



Carlyle 
Infant & Nursery School

Our approach to Parental Engagement



Research and Evidence

The evidence suggests that there are three areas particularly worth focusing on

- supporting parents to have high academic expectations for their children;
- developing and maintaining communication with parents about school activities and schoolwork
- promoting the development of reading habits

The evidence available also suggests that delivering parental engagement initiatives effectively can be challenging, partly due to demands made on parents' time.

**WORKING WITH PARENTS TO
SUPPORT CHILDREN'S LEARNING**
Guidance Report



WORKING WITH PARENTS TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S LEARNING

Summary of recommendations

1

Critically review how
you work with parents

Schools should be optimistic about the potential of
working with parents

- There is an established link between the home learning environment at all ages and children's performance at school.
- Schools and parents have a shared priority to deliver the best outcomes for their children.

However, evidence on effective strategies that schools can
use to engage parents in their children's learning is mixed

- If the aim is solely to improve academic outcomes, classroom interventions working directly with children currently have more evidence of effectiveness at improving learning than parenting interventions with the same aim.
- Working effectively with parents can be challenging, and is likely to require sustained effort and support.
- Most schools say that they do not have an explicit plan for how they work with parents, and fewer than 10% of teachers have undertaken CPD on parental engagement.

Schools should start by critically reviewing their aims and
current approaches

- Focus on areas that have better evidence such as those summarised opposite – different approaches are needed for different ages.
- Talk to parents who are less involved about what support they would find helpful.
- Plan and monitor to progress towards defined aims.

2

Provide practical strategies
to support learning at home



- For young children, promoting shared book reading should be a central component of any parental engagement approach. Home learning activities, such as playing with letters and numbers, are also linked to improved outcomes.
- Tips, support, and resources can make home activities more effective—for example, where they prompt longer and more frequent conversations during book reading.
- Book-gifting alone is unlikely to be effective, but carefully selected books plus advice and support can be beneficial for supporting reading.
- Support parents to create a regular routine and encourage good homework habits, but be cautious about promoting direct parental assistance with homework (particularly for older children).
- Parents can support their children by encouraging them to set goals, plan, and manage their time, effort, and emotions. This type of support can help children to regulate their own learning and will often be more valuable than direct help with homework tasks.
- Consider initiatives to encourage summer reading; these have some promise but are not widely used at present.

3

Tailor school communications
to encourage positive dialogue
about learning



- Well-designed school communications can be effective for improving attainment and a range of other outcomes, such as attendance.
- Examples include weekly texts sent from school to parents, and short, timely letters.
- Impacts from such approaches may appear small but they are generally low cost, and straightforward to introduce.
- Messages are likely to be more effective if they are personalised, linked to learning, and promote positive interactions by, for example, celebrating success.
- Communication should be two-way: consulting with parents about how they can be involved is likely to be valuable and increase the effectiveness of home-school relationships. Currently around half of parents say that they have not been consulted.
- School communications may be particularly important for engaging some parents who could play an important role but may have less contact with school.

4

Offer more sustained and
intensive support where needed



- Start by assessing needs and talking to parents about what would help them support learning; targeting is likely to be needed to use resources effectively and avoid widening gaps.
- Communicate carefully to avoid stigmatising, blaming, or discouraging parents. Focus on building parents' efficacy—that they are equal partners and can make a difference.
- Encourage a consistent approach to behaviour between parents and the school, for example, by sharing expectations with parents.
- Offering more structured, evidence-based programmes can help to develop positive behaviour and consistency where needs are greater.
- Plan carefully for group-based parenting initiatives (such as regular workshops). A convenient time and location, face-to-face recruitment, trusting relationships, and an informal, welcoming environment are the most important factors for parents to attend group sessions.
- Consider offering regular home visits for younger children with greater needs. This can be an effective approach for parents that struggle to attend meetings, and for building relationships.

