

Parents, the pandemic and transition



PLANT YNG NGHYMRU
CHILDREN IN WALES



Research

Research document no: 079/2023
Date of issue: November 2023

Parents, the Pandemic and transition

Audience	Schools, parents, policymaker in local and central government.
Overview	<p>A research report on the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on parental engagement and transition in Wales.</p> <p>Authors: Professor Janet Goodall, Dr Patrizio De Rossi, Dr Yi Zhang</p> <p>The research team would like to record its thanks to Dr Suzanne Sarjeant for her interest in and comments on the project, as well as her help in disseminating the project and providing access to sites.</p>
Action required	This report makes recommendations on how to improve parental engagement and school transitions.
Further information	Enquiries about this document should be directed to: Professor Janet Goodall j.s.goodall@swansea.ac.uk



@WG_Education



Facebook/EducationWales

Additional copies	This document can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-learning/leading-professional-learning/research-and-enquiry/national-strategy-for-educational-research-and-enquiry-nisere/collaborative-evidence-network
--------------------------	---

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

Contents

Glossary of terms	2
Executive Summary	3
1. Introduction and Background	6
2. Literature Review	8
3. Methodology	16
4. Presentation and analysis of data	22
5. Case Studies	49
6. Discussion	56
7. Limitations	59
8. Recommendations	61
Annexes	62
References	86
References	87

Glossary of terms

Term/acronym	Definition/explanation
ALN	Additional Learning Needs
CinW	Children in Wales
CPAG	Child Poverty Action Group
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CYP	Children and young people
FSM	Free School Meals
HLE	Home learning environment: this includes the physical elements of the home situation as well as the support given to learning by those caring for the child/young person (Hm Government and Trust, 2018)
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
Parental engagement with learning	Parental Engagement: “parents’ engagement in their children’s lives to influence the children’s overall actions” (Kim 2009, 89).
Parental involvement with school/schooling	Activities for/with parents which are centred around the school, or school activities, rather than around learning (Goodall and Montgomery, 2014)
PE	Parental Engagement
SES	Social Economic Status
TLR	Teaching and Learning Responsibility
Transition	The change experienced by CYP as they move from one phase of schooling to another, or enter formal schooling for the first time

Table 1 Glossary of terms

Executive Summary

Background

This short-term project (November 2021 – March 2022) was undertaken by a team at Swansea University, working with the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) and Children in Wales (CinW).

The project, funded by Welsh Government, set out to investigate the following main research questions:

- How have relationships between parents and schools in Wales changed over the period of 2020-21?
- Have relationships moved along the continuum from involvement with schools to engagement with learning?
- What can we learn from these changes to support improved parental engagement in young people's learning in Wales?
- How can transition between phases of education be supported in Wales?

The project team were specifically instructed to examine the provision of support for parental engagement in Wales in relation to the continuum between parental involvement in school/schooling and parental engagement with learning (Goodall and Montgomery, 2014), and, on the basis of their findings, to create a tool which could be trialled in schools to support that engagement.

Methodology

To fulfil these aims, the team undertook the following:

- An online survey for parents in Wales
- An online survey for school practitioners in Wales
- Case studies with schools around their work at transition
- Work on the tool for schools

Findings

- Most parents in the survey defined parental engagement with learning as being about learning, while most staff defined the term as being closer to parental involvement with schooling
- Parents responding to the survey felt the major barrier to their engagement with their children's learning was time; staff felt that the major barrier was parents' knowledge and understanding
- Parents responding to the survey felt less engaged with schools during the lockdowns required by COVID-19
- A small majority of parents responding to the survey felt that their relationships with their child's school improved over this period
- Alternatively, a large majority of school staff responding to the survey felt that their relationships with parents improved over this period
- Some school staff respondents felt that the communication required during the COVID-19 lockdown facilitated their understanding of their students' lives

- Most staff responding to the survey felt better able to support parental engagement, since lockdown
- Very few staff had experienced training around support for parental engagement in learning
- Parents requested more support from school staff, particularly around communication from the school
- An extended range of tools enabled greater communication between school staff and parents, although communications did not improve for all families

Case study: Transition

- Case study schools emphasised the importance of building relationships between staff and families
- Successful transition practices emphasised the connection and communication between the three major stakeholders: children and families, the institution (school or nursery) the young person is leaving and that to which the young person is going
- The relationship between the two institutions was seen to be important to successful transition practices
- Successful transitions are supported by early and consistent communication
- Meeting staff from the new setting reduced anxiety around transition for parents and young people
- Successful transition practices can involve the young people themselves, or those who have recently been through transition

Limitations

- The sample of staff was limited; therefore, findings from this section of the study should not be generalised to all teachers/teaching staff in Wales
- Just over 1/5th of parents who responded to the survey were governors in schools; this experience may have impacted positively on their knowledge of schools and their relationships with staff
- The case study sites were all English medium schools, and all situated within the general area of South Wales. The primary schools involved were on new housing estates and had an above average number of students registered with additional learning needs (ALN).

Recommendations

Recommendations for Staff

- Increase communication between all three stakeholders involved in transition (families, initial institution and receiving institution)
- Giving parents and young people access to the new site can reduce anxiety and support a smooth transition process
- Begin work around transition as early in the academic year as possible
- Designate a member of nonteaching staff to support work around transition

Recommendations for Policy Makers

- Embed concepts of parental engagement with learning and partnership with parents in initial and continuing teacher education and training in Wales
- Trial and refine the toolkit produced for this project with a wide range of schools and contexts, from early years settings through to colleges and sixth forms.
- Ensure that parents and the wider community are involved in all processes surrounding this work, in line with Welsh Government's mandate for collaborative working.

Recommendations for Further Research

- Survey both staff and parents more widely about the value of the changes since COVID-19
- Create clear case studies of good practice in transition (extending the work of this project), based in different phases of education and different contexts, to lead to more understandings of good practice and further recommendations in this area.
- Investigate the possibility and value of involving pupils who have recently transitioned, in supporting incoming students.
- Investigate staff confidence in supporting parental engagement
- Investigate the impact of ALN, SES, etc. on parental engagement in learning in Wales

1. Introduction and Background

This small scale collaborative research project investigated parents' and families' relationships with schools/settings and learning, as we recover from COVID 19 and move forward, with a particular emphasis on points of transition (Harris and Goodall, 2009a). It produced case studies from points of transition in the educational system, and based on these case studies, surveys and prior work (Goodall, 2018b), produced an interactive tool to support work around parental engagement in learning in schools, colleges and early years settings in Wales. The work was collaborative between Swansea University and Children in Wales and the Child Poverty Action Group in Wales

This project contextualised the framework set out in Goodall and Montgomery (2014), examining parents' relationships with schools along the continuum of involvement with school/schooling through to engagement with learning (See Figure 1 below). The research paid particular attention to any movement along this continuum in Wales during the periods of lockdown of 2020-21, highlighting improved practice through case studies.

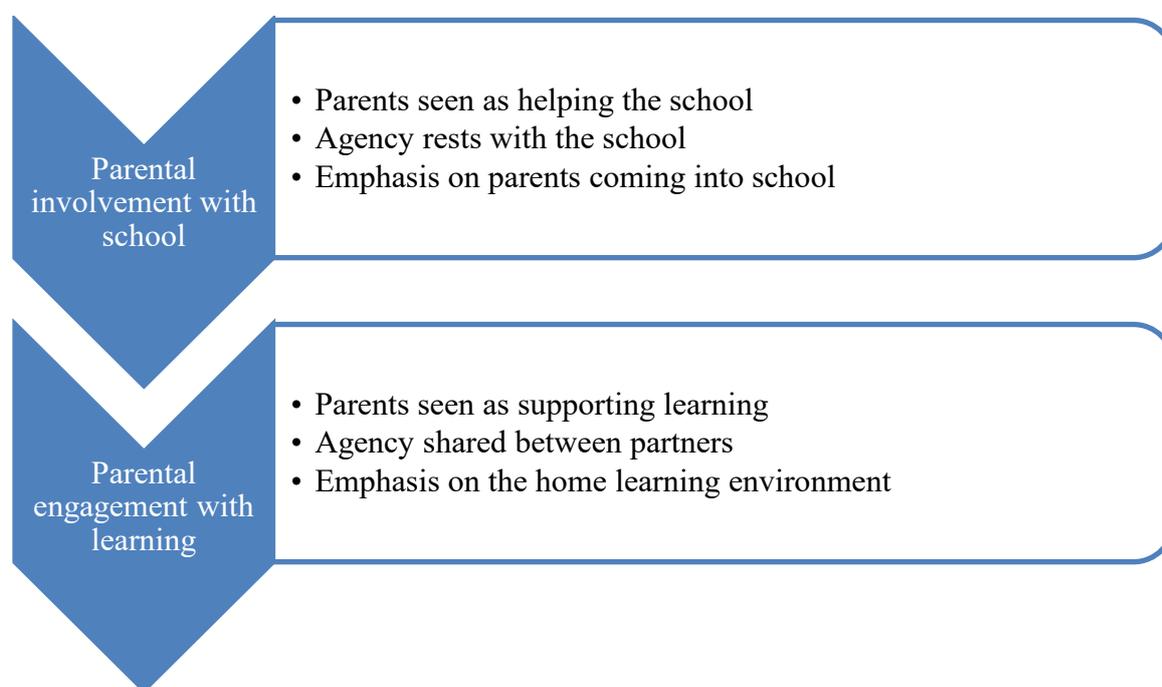


Figure 1 Continuum between parental involvement to parental engagement (Based on Goodall and Montgomery 2014)

Parents' engagement in learning helps young people to attain the 'secure foundation for learning' called for in Welsh Government's Renew and Reform recovery plan (Llywodraeth Cymru Welsh Government, 2021b), to move toward the improved attainment goals set out by Welsh Government (Llywodraeth Cymru Welsh Government, 2021c), and to achieve the four purposes set out for the Curriculum for Wales (Llywodraeth Cymru Welsh Government, 2020), particularly the first, of being ambitious, capable learners. The lifelong nature of learning highlighted in the first purpose is of particular interest to this study, as the study will investigate parental engagement from the earliest days of schooling through to transition to post-sixteen study/life (Llywodraeth Cymru Welsh Government, 2020).

During the COVID 19 pandemic, most children and young people¹ in Wales continued their educations from home, supported by both school staff and parents/family members; some children did attend settings, particularly those whose parents were key workers or who were otherwise considered vulnerable (Rengasamy et al., 2021, Parnham et al., 2020). Emerging research seems to suggest that this change to learning at home may have had a significant effect on learners already underperforming in schools, exacerbating the attainment gap and threatening work done in the past decade to narrow the difference in achievement between children from different backgrounds (Eyles et al., 2020, Andrew et al., 2020b, Andrew et al., 2020a); in the Welsh context, research suggests that fewer than half of parents responding to a survey felt competent to support their children's learning (Sutton Trust, 2020). It will therefore be of utmost importance, moving forward, to support all children but particularly the most vulnerable groups; supporting parents to support learning has been shown to be an effective means of improving outcomes for this group of students.

In moving to recovery from the pandemic, Welsh Government has set out its priorities, among them support for vulnerable learners, increased support and training for staff, collaborative and inclusive working, all focused on ensuring the four purposes of the new curriculum are enabled. It will be important in moving into the period of recovery that parents and families are intimately involved in school and wider plans; the most effective forms of support for parental engagement are those which are embedded within school and setting strategies (Goodall and Vorhaus, 2011).

This project goes further than current literature by being focused on Wales (there is a lack of current research around parental engagement practices in Wales) and also through the use of the case studies across a range of ages, provides a unique understanding of current practices to support parental engagement in learning at points of transition.

This project examined the support currently offered to parents around engagement with learning, any changes in that engagement arising from the move to home based learning during the pandemic, and looks to the future, to support staff and parents to move forward, through the general findings of this project as well as specifically through the use of the interactive tool².

Further, this project examines the processes of transition between phases of schooling as well as transition into formal schooling, whether that is from home or from nursery. Transition is known to be a point of stress and anxiety for both children and families (Harris and Goodall, 2009b). The report contains case studies of transition between phases in settings in Wales. The findings from these case studies are then linked to the rest of the data in this report. In terms of policy, the results of this project highlight areas of good practice on which to build, as well as gaps in current provision. The findings provide a sound footing, rooted in practice, for future work to support parental engagement.

¹ This term includes all those of compulsory school age, and those preparing to enter that stage, so children and young people in general from 3 – 18 years old.

² The Toolkit is contained in an annex (see 11.5).

2. Literature Review

2.1 The notion of parental involvement and parental engagement

Parents' engagement in learning helps young people to attain the 'secure foundation for learning' called for in Welsh Government's Renew and Reform recovery plan (Llywodraeth Cymru Welsh Government, 2021b); the importance of parents' role in children's learning (i.e. parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making and collaborating with community) is well known yet these activities are often suggested to parents without consideration of context. Promoting such activities without consideration of context may widen the achievement gap, as advantaged parents who are already involved in such activities may be more able to support learning due to their social and cultural capital (Borgonovi and Montt, 2012, Carolan and Wasserman, 2015)

The idea of parental engagement has gained in importance due to its value in potentially narrowing the achievement gap between young people from different backgrounds (Henderson and Mapp, 2002). In Wales, vulnerable children and young people (e.g. Looked after or care experienced young people, having an additional learning need (ALN), and eligible for free school meals (FSM)) are often associated with lower academic achievement and attainment, as they are less likely to 'gain academic qualifications and gain access to further/higher education' comparing with their peers (Blandford, 2017, 23).

Parental engagement is defined here as 'parents' engagement in their children's lives to influence the children's overall actions' (Kim, 2009, p. 89). Thus, parental engagement considers parents and children's learning as the central area of focus; this is distinct from parental involvement which prioritises school and schooling activities (Goodall & Montgomery, 2014). Research would seem to confirm that this second image is the model many staff still hold of 'parental engagement' (de Oliveira Lima, 2019, Goodall et al., 2021) that is, of actions which are directed by staff for the support of the school. This may be a result of the lack of continued training for staff in this area (Willemse et al., 2016a). It is also worth noting that current understandings of parental engagement and its value are far more nuanced than earlier understanding of the issue (Jeynes, 2012)(Goodall, 2022). While parental involvement with schools or schooling is useful and can be a stepping stone to greater engagement, it is parental interactions with young people and their learning, which has the greatest positive impacts on achievement and outcomes (Fan and Williams, 2010, Jeynes, 2012, Jeynes, 2008, Jeynes, 2005).

Parents' involvement with schools is strongly influenced by parents' backgrounds and experiences, for example, minority groups parents and those from low Social Economic Status (SES) backgrounds may find that they struggle to participate in school activities for a wide range of reasons (Assaf and Dooley, 2010, Johnson, 2015, Reynolds, 2010). Those parents who are actively participating in school activities often mirror the social capital displayed by staff; other parents may feel far less comfortable coming into schools. However, these demographic characteristics are not necessary related to parents' desire or willingness of engaging with their children's learning (Goodall & Montgomery, 2014; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011).

2.2 A continuum: moving from parental involvement with school and schooling, to parental engagement with learning

Individual schools and parents all have their own characteristics. Schools may have different school goals and espoused values (Schein, 2017), and parents may have different personal needs and understandings of parental engagement (Crozier and Davies, 2007). Therefore, instead of a one solution for all situations, a continuum framework was introduced by Goodall and Montgomery (2014); this continuum will be briefly discussed here as it sets the foundation of this research project, as well as the base of the later suggested toolkit. The continuum provides charts movement from parental involvement with school (focused on and led by the school) to parental engagement with learning (focused on learning in the home).

The continuum framework acknowledges parent agency, as well as highlighting the importance of maximising parents' capacity to support learning. At the parental involvement end of the continuum, teachers and schools offer roles to parents based on their assumptions about parents' capacity to support learning (Harris and Goodall, 2008) whilst the voice from parents is often overlooked, and the 'informal roles' of parents in out of the school context are often discounted. The continuum framework provides the possibility of breaking the boundaries of context/settings, through deciphering how parents' values and beliefs are shaped by their personal trajectories in out of school contexts, and how these then can impact on learning. Therefore, a crucial consideration of this continuum model is moving from offering roles to parents, to identifying and understanding the role of parents, especially in relation to how they are engaged in children's learning. As [Goodall and Montgomery \(2014\)](#) highlighted, the third level of this continuum is the re-location of agency, shifting agency from schools and teachers to parents with a focus on children's learning, as shown in Figure 2. The aim of the continuum is to highlight the value of partnership working between families and school staff, for the benefit of young people (Goodall, 2017a).

Partnership working between parents/families and schools has been highlighted in the literature for some time (Warren et al., 2009, Goodall, 2017a). Working in partnership has been described as having a model of working which supports and facilitates the learning of all members of the partnership, including not only children and young people but also parents, school staff and members of the wider community (Goodall, 2017a). Working in partnership with all members of the school community cannot be something which is 'bolted on' to the usual practices of the school; in contrast, it must emerge from a deep understanding of the value of the contributions of all members of the community to the support of young people's learning.

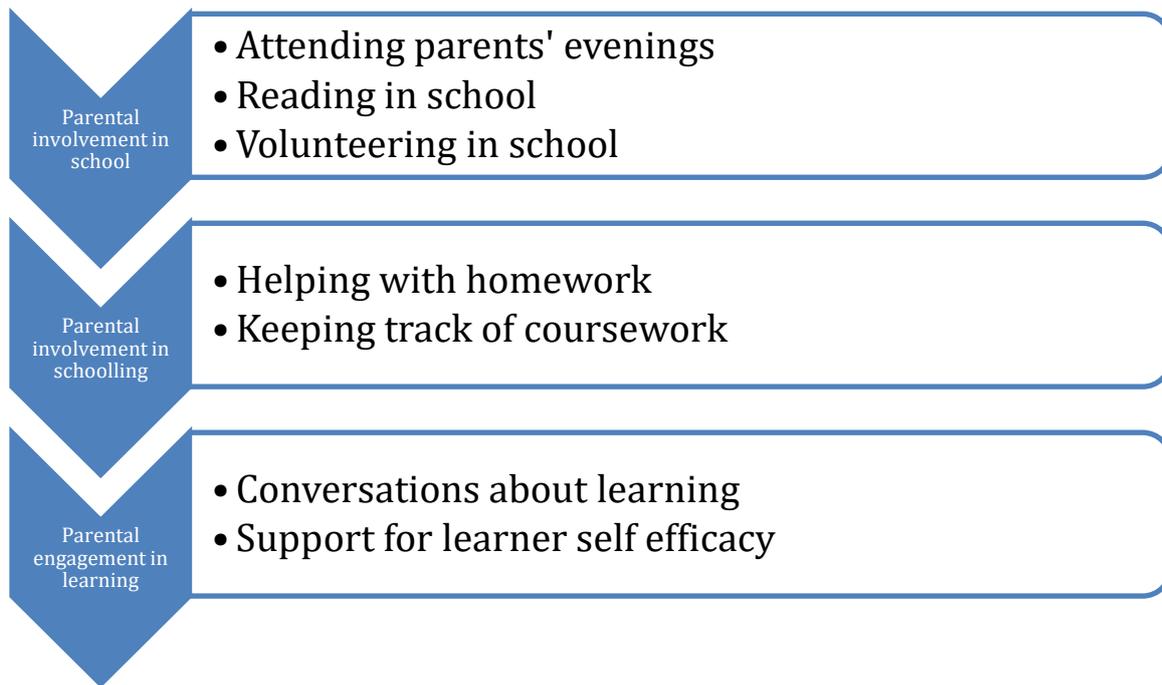


Figure 2 Continuum, based on Goodall and Montgomery 2014 and Goodall, 2017

Acknowledging parent agency ([Goodall & Montgomery, 2014](#)) provides possibilities for school leaders to deal with the complexity of wider communities, rather than solely focusing on interactions within schools ([Goodall, 2018](#)); and to understand how parents interact with their children for learning in out of school contexts, such as parents taking their children to visit the zoo as a leisure activity ([Carolan & Wasserman, 2015](#)). Parents are thus no longer sitting at the edge of the schools, but rather, become official, recognisable members of school communities (Torre and Murphy, 2016) working with others (e.g. teachers) with shared visions and goals for children’s learning. Learning can shift from being solely school- or teacher-led to also being parent-led, as the location of learning shifts from school alone, to include wherever parents interact with their children ([Goodall & Montgomery, 2014](#)).

This continuum framework also leads to two-way communication, which is known to be an essential component of support for parental engagement with learning (Jeynes, 2018). Under the parental involvement model, communication between parents and schools stays at an exchange of information: teachers deliver the messages to parents and parents have limited chances to express themselves. These activities are designed by schools or teachers, and do not tend to value the role of parents (Kim, 2009). Parental engagement, on the other hand, promotes a true dialogue between partners (Bordalba and Bochaca, 2019). This supportive dialogue can increase the level of parents’ self-efficiency to help their children’s learning (Milne and Wotherspoon, 2020). This sort of communication can potentially help to bridge the social capital gap in between teachers and parents with disadvantaged backgrounds (Bryk et al., 2002). Under this form of parental engagement, joint decisions between parents and schools are made, rather than having a reliance on school-controlled goals and actions ([Goodall & Montgomery, 2014](#)).

2.3 Barriers to parental engagement with learning

Although parents' backgrounds do not necessarily decide their willingness to engage in their children's learning (Livingstone and Blum-Ross, 2019), parent demographic characteristics are still widely recognised as a predictor of their engagement with children's learning, such as parents' age and gender (Rafferty et al., 2011, Carolan and Wasserman, 2015), ethnic background and the languages they use (Mistry et al., 2008). Other parent characteristics are less visible and are harder to decipher, but still significantly influence the level of parental engagement, such as parents' beliefs about the nature of parental engagement and of education (Junge et al., 2021, Ice and Hoover-Dempsey, 2011), the home (or parents)- school (or teacher) relationship, and how confident and comfortable parents are, in engaging in their children' learning (Hornby and Lafaele, 2011, Hornby and Blackwell, 2018, Goodall, 2020).

Parents' demographic characteristics, such as their SES and ethnic background have been discussed as important predictors of how much they could be involved or engaged in their children's education (Hill and Taylor, 2004a). In research comparing children from low SES backgrounds with their peers from high SES family backgrounds, children from low SES family backgrounds experienced reduced learning opportunities at home and other settings (e.g. visiting museums); also, lower SES parents were prone to deferring to teachers as experts (Hornby and Lafaele, 2011). Lack of financial and material resources may present a barrier for low SES parents in creating HLE, as this decides how much parents could invest on their children (Berger and Ezzy, 2009). However, it is important to note that SES is not a deterministic characteristic, as a more recent study demonstrated that the level of parental engagement is not simply related to parents' SES background, as parents who share the same or similar SES have individual differences when they interact with their children, as well as in creating a home learning environment (HLE) (Elliott, 2020).

Another example from the United States shows that parenting styles towards children's learning may vary due to parents' social background (Carolan and Wasserman, 2015). The study carried out by Carolan and Wasserman (2015) examined the relationship between parents' concerted cultivation (Lamont and Lareau, 1988, Lareau, 2002, Lareau and Calarco, 2012) and children's academic achievement. Middle- and upper-class parents were able to transmit their cultural capital to their children for school success, through certain parenting styles. As a result, these middle- and upper-class children are more often rewarded by their teachers who also share the same background (Carolan and Wasserman, 2015). Parental engagement is influenced by the social structures within which parents operate, such as family structure, school structure and the wider, societal structure. Family characteristics have a particular influence on the home learning environment (HLE). It could be the family size that determines how much educational resource each child would receive; on the other hand, parents' relationship status that can produce stress for some parents (Furstenberg, 2014, Lau et al., 2012). Employment situations can impact how much energy and time parents are able to spend on interacting with their children (Peters et al., 2007).

2.4 Parental engagement during transitions

There are various transition stages throughout a lifetime, and each transition in the educational system is a key event in the journey of students (Harris and Goodall, 2009). Documenting the factors which affect and impact on their development is important to understand how we can create less tension for students during transition, and better equip them for future. In line with three case studies, we review three types of transitions in the educational system and highlight the unique challenge of each transition period.

Transition from nursery/preschool to primary education

The literature suggests that points of transition – from home into formal schooling, and then between phases in education – are times of anxiety and stress not only for children but for families as well, requiring extra support from schools and staff (Harris and Goodall, 2009b).

The first vital transitional period related to education and schooling, for both children and parents, is from nursery/pre-school (if the child has attended these, or otherwise from home) to primary school.

Preparing for schooling is difficult for children, as well as for parents and other family members (Webb et al., 2017). According to Quenzer-Alfred, Schneider et al (2021), in a German study, 30-50% children experienced ‘transition problems’ when they started their primary schooling; transition from nursery to primary school involved issues at individual, interactional and contextual levels. At the individual level, children construct their own new identity, and the curiosity and anxiety come along with the demand of school skills such as independence and self-discipline (Wong, 2015). At the interactional level, children start to interact with new people (e.g., teachers and peers). At the contextual level, children start to deal with more complicated contexts that they will have to adapt into school structures with new rules and daily routines ([Quenzer-Alfred et al., 2021](#)).

Parents also experience identity changes they start new relationships with their children, teachers and other parents (Shields, 2009), as Dockett and Perry (2007) highlighted, ‘parents experience a wide range of emotional reactions as children started school’ (93). Therefore, it is important to consider parents’ experience and perceptions in programmes to support transition (Miller et al., 2014). Previous research on transitions has focused on understanding children’s agency through transitions, without acknowledging parent agency (Webb et al., 2017). The importance of collective responsibility is highlighted by Skouteris, Watson et al (2012), as they point out, ‘a wider support system needs to be put into place, with the teaching professionals, parents and other family members, and children working together’ (81). This is also supported by Chan (2012) who points out that work leading to ‘a stronger connection amongst kindergarten, primary schools and parents would facilitate a smoother transition to primary school’ (639). The importance of partnerships across the system has been highlighted in the literature for some time (Goodall, 2017a) as well in previous work for Welsh Government (Goodall et al., 2021).

