

Parental Engagement and Support for Schools and Early Years Settings



Improving the life chances of children and young people by informing, empowering and supporting parents and carers of children from birth – 19 years (25 years for young people with disabilities).

The Parent and Family Support Service

This booklet outlines the services which schools, settings and community organisations can access through the Tower Hamlets Parent and Family Support Service (PFSS) at Tower Hamlets Council.

Teams and services within the PFSS

- Parental Engagement in Children's Learning and Development
- Parenting Support
- Parents Advice Centre
- Holiday Childcare
- Family Information Service
- Parent and Carer Council
- Dads' Network

Services are designed and delivered in partnership with parents and carers and all teams have strong multi-agency links with schools, early years, social care, health and the voluntary sector.

To find out more about our services please visit:
www.pfsupport.co.uk

For further information about the Parent and Family Support Service contact:

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The Parental Engagement Team

There is a long history in Tower Hamlets of parental engagement in children's learning and development. Our approach is based upon strong evidence that when parents and carers have a good relationship with their child's school / setting and are involved in their child's learning and development, life chances and outcomes for children and young people are improved.

The Parental Engagement Team provide an expert advisory, staff training and parent / carer focused service which supports the development of a whole school / setting approach to effective communication and engagement with families.

The focus of the work is negotiated with leadership teams and based on individual needs and priorities. All work is reviewed on a regular basis.

Areas of work might include:

- Practice and policy review and evidencing the impact of partnership with parents and families
- Mentoring and support, supervision and co-facilitation for staff working with parents and families
- Training for whole staff teams and governing bodies
- Pre and post Ofsted support for reporting and consultation with parents (includes Ofsted Parent View)
- Focused guidance and support to identify and engage new and marginalised groups
- Developing a 'father friendly' school
- Best practice guidance, model policies and supporting resources / materials



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The Parental Engagement Team

In addition schools and settings can purchase experienced practitioner time to work directly with parents, particularly targeting those who might find working with schools and early years settings difficult. Support can be negotiated in half day or whole day units of time, termly or by annual arrangement.

Areas of work might include:

- Outreach, home-visiting and targeted work with vulnerable, 'hard to reach' or resistant / reluctant parents
- Engaging parents in children's development, learning and the curriculum
- Parenting support promoting protective factors associated with positive parenting
- Multi-agency work and support for assessment (CAF)
- Supporting parents at key points of transition / transfer and change
- Focused sessions and support for marginalised groups, new arrivals and mid-term admissions
- Engaging parents in consultation, school policy and governance
- Supporting and empowering parents to take steps towards learning, training and employment
- Facilitation of coffee mornings / information sessions
- Coordinating parent forum / council activities

Parental Engagement and Family Programme

Our experienced practitioners offer a specialist and flexible early help and prevention service within a multi-agency context.

We offer targeted support and inclusive workshops, courses, parenting programmes and information sessions which have been developed in response to the challenges parents face as their children grow.

Our programmes aim to increase parent confidence and knowledge, help raise attainment, improve behaviour and attendance and increase parent aspirations for their children, family and wider community.

Our programmes support requirements within the Ofsted framework, Ofsted Parent View and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

Supporting Children’s Learning and Development

Engaging parents with school / setting life, their children’s development, learning and the curriculum has a direct impact on a child’s academic achievement and family aspirations. Programmes include:

Get Counting!	Introducing parents to a beadstring to support numeracy activities at home. Sessions are fun and interactive with weekly ‘take-home’ activities
Maths for Dads	For KS1 or KS2 Focusing on mental and written calculations with ‘take-home’ games to use with their children. This course can support the development of targeted work with dads and male carers
Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL)	For EYFS and KS1 Introducing parents to the SEAL themes ‘Good to Be Me’ and ‘Going for Goals’ and supporting parents to explore issues relating to confidence, aspirations and wellbeing in their children
Toddlers and Technology	A practical session for parents of children under 5 which explores the impact of technology on parent /child interaction and how technology can be used to support children’s learning and development
Understanding Your Child’s Online World	Practical information session which offers tips on the safe use of mobile devices and raises awareness of technology and child development, cyber-bullying and social networking. The programme is available for parents of children in the following age groups: 6 – 11 years and 12 – 14 years
Reading Together	For KS1 Focusing on the impact of parents and children reading together, using a key book and exploring reading strategies, retelling stories, making their own version, using storyprops and storyboxes. Making reading fun, even for reluctant readers
Storytelling	For EYFS or KS1 Making stories come to life with storyprops. Parents can learn how to tell well known stories using homemade props and create / decorate a story bag or box to keep them in

