

# Engaging the parental community with careers

Rachel Green  
NCGS London: 17<sup>th</sup> April 2024



# Who are we?

We are the national body for careers education in England, delivering support to schools and colleges to deliver modern, 21st century careers education.

Our mission:

To help every young  
person find their best  
next step

# Why is it important to consider?

- 1** Parents and carers have **significant influence** on their child's career decision making and choices
- 2** Parents **do not always have current or accurate information** to share with their children early enough
- 3** Current methods of **communication or engagement are not reaching all families** effectively



# External context highlights the importance of parents to the sector



*Parental engagement is a powerful lever for raising achievement in schools. When parents and teachers work together to improve learning, the gains in achievement are significant.*



Good Career Guidance: The Next Ten Years  
AUTUMN 2023 UPDATE



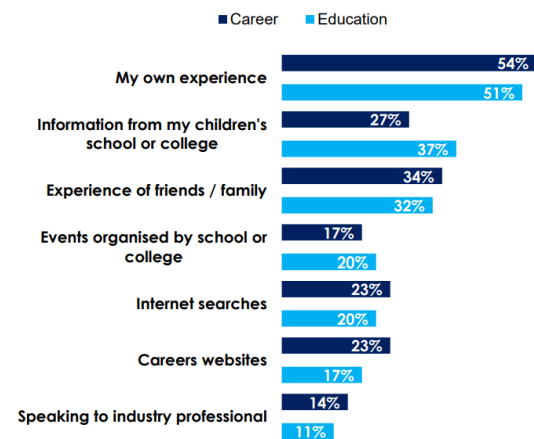
Home > Education, training and skills > Education of disadvantaged children

Press release

## Schools White Paper delivers real action to level up education

Schools White Paper, Opportunity for All, sets out plans to make sure every child can reach the full height of their potential.

Figure 21: Proportion of parents who say the following sources of information have informed their conversations about education and career



Research and analysis

## Independent review of careers guidance in schools and further education and skills providers

Published 29 September 2023



Parents believe children should take their views into account when making important decisions



Some parents underestimate the influence they could have on their child's choices

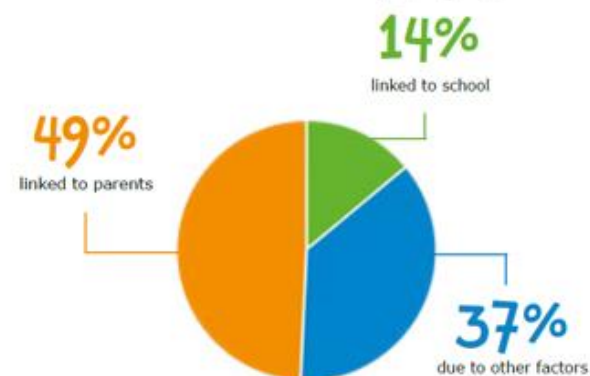


Conversations around key decisions start as early as Year 7, before parents note receiving information from their school or college



Four in five parents note action was taken as a result of their conversations with children about careers options

## What causes the achievement gap by age 11?



# Parents and the CEC

- [Talking Futures](#) is a Gatsby-CEC partnership project with the overall aim of supporting parents to have better careers conversations with their children.
- For the CEC, achieving this vision means giving Careers Leaders the motivation, capability and opportunities to improve parental engagement in careers in their institutions.
- Gatsby go [direct to parents](#) with the same aim.



