

Parent Ambassadors in Practice

"I love the course. It has really made me and my Parent Ambassador reflect on systems and policies in school. She has really enjoyed the sessions."

(School-based mentor, The Meadows Primary School)

The training: "The course is excellent; I have learnt so much." Paul, PA.

"The content is very interesting and helping to improve my practice. There is more homework than I thought previously however the tutor is fair and explains it very well."

Laura, PA

Placements in schools:

"We have implemented drop-ins every Tuesday and Thursday." Paul, PA.

"Once our new building is completed her role will be paramount in school."

(School-based mentor)

Testimony from Kate Wildman (Inclusion Leader) Birches Green Infants

"We approached a parent helper, at the beginning of the Autumn term, to take part in the Parent Ambassador course because we could see the potential she had to make a difference to the children and parents in our school.

She was very excited to take part in the PSS course, which she found really useful. During this time she did voluntary work in school for 5 hours a week, supporting all parents but especially our non-English speaking parents at workshops, parent's evening, coffee mornings and with homework. She also made herself available every morning and afternoon in the playground enabling her to network with a range of our parents. At the end of the term we could not afford to lose her so we decided to employ her for the 5 hours a week. She is now supporting the facilitation of Birmingham Adult Education English and Maths courses, in school, as well as all her other roles.

Encouraging her to complete the course and make the role her own is starting to make a real difference in connecting with our hard to reach parents, which in turn can only help their children to thrive. We have also seen her grow in the role with a new found confidence."

Parent Ambassador Programme

Summary of the Parent Ambassador training programme:

- ◇ As a school, you would select and recruit your parent/s to undertake the PSS Parent Ambassador training programme;
- ◇ This should be a parent who you feel would support with increasing and improving parental engagement in your school. They **must** have a good level of written English (examples of standard required on A2E website);
- ◇ PSS, with Birmingham Adult Education, deliver 9 consecutive weeks of **free and accredited** training entitled: **Becoming a Parent Ambassador (Open College Network - West Midlands Level 2 Unit)**;
- ◇ As a school, you would support parents to undertake 'parental engagement activities' **whilst undertaking their training**. Your Parent Ambassador would then remain 'employed' (paid or voluntary) at your school for a minimum of a further two terms.

What duties can Parent Ambassadors undertake in your school?

It is school's decision as to how you utilise your PA. In some schools, they already:

- Run coffee mornings/support groups/drop-ins and organise family events;
- Support at parents evenings; with home visits and other school events;
- Support with induction of new children/families and help parents to understand their role in their child's education;
- Support parents with literacy and language barriers including translating/interpreting;
- Support families with other issues (i.e. signposting to housing, police etc.);
- Provide a voice for parents reluctant to talk directly to school staff.

For further information:

Visit the A2E website—PSS—Parent Ambassador Programme

<http://accesstoeducation.birmingham.gov.uk/index.php/PSS/parent-ambassador-programme.html>

To **reserve a place, please email**

Emma.Foster@birmingham.gov.uk

by: **Wednesday 8th May 2019**

Please note, for the course to be viable, we require at least 8 parents to register; less than this will mean that the start date will be deferred.

School-based mentors and **parent/s must** then attend our Information and Assessment event on:

Thursday 9th May 9:30—11:00am

Vauxhall Gardens, Barrack Street, Nechells, B7 4HA

What will take place:

- The mentor and parent will receive an overview of the requirements of the course including content and structure.
- Each parent will then complete a short written assessment to ensure their writing meets the required standard of written English for Birmingham Adult Education.

For parents who pass their written assessment, training will commence on:

**Monday 13th May (9:30—12:30) at Vauxhall Gardens
for 9 consecutive weeks (excluding holidays)**

“Parents are coming into school and raising issues as to what they want us to help them with. More parents are coming to meetings.” (Reshma, PA)

What their training covers?

Each Parent Ambassador will complete **one unit** of an Open College Network West Midlands qualification (level 2).

This training aims to develop your Parent Ambassador's understanding of:

- The role of the Parent Ambassador and limitations of their role;
- The role and responsibilities of school staff and how Parent Ambassadors and school staff can work collaboratively to increase parental engagement;
- The policies and procedures relevant to the school;
- The types of information required by parents and school staff;
- The potential barriers to learning for adults and children;
- The values of the school and the importance of promoting British Values through education;
- The safeguarding requirements within a school.



What is your commitment as a school?

- ✓ Recruit a suitable parent/s (there is no limit as to how many undertake the training but you may need to consider school's capacity to support them);
- ✓ Allocate a suitable **school-based mentor** (to oversee and support the work of the Parent Ambassador);
- ✓ Provide opportunity for the PA to engage with parents **whilst they train** (10 weeks);
- ✓ Provide a further two terms of either **voluntary** or **paid** employment (approx. 3-5 hours recommended per week);
- ✓ Support the Parent Ambassador to achieve their accreditation (i.e. provide witness testimonies for their portfolio and if necessary, provide support with their portfolio collation. For example, one homework task is to bring a sample of school policies; they may need their mentor to support with this);
- ✓ Complete the necessary **safeguarding checks** (DBS);
- ✓ **Promote** their role within your school.