<p>Thrive Financial Literacy for Families</p>	<p>Introducing the basic principles of money management and budgeting. Sessions explore how parents can encourage and support children to develop a healthy relationship with money – sessions include positive parenting techniques The programme is available for parents of children in the following age groups: 3 – 5 years, 6 – 11 years and 12 – 14 years</p>
<p>Fun with Phonics</p>	<p>Focusing on interactive games and activities which introduce initial sounds and can be shared at home. Activities support the Every Tower Hamlets Child a Talker (ETHCAT) programme</p>
<p>Playbags</p>	<p>An EYFS and KS1 language and phonics course providing fun, interactive learning activities which raise attainment in phonics, reading, writing, communication and language. Parents take home a weekly playbag to support learning at home</p>
<p>Learning Through Play in the EYFS</p>	<p>Exploring how children learn in the EYFS focusing on practical play-based activities that develop parents' confidence to support their child's learning through play at home. Activities support the ETHCAT programme</p>
<p>Family Out of School Hours Learning</p>	<p>Parent and child workshops / combination arts and crafts plus themed projects to develop new skills, share ideas and support home learning. Programmes can be developed to support targeted and vulnerable families. The programme is available for parents of children in the following age groups: 3 – 5 years, 6 – 11 years and 12 – 14 years</p>
<p>Annual Review Workshop</p>	<p>For parents whose children have a statement of Special Educational Needs to explain the purpose of Annual Reviews and how to get the best out of them for their child</p>
<p>Family Aspiration Programme</p>	<p>Supporting parents to explore and increase their families' 'social capital' so they can encourage and support their children to have high aspirations and fulfil their potential. The programme is available for parents of children in the following age groups: 3 – 5 years, 6 – 11 years and 12 – 14 years</p>

Supporting Parents at Key Points of Transition and Change

Transition can be a challenging time for children, young people and families, particularly those who may be vulnerable. Our successful transition programme provides practical information to support and prepare children and parents. Programmes include:

<p>Transition Information Workshops</p>	<p>An opportunity to discuss concerns and obtain information and advice which supports parents and families at key points of change. Programmes available: • School Ready! • Getting Started! Joining Reception • Preparing for Secondary Transfer Year 5 and Year 6</p>
<p>Secondary School - All Change!</p>	<p>Information, activities and discussion, raising aspirations and helping parents gain a better understanding of the secondary learning environment so they feel more confident in their role of supporting learning and their child's secondary education. For parents of children in Year 6 and Year 7</p>
<p>Moving Up!</p>	<p>An opportunity to discuss concerns and obtain information and advice which supports parents and families at key points of change. Programmes available: Preparing for Year 9 Options, Supporting Year 11 and Post 16 Options (includes information to support the Raising the Participation Age agenda)</p>

Consultation and Governance

We know that children and young people do better when parents and carers have a positive relationship with their child's school or setting. Our successful Parent Voice model supports schools and settings establish and maintain effective communication with parents, reduces parental complaints and helps meet Ofsted requirements. Programmes include:

<p>Parent Voice Consultation</p>	<p>Supporting effective home-school / setting communication, the development of policy and helping schools / settings to meet Ofsted requirements and respond to Ofsted Parent View. Includes follow-up support for school / setting staff facilitating the parent feedback session</p>
<p>Establishing a Parent Forum / Council</p>	<p>For parents and carers who wish to develop and / or play an active role in a school or children's centre forum. Includes governance, managing meetings and public speaking. Plus two follow-up sessions to review progress and provide additional guidance for staff</p>
<p>Parent Governor Network and Support</p>	<p>An opportunity for parent governors to meet, share their experiences, issues and challenges and obtain updates on current topics and developments</p>



Parenting Support

At times parents and carers need help and advice to deal with the everyday challenges of family life and improve their understanding of their own and their child’s personal, social, emotional, intellectual and physical needs.

Our parenting programmes and supporting activities promote protective factors associated with positive parenting. Programmes include:

Triple P Discussion Group	Support and information session about stages of child development with opportunities for parents and carers to discuss common concerns about parenting, managing routines and behaviours. Sessions available for parents of children in the following age groups: 18 months – 5 years, 6 – 11 years and 12 - 17 years
Triple P Group Parenting Teenagers Programme	To support parents of teenagers aged 11 -18 learn new skills for communicating effectively with their teenager and explore positive discipline, setting boundaries and ways to reduce conflict and challenge unacceptable behaviour
Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities	Promotes effective behaviour management with children as well as encouraging parents to become actively involved in their community and to access services to support them. The programme is available for parents of children in the following age groups: 3 – 5 years, 6 – 11 years and 12 – 17 years
Play and Positive Parenting	Exploring how children learn in the EYFS focusing on practical play-based activities and strategies which support positive parenting: establishing routines, boundaries and praise. The programme is available for parents of children in the following age groups: 3 – 5 years
Emotional First Aid	Promoting positive emotional health and wellbeing by supporting parents to identify anxieties and stress factors in their everyday lives and learn strategies to deal with them. The programme is available for parents of children in the following age groups: 3 – 5 years, 6 – 11 years and 12 – 19 years
Speakeasy	Supporting parents to feel more confident talking to their children about growing up, emotional and physical development and relationships. Parents will discuss puberty and influences on children from TV, media and peers and also learn about SRE curriculum in schools. The programme is available for parents of children in the following age groups: 3 – 5 years, 6 – 11 years and 12 – 14 years
Healthy Families	Supporting parents and carers to encourage healthier eating and more active lives. Fun, accessible activities about healthier foods / packed lunches, creating balanced meals, establishing mealtime routines and becoming more active as a family. The programme is available for parents of children in the following age groups: 3 – 5 years, 6 – 11 years and 12 – 16 years

