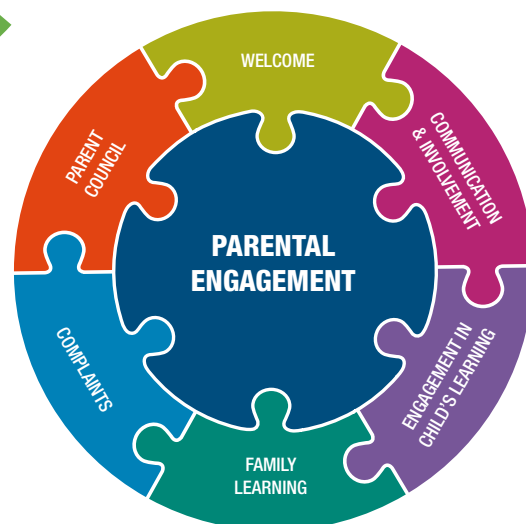
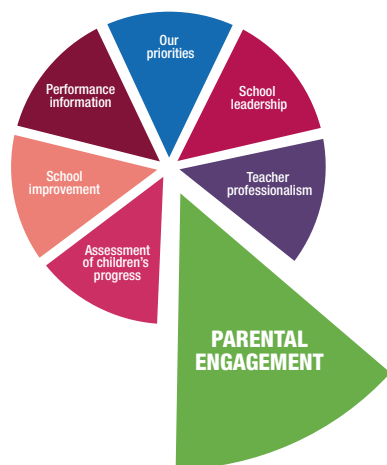


# Parental Engagement **STRATEGY 2017**



**getting  
it right**  
*for every child*



# INTRODUCTION

In East Lothian Council we believe that fostering positive partnerships between parents and schools are key to securing the best outcomes for our children and young people. The Parental Engagement Strategy demonstrates the commitment by East Lothian Council to improve the quality and extent of parents' involvement in their child's learning and the important role they play in their child's education. Through this strategy we can continue to build on existing good practice and create further opportunities for our parents and schools to work together. I would like to pass on my thanks to the parents, head teachers and council officers who worked together to co-create this Strategy taking into account the views of the parental and school community.

**Fiona Robertson** – Head of Education

## GLOSSARY

**Parent:** Parent refers to the mother or father of a child or young person, or to any foster carers, relative or friend who has 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 and carers throughout this document.

**Schools:** Our Parental Engagement Strategy is for schools, partner provider early learning and childcare settings and for all other partners of East Lothian Council. The term school is used throughout this document to denote a range of settings.

**ASN (Additional Support Needs):** Children and Young People who require additional support, in order to help them make the most of their school education and to be included fully in their learning.



## KEY

- **ELC** – East Lothian Council
- **EL&C** – Early Learning & Childcare
- **S** – Schools
- **P** – Parents
- **PC** – Parent Council





# WELCOME

All parents can expect to be given a warm welcome in our schools and will actively be encouraged to participate in the life and work of the school.



WHAT	WHO					HOW	WHEN	IMPACT
	ELC	EL&C	S	P	PC			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mutual respect and non-judgemental support underpin all staff/parent relationships.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School Management and Partner Provider Staff will create a welcoming environment for parents in their setting. Children and siblings will be welcomed at parent consultations.</li> <li>All school staff will welcome parents from the first point of contact at enrolment and throughout every contact.</li> <li>Training will be offered to all front of house staff to ensure that the needs of all parents are addressed in a professional manner when they arrive at the school.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All parents and families will feel welcomed and included in the life of the school and the care and education of their children.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our engagement will take into account factors that may act as barriers for some families.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents will be given opportunities to discuss and agree with staff what may be put in place to support their individual needs.</li> <li>Non-resident parents will have their address/contact details included on their child's Enrolment Form and schools will ensure they will be provided with the same information as the resident parent as appropriate.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents' needs are recognised and supported.</li> <li>Families feel welcome in our schools and can report their experience in the Annual Parental Engagement Consultation.</li> </ul>



## MEASURE

- East Lothian Council Annual Parental Engagement Consultation
- East Lothian Council Self Evaluation Reports
- Level of Complaints
- Education Officer visits
- School Inspection Pre-Questionnaires



# COMMUNICATION AND INVOLVEMENT

Our schools will communicate information clearly to parents in a variety of ways and will provide a range of opportunities for parents to become involved in the life and work of the school.



