



# Family School Partnership Awards 2022

Sharing Good Practice & Celebrating Success



JOHN LYON'S CHARITY



# Family School Partnership Award & SEND Family School Partnership Award 2022

*Sharing Good Practice & Celebrating Success*

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# Background to the Family School Partnership Award

*"If parents engage with their children's education, the attainment of the child will **increase by 15%** no matter what the social background of the family"*

Professor Charles Desforges

A huge body of evidence tells us that children of parents who are actively engaged in their learning make greater progress than other children and that the gains made in achievement as a result of this engagement tend to be permanent.

Studies which have attempted to quantify this difference in progress estimate it to be significant.

*"Research evidence is consistent, in demonstrating that families have a major influence on their children's achievement in school and through life. When schools, families and community work together to support learning, children tend to **do better in school**, stay in school longer and like school more." Do Parents Know They Matter, Alma (2007)*

Increasingly schools are providing a huge range of services and support to parents and carers in order to engage them in their children's learning and develop their own skills. The Family School Partnership Award was developed by the School Partnerships & Enrichment Team in Ealing and seeks to build on and enhance this work by providing:

- A model to review family engagement at a strategic level
- Resources & support to build capacity in schools
- An award for schools to work towards

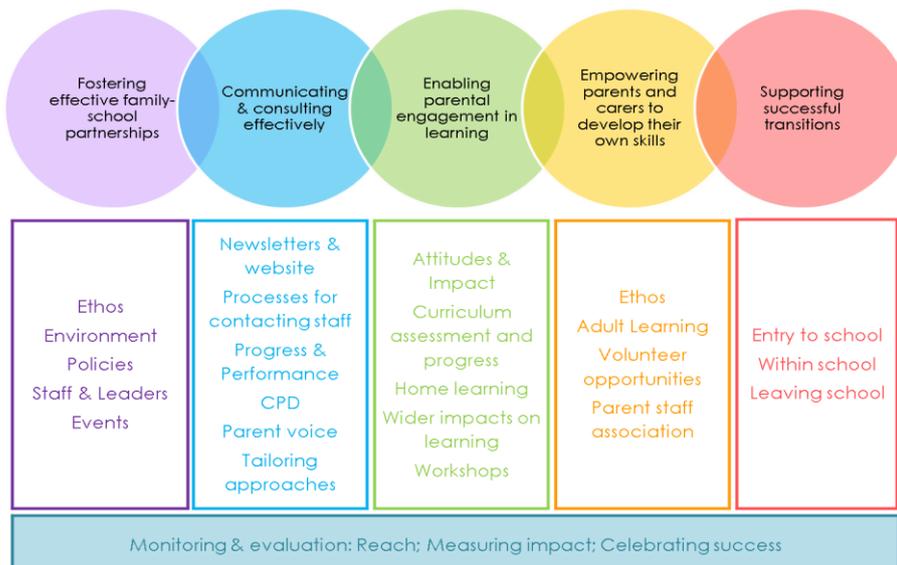
*"Research has shown that parental involvement boosts attainment by an average of 2-3 months. This is the equivalent of **20-25% more progress** over a year" EEF Teaching & Learning Toolkit, February 2016*

In developing the award framework the team drew on feedback from school leaders as well as: carrying out a comprehensive review of current research and literature; reviewing other awards and schemes; and looking at good practice worldwide. Parent surveys and focus groups were also conducted to ensure the views of parents are reflected.

The project was piloted in Ealing in 2016/17 with 13 schools achieving the award. Since 2018 the School Partnerships & Enrichment Team have been funded by John Lyons Charity to continue the project in Ealing and to expand into Harrow and Brent.

## The Family Partnership Model

The framework developed in Ealing aligns the different aspects of schools work with parents and families under 5 Key Themes, with an overarching theme of monitoring and evaluation cutting across all areas:



## The Award Process

- 1.** A comprehensive diagnostic is completed with staff, Governors and Parents covering every aspect of family-school partnership
- 2.** The results are analysed by the SP&E Team and schools provided with a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rated 'Scorecard' showing areas of strength and opportunities for improvement
- 3.** Schools use their data to inform an action plan and identify 3 areas where they would like to see positive change
- 4.** The SP&E Team share their online toolkit which brings together resources and examples of good practice to support schools to develop specific areas of their practice under each of the 5 Key Themes
- 5.** Workshops and training developed by the SP&E team are delivered to address common areas identified by schools
- 6.** Mid-year reviews are submitted by schools showing progress towards priorities
- 7.** Update meetings for all schools are held to support schools, keep them on track and share good practice
- 8.** Schools are offered individual follow up online meetings or phone calls to offer advice and support if needed
- 9.** Schools apply for the award, providing evidence of change achieved
- 10.** Award submissions are reviewed by the SP&E Team and moderated to quality assure the judgements made

## Developments & Challenges in 2021-22

This year has been exciting due to a number of new developments. Firstly, the programme opened for the first time to Private, Voluntary & Independent Nurseries (PVI). Although we have had engagement from Children's Centres this addition meant some revisions to the programme ensuring it was relevant and useful to PVIs. Secondly, this year has seen us pilot a brand new strand - the SEND Family School Partnership Award which focuses on relationships between schools and parents of children with additional needs. We had long identified this key area of need so were very pleased to have the opportunity to develop this.

### Engaging PVI Nurseries

We were pleased to engage 2 providers this year representing 6 PVI settings. Whilst we would have ideally liked to have higher engagement, working closely with two providers enabled us to offer more personalised support and use their experience to make key amendments to training and resources which will be used in coming years so the impact has still been high.

For PVI settings the FSPA process remains the same, however, some amendments were made to diagnostic questionnaires to ensure they were relevant for the settings. We were pleased with how well the structure worked and that the review process highlighted areas where positive change could be made as well as celebrating what settings were already doing well. The settings chose a variety of priorities including policies, increasing volunteers, using parent voice and wider impacts on learning.

