

Parental Engagement Toolkit

Key Messages

It's not just about getting parents through the door

Use 'soft' approaches to encourage engagement

Support parents to support their children

Keep it simple and practical

Find out any barriers that parents have

Remember that some parents will themselves struggle to understand

Not all school experiences for parents will have been positive

Be sensitive and empathetic to circumstance

Don't forget dads & grandparents

Combine a universal, targeted & personalised offer

Adopt an open door policy for parents

Ensure parents know their views matter

Parents taking an interest in their child's learning is key

Evidence base and rationale for PPG spending

The EEF evaluates the impact of parental involvement on the outcomes of pupils as:

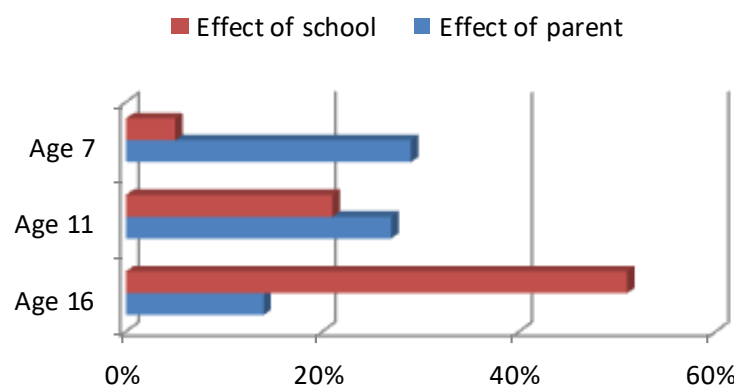


Moderate impact for moderate cost, based on moderate evidence

They outline that there is a well established association between parental involvement and academic success however evaluation of approaches to improve learning through parental involvement is relatively limited and what is available is predominantly focused on primary and the early years, with impact studies tending to focus on reading and maths.

However, other research from sources such as Desforges & Aboucher (2003), Goodall et al (2011), Goodman & Clegg (2010), Harris & Goodall (2007), OECD (2012) and Sylva et al (2004) suggests that: progress is better for children who's parents take an active interest; improvements gained from parental involvement tend to be permanent; parental commitment to a child's learning supersedes socio-economic status; high parental aspirations correlate to better performance at school; white parents tend to be less involved than those from BME communities; mothers tend to be more involved than fathers; schools can make a difference and raise levels of parental engagement.

The proportion in variance in attainment explained by parent and school effects (Sacker et al: 2002)



Some important questions to consider ...



- Have we considered the available research about what works?
- What do we know about local needs and circumstances?
- How well do we know our parents from available data?
- Is our approach to parental engagement sustainable?
- What are the barriers preventing parents from engaging?
- Do we need to provide CPD to staff on engaging parents?
- How committed are our staff and SLT to our strategy?
- How do we demonstrate we value parental opinion?
- How effective is our communication with parents?
- Do we provide advice/support to promote positive parenting?
- How effective are our multi-agency partnerships?
- Is our school a welcoming environment for parents?
- Do we prioritise parental engagement in their child's learning?

Acknowledgments/Further Reading:

- [Teacher Guide: Parental Engagement and Narrowing the Gap in Attainment for Disadvantaged Children](#), Helen Aston & Hilary Grayson, NFER
- [The Pupil Premium: Making it work in your school](#), Oxford School Improvement
- [Parental Engagement: How to make a real difference](#), Oxford School Improvement
- [Parental Involvement](#), EEF Teaching & Learning Toolkit
- [Closing the achievement gap: the critical importance of parental engagement](#), Di Hatchett (blog)
- [Pupil Premium Challenges: Supporting the most vulnerable children](#), Helen Frostrick
- [An Updated Practical Guide to the Pupil Premium](#), Marc Rowland, John Catt

What works?

A review of the available evidence on parental engagement undertaken in 2011 by the NFER and the DfE found that:

- a combined approach focusing on both academic outcomes and parenting skills is more effective than addressing either in isolation
- there is a statistical association between children's levels of achievement and parental promotion of reading and learning, parental interactions with their children and disciplinary practices
- support and training for parents, for example in managing behaviour, can increase their confidence and have a knock-on effect on the child's learning
- supporting the development of the home-learning environment can increase parental confidence in supporting children's literacy



TOP IDEA



Establish a game, toy or book lending library. Include both adult and children's books, issue all parents with a library card and invite them to use the library. Hold after-school events where parents and their children can play games and read together.



TOP IDEA



Invite your Disadvantage Champion along to pre-school home visits to build up 'special relationships' with families who may need additional support and may feel more comfortable discussing their needs within the familiarity of their own home.



TOP IDEA



At the start of the academic year invite disadvantaged parents & pupils to a meeting. Provide a small bursary (£50-100) for the purchase of a resource which will specifically benefit the learning of the child and help to overcome their barriers to learning. Ideas could include range from computer software or equipment to ingredients for cooking lessons.



TOP IDEA



Develop a Saturday morning 'Fantasy Football' club. Parents and children work with professional coaches to develop skills and take part in learning opportunities such as kit/logo design using ICT/art resources and literacy skills through researching/writing about players.



TOP IDEA



Establish relationships with parents before children even start school by inviting them to teddy bears picnics, the school fair, stay and play sessions, time in the playground and other school events such as the end of year concert

Parental Engagement Toolkit

Oxford School Improvement: *Parental Engagement—How to Make a Real Difference*

Summarised below are the suggestions made as part of Oxford School Improvement service's work on engaging parents. They have been augmented with other ideas, either from within the ER or beyond, to support schools in their work to improve communication with and engagement of parents. It is intended that the information below is considered as a step by step approach and as such could be used as the basis of addressing the barrier to learning of parental engagement as part of a multi-year PP strategy.

