



Leading Parent Partnership Award (LPPA)

Impact, Best Practice and What Works

LPPA

improving
parental
engagement



OPTIMUS EDUCATION



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Executive summary

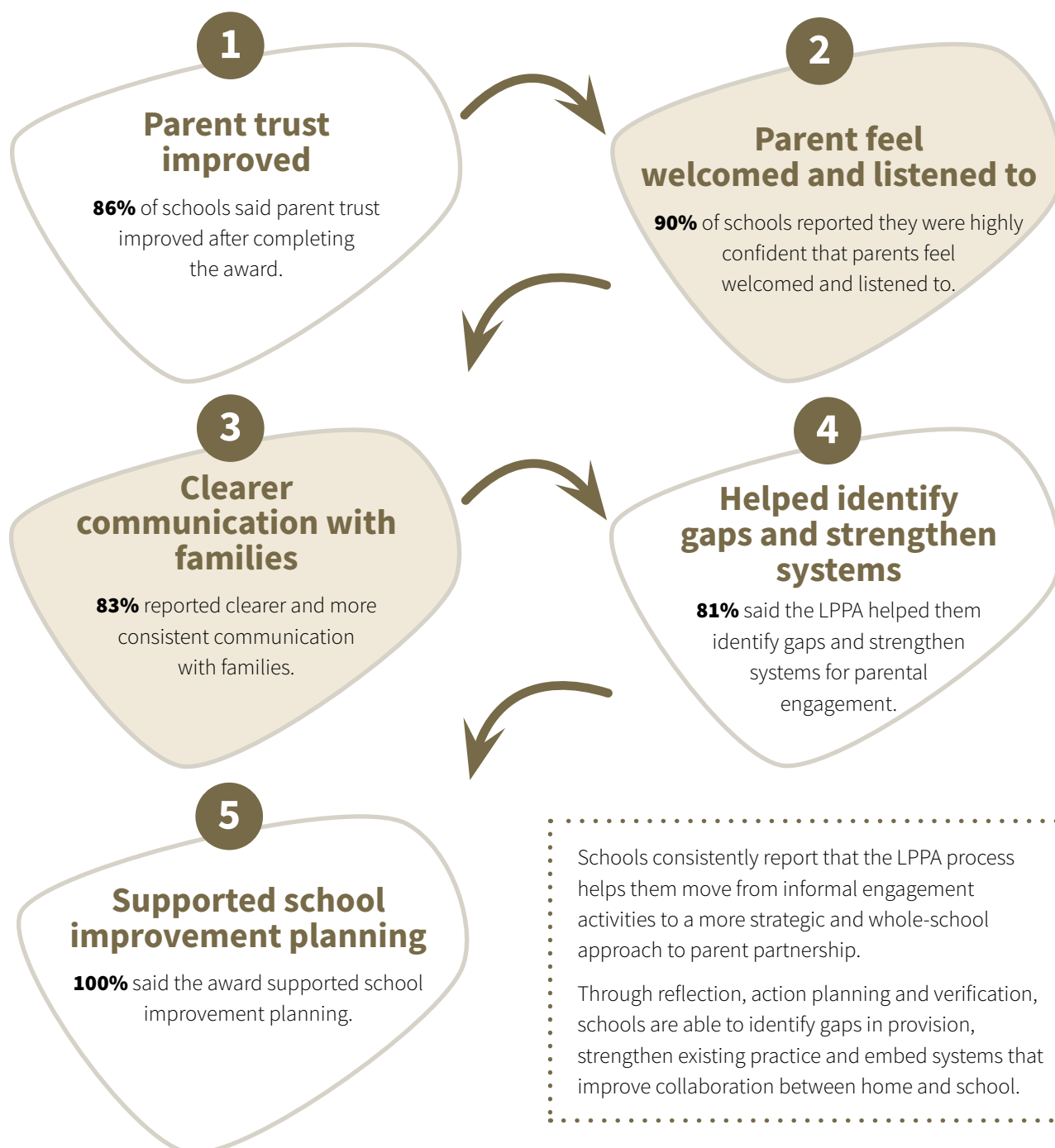
The **Leading Parent Partnership Award (LPPA)** supports schools to take a structured and strategic approach to working with parents and carers. It helps transform parental engagement from a series of individual activities into a whole-school driver of improvement.

Evidence from accredited schools shows that strengthening parent partnership has a direct impact on communication, engagement and pupil outcomes.

