

Parents play a crucial role in supporting their children's learning, and levels of parental engagement are consistently associated with children's academic outcomes. This is never truer than when a child is struggling with an aspect of school, the curriculum or their learning.

Here are our expert top ten communication tips for **TEACHERS...**

1 Be honest



To achieve the best outcome for the learner you will need a level of partnership with their parents. If you gloss over your concerns or say everything is fine when it's not then this partnership will fail.

2 Be timely

If you have a concern don't wait until parents evening to address it. Contact the parent at the first opportunity.



3 Make it easy to communicate

Ensure that all communications are accessible, how easy is it to navigate your website or to get past the receptionist to contact you on the phone?

Avoid confusing jargon, abbreviations and acronyms wherever possible.

Be aware of reading levels of written text. Dyslexia is often hereditary.

4 Ask for help

Actively seek parents' expertise and ask them what works, what they are doing at home and how you can reinforce this at school.

5 Listen

Listen to a parent's perspective without being dismissive, their insight and/or concerns could help in creating support strategies.



6 Who's got the power?

Consider the power-relations when meeting face-to-face. Ask parents how they would like to be addressed and stick to it, if in doubt use their surname.



7 Structure your conversation

Consider using a structured conversation, for example, a meeting notes template which begins by looking at what is working well and subsequently what areas could be improved.

8 Encourage parents

Encourage parents to offer a balanced degree of support for homework. Make it clear how much time you expect to be spent on school-work at home and ask parents to indicate times in the margin of homework rather than asking them to ensure a task is completed.

9 Share with parents

Provide parents with detailed information of particular approaches and appropriate resources which can be used to support home learning.



10 Value parents

Try to make a specific suggestion about how you would like to see your concern resolved. Going into a discussion with a constructive suggestion rather than a complaint can be helpful.