### Challenges

The key challenge we experienced this year was reduced capacity in schools and early years settings. This was unexpected as over the past two years of the pandemic we had maintained relatively stable engagement and those schools who started the FSPA process generally completed it successfully, even if this was over 2 academic years as was the case for some of the 2019/20 cohort.

This year we had fewer schools sign up to launch events than in previous years and of those who signed up and started the process the dropout rate was significantly higher. This was for a number of reasons but the overarching theme was a lack of capacity in schools to engage in things which sit outside their core business. We know from other programmes working in schools that our experience is not unique and that many services have seen reduced engagement. The cumulative effective of the last two years of uncertainty and challenge have been far reaching and impacted staff at all levels in schools. We have recently started to recruit schools for 2022-23 and early indications are positive across all three FSPA strands.

# New SEND Family School Partnership Award

This year we have been piloting a new award focusing on the relationship between mainstream schools and parents and carers of children with additional needs. Using a model of co-production with schools and input from parents, carers and community groups the FSPA Framework was reviewed and redeveloped.

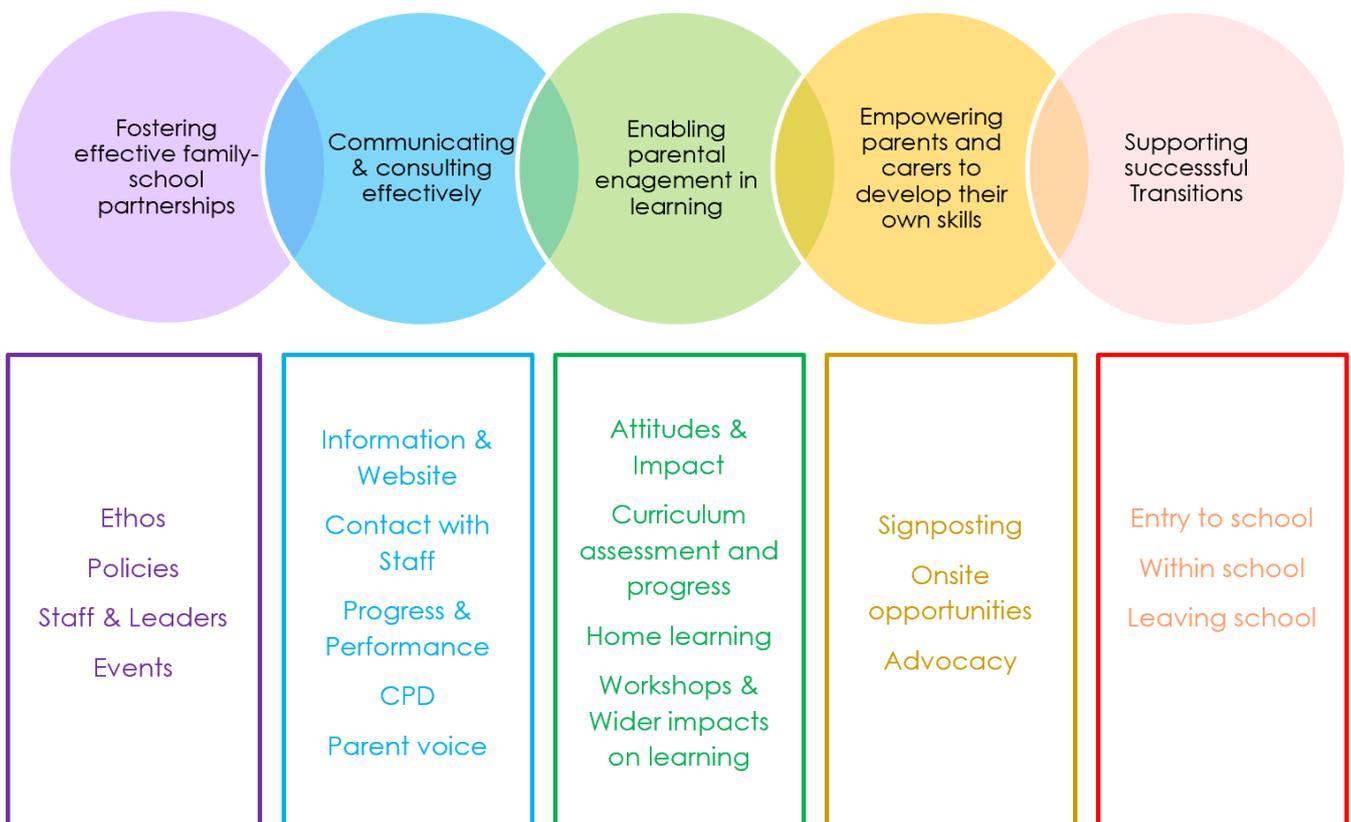
The aims of the new SEND FSPA are:

- To support schools to strategically review their whole school approach to working with parents of children with SEND from the point of identification through to assessment, provision and review.
- To create a cohesive, whole school approach:
  - contribution of every staff role, areas of responsibility – NOT a judgement on the SENDCo
  - all school processes and provision
  - every factor in creating a positive experience for parents and carers of SEND children
  - Across a child's time at the school
- To build capacity in schools – at all levels
- To increase accessibility of other sources of support for parents and carers
- To strengthen partnership working between schools and parents to improve outcomes for pupils

## Developing the new award

To ensure the new award reflected the needs of parents and carers and was informed by the views of schools we started by creating an online survey for families of children with additional needs to find out what they felt was most important in the relationship with their child's school. We also held a focus group with school SENDCos. From this we developed the award framework, based on the main FSPA framework and encompassing every interaction between parents of children with additional needs and everyone in school.

## SEND FSPA Framework



Following this, surveys for parents and staff were developed and pilot schools distributed them to all SEND parents and all staff. We held an action planning meeting where schools received their data and set two priorities for change. Based on the data there were also two mandatory priority areas for schools: Delivery of CPD for staff on building positive relationships and Sharing of information on the Local Offer as these were common areas identified. Schools chose several priorities: enabling engagement in learning, specifically workshops; empowering parent and carers, specifically bringing in outside support; creating opportunities for positive feedback and engaging parents in target setting and reviews.

