

Partnership working to support parental engagement

Find out how partnership working between the Family Hub and a local primary school has helped improve parent participation in their children's learning in the rural area of Bellingham.

Identification of Need-

It was identified that families would benefit from accessible, supportive opportunities to engage in their children's communication and interaction development within the school environment. There was a need to increase parental confidence, involvement, and understanding of strategies that could be used both in school and at home. Previous experience suggested that longer intervention blocks could be difficult for families to commit to consistently, creating a need for a more flexible approach that encouraged participation and maintained engagement.



"I CAN SHOW HER HOW IMPORTANT HER LEARNING IS TO ME BY BEING THERE."

Actions Taken-

A series of one-off Talk Time sessions were planned and delivered rather than a traditional 5–6 week block by the Family Hub. This approach was chosen to reduce barriers to attendance and allow families to engage without long-term commitment.

Sessions were scheduled to enable parents and carers to attend easily around school drop-off and pick-up times. Each session began with Talk Time for parents only, providing an opportunity to explain strategies, model activities, and answer questions. Children then joined the session for a hello song and practical activities, allowing adults to see strategies in action.

Mrs Barber (Bellingham Primary School) played a key role in informing parents about sessions and keeping staff updated on attendance numbers, ensuring sessions were well organised and well attended. Attendance was consistently high across all sessions, with mums, dads, and grandparents attending.



Impact-

The one-off session model proved highly effective. Attendance was excellent, indicating that families felt able and motivated to participate. Parents reported increased confidence in supporting their child's learning and engagement with Talk Time activities at home.

Impact Continued...

Parent feedback highlighted positive outcomes, including:

- "Enjoyed the memory games they played and now play them at home."
- "Absolutely, 'E' gets so excited when I come into her school. She feels that I am more engaged with her learning."
- "I can show her how important her learning is to me by being there."
- "It's lovely to familiarise myself with my child's daily environment."

Children demonstrated enthusiasm when parents attended sessions, and families expressed appreciation for being welcomed into the school environment and involved directly in learning activities.



"NOTHING WOULD MAKE THE SESSIONS BETTER. KEEP COMING AND KEEP DOING A GREAT JOB! EXCELLENT AS ALWAYS."

Review-

The sessions will continue to use the one-off delivery model, as this has been shown to encourage attendance and reduce pressure on families. The structure of delivering Talk Time to parents first, followed by joint parent-child activities, will be maintained as it supports understanding and practical application.

Although limited written feedback was received, the consistently positive verbal feedback suggests high satisfaction. Future sessions may explore alternative ways of capturing parent voice, such as brief informal surveys or digital feedback options. Overall, the approach has been reviewed as highly successful, with families requesting the sessions to continue:

- "Nothing would make the sessions better. Keep coming and keep doing a great job! Excellent as always."