

# Why is family engagement important?

Research suggests that the engagement of parents/carers has a bigger impact on a child or young person's academic learning than any other factor, including the quality of the school. By bringing parents/carers and teachers together, it is possible to provide a child or young person with a trusting circle of adults who will support them.



## What can school staff do to encourage family engagement?

Introduce non-stigmatising opportunities for collaborative involvement of parents/carers in a child's learning. The **multi-family groups in schools** approach brings parents/carers, teachers, children and young people, and mental health professionals together in school settings, with the aim of helping to change and improve the children and young people's emotional wellbeing and behaviour. This helps children and young people to be more settled and better able to engage with teaching and learning opportunities. A family group allows parents/carers to share experiences and ideas with others who may have struggled with or suffered from similar difficulties to their own. It has been shown that changes initiated in the group transfer very well into better behaviour and learning performance in the classroom.

## What is a Multi-Family group and how is it run?

- Multi-family groups are set up and run by a member of the school staff and a suitably qualified psychologist, social worker or mental health professional.
- Six to eight families meet weekly in school with the two group leaders.
- Children and young people's progress is monitored daily against emotional wellbeing or behavioural targets and every six weeks overall progress is measured against goals, such as improved attendance, behaviour and independent learning.
- A family group has a clear structure based on targets, planning, action, reflection and transfer.

