

Working with parents to support children's learning - EEF Guidance Report⁺ 'At A Glance'

Recommendations

1

Critically review how you work with parents

Schools should be optimistic about potential of working with parents, start by critically reviewing aims and current approaches and be aware that evidence for effective strategies, that can be used to engage parents in their children's learning, is mixed.

2

Provide practical strategies to support learning at home

Promotion and support for **shared book reading** should be a central component along with positive messaging about the value of **home learning activities** with letters and numbers, the creation of **regular routines to encourage good homework habits**, helping children to **set goals, plan and manage their time, effort and emotions** in order to help **children regulate their own learning**.

3

Tailor school communications to encourage positive dialogue about learning

Timely, regular, personalised, well-designed messages which are linked to learning and promote positive interactions (eg celebrating success) are likely to be more effective. Set out to ensure that **communication is two-way** and include **consulting with parents about how they can be involved**.

4

Offer more sustained and intensive support where needed

Start by **assessing needs** and finding out what would help parents support learning. **Communicate carefully** to build parents' efficacy and avoid stigmatising/widening gaps. **Trusting relationships, accessibility & welcoming environments** are important esp. when planning group-based activities.



Resources from the EEF guidance report:

- single page pdf [summary of recommendations](#)
- comprehensive, actionable evidence informed guidance in the [full guidance report](#)

Complementary EEF guidance reports include:

- [a school's guide to implementation](#)
- [metacognition and self-regulated learning](#)
- [using digital technology to improve learning](#)
- [literacy guidance – EY to KS3](#)

Useful books on the subject:

- *Narrowing the achievement gap: parental engagement with children's learning* by Janet Goodall
- *Do Parents Know They Matter?: Raising achievement through parental engagement* by Alma Harris
- *Engaging Parents 100 Ideas for Primary Teachers* by Janet Goodall and Kathy Weston

Further reading

- Behaviour Insights Team (['EAST'](#) and ['Behavioural Insights for Education'](#))
- Sutton Trust (['Parental Engagement Fund'](#) & [paper](#))
- DfE (['Review of best practice in parental engagement – Goodall and Vorhaus'](#))
- Goodall & Montgomery (['Parental involvement to parental engagement: a continuum'](#))
- Professor Charles Desforges with Alberto Abouchaar (['The Impact of Parental Involvement, Parental Support and Family Education on Pupil Achievements and Adjustment: A Literature Review'](#))
- Centre for Research on Families & Relationships (['Can we put the 'poverty of aspiration' myth to bed now?'](#))
- Research School blogs (['Helping parents to help our students'](#), ['Parental engagement'](#))
- National Literacy Trust (['Encouraging reading'](#))
- [Parental Engagement Network](#)
- [Engaging Parents Toolkit](#)—University Of Bath



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