

Cross-Party Group on Families Supporting Children's Learning

Tuesday 19 September 2023 6pm-7.30pm

Minute

Present

MSPs

Oliver Mundell MSP (Co-convenor)
Fulton MacGregor MSP (Co-Convenor)

Invited guests

Diane Deleney (Give Them Time Campaign),

Non-MSP Group Members

Cathy Sexton (Fathers Network Scotland)
Cheryl Burnett (NPFS)
John Forsyth (Shared Parenting Scotland)
Kathryn Farrow (SPION)
Magaidh Wentworth (Comann nam Parant)
Patrick McGlinchey (Connect)
Sara McFarlane (Connect)
Lorna Carmichael (Mears Primary School Parent Council)
Annie Watson (Enquire)
Jen O'Donnel (Skills Development Scotland)
Katie Hay (GTCS)
Sarah Walker (NASUWT)
Claire Trainor-Gray (OnePlusOne)
Claire-Louise Williams (North Lanarkshire Council)
Paula McEwan (EiS)
Rob Bryne (Fulton MacGregor's Office)
Zoe Prosser (Law Primary School)
Kathleen Mc Tagart (St Denis Primary School)
Anne McInnes (Parent Network Scotland)

Apologies

Ross Greer MSP
Monical Lennon MSP
Pam Duncan-Glancy MSP

Willie Rennie MSP
Sue Palmer (Upstart)
Michael Wood (ADES)
Beverly Ferguson (Education Scotland)
Ciaran McDonald (Scottish Government)
Heather McLean (Scottish Government)

Agenda item 1 and 2

Fulton MacGregor took the chair and welcomed attendees to the meeting of the CPG. The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

Agenda item 3

AGM

Patrick McGlinchey took the chair for the AGM portion of the meeting. Fulton MacGregor MSP and Oliver Mundell MSP were re-appointed as co-convenors and Connect re-appointed as secretariat.

Agenda item 4

Diane Delany – Give Them Time

Diane gave a presentation on the successful campaign for a further year of nursery funding for all children legally deferring their primary one start in Scotland. This was followed by questions and discussion.

The CPG discussed the need for a culture change in how parent concerns are responded to, where parent voices and knowledge of their children is valued. As well as how it is being currently implemented, and issues of parents and professionals still not understanding the right to deferral.

There will be a Parliamentary Reception to celebrate the campaign in January 2024.

Agenda item 5

Reporting back on previous work

Patrick provided an update on correspondence with local authorities on how they are supporting enhanced collaboration and communication with parents on additional support for learning, as set out in the Scottish Governments ASL Action Plan. This focused on how local authorities are sharing information with parents of children with additional support needs, if and how they are supporting dedicated parent groups/forums, and if local authorities are aware of support from COSLA and ADES on this.

Initial findings show a mixed picture across the country, with only a few local authorities involving parents at a strategic level.

Actions: The report will be shared with the Scottish Parliament Education, Children and Young People's Committee and the relevant Government Minister.

Agenda item 6

Future work

The CPG discussed the Parental Involvement 2006 Act and the need for this to be updated.

Actions: To be the focus of the next meeting.

Agenda item 7

Member recruitment

Asked non-MSP members to consider how best to involve more parents in the group and discussed the challenges of representing the diversity of parents.

Agenda item 8

Any other business

Pam Duncan-Glancy MSP had submitted a question on the status of the updated Learning Together Action Plan, and the Scottish Government replied that this should be published later this year.

Cathy Sexton of Fathers Network Scotland gave an update on the 2023 Dads Survey, which has found the time dads are spending with their children is going up, particularly from deprived areas. CPG members were invited to register for an event on the survey findings on 4 October.