

Devolved School Management - DSM

What Parent Councils need to know

Purpose of DSM

DSM empowers headteachers to make decisions about school budgets and resources to best meet local needs and outcomes for children and young people. It supports national priorities like:

- Curriculum for Excellence
- Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)
- Developing the Young Workforce (DYW)
- Early Years Framework

Parent Council involvement in DSM

Parent Councils are vital partners and key stakeholders in school decision-making, ensuring parental voices are heard. Under DSM:

- Headteachers **must** update Parent Councils on their school's budget throughout the year.
- Parent Councils are **consulted** on school resources and priorities.
- Collaboration is **encouraged** between headteachers, staff, parents and the community.

Key principles of DSM

- 1. Subsidiary and Empowerment:** Headteachers have flexibility to manage budgets locally.
- 2. Collaboration:** Partners work together, focusing on children and young people's interests.
- 3. Accountability and Responsibility:** Headteachers and the council are responsible for budget decisions and outcomes.
- 4. Clarity and Equity:** Budget decisions should be clear, fair and accessible to stakeholders.

How DSM works in practice

DSM aims to enhance the quality of education through informed decision-making and effective use of available resources to support learning and teaching by those closest to learners, e.g. headteachers.

- Headteachers have flexibility in making decisions about and addressing priorities.
- Consultation is a key element in the process of devolved decision-making.
- Some areas of expenditure remain with Fife Council.
- Headteachers have overall responsibility for financial decisions at a local level.
- Business managers will support headteachers by providing financial management and guidance.

Training and support

- Headteachers receive DSM training and mentoring.
- Parent Councils can get more information and advice via school websites, Fife Council website, and the council's Education Directorate.
- Full **DSM Guidelines 2025** are on the Fife Council website.

Why this matters to you as a Parent Council

Your involvement helps ensure:

- **Fair and efficient use of resources**
- **Transparency in spending**
- **Better outcomes for learners**
- **Community voice in school decisions**