Over the year schools have been heavily involved in the shaping of the process and in developing new resources and training. We have developed a new train the trainer programme designed to support school staff to develop positive relationships with parents of children with additional needs and a new Local Offer training, working with the Family Information Service.

## Success and Impact

Feedback from the pilot schools and new baseline data collected at the end of the year has shown the new SEND Family School Partnership Award to be a success. Both schools saw huge increases in positive responses from parents to the diagnostic questions, particularly for those parents of children on SEN Support. Overall, baseline data showed an **average 25% increase in positive responses from parents and carers**. For parents of children on Sen Support without an EHCP this **increase was 36%**.

School leads have reported that the process has enabled them to make positive changes to whole school practice which is improving the experience of parents and carers with SEND and will ultimately improve outcomes for pupils. Staff have been upskilled and increased in confidence and the strategic nature of the changes means that these will continue beyond the award year.

		Parent Data - ALL Parents		Parent Data - EHCP Parents		Parent Data - SEN Support Parents	
		Autumn Term 2021	Summer Term 2022	Autumn Term 2021	Summer Term 2022	Autumn Term 2021	Summer Term 2022
		34	44	15	19	14	15
1. Fostering effective family-school partnerships	Ethos	61.76	77.73	80.00	86.84	46.43	73.33
	Policies	52.94	81.82	60.00	89.47	42.88	73.33
	Staff & Leaders	52.94	72.16	68.33	78.95	39.29	78.33
	Events	38.24	68.18	56.67	76.32	25.00	66.67
2. Communicating & consulting effectively	Information & Website	60.42	79.17	73.33	87.72	57.14	68.89
	Contact with Staff	57.82	71.25	76.67	80.26	42.86	73.33
	Progress & Performance	46.88	71.25	70.00	71.05	28.57	66.67
	CPD	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Parent voice	43.75	77.50	73.33	73.68	14.29	80.00
3. Enabling parental engagement in learning	Attitudes & Impact	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Curriculum assessment and progress	70.97	80.00	80.00	84.21	64.29	73.33
	Home learning	45.17	61.25	63.33	57.89	32.14	60.00
	Workshops & Wider impacts on learning	35.48	62.50	40.00	57.89	35.71	60.00
4. Empowering parents and carers to develop their own skills	Signposting	38.89	68.42	62.22	73.68	16.66	60.00
	Onsite opportunities	30.00	73.68	40.00	68.42	21.43	80.00
	Advocacy	30.00	71.05	40.00	73.68	21.43	66.67
5. Supporting successful transitions	Entry to school	62.07	81.08	73.33	78.95	50.00	86.67
	Within school	48.28	72.97	73.33	68.42	21.43	80.00
	Leaving school	24.14	51.35	26.67	52.63	21.43	46.67

# Theme 1: Fostering Effective Family-School Partnerships

## Engagement of parents of children with additional needs

Both schools who took part in the pilot SEND Family School Partnership Award saw their overall engagement with parents of children with SEND rise. Data from the end of the project for both **Coston Primary** & **Ravenor Primary** shows a **30% increase** in the number of parents responding to the survey.



Parent responses were also much more positive with an increase in parents responding YES in each one of the 17 SEN FSPA Areas with an **average increase of 25%**. The most significant change was for parents of children receiving SEN Support but without an EHCP. In October 2021 parents of children receiving SEN support, without an EHCP responded LESS positively in 28/31 questions responses and for 25 of those the variance was greater than 5%. In June 2022 this had greatly reduced, they responded less positively to 19 questions and the variance was great than 5% for only 12 of those questions. This demonstrates a huge improvement in the relationship between parents of children receiving SEN Support and the schools.

## Targeted Governor Engagement

In the initial FSPA Survey **Shaftesbury High School** had no responses from their Governing Body. They wanted to achieve more proactive Governor involvement - increasing communication with the school and with parents and an acknowledgement that the GB has a role to play in family/parent engagement. They were also keen to raise the profile of the GB and awareness of their work with parents.



The team leading the FSPA presented to Governors including the analysis of the survey data, in particular the lack of Governors feedback. Family Engagement became an agenda item at full GB meetings and a new Parent Governor was appointed as the lead for Family-School Partnership.

As a result there is now a commitment by the GB to work with and support staff on improving family partnerships and engagement. The final FSPA survey was completed by 6 of the GB (up from 0 in Autumn 2021) and increases were seen in baseline data: **76% of staff were aware** that there was a member of the GB leading on family school partnership and there was a **27% increase in parents** who had an awareness of who the GB are and their role.

## Family School Partnership Policy Development

The SP&ET ran a workshop for Writing a Family School Partnership Policy which was held in November 2021 attended by schools. The format of the training enables staff to write their policy during the session meaning they leave with a completed draft.

Feedback from the session was very positive: *"The session was well structured, and the resources were very useful" "I got the premise quickly and from there was able to understand the process and explore the resources that will help us to create our own policy"*.

FSPA Leaders from **Shaftesbury High School** attended the training to help them achieve their priorities. They wanted to bring consistency to their approach to parental engagement through a sustainable and working family engagement policy. They wanted their policies and programmes to reflect, respect and value the diversity of families in their school community and to see all stakeholders working together to inform, influence and create policies and practice.

Following the training they set up a small working party in school and the team reviewed various FSP Policy templates. They drafted a policy suitable for the school and community which was then shared with the new Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team, staff and Governors so all stakeholders could input ideas.

They saw a great increase in their baseline data with **84% of staff being aware of the policy** and **53%** saying that they thought it was well established.



## Increasing Engagement in Early Years Settings



Private, Voluntary & Independent Nurseries (PVI) were invited to take part in FSPA for the first time this year. Two providers took part over 6 nursery settings. Both providers were supported by the SP&ET to develop a whole setting policy for parental engagement setting out how they wanted to work with their families. Over the course of their FSPA journey both **Peapods ELC** and **Buttercups Nursery Ealing** saw a huge increase in their overall engagement with parents with survey responses growing by **more than 30% over the year**.

