

SCOTTISH SCHOOLS (PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT) ACT 2006

EXPLANATORY NOTES

COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS

Section 1 – Duty of Scottish Ministers and of education authorities to promote involvement of parents in school education etc

6. **Section 1** establishes the duty of Scottish Ministers and of education authorities to promote the involvement of parents of pupils at public schools in the education provided to their child by the school and in education more generally.
7. **Section 1(1)** places a new duty on Scottish Ministers to promote parental involvement in public school education generally. This complements the Scottish Ministers' existing duty in section 3(1) of the 2000 Act to endeavour to secure improvement in the quality of school education which is provided for Scotland, and the duty to exercise their powers in relation to such provision with a view to raising standards of education. The new duty in the Act is in regard to the parents of pupils attending public schools. Section 20 of the Act provides that terms used within the Act are, generally, to have the same meaning as given to them within section 135 of the 1980 Act. As a result, "public school" means a school which is under the management of an education authority. The definition of a "parent" in the 1980 Act is a broad definition and includes guardians, those who are liable to maintain or who have parental responsibilities, and persons who have care of the child or young person, such as another relative or foster parent. An "education authority" means a council constituted under the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994.
8. **Section 1(2)** places a similar duty on education authorities to promote the involvement of parents in the education provided in public schools in their area. As with the new duty on the Scottish Ministers, the duty on education authorities under section 1(2) of the Act complements the duty on education authorities under section 3(2) of the 2000 Act (improvement in the quality of school education). Education authorities have a duty under section 5(2)(a) of the 2000 Act to include within their annual statement of education improvement objectives an account of the ways in which the authority will seek to involve parents in promoting the education of their children. This Act places a duty on education authorities to promote the involvement of parents in their own child's education and in the education provided in the school to all the pupils in attendance. It provides a statutory framework within which education authorities can continue to build on the actions already being taken to promote parental involvement in school education.
9. **Section 1(3)** provides that "education" is, generally, to be interpreted as meaning "school education", defined in the 1980 Act as meaning progressive education appropriate to the requirements of pupils having regard to the pupil's age, ability and aptitude. The meaning is enhanced by the duty on education authorities in section 2 of the 2000 Act to secure that the education provided by them is directed to the development of the personality, talents, mental and physical abilities of the pupil to their fullest potential.