



Parentkind

WALES MANIFESTO 2021

As a national charity, Parentkind give those with a parenting role a voice in education. We invest substantial resources to represent parent views on their child's learning to education agencies, local authorities and governments because evidence tells us parental participation in education benefits all children in all schools and society as a whole. As the largest network of PTA fundraisers in the UK, we bring specialist support and advice to parent volunteers so that every school can benefit from a successful PTA. Our 13,000 PTA members raise over £120+ million per year, placing us alongside some of the largest charities in the UK.

Parental participation has the potential to make a huge contribution to a child's educational experience and attainment yet it often remains one of the most under-used resources in the education system.

However, it doesn't have to be this way.

We have a vision of a future where parents are both fully engaged and seen as essential partners in the success of a child's education. A future where homes and schools work together for the good of all children and society as a whole. A future where the partnership between the two is positive and considered open.

Parentkind champions this vital role parents have as partners in the education of their child aiming to secure support among politicians and stakeholder audiences who share our vision. In this manifesto we call on them to ensure every parent in Wales has a clear and transparent structure to engage with their child's education.

We have identified four key areas that we are asking politicians to put on the agenda for delivery in education by the next Welsh Government.

A representative parent body to be present in every school in Wales

Parentkind asks for a representative parent body to be present in every school with key stakeholders acknowledging the value of, and endorsing the requirement for, every school in Wales to have a parent body such as a PTA, Parent Support Group or Parent Council with a view to making this a statutory requirement if they are not established voluntarily.

When asking parents how likely they would be to get involved with any of these groups in our 2020 Annual Parent Survey, we found similar levels of interest between PTA and lesser known groups.

47%

WERE LIKELY TO ENGAGE WITH BOTH THE PTA OR A PARENT COUNCIL

43%

WERE LIKELY TO GET INVOLVED IN A PARENT ACTION GROUP¹

When asked about their barriers to participation over a quarter say they haven't been asked with 29% telling us they don't know what skills they can offer. The top three responses² were:

I DON'T HAVE TIME

45%



I DON'T KNOW WHAT SKILLS I CAN OFFER

29%



I HAVEN'T BEEN ASKED

27%



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Train teachers in Wales how to successfully work with parents as partners in their children's education

Teacher training and Continuing Professional Development must include meaningful training in why and how to engage with parents for the benefit of the children. Many teachers are thrust into parental interactions without understanding why they are worthwhile and how to get the most for the child through the relationship. Let's invest in our teachers to build a partnership approach with our parents.



³ PTA UK, 2017 – Teacher Survey

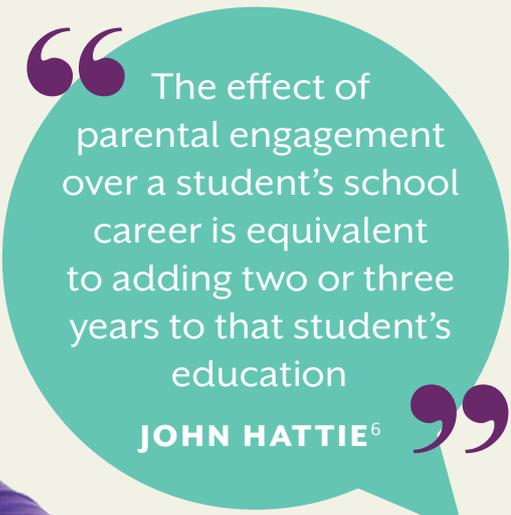
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Include parental engagement in the inspection and assessment criteria of our schools by Estyn

*The measure of a school's success must evidence how parent voice and engagement are at the core rather than the fringe. Our education system needs to be assessed on how it is working with parents as partners. Simply put, when schools are inspected, parental engagement must form a core of Estyn's common framework. Parentkind's **Blueprint⁴ for Parent-Friendly Schools** is a tool for building a more rigorous way to analyse and ultimately support Wales' schools to become outstanding globally in education.*



**ONLY
2%
OF TEACHERS BELIEVE
PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT
HAS NO IMPACT ON
THEIR SCHOOL⁵**



“ The effect of parental engagement over a student's school career is equivalent to adding two or three years to that student's education ”
JOHN HATTIE⁶



⁴ Parentkind Blueprint
⁵ PTA UK, 2017 – Teacher Survey
⁶ Hattie, J., 2008 – Visible Learning: A Synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement (Routledge)

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Give parents a seat at the table when decisions are taken about our schools at a local, regional and national level recognising parents as partners in education

Parents are increasingly demanding a say in how decisions are made, but what must be clear is how they can have this say beyond their own school. We ask the next Welsh Government to work with Parentkind to create an inclusive path for parents to have a seat at the decision making tables - in their communities, councils, consortia, and in Cathays Park. Parents are essential stakeholders as policy is developed for their children's education.



86%

of parents want to
PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE
in my child's education⁷

75%

of parents want a
say in their child's
education at
**SCHOOL
LEVEL**

59%

OF PARENTS WANT A SAY IN
THEIR CHILD'S EDUCATION AT
GOVERNMENT LEVEL

55%

of parents want a say in their child's
education at **LOCAL AUTHORITY LEVEL**⁸

⁷ Parentkind 2020, Annual Parent Survey
⁸ Parentkind 2020, Annual Parent Survey

Championing Parent Voice

Our Parentkind journey started in 1956 by a group of pioneer parents who were passionate about parent involvement in their child's learning but felt that they needed a voice at national as well as local level. Therefore, from PTAs on the ground forming regional federations, the National Association of PTAs was born.

Nicholas Gillet was the first chair of NCPTA, as it was then called, and his vision was that parents should not only have a local role and a voice in their child's school but also at a national level in education policy.

Today, family life is very different to 65 years ago and so is the education system. We have many different types of family structures and circumstances (nuclear families, single parents, or two working parents), much more disparate community support and a multitude of care arrangements for children around school. However, the vision remains the same; parents should not only have a local role and a voice in their child's school but also at a national level in education policy.

Parentkind continues to build on our reputation as an evidence-based organisation that advocates on behalf of parents to influence education policy at national and local levels. We build up research data by conducting a range of surveys and respond to consultation opportunities, offering policymakers a broad perspective of what parents think when it comes to education with evidence of representative parent voice⁹.

We want to share this parent voice with policy and decision-makers in education and invite them to engage with Parentkind to hear views of parents to understand the impact of education policy on them and their children.

Parentkind recognises the breadth, depth and diversity of Wales' schools and the changing picture of how they shape our future generations. No one-size-fits-all approach will work. Let us invest in developing sustainable models for parent voice and engagement that can meet schools where they're at and adapt towards excellence.

⁹Parentkind Policy and Research



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