Schools that complete the LPPA consistently report improvements in:

- communication with parents
- parental engagement in learning
- support for vulnerable families
- school culture and community relationships.

The data shows the scale of this impact:



Introduction

Strong relationships between schools and parents are one of the most powerful influences on pupils' success and have a measurable impact on pupil outcomes, attendance and wellbeing.

When families feel welcomed, informed and confident engaging with their child's school, pupils are more likely to attend regularly, develop positive attitudes towards learning and achieve better outcomes.

However, building meaningful partnerships with parents is not always straightforward. Schools are increasingly working with diverse communities where families may face a range of barriers to engagement, including time pressures, language differences, previous experiences of education or a lack of confidence in supporting learning.

At the same time, expectations on schools continue to grow. School leaders are expected to demonstrate strong communication with families, support parental engagement in learning and build positive relationships with their communities.

The LPPA provides schools with a structured framework to strengthen these relationships and embed parental engagement as a core part of school improvement.

The award supports schools to:

- review and evaluate existing practice
- identify gaps in parental engagement
- develop clear systems and policies
- implement practical strategies to strengthen partnerships with families.

Through this process, schools are able to move beyond occasional engagement activities and develop a whole-school culture of parent partnership.

The Leading Parent Partnership Award has transformed our school culture by moving parental engagement to a core strategic priority.

About this report

This report explores the impact of the Leading Parent Partnership Award on schools that have successfully achieved the award.

The findings draw on two key sources of evidence:

1. Survey responses from accredited schools

Schools that have achieved the LPPA were asked to share their experiences of the award and the impact it has had on their school community.

2. Analysis of final verification reports

Verification reports from accredited schools provide detailed insight into how schools implemented the award and the changes that followed.

Together, these sources provide a rich picture of how the LPPA is supporting schools to strengthen relationships with parents and carers.

About the LPPA

Background and overview

The Leading Parent Partnership Award (LPPA) is an internationally recognised framework that supports schools to build strong, sustainable partnerships with parents and carers.

Originally developed in 2003, the LPPA has been supporting schools for more than two decades to strengthen relationships with families and embed parental engagement at the heart of school life. Since then, thousands of schools and educational settings have worked towards and achieved the award.

Currently **2,166 schools have achieved the award** (March 2026). The LPPA continues to play an important role in helping schools respond to increasing expectations around parental engagement, communication and community relationships. As inspection frameworks place greater emphasis on how schools work with families, the LPPA provides a clear and evidence-based approach to meeting these expectations.

A key strength of the LPPA is its flexibility. The framework is designed to reflect the unique context of each school, including its community, location and the needs of its families. This ensures that the award is relevant and meaningful for all settings, regardless of size or demographic.

Award framework

At the heart of the LPPA is a structured framework that helps schools take a strategic and whole-school approach to parent partnership.

The framework is built around a clear set of objectives that guide schools through the process of reviewing, developing and embedding effective parental engagement. Rather than focusing on one-off initiatives, the LPPA encourages schools to develop sustainable systems and practices that strengthen relationships with parents over time.

2,166
schools have achieved
the Leading Parent
Partnership Award

The LPPA has been an excellent vehicle to acknowledge what we do well and help us to continually improve our relationship with parents and our wider community.

A structured process for school improvement

Schools work through a structured process that supports both reflection and implementation:

- 1. Self-evaluation**
Schools assess their current approach to parent partnership, identifying strengths and areas for development.
- 2. Action planning**
A clear and targeted plan is developed to improve parental engagement across the school.
- 3. Implementation and evidence gathering**
Schools implement their action plan and build a portfolio of evidence demonstrating impact.
- 4. Review and evaluation**
Progress is monitored and evaluated, ensuring that changes are effective and sustainable.
- 5. Verification**
An external verifier reviews the school's evidence and assesses whether the award standard has been met.

This structured approach ensures that schools are not only introducing new initiatives but also embedding long-term improvements.

This has developed closer working partnerships between parents and school...

The core focus of the framework

The LPPA framework supports schools to strengthen parent partnership across several key areas:

Creating a welcoming environment

Schools develop an environment that is friendly, accessible and inclusive, ensuring parents feel confident visiting and engaging with the school.

Strengthening communication

Clear, consistent and accessible communication systems are established, enabling effective two-way dialogue between school and families.

Involving parents in learning

Schools provide opportunities for parents to actively support their children's learning through guidance, workshops and shared learning experiences.

