

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILEDUCATION COMMITTEE25 SEPTEMBER 2025Report by Director of EducationPARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT (PIE) STRATEGY 2025-28**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The purpose of this report is to update Elected Members on the approaches taken to meet the duties outlined in the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 in East Renfrewshire schools between 2022 and 2025, and to seek approval for the Parental Involvement and Engagement (PIE) Strategy 2025–2028.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. Education Committee is asked to:
 - a) note and comment on the findings of the report (Appendix 1/2);
 - b) approve the Parental Involvement and Engagement Strategy 2025–2028; and,
 - c) ask the Director of Education to support all educational establishments to implement this strategy.

BACKGROUND

3. The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 aims to ensure that parents are involved in their child's education and learning, welcomed as active participants in the life of the school, and encouraged to express their views and work in partnership with schools.
4. The Act requires local authorities to:
 - Involve parents in their child's education and the education provided generally;
 - Provide advice and information to parents;
 - Promote and support Parent Councils; and,
 - Establish a complaints procedure for duties under the Act.
5. The strategy aligns with national frameworks and local priorities, including the Children's Services Plan and East Renfrewshire's "A Place to Grow" vision. It supports the Education Department's vision of Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving, through Excellent Experiences.

REPORT

6. The PIE Strategy 2022–2025 focused on three key aims: Communicate, Collaborate, and Consult. It was informed by extensive consultation and a PIE census involving over 1,100 parents.
7. Key strengths identified include:

- High levels of parental satisfaction and improved communication;
 - Increased use of digital platforms and hybrid engagement approaches;
 - Growth in family learning opportunities and targeted support for disadvantaged families;
 - Enhanced collaboration through Parent Councils, Equalities Forums, and participatory budgeting; and,
 - Development of professional learning for staff and PIE Coordinators.
8. A range of good practice examples from our settings and schools are included within the report. These include:
- In Isobel Mair School, all learners are encouraged to develop an interest in and enthusiasm for STEM, and parents have been participating in STEM learning experiences alongside their children both in school and at home.
 - St. Ninian's High School is the first secondary school to achieve silver accreditation in Family Centred Approaches.
 - Arthurlie Family Centre have created opportunities for parents to participate in family learning to enhance the learning experiences of children and their families. This included *STEM* and *Craft and Cooking* sessions.
 - McCreedy Family Centre, adapted Book Bug sessions to reflect the linguistic diversity within the community, incorporating languages such as Urdu, Spanish, Portuguese, and Kurdish. Parents participated by reading stories to the children in their native languages.
 - St. John's Primary School staff, using insights from the Attendance Toolkit and their own internal data, initiated an action research project aimed at improving attendance rates. The school implemented tailored support for families based on specific circumstances.
 - Adult Learning, in partnership with Mearns Primary School delivered an SQA Maths unit to parents in the school. A family learning course, Learning Maths Together, was also developed for parents and their children in P5-7.
9. The new PIE Strategy 2025–2028 builds on these successes and focuses on:
- Parental Involvement: improving opportunities for parents to participate in the life and work of their child's establishment;
 - Parental Engagement: supporting meaningful interaction with children's learning; and,
 - Family Learning and Learning at Home: promoting learning experiences that benefit the whole family.

CONSULTATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

10. The strategy has been developed through consultation with parents, Head Teachers, PIE Coordinators, Parent Council Chairs, and other stakeholders.

FINANCIAL AND EFFICIENCY IMPLICATIONS

11. Any financial implications will be met from the Education Department's budget. Schools may use Pupil Equity Funding to support parental engagement and family learning where appropriate.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

12. An Equality, Fairness and Rights Impact Assessment has been undertaken and has found that PIE Strategy is likely to have a positive impact on children, young people and their families.

CONCLUSION

13. The PIE Strategy 2022–2025 has strengthened parental involvement, engagement, and family learning across East Renfrewshire. Increased satisfaction, improved communication, and more inclusive practices have helped families feel connected and empowered. Insights from the PIE census and stakeholder feedback have shaped the new 2025–2028 strategy, which will continue to focus on meaningful involvement, engagement in learning, and family-wide learning opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION

14. Education Committee is asked to:
- a) note and comment on the findings of the report (Appendix 1/2);
 - b) approve the Parental Involvement and Engagement Strategy 2025–2028; and
 - c) ask the Director of Education to support all educational establishments to implement this strategy.

Mark Ratter
Director of Education
25 September 2025

Report Authors
Siobhan McColgan, Head of Education Services (Equality and Equity)
Tel: 0141 577 3253
Siobhan.McColgan2@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

David Gordon
David.Gordon2@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Appendices
Appendix 1: PIE Strategy Report 2022–2025 and 2025-28 Driver Diagram
Appendix 2: Executive Summary Parental Involvement and Engagement (PIE) Strategy 2022-25

BLANK PAGE

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILREPORT ON THE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT (PIE) STRATEGY
2022-25**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1. The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the approaches taken to meet the duties outlined in The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 in East Renfrewshire schools between 2022 and 2025. The report outlines the next steps which will be taken forward in the Parental Involvement and Engagement (PIE) Strategy 2025-2028.

BACKGROUND

2. The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006, aimed to ensure that parents are: involved with their child's education and learning; welcomed as active participants in the life of the school; and encouraged to express their views on school education generally and work in partnership with the school.

3. The Act requires local authorities to prepare a strategy document setting out their policies for parental involvement which covers their duties to:

- Involve parents in their own child's education, and that provided by a school to its pupils generally;
- Give advice and information to parents in respect of their own child;
- Promote the establishment of Parent Councils in schools and support their operation; and,
- Establish a complaints procedure for their duties under the Act.

