

<b>Report Title:</b>	Parent/carer Engagement
<b>Meeting for:</b>	Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission
<b>Date:</b>	24.02.2022
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### **Report Summary**

A short summary is required for all reports to the CYP Scrutiny Commission in acknowledgement that scrutiny is a public body and has a number of lay representatives and young people who are members of the Commission.

**The main duties and responsibilities of the Local Authority** are outlined below - taken from the *Hackney Education Improvement Plan*:

*Parents and carers will feel supported, engaged, and valued in Hackney. Through meaningful engagement, such as through events and consultation, we will ensure that Hackney's parents and carers feel that their views are heard. We will work closely with schools and settings to understand parents and carers more closely, and develop innovative ways to connect with them.*

The System Leader for Parent/Carer engagement will drive the following:

1. To develop schools' capacity to work more effectively with parents and carers to close gaps in attainment and progress. In particular, to support schools in developing links with less actively engaged parents, helping to remove the barriers to engagement and ensuring all parents have a sense of belonging to their school community
2. To research, develop materials and training for schools - considering increasing parental information and involvement around curriculum, pastoral work and SEND issues
3. To identify and share best practice in promoting parent partnership work in Hackney Schools.
4. To clarify existing processes for communicating with parents and to support Hackney Education and schools in developing coherent communication strategies.
5. To lead on relevant elements of the use of the Under Performing Groups strategy, especially with primary schools.

### **Work carried out so far/impact:**

#### **Research paper:**

My initial focus was to understand the scope of parental engagement in Hackney; what it looked like in schools, the communication between Hackney Education and parents, along with how other parts of the council engage with parents. I was curious about what good practice looked like and what the national picture on parental engagement looked like. Therefore, I carried out an extensive piece of research [here](#), which was informed by national reports and data.

**Impact:** This research informed a comprehensive action plan, which dovetails with Hackney's priorities for parental engagement, [here](#). The action plan is decisive in *how* I will drive parental engagement in my role, going forward. I have presented my action plan to Hackney Education's SLT and subsequent to their comments, I have made amendments.

I have also introduced myself by way of presentation to Hackney Governors, Post-16 meetings and various other groups. In addition, I have met with different sections within Hackney Education, the council and community organisations. My meetings with some of the organisations within Hackney proved insightful as they have direct links with parents. For example, within early years, there is a strong connection with most groups of parents, whilst some groups, for example the Turkish, Kurdish and Turkish Cypriot (TKTC) community and the Black Caribbean group, tend to trail off in the latter part of the early years and this pattern is echoed within the outcomes among these groups. I have held meetings with groups such as: *The Claudia Jones' Organisation*, *Father2Father*, *The crib*, *Hackney Quest*, *The Pembury Organisation*, *Young Hackney*, *Hackney Independent Forum for Parents/carers of Children (HIP)*

**Impact:**

The meetings have allowed me to familiarise myself with how parents are reached in a variety of ways, and to gain an understanding with the capacity in which schools and organisations all connect with parents. It was powerful to see what exists and how I could use some of these organisations to support schools in reaching parents. The myriad of organisations and services who communicate with parents is something that schools can be supported with in my role. I will also be meeting with a group of black Caribbean fathers, through *Father2father* to discuss communication, engagement and perceptions.

**Self-evaluation Tool:**

To ensure that Hackney schools are able to benchmark themselves against parental engagement, I have created a self-evaluation tool. Currently amendments are being made to ensure a more streamlined approach to the Hackney context is reflected in the self-evaluation tool, it will then be shared with schools that I work with as a way of auditing parental engagement.

**Impact:** An initial draft has been shared with one school; they have found it useful, in guiding what aspects of parental engagement require focus.

**School visits:**

Having visited over eighteen schools in the Autumn term, all welcomed the need for the parental engagement role in Hackney Education. Many schools did not have a parental engagement strategy. Some saw their parent engagement focus as being embedded in their audit response for the *Wellbeing and Mental Health in Schools Project (WAHMs)*. Furthermore, many schools recognise the need for specific groups of parents to have a platform in which their voices could be amplified.

**Impact: Guidance on setting up forums:**

I have created a guidance document on *Setting up a School Forum*. As a result, I have and will be using it with schools in my work and intend to share with the lead on parental engagement in schools across Hackney. Three schools have set up their forums with my

support and a fourth will do so after Easter.