Supporting all families

Targeted strategies are developed to engage all groups of parents, including those who may be harder to reach.

Developing parent-friendly policies

Policies are designed and communicated in ways that are clear and accessible, helping parents understand their role in supporting their child's education.

Supporting transition and continuity

Schools ensure that parents are supported as their children move through key stages of education.

IMPACT 1

Stronger communication

90%
of schools reported they were highly confident that parents feel welcomed and listened to.

Partnership working with our families will remain a priority and we have committed to embedding this award further within our School Development Plan.

One of the most consistent impacts reported by schools is improved communication with parents.

Schools often begin the LPPA process by reviewing how information is shared with families and whether communication systems are clear, accessible and effective.

Through the award process, many schools introduce:

- more structured and strategic communication approaches
- increased use of multiple channels to reach all families
- clearer, more accessible information for parents
- stronger two-way communication, rather than one-way updates.

These changes help create a more consistent and transparent approach to communication.

Parents report that they feel more informed about school life and more confident contacting staff when they need support.

For schools, improved communication leads to stronger relationships and greater trust between families and staff.



Impact achieved:

- **increased trust between parents and school staff**
- **more consistent and reliable communication across the school**
- **parents feel more confident initiating contact with the school**
- **stronger engagement from families, including those previously less engaged.**

This is reflected in the data, with 83% of schools reporting clearer and more consistent communication and 86% reporting increased trust from parents following the award.

Case study: River Tees Secondary Academy



Strengthening communication and family engagement

The school already had strong relationships with parents and carers, but the LPPA process helped leaders review existing systems and identify opportunities to make communication even more accessible and inclusive.

A range of communication channels were introduced and strengthened, including social media, the school website, the management information system and direct contact with families.

Regular phone calls with parents became an important part of maintaining strong relationships.

Pupils themselves recognised the impact of this approach. During the verification visit, one pupil explained that his father particularly appreciated the regular phone calls from the school, describing how the conversations helped him stay connected with his child's progress.

The school also took practical steps to remove barriers to communication. These included:

- the use of QR codes to access information quickly
- translation tools to support families whose first language is not English
- flexible meeting arrangements to enable parents to attend school events.

These improvements helped ensure that parents and carers felt informed, supported and confident communicating with the school.

Impact

- stronger relationships between families and school staff
- improved access to information for parents
- increased parental engagement with school communication.

Partnership working with our families will remain a priority and we have committed to embedding this award further within our School Development Plan.

This will see our school launch a new communication platform to improve our links with families and better develop our website to make families our main stakeholder when accessing our information.

Headteacher, River Tees Secondary Academy

IMPACT 2

Greater parent participation in learning

The Award helped us strengthen our provision across the board, particularly in communication, home learning and adult learning.

The LPPA encourages schools to actively involve parents in their children's learning.

Many accredited schools introduced programmes designed to help parents understand the curriculum and develop practical ways to support learning at home.

Examples of successful initiatives include:

- literacy and numeracy workshops
- phonics sessions for parents of younger pupils
- revision support workshops for older students
- online safety sessions
- family learning events where parents and children participate together.

These opportunities help parents feel more confident supporting their children's learning. They also strengthen relationships between teachers and families by creating shared experiences around education.

Schools report that increased parental participation often leads to greater engagement from pupils as well.

Parents reported feeling much more confident supporting their children's learning following the workshops and guidance provided.

IMPACT

Impact achieved:

- **parents report increased confidence in supporting learning at home**
- **pupils show greater engagement and motivation in their learning**
- **stronger alignment between home and school expectations**
- **increased participation from parents in school-led learning activities.**

These changes contribute to stronger relationships between families and schools and support improved outcomes for pupils.

Ideas to try in your school

Monton Green Primary School offers a range of learning opportunities including reading workshops, maths sessions, e-safety sessions and curriculum events where parents can experience classroom activities alongside their children.

Newman Catholic College introduced targeted revision workshops and information evenings for parents of exam-year students, helping families better support GCSE preparation and reducing anxiety around assessments.

Ashmole Academy embedded pupil development and learning support across the curriculum, supported by regular parent engagement opportunities and guidance sessions. Parents are actively supported to understand how to help students with independent learning and revision strategies.

Case study: Jumeirah English Speaking School (JESS), Dubai



A whole-school culture of parent partnership

The school has embedded parental engagement as a defining feature of its school culture, ensuring parents are actively involved in shaping the school's direction.