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PREPARING FOR LITERACY

Improving communication, language
and literacy in the early years

1 Prioritise the development of communication and language  Language provides the foundation of thinking and learning and should be prioritised. High quality adult-child interactions are important and sometimes described as talking with children rather than just talking to children. Adults have a vital role to play in modelling effective language and communication. Use a wide range of approaches including shared reading, storytelling, and explicitly extending children's vocabulary.	2 Develop children's early reading using a balanced approach  Early reading requires the development of a broad range of capabilities. Using a number of different approaches will be more effective than focusing on any single aspect of early reading. Promising approaches to develop early reading include storybook activities to develop letter and sound knowledge, and singing and rhyming activities to develop phonological awareness. Prior to the introduction of systematic phonics teaching, activities to develop children's phonological awareness and interest in sounds are likely to be beneficial.	3 Develop children's creativity and motivation to write  Writing is physically and intellectually demanding. Expressive language underpins writing and should be prioritised. Provide a wide range of opportunities to communicate through writing and develop children's motivation to write. Support children to develop the foundations of a fast, accurate, and efficient handwriting style. Monitor the product and process of children's handwriting and provide additional support as necessary.	4 Embed opportunities to develop self-regulation  'Self-regulation' refers to children's ability to manage their own behaviour and aspects of their learning. A number of approaches to developing self-regulation exist, including the 'Plan-Do-Review' cycle. Limited opportunities to develop self-regulation within day-to-day activities. Monitor the development of children's self-regulation and ensure activities remain suitably challenging.	5 Support parents to understand how to help their children learn  Effective parental engagement is challenging but has the potential to improve children's communication, language, and literacy. Promising strategies include: - encouraging parents to read to children before they can read, then to begin reading with children as soon as they can - running workshops showing parents how to read and talk about books with their children effectively Less promising strategies include occasional home visits or homework tasks.	6 Use high quality assessment to ensure all children make good progress  Ensure clarity of purpose about the different assessments used in your setting. Collect a small amount of high quality information to ensure that: - children who are struggling receive the right type of support, and - time is used efficiently by avoiding reteaching skills or content that children already know well. Use assessments to inform, not replace, professional judgement. Monitor children's sensory needs to ensure they do not impede learning. Avoid using assessments to label children and split them into fixed groups.	7 Use high quality targeted support to help struggling children  High quality targeted support can ensure that children being behind catch up as quickly as possible. Small-group support is more likely to be effective when: - children with the greatest needs are supported by the most capable adults - adults have been trained to deliver the activity being used, and - the approach is evidence-based and has been evaluated elsewhere. In addition to using evidence-based programmes, some specialised services are likely to be best delivered by other professionals, such as speech and language therapists.
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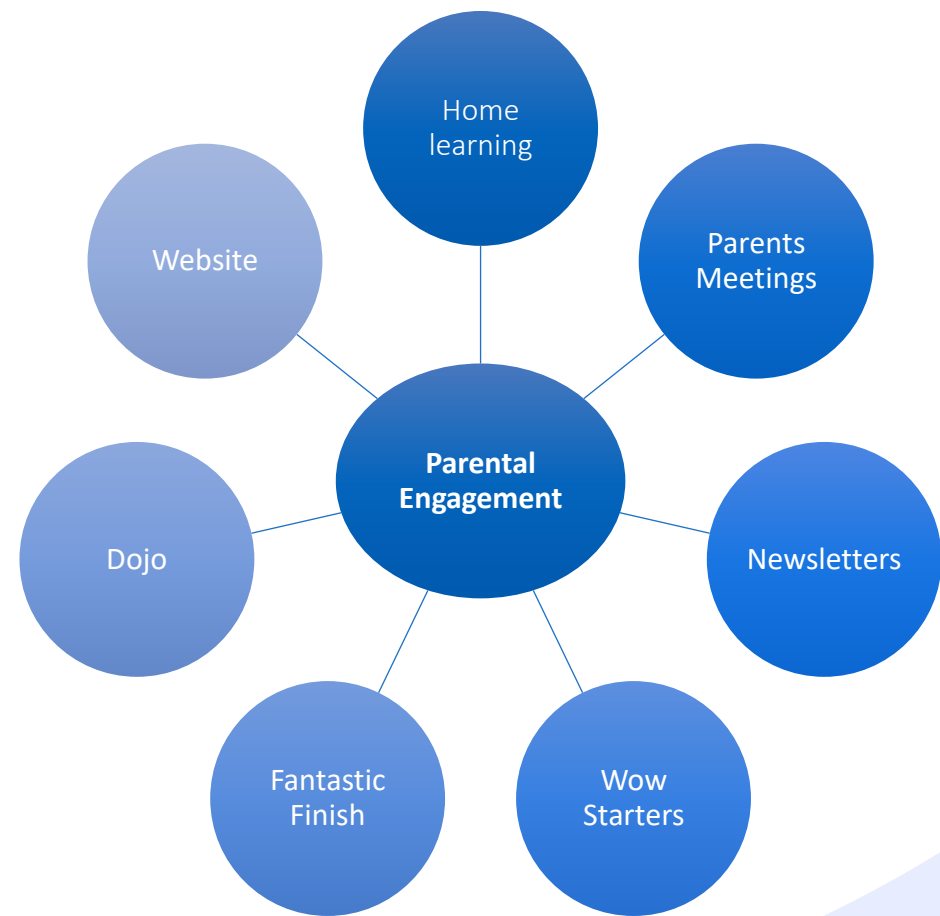
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There is a clear difference between parental involvement where we are building trust, relationships, addressing attendance and safeguarding and parental engagement where our intended aim is to improve children's outcomes.