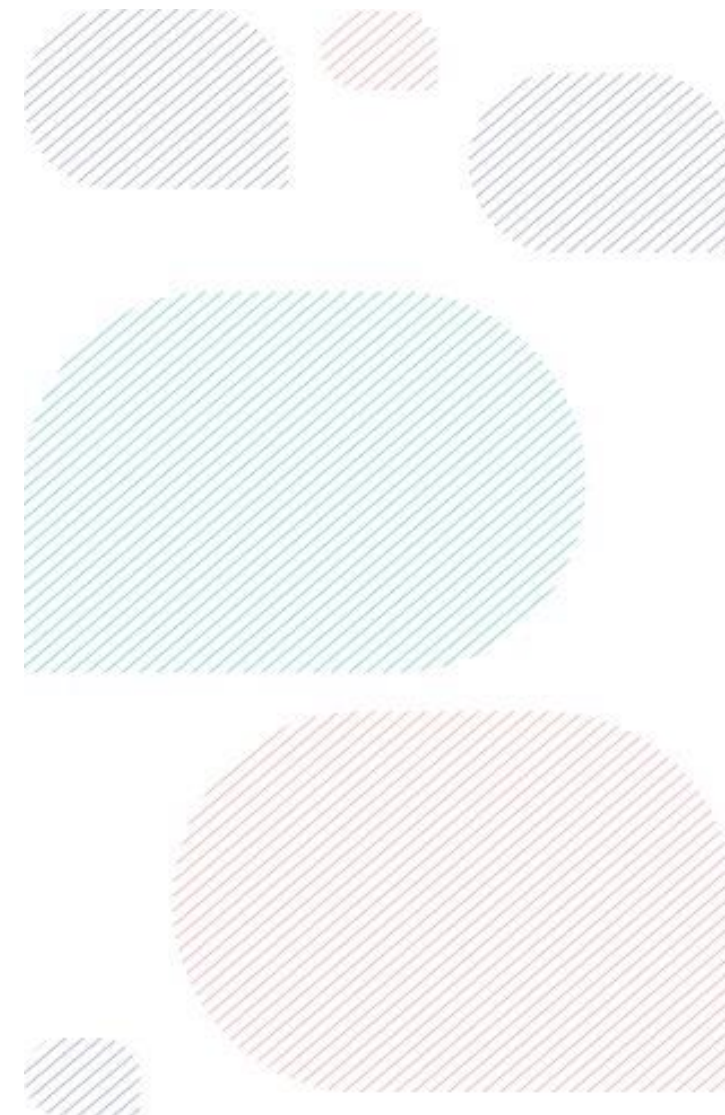
## Parental involvement vs engagement

### Parental involvement:

- Ensuring parents/carers feel a part of the school, special school or college community by understanding what is on offer to them and taking part.

### Parental engagement:

- Helping a parent/carer understand the importance of their role and to feel equipped to have positive, informed conversations at home to support their child's learning and decision making.





## What is your intent?

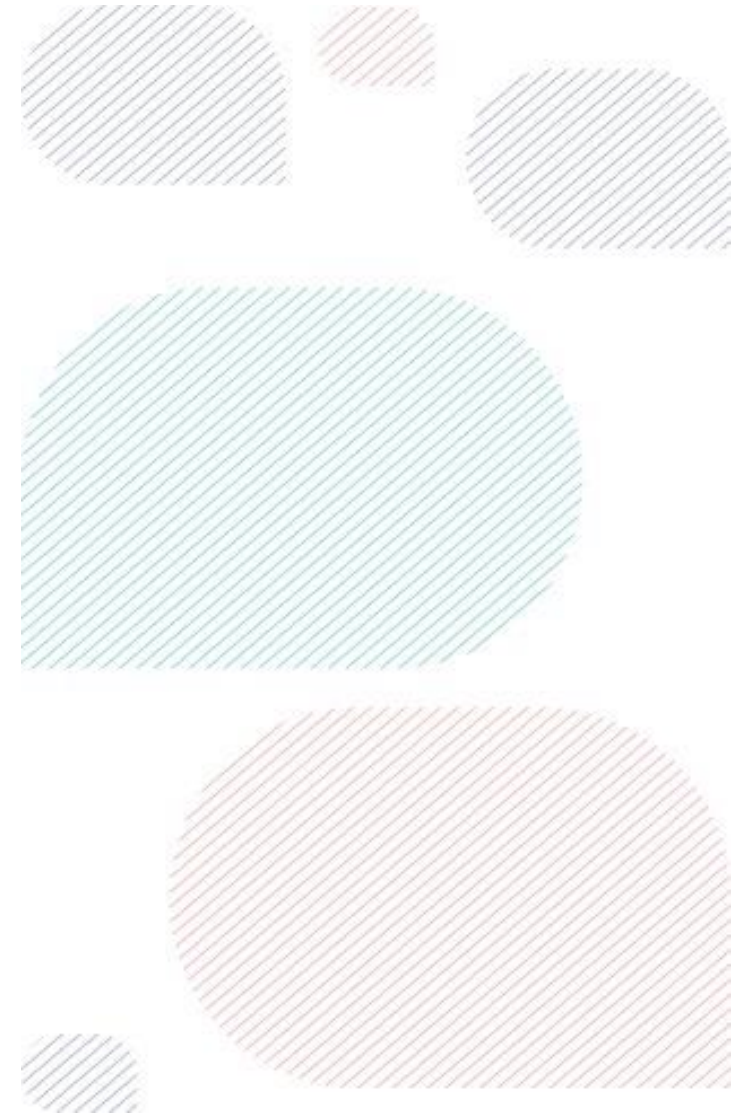
### Gain clarity of purpose.

