



An exploration into the impact of family and community-school partnerships on children living in areas of deprivation.

Carys Cook

BAEd Primary Education with QTS

University of Wales Trinity Saint David

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Introduction

Few would dispute the influence of parents and families on children's lives and the significant degree to which these relationships can positively or negatively affect their experiences and development. This impact extends to their education and there is a wealth of research to suggest that parental involvement in schools can make a substantial difference to children's attainment and attitudes (Deforges and Abouchaar, 2003; Epstein, 2001; Whalley, 2007). In addition to this, parental involvement has been identified as a significant strategy in closing the gap between children living in poverty and their more affluent peers (WG, 2016), as the effectiveness of parental engagement has been evident across all social classes and cultures. However, this is an area that schools have found most challenging in tackling the impact of poverty on children in their schools (Estyn, 2010; 2012), with parents from disadvantaged backgrounds significantly less likely to be involved than those from more affluent backgrounds (Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003; Ermisch *et al.*, 2001). Other factors that significantly impact levels of parental involvement include health (Children in Wales, 2012), the mothers' education (Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003), single parent status (Katz *et al.*, 2007) and parent's confidence and experiences of school (Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, 1997), all of which are closely linked with poverty. The implications of this for schools and the education system in Wales in the aim to tackle poverty is hugely significant, which led to the introduction of 'Families and Schools Together' (FAST), a parental engagement programme delivered by Save the Children (EEF, 2019). However the EEF (2018) reported that they found no evidence that the FAST programme improved educational attainment. In addition to this, Gorard and See (2013) found a lack of sufficient evidence that parental involvement interventions had any impact on children's attainment. Therefore the aim of this research is to explore what impact, if any, family and community-school partnerships are having on primary aged children living in areas of poverty, and how these can be improved, if necessary.

Interest in this area began with observation of excellent practice in a large city school, where there was not only significant levels of deprivation for some families, but staff also had the responsibility of supporting families speaking over 40 different languages, some of whom did not speak English and some who had moved to

Wales to seek refuge from war. This provided significant new challenges for staff, but also led them to work hard in striving for excellency in parental involvement, achieving a unique community atmosphere within the school where all staff, children and families were accepting and supportive of each other, regardless of culture or background. The impact that parents' involvement in their child's school and the positive relationship between them and staff had both on families and the children was clearly evident, and children made excellent progress in their learning, despite the statistical odds and challenges that were against them.

Interest in this area also stems from a fundamental belief that all humans have an innate desire for family and community and that a child's wellbeing, development and learning is the responsibility of all adults involved their life. In other terms, it is based on the African proverb, 'it takes a whole village to raise a child' (as cited in WG, 2016). This is related to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems theory, which stated that child development is influenced greatly by societal factors and their relationship with those around them and stressed the importance of people from these different systems interacting positively. As well as this, Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory emphasises the influence of a child's family and the wider community on how they make sense of the world around them.

Research for this project will take place in a large community school in a significantly deprived area of West Wales that prioritises family engagement. Research methods will include observations, interviews and questionnaires, all of which have been approved through an Ethics Form (see Appendix 1) signed by the University.

Literature Review

Over the past fifty years (DES, 1967), parental involvement has become increasingly valued within the education system, as research and effective practise has evidenced its positive impact on children's wellbeing, learning, and attitudes (WG, 2016) The following chapter will discuss this using Epstein's (2001) six part model, considering different aspects of parental involvement. Each section of the model will be considered in relation to children from disadvantaged backgrounds, considering effective practise and potential barriers to involvement.

The first type of parental involvement that Epstein (2001) identifies is supporting parents at home. This area of parental involvement includes the school supporting families with parenting skills and understanding of child development, but also taking a responsibility to understand the background and culture of every family, an aspect that Whalley (2007) considers essential in order to truly know a child. Deforges and Abouchaar (2003) emphasise that the most significant finding from their research was that 'at-home good parenting' had a notably higher positive impact on pupil's attainment and adjustment than any other form of parental involvement. This is not surprising, perhaps, when it is noted that children spend only 15% of their time in school (Scottish Executive, 2003). Within research in this field, a correlation has been drawn between children living in poverty and school readiness, with children from disadvantaged backgrounds six months behind the average in school readiness (JRF, 2014) and less likely to be read to, play number games and have nursery rhymes sung to them (Grigg *et al.*, 2014). In view of this, research does give strong evidence to the need to offer support to families with parenting skills. However, it must be questioned whether 'good parenting' can be defined, especially when considering the differing experiences and values of different families and cultures. This is supported by concerns over teachers' attitudes towards parents, with findings that teachers often blame parents for children's disadvantage in school, yet this includes both accusations of emotional neglect when parents work long hours, and judgements of unemployed parents as 'bad role models' (Horgan, 2007). Shepherd (2011) highlights the need for teachers to recognise that good parenting may take on different forms, especially depending on the culture of the child and family.

