

What Skills and Expertise Can Parents Contribute to School Life?

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A means of involving parents, making them feel valued and benefiting the students, is to find out if they have any specific interests or skills that they could bring to school. A quick and easy way to do this is through a questionnaire which could be sent home with students, emailed to parents or it could be introduced at a school function such as a workshop, Parents' Evening or coffee morning. If the questionnaire is introduced during a school function, the parents should always be given the option of completing it at home.

A sample parent survey and accompanying introduction has been provided below and this could be adapted and added to (next page):

Parent/School Partnership

Dear Parent

As you know, at X school we value and encourage parental involvement and we are always looking for ways to improve this. We also know, through discussions with you that our parents have a number of skills, talents and areas of expertise that would benefit our students and, it would really help us if you could answer a few questions about your interests and skills and whether you feel you have time to get involved in some way to support your child and other students at the school.

By answering this questionnaire, you are not making any commitment and you don't have to take part, but it would really help us to plan activities for parents and children in the future.

Name of parent:

Class/es your child/children are in:

Question 1: Do you have any particular interests, experiences or skills that could help the school and/or the students?

For example;

At home or work it may be craft, cooking, DIY, gardening,

At work you may use skills such as IT skills, design, building and making, catering.

You may have interests or hobbies, such as reading, sports activities, collecting, arts or craft, travelling, play a musical instrument or other interests that you could share:

Question 2: In what ways, if any, would you be most interested in supporting us?

For example: Fathers/male carers coming in to read to students and/or talk about favourite books could have a most positive influence on boys. Parents talking about their professions can help students understand about the outside world and opportunities. Helping groups of children in art/craft tasks or helping to teach new IT skills are invaluable. In the same way helping us prepare resources for the students or get ready for school functions would be most appreciated. If you can think of ways that you would like to support us, please name them here:

Question 3: Are there any other comments or suggestions that you would like to make about your involvement with the school or ideas we haven't thought of:

Question 4: Do you have any spare time to come in and support the school and the students?

We are not looking for any major commitment but just to get an idea of what times suit people best.

What time would suit you best (please tick any that apply)?

Before school:

Immediately after school:

During the school day:

Evenings [If yes] please state when you would be available:

Weekends:

Question 6: How much time do you feel you would be able to offer? You may or may not be able to make a regular commitment or it may be a one-off visit. Just one hour would be useful for us

Question 5: Is there anything that would help you attend at any time – e.g. transport or childcare?

Thank you for your time and your support

Please Sign.....

Contact details (email or phone)