4. This report outlines the impact of the Education Department's PIE Strategy 2022-2025 and presents a new strategy for 2025-2028, which will contribute to East Renfrewshire Council's A Place to Grow Vision for 2040. Our ambition for East Renfrewshire is that every child and young person, regardless of background or circumstance, will fully flourish on their journey to adulthood (Pillar 1).

Every child and young person will:

- Be loved, safe and happy
- Be as healthy as they can be
- Have friends and adults they trust
- Be successful learners and well prepared for the future
- Have their voices heard and their rights recognised, respected and nurtured.

Our children, young people and families that face challenges and disadvantage will:

- Access the right support as early as possible
- Receive support that is compassionate and aspirational and builds on their strengths.

Our learning establishments will:

- Deliver a curriculum that inspires and prepares children and young people well for the future
- Continue to improve achievement for all.

5. It will also contribute to the aims of our Children's Services Plan 2023-26, where our vision is for East Renfrewshire's children to grow up loved, respected and given every opportunity to fulfil their potential. We want them to be safe, equal and healthy, have someone to trust, have friends, but most of all hope.

REPORT

6. The PIE 2022-2025 had a range of aims and critical indicators which are listed in Appendix 1.

7. In order to involve a wide range of stakeholders in a review of the strategy, and to identify priorities for the new strategy, we undertook consultation over the last year that included presentation and feedback at a: Director's Staff Forum (November 2024); Head Teacher meeting (January 2025); PIE Coordinator meeting (March 2025); and Parent Council Chairs meetings (March and May 2025). We also used a Padlet to collect views from colleagues and parents unable to participate at the above meetings, and we conducted a PIE census (March – May 2025).

Communication

8. Parental satisfaction with schools in East Renfrewshire is consistently high. 1120 parents responded to the PIE census questionnaire in 2025. From these responses, most parents (75%) are satisfied or very satisfied overall with how their school engages with them. This compares favourably to a positive response rate of 63% through the previous census in 2022. Almost all parents (91%: 86% in 2022) agree that school staff are approachable and most (83%: 81% in 2022) are confident that if they need to contact their child's school, they will respond helpfully to questions and comments.

9. All schools have clear procedures to ensure parents regularly receive information about their child's strengths, next steps for learning, progress and achievements. Establishment websites provide parents and other family members with a wide range of useful and engaging information with most establishments including a dedicated section for parents. Almost all establishments use individual class blogs to share children's experiences with their parents and have further developed use of digital technologies, such as Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams and See Saw to support learning at home.

10. In partnership with parents, establishments are building on the knowledge and skills gained during periods of school closure to further look at what suits families best with regard to communication. In October 2022, the success of the above approaches were confirmed during a meeting with Parent Council Chairs which focussed on best practice in parental engagement as we responded to the challenges of Covid-19. Chairs responded very positively with a range of examples of successful and innovative engagement which led to families feeling welcomed back physically into their school communities. After consulting with their parent forums, a few establishments have adopted a hybrid approach to parent's evenings where a choice of virtual or face to face appointments are offered. All establishments use a range of digital platforms and tools effectively to share learning and achievements; there is also clear evidence of two-way communication with parents sharing learning and achievements from home. Education Scotland inspections have found that our schools communicate appropriately and effectively. The inspection of Kirkhill Primary School (March 2024) noted that: *"Parents contribute to the celebration of children's achievements by sharing them with the school. These are then included in weekly assembly slideshows, highlighting a strong home-school connection."*

11. As the local authority has moved away from the “X” platform, guidance and training has been provided to establishments which supports staff to select the most appropriate platform for different types of communication such as administration messages and sharing successes and achievements. East Renfrewshire Council maintains an easily accessible and regularly updated website which features a section on Schools and Learning. This site links directly to each establishment website, supporting parents to quickly find information about their child’s school. It also links to a range of online services including Parentsportal, which has replaced the traditional 'schoolbag run' while also reducing paper transactions and the administrative burden on schools. In May 2024, a workshop on Parentsportal was provided for Parent Council Chairs in order to gain feedback and plan further improvements to this service. Currently, East Renfrewshire has the highest level of use of this service of all participating local authorities.

12. All establishments update their handbooks regularly with increasing involvement of parents to ensure that they contain the necessary legislative information and are easy to read. An audit of handbooks and websites was carried out in 2024 which showed that all establishments described the opportunities provided for parents to become involved in their child’s learning and the life of the establishment within their handbooks as well as important aspects such as the curriculum and support for pupils. Almost all handbooks and websites adhere to National Improvement Framework (NIF) Parent Communication principles; using simple and clear language, avoiding jargon and acronyms where possible and focussing on information which is most relevant to parents. In a few establishments, handbooks and websites can be hard to navigate and relevant information is not always easily to find. In these cases, support and guidance is offered to schools to support improvement which has resulted in more accessible handbooks.

13. PIE coordinators have shared good practice in communicating with parents as we responded to the challenges of Covid-19, including through the use of technologies. In May 2023, senior staff from McCreedy Family Centre, Braidbar Primary School and Mearns Castle High School shared their approaches: using apps to engage with families and share progress; making best use of the school website and other resources to communicate with EAL families; and using an App to communicate with families and support them to stay safe online. From the PIE census conducted in 2025, most parents (78%: 67% in 2022) know what their child is learning at school and most (78%: 69% in 2022) agree that the school keeps them well informed about their child's progress in a way they can understand.

14. In the HMIE national thematic inspection report of local authority approaches to supporting school improvement, East Renfrewshire was highlighted in a practice example: “Child and parent-friendly versions of school improvement plans are available in all schools. This is supporting children, young people, and parents to have a better understanding about school improvement. Parents welcome these school improvement plans and standards and quality reports that avoid educational jargon.”

