information given to them on their children's strengths and development needs to support them at home?</p>		

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Reporting pupils' progress. This indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *reporting procedures* • *information given to parents about each pupil's progress*
- *responsiveness of the school to parents' views and enquiries about their child's progress*

Good practice	Key questions	Evidence	
		Strengths	Areas for development
<p>School reports provide a range of information to parents, including information about their children's progress in their personal and social development, attainment and achievement. Reporting should involve the sharing of information by parents and the school. Reports set out the school's views of learners' strengths and development needs as a basis for dialogue with parents. These reports need to be informative and helpful. They should provide an accurate reflection of individual children.</p> <p>Reporting arrangements should take account of parents' views and needs, particularly in relation to the frequency and level of detail. Schools should facilitate and encourage parents to access more detailed or more regular information if they seek it. Schools will have arrangements for face-to-face discussion between parents and appropriate school staff. Staff and parents should have time to talk and listen to each other in a pleasant climate. Schools also need to make sure that the arrangements for such meetings, including timings and venues, are suitably flexible to meet parents' varying circumstances and needs.</p> <p>Parents should be able to contribute useful information on their children's progress to the school. The effective, two-way sharing of information is essential to a partnership which fully empowers parents in supporting their children's learning.</p>	<p>To what extent are parents satisfied with the quality of reports and arrangements for parents' meetings? To what extent do we ensure that reports to parents are clear, written in plain English, and sufficiently personalised to describe their children?</p> <p>To what extent do we ensure that parents understand the range of arrangements which exist for discussing their children's progress?</p> <p>To what extent do we take parents' needs and views about timings for consultation meetings into consideration?</p> <p>How effectively do we ensure reports cover progress in key areas of the curriculum and identify the next steps in learning?</p> <p>How well do we respond to information and enquiries from parents about their children's attainment and achievements?</p>		

Pastoral care. This indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *arrangements for ensuring the care, welfare and protection of pupils*
- *provision for meeting the emotional, physical and social needs of individual pupils*

	Key questions	Evidence	
		Strengths	Areas for development
<p>Good practice</p> <p>Parents need to be aware of the range of policies and procedures which a school has to ensure that children are kept safe. Schools should consult parents when developing such policies and encourage them to be involved in making the policies work effectively. In addition, parents need to be aware of the procedures used by the school where parents or teachers have concerns over children's care and welfare.</p> <p>There should be many positive examples of active partnership between home and school and evidence of mutual respect and positive relationships. These should ensure high levels of communication which should impact on pastoral care, promote healthy and self-respecting lifestyles, develop positive relationships and raise children's self-esteem.</p> <p>Children and parents should be able to raise concerns with the school, and the school should respond to these quickly and effectively. On rare occasions, a complaint may not be resolved and parents and children need to be aware of the school and local authority complaints procedures. Information about the complaints procedure should be available in all establishments.</p> <p>In order to support children's care and welfare as effectively as possible, key information needs to be shared between home and school. Schools should also support the sharing of information with partner agencies that may be involved with the family. Parents need to understand the reasons for sharing information, and should be involved in drawing up the protocol for this sharing.</p>	<p>To what extent do we ensure that parents are aware of the school's policies and procedures for supporting children, and how these procedures are implemented in practice?</p> <p>How effectively do we involve parents in forming and reviewing policies and procedures for supporting children?</p> <p>Are parents aware of the school's and education authority's complaints procedures? Does the process address issues raised quickly and effectively?</p> <p>How well have parents been involved in establishing arrangements for sharing information between home and school?</p> <p>How effectively is key information on children shared between parents, staff and partner agencies?</p>		

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Curricular and vocational guidance. This indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *preparation for choice in education, training or employment* • *accuracy and relevance of information and advice*
- *extent to which guidance is founded on appropriate consultations*

Good practice	Key questions	Evidence	
		Strengths	Areas for development
<p>School staff should inform parents and children about transfer arrangements and, where applicable, the options available to young people when they are ready to progress to the next stage of their education or into employment.</p> <p>The extended use of curriculum flexibility, particularly in secondary schools, has made the task of explaining future options to children and parents more complex and more important.</p> <p>While curricular and vocational guidance should primarily centre on children's' individual achievements, abilities and needs, the wishes and expectations of parents should be taken into consideration.</p> <p>Schools should be prepared to use the experiences and skills of parents as part of their curricular and guidance programmes. Many parents are likely to be able to share experiences of further and higher education, and of employment in a range of occupations.</p>	<p>How effectively do we ensure that parents are well informed about the choices and progression routes available for their children?</p> <p>To what extent do we use parents' skills and knowledge in aspects of curricular and vocational guidance?</p> <p>To what extent do we include parents on curricular working groups?</p> <p>To what degree do we support parents to access information and advice on further learning opportunities, career choices and financial awards for their children?</p> <p>To what extent do we take parents' views and expectations into account during discussion and making decisions on courses?</p>		

Links with local authority or other managing body, other schools, agencies and employers.

This indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- links with the local authority or other managing body • links with other educational establishments
- links with voluntary organisations, the wider community and employers • links with statutory organisations

Good practice	Key questions	Evidence	
		Strengths	Areas for development
<p>The local authority has a key responsibility for supporting parents in their involvement with schools. As schools adopt arrangements for creating Parent Councils, they will need to work in partnership with the local authority to ensure that these bodies receive training, ongoing support and up-to-date information to enable them to carry out their work effectively.</p> <p>Information on learners' progress, attainment and achievement, along with key pastoral information, needs to be transferred and used effectively at key points of transition. Parents have a key role to play in keeping the new school or class informed of important aspects of their children's personal and social development, and learning needs. The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act, 2004 makes clear the action that must be taken when pupils with additional support needs transfers from one school to another. Advice on this can be found in chapter five of <i>The Code of Practice</i>, 2005.</p> <p>Schools have the opportunity to enhance their links with employers through developing closer partnerships with working parents.</p> <p>Some families rely on additional support from a range of agencies, including social work, the health services, home-school link workers and community learning and development. Schools can support families in making contact with those agencies, such as by giving names and contact details or by organising initial meetings.</p>	<p>How effectively do we support the forum or Parent Council that represents parents' views?</p> <p>To what extent do we involve parents in sharing key information about their children's pastoral and learning needs at key transfer stages?</p> <p>How effectively do we follow advice in <i>The Code of Practice</i> for pupils who have additional support needs</p> <p>How effectively do we use parents' skills and interests to promote effective partnerships with employers and industry?</p> <p>How effectively does the school work with parents to establish links and communicate with statutory agencies and other sources of support for families?</p>		

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Climate and relationships. This indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *sense of identity and pride in the school* • *reception and atmosphere* • *pupil and staff morale*
- *pupil/staff relationships* • *pupils' behaviour and discipline*

Good practice	Key questions	Evidence	
		Strengths	Areas for development
<p>Parents should identify strongly with the life and work of the school. The school has to be welcoming to parents. This involves creating a welcoming environment, with clear directions to the office where friendly staff deal effectively with enquiries. Schools should strive to develop comfortable waiting areas and parents rooms.</p> <p>Schools should strive to hold social activities which involve families and the community. Parent teachers associations (PTAs) and Parents Associations (PAs) have valuable roles to play in developing the school as a key community hub.</p> <p>Teachers should be approachable and accessible to children and parents. They should be committed to working in partnership with parents to enhance the quality of children's learning.</p> <p>The school should have procedures in place to engage with parents who are reluctant, or find it difficult to support their children's learning or become involved in the life and work of the school.</p>	<p>How effective are we in providing a friendly and welcoming environment to parents?</p> <p>What steps do we take to encourage parents to contact the school?</p> <p>How prompt, effective and approachable are our staff in dealing with parental visits and enquiries including parents who exhibit challenging behaviour?</p> <p>How effectively do we engage with and involve parents in the life and work of the school, including those who are reluctant or find it difficult to engage with the school?</p> <p>How well do we understand the barriers to parental involvement in children's learning and how effectively do we overcome them?</p>		

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Partnership with parents. This indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- *encouragement for parents to be involved in their child's learning and the life of the school* • *procedures for communicating with parents*
- *information given to parents about the work of the school* • *links between the school and parents* • *the school's role in the local community*

Good practice	Key questions	Evidence	
		Strengths	Areas for development
<p>In an effective school, parents will have a strong role both as partners in their children's learning and in the wider life and work of the school. The school will make use of parents skills and knowledge where possible. PTAs and PAs play an active part encouraging parental involvement.</p> <p>Staff will keep parents informed about the strengths and development needs of their children, and enable them to support their children's progress and future development.</p> <p>The school should keep parents informed about the general life and work of the school, and listen and respond to the issues and enquiries that parents raise. The school should ensure that parents receive regular communication about all aspects of the school.</p> <p>The education authority and the school need to support the work of Parent Councils so that they can carry out their responsibilities and duties effectively to the benefit of the school and its community. The school should also make appropriate use of parents who are members of community groups in order to develop its links with the community.</p>	<p>How effectively do we give advice to parents on how they can support their children's learning, including homework?</p> <p>How effectively do our school's procedures involve those parents who are reluctant or find it difficult to engage?</p> <p>How accessible is the information we give to parents on the life of the school? How do we ensure that the school takes account of the needs of parents who have, for example, sensory impairments, mobility difficulties or English as an additional language?</p> <p>How easily can parents find out more detailed or additional information on aspects of the school's work?</p> <p>How effectively do we work in partnership with the Parents Council?</p>		

Partnership with parents

Self-evaluation. This indicator is concerned with the following themes:

- processes of self-evaluation • monitoring and evaluation by promoted staff • reporting on standards and quality

	Key questions	Evidence	
		Strengths	Areas for development
<p>As part of the self-evaluation process, schools gather the views of parents. Parents should be involved in this process. Schools ensure that there are good opportunities for parents to give their views and to be involved in shaping and regularly reviewing arrangements for their home-school partnerships.</p> <p>The school should also ensure that the views of parents who do not engage readily with the school are sought in order to check how successfully it is in meeting the needs of all its children and parents.</p> <p>Schools should build up a picture of key strengths and development needs through effective self-evaluation, and monitoring. Parents should be involved in the process and be well informed about the school's success in implementing its plans for further improvement.</p>	<p>How do we ensure that we gather the views of parents on key aspects of our school's performance and engage parents in the process of self-evaluation?</p> <p>How well do we actively involve parents as we plan for improvement?</p> <p>How effectively do we report to parents on our overall strengths and development needs?</p> <p>How effectively do we feedback to parents about their views and how they are being taken into account?</p>		

Appendix 1: Worked example

Introduction

The following section gives an illustration of a completed work pad. The example reflects the work of an individual school. The strengths, areas for development and sources of evidence were recorded at appropriate times over the course of the year.

