# Worcestershire Seven Quality Standards for parent carer engagement

The following Quality Standards for parent carer engagement have been developed for the benefit of schools in Worcestershire. They are based on similar principles to the Quality Standards that appeared in the Parental Engagement guide, published by Worcestershire County Council in 2008.

The standards represent guidance only and are not linked to an accredited award. Appropriately implementing the standards however can help contribute to existing inspection frameworks.

The standards identify a range of suggestions and best practice for embedding effective and genuine parent carer engagement. We have presented them in the form of a checklist, for schools to use when they are assessing where they are and planning where they want to be.

We suggest that you use the columns to record what you currently do, what you plan to do and what needs more work. In order to get a full reflection of your current position, we recommend that you share the framework with your parent carers and ask them to fill it in from their viewpoint. This framework can then be used to co-produce an action plan together to further develop your parent carer engagement.

## Standard One: Shared values

### Standard One: Shared Values – what everyone in the school believes in.

There is a clear commitment to working co-productively with parent carers, to develop, review and deliver shared aims together, with parent carers actively involved as equal partners in the process.

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|  | Emerging | Developing | Embedded |
| Your school has an ethos where everyone within it shares and values the principles of co-production and involving parent carers and this is highlighted in your mission statement, vision or development plan aims and objectives. |  |  |  |
| You ensure that key information about SEND in your school is co-produced and is available to all parent carers (e.g. policies are adapted so that they can be understood by all who read them). |  |  |  |
| Your school specifically informs parent carers of the variety of co-production, engagement and consultation options available to them (questionnaire, focus group, fun activities with children, parent carer forum) and is committed to involving those who are traditionally excluded from this type of activity (e.g. you work with partners when planning to reach fathers, ethnic minority groups, teenage mothers and fathers). |  |  |  |
| Your school is open and honest; explaining clearly to parent carers the school’s governance to adhere to SEND legislation. |  |  |  |
| Parent carers are always involved, as equal partners, in any review of your school as a matter of routine (e.g. you have a parent carer forum to obtain their views on SEND within school on a regular basis). |  |  |  |
| You have worked together with parent carers to co-produce a charter for parent carer engagement that outlines parent carers’ expectations and your commitment to support their active involvement, based on the Ladder of Participation. |  |  |  |

## Standard Two: Strategies

### Standard Two: Strategies – The school’s intentions and plans – what you are committing to.

As a matter of routine parent carers are actively encouraged to be involved in co-producing and reviewing SEND policies and practices in school.

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|  | Emerging | Developing | Embedded |
| 1. Your school has co-produced a strategy or action plan outlining its aims and objectives for parent carer engagement (within its overall parent engagement strategy) ensuring that it is an ongoing and sustainable process. |  |  |  |
| 1. Parent carers have been involved in the co-production of this strategy or action plan for engagement ensuring that it is meaningful, relevant, jargon free and accessible to all. |  |  |  |
| 1. Your school’s strategy or action plan for engagement acknowledges and recognises the potential barriers for parent carers to participate and be involved and reflects how you plan to overcome them. |  |  |  |
| 1. Within the co-production process parent carers’ views on what works well for them are actively sought and reflected in the development and review of a range of strategies, policies and action plans within your school, both SEND specific and for the wider school.   For example – all information to parent carers on the annual review process, mentoring and peer support for new arrivals to the community, meeting arrangements, home school agreement are co-produced involving parent carers. |  |  |  |
| 1. Parent carers are involved as partners in co-producing, reviewing and evaluating the above processes. |  |  |  |

## Standard Three: Structures

### Standard Three: Structures – the mechanisms that support and enable parent carers to take part.

There are a range of mechanisms which are in place to support the engagement of parent carers as joint and equal partners in decisions that affect their child.

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|  | Emerging | Developing | Embedded |
| 1. Your school has developed a range of mechanisms to support the engagement of parent carers as partners to co-produce decisions that affect their child for example:  * A parent carer forum or parent carer council (in addition to a parent carer rep on the wider school parent forum) * A parent carer support group * Parent Ambassadors (SEND) to support parent carers * School policies are co-produced and consulted on during established activities or meetings (e.g. stay and play sessions, family learning sessions, SEN reviews, family support meetings/reviews, health or social care reviews, school assemblies, fun days) * Evaluation and feedback forms * Parent carer friendly review meetings * Feedback methods are in place to show what has changed and that parent carers have been listened to |  |  |  |
| 1. Your school has asked for parent carers’ views on barriers to participation at the earliest stages. Staff work with parent carers on how to overcome these and ensure that action arises out of such planning. School commits to checking for any barriers with each new cohort of parent carers. |  |  |  |

## Standard Four: Systems

### Standard Four: Systems – the ‘working parts’ – the technical, human and financial resources.

Appropriate procedures and routines are in place to support co-production and the recognition of the value of parent carers with regular communication about the impact of their involvement.