However, previous studies (Dockett and Perry, 2007) have demonstrated the low awareness of the value of parental engagement during transitions from both sides

(i.e. practitioners and parents). Their study included a questionnaire for 298 parents and 280 practitioners asking respondents to 'List the first five things that come into your mind when you think about a/your child starting school' (Dockett and Perry 2007: 93), only four percent of parents and one percent of practitioners mentioned parental adjustment. Further research has highlighted the importance of three areas of 'school readiness' - not just the child being ready for the transition to school and schooling, but the family's readiness needs to be taken into account, as well readiness of the institution to receive the children who will actually arrive (UNICEF, 2012).

Transition from primary to secondary education

The second transition period is from primary to secondary school³. Similar to the first transition period, this one is widely explored in previous research (Coffey, 2013, Virtanen et al., 2019). For children who are going to start their secondary schooling, this transition brings excitement of meeting new peers (Chedzoy and Burden, 2005) and new social networks (Rice et al., 2015), along with anxiety of adopting a new environment (Rice et al., 2021) and concerns that peer conflict may occur during the beginning of secondary school (Moore et al., 2021). For parents and teachers, transition from primary to secondary school is also a stressful period (Bagnall et al., 2020).

Children's academic performance and wellbeing during the transition are two key concepts to consider. Pupils from low SES family backgrounds could be very vulnerable when they experience the first transition (i.e. into primary), and the achievement gap could be wider through the second transition ([Moore et al., 2021](#)). Additionally, children's wellbeing is recognised as strongly associated with the difference between school characteristics and children's characteristics; this parallels the points made above about a gap between parental and teacher backgrounds. For example, pupils with disadvantaged backgrounds tend to experience lower wellbeing after they entered a wealthier secondary school ([Moore et al., 2021](#)), as the anxiety of being 'different from their wealthier peers' increased ([Moore et al., 2021](#)).

Furthermore, a recent study carried out by Bagnall et al (2020) in the UK explored children's emotional experiences during the primary-secondary transition period. This study triangulated perceptions and experiences of three groups (i.e., students, parents and teachers), and they found out that children's transition experience is largely influenced by peer affiliation, partnership between teachers and parents, and the relationship between primary and secondary school staff. This again highlights the need for a holistic approach to transition, taking into account the views, voices and actions of parents, young people and school staff.

³ While some students do transition from primary/infant school to middle school, this is relatively uncommon in Wales; for example, for this academic year, there are 23 middle schools in Wales, and 182 secondary schools, and 1,219 primary schools in Wales. (<https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Education-and-Skills/Schools-and-Teachers/Schools-Census/Pupil-Level-Annual-School-Census/Schools/schools-by-localauthorityregion-type>)

2.5 Transition from secondary education to beyond

Parent involvement/engagement still plays a significant role in student outcomes during secondary education (Hill and Taylor, 2004b, Jeynes, 2014). However, although the role of parents during the transitions can have a significant impact on their children's later adulthood outcomes (Moyles, 2007), it may be assumed that the role of parents would be different, as compared to prior transitions (Huntsinger and Jose, 2009), as their children become more mature and make decisions for themselves during and after their secondary education. However, this is a vital transition for a young person, and thus, self-determination theory suggests that for adolescent students to achieve their own autonomous decisions and future success, the parenting style must remain supportive and engaged (Dietrich and Salmela-Aro, 2013).

Working with families and parents during transitions

As noted above, parents and children may have different experience of transition due to their social and cultural backgrounds. Thus, an inclusive transition process is needed for providing successful transitions, especially for socially and culturally disadvantaged families and children (Rothe et al., 2014). This will support parents to become better equipped to support their children's transitions, as well as their own, leading to positive outcomes for young people (Heckman, 2013). It is useful for schools to develop strategies for supporting parents and other family members ([Webb et al., 2017](#)); these strategies are important because 'not all parents are equally equipped to adapt to changing schedules, roles and responsibilities as their children age' (DeCaro and Worthman, 2011, 446), particularly as the schooling system expects particular sorts of social and cultural capital of both parents and children (Goodall, 2019). In developing these school strategies, there is also a need to consider the agency of children and young people in the process of transition ([Wong, 2014](#)). This will require schools and teachers to provide time and spaces for parents and other family members to tell their stories (Turunen and Dockett, 2013).

2.6 The impact of COVID 19 on remote learning in home learning environment

COVID-19 has altered how schools operate, with the main difference being abandoning in class learning and rapidly shifting to remote/home learning for most students (Spear et al., 2021) during the periods of lockdown. Due to the sudden change in learning format, the materials and resources for distance learning lacked the intricate planning and design of a learning curriculum which was usually conducted in the classroom (Ezra et al., 2021). A study from Kuhfeld et al (2020) estimated the pandemic caused a 32-37% reduction in reading progress in US schools. This trend will not yield the same results in every community; these results could be significantly more problematic in areas that are subject to poor economic conditions (Andrew et al., 2020a, Andrew et al., 2020b, Easterbrook et al., 2022) . This is further exemplified by a survey from Andrew et al. (2020b) which showed 25% of primary, and 62% of secondary school students in England had exclusive access to a computer for education, leaving a significant proportion of secondary students, and the majority of those in the primary phase of education, sharing devices used for remote learning with at least one other person in their household; the lack of sufficient devices could impact on the academic performances of young people ([Spear et al., 2021](#)).

Before the pandemic there were already a number of schools and institutions with an established online learning community; research by NFER (2020) in England found the schools with prior knowledge and experience of online learning enhanced student engagement levels of all students, even those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds (Bubb and Jones, 2020). Online or remote learning is not as effective as face to face classroom instruction for certain subjects (Hash, 2020), for example, learning through the medium of the internet introduces the occurrence of technical difficulties, whereby visual or audio delays can disrupt the online learning experience for students, this is a common issue for eLearning music lessons (Hash, 2020). However, remote learning can be characterised by independent study and student autonomy (Ewing and Cooper, 2021), thus, given appropriate conditions, academic achievement can be maintained even via distance learning.

With students having to work remotely, parents have been faced with a plethora of challenges. The UK experiences a “digital divide” (UNESCO, 2020), meaning that children from low-income families may not have the same access to computers and the internet as their counterparts from middle to high-income families; these digital deficiencies add to the burdens families may already be experiencing, such as, living conditions which may not be sufficient for low-income families ([Spear et al., 2021](#)). Many parents also faced juggling their own working from home with supporting their children’s education, leading to added tensions (Touloupis, 2021).

As a result of the move to home learning during the pandemic, research with parents and teachers has found that many parents have now realised that they can have a more prominent role in their child’s education. Survey research found early in the pandemic lockdown that 42% of parents felt confident in supporting their children’s learning at home (Cullinane and Montacute, 2020). In an online poll specific to Wales, 53% of responding parents (n:937) reported that they felt more engaged with their children’s learning during lockdown than they had before (Parentkind, 2020).

3. Methodology

Based on the literature and background above, and cognisant of the request from Welsh Government for this project to lead to an interactive tool for use by school communities, this project had the following research questions:

- How have relationships between parents and schools in Wales changed over the period of 2020-21?
- Have relationships moved along the continuum from involvement with schools to engagement with learning?
- What can we learn from these changes to support improved parental engagement in young people's learning in Wales?
- How can transition between phases of education be supported in Wales?

The tool was created based on previous work and feedback with school leaders (Goodall, 2018b, Goodall, 2022), and refined for the Welsh context. The tool provides background information about parental engagement in learning, and supports school staff to examine their own practices, and, more importantly, to decide on the actions they wish to take in this area. The tool provides a framework for school staff, working with their parent communities, to design, chart, and evaluate their work around support for parental engagement in learning. The tool does not provide specific answers but rather allows school communities to create ways forward which are specific to their circumstances (see 10.6).

3.1 Methods and approach

This research project combined qualitative and quantitative research methods and methodologies (Brannen, 2005, Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004, Johnson et al., 2007, Lingard et al., 2008, Teddlie and Yu, 2007). It made use of case studies of sites of transition for parents and families (Curtis et al., 2000, Langberg and Smith, 2006, Taber, 2000, Yin, 2003).

These methods allowed the project to capture not only a wide range of views from parents and school practitioners (in open questions in surveys and case studies) but also provide a firm grounding for recommendations moving forward, based on data derived.

This research presents a situated, time bound set of rich reflections on the experiences of parents and school staff in relation to parental engagement in young people's learning during the pandemic, and to suggest ways forward for the future. While, in common with most sociological research, it does not seek to uncover or define universal laws or universal statements (Hammersley, 2007), the research does seek to present a picture of the situation as understood by an appropriate range of respondents (Golafshani, 2003).

3.2 Sampling

Results from open online survey research were mainly qualitative in nature, but can still be sampled in a way that yields broad and reflective conclusions (Braun et al, 2020).

Parents and carers living on low incomes are often under-represented in self-selecting surveys. We used targeted dissemination strategies to boost participation. We aimed for a proportionate representation of low income families, using Welsh Government figures of 23% of families living in relative poverty in 2020 (Llywodraeth Cymru Welsh Government, 2021a). To this end, we asked parents for their highest level of education (Zwierzchowska-Dod, 2022) as this has been shown to be a relatively accurate indicator of SES (Kwok and Yankaskas, 2001), but does not require participants to enter more personal data (such as post code) in the survey. We also asked parents if their household was in receipt of means tested benefits (see Figure 30 and Figure 31).

3.3 Qualitative Data Collection

The qualitative data for this project were collected through two main interventions: online surveys for parents and school staff (which will also generate quantitative data, see above), and the case studies of sites of transition. For the case studies, four semi-structured interviews were conducted. Two of the interviews involved staff in primary schools (one teacher/middle manager and one senior manager) focused on the transition from nursery to primary and from primary to secondary school. The other two interviews involved staff in secondary school (one senior leader and one career adviser) were related to the transition process from primary to secondary and from secondary to post-16 education.

For parents, the questionnaires covered how they engage with their children's learning, based on previously used and validated scales (for example, Abd, 2006, Cavanagh and Romanoski, 2006, Brackenridge, 2006, Alan, 1998, Walker et al., 2005). The survey also investigated how parents may feel that their engagement with learning has changed over the course of the pandemic lockdown, and what their hopes are for the future.

For staff, the survey covered staff perceptions of the above, and also investigated staff understandings of the concept of 'parental engagement in learning' as well as training around this concept.

The surveys were hosted online at Swansea University using Qualtrics XM software (Qualtrics, Provo, UT, 2020).

3.4 Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis

The qualitative data in this project were analysed using a grounded approach (Keddy et al., 1996, Lingard et al., 2008); this means that the data are examined as far as possible without imposing frameworks upon them, but rather letting the data speak for themselves. Qualitative data were analysed using MAXQDA 2022 (VERBI Software, 2021)(Kuckartz and Rädiker, 2019). The free text comments in the surveys were coded using a framework.

A coding framework was developed (See Section 11.3) based on reading and re-reading of the information from both the surveys and the case study sites (Lingard et al., 2008, Radulescu and Vessey, 2011), as well as reliance on a priori codes from the literature, in particular the continuum between parental involvement and parental engagement (Goodall and Montgomery, 2014). Other codes emerged from the data

(open codes) (Maxwell, 2012). Codes were created without structure in the first instance, and then collated into a framework on further reading and consideration of the data (Kuckartz and Rädiker, 2019). The coding framework thus derived was used throughout the project. The coding frameworks are reproduced in the appendices (see 11.4).

Quantitative data were analysed using Microsoft Excel (Microsoft Corp., 2018). Descriptive analysis on parents and staff surveys were performed separately. The results were then compared. The parent respondents were analysed as a whole group and divided according to free school meals (FSM) eligibility and child with additional learning needs/special educational needs (ALN/SEN). When results show variance, these variables are included. The Parents and the Staff surveys included closed-ended and open-ended questions which produced quantitative and qualitative data. These data from both surveys were analysed separately and then integrated (Bazeley, 2018). The integration of quantitative and qualitative data contributed towards a more refined understandings of the effects of Covid19 lockdowns both on the relationships between parents and schools, and on parental engagement in learning.

3.5 Tools

Case Studies

This project produced a series of case studies (Yin, 2003, Baxter and Jack, 2008) at different stages of formalised education, with particular emphasis on points of transition (Harris and Goodall, 2009b); the studies are descriptive and multiple (Baxter and Jack, 2008). A case study provides examples from a particular event, for this study the parental engagement at the point of transition, in a particular context. It offers exemplary knowledge on transition processes, the factors that affect positively and negatively the transition process. This knowledge is then read and interpreted from one's own experience (Webb, 2014). This section of the study aims to demonstrate how the concepts and the themes of the new framework proposed (based on Goodall and Montgomery, 2014) can lead to a positive transition process, and to explain why some key features adopted in these schools have been successful. The "cases" here are the features and the process of parental engagement, in particular at the point of transition, and not the schools per se. The case studies examine points of transition:

- Nursery to primary school
- Primary to secondary
- Secondary to post-16 education

This final stage is particularly important, as there is a paucity of research around parental support for learning at this age, yet the literature shows that young people of this age place increasing weight on their parents' advice and opinions about life choices and that interactions with parents can be vital in settling into university or other areas of life (Henton et al., 1980). The importance of early years and post 16 has also been highlighted as significant areas of concentration in the recovery from the pandemic (Llywodraeth Cymru Welsh Government, 2021c).

These case studies foreground the voices of school-and-setting based practitioners, and particularly the voices of parents and carers. The studies highlight changes

arising from the recent period of disruption and point to recommendations for increased support for parental engagement in learning, as we move forward into a period of recovery and rebuilding better.

Case study sites were selected on the basis of a number of criteria:

- Accessibility
- Willingness to be involved in the project
- Good practice (for this, the research team relied on recommendations from partners such as Children in Wales, the Child Poverty Action Group, and Save the Children, as these organisations were working closely with schools throughout Wales and were able to suggest institutions with useful practices).

Surveys

These case studies were supplemented by wide scale surveys for parents and school staff. These surveys gathered data to capitalise on what has been learned during the pandemic; it is clear that many young people have benefitted from working closely with family members during the periods of lockdown (Llywodraeth Cymru Welsh Government, 2021b, Bayrakdar and Guveli, 2020); there are also early indications that staff and parents have benefitted from closer and better working relationships through this period (Goodall et al., 2021, Greenhow et al., 2020).

While most staff agree that parents' engagement in learning is important, practice still lags behind research in implementing support for parental engagement in schools (Addi-Racchah and Ainhoren, 2009). The survey investigated not only practices to support parental engagement but also teacher attitudes toward and understanding of that engagement, as staff often do not see parents as a vital part of the learning cycle (Lewis and Forman, 2002), and indeed, may harbour deficit views of parents and families. (Patrice et al., 2017, Hamlin and Flessa, 2018). The importance of avoiding such views is clearly laid out in the Renew and Reform plan from Welsh Government (Llywodraeth Cymru Welsh Government, 2021b).

Development of the surveys

The questionnaires for both staff and parents were developed based on previous validated work in the field (For example: Fantuzzo et al., 2013, Fantuzzo et al., 2000, Sabol et al., 2018, Schueler et al., 2017), recent research related to parental engagement and the pandemic (Andrew et al., 2020a, Andrew et al., 2020b, Goodall et al., 2021, Marchant et al., 2020, Parentkind, 2020, Sutton Trust, 2020, Cullinane and Montacute, 2020).

As per the original project plan, the surveys aimed to investigate the relationships between parents and school staff, particularly over the period of the lockdowns, and to understand those relationships in relation to the continuum between parental involvement and parental engagement, with a view to providing recommendations to support moves toward the engagement end of the continuum.

The surveys were designed by the team at Swansea, commented on by partner organisations and piloted with small groups of teaching staff and parents, as appropriate.

The surveys were open for just over two months, to allow parents and school staff sufficient time to take part.

The surveys were promoted through a variety of means, including social media (Twitter) (the Department of Education and Childhood studies has over 35K followers on social media; the Child Poverty Action group has the same number, with Children in Wales able to reach a further 10,000 followers). We also disseminated information about the project and surveys through our range of partner schools in Wales, and through other contacts throughout the country. The surveys were also promoted by Children in Wales and the Child Poverty Action Group through their own networks.

While it is impossible to ensure a representative sample in online surveys, the two partner organisations, Children in Wales and the Child Poverty Action Group were uniquely placed to reach families who might not otherwise take part in such surveys. There were 277 responses to the parents' survey and 34 responses to the staff survey.

Toolkit

Based on the case studies and survey data and previous work (Goodall, 2018b), the project produced a tool for use in schools, colleges, and early years' settings. This tool will allow schools to gauge their own practice along the continuum from parental involvement with schooling (in which parents are seen as helping the school) to parental engagement with learning (in which parents are understood as partners in young people's educative processes) (Goodall and Montgomery, 2014). The toolkit was originally devised and used with schools in England (Goodall, 2018b), and updated after discussion with educational leaders in Wales and policymakers in the Welsh Government (Goodall, 2022).

This tool will support an interactive process on the part of schools; rather than being a list of particular actions schools might take, the tool highlights attitudes and conceptions along the continuum, illustrated by the case studies, but with the understanding that every school, every family is unique and supporting parental engagement must be seen in light of every school's local context.

Supporting the professional learning needs of practitioners is again an important part of Welsh Government's plan for recovery after COVID (Llywodraeth Cymru Welsh Government, 2021b). The tool is accompanied by suggestive materials for supporting staff to understand the nature and value of parental engagement, as this is rarely covered in teacher education processes (Jeanne and Peter, 2017, Souto-Manning and Swick, 2006a, Nancy and Gilbert, 2009, Willemse et al., 2017). Training and support for staff is important for their own ongoing wellbeing (Llywodraeth Cymru Welsh Government, 2021c), and will contribute to their ability to support the wellbeing of learners and families.

3.6 Focus group of parents

A small-scale focus group of parents added to the data for this project. The participants were recruited by one of the partners of the research project, Children in Wales; the participants were regular members of ongoing groups supported by Children in Wales. There were six parents/carers involved in an online (Zoom) discussion lasting approximately 45 minutes. The research team prepared a semi-structured interview guide based on the provisional findings of the parents and staff

surveys, and Prof Goodall, the P.I. of the research project, facilitated the discussion. The focus group provided some added insight to the findings, but was a small portion of the overall whole and does not provide generalisable data.

3.7 Staffing

Swansea University Research Team

This research was a collaborative project, led by a research team at Swansea University (Dr. Janet Goodall – Principal investigator; Dr. Patrizio de Rossi and Dr. Yi Zhang) and Children in Wales, supported by the Child Poverty Action Group (Wales). The team at Swansea designed the survey instruments, and was responsible for the distribution of these, with support from partner organisations. This team also undertook the work to create the case studies, and the majority of the data analysis. The Swansea team was ultimately responsible for the creation of the final report, again with input from the partner organisations.

Children in Wales, as the umbrella grouping for organisations working with families across Wales, was uniquely placed to support this work. They provided access to families who might not otherwise be reached by research, particularly as they share an explicit remit toward inclusion and participation. The team included Anna Westall, who was instrumental in arranging the parents' focus group.

Child Poverty Action (CPAG) works on behalf of the more than one in four children in the UK growing up in poverty. The CPAG use their understanding of what causes poverty and the impact it has on children's lives to campaign for policies that will prevent and solve poverty – for good. The CPAG provide training, advice and information to make sure hard-up families get the financial support they need. They also carry out high-profile legal work to establish and protect families' rights. This team included Ellie Harwood, (Wales Development Manager, CPAG), and Tom Lee, (Senior Policy Analyst, Child Poverty Action Group), who supported the research not only by distribution of the survey but also with data analysis, particularly of the quantitative data.

4. Presentation and analysis of data

Results from the surveys will be presented in two parts: first, quantitative results will be presented from each survey, and then greater analysis will be given to the combined results from the open questions. The discussion section combines these findings with those from the case studies.

4.1 Staff survey results

PAC Staff Survey Demographic information

A total of 34 school staff members participated in the survey. The number of surveys completed was 28, as some respondents did not complete all sections of the survey. The respondents covered a range of roles (classroom teachers=11, senior manager=8 middle manager=7) and phases of education (primary school=16 secondary school=9 nursery=2) (Figure 3). Their highest qualification was an undergraduate degree (13) or master's degree (12) (Figure 5). Most respondents were from primary schools (See Figure 2)⁴. As mentioned in the limitations section, this is a low number of teaching staff, so results from this survey should not be seen as generalisable to all teachers in Wales.

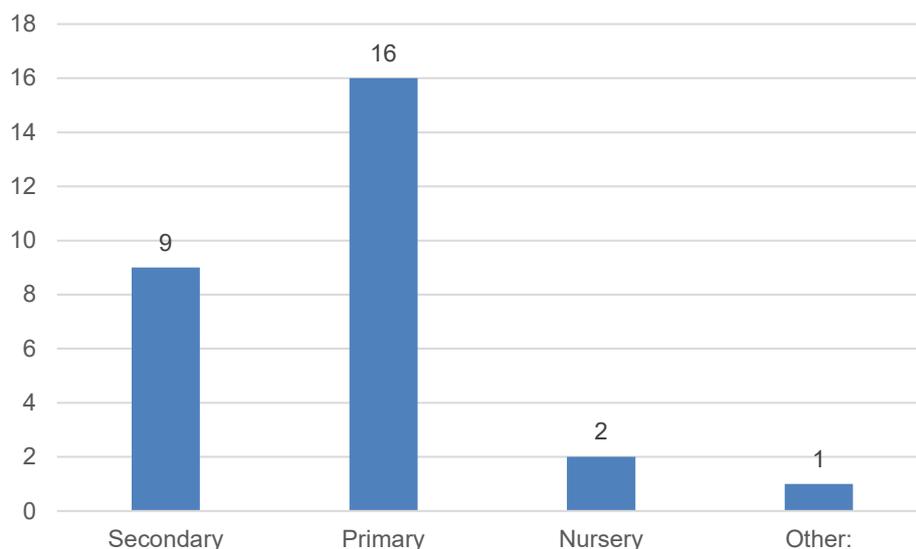


Figure 2 Staff: Phase of schooling

⁴ For reference, there are 1553 schools in Wales, of which 9 are nurseries, 1219 are primary, 23 are middle and 182 are secondary phase LLYWODRAETH CYMRU & GOVERNMENT, W. 2021. Schools' census results: April 2021..

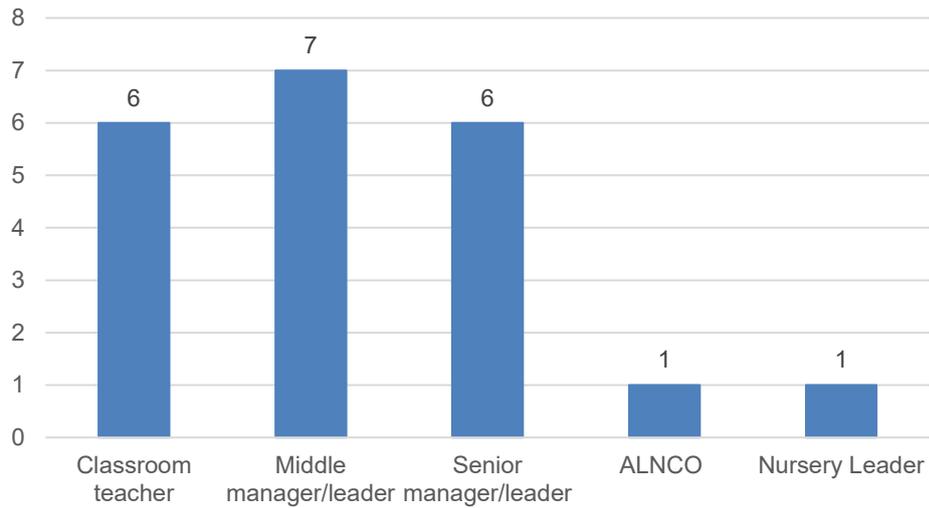


Figure 3 Staff: Role in school

Respondents were also asked to report on their highest qualification, as shown in Figure 5, and the local authority covering their institution in Figure 6.