## New FSP Policy to Underpin a Whole School Approach



**Vaughan Primary School** wanted to establish an effective and coherent approach to family partnership which was understood and implemented by all stakeholders. The FSPA process was led by the HT who attended all CPD sessions provided and made sure that FSPA and parental engagement were documented as a key priority in the School Improvement Plan, shared with Governors, their School Improvement Partner and crucially all stakeholders from the beginning of the process. The FSPA and parental engagement became a standing Senior Leadership meeting agenda item.

The HT attended the SP&E Teams Writing a Family Partnership Policy workshop and completed a draft policy. A Governor with responsibility for Family School Partnership was appointed along with the formation of a cross school Working Party to lead the project. The draft policy was shared with the GB and with staff and the Working Party agreed areas of responsibility. A whole staff CPD session was held to introduce the policy. New Parents Forum sessions were introduced and through these the policy was discussed with parents before being circulated to all parents. The final survey saw a huge increase in staff responding that the school had a Family School Partnership Policy with **91% aware of it and 40% saying it is already well established**.

*"The development of the policy and drive from the working party has been particularly successful in implementing a policy that has been a meaningful step forward for the school. The policy and associated involvement with the FSPA Award is a first step towards embedding a clear set of procedures and protocols to drive parental engagement forward and re-establish its importance in the school. The school does a number of different things and always has done, however, it was the impact of being part of the FSPA Award that really brought things together under one umbrella and supported the implementation and clear understanding of the need for a policy."*

## Increasing Governing Body Engagement



**Viking Primary School** wanted the Governing Body to develop links with staff and parents and for all staff and parents to know who the GB are and understand their role.

To support better communication between the governors and parents the school added additional pages to the website which cover types of GB roles, key areas of responsibility and GB memberships. They have also increased the presence of the GB at school. Governors have started to visit more during school hours therefore have met more staff and pupils, they want to continue this and expand it to include all governors. Governors also attended the most recent parents evening to develop governor and parent links.

The approach has been effective with the number of parents who said they know who the school Governors are and what they do **rising from 58% to 97%** over the year. **86%** who responded to the survey said they took part in the Governor elections.

Staff responses to the final survey questions were similarly positive: 'Governors have had more interaction with parents this year via parents evening' (**100%**); 'School governors are beginning to provide updates for parents' (**88%**).

## Theme 2: Communicating & Consulting Effectively

### Positive Messages for parents

**Ravenor Primary School** wanted to increase the number of parents/carers of children with additional needs reporting that they regularly receive positive messages about their child and their child's learning as baseline data showed this was a key area for development.



Two sessions on SEND were run for all staff by the Inclusion Leader: focussing on barriers to learning, and expectations of SEND – both with key messages of celebrating all success however small and how important it is to share that message with the parents/carers. Alongside this a whole school system of sending 'celebration emails' to children with SEND was established and this is monitored by the Inclusion Leader. Staff were asked to ensure children with SEND were celebrated by including them in well-done assemblies and in sharing good work with SLT and the Headteacher's newsletters celebrate the successes of children with SEND. Staff phone parents/carers of children with SEND to give positive messages about their child and their learning as well as regular phone calls from the Inclusion Leader to parents/carers to celebrate positive news and allowing the child with SEND to speak to their parent on loudspeaker to reinforce the positive message. The schools new Annual Review Meeting structure also provides another time to celebrate the child and give positive messages. These meetings are now attended by the child and as part of the meeting every adult present (parent, Inclusion Lead, professional (SALT), CT, TA and inclusion officer) tells the child what they were proud of them for, which was an emotional experience for the child and parent.

The increase in baseline data show how impactful this work has been with an **increase of 156%** of parents/carers responding that they receive regular, positive news about their child and this change can be seen for parents of children on SEN Support and with an EHCP. Similarly, staff awareness of the school wide process to ensure the sharing of positive messages **increase by over 20%**.

It is now an established and embedded system that will continue and there is a growing awareness and understanding in staff, and for some parents/carers also, of the need and value to celebrate progress and share success however small.

*"Thank you so much for this feedback. She had not mentioned half of this to us and was quite chuffed about the lovely message."*

*"Once again thank you for taking the time to make us aware that he is improving, and we always welcome your emails or calls."*

### Staff CPD: Building Positive Relationships with Parents

Once again, the SP&E Team ran the successful staff CPD developed through the FSPA. In Spring 2022, 10 staff from 5 schools attended 2 train the Trainer sessions for Building Positive Relationships with parents. This equipped them to go back to their setting and deliver 2 INSETs to their whole staff team.



Feedback was incredibly positive, and staff found the experience very empowering: "Relaxed, friendly approach, supportive, well organised and Fun! Useful resources"; Friendly trainers, delivered in a clear way".

So far the first INSET session has been delivered to over 100 staff and the confidence scores recorded by staff **show an increase from 6.6 to 8.7 out of 10**.

## Building Positive Relationships with Parents of Children with Additional Needs



Based on the highly successful training delivered as part of the main FSPA programme the SP&E Team developed a new train the trainer to support school staff to develop positive relationships with parents of children with additional needs. The sessions enable staff to go back to school and deliver a one-off INSET session to colleagues which covers:

- Current relationships with parents of children with additional needs
- Considering what positive relationships would look like – what are we aiming for
- Identifying barriers to positive relationships and strategic and individual changes which could remove these
- Practicing the steps for positive conversations

The training was piloted with 5 schools in March 2022. Feedback from the train the trainer session was incredibly positive: "Trainers were outstanding with their delivery. Going through the resources and PowerPoints at the end was excellent as it provided a good prompt to reflect on what we had learnt and done during the session" "Everything! Just a great session- brilliantly planned and delivered. Informative and inspirational. Wonderful group of people. Will make a huge difference to staff, pupils and parents"

It has since been delivered to over 70 staff back in schools and the impact has been an **increase in confidence reported by participants from 5.8 to 8.6 out of 10**. "Going through how to navigate a conversation with a difficult parent and approaches we could take. The role play particularly allowed me to address a situation that could potentially happen."; "Different ways and ideas to help parents and get involved with children's learning and build relationships with parents"; Found it useful to think about barriers for parents of SEND children and how they could feel about having a child with SEN"

## Engaging all Staff



Vaughan Primary School wanted confident engagement with parents from all staff and chose to support this through the provision of staff CPD to support effective communication and engagement with parents. They used FSPA as a chance for the staff to re-establish their relationships with parents with a clear understanding of expectations on both sides and confidence in engaging positively and personally as many of the interactions of the last twelve to eighteen months have been online.