- Support and enlighten.
- Build trusted partnerships.
- Work together for the benefit of learners.
- Securing aspirational and appropriate progression.
- Reinforcing the value and purpose of education.

### Communicate the why to parents at the outset.

**All parents & carers want to support their child.**

**They just need to be given the tools to do so.**





# The principles of a strategic approach



**Aware:** parental engagement can be hard but valuable, so get familiar with how to do it strategically.



**Collaborative:** gain buy-in from other staff to engage parents in careers.



**Targeted:** think about who your different groups of parents are and plan accordingly.



**Progressive:** build a learning journey for your parents.



**Integrated:** build careers into existing parental engagement activities.



## Aware:

- We recognise the value, but it can feel difficult.
- Parental engagement is bigger than careers.
- Careers is a positive engagement point.
- Help others see the value.
- Help parents recognise their value and role.



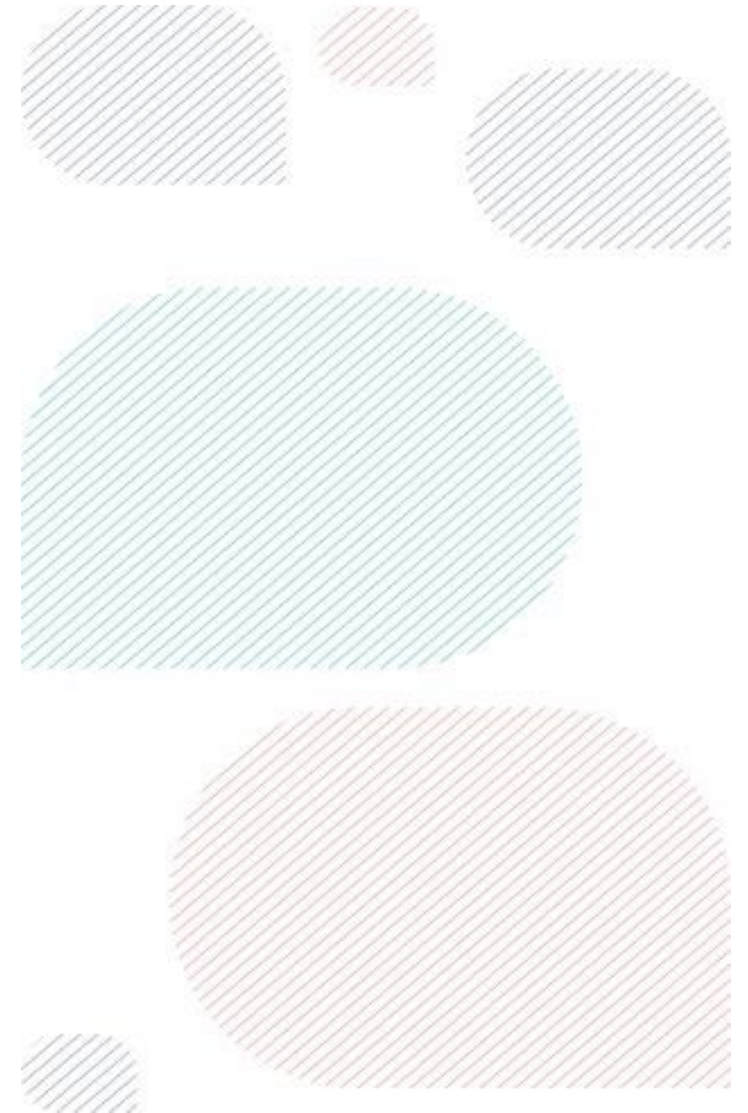
Whole staff CPD



SLT meeting



Just because we share information with parents,  
does not mean they engage with the information.