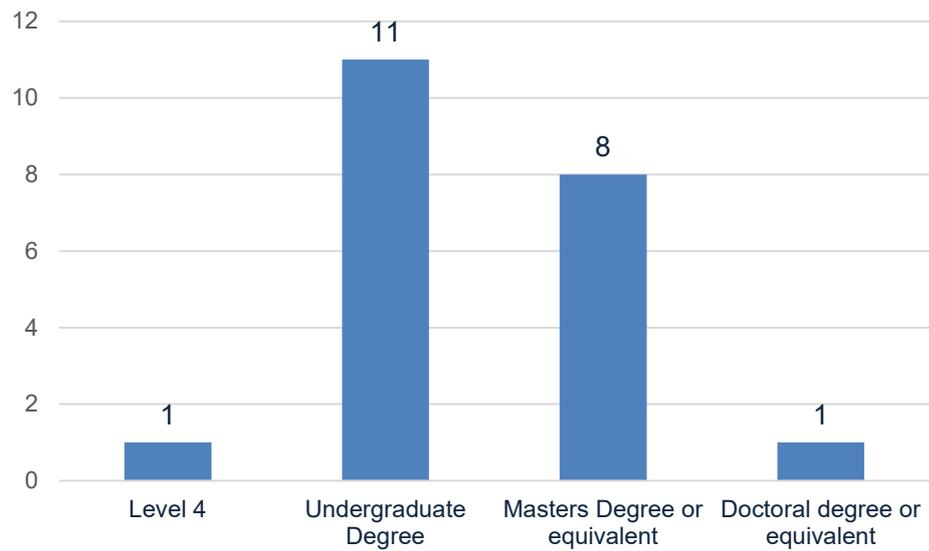


Figure 4 Staff: Qualification level

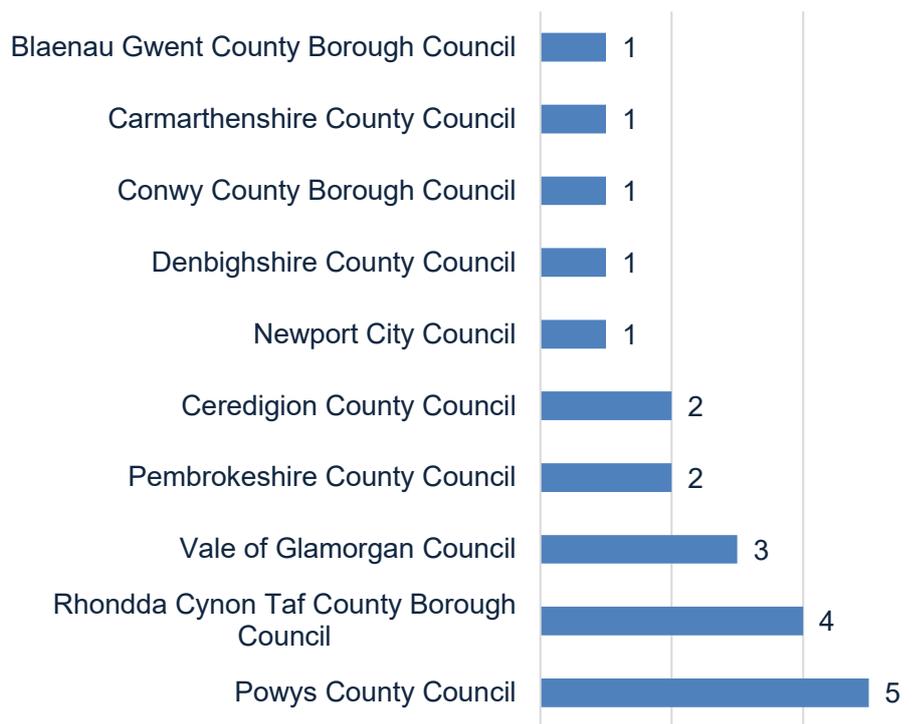


Figure 5 Staff: Local Authority

Staff perceptions of parental engagement

All respondents to the survey agreed that parental engagement in learning is extremely important (14) or very important (7) (Figure 7). (This topic is covered in more depth further on in this report).

Do you think parental engagement in learning is important? - I think parental engagement in learning is:

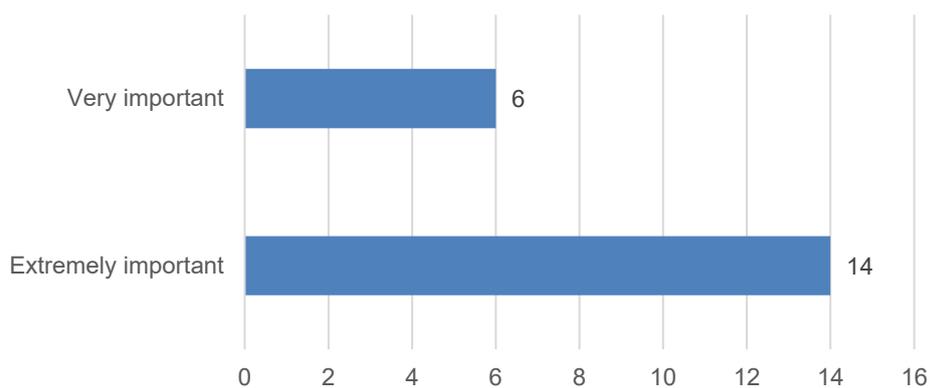


Figure 6 Staff: Importance of parental engagement

This finding was also supported by staff responses to a question about the value of family support for learning outside of the school (although it should be noted that this response was not unanimous, as was the previous one), as seen in Figure 9 below:

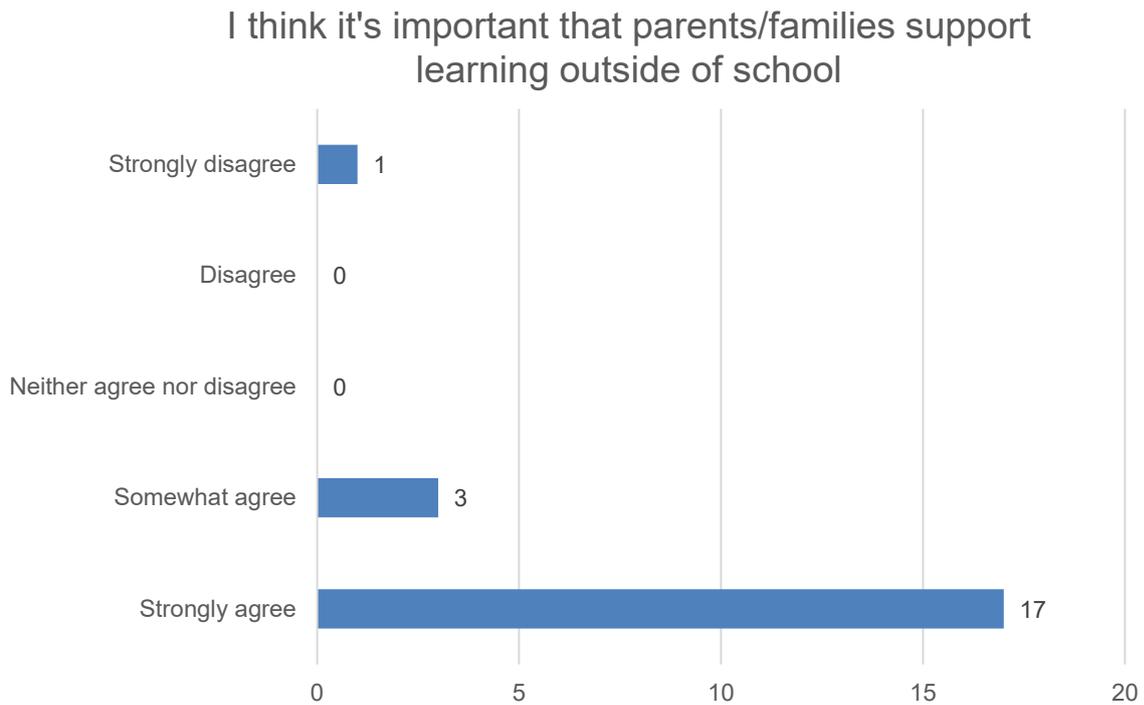


Figure 7 Staff: Importance of support for learning outside school

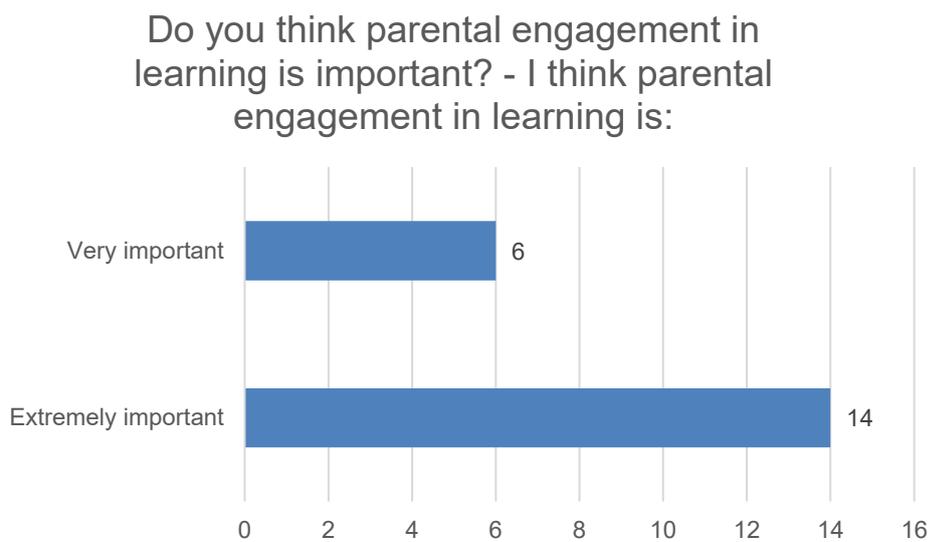


Figure 8 Staff: Views of importance of family support for learning

When asked to respond to the statement, “I don't feel parents have an impact on my students' learning”, most staff disagreed, as shown in Figure 10 below. This argues that teachers understand at least the basic value of parental engagement in learning.

I don't feel parents have an impact on my students' learning

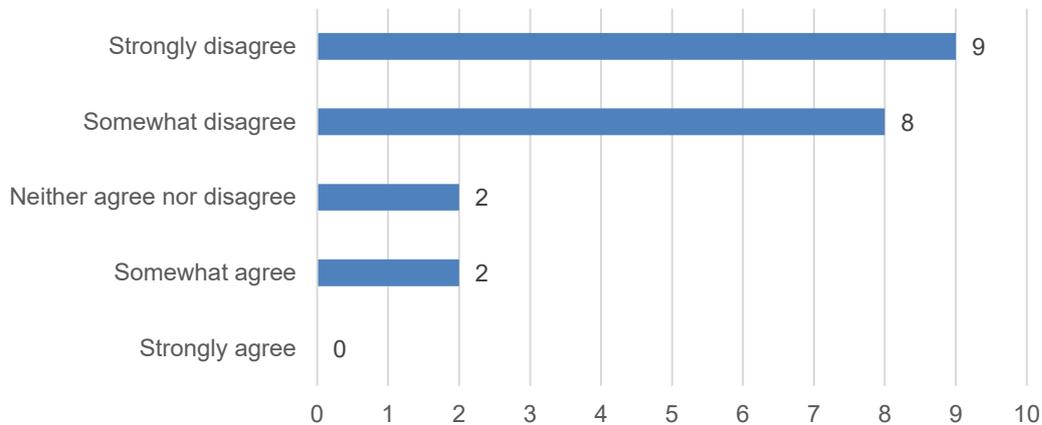


Figure 9 Staff: Parental impact on learning

In response to: “I think parents know how to support my students' learning”, most teachers disagree, as shown below in Figure 11,

I think parents know how to support my students' learning

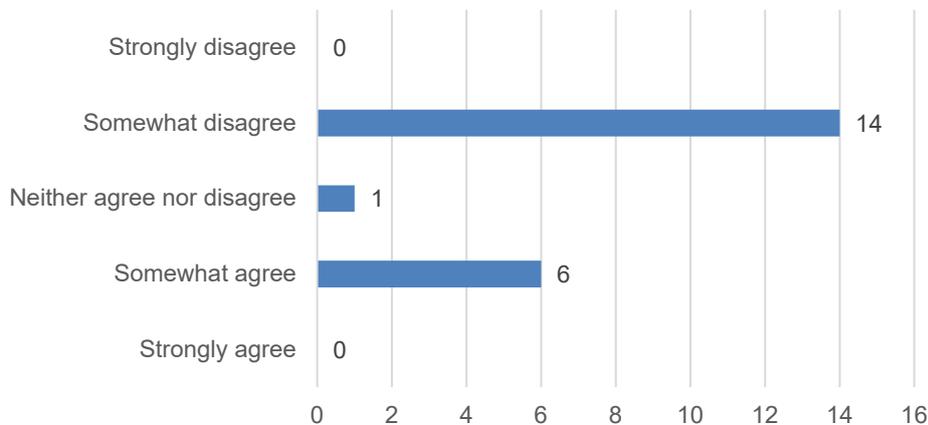


Figure 10 Staff: Parental support for learning (knowledge)

While staff express relatively strong belief in parents' ability to support learning, 18 somewhat disagree with the statement – “I think parents feel confident in supporting my students' learning”, with only three members of staff strongly agreeing with the statement (and none in between) Figure 12.

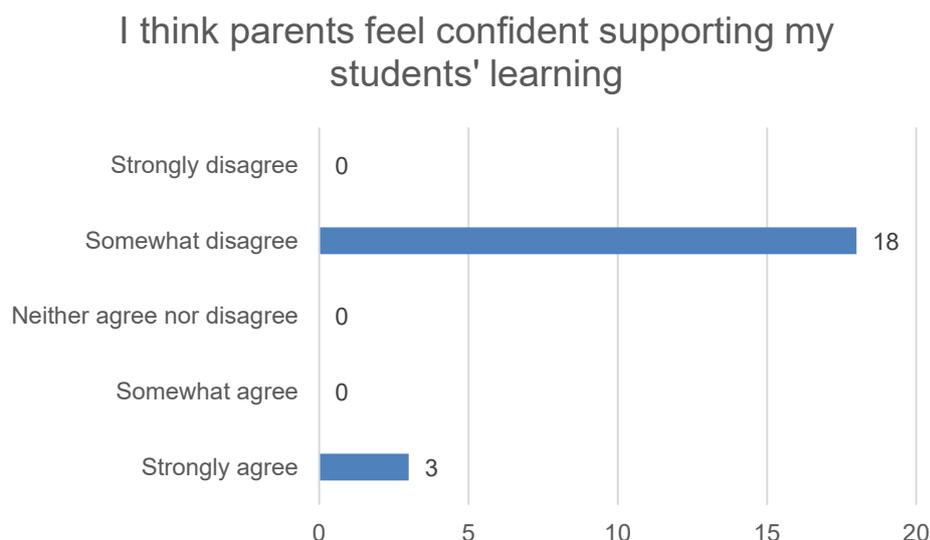


Figure 11 Staff: Parental support for learning (confidence)

Most respondents agree that their school gives parents enough information to support student’s learning, while 3 disagree (See Figure 13). There is less consensus over this item than many others.

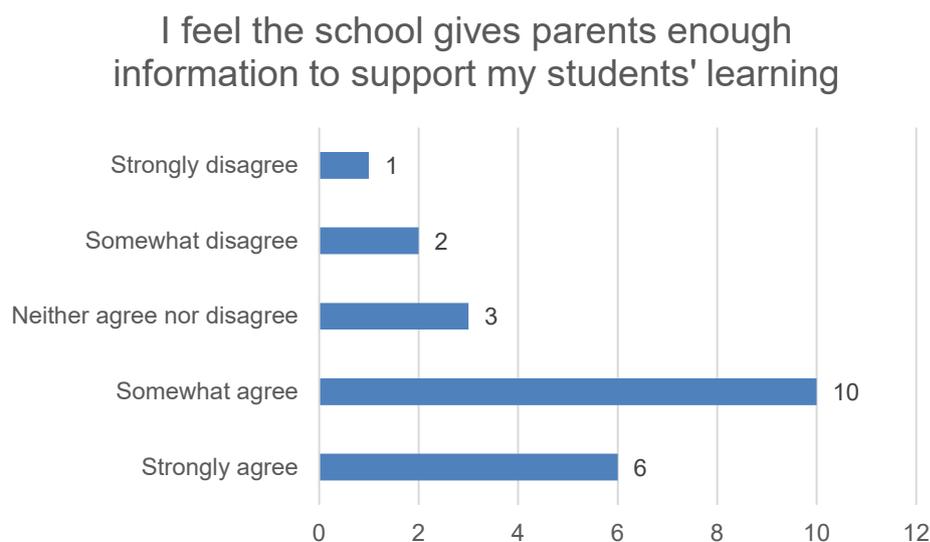


Figure 12 Staff: School support for parental engagement

Staff perceptions of parental involvement in school life

In response to, “What proportion of parents attend parents’ evening/equivalent?”, 15 of respondents held that most parents got involved, while the remaining 6 say around half of parents attend. There is a mix of secondary and primary schools in each response group.

18 of the 34 respondents said ‘very few’ parents get involved by volunteering at school. The remainder did not know. No-one responded positively to this question. 13 respondents felt that most parents attended concerts, plays and assemblies when they are able to do so. 5 say around half do, and 2 say very few do. Those saying around half or very few were all secondary/middle school teachers.

One-third 7 respondents said around half of parents attend workshops or training, while 13 said they very rarely did.

Things parents/carers do to support home learning

The majority of teachers (18) felt that parents discuss the school day with their child, followed by helping with or checking homework, and reading with their children. Less than half said parents supported learning by taking part in hobbies, ensuring their child has a place to do homework, and taking their child to cultural institutions like art galleries or museums (see Figure 14).

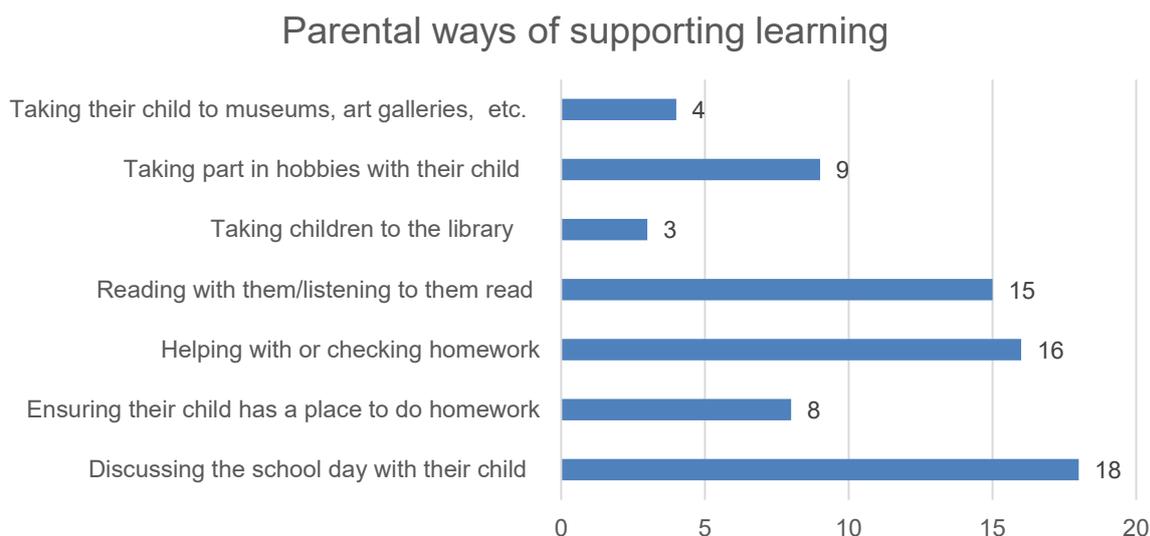


Figure 13 Staff: Ways parents support learning

Most school staff reported that they believe parents experience barriers to supporting learning (Figure 15).

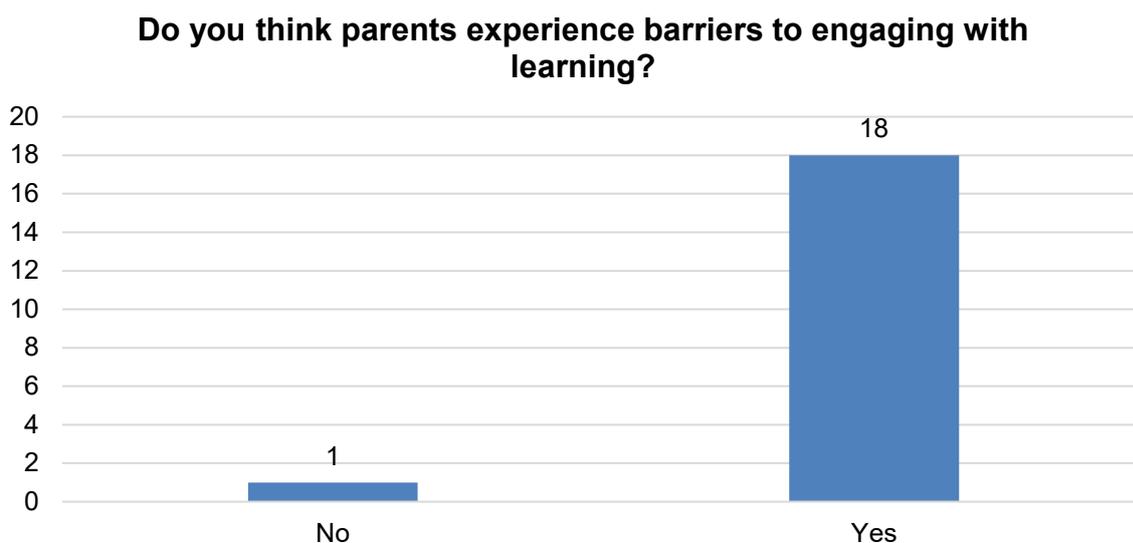


Figure 14 Staff: Barriers to parental engagement

15 teachers agreed or strongly agreed they would like parents to have more support to help them engage with their students' learning. Yet, when asked, 15 members of

staff agreed/strongly agreed that schools gave parents enough information to support learning, while 4 disagreed or disagreed strongly with this statement. It is not clear, then, where or how parents should be able to access this extra support (Figure 16).

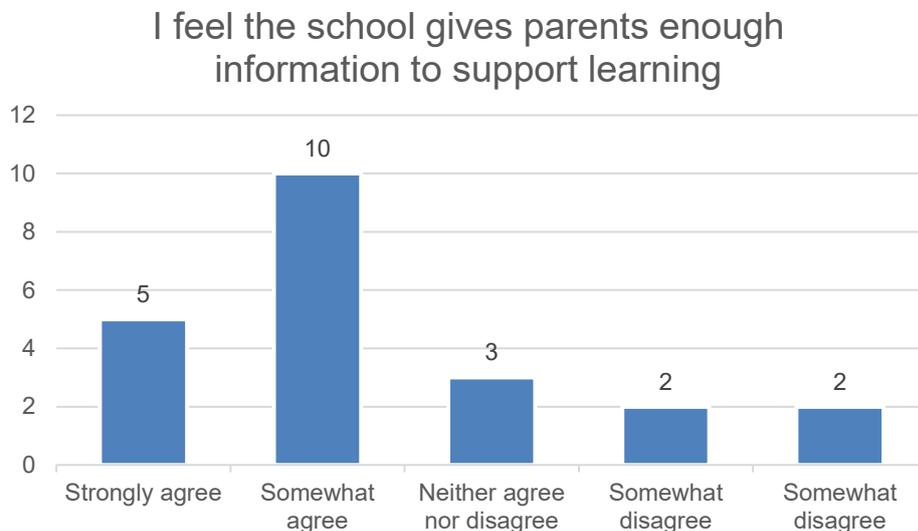


Figure 15 Staff: Information for parents from schools

Communication with parents

The most commonly used means of communication with parents was through email, followed by online meetings (zoom, teams), written letters and text messaging (Figure 17).

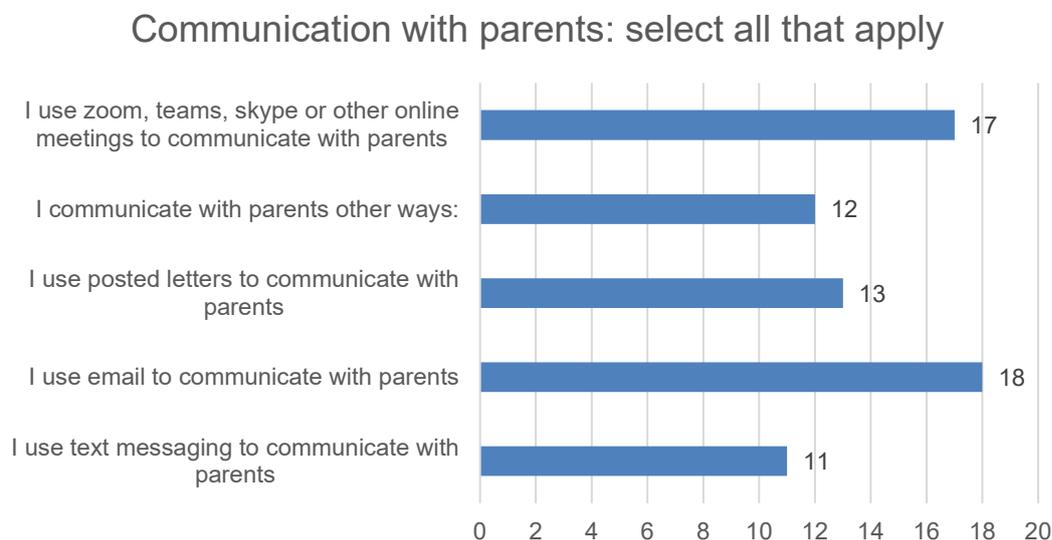


Figure 16 Staff: Means of communication with parents

14 teachers agree or strongly agree that they are satisfied with communication with their students' families, although 3 somewhat disagree with this statement. Seven teachers say they would like more communication with their students' families. Around a third neither agree nor disagree with this question. One in 5 disagree they would like more communication with families.