The school nominated two members of staff to attend Train the Trainer sessions run by SP&ET which were then redelivered in groups to all staff back in school. All staff have responded positively to the sessions delivered by the two members of staff and valued the fact that it was delivered by colleagues rather than SLT. CPD feedback saw staff confidence to build relationships with parents **rise from 6.4 to 8.7 out of 10**. The final FSPA survey also saw a rise in the % of parents reporting that 'Teaching staff build positive relationships with parents'.

"I am going to attempt to plan conversations with parents and prepare them before telling them any problem their child might have. I will also try to build trust with the certain parents to an extent so that we would be able to work together in finding solutions and the best option for their child'.

'I am going to try and be more open minded and listen to the parents more carefully as they tell their story and use empathic phrases'.

The whole process has given staff the opportunity to have a voice and be reflective when considering how they engage and deal with parents from this point forward and how they have engaged with them in the past. The overriding sense has been to think of ways to support effective engagement moving forward and how they can share in that success,

The whole school approach to the FSPA process supported by the implementation of the policy and the delivery of CPD really highlighted the need for engagement from all staff: "Another lesson is to have the right balance of individuals leading the change and ensure that these are not just Senior Leaders. It has really cemented the process by having non-SLT members engaging and delivering training as well as being members of the working party."

## Enabling parents to contribute to progress and target setting

**Ravenor Primary School** wanted parents/carers/carers to feel actively involved in setting their child's targets and reviewing their progress.



To begin, CPD meetings were run by the Inclusion Leader on SEND expectations, and also on barriers to learning which provided staff with further knowledge to increase their understanding about the need to target set and share these targets with the parents. The roll out of the 'Building Relationships' training for all staff increased their understanding and confidence and provided opportunities for discussions and reflection.

The number of phone calls and meetings increased, and the Inclusion Lead met with every parent/carer that requested a meeting to discuss their child's targets/progress, many of which have resulted in referrals to get the support their child needs to make the progress they are capable of. The Inclusion leader attended Parents Evening for many children on SEN Support to offer advice and support and many follow up meetings were held. The school introduced a new system of giving the children with EHCPs 15minute slots with the Inclusion Lead and other professionals (e.g. the SALT), as well as the CT which proved hugely beneficial and a real 'team around the child' format placing the child at the heart of it all.

The impact has been a real change in culture and a deeper understanding of the need and value to have regular conversations with parents/carers for their sake, but more importantly for the child and the teacher too. This can be clearly seen in the impact data from parents: Positive responses to "I am able to engage in regular conversations about my child's targets and progress" **increased from 25% to 68%** and parents agreeing that they receive regular reports on their child's progress towards set targets **increased from 25% to 64%**. **100% of staff agreed** that the school has mechanisms which enable regular, 2-way conversations to share effective strategies employed at home or in school to support SEND pupils.

"The key message from training and listening to parents/carers' voice is the need to be heard and to be involved. The partnership between school and home is crucial and without sharing that responsibility, children miss out on making the progress they could if home and school were working in close partnership. Our advice to other schools would be ensure that all staff fully understood the need for a joint approach from school and home, and the huge difference this can make to the child."

## Reflecting Parent Voice

**Buttercups Nursery Ealing** wanted increase positive communication between staff and parents and ensure that parents felt that their views are being heard. The changes they wanted to see were:



- Parent voice and feedback being used to inform changes which happen in nursery
  - Parents engaging with staff regularly with staff to share information on children's learning and development
  - Staff feeling empowered to share information and strategies with parents which will support their child
- They started by making changes to the format of parent consultations. Parents were offered a choice of time and a choice of online, phonecall or in-person meetings to enable more parents to attend and engage. They held Open Days for parents and carers to come in have a look in their child's class and talk to the nursery staff about learning and share information more informally (e.g. difficulties around food, sleep, routines). These included activities set up for parents and children to do together to share examples of how children learn at nursery. As well as this they re-introduced parent events which had not been run since COVID as a way to informally re-engage, this included a Jubilee Picnic. The nursery were also redesigning their menus and used feedback from parents and carers to do this ensuring their ideas and feedback were incorporated.

Buttercups saw an increase in parent attendance and fantastic increases in their baseline data:

- Nursery has lots of opportunities for parents to attend events **increased by 24%**
- Nursery takes into account the needs of all parents when planning events **increased 19%**
- Nursery provides information which helps me support my child's development **increased 43%**

*"All the staff are very friendly and welcoming. They are always happy and approachable. No matter which member of staff you speak to is clear they have made an effort to know the children and parents even if they are not working in your child's particular class"*

## Theme 3: Enabling Parental Engagement in Learning

### Supporting Learning at Home

**Heathland School** wanted to increase information and activities which would help parents support learning at home. This was particularly important post-covid to re-engage the whole school community, increase and improve communication about school life and provide more opportunities for parents to be part of activities.



They started with a redesign of their website and how they shared curriculum content. The website was then relaunched with parents and Directors. They also worked with a group of pupils to develop their monthly newsletter into a publication which had ownership from the children and reflected voices from all over the school. New curriculum newsletters also began in Spring term, with much more detail on the learning that term and key information about dates. They looked at their development priorities and created a plan of workshops over the year. These included workshops about the curriculum but also about wellbeing like the schools Mind Up approach.