WHAT	WHO					HOW	WHEN	IMPACT
	ELC	EL&C	S	P	PC			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools will communicate information to parents in a variety of ways in consultation with parents.</li> <li>Schools will make clear to parents how they can contact the school.</li> </ul>		✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools will communicate in a variety of ways which may include online Learning Journals, Learning Stories and face to face meetings. Schools will use newsletters, websites, noticeboards, a text/email service, phone calls and social media to give information to parents. All communication will be clear, giving parents good notice of events. Ways for parents to respond will be clearly explained.</li> <li>At enrolment, parents will be given clear information on who is the main contact person for their children and how they can contact that person to discuss matters relating to their children. They will also be given information on how to raise a concern. Schools will develop and put in place a well understood system and process to record and respond to parental concerns.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents will know how to raise concerns.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Websites will contain key information for parents from Early Years Partnership settings through to Secondary School.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School websites will make key documents available to read, link to or download including the School Handbook, Standards and Quality Report and School Improvement Plan. The website will also include links to local and national guidance and useful websites e.g. Parentzone, Read/Write/Count, school lunch menus and local consultations etc.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents are making regular use of school websites.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools will make the involvement of parents a priority.</li> </ul>		✓	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools will consult with parents and find a variety of ways, times and places to involve all parents in the life of the school at a level that families find comfortable, is supportive and inclusive. This will vary depending on family circumstances, children's stage of schooling and the school's location. It does not necessarily involve the parent coming into school.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ethos and culture of the school reflects parents as partners in their children's learning through their involvement with the school.</li> </ul>

WHAT	WHO					HOW	WHEN	IMPACT
	ELC	EL&C	S	P	PC			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>East Lothian Council and schools will communicate the ways in which parents are meaningfully involved in decision making.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ways parents can be involved in decision making will be communicated through the School and Parent Councils newsletters, Parent Council meetings, Parents Evenings, Questionnaires, East Lothian Council Evaluation visits and Care Inspectorate and Education Scotland inspections.</li> <li>The School Handbook must be produced in consultation with the Parent Council.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents know how they can be involved in decision making in schools.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>East Lothian Council will consult parents annually on their school involvement and engagement.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An annual consultation will gather the views of all parents. The results will inform the School Improvement Plan, which will be produced in consultation with the Parent Council, and analysed at school/cluster/local authority levels.</li> </ul>	Annually, commencing in May 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Annual Parental Engagement Consultation will effectively involve parents in both the school and local authority improvement planning process.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools will ensure that parents are meaningfully involved with the creation of the School Improvement Plan.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools will report on parental involvement and engagement within the context of their annual Standards and Quality Reports. Parents will be invited to give their opinions on the School Improvement Plan and to be involved in choosing improvement priorities for the year ahead.</li> <li>All parents will be informed of the key priorities contained within the School Improvement Plan. The School Improvement Plan will be placed on the school website, with hard copies available to parents on request.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents will know where to find information about the key aspects of the school's improvement work.</li> </ul>

WHAT	WHO					HOW	WHEN	IMPACT
	ELC	EL&C	S	P	PC			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools will consult parents about the ways they report on pupil progress in learning.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools will develop bespoke approaches to reporting on pupil progress within the parameters of East Lothian Council and National guidance. Parents will be consulted with regard to these approaches. Schools should regularly review these approaches to ensure that parents have the information they need about the progress of their children.</li> <li>Schools will produce reports in Plain English that can be clearly understood by parents.</li> <li>The report should give clear feedback to parents that demonstrates that the teachers know their children well, and pays attention to their children's emotional and social development and their progress in learning.</li> <li>Learners will be meaningfully engaged in this process.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents will feel valued and be meaningfully involved in developing approaches to reporting that meets their needs. Parents will understand the progress their children are making and the information/support they require to be able to support their children's learning.</li> <li>Pupils will have a clear understanding of their strengths and next steps in learning.</li> <li>Pupils will have a clear understanding of the support in place to help them succeed.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parent volunteers will be welcomed to support school activities.</li> </ul>		✓	✓	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents who wish to come into school to help with a wide range of activities will be welcomed and supported by a designated member of staff. Protocols will be developed by schools to support parents working with children as a volunteer.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children's learning and school activities will be enhanced by the contribution of parent volunteers.</li> </ul>