However, no teachers agreed with the statement “I would like less communication with my students’ families”. Two teachers strongly disagreed, and 3 somewhat disagreed with this statement (See Figure 20)

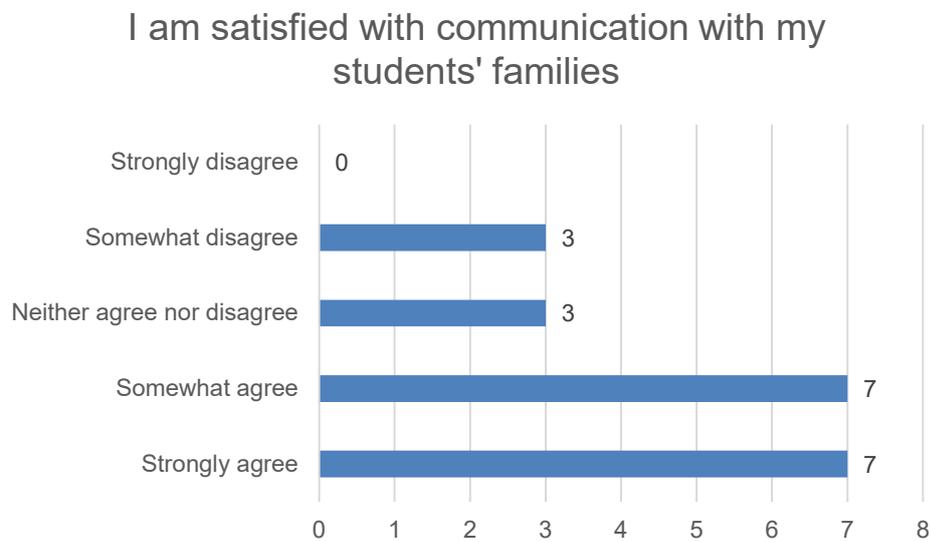


Figure 17: Staff satisfaction with communication with families

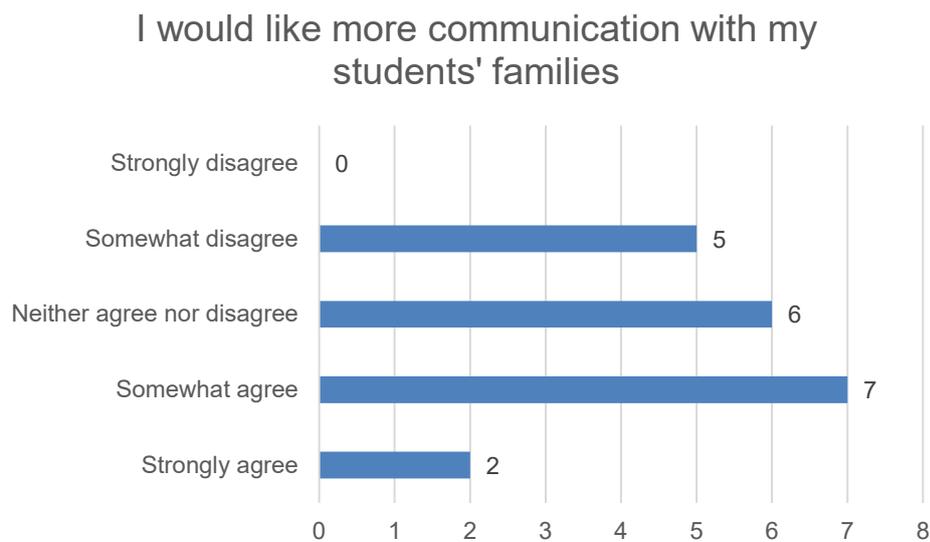


Figure 18: Staff desire for more communication with families

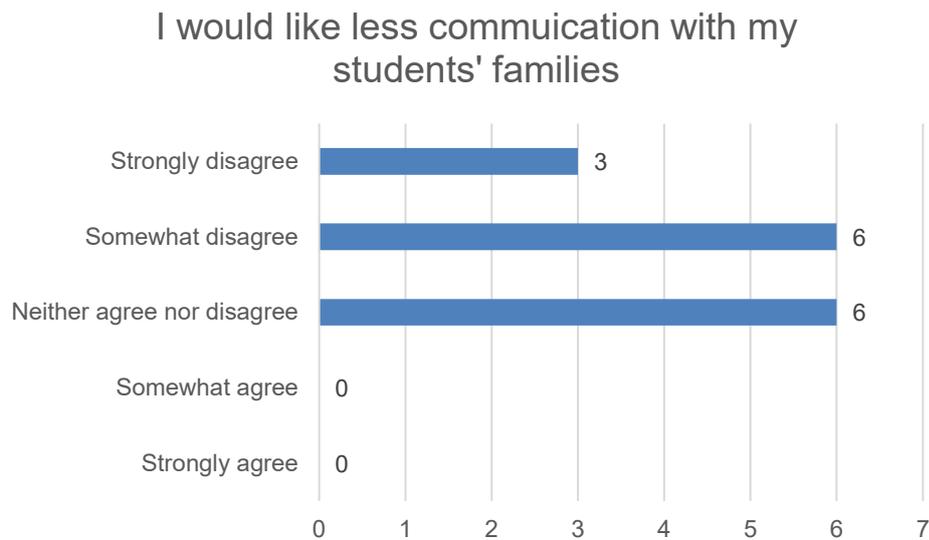


Figure 19: Staff desire for less communication with families

Changes in parental engagement since lockdown

On balance, staff felt that parents were more engaged in learning since lockdown with half agreeing, a quarter being neutral, and a quarter disagreeing with the statement. (Figure 21)

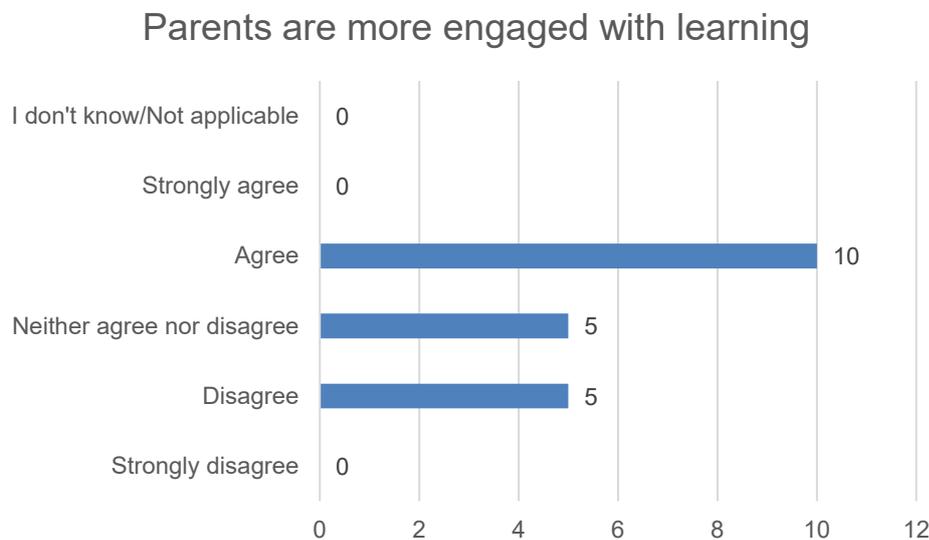


Figure 21 Staff: Parental engagement since lockdown

Staff also felt on balance that parents were more able to support learning since lockdown (half agree, a third are neutral and fewer disagree) (Figure 23).

Parents are more able to support learning

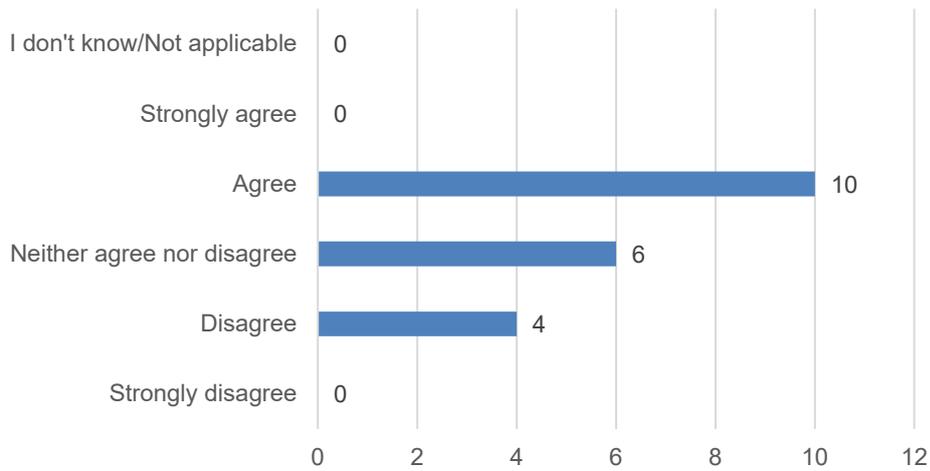


Figure 22 Staff: Parents able to support learning

Most staff also feel that, after the lockdown, they have a good relationship with their students' parents (Figure 23); this does not necessarily show a change resulting from lockdown.

I have a good relationship with my students' parents

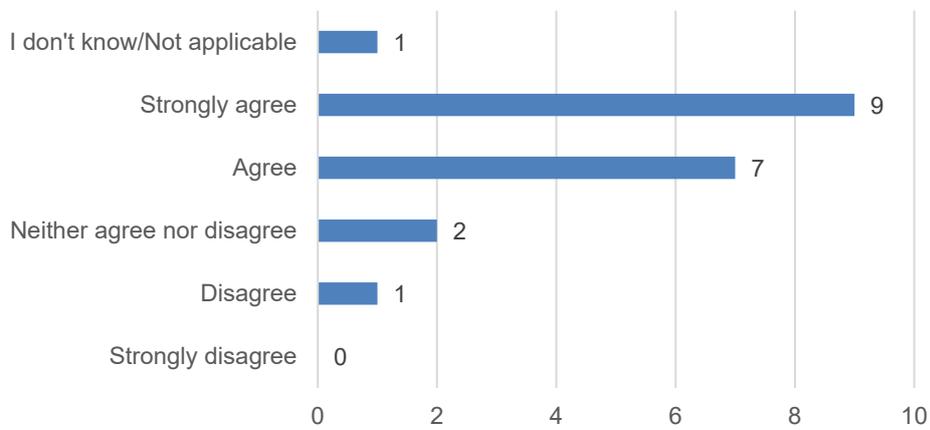


Figure 20 Staff: Relationship with parents

Overall, school staff feel that they are more able to support parents' engagement in learning, since lockdown (Figure 24):

I am better at supporting parental engagement in learning

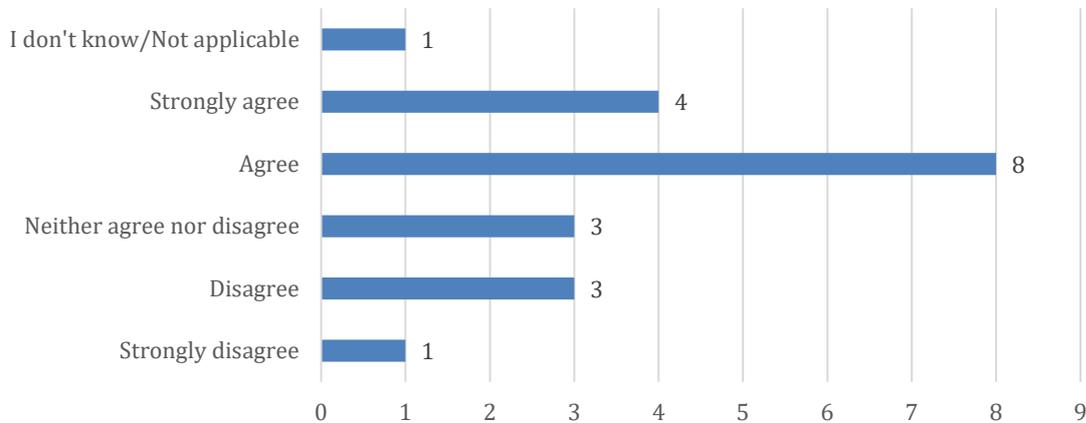


Figure 24 Staff: Ability to support parental engagement

Training around parental engagement

Most staff reported having little or no training around parental engagement, either in their initial training or as a part of continuing professional development (Figure 25).

Did your teacher training include information about supporting parental engagement in learning?

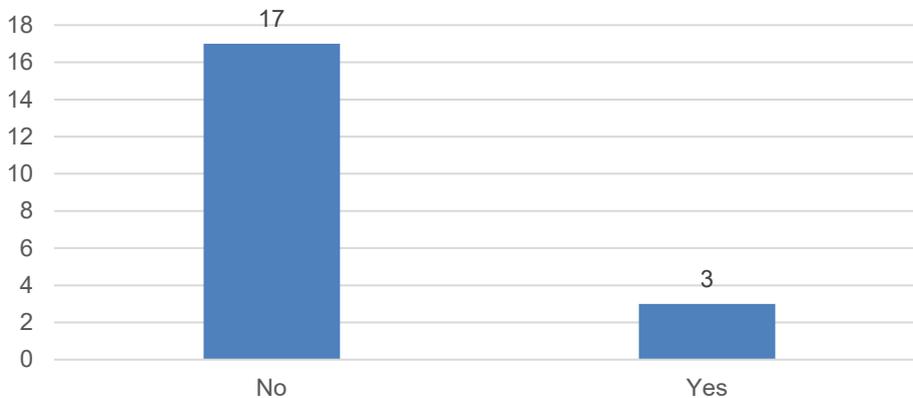


Figure 215 Staff: ITE around PE

Have you attended any professional development around supporting parental engagement?

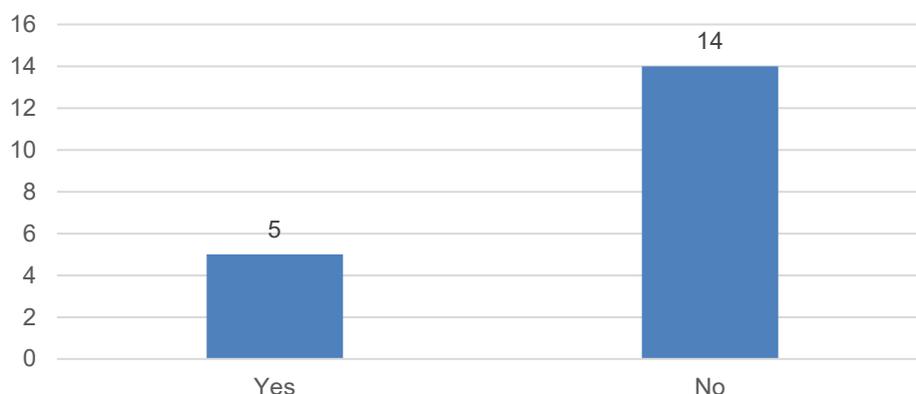


Figure 226 Staff: CPD around PE

In view of this lack of training, it is not surprising that the majority of teachers who responded to the survey would like to know more about parental engagement with learning, perhaps reflecting the low number who have experienced training in this area (Figure 27).

I would like to know more about how I can support parental engagement in learning

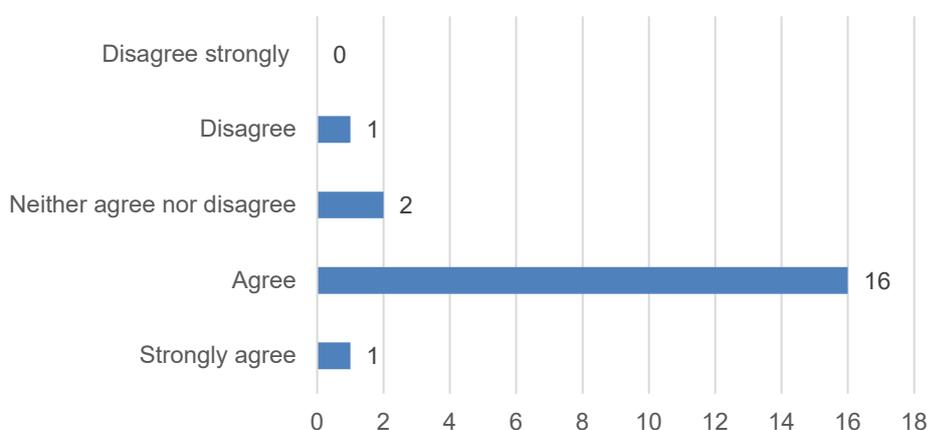


Figure 23 Staff: Desire for more training

Sixteen teachers agree or strongly agree with this statement, while 2 are neutral and only one disagrees.

4.2 Parent survey results

PAC Parents Survey Demographic information

A total of 277 parents participated in the survey. The number of surveys completed was 236, as not all parents completed all sections of the survey. The participants came from all the Wales' local authorities (the highest proportion of responses, in order, were from Vale of Glamorgan=12%, Rhondda Cynon Taf=10%, Neath Port Talbot=9% and Caerphilly=8%). The largest group of respondents had an

undergraduate degree (40%)¹¹ or a secondary school qualification (37%) (e.g. combined the two groups were the majority of respondents. Forty-two percent of parents had two children, and the majority defined their ethnicity as white (98%). Regarding the receiving of means-tested benefits the participants were equally split into two groups (Yes=26%; No=27%) although a higher number of respondents did not answer this question (48%). The majority of respondents had a child in primary school (68%) who was not receiving free school meals (FSM) (73%), and attended an English medium school (78%) The vast majority of the respondents were mothers (92%), and not a member of parent committee/PTA/parent forum at their child's school (88%). Some participants (22%) were a governor at their child's school, although none of the FSM eligible families were governors⁵. 13% of the sample agreed their child has ALN/SEN, and a further 3% said their child was displaying signs or undergoing diagnosis for ALN/SEN support.

As mentioned above, the survey set out to ensure that the voices of a wide range of parents were heard. In response to the question, ' Does your household currently receive any means-tested benefits? (e.g., universal credit, tax credits, income support, income based Jobseeker's Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, council tax support), almost equal numbers of parents did and did not receive such benefits (see Figure 28).

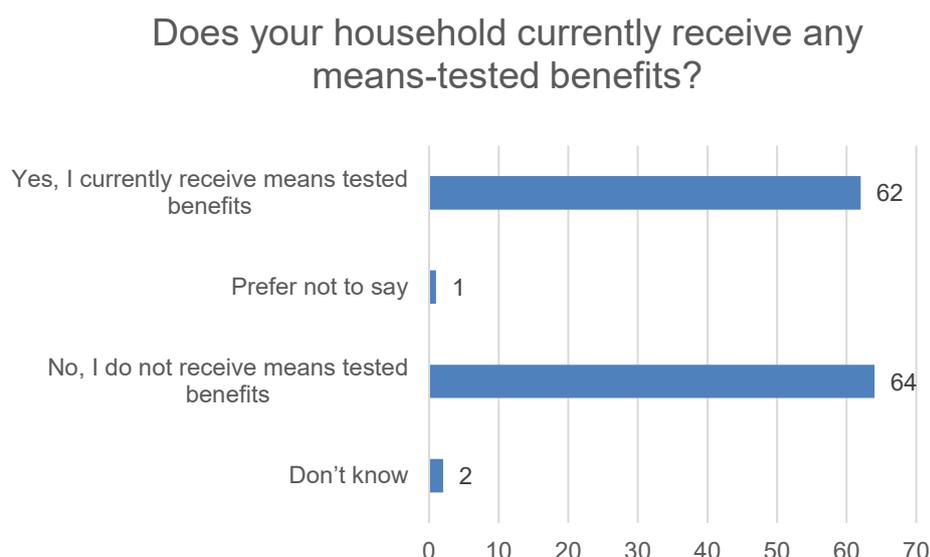


Figure 248 Parents: Means tested benefits

When asked whether or not children in the household received free school meals, the difference was larger, (see Figure 30).

⁵ It is likely that those parents who are governors would have more understanding of school processes than other parents.

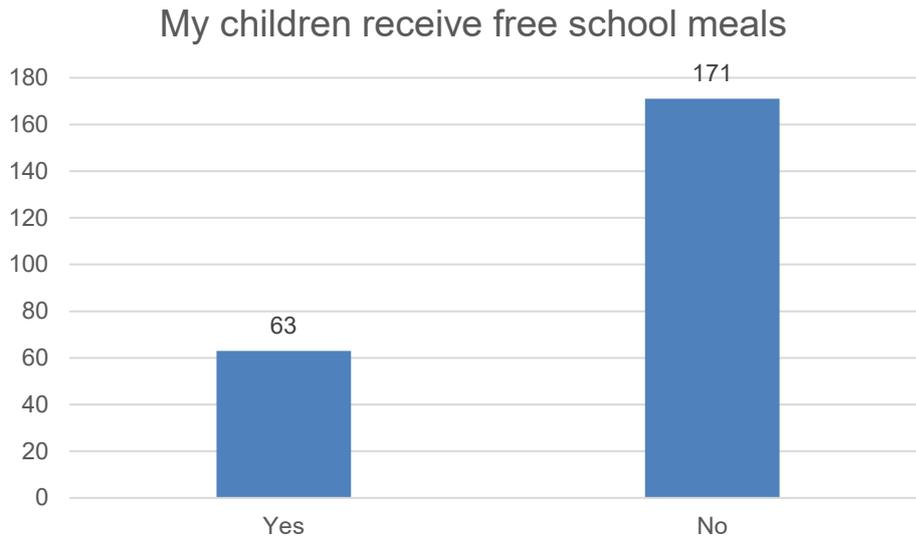


Figure 25 Parents: Free school meals

Support for engagement in learning

Overall, most parents would welcome more support for their engagement in their children’s learning, as shown in Figure 31.

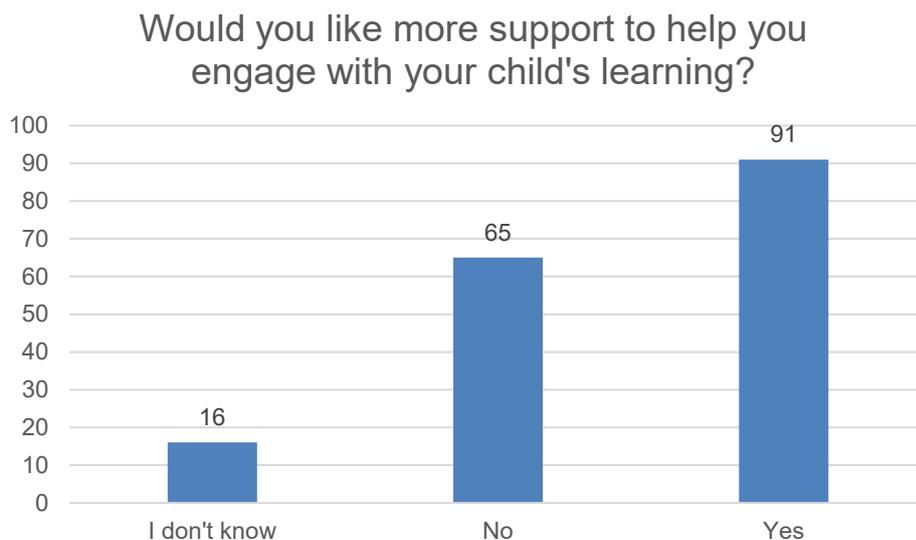


Figure 26 Parents: Support for engagement

Parents responded that they support learning in a wide range of activities: reading with/to their child (144 responses), helping with or checking homework (131 responses), discussing with the child what has happened at school (167 responses), taking the child to the library (59 responses), taking the child to musea, or other places they can learn (94 responses), sharing hobbies with their child (123), ensuring the child has a place do to school work (131 responses).

Most parents thought that parental engagement was important or very important, with 86 responding that it was important or very important, while only 22 felt that it was unimportant or very unimportant (see Figure 32).

How important do you think it is for parents to be engaged in their children's learning?

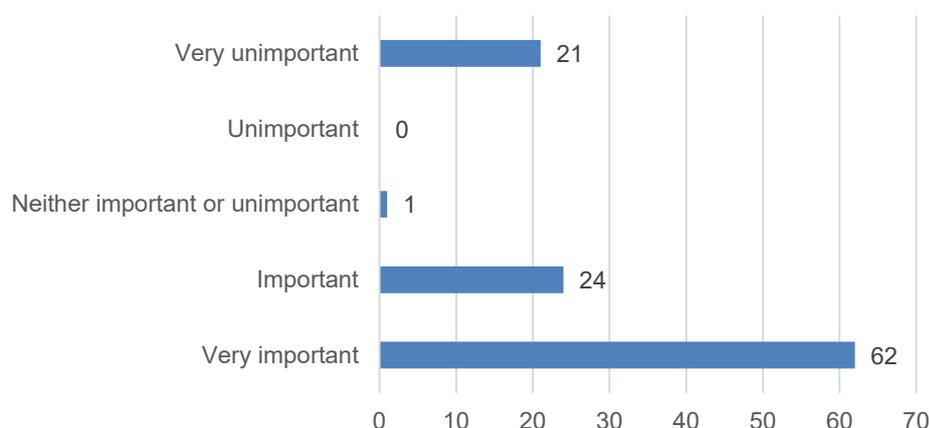


Figure 27 Parents: Importance of engagement in learning

Parents responded to set questions about how they supported learning, as well as providing free text answers. For the set questions, the results are seen in Figure 33 below:

How do you support your child's learning?

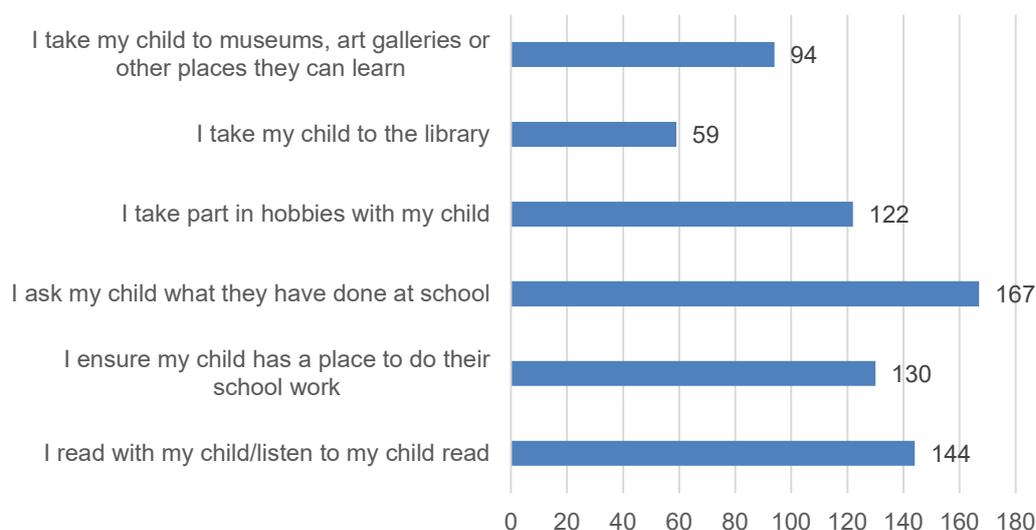


Figure 28 Parents: How they support learning

The majority of respondents discuss the school day with their children, and for those children still in primary school, most parents read to their child or listen to their child read. Parents also offered free text answers, relating to issues such as providing extra resources (books, apps, etc.), but in the main, these responses centred around encouraging children to be curious, and to enjoy learning.

Parental confidence in supporting learning

Parents expressed guarded confidence in their ability to support learning (see Figure 34), with the majority of parenting reporting that they felt 'somewhat' confident. (However, it is worth noting that only five respondents disagreed strongly with this

statement, and a further 10 somewhat disagreed; 82 respondents agreed somewhat or strongly with this statement).