## Collaborative:

Making careers conversations everyone's responsibility.

### Examples

- SENCo – EHCP reviews
- Pastoral – reintegration meetings
- Teaching staff – parents' evenings / progress reviews
- Tutors / parent lunches during experiences of the workplace



Further Education  
planning tool





## Targeted:

Who needs to hear this messaging the most?

Who are you not currently reaching?

How do we appeal to them?



Careers Excellence  
Seminar

- Communication methods
- Trusted relationships – internal/external - alumni
- Location – “Community conversation cafes”
- Inclusive
- Incentives – “Slice and Advice”
- Multiple and varied touchpoints
- Meeting parent and student needs





“ Careers is often  
the lever to seek  
solutions. ”

Headteacher

Alternative Provision

Blackburn





## Progressive:

- Identify the most important things you want parents to know, understand and be able to do ahead of key decision points.
- Consider how parents can support their children ahead of opportunities and what they need to do this effectively.
- Map to your student careers learning journey.

Careers Support available  
Academic Year Name of School

TALKING FUTURES THE CAREERS & ENTERPRISE COMPANY

Vision Statement

Contact:  
Email:  
Telephone:

Key Decision Points	Support for families
Year 11	Year 11
Year 10	Year 10
Year 9	Year 9
Year 8	Year 8
Year 7	Year 7

Helping every young person find their **best** next step.





## Integrated:

### Examples

- Options evening – bespoke lead in events
- Transition support
- Open evenings USP
- Adapting existing activity



Case study examples



Adapting existing activity support





# Spark a conversation to engage parents better

Talking Futures is a dedicated campaign with the mission of facilitating confident careers conversations between parents/carers and children. And it's here to help you become the catalyst for change!

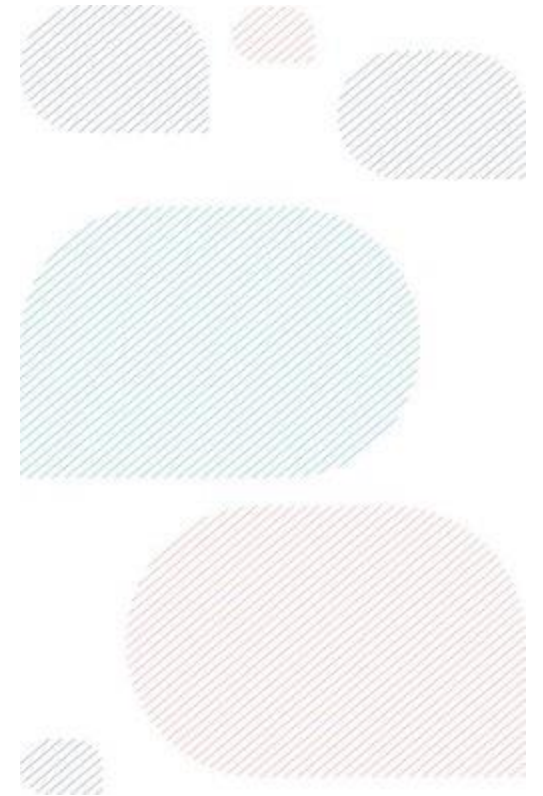
Our free parental engagement training will support you to ignite better conversations about careers across your education institution – from you, to your colleagues, to parents.

Bringing all stakeholders together could be the key to inspire the next generation, and sometimes all it takes is one conversation.