Unfortunately, due to the ongoing impact of COVID face to face workshops were not possible in the Spring Term, however, the school instead created 5 videos on key themes in the curriculum which were shared with parents and carers. During the Summer Term a further 5 workshops were delivered in person and were well attended.

Whilst their plans were impacted by restrictions the school were able to trial a number of new ways of working and as a result have a robust plan moving forward into next year to increase engagement including: Better attendance tracking of at workshops; Identifying need based on pupil assessment data where related to core subjects and using class teachers to identify families early who were at risk of disengagement with the curriculum. In addition the Communications Manager is reviewing the whole school communication strategy for 2022/23.

There were some key increases in the school's baseline data which support their approach. The % of parents responding 'Yes' to 'The school provides information or runs workshops which help me support my child's learning at home' **increased from 58% to 76%**. Staff data shows a similar picture with positive responses to 'There are opportunities for all parents to engage in workshops and activities which help them to practice the skills needed to support learning and development at home' **Increasing from 21% to 47%** and 'Everyone at school works actively to encourage attendance at workshops, particularly for those parents who find working with the school difficult or those whose children would benefit from additional support at home' **increased from 23.53% to 42%**. They also saw increases in Year 2 pupils (one of their target groups) on track for Reading/Writing /Maths combined which **increased from 26% in September 2021 to 52%** in June 2022.

*"I have increased my confidence in maths I will be able to help my daughter better"; "I will use strategies to help to calm my children"*

### Targeted reading Support in Year 3

**Viking Primary School** focussed on reading at home for Year 3 pupils for their targeted group in order to support transition into KS2. They wanted more parents in Year 3 to hear their children read at least weekly, more parents to report feeling confident to help their child develop comprehension skills and widen their vocabulary and ultimately for more children in Year 3 to progress in reading.



A reading workshop took place that looked at phonics and the transition to focusing more on comprehension and less on decoding. A number of year 3 parents were directly invited and 4 attended. To try to increase engagement the school tried a more informal approach and introduced Biscuit and Book sessions for all year groups including Year 3 which were much better attended. They also used existing opportunities to share information with parents - reading resources were shared with Year 3 parents during parents evening to help them develop their own understanding of comprehension and have a bank of questions to use with their child when reading together at home.

Year 3 reading records have been monitored weekly and **100% of the pupils** now have at least one comment/ reading session in their diary each week and **100% of the pupils** have books changed weekly.

Parents commented that the resources they received were helpful and allowed them to further support their child. One parent has also gone on to volunteer at school listening to readers.

Pupil data shows that children are making good progress and closing the COVID gap in reading.

## Differentiated Support for Homelearning for Pupils with Additional Needs



Coston Primary took part in SEND FSPA and identified that parents of children with SEND did not feel they received enough differentiated help to support their children's learning at home.

They reviewed their home learning policy in relation to SEND pupils and identified key areas for improvement. All teachers met or phoned parents with children on the SEND Register to discuss their individual Pupil Plan and provided toolkits/resources for parents to use at home. They delivered specific workshops for those parents on the key online homelearning resources and targeted 25 families through face to face and written encouragement. Subject leaders closely tracked which families had attended workshops and the progress of these children and children have been receiving certificates for their engagement and progress with their online home learning.

As a result they have seen attendance quadruple at workshops and feedback from parents is very positive: *"Small group and 1;1 sessions have helped me to understand how I can support my child/ren at home"*. More children are engaging in Reading Eggs, TTRockstars, Mathsseeds and Mathletics. Some children have been challenging the head Teacher on TTRockstars.

**14 out of the 25 targeted** children have made good or accelerated progress in Reading and Maths and 5 out of the 25 children are on track to make expected or above expected attainment in Reading and Maths (where they previously were not). The class teachers have shared their positive thoughts on the children's progress: *"She is doing really well, her mother has listened to the advice and used the strategies we have provided."*; *"It has been great to see him able to read books independently."*; *"He could not blend or segment when in Autumn Term, now he has passed the phonics screening test."*

Parental responses in Summer 2022 showed the impact of the work: Positive responses to "I am given information each year on home learning which is differentiated to my child's needs" **rose from 64% to 83.33%** and to "The school provides information or runs workshops which help me support my child's learning at home" the percentage of parents responding 'Yes' **increased from 50% to 72.22%**.

## Healthy Families at Peapods ELC



**Peapods ELC** used their work on the award to drive another priority – a Healthy Eating Project called "Eat Right Be Bright" aimed to raise awareness of the importance of healthy life styles. To meet this need the setting used their work on FSPA to increase information to parents to help them think about what healthy food looks like and giving suggestions on how to be healthier and increasing exercise as a family.

Initial feedback from parents was they felt they lacked the time and knowledge to develop their families understanding of healthy lifestyles and would benefit from practical advice and tips.

Peapods shared information with Parents through newsletters and workshops on oral health and hygiene and provided support with identifying foods with high sugar content and how to encourage healthy eating. As a result parents and staff all have a better understanding of portion sizes and creating quick, simple, balanced meals. Their understanding of oral health and its wider impact on wellbeing is also improved.

## Theme 4: Empowering Parents and Carers to Develop their Own Skills

### Local Offer Training & Resources



New training for schools was developed on the **Local Offer for SEND** in partnership with the **Ealing Family Information Service**. This training aimed to increase whole staff knowledge of the Local Offer and create school 'experts' so that all parents and carers of children with additional needs have access to the wealth of information and support services available and that school staff feel empowered to signpost parents to support.