15. The Education Department, Head Teachers and school staff work together effectively to ensure that they give advice and information related to their own child’s learning in a manner consistent with the authority’s duties under the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act. This includes information and advice for parents who wish to educate their child at home. In our annual questionnaires, most parents with children who attend school in East Renfrewshire tell us that they receive helpful feedback about how their child is learning and developing at school and that they get advice from the school on how to support their child’s learning at home. This has been exemplified during Education Scotland Inspections since 2022. For example, the Summary of Inspection Findings for Barrhead High School in January 2024 noted: *“Parents are able to access a digital feedback platform, and this supports their*

engagement in their child's learning. Most parents agree that staff, commendably, give them advice on how to support their child's learning at home."

16. In February 2024, senior staff from establishments and the Education Department participated in professional learning with Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) on complaints handling, with a focus on timely, transparent communication and a willingness to use complaints as learning experiences. SPSO also provided information during this session about the development of child friendly complaints in response to UNCRC legislation. We continue to respond to and learn from the complaints, enquiries and compliments we receive from parents. During financial year 2024-25 the average response times to Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints by the Education Department were 4.0 and 18.7 days respectively, in both cases the fastest response times over the last five years. Almost all (92%) of complaints were responded to on time over that period.

17. The Education Department analyses the frequency and nature of compliments, complaints and enquiries. One audit showed that the most common types of complaint related to school management. However, further interrogation showed that a significant number of complaints under this category related to reorganisation of classes in primary schools. In response to this issue, the Education Department worked with focus groups of Parent Council Chairs, Head Teachers and Pupil Leaders to develop a policy on Class Organisation which was shared with Head Teachers and Parent Council Chairs in 2024.

18. The Community Hub website includes a directory of groups & activities for children and young people with Additional Support Needs. This supports a target in the East Renfrewshire Children's Plan of increasing access to information to promote the inclusion of children with complex needs and their families. Parents were involved in the co-creation of the Community Hub. The directory was accessed over 2600 times between April and December 2024.

19. To improve communication with non-resident parents, the Education Department worked with Shared Parenting Scotland to deliver workshops and provide support and guidance to PIE Coordinators (December 2024) and the Equalities Parent Forum (February 2025). Shared Parenting Scotland highlighted certain aspects of local authority communication that worked well and others could be improved to ensure that we always meet the rights of non-resident parents.

Collaboration

20. There has never been a more important time to ensure that the workforce has the appropriate values, competencies, skills, knowledge, experience and qualifications to work effectively with learners, parents and families. Engaging parents in their child's learning is said to be '*a powerful lever for raising achievement*' (Goodall, 2017)

21. We have provided Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) for practitioners, which has been positively evaluated, to support relationship-based approaches with parents. These opportunities have included:

- Solihull Approach Foundation training
- Family Centred Approaches – Going for Gold
- Parental Involvement and Engagement (NQTs)
- Engaging Stakeholders (Aspiring Leaders)
- PIE Coordinator Forums
- Family Learning Collaborative Enquiry

22. The Solihull Approach Foundation Training is delivered to Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) professionals supporting our youngest children. In addition, our new Equity and Excellence Lead and staff within the Early Years Outreach Team have completed this training and use the approach to support identified families. The Solihull Approach is to support the emotional health and wellbeing for all children, their parents, carers and grandparents. Solihull training was initially targeted at ELC practitioners working with families in our least affluent communities, but the offer has been widened to include practitioners across the authority. Over the last three years, 61 practitioners have been trained, bringing the total to 111 within the authority. Feedback from participants has shown how much more confident staff are to support families using the three principles of Solihull: containment, reciprocity and behaviour management.

23. Every establishment in East Renfrewshire has a named Parental Involvement Co-ordinator who leads on this area within their establishment. Professional learning and guidance has been provided to practitioners, and in particular to PIE Coordinators, on how to use the National Improvement Framework (NIF) Parent Communication principles to improve communication with parents. We have supported and challenged establishments to develop their approaches to Parental Involvement, Parental Engagement, Family Learning and Learning at Home. We collaborated with officers from Education Scotland to deliver a local launch of this framework with PIE coordinators in February 2024. We focussed in particular on family learning. Our Adult Learning Service (ALS) Manager also outlined how this service facilitates family learning opportunities across East Renfrewshire and how they can support establishments to develop their approaches. A few establishments have started working in partnership with the ALS since this event.

24. A wide range of evidence shows family learning to be an effective way of promoting and facilitating increased parental participation and engagement with establishments. Following the above event, a Family Learning Collaborative Enquiry Group was established with practitioners from two family centres (Cart Mill and Hazeldene), four primary schools (Crookfur, Netherlee, Our Lady of the Missions and St. Cadoc's) and one secondary school (St. Luke's) researching, planning and delivering family learning activities over the following year. They were supported by a Quality Improvement Officer and the Adult Learning Service Manager. In May 2025, the above group presented their findings to PIE Coordinators, to share good practice and stimulate further engagement in family learning. In all the establishments involved, the lead practitioners noted increased levels of parental engagement in their children's learning from targeted families.

25. Education Scotland inspections of East Renfrewshire schools have noted the positive impact of family learning, including:

"Parents participate in family learning sessions on topics like digital safety, STEM, and positive parenting. The school works closely with families to reduce the cost of the school day and ensure all children can participate fully." (Summary of Inspection Findings: St. Joseph's Primary School (March 2025))

"Family learning events, such as cooking classes, have led to improved attendance for targeted pupils." (Summary of Inspection Findings: Williamwood High School (March 2025))

26. In Isobel Mair School, all learners are encouraged to develop an interest in and enthusiasm for STEM, and parents have been participating in STEM learning experiences alongside their children. The school made innovative use of Google Classroom to increase the number of parents who were able to participate. Families also had an opportunity to engage at home with *Dec-STEM-Ber* Science and Technology home learning packs.

27. In the PIE Census conducted across East Renfrewshire in 2025, it was pleasing to note the following responses in relation to family learning when compared to the previous census. However, there is scope to further develop approaches to family learning since less than half of respondents have taken part, and family learning will again be a focus in the new strategy.