## MEASURE

- East Lothian Council Annual Parental Engagement Consultation
- Websites and other social media
- Education Service Improvement Plan
- Parents Evenings
- Parent Council feedback
- Parent volunteers
- Level of parental engagement in the development of the School Improvement Plan



# ENGAGEMENT IN CHILD'S LEARNING

Parents will be supported and encouraged to become actively engaged in their child's learning both in school and at home.



WHAT	WHO					HOW	WHEN	IMPACT
	ELC	EL&C	S	P	PC			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools will support parental engagement in children's learning.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>East Lothian Council expects that all school staff will demonstrate and understand that parental engagement in children's learning is highly effective in improving a range of outcomes for children; better attendance, behaviour, home learning and overall learning progress. They will also understand that it is a duty of school staff to find meaningful, inclusive and accessible ways to involve and engage parents in their children's learning.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents will be encouraged to be fully engaged in their children's learning at a level with which they are comfortable.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools will explain helpful ways that parents can support learning with clear information about what children are studying and how it can be supported at home.</li> </ul>		✓	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools will help parents to understand that their interest in children's learning can impact on children's progress. They will find ways to help parents understand what their children are learning and how they are being assessed.</li> <li>Parents can be supported to engage with their children's learning, both in and out of school, through information leaflets, use of social media, sharing virtual learning environments, links to online learning materials and, information about outside educational experiences in the community.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents report increased confidence in helping their children to develop and learn.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools and families will work together to plan successful transitions.</li> </ul>		✓	✓	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools will involve parents and pupils in the transition programmes to ensure that the emotional and social needs of children and parents are met and that children's learning is continuous.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families feel supported through transitions to the next stage of schooling.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools will ensure that all parents are aware of transition arrangements.</li> </ul>		✓	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools will communicate the details of transition programmes to all parents including enhanced transition for children with additional support needs.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents of all children including those with additional support needs will feel more confident about their children's wellbeing and learning progress through transitions.</li> </ul>

WHAT	WHO					HOW	WHEN	IMPACT
	ELC	EL&C	S	P	PC			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools will help and encourage parents to support their children and young people through course selection.</li> </ul>			✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff will help and encourage parents to support their children through course selection at all stages. This will include opportunities to consider children's wider interests in life and for both parents and children to have the information they need to make these important decisions. This may be through curriculum evenings, meetings with guidance support, careers evenings or other flexible ways, as requested by parents.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents feel informed and enabled to support their children and young people in their decisions on courses.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor levels of parental engagement with learning provision in all our schools.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information about strengths and development areas in relation to parental engagement in children's learning will be gathered from East Lothian Council Evaluation visits, from Care Inspectorate, Education Scotland Inspections and The East Lothian Council Annual Parental Engagement Consultation. Data will be gathered and analysed at school and council level to inform improvements in parental engagement in learning.</li> <li>East Lothian Council will share good practice of where parental engagement is working well, including with Head Teachers during their Evaluation Visits.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents will be meaningfully involved in East Lothian Council and school level monitoring and evaluation.</li> </ul>



## MEASURE

- East Lothian Council Annual Parental Engagement Consultation
- Feedback from the Parent Council
- Attendance and feedback from Parents Evenings, course choice and transition meetings
- Minutes from The East Lothian Association of Parent Council Members Meetings



# FAMILY LEARNING



Our schools will work with partners to promote, support, and provide Family Learning opportunities, taking into account the varied needs of parents.