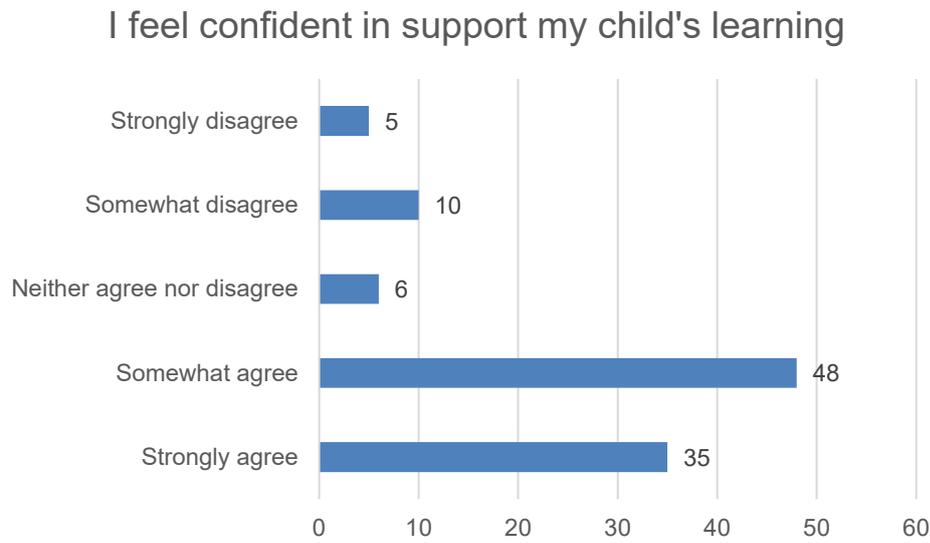


Figure 29 Parents: Confidence in supporting learning

Most parents felt that they had an impact on their child’s academic success, with 84 parents agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement, and only three disagreeing or disagreeing strongly (See Figure 35).

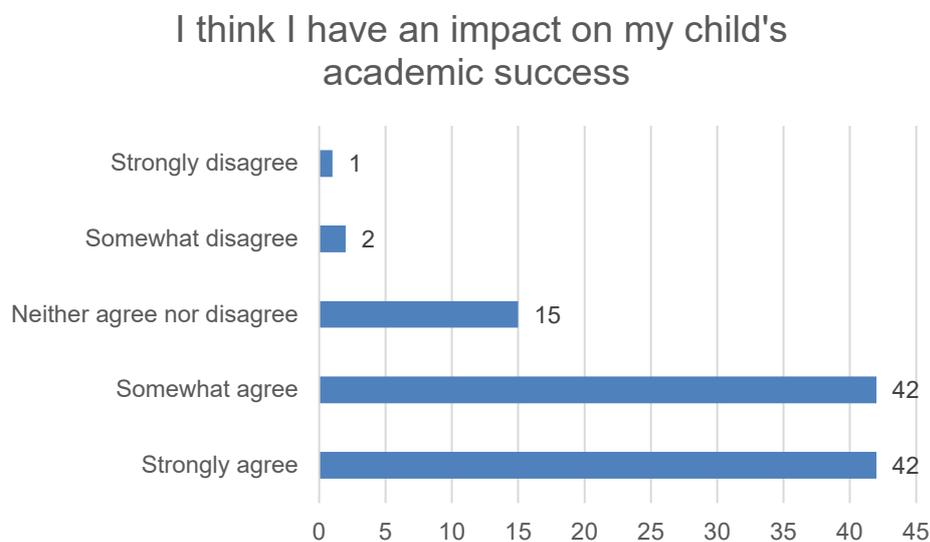


Figure 30 Parents: Impact on child's academic success

Do you experience barriers in supporting your child's learning?

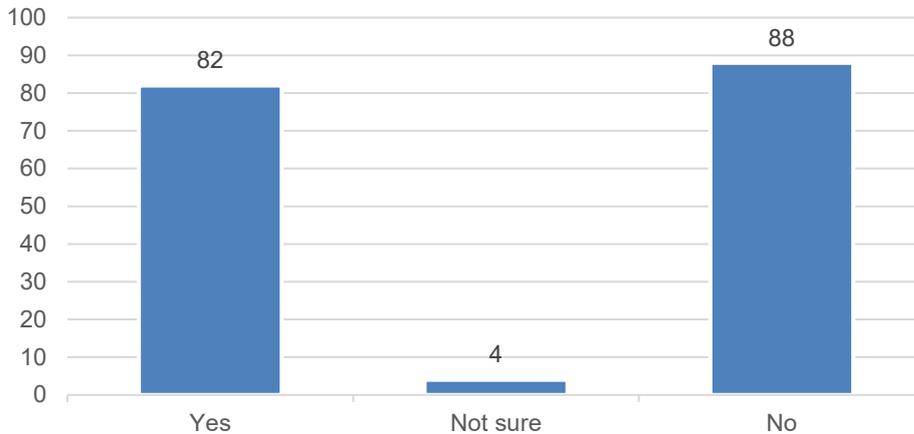


Figure 31 Parents: Barriers to learning

Parents were relatively evenly distributed in their views about barriers to supporting learning, with 82 saying that they did experience these, and 88 saying that they did not (Figure 36).

Communication

Parents reported that the most common way they received communications from school was through texts, (123 responses), then followed by emails, written letters, online meetings and communication online through websites/Hwb (see Figure 37).

How schools communicate with parents

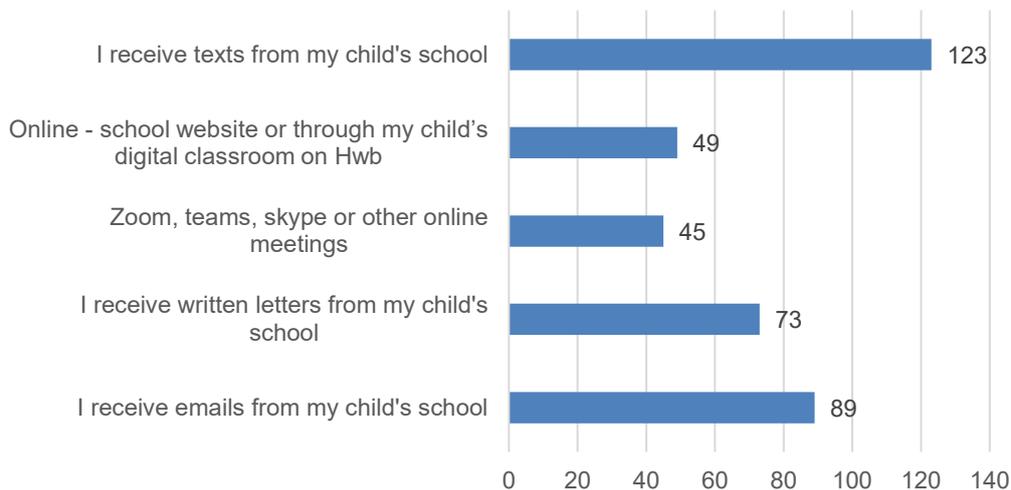


Figure 32 Parents: How schools communicate with parents

Parents' reports on their desire for more communication with schools are interesting – 64 parents agree or strongly agree that they would like more communication from schools, and 52 parents disagree or disagree strongly with this statement, with 26 parents undecided (see Figure 38). It would be useful to investigate this further, as parents are so nearly evenly divided on this issue.

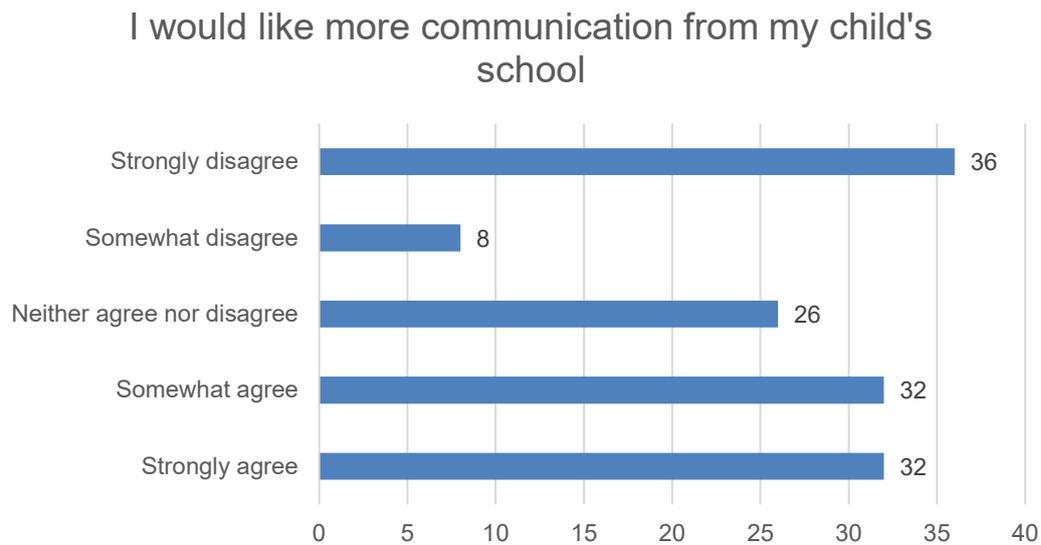


Figure 33 Parents: Desire for more communication from schools

However, when asked if they would prefer to have less communication from their children’s school, the answers are clearer, with a large majority of parents disagreeing with the statement, as can be seen in Figure 39.

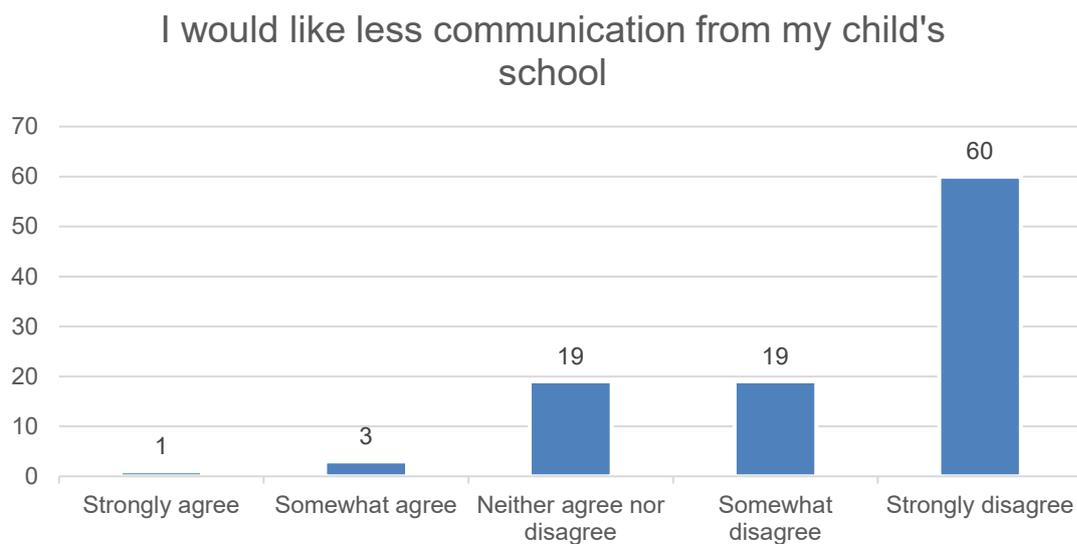


Figure 34 Parents: Desire for less communication from schools

Parents are more ambivalent about whether or not they feel encouraged to be involved in the life of the school, by school staff. Figure 40 demonstrates this by collapsing the positive (agree/strongly agree) and negative (disagree/strongly disagree) answers together. It would seem that the majority of parents do not feel encouraged to be involved in school.

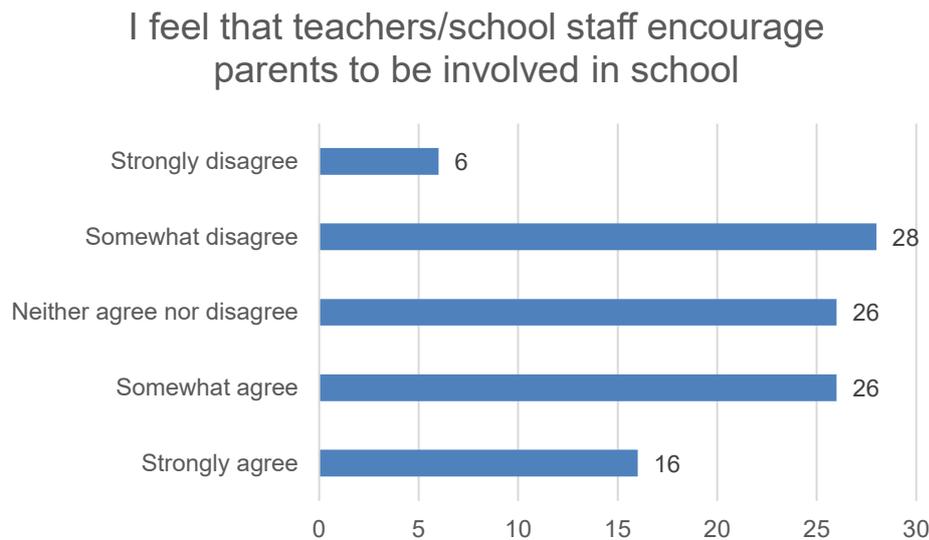


Figure 35 Parents: Feeling encouraged to be involved in school

Finally, parents responded to a question about how the COVID-19 lockdowns impacted on their involvement in learning. As can be seen in Figure 41, the majority of responses showed that parents felt neither more nor less able to support learning since lockdown.

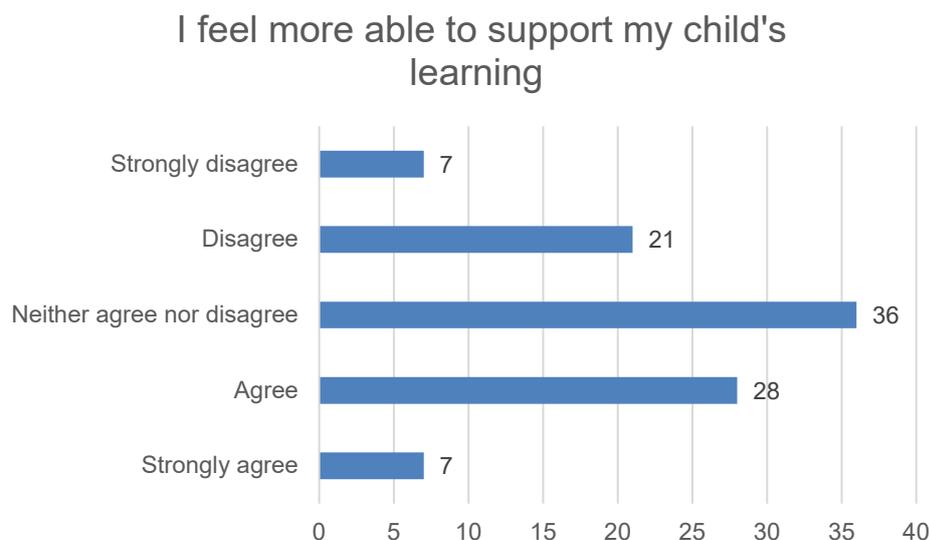


Figure 36 Parents: Impact of lockdown on support for learning

4.3 Combined answers to specific issues

In looking at answers to specific questions from both staff and parents, it is important to note that there were far more responses from parents than from staff; while the comparisons are interesting, they should not be taken as generalisations for all staff.

Communication

We can compare responses to the questions “I would like more communication with my students' families” in the staff survey, and “I would like more communication from my child's school” in the parent survey. Parents are keen to have extra communication, with around a two-thirds responding positively. Teachers are more

likely to be ambivalent or to disagree with this statement, as can be seen in Figure 42. However, as throughout this report, it should be remembered that the response levels from teaching staff were low.

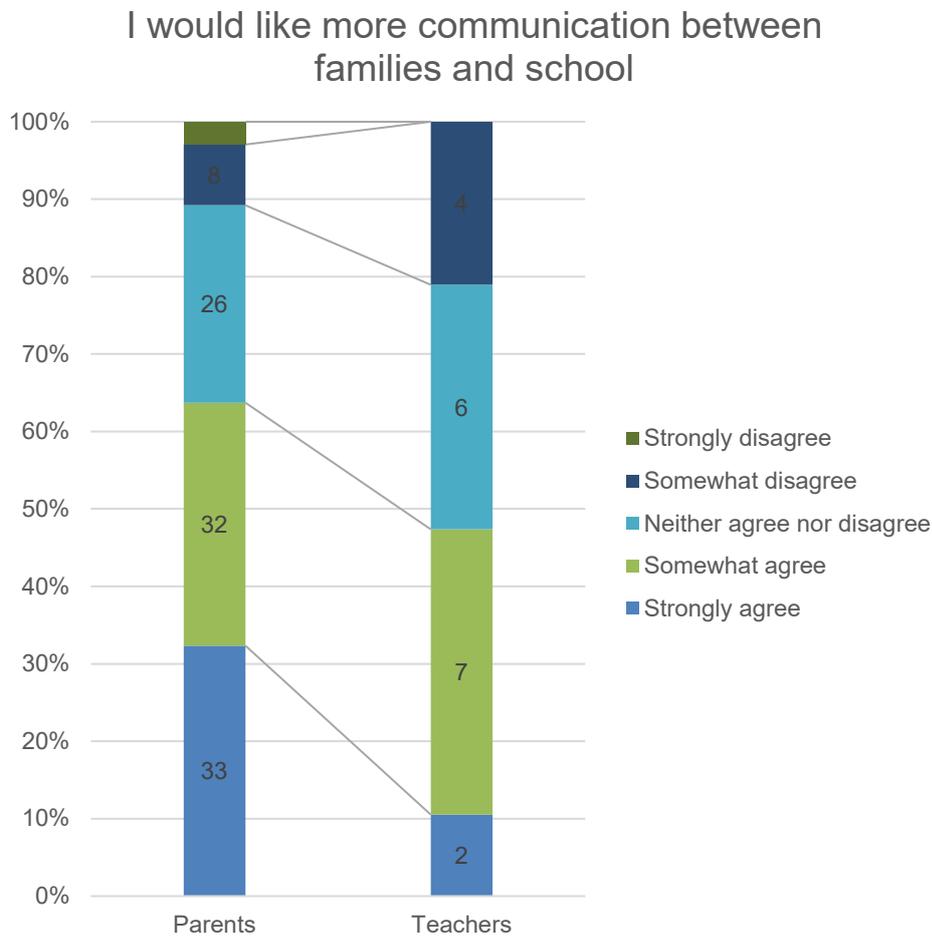


Figure 37 Combined: Communication

Support for parental engagement

We can compare the responses to the questions “Would you like parents to have more support to help them engage with your students' learning?” (staff survey) and “Would you like more support to help you engage with your child's learning?” (parent survey). Staff were slightly more likely to say yes to this question, and parents were much more likely to say no (See Figure 43).

Would you like parents to have more support to help them engage with children's learning?

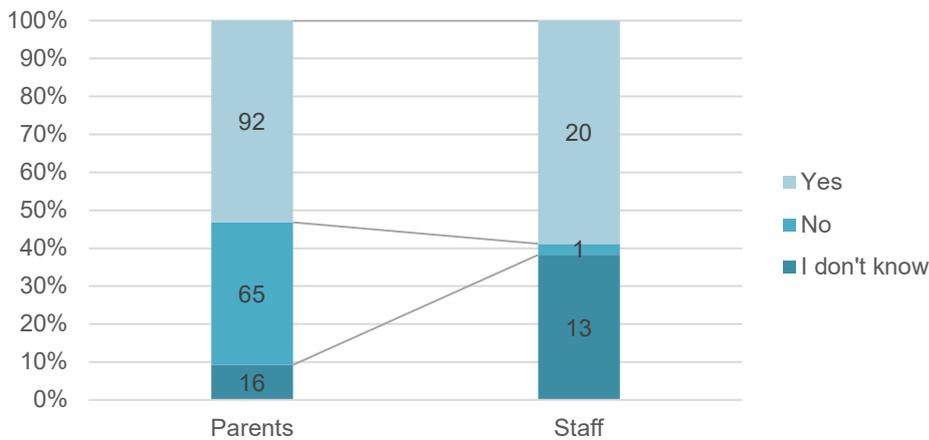


Figure 38 Combined: Support for parental engagement

Comparing responses to the 'since the Covid-19 lockdown' questions. Comparing responses to “Since the COVID 19 lockdown, I feel... - Parents are more engaged with learning” (staff) with ‘Since the COVID 19 lockdown I am...’more engaged with my child's learning’ (parents) (Figure 44).

Families Are More Engaged With Learning

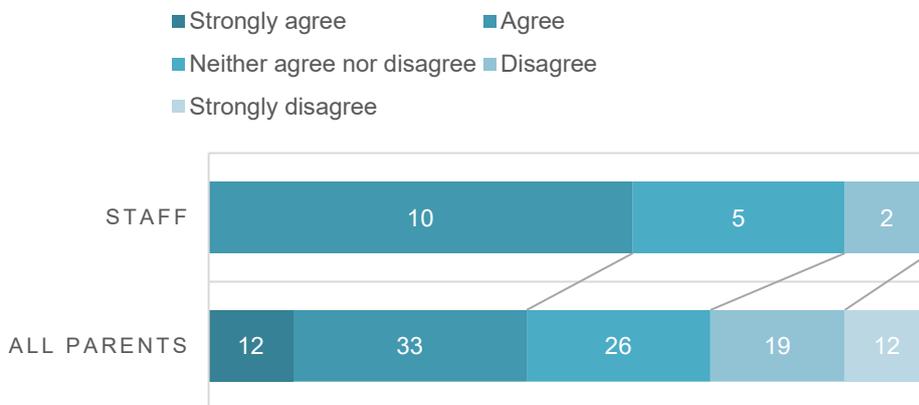


Figure 39 Combined: Engagement with learning

Comparing responses to “Since the COVID 19 lockdown, I feel... - Parents are more able to support learning” (staff survey) with “Since the COVID 19 lockdown, I feel... more able to support my child's learning” (parents survey) shows that more staff than parents (overall) feel that parents’ ability to support learning has increased (See Figure 45).

Families are more able to support children's learning

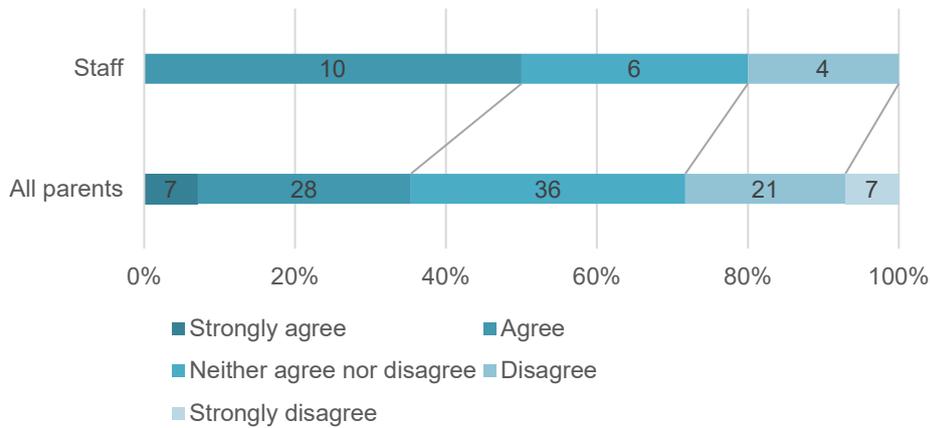


Figure 40 Combined: Ability to support learning

Good relationships between families and school staff

Comparing responses to the questions “Since the COVID 19 lockdown, I feel... - I have a good relationship with my students' parents” (staff survey) with “Since the COVID 19 lockdown, I feel...I have a good relationship with my child's teachers” (parents survey) shows that again, parents are less positive about this element than were staff (Figure 46).

Teachers and parents have good relationships

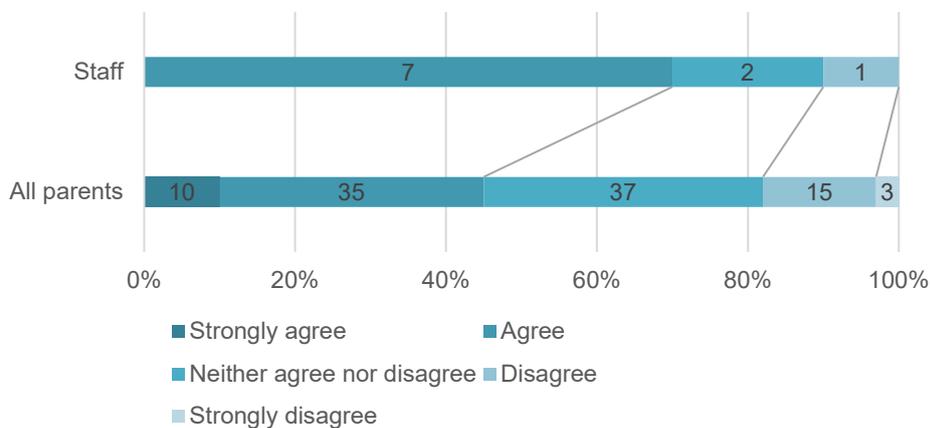


Figure 41 Combined: Staff parent relationships

Changes in the relationships between parents and school in Wales over the period of 2020-21

Parents and school staff had different opinions about the changes in the relationships between each other since Covid-19 lockdowns. Over this period, the majority of the parents (43%) felt less engaged with their child’s school and a smaller number of parents (24%) felt more engaged. The changes in the relationships with their child’s teacher were more positive. In answer to the question, “Since the COVID 19 lockdown, I feel... - I have a good relationship with my child's teachers”, parent responses areas shown in Figure 37. While 45% of parents noted a positive

change in the relationships with their child’s school, another 36% did not notice any differences (Figure 47).