The new training model was very positively received by trainees and when it was cascaded back in schools and will form part of SEND FSPA going forward. Staff confidence to use the Local Offer to support parents went from **4.7 to 9 / 10**. *"Lots of great information about the Local Offer and how to disseminate information to parents. Also spending time looking at how to navigate the Local Offer."*; *"I will use the Ealing local offer website to find extra support for parents."*

The impact of the training and cascading of information to school staff and parents led to an increase in the number of parents reporting that they knew what the Local Offer was and how to get support to access it, particularly for parents of children receiving SEN Support without an EHCP:

	SEN Support Parents		EHCP Parents		All Parents	
	Baseline October 2021	End of Pilot June 2022	Baseline October 2021	End of Pilot June 2022	Baseline October 2021	End of Pilot June 2022
I know what the Local Offer for SEND is	7%	40%	73%	84%	40%	66%
The school have provided me with information and support about the Local Offer and I know who to talk to in school if I need more support	7%	60%	60%	79%	33%	71%

### Developing Parents Own Skills

**Viking Primary School** wanted a whole school approach to engaging parents in their own learning and to developing opportunities for parents to support their children within and outside of school.



To facilitate this they created 3 new pages on their website to give parents more information about the opportunities available in school, and within the local area. Parents are signposted to these via direct conversations, the newsletter, parent emails and through a new parent display board has been set up on the playground.

- Parent learning Opportunities - providing information about learning opportunities for parents delivered by outside provider (ESOL etc).
- Parent Workshops - providing information about school run workshops. They also provide information about previous workshops to allow parents to request information if they missed the session.
- Volunteering at Viking - providing information about volunteering opportunities for parents.

As well as publicising everything on the new website pages, details are emailed directly to the parents and added to the parent display board.

Over the year the school have seen parents coming into school more especially for more 'informal' events. In the Summer Term they have hosted a jubilee picnic, a commonwealth games exhibit and a Biscuits & Book session. During these sessions, parents got to find out about their child's learning and got to interact socially with other parents and staff. Parents are also utilising the website and parent display board more to find out about learning opportunity for themselves.

Impact data reflects the success of the approach. In response to the question 'The school tells me about opportunities to develop my own learning or skills' the parent response has **risen from 57% 78%** and to 'The school lets parents know about opportunities to volunteer via the volunteer page on the website' positive responses **rose from 52% to 94%**.

## Empowering Parents & Signposting Support

**Coston Primary School** wanted to increase the provision of support and signposting to all parents of children with additional needs. Previously they had run coffee morning for parents of children with an EHCP but they decided that these would now be opened up to those with children receiving SEN Support also. The aim of the coffee mornings was to create a safe space to support families with any concerns they had. Parents were able to provide feedback and ask questions related to workshop sessions, home learning and any concerns they had related to their children.



Over the year they saw a steady increase in attendance at workshops rising from 5 in November 2021 to 22 in June 2022, 10 parents of children with an EHCP and 12 of pupils receiving SEN Support.

Parents felt supported and able to communicate their wider concerns about their children and get advice and support. One common theme was how isolated parent felt, through the coffee mornings parents have now started to support each other as well as feel supported by the school, they have created a WhatsApp group and have even begun helping each other with babysitting. The school have also started running termly movie nights for all their SEN children which staff volunteer to run and means that parents get 3 hours of respite on a Friday evening while their children are happy safe and having fun.

The school have seen huge increases in their parental baseline data responses: Parents answering Yes to 'The school provides information on events and workshops in the local area which are relevant to my child's needs' **rose from 64% to 82%**; 'The school runs workshops and events delivered by themselves or others which support me as a parent of a child with SEND' **rose from 43% to 88%** and to 'The school provides me with information and guidance to ensure my child and our family can access the services and support we need' a massive **increase of 50% to 94%**.

*"I have learnt that building positive relationships with parents is important for the children, the school and parents. When parents feel listened to and supported, they work better with the school to ensure good outcomes for their children. You also find out more information which can help in school. The advice I would give would be ask your parents what they need, support them, work as a part of a team with your parents. Don't be afraid to ask parents what the school can do to make things better, this is very important."*

## Utilising Skills of Families and Increasing Volunteers

**Buttercups Nursery Ealing** wanted to create a culture of family and shared learning in nursery by giving parents, carers and extended family members the opportunity to share their unique skills and knowledge to enhance the children's learning and development.



They re-launched their Mystery Guest initiative which invites parents, carers or wider family members to come in and share anything – their profession, their background, musical instruments, gardening, cooking, dancing. The sessions have increased in regularity and number over the year and including dentists, book sharing, talking about religious festivals and much more.

Buttercups have also increased information through their weekly newsletter where they share ideas of activities to do at home to support learning and development particularly those which relate to current topics and ideas for days out and local trips which can support learning.

As a result Buttercups saw an increase in positive responses from parents in their final survey:

- The nursery lets parents know about opportunities to volunteer **increased from 25% to 89%**
- **92% were aware** that parents and other family members have the opportunity to volunteer to share their skills and knowledge

*"Always receive timely and useful feedback including things we can do at home to help with development areas"*

*"I loved having the opportunity to come and read to my daughter's class, especially after a long period of covid restrictions. I felt very welcome and loved that management and staff were very enthusiastic for us parents to come in and share where we are from with the children"*

## The Overall Impact of the FSPA Process & Long-Term Change

The Family School Partnership Award and the SEND Family School Partnership Award support schools in making long-term, sustainable changes to the way they work with parents and carers which lasts beyond the year they are engaged with the award.

Unlike other award processes it uses highly detailed stakeholder data to highlight priority areas as well as guiding schools to link their work for FSPA & SEND FSPA clearly to wider school priorities. It encourages schools to see engagement with families as integral to everything they do rather than an add on. The process advocates they adapt a whole school approach to how they work with parents and carers. Over the year schools make systematic changes, based on evidence with the aim of ultimately improving outcomes for their pupils. The extent of these changes are measured at the end of the year to demonstrate their impact.

Many schools see their year working towards the awards as the start of the journey rather than the end. They use the focus of the year to galvanise interest and engage stakeholders and use the data and feedback gathered through the year to inform their next steps post achieving the award. Below are some examples of schools explaining the long-term impact in their settings.

“The process itself has been extremely positive. From embarking on the training sessions and having the support of the team as well as peers that I have had the pleasure of networking with – it has helped me to become even more reflective as a leader. Having the opportunity to talk through our contexts and priorities for the process has also helped to form a comradery as a wider group as well as a school team.



