

Engaging parents

This audit tool provides a useful reflection opportunity for schools. It is based on findings from the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) and a Department for Education review of parental engagement (Goodall et.al., 2011).

A whole school approach

	What does this look like?	What difference does it make?	Where's the evidence?
An ethos that says all families are reachable			
All staff on board			
Staff confident to engage with all parents from different backgrounds			
All parents feel their input is valued			
All parents feel that the school is a welcoming place			
Parents' views are regularly sought in a variety of ways			

Communication

	What does this look like?	What difference does it make?	Where's the evidence?
Parents have clear, specific and targeted information			
ICT gives parents access to information in a range of ways			
Expectations of parents are clear			
A variety of approaches is used to engage parents including home visits, neutral, unthreatening locations			
Parents' views are routinely sought when planning individual support plans for vulnerable pupils, including disadvantaged pupils			

Maximising choice, minimising barriers

	What does this look like?	What difference does it make?	Where's the evidence?
Parental engagement activities are organised to take account of logistical barriers faced by parents			
Some services are universal to reduce stigmatisation			
Parents have opportunities to choose ways in which they engage with school – e.g. volunteering, attending workshops, etc			

Support for positive parenting

	What does this look like?	What difference does it make?	Where's the evidence?
We work with parents to form positive ways of managing behaviour e.g. using the Incredible Years (IY) behaviour and relationships programme			
We work with other agencies to reach the most vulnerable families to ensure children			

attend school and are ready to learn			
Early identification and support systems are in place			

What next?

Use the information here to support your planning

Define the successes and challenges – be explicit about what you want/need to achieve

Decide what data you need to collect to measure the impact of the strategy. This could be performance information or satisfaction, engagement surveys, etc

Keep regularly reflecting on the impact of the strategy and refine as needed -

Evaluate the overall impact using your agreed measures and decide whether to continue or whether this can be improved in any way