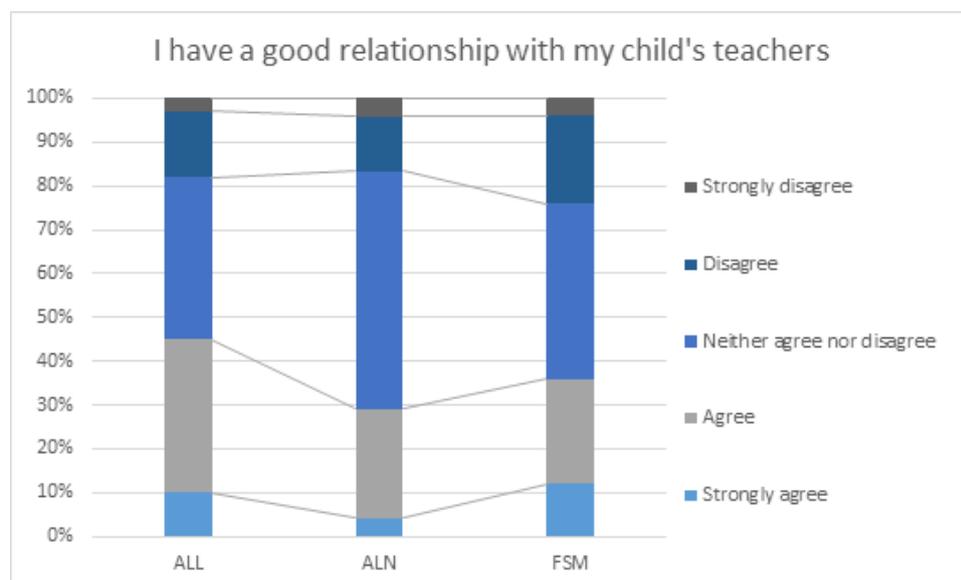


Figure 42 Parents' relationship with teachers

However, for the school staff the perception of the changes in the relationships between them and the parents over the period 2020-21 was completely different. The vast majority of the school staff noted positive changes in the relationships with the parents, yet when asked to comment about the changes in the relationships their answers revealed both positive and negative changes.

The various comments emphasised the importance of considering the variable and complex interactions that establish a relationship between individuals. Out of the 14 staff who commented about the impact of Covid 19 lockdowns on relationships with parents (10 from the surveys and 4 from the case studies interviews) six comments were completely positive, two were completely negative, and six highlighted both positive and negative factors that affected changes in the relationships with parents.

Positive changes

The factors that supported positive changes were related to better communication between schools and parents, in particular personal relationships which became stronger and more open. Staff commented that:

“The pandemic did open up the personal space in the teacher/parent relationship in some instances and the visual insight into home circumstances was unparalleled,” (Senior manager, various phases of education)

“Although we had good relationships with our parents previously, these have been further strengthened through the engagement over lockdowns. Parents are much more willing to let us know when they are struggling so that support can be arranged.” (Classroom teacher, primary school).

“Parents seem to trust school and teachers more and are better able to communicate with school.” (Senior manager, primary school)

Other positive factors highlighted the importance of considering different modes of communication with parents, for example regarding parents' evenings

"Parents evening now being held online - this is successful - straight to the point - no time to waste." (Middle manager, secondary school).

Some comments were on the usefulness of phone calls, video calls to reach parents that previously for several reasons, psychological or family related issues, had found it difficult to participate in parents' evenings or other meetings.

Negative changes

Multiple factors were connected to the decrease in communication with parents. The factors most cited were related to the restrictions for parents to visit or physically participate to school's events and online communication: internet access, knowledge, and skills.

"Covid-19 has had a negative impact on many of our parent engagement sessions as we have been unable to have visitors attend the school and many of our parents find virtual meetings difficult". (Senior manager, primary school)

"A lot of parents don't communicate via the app... communication with some parents feels lost." (Classroom teacher, primary school)

Another negative factors that various member of staff noted were related to parents' higher expectations on teachers to support their child's learning and a more negative and critical attitude towards teachers and schools.

"A significant minority have expectations that were unrealistic (for example, prepping & delivering lessons, with online and hard copy materials, whilst also phoning pupils on the check-in lists)." (Middle manager, secondary school)

"Lack of meaningful contact due to digital access. Some contact is quite aggressive as its hidden behind a monitor." (Senior manager, primary school)

Parents also noted negative changes, sometimes resulting from the end of lockdown; some parents pointed out that while communication with schools had improved over lockdown, 'During lockdown my son's school made fantastic use of seesaw and it was lovely to see the work that he was completing. Now that he is back in school it is often difficult to know what he has been doing during the day to support at home. Any information would be useful so that we can continue discussing at home'.

Barriers to engagement with learning

When asked about barriers to engagement with their children's learning, the most commonly reported barrier from staff was lack of knowledge or understanding, which was closely aligned to views of parents' own experiences of education, leading to both a lack of willingness to engage with schools, and a perceived lack of ability to support learning. Again, there is evidence of a view of parental engagement which is centred on the school (rather than on learning), 'Negative experiences during their own school lives prevent them from being interested in their child's life at school'.

Other barriers mentioned by staff include parental lack of time and resources, particularly access to the internet or technology.

Parents, on the other hand, cited issues of time more often than any other barrier; parents pointed to issues related to working full time, being single parent carers, and having a number of children at home to support.

The next most common barrier cited by parents (closely followed by the one below) was around communication from the school. Parents pointed out that they often did not know enough to support learning at home. These comments are summed up by comments from two parents: 'Lack of information sharing- I have no idea what he's working on, where he is at (apart from the parent teacher 5 minutes phone call at the end of the year)!' and 'I'm not listened to'.

With nearly the same number of coded segments, parents as well as staff highlighted a lack of parental knowledge/understanding as a barrier to engagement with learning. It is interesting, however, that parents generally linked this barrier to the one above – that is, parents saw their lack of knowledge or understanding as resulting from a lack of communication from school staff, 'It can be hard to find time as both myself and my husband work full time and not standard hours.

I also have very little idea of what exactly is being taught in school as all they tell us is what the theme for each term is. It would be good to know some basics of the curriculum and where our child should be so we can do more at home to support him', and 'I don't know how she I taught. For example I do not know the methods used to teach maths so am uncertain how best to support this at home. I do not speak Welsh and homework is always in Welsh with no English translation provided'.

Support for parental engagement

When asked what support would be useful, a majority of parent respondents mentioned something to do with communication from the school, with responses ranging from 'more communication' to responses centred around what young people are learning in the school setting, 'Having meetings with my child's class teacher, seeing more of what goes on in my child's daily lessons and applying what I learn to her home learning'.

The second most commonly coded response was aligned to this, with parents asking for more understanding and knowledge of what children were learning (this is linked to the barrier mentioned above). Parents often linked this sort of knowledge with their ability to support learning in the home learning environment, 'More information on what they are being taught and why and how I can help at home'.

When asked what support parents were already giving to their young people, parents reported giving support for academic skills (such as purchasing resources for their children or undertaking learning themselves, to support their children) and support for life skills, in particular around learning itself, 'I try to show that leaning is of value by continuing to learn myself, I try to help him not worry about when he finds things hard or doesn't understand'; parents seem to be supporting mastery goals with their children (Pomerantz et al., 2006, Goodall, 2020).

Staff responses mirrored those from parents, with staff reporting the two most common ways they supported parents to engage with learning were through communication, such as 'Simple suggestions for effective support' and, aligned to the concept of mastery above, 'How to foster a love of learning/listen to children read/correct pronunciation of sounds/training to help them in their own education, e.g. basic Maths'.

5. Case Studies: Parental Engagement at C Primary school, OF primary school and P high School ⁶.

The case studies are based on three different schools, two primary and one secondary school. The case studies centred around parental engagement in children's learning with a particular consideration on the parental engagement at the transition process from one phase of education to the next. The case studies focus on interviews with the lead practitioners in each school/set of schools.

The case studies are built on background information about the school and the area. The background information provided important data to understand each school's unique experience and involvement in the community context, as well as the different contexts within which the case studies schools existed. Other data were collected through materials, such as booklets, webpages, that are supporting and informing parents and students during the transition process and reports from the schools, and face-to-face and on Zoom semi-structured interviews with a Family Engagement Officer (F) in C primary school, an Assistant Head Teacher (A) in charge of transition in P secondary school, an Head Teacher (H) in OF primary school, and a Career Adviser (C) in P secondary school. The structure of the interviews was linked to the aims and the objectives of the study in particular on the key features of a successful transition. Other questions emerged from the analysis of the surveys data in particular on the changes in the relationships between school and parents; see 10.3 for recommendations for further research.

5.1 Background information on C primary School

C primary school is an English medium school that includes a nursery, infant and junior school. The school is housed in a new development (2018) in a rural area of south Wales. Estyn rated the school as "Good".

There are 220 pupils⁷ on roll, both boys and girls. The percentage of pupils that receive free school meals is 37%, higher than the average for the local authority (25%) and Wales (21%). Approximately 25% of the pupils are on the ALN register; 20% on School Action (L.A. average 11%, Wales average 11%) and in 4% on School Action Plus (L.A. average 5%, Wales average 7%). Very few pupils (4%) come from an ethnic minority background (L.A. average 5%, Wales average 13%)

Using the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation, the area where the school exists is in the 20% most deprived in the Overall category, in the Income Deprivation, Employment, and education categories. It is in the 30% most deprived in the Health category.

5.2 Background information on OF Primary school and P Secondary school

According to the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation, the area where the OF primary school and P high school are located is in the 50% group of most deprived areas in

⁶ These letters are used to allow anonymity for the case study schools.

⁷ All the data are from "My Local School" website, Welsh Government.

all the categories considered (Overall, Income Deprivation, Employment, Education, and Health).

OF primary school and P secondary school are in the same area, and OF is one of the main feeder schools for P secondary school. For this reason, the background information for both schools is presented in the same section.

OF primary school is an English medium school that includes a nursery, infant and junior school. The school is housed in a fairly new building site (2015) in a town area of south Wales. Estyn rated the school as “Good”.

There are 200 pupils on roll, both boys and girls. The percentage of pupils that receive free school meals is 65%, much higher than the average for the local authority (15%) and Wales (21%). On the ALN register, there are 38% of the pupils; 18% on School Action (L.A. average 7%, Wales average 11%) and a higher number (20%) on School Action Plus (L.A. average 6%, Wales average 7%). The number of pupils who come from an ethnic minority background (13%) is higher than the average for the local area (L.A. average 11%, Wales average 13%).

P high school is an English medium school. The school is housed in a brand new building site (2022) in a town area of south Wales.

There are 935 students on roll, both boys and girls, from 11 to 19 years old (62% girls). The percentage of students that receive free school meals is 36%, higher than the average for the local authority (12%) and Wales (19%). Approximately 32% of the pupils are on the ALN register; 22% on School Action (L.A. average 9%, Wales average 12%) and 10% on School Action Plus (L.A. average 5%, Wales average 7%). The number of pupils who come from an ethnic minority background (8%) is lower than the average for the local area (L.A. average 13%, Wales average 11%).

5.3 Background information on OF primary school and P secondary school area

Using the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation, the area where the OF primary school and P high school are in the 50% most deprived in all the categories considered (Overall, Income Deprivation, Employment, Education, and Health).

5.4 Main Findings of the case studies

The main findings emerged mostly from the experiences and perspectives of the Family Engagement Officer (F), the Assistant Head Teacher (A), the Head Teacher (H), and the Career Adviser (C) during the interviews undertaken in March 2022, complemented by the schools’ booklets, web pages and reports as appropriate.

Communication and relationships

“Building relationship and a friendly face is the number one”. (H, primary school) During the process of transition from one phase of education to the next, three main stakeholders are involved: the child/young person, their family; the school where

they came from (in the case of a child moving to a nursery is often the family itself) and the school where they moving to.

One key finding is related to the important role of communication and relationships between those three stakeholders.

For example, one of the participants (F) noted the importance of the timing of communication between the three stakeholders, and noticed some differences between two of the secondary schools where the primary school pupils were transitioning into.

“The liaising with X (one of the secondary schools in the area), which is less popular with our families has been much, much better than it has been with the Y (another secondary school in the area). We had a lot of difficulties trying to communicate with the year 7 and pastoral leads and things (with Y) they're not really interested until around July, whereas already things are getting put in place with X.” (F, primary school)

One of the schools was giving information and liaising with the primary school from February. Early communication was important for the primary school as they could provide more information to the families and give them better support. This could be one of the motives that explain the rising number of students and families that choose X rather than Y.

Continuous dialogue and liaison between primary and secondary school are considered fundamental for a positive transition (Jindale-Shape and Miller, 2008), and the relationship between OL primary school and P high school shows how a constant partnership and cooperation support a positive transition process. Both senior managers from primary and secondary schools compared the characteristics of the current transition process with the one that was adopted previously, and in the case of the primary school the transition process with other secondary schools.

“In the old system, it was this is what we can fit in and this is what we can do. It was very much a one way, the kids are coming into us. So it's ours the way we do it.” (A, secondary school)

“The school in the (other) side of the town very much has their own ideas, the transition for them is going to be about testing the children in an exam situation, all on one day together before they start.” (H, primary school)

Now, these two schools have regular meetings every month throughout the school year, building together a process of stronger cooperation.

“We have meetings with all of the cluster schools, so that the five primaries and the secondary school together with all of the different stakeholders, there'll be a session for teachers, there'll be a session for parents. Together with the senior leaders, governors, all the multi agencies, we are creating a vision for the cluster together.” (H, primary school)

As a result of this process, the secondary school has more information about the students, making them aware of children who could potentially be at risk of a difficult

transition, and primary and secondary schools are working together, engaging families and the wider community to establish a better educational path for every child.

During the interviews, the members of school staff mentioned the different forms of communication that they use with the families: text, website, Facebook page, Microsoft Teams meetings and pre-covid welcome meeting in school.

The three schools also use their website to provide information to parents about transition, with links to the council website, school prospectus and contact details of the Family Liaison Officer.

The website of the secondary school is worth a particular and detailed description as an example of positive communication to families and students about the transition from primary to secondary school. The senior manager involved in the transition process creates and then constantly updates a transition page. On the website there is a section exclusively focused on the transition from primary to secondary school. On this page, there is a promotional video with the Head Teacher introducing himself and then presenting the different curricular and extra-curricular activities that the students are involved in.

On the transition page, there is detailed information on the Open Evening. This event is divided into three different sessions, with just three main feeder schools per session to provide parents with a more personal experience.

There is also a section dedicated to frequently asked questions that cover topics from visiting the school building to the provision for students with ALN, from information on the suppliers for the school uniform to the school's system for buying food.

There are also sections of video recorded samples of lessons from different subjects to help the new students to familiarise themselves with their teachers, and testimonial videos of Year 7 students on their experiences on the transition process from primary to secondary school.

On the different sections there is not a general school email address, but the mail address of the senior manager dedicated to the transition process to provide parents with a single point of contact.

The importance of having a single point of contact for the families and a familiar face for the student to build a meaningful and personal relationship emerged from the interviews with the school staff members and the parents during the focus group. However, as A, the senior manager in the secondary school noted, a non-teaching role dedicated to the transition process and in developing and supporting the process of cooperation and partnerships with the feeder schools is needed.

"I think our school should have a dedicated transition officer who is paid a Teaching and learning Responsibility tariff TLR of approximately 6000 pounds a year, which is the same as a, as a head of school or a head of year. And I think that permanent role should be both supporting the head of year seven. 50% of their time could be supporting the increasing integration of year 7 fully with pastoral support, parental

support and the other 50% is spent out in the primary schools, you know, visiting, working and getting to know them there. (A, secondary school).

The significant role of building strong and personal relationships with the different stakeholders was evident from the experience of the transition into nursery. H from the other primary school spoke of the relationship they have with the “Flying Start” settings⁸.

“The nursery teachers go to see the children in the “Flying Start” setting, speak with a “Flying start” staff member about the child and how they are in that setting. And then they meet with the parents in that setting as well. So the parents, the staff in the “Flying start” setting, and the teacher are together observing the child, talking about the child making relationships. The nursery teachers visit the parents at home with the child and then the parent before the child starts comes with the child into the school setting. That is very much improved recently and the children are happy and confident then coming into school, and the parents are happy and confident. (H, primary school).

Another participant (F) described the impact of Covid 19 restrictions on early relationships between primary school students and their future secondary school teachers:

“In the past, we've had engagement from the comprehensive school where they used to come out, every other week, the maths teacher would come and would meet the children and then teach a maths lesson. That's all stop now... It's a familiar face when they go to high school. And I know the parents like that link. Now that's gone. So I think that has a detrimental effect on the children's confidence moving on to high school.” (F, primary school)

The fundamental role of establishing early connections and relationships between children and young people and their future teachers emerged from the interviews. For example, both primary and secondary school senior manager described their experiences with Year 6 students and the effect of these connections on Year 7 wellbeing.

“In the autumn term, October, November, I go to the primary to spend two hours with each (Year 6) class. I just spend time circulated sitting with them, chatting with them, introducing myself to them basically whilst they work. And that's been received really well to start with. They have lots of questions on what's the food like and is basically just that” (A, secondary school).

“It's been really important that the P (secondary school) staff have come and spent time with the children in the year six classroom and understanding, you know, what

⁸ “Flying Start is the Welsh Government’s targeted Early Years programme for families with children under 4 years of age who live in some of the most disadvantaged areas of Wales. Flying Start aims to make a decisive difference to the life chances of children by mitigating the impact of poverty, which is linked to poor life outcomes in early childhood, including health outcomes” LLYWODRAETH CYMRU & WELSH GOVERNMENT 2017. Flying Start Health Programme Guidance.

school looks like for them here and now so that they understand that.” (H, primary school)

The positive effect of establishing close links with staff of the school they are going to, is shown in the children’s feedback to their teachers:

“(In the past) they would come back to school and say, we all wish we were still here, we really miss you. Nobody knows us, nobody understands us. This has gone wrong, I've got lost, there was nobody to support me. Now the children are much happier.” (H, primary school)

Similar positive effects of an early connection with the school staff and the school environment emerged from the process of transition into nursery that OF has built in the past few years.

“The children start in new stream every term. So we have children start in September, we have children start in January with children started Easter. There are three waves coming in. So we can concentrate on the September children in the summer term before they start... And so transition is always a piece of work that is happening all of the time. And one of the things that they do when they come to visit is they spend time in the forest school area with their parents; the parent, the child, the teachers, together, outside. And that again, really develops that relationship, toasting marshmallows, looking at the trees, reading stories outside so that everybody feels that that is a non-threatening place. And then on the next visit, they've come in and they'll spend time in the classroom together, but before that, all of those visits have happened in flying start as well in that setting. The nursery children, they're very happy to start, you know, previously, when it was not, not so thorough in terms of the transition in there be children crying, not wanting their parents to leave.” (H, primary school)

This extract showcases the value of introducing families, children and young people to the new school environment before the school year starts. Some of the responses from the staff survey mentioned the negative past experiences of some of the parents as one of the perceived barriers to parental engagement in education. A visit to the school site, together with their child might have a positive effect in considering school as “a non-threatening place”. The secondary school, for example, organises “mini-transition visits”, before Easter break, where each of the cluster primary schools is booked in for a two-hour visit. During this time, they will have an assembly, a lesson, food in the canteen, and a visit to the sports hall. In the summer term, they will have two full transition days: one where the students experience a lesson timetable, and another day where the student will be involved in a sports day.

During the interviews, the participants noted the importance of providing personal communication, treating families, children and young people as individuals respecting their own personal social, cultural and economic background, their motivation, concerns and interests.

In the focus group parents mentioned a problem that they face in the communication with the teachers and the schools. When parents and schools work together, parental support is more effective (McGee, 2004). Parents can be a valuable source

of information about their child or young people but often they are not involved in the transition processes.

“If you talk to teachers, they will tell you they know that every child is different. Every child needs something different. But they don't always recognise that in terms of parents because every parent is different” (Parent1)

“Don't be afraid to ask parents for their support. I know you won't get support from every parent, ... but most of us would love to be able to support our children ... so they get the most out of their school years.” (Parent2)

Continuous partnerships and cooperation between the various schools, the families and the children and young people, early connection, and communication from the school where the children/young people will be transitioning to and more personal and individualised communication which support families, children and young people in overcoming fears and concern, are some of the key features of a positive transition.

Engaging young people in the transition process

Children and young people themselves can play a significant role in the transition process. As example of good practice, it was mentioned previously that the secondary school added video testimonials of students who had just transitioned into secondary school. These videos were in their web pages dedicated to the transition process aimed at parents/carers and students. During the interviews, the participants mentioned the idea that Year 7 students could go back into their primary school and meet Year 6 students who will transition at the end of the school year.

“We like to involve them the next people's back here. So then they can say to the use six children here.” (H, primary school)

“I think an experience of maybe some of the year's seven children coming down to us during the summer term and coming to speak to our children Just to come down and talk about the school.” (F, primary school)

“We may arrange video calls, then, where Year seven from one of our primaries have a video call into the year six classrooms so that they can say, “Hey, how's it going?” you know, because they were all friends, a few months before.” (A, secondary school)

These meetings could offer the opportunity for recently transitioned students to talk about their experiences, the incoming students could express their thoughts and concerns. They could provide precious information for schools to generate policies for making a smooth and positive transition.

6. Discussion

6.1 Discussion of the research questions

How have relationships between parents and schools in Wales changed over the period of 2020-21?

As noted in section 7.5, parents and school staff differed on their views of the impact of the pandemic lockdowns on the relationship between them. Parents felt less engaged with schools as institutions, yet nearly half of parents (46%) felt that the relationships had improved, and 37% of parents felt more able to support their children's learning.

While it is not possible to directly compare and contrast teacher and parent views, due to the different sample sizes, it is interesting to note that while most school staff felt relationships had improved, when analysed not all of the changes were found to be positive ones. There were positive changes in having closer personal relationships with parents, which contrasted with a detrimental impact on relationships due to lack of physical proximity and difficulties in using technology.

6.2 Definitions of parental engagement

Overall, the picture presented of staff perceptions of parental engagement is closer to the concept of parental involvement in school/schooling than it is to a partnership between families and schools. Some school staff did report views which would be considered partnership with parents, such as 'Involving parents in decision taken with regards to their child's education; support needed; how they can support at home; sharing resources'. However, as discussed in the literature review above, partnership working with parents and families emerges from a deeper understanding of the importance of all members of the community in supporting young people's learning.

The majority of staff responses centred around parents supporting the school, rather than supporting learning directly through their own action. This view is exemplified in survey responses from school staff, such as, 'When parents/carers actively support teachers and schools in supporting their children's academic learning', as a definition of parental engagement (Q12) and concentration from staff on 'bringing parents in' for workshops as both a definition of parental engagement (Q12) and something which would be useful to support that engagement (Q17) and in a clear linkage between parents coming into school and supporting learning. Even responses which lean toward parental engagement with learning, seem to base this on the direction of the school, for example, 'Parents supporting and supplementing their children's classroom experience in a way that enhances the experiences and supports the school community. Responding to school communication and showing understanding of school policies in the context of whole school ethos'. Even in this comment, which does relate to parental engagement in learning, links this to school policies. A member of school staff commented in the final, open section of the survey, 'I feel that liaising with parents is very important to the impact and development of pupils learning. I feel schools already offer a range of opportunities for parents to become more actively involved in pupils academic development'. This comment acknowledges the importance of parental involvement but does not show the foundations of partnership working with parents.

Parents' responses, on the other hand, were much closer to the concept of parental engagement in learning, with three times the number of responses coded as 'engagement' as were coded in relation to involvement. Examples from parents which exemplify the idea of engagement in learning include, 'Being actively involved in all aspects of the child's life', 'Helping your child with education, learning while undertaking everyday activities e.g. gardening, baking and helping with reading. Engagement with the school'.

Some parents did give responses which were closer to the idea of parental involvement with school or schooling, however; these included 'The responsibility of parents to reinforce classroom learning' and 'How involved a parent or guardian is in the education of their children, for example, contact with school, parents evenings attendance, assisting with homework'.

It is clear from the foregoing that while school staff value the conception and idea of parental engagement with learning, for the most part, their understanding of this idea is closer to the concept of parental involvement with school or schooling than with learning, which accords with prior research (Daniels, 2020, Wood and Bauman, 2017, Souto-Manning and Swick, 2006b). The response rate for the staff survey was low and therefore cannot be seen to be representative of all teachers in Wales, however, this result does accord with the literature discussed above; agency for the most part remains with the school, which directs and dictates actions. While again it is not possible to generalise from these results, it is significant that over 80% of teachers reported that their initial training did not include information about parental engagement; this aligns with recent research on initial teacher education in Wales (Goodall et al., 2021). However, it should be noted that all school staff saw value in parents' engagement in the learning process; this provides a sound foundation on which to build.

6.3 Barriers to engagement

There is a clear disjuncture between the views of parents and school staff around the barriers faced by parents, in engaging in their children's learning, even to whether or not parents experience these barriers (Figure 17 and Figure 36), with parents nearly equally divided between feeling that they did or did not experience such barriers, but most staff believing these barriers did exist. Parents felt the biggest barrier was the time they had available to support learning, while school staff suggested that the biggest barrier to engagement was parents' lack of knowledge or understanding of what children were learning. This may suggest deficit models of parents being held by staff, however, the sample size is not large enough to make a definitive statement on this issue.

It should be noted that both school staff and parents highlighted the need for greater – or better – communication between families and schools. Both groups of respondents held that the content of this communication should be about learning – what children are learning, and how parents and families can support this learning in the home learning environment. It is interesting that parents and staff disagreed on the most common form of communication (but again, this could be related to the small sample size for the staff survey). (Figure 19 and Figure 37)

In light of the discussion above about deficit views of parents, it is interesting to note that a greater proportion of staff expected parents to encounter barriers to engaging with learning, than did parents themselves (Figure 15, Figure 15). It is also the case that the majority of parents felt confident about supporting their children's learning, while the majority of staff reported that they believed that parents did not have this confidence (Figure 34, Figure 12)

The findings from the case study schools around transition bear this out and also build on previous research around parental engagement in Wales (Goodall et al., 2021), which highlighted the importance of building trusting relationships between all parties (young people and families, and school staff in all schools/settings involved).

