

Contents

Title		Pages
Welcome, How to use this resource		3-4
Session 1	The Role of a Parent Champion	5-10
Session 2	Exploring Barriers to Learning	11-17
Session 3	Building Trust and Positive Relationships	18-26
Session 4	Emotional Wellbeing and Resilience	27-37
Session 5	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion	38-43
Session 6	Developing an Effective Parent Champion Team	44-50
Whole Course Evaluation and Closing Comments		51-53

Welcome to the Becoming a Parent Champion Course

Introduction

Families play a vital role in children's learning, wellbeing and confidence. When parents and carers feel welcomed, respected and able to ask questions, children benefit from stronger learning habits, improved relationships and a more positive experience of education.

Throughout this workbook, the term 'parent' is used in an inclusive way. It refers to anyone in a caregiving role who supports a child's education and wellbeing - including carers, foster parents, kinship carers, grandparents and other trusted adults. The programme recognises and values the diverse ways families are formed and supported.

Many parents feel confident engaging with their child's learning setting, but others may feel unsure, anxious or disconnected - often because of past experiences or barriers that make engagement feel difficult. Parent Champions help bridge this gap. They are trusted members of the community who can offer encouragement, practical support and a friendly, non-judgemental space for parents who may need it most.

This programme introduces the Parent Champion role and provides the knowledge, skills and reflective tools needed to support families effectively. It explores communication, rapport-building, emotional wellbeing, equality and inclusion, and the barriers that can prevent parents from engaging. The programme can be used in any organisation that works with families - schools, early years settings, family hubs, community groups or local services.

The aim is simple: to help every parent feel able to participate, ask questions and support their child's learning with confidence.

How to Use This Resource

This workbook is designed to be used flexibly by any organisation that wants to strengthen family engagement. It can be delivered as a five-session course, used for volunteer training, or adapted for community-based programmes.

Each session includes:

- Core learning content introducing key ideas
- Activities and discussion prompts to explore experiences and build confidence
- Practical tools and strategies for supporting families
- A reflective page at the end of the session

Reflection is an important part of the programme. At the end of every session, you will find a dedicated reflection page with prompts to help you think about what you have learned, how it relates to your own experiences, and how you might apply it in your Parent Champion role. You are welcome to write directly in the workbook or keep your own journal if you prefer more space.

The programme works best when:

- sessions are delivered in a supportive, non-judgemental environment
- participants have opportunities to practise communication skills
- facilitators encourage open discussion and shared learning
- Parent Champions feel valued, empowered and part of a wider community

This resource can be adapted to suit the needs of your organisation, the families you work with, and the experience level of your Parent Champions.

Session One

The Role of a Parent Champion

Why Parent Champions Matter

Families play a central role in children's learning, wellbeing and confidence. When parents and carers feel welcomed, respected and able to ask questions, children benefit from stronger learning habits, improved relationships and a more positive experience of education or community life.

Many parents feel confident engaging with their child's learning setting, while others may feel unsure, anxious or disconnected, often because of past experiences or barriers that make engagement feel difficult. Parent Champions help bridge this gap. They offer encouragement, practical support and a friendly, non-judgemental space for parents who may need it most.

Parent Champions are trusted members of the community who understand the realities of family life. Their lived experience, empathy and insight make them uniquely placed to support other parents in ways that feel safe, informal and accessible.

The Purpose of the Parent Champion Role

Parent Champions are encouraged to:

- engage with parents and families in a warm, respectful way
- help people feel comfortable participating in activities and events
- build relationships with parents who may find engagement difficult
- promote opportunities, workshops and support available in the community
- act as ambassadors for positive family engagement
- listen without judgement and offer encouragement
- reflect on their own learning and experiences
- uphold a school's or other service's values, policies and safeguarding expectations

- work collaboratively as part of a wider team

The aim is to create a culture where every parent feels able to participate, ask questions and support their child's learning with confidence.

The Impact of Positive Family Engagement

When families feel supported and connected, the benefits can include:

- stronger relationships between families and the school and community project
- improved confidence for parents and carers
- a more positive home learning environment
- increased participation in activities and events
- better communication and shared understanding
- raised aspirations for both children and adults

Parent Champions help create these conditions by building trust, offering reassurance and helping families navigate challenges without judgement.

Activity: The Strengths We Bring

Everyone brings different strengths, experiences and perspectives that will support the development of an effective team.

Take a look at the table below that lists some qualities, experiences and strengths.

Calm under pressure	Good listener	Practical Problem-solver
Solution-focused	Can-Do attitude	Open-minded
Ability to motivate others	Confident speaking to new people	Good at noticing when someone is struggling
Experienced with additional needs	Multilingual	Community-minded

(1) Identify three strengths you feel you bring to the Parent Champion role.

(2) Select one strength you would like to develop.

(3) In small groups, share your choices and discuss:

- What strengths do we have collectively?
- What strengths are we missing?
- How does having a mix of strengths make the group more effective?
- How can we support each other to grow?

There is no single 'type' of Parent Champion. A strong team is made up of people with different personalities, backgrounds and experiences. Everyone has something valuable to contribute.

Personal Qualities Useful in the Role

The following qualities may be helpful for Parent Champions. Consider which ones feel most relevant to you and which you may want to develop further.

Responsiveness	Enthusiasm	Persistence	Approachability
Empathy	Flexibility	Determination	Creativity
Calmness	Organisational skills	Curiosity	Reflective Thinker
Honesty	Persistent	Questioning	Patience
Encouragement	Persuasiveness	Understanding	Tolerant

No one will have all of these qualities. What matters is the willingness to learn, reflect and grow.

What qualities do you feel you bring to the role of a parent champion?

I am confident I can be:

I might need support to be:

Signing up to be a parent champion offers an opportunity to refresh or develop skills that will not only be beneficial to the school or community and you personally but can also support your longer-term goals. For example, if you have not been in work for a while this volunteer role can demonstrate skills relevant to many employers. There may be an opportunity to volunteer in the school or community which could lead to a paid position too. For example, many Teaching Assistants progress to higher level teaching assistants covering lessons and some may go on to train to become a teacher.

How Parent Champions Support Families

Parent Champions can make a meaningful difference by:

- helping parents feel safe to ask questions
- offering reassurance and reducing anxiety
- supporting families to understand how learning works
- encouraging participation in community or learning activities
- helping families navigate challenges or unfamiliar processes

- strengthening relationships between families and the organisation
- modelling positive communication and respectful engagement

Small acts of connection, for example, listening, noticing, encouraging, can have a significant impact on a parent's confidence and sense of belonging.

DO NOT COPY