It could be argued that communication is one aspect of parental involvement that is better established, due to legislation as far back as the 1960s which ensured parents had the right to access information and receive communication about their child's education (Wilson, 2016), as well as the introduction of the concept of 'parents as consumers' with the introduction of the National Curriculum (Hughes *et al.*, 1998, p. 339). In spite of this, Whalley (2007) criticises the reportedly common approach to communication with parents claiming that, other than annual parents evenings, it is often one way and mostly through a reading record, thus not giving a holistic window into the child's learning and experiences and not listening to the valuable contribution that parents can make towards supporting that child. Where parental involvement

becomes an effective partnership, there is a two way communication between home and school (Epstein, 2001; Hornby, 2011; Grigg, 2015) where parents and staff are respected and heard. The EEF (2018) suggest that personalised communication from school to home proves more effective, and also found that text communication was more well received than paper-based communication such as letters. It must be emphasised again that in all cases, the most effective family involvement will take place when staff get to know families on an individual basis. However the EEF (2018) reported that 50% of parents reported that they had not been asked how they would like to receive information. When working with families in areas of poverty, the individual needs of parents must be considered. Some parents may not be able to read communication sent, and therefore it will be important for staff to have regular face-to-face dialogue with them about their child's progress and school information. In addition to this, it must also be considered that where information is shared on internet platforms, some families may not have the means to access this.

The third type of parental involvement in Epstein's (2001) model is volunteering. Some schools are encouraging parents to volunteer with a long-term plan to support them in gaining qualifications to work in schools (Whalley, 2007; Estyn, 2012). This promotes parental involvement, but also helps to tackle the effects of poverty as it provides an opportunity for parents to further their education and increase job prospects. Parents can be a valuable resource within schools and a link to the community through different cultures, jobs and skills (Grigg, 2015; Wilson, 2016) and it is also worth noting that research shows that children want their parents to be involved in school life (OFSTED, 2006). However with family dynamics having changed over time, particularly with more households with two working parents and an increase in single-parent families, it must be respected that parents may not always have the option to come into school, due to work or care duties to other children or family members.

Research has shown that children's educational attainment, and social, emotional and cognitive development largely depends on the quality of their 'home learning environment' (Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003). Whalley (2007) argues the importance of parents being acknowledged not only as the child's primary educator (Nutbrown, 2006) but their most enduring educator. While there may be an

assumption from school staff that parents who are not engaging well with their children's learning do not care about educational attainment (Horgan, 2007; Hornby, 2011), research suggests that this is often not the case (Horgan, 2007) and that staff have a responsibility to find out what barriers are causing a lack of involvement and therefore move forward in supporting parents. Particularly in areas of poverty, it is more likely that parents lack confidence in their own ability to support their child's learning (Hoover-Dempsey *et al.*, 2005; Goodman and Gregg, 2010). There may be other barriers such as a lack of resources, ill mental health or simply that parents are unsure how to best support their child's learning at home (Estyn, 2013). Schools will often be the only contact of support for many parents and may be able to put parents in contact with the right organisations, which is why a multi-agency and community approach is so vital (WG, 2016). Epstein *et al.* (2002) states that the best way parents can be supported in this area is by informing them on how they can support their children. This is supported by Gorard and See (2013) as well as Goodall and Vorhaus *et al.* (2011) whose research warns schools against simply encouraging parents to support their children with their learning at home in the name of parental engagement, considering positive parent-school relationships to be sufficient, when the evidence of progress is present when schools provide direct support in how to help their children learn at home. Therefore one way in which this type of parental involvement can be encouraged and supported is by making sessions available to parents in which they are supported in how to help their children learn, particularly relating to reading and numeracy (EEF, 2018)