Strongly agree /agree	2022	2025
The school provides me with useful information about how I can help my child learn at home.	58%	65%
My child's school offers a selection of Family Learning activities such as events and workshops.	33%	64%
The school is making me aware of the Family Learning opportunities.	34%	65%
I have taken part in Family Learning activities. This is where parents/carers and children learn together.	24%	45%

28. There has been steady progress in embedding Family Centred Approaches (FCA), which was launched in 2012, with more establishments gaining accreditation over the last three years. In the ELC sector, 19 nursery classes and family centres have achieved Gold accreditation, and in the primary sector 14 schools. In the secondary sector, progress has been slower, with our first school (St. Ninian's High School) gaining Silver accreditation in February 2024. Engagement in the process has further developed the ability and confidence of staff to meaningfully engage with families and takes account of their individual circumstances. We will continue to offer CLPL relating to FCA, we will continue to develop our pool of Gold Validators, and we will continue to report on progress to and seek feedback from Parent Council Chairs and PIE Coordinators.

29. A seminar on Engaging Stakeholders, led by experienced Head Teachers, was included in our Aspiring Leaders Programme. This seminar included a focus on parental engagement and was positively evaluated by participants (Depute Head Teachers and Principal Teachers) with comments including: *"I will make use of the list of recommended professional reading around engaging families."*; *"I will complete the activity about identifying which families may face barriers to engagement, what those barriers are and what I am going to do about it."*; *"I am keen to explore further the more innovative ways to promote family and parent engagement and participation."*

30. Sessions on *Parental Involvement and Engagement* and *Preparing for Parents Evenings* have been included within our Probationer Teacher CLPL Programme over the last three years. This has increased teachers' awareness, at an early stage in their careers, of the importance of communicating effectively with parents and providing them with a range of opportunities to be engaged in their children's' learning. These sessions have been positively evaluated positively, with comments such as: *"these sessions allowed me to develop strategies for tracking, reporting and parent's evenings."*

31. The Education Department promotes increasing diversity in Parent Councils. It also supports establishments to ensure that all parents can have their views represented and to develop approaches to effective collaboration with parents in planning and decision making. An increasing proportion (40% in December 2023) of establishments established a Parent Equalities Group, and we are working with all establishments to demonstrate the value of these forums. Almost all establishment handbooks contain a statement about equalities and

inclusion, with a majority naming the Equalities Coordinator and how to contact them. When Education Scotland published their inspection report on Crookfur Primary School in February 2023, it was noted: *“children are developing an increasing understanding of protected characteristics such as race and gender through planned curricular opportunities and cultural events. The Parent Diversity Group is supporting this work very effectively.”* The inspection report for Braidbar Primary School (March 2023) noted: *“The school has a highly effective approach to working in partnership with children and parents to build a culture of equality. As a school community they wanted to recognise and celebrate the religious and culture beliefs of all children and their families”.*

32. In the 2025 PIE Census, most parents (80%: 77% in 2022) agreed that the cost of participating in school activities and events is affordable, although the proportion disagreeing with that statement has risen from 5% to 8% over the last three years. An audit of schools’ Pupil Equity Fund Plans demonstrates that all schools are taking action to reduce the cost of the school day. In the Education Scotland inspection report on St. Luke’s High School published in March 2024, it was found that *“the school ensures financial barriers are removed so all young people can participate in curricular and extracurricular activities. Effective support is available to families to help with costs, contributing to high participation and attainment among pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.”*

33. Less than half of respondents (47%: 49% in 2022) would like to be more active in their child’s school. Work commitment remains the most significant barrier. However, where establishments have been responsive to the work commitments when engaging with parents, they have been able to maximise participation. In Arthurlie Family Centre, creating opportunities for parents to participate in family learning has enhanced the learning experiences of children and their families. The centre consulted with all families about how and when they would like to be involved. A range of family learning events were delivered, including *STEM* and *Craft and Cooking* sessions, and were very well attended. Parents provided positive feedback on these family learning events, with particular comments on the flexible offer including *“I found the timing of it supported working parents and provided opportunity for us to engage with the provision. I look forward to participating in more sessions in the future”.*

34. The proportion of parents who responded in the census that they were not made aware of opportunities to be more active in their child’s school has reduced from 28% to 8% over the last three years. Most parents (77%) agreed that usually there are opportunities for them to help or volunteer with their child’s school. This was a significant increase in 46% who agreed in 2022; however, it was well below the 92% who agreed in the census before that, in 2019. Covid-related restrictions will have affected the response in 2022, so a look further back suggests there is more support needed in this area to provide more opportunities for meaningful volunteering. Supporting establishments to develop meaningful and impactful opportunities for volunteering will feature in the new strategy.

35. The Early Years Outreach Service (EYOS) has expanded its support for children and their families in Early Years settings and has included a focus on parent empowerment. They have increased the knowledge and confidence of parents through: home visits; collaborative wellbeing planning; information sessions; collaboration with a range of professionals; and monthly information Sways. Almost 100 children and families have been supported since it was established, and effective tracking has demonstrated improved outcomes for children and their families and increased skills and confidence in ELC staff.

36. The Family First Team is East Renfrewshire’s universal Early Years Prevention Service. Over 2000 families have been supported by the service. The main need of families

over the last three years has been parenting support which includes support with sleep, routines and behaviours within the family home. 128 families received parenting support during 2024-25, with outcomes including 1:1 support within the home environment and sharing strategies from the Solihull Approach resource. The service also makes referrals on to partners in Work East Renfrewshire for employability support and to RAMH for counselling and anxiety management support. Where a higher level of support is identified through the use of the Family Wellbeing Scale, families have engaged in our Psychology or Parenting Programmes (PoPP) offers. 46 families engaged in a PoPP programme last session. 80% of initial SDQ scores were over 17 which is high risk range. Final average scores decreased to below 14 which indicates low risk. Almost all families (93%) had an improved SDQ score following participation. Further development of parenting programmes will feature in the new strategy.