The training is FREE, and each module only takes one hour to complete! Scan the QR code to learn more about the modules and take the training:



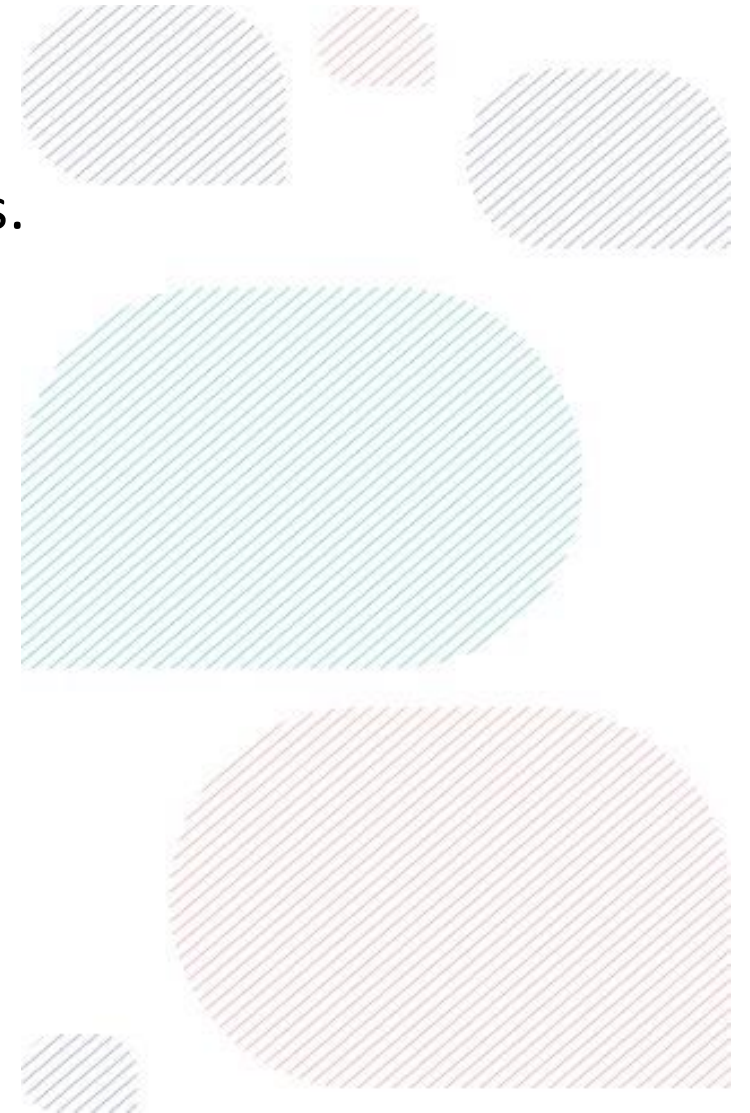
Visit our [parental engagement](#) page for information.





## TOP TIPS

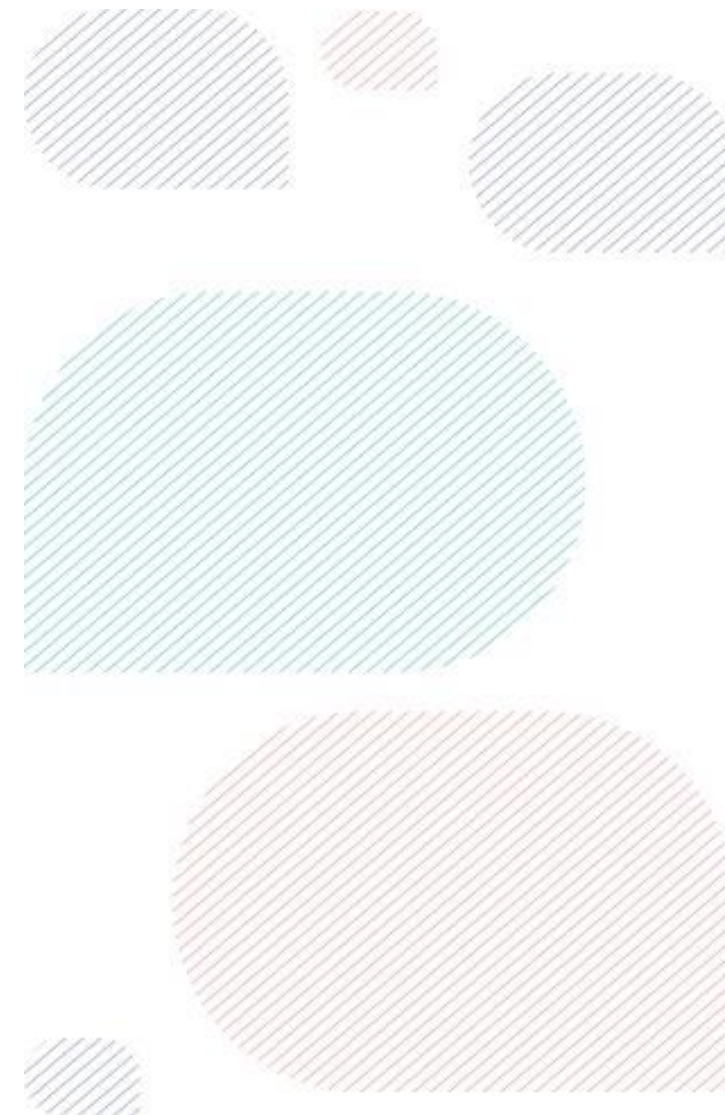
1. Prioritise your CPD with the parental engagement modules.
2. Look for other key staff, particularly leaders, for whom this is important.
3. Remove the jargon.
4. Regular information in bitesize chunks, delivered in a variety of ways.
5. Start at point of transition when the interest is highest.