“The process has very much been a first step to establishing a clear set of protocols in place that the school wants to develop for years to come. It has always been something that as the Headteacher, I have wanted to put in place but was unable to find a route in. The process has supported me immensely with this. The establishment of a parental engagement policy that is the umbrella under which we have a clear set of expectations for all stakeholders to the staff learning more about the potential parents we serve and barriers that may occur for them has been very rewarding. The whole community is enthused about how the school moves forward in partnership and will look positively to the future.” **Vaughan Primary School**

“The impact on the SEND FSPA has been huge and it has been one of the most valuable processes that I have seen a school be part of. Impact can be seen on children, parents/carers, and staff and indeed the whole school community . . .

Although data is key [and details the positive increase clearly], it is the change in culture that is the biggest impact of the process: there is an increased awareness, understanding and passion of staff to celebrate the children with SEND, and that is more than we set out to achieve. To change systems and processes takes times and does have impact, but to change attitudes and culture is harder and provides the next steppingstone on the SEND Journey that will ultimately change the lives of the children with SEND at Ravenor, their parents/carers and the staff and school as a whole.



The process has built awareness and confidence to build positive relationships and the skills to achieve this. There has been a notable change in how parents/carers of children with SEND feel listened to and this is clearly evident by the increased number of conversations and meetings, as well as the enthusiasm and desire to be part of a community in which SEND is acknowledged and celebrated as was seen by the twenty parents/carers who attending the first SEND Coffee Morning. One other key point of impact is how staff now have a deepened understanding of their role in relation to the children with SEND in their class and how it is a team effort between them, support staff, Inclusion Leader and parents/carers to ensure needs are met.” **Ravenor Primary School**

"The FSPA process has supported us to refocus on the needs of our parents following the impact of Covid on their engagement with school – both by physically bringing them back in to attend targeted school events and refining our communications about their children's learning via our website, newsletter and email. The FSPA award has given us a framework to use on a yearly basis, which ensures we are delivering a programme of high-quality workshops which supports our parents with the learning. It has also helped us to be mindful of parent communications and look into how we can improve those more widely, such as managing our platforms, better tracking of parents who do not engage, more work to support EAL parents to attend events." **Heathland School**



"The impact of SEND FSPA has been wonderful, all staff and parents feel more confident to work together. Staff feel less anxious about having conversations with parents of children with additional needs. Parents feel listened to and have expressed a lot of gratitude.



If it was not for the SEND FSPA, we would continue doing things the same, it is easy to continue doing the same when you don't realise things need to be changed. All of the changes we have made, have been due to the CPD through the SEND FSPA and feedback from our parents."

**Coston Primary School**

## Learning and Advice for Other Schools

"This has been the best experience for our school. All of staff have worked together as a team, no judgement, sharing honest feelings and views about things that they find difficult. As a school staff, we have identified our priorities for the next academic year and year on year we will continue to do this. One of school aims was to have all staff on board sharing and delivering our school ethos of inclusion and respect. Working with parents was very difficult for lots of staff and the SEND FSPA helped to support all staff in feeling less anxious and working as a team to deliver our school ethos effortlessly. As a result of this, our parents and children are happier and more successful." **Coston Primary School**



"It is well worth doing the FSPA, it helped us focus on the strengths of the school and identify areas for development. It [FSPA] raises the profile of family school partnership amongst all stakeholders. It is hard work (isn't everything) - you need to make the time and keep going" **Shaftesbury High School**



"It has to be a whole school priority. It cannot be undertaken by one or two individuals. All stakeholders must have a buy in and commitment at varying levels. The experience has been very positive in bringing together the entire school community and keeping the pupils at the centre of what we do." **Vaughan Primary School**



"The process made me remember to question why! Why do we run workshops in the hall and talk at parents if they don't attend in high numbers? Why do we repeat sessions year on year just because that is how we have always done it rather than ask why do we do it this way? Does it work best for the target audience?" **Viking Primary School**



"This process has opened up wider conversations about how we communicate with our families. It has the potential to impact decisions around how you plan all aspects of school life – club bookings, parents' evenings, daily emails, workshop bookings etc. It has encouraged us to consider a communications strategy moving forwards and has stressed the importance of a whole school approach when doing this, and the role of the school office and finance teams in this process." **Heathland School**



"The whole process has been invaluable and there is both hard and soft data to show impact. It is just the start of an exciting journey to continue to celebrate all children with SEND, that all schools should undertake. The SEND road can be a long one, with many obstacles along the way and it is our job to help parents/carers and children with SEND, navigate that journey, support and guide them. This experience has led to a culture change in the school and a deepening of understanding and passion in all staff. To provide a culture in school in which parents/carers truly believe their child is accepted and celebrated is essential though challenging... to have five parents inform the Inclusion Leader of their own SEND, as well as nearly every parent/carer at the Annual Reviews shed a tear, and twenty parents/carers attend the SEND Coffee morning, and all staff wanting to further developing relationships with parents/carers of children with SEND, shows we are providing that culture and that is something we should be proud of and build upon, and something other schools can do too." **Ravenor Primary School**



**Congratulations to the schools who achieved the  
Family School Partnership Award in 2022:**

Heathland Primary School, Harrow

Shaftesbury High School, Harrow

Vaughan Primary School, Harrow

Viking Primary School, Ealing

**Congratulations to the early years settings who achieved the  
Family School Partnership Award in 2022:**

Buttercups Nursery Ealing

Peapods Early Learning Centre (All sites)

**Congratulations to the pilot schools who achieved the  
SEND Family School Partnership Award in 2022:**

Coston Primary School, Ealing

Ravenor Primary School, Ealing



If you would like to find out more about the **Family School Partnership Award** or the **SEND Family School Partnership Award**, please contact:

Sarah Thompson, Vulnerable Groups / School Partnerships Lead  
Ealing Learning Partnership

Email: [sthompson@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:sthompson@ealing.gov.uk) Tel: 0208 825 7372



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