Whole School

Autumn

- Coffee Morning
- Home Learning Packs
- Parents Evening
- Class Assembly
- Harvest Collections
- Global Schools Day

- Nativity Performances
- Winter Disco
- 'Time to Shine'

Spring

- Coffee Morning
- Parents Evening
- Book Fair (world book week!)
- 'Time to Shine'

- Class Assembly
- Parent Survey
- Parent Forum
- Easter Fundraising

Summer

- Coffee Morning
- 'Time to Shine'
- Class Assembly
- Littleover Goes Green

- Sports Day
- EoY Report
- Transition meetings
- Summer Fair



EYFS



Autumn

- Welcome meetings
- Harvest Festival
- Fantastic finish- Nursery Rhymes
- Local Area Walk

- Phonics in Action! Workshop
- PSED workshop (N)
- Nativity performance
- Reading in Action! Workshop
- People who Help us- parent visitors

Spring

- Maths in Action! Workshop
- C&L Workshop (N)
- PD workshop (N)
- DT in Action- Beanstalks

- Easter bonnet parade
- Fantastic Finish- Clay models and Fruit kebabs
- Writing in Action! Workshop

Summer

- DT in action (Nursery- Vehicles)
- Extra Curricular Trip volunteers
- Fantastic Finish- Bee homes and Moon picnic
- Nursery experience/trip

- Forest School in Action!
- Home visits
- Transition meetings

KS1



Autumn

- Phonics in Action! Workshop
- Fantastic Finish- Local walk
- Christmas Nativity
- Carol concert
- Forest School

Spring

- Breakfast with a book
- Reading in Action! Workshop
- D&T in Action! (Castles Y1 / Moon buggies Y2)
- Extra curricular trip volunteers
- Forest School
- PSC Information session
- Maths in Action Workshop

Summer

- Transition Meetings and 'Meet the Teacher'
- Extra curricular trip volunteers
- Toilet Twinning
- Forest School
- Leavers Parade
- End of year performance

Communication

Gate Duty

Half Termly Newsletters

Class Pages on Dojo

Website

Events and Workshops

Parents Meetings

Home learning

Homework has a number of potential benefits including consolidation of what has been learned in lessons, preparation for subsequent lessons, and the development of independent learning skills. Furthermore, most importantly, it encourages conversations and activities between children and their families, promoting communication and language.

The evidence is strongest for short and focused homework projects where learning is tightly tied to main class teaching and children receive feedback.

In EYFS, any home learning opportunities focus on supporting children's oral language development and Early Literacy skills.

Shared Reading is important in EYFS and parents can support their children by reading stories together and asking questions..

Teachers use ORIM o plan other home learning activities:

Opportunities

Parents and carers make the experiences of everyday life into learning opportunities, through the ways in which they interact with their child.

Recognition

When parents and carers show that they recognise and value their child's achievements and effort.

Interaction

When parents and carers support their child's development by interacting with them in a variety of ways including listening, talking, sharing, etc.

Modelling

Through modelling by parents and carers, children can absorb behaviours, attitudes towards learning, and how to interact with others.