37. McCready Family Centre, adapted Book Bug sessions to reflect the linguistic diversity within the community, incorporating languages such as Urdu, Spanish, Portuguese, and Kurdish. Parents participated by reading stories to the children in their native languages. Additionally, families were invited to attend Gaelic Book Bug sessions designed to promote and celebrate Scottish culture and heritage. All new families receive a Home Learning Bag containing a set of engaging resources. These are displayed on a family wall as a warm welcome and a celebration of the diverse cultures and backgrounds within the community. This initiative supported the centre's Rights Respecting Gold Award. One new parent commented, *"I have never felt so welcomed into a nursery. Everyone is so friendly and welcoming. Thank you!"*. This family learning approach should be shared with other establishments and further developed within the new strategy.

38. Glenwood Family Centre parents actively enhance the work of the centre including a Parents' Committee who further support this approach. They engage families in a range of ways, gathering parental views and increasing parental involvement and engagement. Staff supported cluster parental sessions including Psychology of Positive Parenting, Sleep Scotland and Family First sessions. The format of Parents' Curriculum Evening was changed to a Come and Play session for families, where children and parents participate together. 46 families attended and took part in a range of activities together led by the staff team in session 2024-25. In evaluations, one parent commented, *"We loved it! Lots to explore and lovely to see how confident (our child) is at nursery. Thank you!"*. The committee built on previous success to include Mini-Master Chef sessions which encourage families to prepare and cook healthy foods together. The centre delivers sessions at various times across the week to meet the needs of different families and align with different attendance patterns.

39. St. John's Primary School staff, using insights from the Attendance Toolkit and their own internal data, initiated an action research project aimed at improving attendance rates. The school implemented tailored support for families based on specific circumstances. These supports included one-to-one check-ins, home visits, and flexible drop-off and pick-up times to ease parental pressures. These approaches made a significant impact, with the school meeting their East Renfrewshire target of 95% attendance in 2024-25, an increase of 1.2% on the previous year. A Principal Teacher presented this research to colleagues as an example of good practice.

40. St. Mark's Primary School was recognised and accredited by National Nurture Network UK. A target in their report was to "increase opportunities for parental involvement in the nurture class" so the school introduced *Family Friday* mornings within its nurture group. During these sessions, parents were invited to the *Treasure Island* nurture room to engage in a range of collaborative learning activities with their children. The initiative was positively received, with one parent sharing, *"I saw how well my son felt in a group and how confident he was"*.

Feedback from a questionnaire revealed that all participating parents expressed a desire for more opportunities to work alongside their children in the nurture setting.

41. Family Learning at Mearns Primary School has continued to grow and develop over the last few years. The school consulted with parents over what they wanted to learn about alongside their children, and those responses were used to design family learning programmes. Children and parents learned alongside each other. There was a particular focus on Health and Wellbeing and fun community activities. This has led to an increasing number of parents volunteering within the school.

42. From 2022 to 2025, Adult Learning Services (ALS) have delivered a range of learner centred courses for parents to meet their identified needs, including: *Supporting Parents Supporting Children; Family Maths; Family ESOL; Wellbeing for Parents group; and Incredible Years*. The ALS has engaged with education establishments to help target parents across

43. the authority. Over the last three years the ALS supported 291 parents who identified personal and family learning goals. Almost all parents (99%) reported improved skills and confidence in relation to their goals. Through UK Shared Prosperity Fund Multiply funding, the ALS delivered a range of courses aimed at parents. For example, in partnership with Mearns Primary School a Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) Maths unit was delivered to parents in the school. A family learning course, Learning Maths Together, was also developed for parents and their children in P5-7.

43. Parents are involved in decision making through the recruitment and selection process for Head Teacher and Depute Head Teacher posts. We have provided 9 training sessions between November 2022 and November 2024 to increase the number of Parent Council members who can take part in this process in an informed and confident manner to 48. We continue to respond flexibly in cases where Parent Council members require training at short notice to take part in a recruitment process.

44. Although we no longer have group membership as a local authority with Connect, we have encouraged all schools to take out their own membership, which includes insurance cover, working in partnership with Connect to highlight the benefits of membership. Connect provide a vital source of information, resources and advice on the few occasions when any issues arise. They have provided training to PIE Coordinators to increase their awareness of how to most effectively support their Parent Councils. Connect have also supported us to provide training for Parent Council Chairs (October 2023) to understand their roles as Chairs and other post holders.

45. We currently have 14 children registered with us as being home educated, and another 5 who are home educated for part of each week. This represents a significant decrease in home educating families since 2022, when 34 children were registered as being home educated. The QIO responsible for home education maintains regular communication with these families and offers support and guidance to help parents provide high quality learning experiences. New national guidance on home education was published by the Scottish Government in January 2025 and this is being used to further strengthen the support we offer home educating families.

Consultation

46. The *Achieving Excellence and Equity: 2025 National Improvement Framework Improvement Plan* reports that “*there is room to strengthen the involvement of parents, carers, and the wider school community in shaping the vision and driving change*”. The Education

Department and all establishments continue to develop approaches to involving parents in decision making.

47. Following participation in the Scottish Government PIE census in January – March 2022, the Education Department shared the findings of this census with Head Teachers, PIE Coordinators and Parent Council Chairs. Findings were used to set benchmarks and measures for the 2022-25 strategy. We recently conducted another census in March – May 2025. We used the same set of statements and questions so that we could make comparisons with results from 2022. On this occasion we were not able to benchmark against national results as the Scottish Government did not collect local authority data as they did three years ago. The findings from this census have helped the local authority to measure the success of this strategy and to develop our priorities for 2025-2028.