Staff and parents expressed a desire for greater support around the concept and practice of parental engagement in learning; this desire is in line with Welsh Government's plans for recovery, which specify support for learning and particularly for vulnerable learners.

6.4 What can we learn from these changes to support improved parental engagement in young people's learning in Wales?

This project has shown that there still remains a gulf between the understanding of parental engagement as partnership (Goodall, 2018a, Goodall, 2017b) and the understanding of parental engagement in schools, particularly by the group of school staff who responded to the survey.

The project has also shown that not only were few teacher respondents prepared to support parental engagement by their initial teacher education (Goodall et al., 2021, Willemsse et al., 2016b, Willemsse et al., 2018), but at least among the small sample of teachers who responded to this survey, there is an appetite for more training and information in this field (See section 11 for recommendations).

7. Limitations

All research has limitations; the purpose of a section such as this is to discuss the particular limitations faced by this study, to suggest ways such limitations might be overcome in future work, and to describe any steps taken to mitigate the limitations presented (Ross and Bibler Zaidi, 2019).

7.1 Sample size

The first and most obvious limitation in this study is the small number of teacher/school staff respondents to the survey. As noted above, the surveys were open for just over two months (February 7 to March 16, 2022).

A number of strategies were used to gain respondents: the surveys were highlighted through social media (the twitter accounts of the Swansea Team, the CPAG and CinW, and retweeted by others). Contacts were also approached and asked to distribute the survey link; this included ITE providers in Wales, who shared the link to and information about the survey with partner schools. Members of the Swansea Team also attended Partner School Meetings of ITE providers to discuss the project and distribute the link. The link to the survey was also distributed through other contacts such as colleagues throughout Wales working on other projects from this call; direct conversation with school leaders and contacts in other organisations. Links were repeatedly circulated throughout this time.

However, the number of respondents remained disappointingly low. While it is not possible to be certain why this is the case, there are certain points which must be taken into consideration.

Many schools had dealt with uncertainty around returning to the classroom after the Christmas closures between December 2021 and January 2022 (BBC News Online, 2021), a situation which followed on from the disruption of the previous 18 months. Teacher stress throughout the pandemic was high, from the earliest days (Lisa and Kathryn, 2020), and stress levels for teachers continued to be high throughout the pandemic and the phased return to classroom based teaching (Manning and Jeon, 2020); research in Wales has shown that teachers here were not exempt from these effects (Smith and James, 2021). While it's possible that some teachers experienced a slight reduction in their working hours during the period of school closures, with the return to classroom practice, it seems that teacher workload again increased to its pre-pandemic levels in terms of hours worked, hours which are felt within the profession to be too long (Worth and Faulkner-Ellis, 2021).

Further, many teachers have expressed concern about students being behind where they would have been expected to be, with teachers in some research expecting 44% of their students to be in need of "intensive catch-up support" (Sharp et al., 2020, 5).

Taken together, the uncertainty around provision, the stress levels caused by the responses to the pandemic, and the extra work required to support students in need of 'catching up', may go some way to explaining a lack of teacher engagement with an online survey.

7.2 Number of parent respondents who are governors

It is interesting that over 20% of the parent respondents were governors at their children's school. As noted above, this involvement in the governing processes of the school may lead to these parents having a greater understanding of the workings of the school and may impact on their relationship with school staff.

7.3 Case Study Limitations

While the case study process sought to include a range of settings, it should be noted that all of the schools involved were English medium schools and all within the general area of South Wales. The primary schools had above average numbers of children diagnosed with ALN, and sat within new housing estates.

The evidence collected came from the head teachers and middle managers within the three schools involved. The young people who had already experienced the transition process and those who would be undergoing that process and their parents were not involved in the study. The two primary schools were of similar sizes and both have above average percentages of ALN learners. We have included a recommendation for further case study work around transition, to broaden the understanding of good practice in this area. The videos of young people about the transition process are of interest but should not be taken as representative of all students' views.

8. Recommendations

8.1 Recommendations for Staff

- Increase communication between all three stakeholders involved in transition (families, initial institution and receiving institution)
- Give parents and young people access to the new site can reduce anxiety and support a smooth transition process
- Begin work around transition as early in the academic year as possible
- Designate a member of nonteaching staff to support work around transition

8.2 Recommendations for Policy Makers

- Embed concepts of parental engagement with learning and partnership with parents in initial and continuing teacher education and training in Wales
- Trial and refine the toolkit produced for this project with a wide range of schools and contexts, from early years settings through to colleges and sixth forms.
- Ensure that parents and the wider community are involved in all processes surrounding this work, in line with Welsh Government's mandate for collaborative working.

8.3 Recommendations for Further Research

- Survey both staff and parents more widely about the value of the changes since COVID-19
- Create clear case studies of good practice in transition (extending the work of this project), based in different phases of education and different contexts, to lead to more understandings of good practice and further recommendations in this area in this area.
- Investigate the possibility and value of involving pupils who have recently transitioned, in supporting incoming students.
- Investigate staff confidence in supporting parental engagement
- Investigate the impact of ALN, SES, etc. on parental engagement in learning in Wales

Annexes

Annex A - Parents after Covid: Parents Survey

Hello, and thank you for taking the time to engage with this survey. Please read this information carefully.

What is the purpose of the research?

We are conducting research into how parental engagement has been effected by the COVID 19 epidemic

Who is carrying out the research?

The research is being carried out by a research team at Swansea University. The research has been approved by the College Research Ethics Committee in the College of Arts and Humanities at Swansea University.

What happens if I agree to take part?

If you agree to take part, you will be given the opportunity to fill in an online survey; this should take no more than 10 or 15 minutes to complete.

Are there any risks associated with taking part?

The research has been approved by the College Research Ethics Committee. There are no significant risks associated with participation. You will not be asked any questions that will identify you.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Taking part in this research can help you reflect on your own experiences and those of your family. On a wider scale, this research will help to inform practice in educational settings across Wales, to the benefit of other families and young children.

What will happen to the information I provide?

An analysis of the information will form part of our report at the end of the study and may be presented to interested parties and published in peer reviewed journals, conferences and related media. Note that all information presented in any reports or publications will be anonymous and unidentifiable.

Is participation voluntary and what if I wish to later withdraw?

Your participation is entirely voluntary – you do not have to participate if you do not want to. If you decide to participate, but decide not to complete the survey, you are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without penalty.

Data Protection Privacy Notice

The data controller for this project will be Swansea University. The University Data Protection Officer provides oversight of university activities involving the processing of personal data, and can be contacted at the Vice Chancellors Office.

The legal basis that we will rely on to process your personal data will be processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. This public interest justification is approved by the College of Human and Health Sciences Research Ethics Committee, Swansea University.

The legal basis that we will rely on to process special categories of data will be processing is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes.

Any requests or objections should be made in writing to the University Data Protection Officer:-

University Compliance Officer (FOI/DP)
Vice-Chancellor's Office
Swansea University
Singleton Park
Swansea
SA2 8PP
Email: dataprotection@swansea.ac.uk

How to make a complaint

If you are unhappy with the way in which your personal data has been processed you may in the first instance contact the University Data Protection Officer using the contact details above.

If you remain dissatisfied then you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: -

Information Commissioner's Office,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire,
SK9 5AF
www.ico.org.uk

What if I have other questions?

If you have further questions about this study, please do not hesitate to contact us:

Dr Janet Goodall

Department of Education and Childhood Studies
Swansea University

Email : j.s.goodall@swansea.ac.uk

Consent Do you consent to taking part in this research?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Q25 If you have more than one child, please fill this survey in, thinking of your oldest school age child.

In which local authority do you live? Please select from the dropdown box below.

▼ Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (26) ... Wrexham County Borough Council (47)

Q5

If you have more than one child, please consider only one in this survey.

How old is the child you have in mind when answering the questions in this survey?

Under 5 years old (1)

6 - 7 years old (2)

8 - 9 years old (3)

10 - 11 years old (4)

12 - 13 years old (5)

14 - 16 years old (6)

Over 16 years old (13)

Q6 What phase of education is this child in?

Preschool or nursery (1)

Primary school (2)

Secondary school (3)

College/Sixth Form (4)

Other: (5) _____

Q7 What is your relationship to the child you have in mind in this survey?

Mother (1)

Father (2)

Grandmother (3)

Grandfather (4)

Foster mother (5)

Foster father (6)

Other: (7) _____

Q8 What is your highest level of education?

Primary education (1)

Secondary education (2)

Undergraduate Degree (3)

Masters Degree/MBA or equivalent (4)

Doctoral degree or equivalent (5)

Q26 How many children do you have still living at home?

One (1)

Two (2)

Three (3)

Four or more (4)

Q28 My child attends

An English medium school (28)

A Welsh medium school (29)

A Bilingual school (30)
Unsure (31)

Q41 My child has an additional learning need (ALN)/special educational need (SEN)
Yes (1)
No (2)
Other (3) _____

Q29 How would you define your ethnicity?
White (Welsh, English, Scottish, Northern Irish or British; Irish; Gypsy or Irish Traveller; Any other White background) (1)
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups (White and Black Caribbean; White and Black African; White and Asian; Any other Mixed or Multiple ethnic background) (2)
Asian or Asian British (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Any other Asian Background) (3)
Black, African, Caribbean or Black British (African; Caribbean; Any other Black, African or Caribbean background) (4)
Other ethnic group (Arab, any other ethnic group) (5)
Q27 My children receive free school meals
Yes (1)
No (2)
In the process of applying (10)
Unsure (9)

Q47 Does your household currently receive any means-tested benefits? (e.g. universal credit, tax credits, income support, income based Jobseeker's Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, council tax support)
Yes, I currently receive means tested benefits (1)
I am in the process of applying for at least one of these benefits (6)
No, I do not receive means tested benefits (7)
Don't know (8)
Prefer not to say (9)

End of Block: Demographic information

Start of Block: Your engagement with your child's learning

Q12 How would you define 'parental engagement in learning'? Please write your answer below:

Q14 Do you experience any barriers to supporting your child's learning? These might include lack of access to information or technology, lack of time, not speaking the language my child is being taught in,

No (3)
Yes (5)
Not sure (4)

Skip To: Q16 If Do you experience any barriers to supporting your child's learning?
These might include lack of a... =

Display This Question:

If Do you experience any barriers to supporting your child's learning? These might include lack of a... = Yes

Q15 What barriers do you experience to supporting your child's learning?

Q16 Would you like more support to help you engage with your child's learning?
No (3)
Yes (5)
I don't know (4)

Display This Question:

If Would you like more support to help you engage with your child's learning? = Yes

Q17 What support would be useful to help you engage with your child's learning?

Q18 How do you support your child's learning? Please select all that apply and please add anything which does not appear in the list.

I read with my child/listen to my child read (1)

I help my child with homework/check my child's homework (2)

I ask my child what they have done at school (3)

I take my child to the library (4)

I take my child to museums, art galleries or other places they can learn (5)

I take part in hobbies with my child (6)

I ensure my child has a place to do their school work (7)

Please add anything else you do to support your child's learning: (8)

Q30 Parental engagement with learning

	Very unimportant (7)	Unimportant (8)	Neither important or unimportant (9)	Important (10)	Very important (11)
How important do you think it is for parents to be engaged in their children's learning? (1)					

Q34 Parental engagement in learning

	Strongly disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Strongly agree (6)
I would like to be more involved in my child's learning (1)					
I feel confident to support my child's learning (2)					
I feel confident to help my child with homework (3)					
I think I have an impact on my child's academic success (4)					
I understand the homework tasks my child is given (5)					

Q10 Communication with school - please select all that apply

I receive texts from my child's school (1)

I receive emails from my child's school (2)

I receive written letters from my child's school (3)

Zoom, teams, skype or other online meetings (5)

Online - school website or through my child's digital classroom on Hwb (6)

I receive information from my child's school in other ways: (4)

Q11 Communication with my child's school - please select the appropriate answer for each question

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I am satisfied with communication from my child's school (1)					
I would like more communication from my child's school (2)					
I would like less communication from my child's school (3)					
I feel that teachers/school staff encourage parents to be involved in school (4)					

Q31 Interactions with school

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)	Does not apply (6)
I always attend workshops or meetings at my child's school (1)						
I go on school trips with my child when asked (2)						

Q39 I volunteer at my child's school

Yes (1)

No (2)

Unsure (3)

Q32 I am a member of the parent committee/PTA/parent forum at my child's school

No (21)

Yes (22)

Q33 I am a governor at my child's school

Yes (1)

No (2)

Q35 This section looks at the impact of the school lockdowns and the home schooling experience on your relationship to your child's learning and to your child's school

Q36 Since the COVID 19 lockdown, I feel...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
More engaged with my child's learning (1)					
More engaged with my child's school (2)					
More able to support my child's learning (3)					
I have a good relationship with my child's teachers (4)					

Q37 Parental engagement in learning

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I would like to know more about parental engagement in learning (1)					
I would like to be more involved in my child's learning (2)					

Annex B - Parents After Covid: Staff Survey

Q42 Hello, and thank you for taking the time to engage with this survey.
Please read this information carefully.

What is the purpose of the research?

We are conducting research into how parental engagement has been effected by the COVID 19 epidemic

Who is carrying out the research?

The research is being carried out by a research team at Swansea University. The research has been approved by Swansea University.

What happens if I agree to take part?

If you agree to take part, you will be given the opportunity to fill in an online survey; this should take no more than 10 or 15 minutes to complete.

Are there any risks associated with taking part?

The research has been approved by the College Research Ethics Committee. There are no significant risks associated with participation. You will not be asked any questions that will identify you.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Taking part in this research can help you reflect on your own experiences and those of your students and their families. On a wider scale, this research will help to inform practice in educational settings across Wales, to the benefit of other families and young children.

What will happen to the information I provide?

An analysis of the information will form part of our report at the end of the study and may be presented to interested parties and published in peer reviewed journals, conferences and related media. Note that all information presented in any reports or publications will be anonymous and unidentifiable.

Is participation voluntary and what if I wish to later withdraw?

Your participation is entirely voluntary – you do not have to participate if you do not want to. If you decide to participate, but decide not to complete the survey, you are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without penalty.

Data Protection Privacy Notice

The data controller for this project will be Swansea University. The University Data Protection Officer provides oversight of university activities involving the processing of personal data, and can be contacted at the Vice Chancellors Office.

The legal basis that we will rely on to process your personal data will be processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. This public interest justification is approved by the College of Human and Health Sciences Research Ethics Committee, Swansea University.

The legal basis that we will rely on to process special categories of data will be processing is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes.

Any requests or objections should be made in writing to the University Data

Protection Officer:-
University Compliance Officer (FOI/DP)
Vice-Chancellor's Office
Swansea University
Singleton Park
Swansea
SA2 8PP
Email: dataprotection@swansea.ac.uk

How to make a complaint

If you are unhappy with the way in which your personal data has been processed you may in the first instance contact the University Data Protection Officer using the contact details above.

If you remain dissatisfied then you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: -
Information Commissioner's Office,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire,
SK9 5AF
www.ico.org.uk

What if I have other questions?

If you have further questions about this study, please do not hesitate to contact us:

Dr Janet Goodall
Department of Education and Childhood Studies
Swansea University
Email : j.s.goodall@swansea.ac.uk

If you are happy to continue with this survey, please select Yes, below

Yes (1)
No (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Hello, and thank you for taking the time to engage with this survey. Please read this information... = No
End of Block: Introduction

Start of Block: Block 6

Q3 What is your role in your school or setting? If you have multiple roles, please choose the one that best describes your day to day work.

Classroom teacher (1)
Middle manager/leader (2)
Senior manager/leader (3)
Teaching assistant (4)
Other: (5) _____

Q5 What phase of education do you work in?

Child care, not based in school or nursery (1)
 Nursery (2)
 Primary (3)
 Secondary (4)
 College/sixth form (5)
 Other: (6) _____

Q8 What is your highest level of education?
 Undergraduate Degree (3)
 Masters Degree or equivalent (4)
 Doctoral degree or equivalent (5)
 Other (6) _____

LA In which local authority is your school?
 ▼ Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (26) ... Wrexham County Borough Council (47)

Q12 How would you define 'parental engagement in learning'?

Q29 Do you think parental engagement in learning is important?

	Not at all important (16)	Slightly important (17)	Moderately important (18)	Very important (19)	Extremely important (20)
I think parental engagement in learning is: (3)					

Q13 Parental engagement in learning: please select your answer to the following statements

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I think it's important that parents/families support learning outside of school (1)					
I don't feel parents have an impact on my students' learning (2)					
I think parents know how to support my students' learning (3)					

I think parents feel confident in supporting my students' learning (4)					
I feel the school gives parents enough information to support my students' learning (5)					

Q9 For the activities below, in general what proportion of parents get involved?

	Very few (1)	Around half (2)	Most (3)	I don't know/Not applicable (4)
Attending parents' evenings or equivalent (21)				
Volunteering in school (23)				
Attending concerts, plays, assemblies, etc. when open to parents (24)				
Attending workshops/training (25)				
Other: (26)				

Q18 How do parents already support your students' learning? Please select all that apply and please add anything which does not appear in the list.

Reading with them/listening to them read (1)

Helping with or checking homework (2)

Discussing the school day with their child (3)

Taking children to the library (4)

Taking their child to museums, art galleries, etc. (5)

Taking part in hobbies with their child (6)

Ensuring their child has a place to do homework (7)

Please add anything else you think parents already do support young people's learning: (8) _____

Q14 Do you think parents experience any barriers to supporting young people's learning?

No (1)

Yes (2)

Skip To: Q15 If Do you think parents experience any barriers to supporting young people's learning? = Yes

Skip To: Q16 If Do you think parents experience any barriers to supporting young people's learning? = No

Q15 What barriers do you think parents experience to supporting young people's learning?

Q16 Would you like parents to have more support to help them engage with your students' learning?

No (1)

Yes (2)

Skip To: Q17 If Would you like parents to have more support to help them engage with your students' learning? = Yes

Skip To: Q10 If Would you like parents to have more support to help them engage with your students' learning? = No

Q17 What support would be useful to help parents engage with students' learning?

Q10 Communication with families- please select all that apply

I use text messaging to communicate with parents (1)

I use email to communicate with parents (2)

I use posted letters to communicate with parents (3)

I use zoom, teams, skype or other online meetings to communicate with parents (5)

I communicate with parents other ways: (4)

Q11 Communication with families - please select the appropriate answer for each question

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I am satisfied with communication with my students' families (1)					
I would like more communication with my students' families (2)					
I would like less communication with my students' families (3)					

Q25 Did your teacher training include information about supporting parental engagement in learning?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Skip To: Q26 If Did your teacher training include information about supporting parental engagement in learning? = Yes

Skip To: Q27 If Did your teacher training include information about supporting parental engagement in learning? = No

Q26 What did you learn about supporting parental engagement in learning, during your teacher training?

Q27 Have you attended any professional development around supporting parental engagement?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Skip To: End of Block If Have you attended any professional development around supporting parental engagement? = No

Q28 What training about supporting parental engagement have you attended?

End of Block: Block 6

Start of Block: The impact of COVID 19

Q36 Since the COVID 19 lockdown, I feel...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)	I don't know/Not applicable (6)
Parents are more engaged with learning (2)						
Parents are more able to support learning (3)						
I have a good relationship with my students' parents (4)						
I am better at supporting parental engagement in learning (5)						

Q62 Please use this space to discuss the impact of the COVID 19 lockdowns on parental engagement in learning

Q64 Please use this space to comment on any impact the COVID 19 lockdowns have had on your relationships with parents

Q37 Parental engagement in learning

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I would like to know more about parental engagement in learning (1)					
I would like to know more about how I can support parental engagement in learning (2)					

Q63 Is there anything else you would like to say about parental engagement in learning, or how school staff can support that engagement?

Annex C - Coding Frameworks

Code System	Memo	Frequency
Code System		847
Q12 Def PE	Q12 Def PE	151
Q12 Def PE\engagement	Parental engagement in learning	47
Q12 Def PE\involvement	Parental involvement in learning	38
Q12 Def PE\intermediate		35
Q12 Def PE\na	Not applicable	31
Q15 Type of barrier	Q15 Type of barrier	77
Q15 Type of barrier\Technology	IT equipment availability, internet access	15
Q15 Type of barrier\Communication	communication with school	22
Q15 Type of barrier\Knowledge	teaching skills, curriculum/subjects knowledge	21
Q15 Type of barrier\Time	Lack of time - work, family	31
Q15 Type of barrier\Number of children at home	Brothers nad sisters, different ages and educational phases	1
Q15 Type of barrier\Language	Child is in a school with different medium language than parents	11
Q15 Type of barrier\Personal issues	Personal issues - medical, mental, psychological or emotional, ALN	9
Q15 Type of barrier\Na	Not applicable	1
Q17 Type of support	Q17 Type of support	77
Q17 Type of support\Knowledge		37
Q17 Type of support\Communication		51

Q17 Type of support\Personal issues		4
Q17 Type of support\Technology		9
Q17 Type of support\Na		4
Q17 Type of support\Out of school provision		2
Q17 Type of support\Language		5
Q17 Type of support\Time		5
Q18Support - Other	Q18Support - Other	47
Q18Support - Other\Academic		24
Q18Support - Other\Life skills		21
Q18Support - Other\Educational materials	Books, apps, games	16
Q18Support - Other\School extra curr activities		1
Q18Support - Other\Outdoor learning		4
Q18Support - Other\Sport/Physical activity		4
Q18Support - Other\Arts & crafts		3
Q18Support - Other\Play		3
Q18Support - Other\Split family issues		1
Q10_4 Communication with school - Other ways	Q10_4 Communication with school - Other ways	39

Coding Framework Staff Survey

Code System	Memo	Frequency
Code System		320
Q12 PE in learning def.	Q12 PE in learning def.	20

Q12 PE in learning def.\Na		3
Q12 PE in learning def.\Engagement		10
Q12 PE in learning def.\Intermediate		6
Q12 PE in learning def.\Involvement		1
Q15 Type of barriers	Q15 Type of barriers	17
Q15 Type of barriers\Knowledge		15
Q15 Type of barriers\negative personal experiences in education		7
Q15 Type of barriers\Time		5
Q15 Type of barriers\Technology		4
Q15 Type of barriers\Physical environment		2
Q15 Type of barriers\Self-confidence		4
Q15 Type of barriers\Transport / financial issues		3
Q15 Type of barriers\Communication		1
Q15 Type of barriers\Language		3
Q17 Type of support	Q17 Type of support	19
Q17 Type of support\Worshops/family activities		9
Q17 Type of support\Knowledge/skills		16
Q17 Type of support\Top-down approach		8
Q17 Type of support\Partnership		7
Q17 Type of support\Technology		3
Q17 Type of support\Communication		13
Q17 Type of support\Financial		2
Q17 Type of support\Educational material		4
Q10_4_Communication with families - Other	Q10_4_Communication with families - Other	12
Q62 Impact of the COVID 19 lockdowns on PE in learning	Q62 Impact of the COVID 19 lockdowns on PE in learning	14
Q62 Impact of the COVID 19 lockdowns on PE in learning\Positive		9

Q62 Impact of the COVID 19 lockdowns on PE in learning\Communication Positive		5
Q62 Impact of the COVID 19 lockdowns on PE in learning\Time positive		2
Q62 Impact of the COVID 19 lockdowns on PE in learning\Relationship positive		7
Q62 Impact of the COVID 19 lockdowns on PE in learning\Knowledge/skills positive		3
Q62 Impact of the COVID 19 lockdowns on PE in learning\Play positive		1
Q62 Impact of the COVID 19 lockdowns on PE in learning\Technology positive		5
Q62 Impact of the COVID 19 lockdowns on PE in learning\Educational materials/homework positive		2
Q62 Impact of the COVID 19 lockdowns on PE in learning\Negative		10
Q62 Impact of the COVID 19 lockdowns on PE in learning\Relationship negative		4
Q62 Impact of the COVID 19 lockdowns on PE in learning\Communication negative		2
Q62 Impact of the COVID 19 lockdowns on PE in learning\Educational materials/homework negative		3
Q62 Impact of the COVID 19 lockdowns on PE in learning\Personal issues negative		3
Q62 Impact of the COVID 19 lockdowns on PE in learning\Technology negative		6
Q62 Impact of the COVID 19 lockdowns on PE in learning\School environment negative		2
Q62 Impact of the COVID 19 lockdowns on PE in learning\Knowledge/skill negative		1
Q62 Impact of the COVID 19 lockdowns on PE in learning\Single child positive		1
Q62 Impact of the COVID 19 lockdowns on PE in learning\Multiple children negative		2

Q62 Impact of the COVID 19 lockdowns on PE in learning\Children with behavioural needs negative		1
Q64 Impact the COVID 19 lockdowns on relationships with parents	Q64 Impact the COVID 19 lockdowns on relationships with parents	10
Q64 Impact the COVID 19 lockdowns on relationships with parents\Positive		8
Q64 Impact the COVID 19 lockdowns on relationships with parents\Knowledge/skills positive		1
Q64 Impact the COVID 19 lockdowns on relationships with parents\Communication positive		5
Q64 Impact the COVID 19 lockdowns on relationships with parents\Negative		5
Q64 Impact the COVID 19 lockdowns on relationships with parents\Expectations negative		2
Q64 Impact the COVID 19 lockdowns on relationships with parents\Technology negative		1
Q64 Impact the COVID 19 lockdowns on relationships with parents\Personal relationship positive		3
Q64 Impact the COVID 19 lockdowns on relationships with parents\Support positive		1
Q64 Impact the COVID 19 lockdowns on relationships with parents\Technology positive		1
Q64 Impact the COVID 19 lockdowns on relationships with parents\Vulnerable families negative		1
Q63 Comments about parental engagement in learning, or school s	Q63 Comments about parental engagement in learning, or school staff support that engagement	5

- ABD, E. F. S. M. 2006. Effects of family background and parental involvement on Egyptian adolescents' academic achievement and school disengagement : a structural equation modelling analysis. *Social Psychology of Education*, 9, 139-157.
- ADDI-RACCAH, A. & AINHOREN, R. 2009. School governance and teachers' attitudes to parents' involvement in schools. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25, 805-813.
- ALAN, R. 1998. Family Environment Scale predictors of academic performance. *Psychological Reports*, 83, 1319-1327.
- ANDREW, A., CATTAN, S., COSTA-DIAS, M., FARQUHARSON, C., KRAFTMAN, L., KRUTIKOVA, S., PHIMISTER, A. & SEVILLA, A. 2020a. Family time use and home learning during the Covid-19 lockdown. *Institute for Fiscal Studies Report*.
- ANDREW, A., CATTAN, S., COSTA-DIAS, M., FARQUHARSON, C., KRAFTMAN, L., KRUTIKOVA, S., PHIMISTER, A. & SEVILLA, A. 2020b. Learning during the lockdown: real-time data on children's experiences during home learning. Institute for Fiscal Studies.
- ASSAF, L. C. & DOOLEY, C. M. 2010. Investigating ideological clarity in teacher education. *The Teacher Educator*, 45, 153-178.
- BAGNALL, C. L., SKIPPER, Y. & FOX, C. L. 2020. 'You're in this world now': Students', teachers', and parents' experiences of school transition and how they feel it can be improved. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 90, 206-226.
- BAXTER, P. & JACK, S. 2008. Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers *The qualitative report*, 13, 544-559.
- BAYRAKDAR, S. & GUVELI, A. 2020. Inequalities in home learning and schools' provision of distance teaching during school closure of COVID-19 lockdown in the UK.
- BAZELEY, P. 2018. *Integrating Analyses in Mixed Methods Research.*, London, SAGE.
- BBC NEWS ONLINE. 2021. Covid: Some schools to plan for home learning, says FM. *BBC News* [Online]. Available: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-59830004>.
- BERGER, H. A. & EZZY, D. 2009. Mass media and religious identity: A case study of young witches. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 48, 501-514.
- BLANDFORD, S. 2017. *Achievement for all in international classrooms: improving outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities*, Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.
- BORDALBA, M. M. & BOCHACA, J. G. 2019. Digital media for family-school communication? Parents' and teachers' beliefs. *Computers & Education*, 132, 44-62.
- BORGONOVI, F. & MONTT, G. 2012. Parental involvement in selected PISA countries and economies.
- BRACKENRIDGE, C. 2006. The Parents' Optimum Zone: Measuring and optimising parental engagement in youth sport.
- BRANNEN, J. 2005. Mixed Methods Research: A discussion paper. Discussion Paper. *NCRM Methods Review Papers*, NCRM/005.