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|  | Emerging | Developing | Embedded |
| 1. Your school has clearly identified budgets and resources for the engagement of parent carers, for example (if appropriate) – key staff, publicity and promotional expenditure, venue costs and their involvement in co-production activity. |  |  |  |
| 1. Parent carers are involved in expenditure decisions relating to identified budgets (e.g. Parent carer forum activity costs). |  |  |  |
| 1. Your school has developed systems for highlighting opportunities for co-production, and the impact and value that this has had on school and its SEND families. (e.g. case studies and articles in newsletters, website, local media, school promotional material, school prospectus. Regular updates about the impact working co-productively has made in school and for families which are shared with the school community including the Governors).   You have a mix of school generated material and accounts written by parent carers. |  |  |  |
| 1. Your school has developed policies or procedures for recognising the importance of input from parent carers, for example – publicly acknowledging their help, thanking individuals for their input and experience, celebrating achievements together, highlighting the achievements of your parent carer forum. |  |  |  |

## Standard Five: Staff

### Standard Five: Staff – skilled, empathetic and trusted staff

All in the school are aware of and value the importance of involving and engaging with parent carers.

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|  | Emerging | Developing | Embedded |
| 1. Your school refers to its commitment to co-production and parental involvement, and specifically parent carer involvement, in its recruitment and selection process (e.g. relevant job descriptions, person specifications, interview format). |  |  |  |
| 1. Your school has a focus on co-production and the value of parental engagement, and specifically parent carer engagement in its staff induction and training, which includes input from parent carers (e.g. parents’ charter, meeting with parent carer forum). |  |  |  |
| 1. Staff are encouraged to take an active role in promoting co-production within the school community. (e.g. Parent carer engagement is a regular agenda item in staff and Governor meetings, staff share examples of co-production and its benefits, successes are shared, case studies are co-produced and celebrated). |  |  |  |
| 1. Your school has identified an influential member of staff to champion parent carer engagement and co-production. School provides resources, information and guidance to ensure that this crucial role is supported. |  |  |  |

## Standard Six: Skills and knowledge

### Standard Six: Skills and knowledge – parent carers are equal partners recognised as experts by experience and supported to develop their knowledge of SEND if needed.

Parent carers are the experts of their children and, if desired, are provided with appropriate information, support and mentoring to develop their knowledge of SEND to enable them to participate fully in their child’s support and review meetings.

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|  | Emerging | Developing | Embedded |
| 1. Your school reviews the skills and knowledge needs of parent carers ensuring that assess and review meetings are accessible to all: (e.g. you are aware of how to have key information   appropriately translated, language and literacy skills are considered, and support is offered where appropriate. You have arranged for peer mentoring for those parents who are new to the SEND system.  You provide links to guidance (for example on the SENDIASS website)). |  |  |  |
| 1. Your school has provided information to parent carers that clearly explains the purpose, aims and importance of parent carer active involvement in review activities. (e.g. links to SENDIASS and SEND Local Offer websites, parent carer handbook, parent carer forum terms of reference, peer mentor/volunteer training). You are explicit about the value of their input and the importance of co-producing plans and policies. |  |  |  |
| 1. Your school has provided information to parent carers about the roles of different professionals, what might be written in reports and why they are written in that way (e.g. links to relevant pages on SEND Local Offer, guidance about reports). |  |  |  |
| 1. Your school commits to making meetings a positive experience with parent carers as equal participants. Meetings are outcome focussed. |  |  |  |

## Standard Seven: Leadership

### Standard Seven: Leadership – genuine, open and honest senior leaders who champion parent and specifically parent carer engagement.

The senior leadership team (SLT) champion the engagement of parents and specifically parent carers, meeting with them to review and develop arrangements for the co-production of specific projects or pieces of work.

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|  | Emerging | Developing | Embedded |
| 1. Senior leaders regularly champion parent engagement and specifically parent carers involvement, highlighting the importance and value of this activity with parents, staff, governors and partners. |  |  |  |
| 1. The senior leadership team actively seek to involve parent carers as equal partners in decision-making processes (e.g. In reviewing and co-producing policies, in co-producing plans for future development of the school and the delivery of SEND specific services). |  |  |  |
| 1. Senior leaders commit resources to support parent carer engagement as an ongoing and sustainable process as opposed to a one-off event (e.g. budgets allow for promotion of activity, support groups, venue costs and refreshments. Staff are supported to develop relationships and work collaboratively with parent carers). |  |  |  |
| 1. The senior leadership team ensure that there is timely feedback to parents outlining the impact of their engagement (e.g. “you said… we did…”, “we are able to make these changes you asked for, but unable to make these because…”). |  |  |  |
| 1. Senior leaders highlight to leadership teams and partners the impact and value of parental engagement and co-production on the school (e.g. annual reports, governor reports, inspection framework documents, school website). |  |  |  |
| 1. The senior leadership team take an active part in celebrating and thanking parents for their involvement and commitment to engagement and co-production activity. |  |  |  |