



Conversations worth having

How well do you and your practitioners relate to all parents/carers?

Early years practitioners are highly skilled at interacting with children, but when it comes to effectively engaging all parents, how experienced, knowledgeable and confident are we all - honestly? Newly qualified practitioners coming into the profession, for example, often say this element is lacking in their training. Providing support for all EYFS practitioners is crucial in engaging effectively with all parents and carers.

How can I communicate when I don't often see a particular child's parents?

Who are the key adults in each child's life? It might be that a Grandparent, older sibling or childminder plays a major part in a child's day – supporting parents at drop off and collection times. It's vital that our communication extends to include all key adults around each child.

Negative communication cycles

Practitioner – I tell you very little about myself as a person

Parent response – I don't want to tell you much about myself, my child or family - I don't know you

Practitioner – I'm busy and often don't have the time I'd like to have to listen to you

Parent response – there isn't time to talk to you; I feel it's not important that I share with you what's on my mind

Practitioner – Usually I only talk to you if there's a problem

Parent response – I don't interact much. I feel self-conscious; my parenting is being judged

Positive communication cycles

Practitioner – I interact with you: we communicate successfully

Parent response – I feel valued and respected; I often share positive things with you

Practitioner – I tune into you and try to understand you

Parent response – I respond positively to you and am confident to share concerns or ask questions

Practitioner – I take time to really listen to your contributions to assessments about your child

Parent response – I am happy to tell you about my child and to ask how to further support them at home