WHAT	WHO					HOW	WHEN	IMPACT
	ELC	EL&C	S	P	PC			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families contribute to Family Learning opportunities.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All East Lothian Council groups including schools recognise that ‘a key component of family learning is the negotiated learning between staff and families, taking into account prior learning, family circumstances and aspirations.’ (Family Learning; Education Scotland 2016).</li> <li>East Lothian Council recognises the importance of family learning and will promote this. This can be talking, playing and reading with your children at all stages or more formalised Family Learning opportunities which can be supported by school staff or Community Learning and Development who actively promote/support the curriculum.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families report having a say in shaping the Family Learning opportunities they have been involved in.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools will work with partners to both promote and provide Family Learning opportunities, taking into account the varied needs of parents.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intergenerational opportunities for families to learn together will be created and promoted by a range of partners in collaboration with schools and parents. These partners may include Outdoor Learning, Support from the Start and community groups e.g. First Step, Dad’s Work, Home Start and Area Partnerships. Schools will also consider how they can share resources creatively to increase Family Learning opportunities in their cluster.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families see an improvement in family literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools will encourage the uptake of Adult Literacy and Numeracy classes.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools will aim to build relationships with parents that overcome barriers to parental engagement and raise awareness of provision of support by East Lothian Council for Adult Numeracy and Literacy classes. These relationships will enable parents to feel confident about seeking support to help address any barriers to learning. Schools will enable staff to support each family who “volunteers” into a well matched programme or initiative for their family.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families are matched into the right programme which increases uptake and completion of the programme.</li> </ul>

WHAT	WHO					HOW	WHEN	IMPACT
	ELC	EL&C	S	P	PC			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>East Lothian Council will promote good practice in Family Learning.</li> </ul>	✓		✓		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>East Lothian Council and schools will identify and communicate best practice of local and national Family Learning initiatives through the East Lothian Association of Parent Council Members Meetings, Cluster Head Teacher Meetings and Parent Council Meetings.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>East Lothian Council and other national Family Learning programmes will be celebrated and publicised, which will increase uptake.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>East Lothian Council and schools will build awareness of the factors causing poverty in our communities and how poverty impacts on family wellbeing and children's health and learning outcomes.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The East Lothian Poverty Commission report will be considered by all schools and settings working with parents. The 'Cost of the School Day' will be considered in each school by staff, parents and the Parent Council, supported by community groups to include East Lothian Council Area Partnerships.</li> <li>East Lothian Council will share good practice in schools that improve their understanding of poverty and its impact within East Lothian Council and wider.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poverty, as a significant barrier to family and children's health and wellbeing will be understood. The barriers it causes will be tackled with positive impact on families and children.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>East Lothian Council will provide a range of programmes to support all parents.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The approved programmes can be found in the East Lothian Council Parenting Strategy. These include The Solihull Approach, PEEP, the Incredible Years, Raising children with Confidence, Raising Teens with Confidence, Escape. Availability of these programmes will be advertised through the Parenting Courses quarterly update circulated by Support from the Start.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing numbers of parents taking up a course will indicate the courses are effectively publicised.</li> <li>Parent evaluations of the courses show impact on their confidence in supporting their children.</li> </ul>



## MEASURE

- East Lothian Council Annual Parental Engagement Consultation
- Uptake of Family Learning programmes
- Evaluations from Family Learning programmes



# PARENT COUNCILS

East Lothian Council and our schools will continue to promote the role and function of the Parent Council and will put in place support and training to enable the office bearers to carry out their roles effectively. All parents will be encouraged and supported to become involved in the Parent Council to ensure a wide variety of views are represented.