48. A majority of parents (57%: 51% in 2022) agree that the school takes their views about their child's learning into account and a majority (52%: 52% in 2022) agree that the school seeks their views and opinions on school policies. In the Education Scotland inspection report on Cross Arthurlie Primary School published in September 2024, it was found that *“the Head Teacher consults with the Parent Council regarding the use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF). Parents and children were involved in participatory budgeting decisions, showing a collaborative approach to financial planning.”*

49. Parent Councils have been well supported through Parent Council Chair Forums which occur three times a year. Since 2022, senior officers in the Education Department and colleagues from across ERC have sought the views of Parent Council Chairs on a range of local and national plans, policies, strategies and reports including:

- Funding of Summer Activities
- Home to School Transport Policy
- Social Justice Strategy
- Local Improvement Plans
- Standards and Quality Reports
- UNCRC Report
- Digital Learning and Teaching Strategy
- Class Organisation Policy
- Placing Request Appeals
- Parental Employability Support
- Education Scotland Inspection Framework
- PIE Strategy

50. A Parent Equalities Forum meets termly to: share key information; discuss the work of establishments to promote equality and eliminate discrimination; and consult with parents on a range of equality-focused issues. The Forum plays an important role in consultation on key strategies and policies, for example the Additional Support for Learning action plan and Social Justice Framework. All members of the parent forum are welcome to attend Equalities Forum meetings and all Parent Councils are encouraged to identify a member of their parent forum to join each meeting, in order to share information back to the wider parent body. In this way the Parent Equalities Forum is also an important channel for communicating support available to parents, including around the cost of living crisis, violence towards women and girls, and shared parenting.

51. The Learn Well service promotes positive, nurturing relationships with young people who are missing school due to Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA), and within families. The range of support offered by the service includes engagement with and empowerment of parents. A Parent Support Group offers support to the families of the young

people who attend Learn Well. The group has run fortnightly, alternating between a *Coffee and Connect* session and a wellbeing workshop. *Coffee and Connect* provides an opportunity for the parents to build relationships with staff and meet other parents connected to the service. Workshops cover a range of topics including: sleep; impact of EBSA on the wider family; stigma; graded exposure; and alternative pathways for future learning. This group has been very well received by participants. Parents are consulted annually on the areas of priority for Learn Well engaging with their children. In the last consultation, all parents agreed that the service has been effective and almost all agreed that there has been a benefit to the whole family. Most parents chose improving wellbeing as the top priority for the service.

52. In the Carlibar Campus, a new and shared vision, *“Together we nurture, learn and shine”*, has been developed through consultation with pupils, parents, and staff, with a full launch in August 2025. This collaborative approach, involving most parents, has fostered a shared sense of purpose and collective ownership of the vision, values and direction. All classes have hosted an assembly for parents, celebrating learning and building family engagement. These events have strengthened community links and highlighted pupil achievement across the school.

53. St. Mark’s Primary School wanted to increase parental awareness of support available to alleviate pressures around the Cost of the School Day. A new action plan was implemented to address financial barriers identified by the school community. Communication with parents remained a priority, with updates shared in a range of ways to ensure transparency in how their feedback is being acted upon. To assess impact, a parental survey gathered perspectives. Key findings included that awareness of support for the cost of uniforms has improved, and confidence in discussing financial difficulties has increased.

54. A report to the Education Committee on Provision of Early Learning and Childcare and Out of School Care Services in November 2024 recorded that consultation with parents showed that:

- when asked to rate how their child’s ELC allocation meets the needs of their family (with 1 being ‘not at all’ and 5 being ‘extremely well’), the average score was 3.9. 68% of those responding selected either 4 or 5, with only 14% selecting 1 or 2. This is broadly in line with the results from the 2022 consultation.
- officers have been able to allocate almost all applications received on time to their first choice of setting;
- more flexible options for families, including the wider rollout of add-on hours and the launch of a new full-time model of attendance, have been very popular with families and contributed towards the Council’s income;
- when asked to rate how the provision before and after school services met the needs of their family (with 1 being ‘not at all well’ and 5 being ‘extremely well’), the average score was 3.9. Over 70% of the responses were either 4 or 5, with 17% being 1 or 2

It should be noted that Out of School Care Services are not the statutory responsibility of the local authority.

55. In line with our statutory duties, we will continue to consult on provision of Early Learning and Childcare and Out of School Care Services in order to further improve our service, with the next consultation due in autumn 2026.

NEXT STEPS

56. A new parental engagement strategy has been developed for 2025 – 2028 (Appendix 3). This takes account of the areas identified throughout this report where there is scope for further improvement. The focus of the new strategy is on three main areas which are

highlighted in Education Scotland's *Strategic Framework for: Parental Involvement, Parental Engagement, Family Learning and Learning at Home*, which articulates what effective practice in these areas should look like across Scotland.

- **Parental Involvement:** we will improve opportunities for all parents to get involved in the life and work of their child's establishment;
- **Parental Engagement:** we will improve opportunities for all parents to actively and meaningfully engage in their children's learning; and,
- **Family Learning and Learning at Home:** we will improve opportunities for families to engage in learning outcomes that have an impact on the whole family.

Conclusion

57. The PIE Strategy 2022–2025 has strengthened parental involvement, engagement, and family learning across East Renfrewshire. Increased satisfaction, improved communication, and more inclusive practices have helped families feel connected and empowered. Insights from the PIE census and stakeholder feedback have shaped the new 2025–2028 strategy, which will continue to focus on meaningful involvement, engagement in learning, and family-wide learning opportunities—ensuring every child can flourish, regardless of background.

Report Authors

David Gordon, Quality Improvement Officer

David.Gordon2@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Siobhan McColgan, Head of Education Services

Siobhan.McColgan@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Appendix 1

The PIE Strategy 2022-2025 had a range of aims and critical indicators.