## TOP TIPS

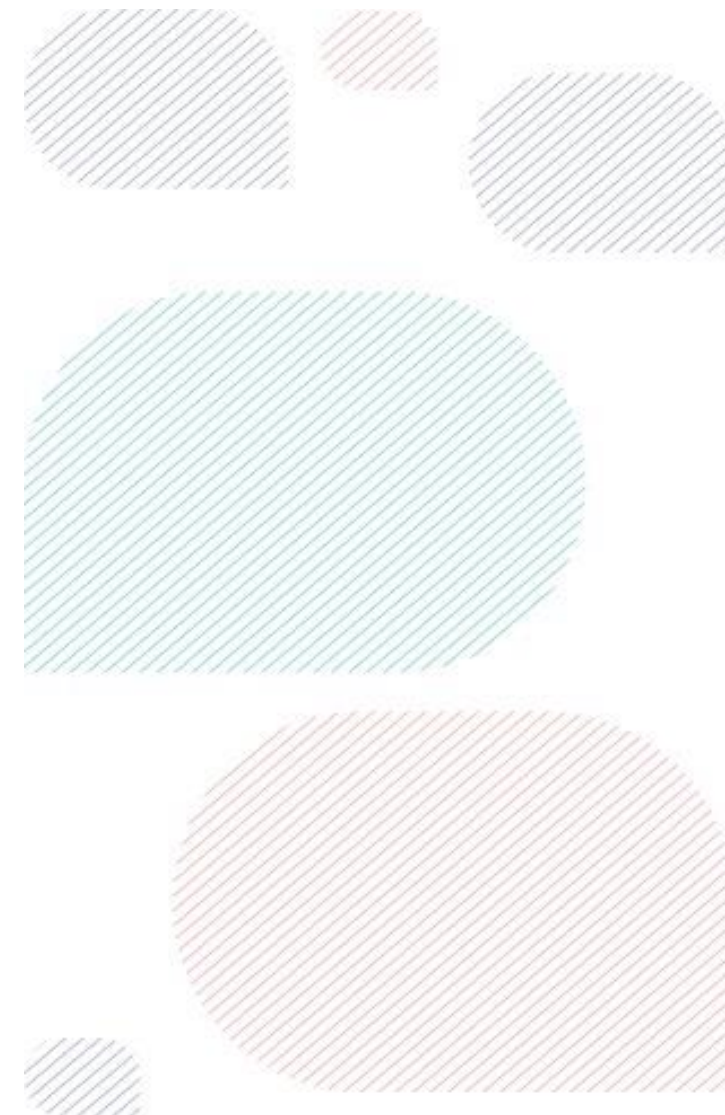
6. Help parents appreciate their influence and role.
7. Help staff to use every conversation with parents as a careers conversation.
8. Identify what parents want support with and use this as the hook.
9. Engaging set up and delivery.
10. Food!



**Any questions? Email the team at:**  
[Talkingfutures@careersandenterprise.co.uk](mailto:Talkingfutures@careersandenterprise.co.uk)

**Find out more about Talking Futures at:**  
[www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/careers-leaders/talking-futures](http://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/careers-leaders/talking-futures)

**Explore Talking Future resources at:**  
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# Thank You

Questions?