WHAT	WHO					HOW	WHEN	IMPACT
	ELC	EL&C	S	P	PC			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>East Lothian Council will continue to support Parent Councils, and in particular the Chair of the Parent Council, as well as the Head Teacher in their role as Adviser to the Parent Council.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓		✓	<p>Through the Parental Involvement Officer by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>delivering training to support new office bearers to carry out their role effectively.</li> <li>attending Parent Council meetings, on request, to brief new members on the role and remit of the Parent Council.</li> <li>offering an annual training programme to support all members of the Parent Council to carry out their role effectively and ensure all training materials are available digitally to support parents who are unable to attend training sessions.</li> <li>meeting with the full Parent Council when there is a Head Teacher vacancy to outline the recruitment and selection process and in particular focus on the parental involvement aspect of the campaign.</li> <li>providing Recruitment and Selection Training for parents specifically for Head Teacher and Depute Head Teacher appointments.</li> <li>providing a venue for Parent Councils to hold their meetings.</li> <li>paying for the services of a Clerk to support the Parent Council.</li> <li>providing an annual budget allocation to support the work of the Parent Council.</li> <li>paying for a group membership to the Scottish Parent Teacher Council which includes public liability insurance.</li> <li>distributing key information at both a local and national level from the Scottish Government; Education Scotland; National Parent Forum of Scotland, and Scottish Parent Teacher Council.</li> <li>consulting with Parent Councils through the establishment of the East Lothian Association of Parent Council Members Meetings.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive partnership working with increased parental engagement.</li> </ul>



WHAT	WHO					HOW	WHEN	IMPACT
	ELC	EL&C	S	P	PC			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents are trained to recruit Senior School Managers.</li> </ul>	✓		✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>East Lothian Council will continue to ensure that parents play a crucial role in the recruitment of Head Teacher and Depute Head Teacher posts.</li> <li>Parents and Parent Councils will be fully briefed and understand their role in the appointment of Head Teacher and Depute Head Teacher posts.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents are directly involved in the decision making process for choosing the leaders in their children's school.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training is provided for parents to participate fully in school inspections.</li> </ul>	✓			✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>East Lothian Council will offer training for parents who may be involved in school self-evaluation and school improvement processes. East Lothian Council will offer training for parents who may be involved in school inspections.</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents will feel more confident to play a key role in the inspection process.</li> </ul>



## MEASURE

- East Lothian Council Annual Parental Engagement Consultation
- Effective participation in the Recruitment and Selection process
- Effective participation in the School Inspection process
- Evaluation from Parent Council training sessions
- Attendance and participation at The East Lothian Association of Parent Council Members Meetings

# COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES



Parents can be confident that any complaints will be acted upon in an effective and timely manner.



WHAT	WHO					HOW	WHEN	IMPACT
	ELC	EL&C	S	P	PC			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complaints Procedure.</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	<p>East Lothian Council and schools take parental concerns seriously:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Full version:</b> [full version of ELC Complaints Procedure]</li> <li><b>Customer version:</b> [customer version of ELC Complaints Procedure]</li> <li><b>Care Inspectorate</b></li> <li><b>Complaints Procedure:</b> [complaints procedure of The Care Inspectorate]</li> </ul>	August 2017 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents will feel confident that their concerns/complaints are being dealt with effectively.</li> </ul>



## MEASURE

- Analysis and level of complaints
- Feedback

**NOTES**







# REFERENCES AND USEFUL ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **National Improvement Framework 2017**  
<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0051/00511513.pdf>
- **Scottish Schools[ Parental Involvement ]Act 2006**  
[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2006/8/pdfs/asp\\_20060008\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2006/8/pdfs/asp_20060008_en.pdf)
- **Parental involvement to parental engagement: a Continuum**  
*[Janet Goodall and Caroline Montgomery]*  
<http://learningfoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Parental-involvement-to-parental-engagement-a-continuum.pdf>
- **Engaging parents and families: A toolkit for Practitioners**  
<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Pages/par2engagingparentstoolkit.aspx>
- **How Good is our School – 4th Edition [HGIOS4]**  
[https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/Frameworks\\_SelfEvaluation/FRWK2\\_NIHeditHGIOS/FRWK2\\_HGIOS4.pdf](https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/Frameworks_SelfEvaluation/FRWK2_NIHeditHGIOS/FRWK2_HGIOS4.pdf)
- **East Lothian Area Partnerships**  
[http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/200521/area\\_partnerships](http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/200521/area_partnerships)
- **East Lothian Council**  
<http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/ParentCouncils>