Parents as Adult Learners – Steps towards Training and Employment

Our award-winning Passport to Learning model supports and empowers parents to take steps towards learning, training and employment. Flexible programmes enable parents to improve their skills and confidence to support their child’s learning, role model behaviours and raise aspirations to improve life chances and outcomes for their family. Programmes include:

Building Skills and Confidence	A personal development programme for parents, building on existing skills and experiences in order to support their own and their child’s learning and development
Next Steps / Support into Employment	A programme supporting parents to gain knowledge and skills required to search for and gain employment. Includes CV writing, job search techniques, interview practice and confidence coaching. This programme explores some of the issues associated with Welfare Reform and includes signposting to relevant services
Parents as Reading Partners	Supporting parents to use their skills as volunteers to support children’s communication and reading development
Volunteering in Your Child’s School Course	A NOCN L1 accredited course for parents wishing to develop skills and knowledge to volunteer in school. Includes school placement
Key Skills ICT for Beginners	Introduction to basic computer skills for parents in order to support their child’s learning. Includes awareness raising of Internet Safety
Key Skills ICT – Intermediate	Further development of IT skills, Microsoft Word, email and internet for parents wishing to support their child’s learning, use the Virtual Learning Platform (VLP) and return to learning for themselves
Money Matters	Basic information and advice to support families manage money including budgeting and saving. This session explores some of the issues associated with Welfare Reform and includes signposting to relevant services
Creative Engagement Programmes	Particularly effective for engaging vulnerable groups and parents who might find a formal learning environment and / or working with schools / settings difficult. Programmes promote emotional wellbeing through creative activities

For further information contact: Denise Hickford, Parent Support Advisor-School Lead
Denise.hickford@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Parent and family support services include:

Parenting Support

The Parental Engagement Team co-ordinate and deliver a range of universal and targeted early intervention and preventative parenting programmes and provide a brokerage service to maximise resources and support co-facilitation within schools / settings and community organisations.

Practitioners deliver a range of training and professional development opportunities and facilitate the multi-agency Parenting Network.

The team manage the London Borough of Tower Hamlets (LBTH) parenting programme referral process and experienced practitioners provide one-to-one support and short-term targeted interventions for families.

Practitioners work within a multi-agency context and support the following initiatives:

- Ocean Somali Community Association (OSCA) Parenting Project
- Supportive Families, Empowered Communities, Prevent Project
- Women Ahead, Female Offenders Programme
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Programme, Women's Refuge

For further information and full details of the parenting programmes available contact:
Sharon Sullivan,
Parent Support Advisor – Parenting Lead
Sharon.sullivan@towerhamlets.gov.uk

The Parents Advice Centre (PAC)

provide expert advice and guidance about Special Educational Needs (SEN) and the assessment process, supporting parents to work in partnership with their child's school. The team also provides training for other professionals in SEN, Exclusions and the Equality Act.

SEN parent groups, the borough's SEN Parents Forum and the Independent Parental Supporters Programmes ensure parents are informed, empowered and supported to achieve the best outcomes for their child.

For further information contact:
Jenny Miller, PAC Manager
Jenny.miller@towerhamlets.gov.uk



Parent and family support services include:

The Family Information Service (FIS)

signpost to services, support groups, sport, leisure, health and much more for birth - 19 year-olds, up to 25 years for young people with disabilities, and provide information, advice and guidance on childcare and a childcare brokerage service.

The team also manage and maintain the Family Services Directory and provide an outreach service.

The Family Services Directory can be found at: <http://fsd.towerhamlets.gov.uk>

For further information contact:
Zefrin Rahman, FIS Manager
Zefrin.rahman@towerhamlets.gov.uk

The Holiday Childcare Team provide access to high quality holiday childcare schemes for children aged 3 - 13. The scheme runs during the half-term breaks, Easter and Summer holidays and operates Monday-Friday from 8am – 6pm. The team also support schools with the delivery, quality and access to resources for Out of School Hours Learning.

For further information contact:
Jenny Quiller, Extended Day Advisor
Jenny.quiller@towerhamlets.gov.uk

The Parent and Carer Council (PCC)

is Tower Hamlets' main family forum. The PCC provides a platform where parents can discuss and contribute to the decision-making process and collectively help shape services that are available to families in the borough.



A short film highlighting the ways that parents are using parent forums to make a real difference to their children's live can be seen at:

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/parentcouncil

The Dads' Network

supports and encourages dads and male carers to strengthen relationships with their children through positive parenting and play.



For more information about the PCC or Dads' Network contact:

Fiona Stokes, Parent Support Advisor
Fiona.stokes@towerhamlets.gov.uk

For further information about the packages available please visit:
www.ths4s.co.uk