Aims:

- Communicate – improve the ways that we communicate with ALL parents to ensure that they are provided with the information and support that they need to be involved and engaged in their child's learning;
- Collaborate – expand opportunities for ALL parents to collaborate at all levels within our education system; and,
- Consult - support consultation with parents in a variety of ways to fulfil our statutory duties and shape our services.

Critical Indicators:

- % of parents responding positively to parental questionnaires:
 - I am satisfied with the school
 - The school staff are approachable
 - My child's school helps me understand my child's rights
 - The school keeps me well informed about my child's progress in a way I can understand
 - The information I receive from the Parent Council is useful
 - How satisfied are you with the communication you get from the school to provide:
 - information on what your child is currently learning about
 - information on how your child is progressing with their learning
 - information on ways to help your child continue learning at home
 - general information about the school
 - The school provides me with useful information about how I can help my child learn at home
 - My child's school offers a selection of Family Learning activities such as events and workshops
 - The cost of participating in school activities and events is affordable
 - The school asks for my views about my child's learning
 - The school takes my views about my child's learning into account.
 - The school seeks my views and opinions on school policies
 - My views help to decide priorities in the School Improvement Plan
- % of ELC settings and primary schools achieving Family Centred Approaches Accreditation at Gold
- % of Secondary schools achieving Family Centred Approaches Accreditation at Bronze or above

Appendix 2

Sources of evidence for self-evaluation:

Looking Inwards:

The following evidence was reviewed from all schools and family centres (where relevant):

- Handbooks
- Websites
- Social Media feeds
- Standards and Quality Reports
- School improvement Plan
- PEF Reports

Centrally held documentation

- PIE Census analysis
- Family Centred Approaches data
- Minutes of meetings: Parental Involvement Co-ordinators, Parent Council Chairs Forum, Head Teacher meetings
- Parent consultations
- CLPL programme and evaluations
- Annual Questionnaire data
- Records of recruitment and selection training for parents
- Complaints data
- SPSO training
- Departmental reports to Education Committee

Looking Outwards:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/guidance-scottish-schools-parental-involvement-act-2006/documents/>

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/engaging-parents-and-families-a-toolkit-for-practitioners/>

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/learning-together-update-on-the-national-action-plan/pages/parental-involvement/>

<https://education.gov.scot/media/ebxjdlxv/strategic-framework-for-pi-pe-fl-lah-october-2022.pdf>

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/supporting-parents> <https://education.gov.scot/resources/review-of-family-learning/>

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/home-education-guidance/>

Glossary:

Parent: Parent refers to the mother or the father of a child or young person, or to any foster carers, relatives or friends who have been given responsibility for looking after or bringing up a child or young person. We will use the term 'parent' or 'parents' to refer to all parents throughout this document.

Parental Involvement: Parental involvement describes the ways in which parents can get involved in the life and work of their child's school.

Parental Engagement: Parental engagement is about parents' and families' interaction with their child's learning. It can take place in the home, at school or in the community.

Family Learning: Family learning encourages family members to learn together as a family. Family learning activities can also be designed to enable parents to learn how to support their child's learning.

Learning at home: Learning at home is the learning which happens in the home, outdoors or in the community. It can take place through everyday activities that families already do and can overlap with aspects of organised or active learning activities.

AIM

PtG1: Every child and young person, regardless of background or circumstance, will fully flourish on their journey to adulthood.

Outcome

We will know we are making good steps along the way WHEN....

Parents are more involved and engaged in their children's learning.

Critical Indicators

% of parents responding positively to parental questionnaires:

- I am satisfied with the school
- The school staff are approachable.
- The school asks for my views about my child's learning.
- The school takes my views about my child's learning into account.
- The school seeks my views and opinions on school policies.
- My views help to decide priorities in the School Improvement Plan.
- My child's school helps me understand my child's rights.
- The school keeps me well informed about my child's progress in a way I can understand.
- The information I receive from the Parent Council is useful.
- The cost of participating in school activities and events is affordable.

Our contribution

So we need to ...

Parental Involvement:

We will improve opportunities for all parents to get involved in the life and work of their child's establishment

Parental Engagement:

We will improve opportunities for all parents to actively and meaningfully engage in their children's learning.

Critical Activities

By.....

- Supporting Parent Councils to further improve communication with and be more representative of the parent forum.
- Supporting establishments and Parent Councils to further develop approaches to effective and inclusive collaboration in planning and decision making.
- Promoting family partnerships that involve all parents in developing a socially just climate across East Renfrewshire.
- Supporting parents understanding of children's rights in relation to UNCRC legislation, and raising awareness of child friendly complaints.
- Sharing and supporting the implementation of new Education Department *Sharing School Life* communications guidance.
- Communicating effectively with parents on Scottish Government reform to the curriculum, qualifications and assessment.
- Responding to all parental enquiries and complaints in line with ERC Customer Care Standards and Complaints Handling Policy.
- Providing Recruitment and Selection training for Parent Councils.
- Conducting and analysing the PIE census.
- Providing CLPL for practitioners on parental involvement.

- Supporting establishments to develop meaningful and impactful opportunities for volunteering.
- Promoting and sharing best practice in removing barriers preventing parents and families from engaging in their children's learning.
- Refreshing East Renfrewshire's *Reporting to Parents* Guidance.
- Supporting establishments to develop approaches for effective communication with non-resident parents.
- Improving communication with parents of bilingual learners.
- Further developing appropriate, contextually relevant parenting programmes.
- Supporting parents to engage with services that offer a range of supports, including Adult Learning, Family First, Healthier Minds and Learn Well.
- Providing CLPL for practitioners on parental engagement.