At the heart of this is a highly effective Parent Partnership Council, which plays a central role in decision-making and school improvement. Parent voice is not treated as an "add-on", but as a core part of leadership and strategic development.

Supporting parents to engage in learning

A key strength is the school's structured approach to supporting parents in their children's learning.

JESS offers:

- curriculum guidance and accessible learning information
- workshops and courses to support learning at home
- joint parent-child learning activities
- bespoke sessions tailored to family needs.

Impact

- parents feel valued as genuine partners
- communication is clear, accessible and trusted
- pupils benefit from strong home-school collaboration
- the school culture is built on trust, collaboration and ambition.

We see relationships with our parents as a pursuit that is an ongoing quest as there will always be more we can do. Having parental partnership identified as a 'defining feature of the school's identity', is not only satisfying but motivates us further to continue to improve and develop this key aspect of any successful school.

Headteacher, Jumeirah English Speaking School (JESS), Dubai

86%
of schools said
parent trust
improved after
completing the
award

IMPACT 3

Welcoming school environments

83%
of schools reported
clearer and
more consistent
communication with
families

Another key area of impact is the creation of a more welcoming environment for parents and carers.

Schools completing the LPPA often review how parents experience the school environment from their first interaction.

Effective schools pay attention to small but important details such as:

- clear signage around the school site
- friendly reception arrangements
- accessible information displays
- comfortable spaces where parents can meet staff
- visible displays celebrating pupil success.

Parents are welcomed into school not just as visitors, but as active participants in school life.

IMPACT

Impact achieved:

- **parents feel more confident, comfortable and valued when engaging with the school**
- **increased attendance at school events and activities**
- **stronger relationships between families and staff**
- **reduced barriers for parents who may previously have felt hesitant to engage.**

This is reflected in survey findings, where 90% of schools reported they were highly confident that parents feel welcomed and listened.

When parents feel comfortable visiting the school and speaking with staff, it becomes easier to build positive relationships that support pupils' development. support improved outcomes for pupils.

Ideas to try in your school

The school as a community hub:

- the playground hosts a regular farmers' market attended by the local community
- parent-led groups share updates and information at key entry points to the school
- school spaces are used to bring together families beyond the classroom.

Case study: Bournville School



A school at the heart of its community

Bournville School has taken a strategic approach to creating a welcoming environment where parents and carers feel valued, listened to and part of the school community.

From the moment visitors enter, there is a clear sense of openness and inclusivity. The reception area and wider environment have been developed to ensure families feel comfortable and supported from their first interaction.

This reflects a wider cultural shift, where building strong relationships with families is a consistent priority.

Creating a culture of openness and partnership

A key strength is the school's commitment to openness, where parents feel confident engaging with staff and contributing to school life.

Leaders have introduced opportunities for families to engage, including:

- parent forums that shape school development
- community events, workshops and coffee mornings
- opportunities for families to learn and celebrate together

Communication systems have been strengthened, ensuring parents can easily connect with staff and access information. This is underpinned by a clear ethos of partnership between parent, child and school.

Consistent and visible leadership

Strong leadership has driven this transformation.

The Headteacher's vision for parent partnership is embedded across the school, supported by:

- clear systems for communication and engagement
- a consistent approach from staff
- a focus on listening to and acting on parent feedback

Parents report their views are taken seriously and that they see tangible changes as a result.

Inclusive and community-focused approach

The school is a central part of the local community, creating opportunities for families to engage beyond the classroom, including:

- events that bring families together
- support and signposting for parents
- plans to develop provision through a family hub

This inclusive approach ensures all families feel able to engage, regardless of background or circumstance.

Impact

- parents feel welcomed, listened to and valued
- increased trust between families and the school
- greater participation in events and activities
- stronger sense of belonging across the community

Parents report a clear shift in the school's approach, with feedback acted upon and relationships strengthened. This has created a positive, inclusive culture where families feel confident engaging with the school and supporting their children's learning.

We look forward to strengthening opportunities for our parents and the community to have Bournville school as a true hub where people can come together, learn together and grow together. We are very humbled by the achievement of this award and look forward to strengthening the links we have already made.

Headteacher, Bournville School

IMPACT 4

Stronger induction and transition

The LPPA places strong emphasis on supporting parents when their children join a school or move through key transition points.

Schools often strengthen their induction processes by introducing:

- induction meetings for new parents
- welcome packs and guidance materials
- school tours and information sessions
- opportunities for parents to meet staff and other families.