Since the questions are designed to evaluate the quality of the school's partnership arrangements, it is of crucial importance that parents are involved actively in the process. Schools will recognise the challenges of engaging with parents who are reluctant to, or find difficulty with, becoming involved in the work of the school. However, the importance of involving all parents in the process cannot be over-emphasised.

The self-evaluation process will lead to points for action for the school. It is important that schools share findings openly. Schools should indicate the strengths of partnership arrangements and how the school's improvement plan will address the areas for further development, as well as highlighting the role of parents in implementing the plan.

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Assessment as part of teaching: worked example of a good evaluation (primary school)

Key questions	Evidence	
	Strengths	Areas for development
<p>How well do we explain to parents the different kinds of pupil assessment procedures used in school, and their purposes?</p> <p>How effectively do we share and explain information on children's attainment and next steps to parents?</p> <p>To what extent are parents able to give their views on the quality of the assessment information we provide and on how their children are progressing?</p> <p>How aware are we about the child's learning outside of school and key influences on it?</p> <p>To what extent do we make sure parents are able to use the information given to them on their children's strengths and development needs to support them at home?</p>	<p>Workshop on formative assessment held to explain new approaches. Information leaflets issued at open evenings. Feedback on report cards indicate very good understanding of 5-14 levels assessed by national assessments. School issues EA summary guide.</p> <p>Open evenings allow parents to discuss with class teachers whether they feel their children are progressing well. Homework diaries are used well for ongoing dialogue with parents.</p> <p>The report includes level achieved and each pupil's progress towards the next level. This, along with the target date set for overtaking the level, gives parents a clear idea of attainment. Emphasis is put on detailing next steps, including specific ways in which parents can help with this.</p> <p>Annual surveys of parents indicate that most (83%) parents are satisfied with the arrangements for reporting. In addition, there is a tear-off slip on each report which includes space for comments; those returned are almost always very positive about arrangements. We have surveyed parents on how well they are able to support their children at home, and how we might improve the quality of our "next steps" in reports and in home-school diaries.</p> <p>The home-link worker supports the parents of bilingual children. She does this by translating the information in information leaflets, and by carrying out regular home visits.</p>	<p>Poor attendance at workshop. Regular parental queries about "lack of marking" indicates a wide misunderstanding of the purpose and nature of formative assessment.</p> <p>We do not specifically prompt parents for what they see as their children's particular strengths and areas for development. A few parents do not use the homework diaries to communicate with the school, and most of those do not read them at all.</p> <p>We hope to develop a system to allow sharing of the formative assessment feedback to children with their parents. This will reduce the need for teachers to repeat this information on reports, and will help us move to the development of personal learning planning.</p> <p>Some parents do not read the homework diaries and do not respond to the surveys. We know they are not using the information we give, but need to find out how we can keep them better informed and involved.</p> <p>We will address the issues raised in our survey in next year's plan.</p>

Appendix 2: Sources of support

Improving partnerships with parents

The Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) has provided clear policy commitments to promote and improve parents' involvement in their children's overall education and to review and reform parental representation. These commitments are set out in a range of documents, including the following.

The National Priorities for School Education

Scottish Executive response to the review of Enterprise in Education – 'Determined to Succeed' (2003)

Educating for Excellence (2003)

A Partnership for a Better Scotland (PABS) (2003)

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004

Ambitious, Excellent Schools (2004)

- The full range of HMIE self-evaluation guides is available from the website www.hmie.gov.uk. Many of these include specific references to partnership with parents. The pre-inspection questionnaires that HMIE use during inspections are available at www.hmie.gov.uk/about_us/inspections/prepinspect.asp.
- SEED has developed a website which gives case studies and support materials from schools which exhibit features of very good practice in their partnership with parents. The materials have been issued in CD-ROM form to all Scottish schools, and can also be viewed at <http://www.not-there-yet.ac.uk>.
- The parentzone website <http://www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk/> is a developing resource for parents. There is a similar site at <http://www.parentscentre.gov.uk> which also contains useful information, primarily aimed at parents of children at school in England.
- There is a specific link from the parentzone website to organisations which can give further support to families. See: <http://www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk/weblinks/parentalinvolvement.asp#0>.
- The Scottish Parent Teacher Council represents parents' interests across Scotland. Its website is at <http://www.sptc.info/>.
- The Scottish School Board Association supports parents' representative bodies. See <http://www.schoolboard-scotland.com/> for more information.

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