

Making the difference

# Personal learning planning



Parents, carers and family members are by far the most important influences on children's lives. You can make a difference to your child's learning by talking to them about what they have been learning, discussing the progress they have made and helping them to set realistic goals for what they would like to achieve next. You can also find out how your child is doing at school through written reports, parents' evenings and meetings as well as through personal learning planning.



## What are schools doing?

Schools are encouraging children and young people to take greater responsibility for their own learning and, as they progress through school, for the choices they make. Schools aim to help all children to become:

- ▶ successful learners
- ▶ confident individuals
- ▶ responsible citizens
- ▶ effective contributors to society.

Education today involves more than just learning facts and figures. To give your child the skills they will need for adult life, they will learn:

- ▶ how to learn
- ▶ to set personal goals for themselves
- ▶ to recognise and monitor their own progress
- ▶ to identify their aims and ambitions
- ▶ to develop independence
- ▶ to have confidence in themselves.

**The school curriculum is becoming more flexible so that it can better meet the needs of all young people from 3 to 18. To ensure that the curriculum gives every child the opportunities they need for learning, schools are developing new ways of assessing and recording progress. Personal learning planning is a key part of this process.**



# What is personal learning planning?

Research shows that children learn best when they:

- › understand clearly what they are trying to learn
- › know what is expected of them
- › are given feedback about the quality of their work
- › are given advice about how to improve their work
- › are involved in deciding what needs to be done next
- › know who can help them if they need it.

Personal learning planning is a process that takes account of these points and will help your child to make the most of their potential. It is a conversation about learning which will involve you, your child and their teacher. The conversation will focus on what your child is going to be learning, what evidence of achievements and progress will look like, and planning together for the next steps.

## What does it involve?

Schools will capture the outcomes of personal learning planning discussions in ways that are most suitable for your child, for you and for the school. This may be in the form of a target sheet, a jotter or diary, or another method such as photographs or video. However it is recorded, the personal learning planning documentation belongs to your child and they or their teacher will add in new achievements and goals from time to time. But it is important to remember that it is the communication between you, your child and their teacher that is important, rather than any personal learning planning document itself.

Each school will have its own arrangements for involving parents and recording personal learning planning information. For more details on how your child's school does this, ask the school.

# How will my child benefit?

By participating in personal learning planning, your child can develop:

- ▶ greater responsibility for their own learning
- ▶ improved confidence and self-esteem
- ▶ a greater sense of involvement in planning for their own future.

It is not only what your child learns in school that counts – children’s achievements in out-of-school activities, such as successes in sport or music or wider interests, can also be recorded.

# What are schools doing?

The most important way you can help your child with their personal learning planning is to talk to them about:

- ▶ what they are learning both in and out of school
- ▶ how they think they are doing
- ▶ the successes they have had, both in and out of school
- ▶ the goals they would like achieve in the future.

Your input is a vital part of your child’s learning and the school will welcome your views. If you are involved in the planning process, your child’s personal learning planning will be more effective and they will value it more highly.

For more information about how you can help your child with personal learning planning, contact the school.

You can find more information about personal learning planning, or any aspect of Scottish education, on Parentzone. **[www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk](http://www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk)**

# Useful links and contacts

**Parentzone** [www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk](http://www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk)

**Assessment is for Learning** [www.ltscotland.org.uk/assess](http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/assess)

**BBC Parents** [www.bbc.co.uk/schools/parents](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/parents)

**Childcare Link** Tel: 0800 096 0296 [www.childcarelink.gov.uk](http://www.childcarelink.gov.uk)

**One Parent Families Scotland** Tel: 0800 018 5026 [www.opfs.org.uk](http://www.opfs.org.uk)

**Parentscentre** [www.parentscentre.gov.uk](http://www.parentscentre.gov.uk)

**ParentLine Scotland** Tel: 0808 800 2222 [www.children1st.org.uk/parentline](http://www.children1st.org.uk/parentline)

**Parent Network Scotland** Tel: 0131 555 6780  
[www.parentnetworkscotland.org.uk](http://www.parentnetworkscotland.org.uk)

**Enquire** (The Scottish advice service for additional support for learning)  
Helpline: 0845 123 23 03 Textphone: 0131 222 2439 [www.enquire.org.uk](http://www.enquire.org.uk)

This leaflet is the eleventh in a series which highlights the real difference parents can, and do, make to their children's learning. Together with the local advice you will have on the arrangements in your child's school, this series will offer information to help you become better involved in your child's education. Other published leaflets are on Homework, Sharing information, Parents' evenings, School holidays, Starting a new school year, Healthy choices, Out-of-school learning, Enterprise in education, New technology in learning and Getting involved in your child's school. The series also includes materials for schools and teachers on these topics.

If you would like to contact us, or suggest topics for future leaflets, please visit [www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk](http://www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk), or telephone 0131 244 0956. This leaflet will be available in community languages and alternative formats from your child's school and the Parentzone website.

This series is prepared in partnership with the Quality in Education Centre (University of Strathclyde) and Children in Scotland.



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