Effective induction helps parents understand the expectations of the school and the ways they can support their child's learning.

Schools also develop stronger transition processes for pupils moving between year groups or to new schools.

IMPACT

Impact achieved:

- **parents feel well informed and confident supporting their child through transitions**
- **reduced anxiety for both pupils and families during key transition points**
- **stronger early relationships between families and school staff**
- **increased parental engagement from the point of entry into the school.**

Parents felt well informed and supported from induction through to progression, enabling students to stay on track and succeed.



Case study: West View Primary School



Supporting a confident start from day one

West View Primary School has developed a highly effective and personalised approach to induction, ensuring that parents feel welcomed, reassured and confident from the very beginning of their relationship with the school.

A comprehensive induction programme has been strengthened since the previous verification, including home visits for all new pupils, enabling staff to build early relationships with families and understand individual needs from the outset.

Information for parents is carefully designed to be fully accessible, with user-friendly and largely pictorial curriculum overviews, ensuring all families can engage with their child's learning regardless of language or literacy barriers.

Impact

- parents feel welcomed, reassured and confident from the very start of their child's journey
- reduced anxiety for both pupils and families during transition
- strong early relationships between families and school staff
- increased parental engagement and confidence in supporting learning
- improved communication leading to parents feeling informed and connected to the school community.

This strong start sets the tone for a positive and sustained partnership between home and school, ensuring that pupils are well supported to settle quickly and thrive.

We are incredibly proud of the strong relationships we have built with our families. Our work with parents and carers continues to grow, and this recognition reflects the commitment of our whole school community.

By working in partnership, we are able to create an environment where children and families feel supported, confident and able to thrive.

Headteacher, West View Primary School

100%
of schools said the
award supported
school improvement
planning

IMPACT 5

Leadership and school improvement

Schools frequently report that the LPPA helps strengthen leadership and school improvement processes.

The framework encourages schools to review their existing approaches to parental engagement and identify areas where improvements can be made.

Through the LPPA process schools:

- conduct self-evaluation
- develop action plans
- collect evidence of progress
- evaluate the impact of changes.

This structured approach allows schools to move beyond individual initiatives and create sustainable systems for parent partnership.

The most successful LPPA schools treat parent partnership as a strategic priority rather than an additional activity.

IMPACT

Impact achieved:

- **parental engagement becomes embedded within school improvement planning**
- **schools develop more consistent and sustainable systems**
- **leadership teams gain clearer insight into strengths and areas for development**
- **parental engagement is aligned with wider strategic priorities.**

Survey responses show that:

- **81% of schools said the LPPA helped identify gaps and strengthen systems for parental engagement**
- **81% said it helped strengthen existing processes and approaches**
- **100% said the award supported school improvement planning**

This suggests that the LPPA framework is particularly effective when it is integrated into wider school leadership processes.

81%

of schools said the LPPA helped identify gaps and strengthen systems for parental engagement

Case study: Archway Academy



From framework to strategic priority

At Archway Academy, parental engagement has been established as a clear strategic priority, driven by strong and visible leadership.

Through the LPPA process, leaders have taken a structured approach to reviewing and strengthening provision, ensuring that parental engagement is aligned with wider school improvement priorities.

Senior leaders, including the Principal and SLT, demonstrate a strong commitment to this work. Their visibility and daily engagement with families, including welcoming parents and students at the start of each day, set the tone for a culture built on openness and partnership.

A consistent, whole-school approach

Parental engagement is embedded across the school through a consistent and collective approach.

Staff at all levels understand their responsibility to build and maintain strong relationships with families. This is supported by:

- clear communication systems, including a well-structured website and direct contact channels
- a proactive Parent Support Adviser, providing a dedicated point of contact for families
- regular and meaningful communication, including weekly contact with parents.

This ensures that communication is proactive, supportive and responsive to the needs of families.

Governors also play an active role, demonstrating a clear understanding of the school's priorities and supporting the ongoing development of parental engagement strategies.

Leadership driving continuous improvement

Leaders use the LPPA framework as a tool for reflection and continuous improvement, ensuring that parental engagement is not treated as a standalone initiative but embedded within the school's long-term vision.

Feedback from parents is regularly gathered and evaluated, with leaders committed to acting on this insight and strengthening provision over time.

This strategic approach ensures that parental engagement is:

- aligned with school priorities
- evidence-informed
- continuously reviewed and improved.