AIM	Outcome	Our contribution	Critical Activities
PtG1: every child and young person, regardless of background or circumstance, will fully flourish on their journey to adulthood.	<p><i>We will know we are making good steps along the way WHEN....</i></p> <p>Parents are more involved and engaged in their children's learning.</p>	<p>So we need to ...</p>	<p>By.....</p>
	<p>Critical Indicators</p> <p>% of parents responding positively to parental questionnaires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school provides me with useful information about how I can help my child learn at home. • I have taken part in Family Learning activities. • How satisfied are you with the communication you get from the school to provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - information on what your child is currently learning about - information on how your child is progressing with their learning - information on ways to help your child continue learning at home - general information about the school 	<p>Family Learning and Learning at Home:</p> <p>We will improve opportunities for families to engage in learning outcomes that have an impact on the whole family.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working in partnership with parents and relevant partners to facilitate family learning approaches, building on strengths of families and based on their needs. • Further developing our Adult Learning Service, including through a strategic family learning offer. • Developing Parental Employability Support in partnership with Work East Ren and other stakeholders. • Reviewing and producing guidance on home learning. • Consulting with home educating parents and their children to provide local guidance based on national home education guidance (2025). • Providing CLPL for practitioners on family learning and learning at home.

BLANK PAGE

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILEXECUTIVE SUMMARY PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND ENGAGEMENT (PIE)
STRATEGY 2022-25**Introduction**

This executive summary provides a summarised evaluation of the implementation and impact of the Parental Involvement and Engagement (PIE) Strategy from 2022 to 2025. It informs the development of the 2025–2028 strategy, aligned with the Council’s vision of ‘A Place to Grow’.

Progress and Examples of Good Practice**Communication**

- Parental satisfaction increased from 63% (2022) to 75% (2025), with 91% of parents finding staff approachable.
- Most parents (78%: 67% in 2022) know what their child is learning at school and most (78%: 69% in 2022) agree that the school keeps them well informed about their child’s progress in a way they can understand.
- All schools have clear procedures to ensure parents regularly receive information about their child’s strengths, next steps for learning, progress and achievements.
- Digital platforms such as Google Classroom, SeeSaw, and Microsoft Teams are widely used to share learning and achievements.
- Hybrid parents’ evenings offer flexibility, combining virtual and in-person formats.
- ERC Parentsportal usage is the highest among participating authorities, streamlining communication and reducing administrative burden.
- Kirkhill Primary School includes parent-shared achievements in weekly assemblies, strengthening home-school connections.
- Barrhead High School uses a digital feedback platform to support parental engagement in learning.
- Crookfur Primary School’s Parent Diversity Group supports curriculum work on protected characteristics, enhancing inclusion.
- Braidbar Primary School celebrates religious and cultural diversity through strong parent partnerships

Collaboration

- 64% of parents reported who responded to the PIE Census reported that the school scoffers a selection of Family Learning activities such as events and workshops.
- Professional Learning is supporting families with over 100 practitioners trained in the Solihull Approach, enhancing emotional wellbeing support for families.
- Family Learning Collaborative Enquiry is being used effectively across establishments. Practitioners from seven establishments co-designed and delivered family learning activities. St. Luke’s High School and St. Joseph’s Primary reported improved attendance and engagement through cooking classes and STEM workshops.

- Inclusive Practice has been used to ensure collaboration and engagement with a range of families. McCready Family Centre adapted Book Bug sessions to include Urdu, Spanish, Portuguese, Kurdish, and Gaelic, celebrating linguistic diversity and earning a Rights Respecting Gold Award. Glenwood Family Centre introduced “Come and Play” curriculum evenings and Mini-Master Chef sessions, enhancing family engagement. Mearns Primary School co-designed family learning programmes with parents, focusing on health and wellbeing and increasing volunteering.
- Schools have targeted support to parents and carers in order to work together to support better outcomes for learners. St. John’s Primary School improved attendance through tailored family support including home visits and flexible drop-offs. St. Mark’s Primary School introduced “Family Friday” nurture sessions, with parents actively participating in learning activities. Isobel Mair School use Google Classroom and home STEM packs to engage families in science learning.
- Adult Learning Services supported 291 parents with courses such as Family Maths, ESOL, and Wellbeing for Parents, with 99% reporting improved confidence.

Consultation

- A majority of parents (57%: 51% in 2022) agree that the school takes their views about their child’s learning into account and a majority (52%: 52% in 2022) agree that the school seeks their views and opinions on school policies.
- PIE Census (2025) showed increased parental involvement in decision-making and policy feedback.
- Parent Council Chair Forums and Equalities Forums provided platforms for consultation on policies such as the Social Justice Strategy and UNCRC implementation.
- Cross Arthurlie Primary School involved parents in participatory budgeting decisions for Pupil Equity Funding.
- Carlibar Campus developed a shared vision—“Together we nurture, learn and shine”—through consultation with pupils, parents, and staff.
- St. Mark’s Primary School improved parental confidence in discussing financial challenges through transparent communication and surveys.
- Learn Well Service have consulted parents annually to shape priorities for supporting children with Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA).

Next Steps: PIE Strategy 2025–2028

The new strategy will focus on:

1. Parental Involvement – Enhancing opportunities for parents to contribute to school life.
2. Parental Engagement – Deepening parents’ role in their children’s learning.
3. Family Learning & Learning at Home – Expanding learning opportunities that benefit the whole family.

Key actions include:

- Strengthening communication with non-resident and bilingual parents.

- Expanding CLPL for staff on inclusive engagement.
- Increasing volunteering and family learning opportunities.
- Enhancing support for home education and parenting programmes.

Conclusion

The PIE Strategy (2022–2025) has significantly strengthened parental involvement, engagement, and family learning across East Renfrewshire. Through innovative practices, inclusive approaches, and strong partnerships, families feel more connected and empowered. The 2025–2028 strategy builds on these successes to ensure every child can thrive, regardless of background.

BLANK PAGE