

# Parent-teacher meetings



## Preparing for formal parent-teacher meetings

- Make sure that if you have important issues about behaviour or pupil progress to discuss with parent/s about their child that this is not the first time they are hearing it from you as the class teacher.
- Prepare thoroughly – have corrections/records up-to-date and readily accessible.
- Gather evidence of each child's achievements e.g. copies, work samples, projects, etc.
- Prepare brief notes on each pupil outlining progress, achievements, concerns, suggestions for improvement. If you are highlighting areas which need to be worked on, then it is important that you have some suggested strategies/activities for discussion with parents.
- Talk with the resource/learning support teacher if necessary and have all information to hand.
- Know the name of the person/s coming to meet with you and their relationship to the child.
- Have times allocated which allow for an over-run but try as best you can to adhere to time allocation. Vary your allocated times, depending on the amount of time you need to allocate for discussion with different parents. If you feel extra time is needed then ask the parent to make a further appointment, in the interest of other parents who may be waiting for quite a while.



# During parent-teacher meetings

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✔ Consider the tone of your voice and your body language throughout the meeting.

✔ Remember, this meeting is not about you but about an opportunity for parents to come and discuss their child's progress.

✔ Beware of using education jargon, explain everything thoroughly to the parent and always check with the parent for understanding and invite feedback.

✔ Listen – this is an ideal opportunity for you to find out information to supplement the developing profile of the child. Valuable insights can be gained on homework, different subject preferences and also the view of the child on what it is like to be a pupil in your class.

✔ Always start with the positive, continue with the areas that need work and support and conclude on a positive note.

✔ Ask for the parent's advice – if you both agree targets then it is important to arrange a time when you will review progress.

✔ Be empathic and attentive – this may be the only time, in this particular year, that you will have an opportunity to meet with the child's parents.

✔ Stay focused on the purpose of the meeting.

✔ It is important to highlight that, by working together as parent and teacher, progress can be made. Be honest and truthful – try not to dilute facts just to keep a parent happy. Parents should be given accurate information but comments should be phrased in a way which is not critical of the parent or their parenting skills.

✔ Ensure other pupils' details/reports are not visible to parents.

✔ Do not get drawn into conversations about other children or other staff members – be professional at all times.

✔ Make notes on actions agreed – have a grid made out with children's names to record your notes.

✔ Always thank the parent for their attendance at the meeting.

✔ Make sure to follow up on actions agreed.