- BRYK, A. S., SCHNEIDER, B. L., RUSSELL SAGE, F. & AMERICAN SOCIOLOGICAL, A. 2002. *Trust in schools : a core resource for improvement*, New York, Russell Sage Foundation.
- BUBB, S. & JONES, M.-A. 2020. Learning from the COVID-19 home-schooling experience: Listening to pupils, parents/carers and teachers. *Improving Schools*, 23, 209-222.
- CAROLAN, B. V. & WASSERMAN, S. J. 2015. Does parenting style matter? Concerted cultivation, educational expectations, and the transmission of educational advantage. *Sociological Perspectives*, 58, 168-186.
- CAVANAGH, R. F. & ROMANOSKI, J. T. 2006. Parent views of involvement in their child's education : a Rasch model analysis.
- CHAN, W. L. 2012. Expectations for the transition from kindergarten to primary school amongst teachers, parents and children. *Early Child Development and Care*, 182, 639-664.
- CHEDZOY, S. M. & BURDEN, R. 2005. Making the move: Assessing student attitudes to primary-secondary school transfer. *Research in education*, 74, 22-35.
- COFFEY, A. 2013. Relationships: The key to successful transition from primary to secondary school? *Improving Schools*, 16, 261-271.
- CROZIER, G. & DAVIES, J. 2007. Hard to Reach Parents or Hard to Reach Schools? A discussion of home-school relations, with particular reference to Bangladeshi and Pakistani parents. *British Educational Research Journal*, 33, 295-313.
- CULLINANE, C. & MONTACUTE, R. 2020. COVID-19 and social mobility impact brief# 1: school shutdown. *The Sutton Trust*.
- CURTIS, S., GESLERB, W., SMITH, G. & WASHBURN, S. 2000. Approaches to sampling and case selection in qualitative research: examples in the geography of health. *Social Science & Medicine*, 50, 1001-1014.
- DANIELS, D. 2020. Reimagining parents' educational involvement during the Covid-19 lockdown. *Southern African Review of Education with Education with Production*, 26, 134-147.
- DE OLIVEIRA LIMA, C. L., KUUSISTO, E. 2019. Parental Engagement in Children's Learning: A Holistic Approach to Teacher-Parents' Partnerships. *Pedagogy in Basic and Higher Education*.
- DECARO, J. A. & WORTHMAN, C. M. 2011. Changing family routines at kindergarten entry predict biomarkers of parental stress. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 35, 441-448.
- DIETRICH, J. & SALMELA-ARO, K. 2013. Parental involvement and adolescents' career goal pursuit during the post-school transition. *Journal of Adolescence*, 36, 121-128.
- DOCKETT, S. & PERRY, B. 2007. *Transitions to school: Perceptions, expectations, experiences*, UNSW press.
- EASTERBROOK, M. J., DOYLE, L., GROZEV, V. H., KOSAKOWSKA-BEREZECKA, N., HARRIS, P. R. & PHALET, K. 2022. Socioeconomic and gender inequalities in home learning during the COVID-19 pandemic: examining the roles of the home environment, parent supervision, and educational provisions. *Educational and Developmental Psychologist*, 1-13.
- ELLIOTT, L. 2020. Sources of heterogeneity in the home learning environments of socioeconomically disadvantaged families. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 70, 101190.

- EWING, L.-A. & COOPER, H. B. 2021. Technology-enabled remote learning during COVID-19: perspectives of Australian teachers, students and parents. *Technology, pedagogy and education*, 30, 41-57.
- EYLES, A., GIBBONS, S. & MONTEBRUNO BONDI, P. 2020. Covid-19 school shutdowns: What will they do to our children's education?
- EZRA, O., COHEN, A., BRONSHTEIN, A., GABBAY, H. & BARUTH, O. 2021. Equity factors during the COVID-19 pandemic: Difficulties in emergency remote teaching (ert) through online learning. *Education and Information Technologies*, 26, 7657-7681.
- FAN, W. & WILLIAMS, C. M. 2010. The effects of parental involvement on students' academic self-efficacy, engagement and intrinsic motivation. *Educational Psychology*, 30, 53-74.
- FANTUZZO, J., GADSDEN, V., LI, F., SPROUL, F., MCDERMOTT, P., HIGHTOWER, D. & MINNEY, A. 2013. Multiple dimensions of family engagement in early childhood education: Evidence for a short form of the Family Involvement Questionnaire. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 28, 734-742.
- FANTUZZO, J., TIGHE, E. & CHILDS, S. 2000. Family Involvement Questionnaire: A multivariate assessment of family participation in early childhood education. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 92, 367-376.
- FURSTENBERG, F. F. 2014. Fifty years of family change: From consensus to complexity. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 654, 12-30.
- GOLAFSHANI, N. 2003. Understanding reliability and validity in qualitative research. *The qualitative report*, 8, 597-607.
- GOODALL, J. 2017a. *Narrowing The Achievement Gap: Parental Engagement With Children's Learning* London, Routledge.
- GOODALL, J. 2017b. *Narrowing The Achievement Gap: Parental Engagement With Children's Learning Creating A Learning-Centred Schooling System*, London, Routledge.
- GOODALL, J. 2018a. Leading for parental engagement: working towards partnership. *School Leadership & Management*, 38, 143-146.
- GOODALL, J. 2018b. A toolkit for parental engagement: from project to process. *School Leadership & Management*, 38, 222-238.
- GOODALL, J. 2020. Scaffolding homework for mastery : engaging parents. *Educational Review*, 73, 669-689.
- GOODALL, J. 2022. A framework for family engagement: Going beyond the Epstein framework. *Wales Journal of Education*
- GOODALL, J. & MONTGOMERY, C. 2014. Parental involvement to parental engagement: a continuum. *Educational Review*, 66, 399-410.
- GOODALL, J., RAMADAN, I., WILLIAMS, M., YLONEN, A., LEWIS, H., OWEN, S., ROBERTS, D., WOLFE, C., HUGHES, C. & CLEGG, Z. 2021. From Relationships to Partnerships: the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on parental engagement in children's learning in Wales and the implications Swansea University, Bangor University.
- GOODALL, J. & VORHAUS, J. 2011. Review of best practice in parental engagement. London: Department of Education
- GREENHOW, C., LEWIN, C. & STAUDT WILLET, K. B. 2020. The educational response to Covid-19 across two countries: a critical examination of initial digital pedagogy adoption. *Technology, Pedagogy and Education*, 1-19.

- HAMLIN, D. & FLESSA, J. 2018. Parental involvement initiatives: An analysis. *Educational Policy*, 32, 697-727.
- HAMMERSLEY, M. 2007. The issue of quality in qualitative research. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 30, 287-305.
- HARRIS, A. & GOODALL, J. 2008. Do parents know they matter? Engaging all parents in learning. *Educational Research*, 50, 277 - 289.
- HARRIS, A. & GOODALL, J. 2009a. Helping Families Support Children's Success at School. London: Save the Children.
- HARRIS, A. & GOODALL, J. 2009b. Helping Families Support Children's Success at School. London: Save the Children.
- HECKMAN, J. J. 2013. *Giving kids a fair chance*, Mit Press.
- HENDERSON, A. T. & MAPP, K. L. 2002. A new wave of evidence: The impact of school, family and community connections on student achievement. Austin, Texas: National center for family and community connections with schools.
- HENTON, J., LAMKE, L., MURPHY, C. & HAYNES, L. 1980. Crisis reactions of college freshmen as a function of family support systems. *The Personnel and Guidance Journal*, 58, 508-511.
- HILL, N., E. & TAYLOR, L., C. 2004a. Parental School Involvement and Children's Academic Achievement. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 13, 161-164.
- HILL, N. E. & TAYLOR, L. C. 2004b. Parental School Involvement and Children's Academic Achievement: Pragmatics and Issues. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 13, 161-164.
- HM GOVERNMENT & TRUST, T. N. L. 2018. Improving the home learning environment: A behaviour change approach.
- HORNBY, G. & BLACKWELL, I. 2018. Barriers to parental involvement in education: an update. *Educational Review*, 70, 109-119.
- HORNBY, G. & LAFAELE, R. 2011. Barriers to parental involvement in education: an explanatory model. *Educational Review*, 63, 37-52.
- HUNTSINGER, C. S. & JOSE, P. E. 2009. Parental involvement in children's schooling: Different meanings in different cultures. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 24, 398-410.
- ICE, C. L. & HOOVER-DEMPSEY, K. V. 2011. Linking parental motivations for involvement and student proximal achievement outcomes in homeschooling and public schooling settings. *Education and Urban Society*, 43, 339-369.
- JEANNE, D. H. & PETER, G. 2017. Teacher Educators' and Student Teachers' Beliefs about Preparation for Working with Families Including Those from Diverse Socioeconomic and Cultural Backgrounds. *Education and Urban Society*.
- JEYNES, W. 2012. A Meta-Analysis of the Efficacy of Different Types of Parental Involvement Programs for Urban Students. *Urban Education*, 47, 706-742.
- JEYNES, W. H. 2005. A meta-analysis of the relation of parental involvement to urban elementary school student academic achievement. *Urban Education*, 40, 237.
- JEYNES, W. H. 2008. Effects of Parental Involvement on Experiences of Discrimination and Bullying. *Marriage & Family Review*, 43, 255 - 268.
- JEYNES, W. H. 2014. Parental Involvement That Works ... Because It's Age-Appropriate. *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, 50, 85-88.

- JEYNES, W. H. 2018. A practical model for school leaders to encourage parental involvement and parental engagement. *School Leadership & Management*, 38, 147-163.
- JOHNSON, L. 2015. Rethinking parental involvement: A critical review of the literature. *Urban Education Research & Policy Annuals*, 3, 77-90.
- JOHNSON, R. B. & ONWUEGBUZIE, A. J. 2004. Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational researcher*, 33, 14-26.
- JOHNSON, R. B., ONWUEGBUZIE, A. J. & TURNER, L. A. 2007. Toward a definition of mixed methods research. *Journal of mixed methods research*, 1, 112-133.
- JUNGE, K., SCHMERSE, D., LANKES, E.-M., CARSTENSEN, C. H. & STEFFENSKY, M. 2021. How the home learning environment contributes to children's early science knowledge—Associations with parental characteristics and science-related activities. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 56, 294-305.
- KEDDY, B., SIMS, S. L. & STEM, P. N. 1996. Grounded theory as feminist research methodology. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 23, 448-453.
- KIM, Y. 2009. Minority parental involvement and school barriers: Moving the focus away from deficiencies of parents. *Educational Research Review*, 4, 80-102.
- KUCKARTZ, U. & RÄDIKER, S. 2019. *Analyzing qualitative data with MAXQDA*, Springer.
- KUHFELD, M., SOLAND, J., TARASAWA, B., JOHNSON, A., RUZEK, E. & LIU, J. 2020. Projecting the potential impact of COVID-19 school closures on academic achievement. *Educational Researcher*, 49, 549-565.
- KWOK, R. K. & YANKASKAS, B. C. 2001. The use of census data for determining race and education as SES indicators: a validation study. *Annals of Epidemiology*, 11, 171-177.
- LAMONT, M. & LAREAU, A. 1988. Cultural capital: Allusions, gaps and glissandos in recent theoretical developments. *Sociological theory*, 6, 153-168.
- LANGBERG, J. M. & SMITH, B. H. 2006. Developing evidence-based interventions for deployment into school settings: A case example highlighting key issues of efficacy and effectiveness. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 29, 323-334.
- LAREAU, A. 2002. Invisible inequality: Social class and childrearing in black families and white families. *American Sociological Review*, 747-776.
- LAREAU, A. & CALARCO, J. M. 2012. Class, cultural capital, and institutions: The case of families and schools. *Facing social class: How societal rank influences interaction*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation
- LAU, E. Y. H., LI, H. & RAO, N. 2012. Exploring parental involvement in early years education in China: Development and validation of the Chinese Early Parental Involvement Scale (CEPIS). *International Journal of Early Years Education*, 20, 405-421.
- LEWIS, A. E. & FORMAN, T. A. 2002. Contestation or collaboration? A comparative study of home-school relations. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 33, 60-89.
- LINGARD, L., ALBERT, M. & LEVINSON, W. 2008. Grounded theory, mixed methods, and action research. *BMJ*, 337.
- LISA, E. K. & KATHRYN, A. 2020. 'Like a rug had been pulled from under you': The impact of COVID-19 on teachers in England during the first six weeks of the UK lockdown. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*.

- LIVINGSTONE, S. & BLUM-ROSS, A. 2019. Parents' role in supporting, brokering or impeding their children's connected learning and media literacy. *Cultural Science Journal*, 11, 68-77.
- LLYWODRAETH CYMRU & GOVERNMENT, W. 2021. Schools' census results: April 2021.
- LLYWODRAETH CYMRU & WELSH GOVERNMENT 2017. Flying Start Health Programme Guidance.
- LLYWODRAETH CYMRU WELSH GOVERNMENT. 2020. Developing a vision for curriculum design. *Designing your curriculum* [Online].
- LLYWODRAETH CYMRU WELSH GOVERNMENT 2021a. Relative income poverty: April 2019 to March 2020. *In: STATISTICS* (ed.).
- LLYWODRAETH CYMRU WELSH GOVERNMENT 2021b. Renew and reform: supporting learners' welling and progression.
- LLYWODRAETH CYMRU WELSH GOVERNMENT 2021c. Well-being Statement.
- MANNING, J. & JEON, L. 2020. Teacher stress and second-hand trauma: Supporting teachers during re-entry.
- MARCHANT, E., TODD, C., JAMES, M., CRICK, T., DWYER, R. & BROPHY, S. 2020. Primary school staff reflections on school closures due to COVID-19 and recommendations for the future: a national qualitative survey. *medRxiv*.
- MAXWELL, J. A. 2012. *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach*, Sage publications.
- MILLER, K., HILGENDORF, A. & DILWORTH-BART, J. 2014. Cultural Capital and Home-School Connections in Early Childhood. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 15, 329-345.
- MILNE, E. & WOTHERSPOON, T. 2020. "Alignment-Plus": alignment with schooling requirements and cultural-bridging among indigenous middle-class parents. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 41, 127-143.
- MISTRY, R. S., BIESANZ, J. C., CHIEN, N., HOWES, C. & BENNER, A. D. 2008. Socioeconomic status, parental investments, and the cognitive and behavioral outcomes of low-income children from immigrant and native households. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 23, 193-212.
- MOORE, G., ANGEL, L., BROWN, R., VAN GODWIN, J., HALLINGBERG, B. & RICE, F. 2021. Socio-Economic Status, Mental Health Difficulties and Feelings about Transition to Secondary School among 10–11 Year Olds in Wales: Multi-Level Analysis of a Cross Sectional Survey. *Child indicators research*, 14, 1597-1615.
- MOYLES, J. 2007. *Early Years Foundations: Meeting The Challenge: Meeting the Challenge*, McGraw-Hill International.
- NANCY, J. R. & GILBERT, H. H. 2009. Building Teacher-Family Partnerships: The Role of Teacher Preparation Programs. *Education 3-13*.
- NFER 2020. Schools' responses to Covid-19: pupil engagement in remote learning. 16 June ed.: National Foundation for Educational Research.
- PARENTKIND 2020. Coronavirus: Third parent survey results: Wales responses.
- PARNHAM, J. C., LAVERTY, A. A., MAJEED, A. & VAMOS, E. P. 2020. Half of children entitled to free school meals did not have access to the scheme during COVID-19 lockdown in the UK. *Public health*, 187, 161-164.
- PATRICE, F., LYDIA, O.-S., BETH, H. & BETH, H. 2017. The Power of Parent Engagement: Sociocultural Considerations in the Quest for Equity. *Theory Into Practice*.

- PETERS, M., SEEDS, K., GOLDSTEIN, A. & COLEMAN, N. 2007. Parental involvement in children's education 2007. *London: Department for Children, Schools and Families.*
- POMERANTZ, E. M., NG, F. F.-Y. & WANG, Q. 2006. Mothers' mastery-oriented involvement in children's homework: Implications for the well-being of children with negative perceptions of competence. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 98, 99.
- QUENZER-ALFRED, C., SCHNEIDER, L., SOYKA, V., HARBRECHT, M., BLUME, V. & MAYS, D. 2021. No nursery 'til school—the transition to primary school without institutional transition support due to the COVID-19 shutdown in Germany. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 36, 127-141.
- RADUESCU, C. & VESSEY, I. 2011. Analysis of Current Grounded Theory Method Practices. *Business Information Systems Working Paper Series*. University of Sydney.
- RAFFERTY, Y., GRIFFIN, K. W. & LODISE, M. 2011. Adolescent motherhood and developmental outcomes of children in early Head Start: The influence of maternal parenting behaviors, well-being, and risk factors within the family setting. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 81, 228.
- RENGASAMY, E. R., LONG, S. A., REES, S. C., DAVIES, S., HILDEBRANDT, T. & PAYNE, E. 2021. Impact of COVID-19 lockdown: Domestic and child abuse in Bridgend. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 105386.
- REYNOLDS, R. 2010. They think you're lazy," and other messages Black parents send their Black sons: An exploration of critical race theory in the examination of educational outcomes for Black males. *Journal of African American Males in Education*, 1, 144-163.
- RICE, F., FREDERICKSON, N., SHELTON, K., MCMANUS, C., RIGLIN, L. & NG-KNIGHT, T. 2015. Identifying factors that predict successful and difficult transitions to secondary school. *London: University College London.*
- RICE, F., NG-KNIGHT, T., RIGLIN, L., POWELL, V., MOORE, G. F., MCMANUS, I. C., SHELTON, K. H. & FREDERICKSON, N. 2021. Pupil mental health, concerns and expectations about secondary school as predictors of adjustment across the transition to secondary school: A longitudinal multi-informant study. *School Mental Health*, 13, 279-298.
- ROSS, P. T. & BIBLER ZAIDI, N. L. 2019. Limited by our limitations. *Perspectives on medical education*, 8, 261-264.
- ROTHER, A., URBAN, M. & WERNING, R. 2014. Inclusive transition processes—considering socio-economically disadvantaged parents' views and actions for their child's successful school start. *Early Years*, 34, 364-376.
- SABOL, T. J., SOMMER, T. E., SANCHEZ, A. & BUSBY, A. K. 2018. A new approach to defining and measuring family engagement in early childhood education programs. *AERA Open*, 4, 2332858418785904.
- SCHEIN, E. H. 2017. Organizational culture and leadership. Fifth Edition ed.: Hoboken: Wiley.
- SCHUELER, B. E., MCINTYRE, J. C. & GEHLBACH, H. 2017. Measuring Parent Perceptions of Family-School Engagement: The Development of New Survey Tools. *School Community Journal*, 27, 275-301.
- SHARP, C., NELSON, J., LUCAS, M., JULIUS, J., MCCRONE, T. & SIMS, D. 2020. The challenges facing schools and pupils in September 2020.

- SHIELDS, P. 2009. 'School doesn't feel as much of a partnership': parents' perceptions of their children's transition from nursery school to Reception class. *Early Years*, 29, 237-248.
- SKOUTERIS, H., WATSON, B. & LUM, J. 2012. Preschool children's transition to formal schooling: The importance of collaboration between teachers, parents and children. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, 37, 78-85.
- SMITH, A. P. & JAMES, A. 2021. The well-being of staff in a welsh secondary school before and after a COVID-19 lockdown. *Journal of Education, Society and Behavioural Science*, 34.
- SOUTO-MANNING, M. & SWICK, K., J. 2006a. Teachers' Beliefs about Parent and Family Involvement: Rethinking our Family Involvement Paradigm. *Early Childhood Education Journal*.
- SOUTO-MANNING, M. & SWICK, K. J. 2006b. Teachers' beliefs about parent and family involvement: Rethinking our family involvement paradigm. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 34, 187-193.
- SPEAR, S., VAN STEEN, T., PARKIN, J. & GOODALL, J. 2021. Fostering 'parental participation in schooling': primary school teachers' insights from the COVID-19 school closures. *Educational Review*, 1-20.
- SUTTON TRUST. 2020. UK Parent Poll. Available: <http://www.publicfirst.co.uk/uk-parent-poll-st.html>.
- TABER, K. S. 2000. Case studies and generalizability: grounded theory and research in science education. *International Journal of Science Education*, 22, 469- 487.
- TEDDLIE, C. & YU, F. 2007. Mixed methods sampling a typology with examples. *Journal of mixed methods research*, 1, 77-100.
- TORRE, D. & MURPHY, J. 2016. Communities of parental engagement: new foundations for school leaders' work. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 19, 203-223.
- TOULOUPIIS, T. 2021. Parental involvement in homework of children with learning disabilities during distance learning: Relations with fear of COVID - 19 and resilience. *Psychology in the Schools*, 58, 2345-2360.
- TURUNEN, T. & DOCKETT, S. 2013. Family members' memories about starting school: Intergenerational aspects. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, 38, 103-110.
- UNICEF 2012. School readiness: A conceptual framework. *United Nations Children's Fund, UNICEF, New York, NY*.
- VIRTANEN, T., VASALAMPI, K., TORPPA, M., LERKKANEN, M.-K. & NURMI, J.-E. 2019. Changes in students' psychological well-being during transition from primary school to lower secondary school: A person-centered approach. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 69, 138-149.
- WALKER, J. M., WILKINS, A. S., DALLAIRE, J. R., SANDLER, H. M. & HOOVER-DEMPSEY, K. V. 2005. Parental involvement: Model revision through scale development. *The Elementary School Journal*, 106, 85-104.
- WARREN, M., HONG, S., RUBIN, C. & UY, P. 2009. Beyond the bake sale: A community-based relational approach to parent engagement in schools. *The Teachers College Record*, 111, 2209-2254.
- WEBB, G., KNIGHT, B. A. & BUSCH, G. 2017. Children's transitions to school: 'so what about the parents'? or 'so, what about the parents'? *International Journal of Early Years Education*, 25, 204-217.

- WEBB, P. T. 2014. How to do your case study: a guide for students and researchers. Taylor & Francis.
- WILLEMSE, T. M., DE BRUÏNE, E., GRISWOLD, P., D'HAEM, J., VLOEBERGHS, L. & EYNDE, S. V. 2017. Teacher candidates' opinions and experiences as input for teacher education curriculum development*. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*.
- WILLEMSE, T. M., THOMPSON, I., VANDERLINDE, R. & MUTTON, T. 2018. Family-school partnerships: a challenge for teacher education. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 44, 252-257.
- WILLEMSE, T. M., VLOEBERGHS, L., DE BRUÏNE, E. & VANEYNDE, S. 2016a. Preparing teachers for family–school partnerships: a Dutch and Belgian perspective. *Teaching Education*.
- WILLEMSE, T. M., VLOEBERGHS, L., DE BRUÏNE, E. J. & VAN EYNDE, S. 2016b. Preparing teachers for family–school partnerships: a Dutch and Belgian perspective. *Teaching Education*, 27, 212-228.
- WONG, M. 2015. Voices of children, parents and teachers: How children cope with stress during school transition. *Early Child Development and Care*, 185, 658-678.
- WOOD, L. & BAUMAN, E. 2017. How family, school, and community engagement can improve student achievement and influence school reform. Washington, D.C.: American Insititute for Research.
- WORTH, J. & FAULKNER-ELLIS, H. 2021. Teacher Labour Market in England: Annual Report 2021. *National Foundation for Educational Research*.
- YIN, R. K. 2003. Case studies research: design and methods. *Thousand Oaks, Sage*.
- ZWIERZCHOWSKA-DOD, C. 2022. Books, babies and bonding: the impact of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library on parental engagement in book-sharing and on child development from 0-5 years old.