Impact

- increased parental participation in school life, leading to stronger relationships between families and the school
- improved student attendance and engagement
- enhanced wellbeing for pupils and families through a strong sense of support and inclusion
- a more inclusive school culture, with parents actively contributing to school life and decision-making
- strong, trust-based relationships that support the whole family.

Verification evidence confirms that this sustained and strategic focus on parental engagement has created a culture where families feel valued, supported and fully involved in their child's education.

Thank you for your kind words about Archway. I am extremely proud of the staff, pupils and parents/carers who make this school such a special place.

This award reflects the strength of our partnership with families and will continue to shape how we support our pupils and community in the years ahead.

Headteacher, Archway Academy

Best practice

While every school implements the framework in a way that reflects its own community, the most successful schools share several common approaches. These practices help schools move beyond occasional engagement activities towards a sustained culture of collaboration between families and schools.

These include:

Parent forums

Parent forums create opportunities for parents to share feedback, ask questions and contribute to school development. They also help schools better understand the needs and perspectives of families.

Examples of effective approaches include:

- parent forums
- parent partnership councils
- regular parent surveys
- informal coffee mornings with leadership teams
- consultation groups for specific policies or initiatives.

We have seen tangible outcomes that reflect our commitment to building strong, meaningful relationships with families.



Flexible communication systems

Successful schools use multiple communication channels to ensure information is accessible to all parents.

Survey results show that:

- 83% of schools said the award helped make communication more consistent
- 58% said it made communication more accessible
- 42% said it made communication clearer
- 100% of schools agreed the award improved communication with parents

Effective approaches include:

- dedicated parent communication apps
- newsletters summarising key information
- social media updates
- parent portals
- translated communications where needed
- regular phone calls or personalised contact for some families.

Family learning programmes

A central aim of the LPPA is to involve parents more actively in their children's learning.

Many accredited schools introduced programmes designed to help parents understand the curriculum and develop practical ways to support learning at home.

Effective approaches include:

- providing loan devices and digital support to ensure all families can access learning opportunities
- sessions based on parent-submitted questions and feedback, ensuring relevance and engagement
- regular curriculum update sessions so parents know what children are learning and how to support at home
- opportunities for parents to participate in reading and classroom-based learning activities
- working with external partners to provide targeted support for families with additional needs.

IMPACT

Impact achieved:

The LPPA helped parents become more confident supporting learning at home.

Our parent workshops, particularly those supporting understanding around ASC, have been well received and have helped build valuable networks for families.

Conclusion

Schools that take a structured, strategic approach to parent partnership see measurable improvements in communication, engagement and outcomes.

The Leading Parent Partnership Award provides a practical, evidence-based framework that enables schools to move beyond one-off initiatives and embed meaningful, sustainable change.

Across a wide range of settings, schools have used the LPPA to:

- strengthen trust and relationships with families
- improve engagement from harder-to-reach groups
- support parents to play a more active role in learning
- embed parental partnership within school improvement planning.

Importantly, this impact is not limited to a specific type of school. The flexibility of the framework means it can be successfully adapted to reflect the needs of different communities, contexts and phases.

For many schools, the LPPA becomes more than an award, it becomes a way of working.

As expectations around parental engagement continue to grow, schools need approaches that are both effective and sustainable. The LPPA provides a clear route to achieving this.

This is reflected in consistent findings across schools, including increased parent trust (86%), improved communication (83%), stronger systems for engagement (81%) and universal alignment with school improvement planning (100%).

The feedback from parents has been overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the personalised, compassionate, and collaborative approach we strive for. Their words are a powerful reminder of the importance of our work.

About Optimus Education

Optimus Education works with schools to deliver measurable and sustainable school improvement.

Through professional development, accreditations and consultancy, Optimus supports leaders to implement structured, evidence-based approaches that strengthen systems, improve outcomes and embed long-term change.

The AwardPlace accreditations are designed to help schools identify gaps, implement effective strategies and demonstrate impact, ensuring that improvements are aligned to school priorities and deliver clear value.

Find out more about the LPPA

If your school is looking to:

- strengthen relationships with parents and carers
- improve engagement and communication
- embed parental partnership within your school improvement strategy.

The Leading Parent Partnership Award can support you to achieve this.

Get in touch

Enquire now and find out how your school can get started: awardplace.co.uk/enquire

Explore testimonials and case studies: awardplace.co.uk/testimonial

Contact us at: awardplace@optimus-education.com





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