

How to... Support staff with family engagement

This short **How to... guide** has been developed to ensure that the staff responsible for family engagement in school are supported by SLT to make a positive change to family experiences with the school community.

Working with families can bring its own unique set of challenges, not least just getting them through the door! These How to... and Quick Start guides have been created to allow your staff to pick relevant and engaging ideas to suit their audience, but they may still require extra support to allay fears raised by working directly with families on a sensitive issue such as money.

When tasking staff with family engagement:

- Listen to their worries
- Have clear objectives you want them to achieve and by when
- Be a sounding board for their ideas, what will work and what won't
- Follow up with support – give them the time, resources and people they need

Teachers are not financial experts therefore the idea is to develop family learning and not to give advice on financial products or situations. However, you could ensure that relevant support materials for local or national organisations such as the credit union, CAB or church are available if families do need specific support.

Money is something that we all use on a regular basis so it doesn't have to be a taboo subject and can be talked about openly. However, it can raise sensitive personal issues with children and adults; ensure that your staff are aware of your safeguarding and disclosure policy in case discussions about money lead to sensitive disclosures or admissions.

There are lots of opportunities for schools and teachers to benefit from the involvement of the wider community, so give your staff the time to develop, nurture and maintain the relationships developed through family engagement.

Look at how other local schools have tackled family engagement and financial education, and work together to create cluster opportunities within the community.

Don't reinvent the wheel! Look at what is already happening in your school that families can engage with and experience a learning opportunity.