### **School Forums:**

School 1 (Primary) : SEND School 2 (Secondary) : Parents of boys

School 3 (Primary): Black Caribbean/African parents

School 4: (Secondary): SEND

**Further impact:** In addition, I have started some background work on a project looking at what we can learn from parents whose children have been excluded from one of our Hackney secondary schools. This will focus on Year 8 pupils, as the exclusion rates have been significant here. This will serve as an informative case study, which will be shared with other schools and going forward, will inform future work and lessons we can take from how the school has interacted with parents in the exclusion process.

Another school has outlined a program of nine sessions - some of which will be tweaked over the next week to consider how community organisations could interact with parents. Many schools are keen on having parents back in schools, especially as Parents' Evenings are being held online for the foreseeable future.

### **Work with HiP**

I have met with the Hackney Independent forum for Parents/carers of Children with Disabilities (HiP). My intention is to ensure that I seek clarity in the needs of this group of parents and a more positive communication and collaborative approach between schools and parents of Special educational needs and disability (SEND) children.

**Impact:** As a result of my initial meetings, 30 parents came to an online meeting on Monday 21st February to relay their scenarios and experiences surrounding communication with schools, in the first of two sessions. The Cabinet Member for Families, Early Years and Play, was also in attendance and supported the need for a joined up discussion. A wide range of voices were heard at this meeting, which strengthened the need for a reciprocal communication structure between SEND parents and schools. Galvanising Parents, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators, (SENCOs) and some of our School Improvement Partners was a key idea resulting from the meeting,

### **Training:**

Having met with various members of staff in Hackney Education, I have identified where some training on how school staff work with parents, could be delivered.

### **Impact:**

The first training session I will deliver is for Deputy Heads, Assistant Heads and aspiring leaders. The training identified is the Leadership Pathway Course, which will be held on Tuesday 22nd March. Additionally, a Middle Leader session in May and a session for Early Career Teachers (ECTs) and Recently Qualified Teachers (RQTs), in July have also been identified, to support staff at different levels in schools with parental engagement. My training will also incorporate Hackney's legacy surrounding education and the possible impact this may have had on them. Feedback from the Parents as Partners Conference will also inform my training.

## **Under Performing Groups Strategy**

### **Reading Project:**

I have met with Rosie Condon and Emma Burton, the literacy and maths consultants. The project 'Jump into a Book Together' workshop will be rolled out in some primary schools after Easter. The workshop is designed to support children in Year 2, who are below age-expectation, with a focus on the Turkish Kurdish and Turkish Cypriot (TKTC) and Black Caribbean heritage (BCRB) and whose parents would benefit from workshops supporting them with reading at home.

### **Impact:**

Delivering the training and observing sessions will support my understanding regarding how schools involve parents in the curriculum.

### **Parent Champions:**

I have researched the role and operations of Parent Champions within Hackney. Having met with members of Young Hackney, CORAM (the Parent Champions National Network), a Parent Champion and representatives from Peabody, I have established that a more coordinated approach is required to pull the Parent Champions together.

**Impact:** I have pulled together an overview summing up where we are in Hackney regarding Parent Champions.

### **Post-16:**

I have attended the P16 Head of Sixth Form Network Meeting to establish the needs of parents and what partnership looks like at P16.

### **Impact:**

As part of my work with the Senior P16 Advisor, I will devise some guidance to support parents' understanding of destinations at P16.

## **Transition/Hackney Schools Group Board**

Feedback from the Parents as Partners Conference informed Hackney Education that parents still needed clarity on the transition process at each stage: Key Stage 2-3, KS3-4, KS4-5 and Post 16.

### **Impact:**

Several community organisations will feed into this focus on transition.

I met with the following organisations on 02/03/2022:

- Father2Father
- Saquib from Hackney Community Voluntary Services
- The Crib
- Hackney Quest

I held a meeting to discuss parents' thoughts on the transition process. As I also sit on the curriculum panel for the Hackney Schools Group Board, this piece of work dovetails with the current focus on transition. The feedback from this meeting will inform a wider piece of work whereby schools will have the opportunity to invite parents to convey their views on the transition process. This will enable a wider

range of parents to be reached about their experiences on the process so that schools and Hackney Education can look at processes, with a view to making possible alterations.

**To set out any questions that you would like the Commission to consider or address**

I would welcome feedback from the Commission on this report and any areas to develop further.

**Forward Plans:**

Continue with school support, ensuring that succinct case studies inform staff across the borough on good practice

Local Parent Forum event in the the Autumn term

Establish a network of school representatives who lead on parental engagement - meet throughout the academic year.

Establish how Parent representatives/champions will work with schools

Explore parent advocacy

Deliver a session at the Headteachers' Conference

Delver training for school staff

Look at how the Hackney Education website supports parents and how schools