

# Empowering parents and carers

## What is the 'empowered system'?

It means that parents, children, teachers and others involved in children's education are valued for the different parts they play.

The picture on the right shows all those, including parents, involved in children's learning. When everyone works together and feels that what they are doing is worthwhile, the end result for children is much stronger: the jigsaw is complete.

This way of working together supports children while they are in education (from age 3 to 18) and for life.

This Nutshell explains how parents and carers fit in the jigsaw. For more information about the empowered system, and to tell us what you think of it, go to: [education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/an-empowered-system](http://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/an-empowered-system)

## What it means for parents

It means that you are recognised for how important you are because you:

- Are vital for what children learn at home and outwith school
- Add to what children learn in school
- Contribute to what goes on in schools and decisions made about children

## You matter to your children

Parents are central to children's lives. You're not the only influence on them, but you are the first, and very important, one. You matter to your children in their earliest years, when they completely depend on you, and as they grow up and become adults.

You, out of all the adults around them,  
know your children best.

What you do with your children at home counts for a lot: playing with them, speaking with and listening to them, taking an interest in what they're learning at school, reading to them and helping with homework, and giving them the chance to learn from you.

What they learn from you,  
they learn for life.



## Parents are an equal piece in the jigsaw

When parents are involved and interested:

- Children do better
- It's easier for children to learn
- Children, parents and schools all benefit

Schools will support parents to be and to feel:

- Involved in their child's education
- Active in the life of the school and decisions about their children's learning

Schools know that parents:

- Know their children best
- Help their children learn
- Need to be involved in the right ways from the very start
- May need some help to feel confident about their part in supporting their children and being involved in the school



## You matter to schools

Parents matter to teachers and others because you are such an important part of the jigsaw. When parents are involved in the right ways, it can add a lot to what children learn at school. This works for everyone, including children and their teachers. It's so much better for children, now and for the long term, when everyone is working together.

Teachers and others in education want to show you how important you are, and to make sure that you are involved in decisions about your child: not just some of the time, but all of it.

Schools may have changed a lot since you were there and they are still changing. Although some parents are already active in education such as through Parent Councils, it will take time for all parents, children, school staff, councils and others to feel 'empowered': equally valued, respected and supported in the education system.

You should notice schools and teachers opening their doors to you, listening to you and speaking to you. You can expect opportunities and encouragement to play an active part in your child's education: at home and at school. You should feel confident that schools want you to be involved, and value you and your part in your child's education.

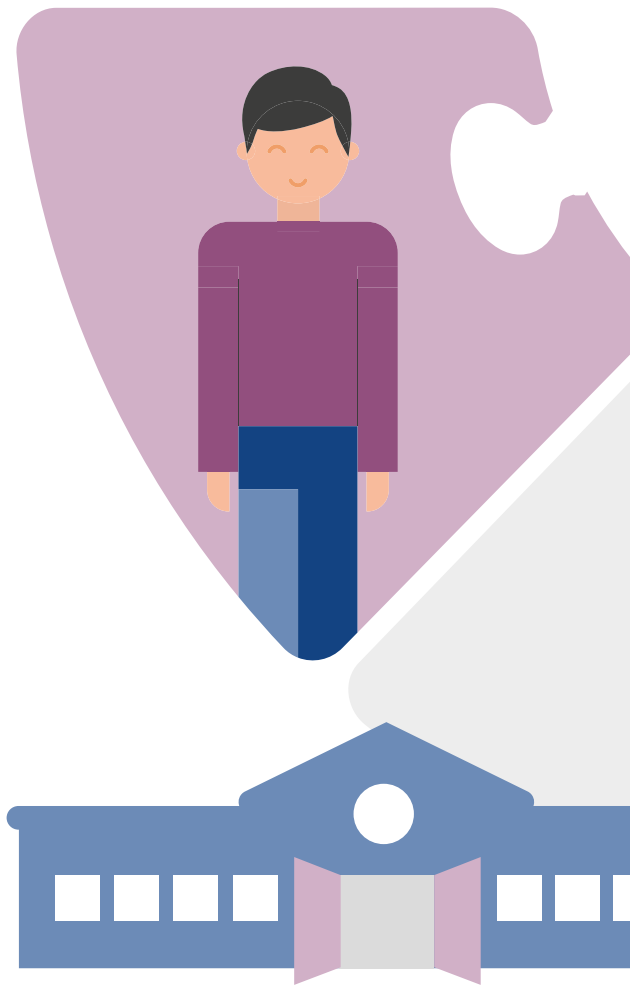
## Parents' rights and responsibilities

By law, schools have to support parents to be involved in children's education and learning. They realise that not all parents feel confident about what they can offer. Schools are supporting parents by:

- ✓ Listening to parents and their concerns
- ✓ Involving parents in their children's learning and decisions about them
- ✓ Giving parents opportunities to take part in the life of the school
- ✓ Making it possible for parents to be actively involved in ways which fit with family life and work
- ✓ Showing parents how they can build on what children are learning at school
- ✓ Being flexible and creative, and doing all they can to help parents feel welcome and involved
- ✓ Looking for new ways to open up schools to parents
- ✓ Explaining how schools work for the benefit of the whole school community so parents know why things happen the way they do

In turn, it's important for parents to respect and value school staff.

By working together parents, teachers and others can help to improve outcomes for children and young people.



### More information

**National Parent Forum of Scotland**  
[npfs.org.uk](http://npfs.org.uk)

**Other NPFS Nutshells in this series**  
[npfs.org.uk/downloads/category/in-a-nutshell-series](http://npfs.org.uk/downloads/category/in-a-nutshell-series)

**Parentzone Scotland**  
<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone>

**Parents as partners in their children's learning: toolkit**  
[education.gov.scot/parentzone/Documents/parents-as-partners-toolkit.pdf](https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/Documents/parents-as-partners-toolkit.pdf)



 the National Parent Forum of Scotland

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