Another type of parental involvement that Epstein highlights (Epstein *et al.*, 2002) is involving parents in decision making within the school; which is often done through PTA groups and appointing parent governors. Effective parental involvement requires a broader approach than simply communicating about the individual child and supporting learning, but also using the role of the PTA well and involving parents in the decision making process, not simply asking for their views (Goodall and Vorhaus, 2011). This is supported by findings that parental involvement improves when staff have responded to feedback, involve parents in decision making and planning and when parents feel their opinions are valued (EEF, 2018; Grigg, 2015; Grayson, 2013). This approach will take full advantage of the skills and expertise of all staff and parents in order to work in partnership and provide the best possible

outcomes for pupils and those around them (WG, 2016; Hornby, 2011). Parents from the local community may have a stronger understanding of its culture and values, and will be able to act as a voice for parents and a point of contact between the school and the community. It could be argued that decision making is an extension of effective communication, as Whalley (2007) encourages professionals to move away from simply informing parents, to listening effectively to them. A survey on parental involvement found that parents felt that this was one area that schools needed to improve upon (NORC, 1997). Schools are encouraged to review and monitor their progress in this area, auditing how included parents feel in decisions made about their child and school life and how they would like to be involved (EEF, 2018).

Epstein *et al.* (2002) defines collaborating with the community as finding and utilising resources and services from the community in order to improve parental support and the school in general. Research has found that active engagement with the wider community has a positive impact on educational attainment, providing context to learning, improve basic skills and showing positive role models for both children and parents (WG, 2016). It is important for schools to be outward focused, recognising their part in a bigger picture of the local community and a valuable link between families and various services (WG, 2016). It has been found that a multi-agency approach is particularly effective when there is a designated individual to work with families and liaise between stakeholders (Grayson, 2013). Many schools now employ a family support or engagement officer to fulfil this role (WG, 2016; Estyn, no date; Estyn, 2012). This may be particularly important in areas of deprivation, where parents may lack the confidence and skills or ability needed to access services they need (Estyn, 2013). Research has found that this holistic support for parents in disadvantaged areas is integral to narrowing the attainment gap and that this is particularly important when working with vulnerable families (Grayson, 2013). Using the school as a central non-threatening environment for meetings with external agencies significantly puts parents at ease and improves information sharing (Estyn, 2013).

In order to protect the wellbeing of children, there is a necessity for schools to work with the police, social service, health professionals and any other stakeholders in

order to share information on children or families that they may be concerns about (Goodall and Vorhaus, 2011). This was highlighted with the introduction of the *Every Child Matters* policy (DfES, 2003), following the death of Victoria Climbié, which arguably could have been prevented, had a number of services been in contact with each other. Therefore it is clear that this is an area that cannot be ignored.

Evidently, family and community partnerships is a multi-dimensional aspect of teaching and learning, which can take on many forms. What is emphasised throughout research, is the need for schools to have a committed, whole-school approach to parental involvement, with a clear goals for implementation, which is evident in the school development plan (Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003; EEF, 2018; WG, 2016).

Methodology and research design

The data for this research project was collected using a combination of questionnaires, interviews and observational notes. Participants included sixteen parents, ten pupils in Foundation Phase, fifty pupils in Key Stage 2 and seven members of staff, all within one Primary school.

In any form of research and data collection, it is essential that the researcher is aware of the relevant ethical considerations in order to respect the rights of all participants and stakeholders (BERA, 2018). Integral to this, is the need to obtain informed consent. Within the context of this research project, a cover letter (see Appendix 2) and consent form (see Appendix 3) was read and signed by a member of senior management in the school on behalf of staff due to wishes not to create additional paperwork for staff. All members of staff who participated, or whose pupils participated, were given a copy of the cover letter and verbal consent was obtained. Upon reflection, gaining written consent from all staff would have been advisable in order to protect the researcher, should anything be questioned. Parents participating were also given copies of the cover letter with a written consent form to sign. This was also explained more simply to parents who found the cover letter difficult to read. When gaining consent from children participating, the purpose and methodology of the research were explained in age-appropriate language. In addition to this, it was made clear to all participants that they had the right to decline

participation or to withdraw at any point during the research. During interviews, children were asked regularly whether they wished to continue or withdraw. This is especially important when conducting research with children, due to the perceived power relationship between adults and children (Fraser *et al.*, 2004).

Within the field of education and child development, research has moved significantly from collecting research about children to becoming partners with the children in research (Fraser *et al.*, 2004). Children are now widely given full respect as 'experts in their own lives' (Clark and Moss, 2011, pp. 54) and it is arguably impossible to understand their world and experiences if their point of view is not considered in research (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). It is both this philosophy and the United

Within this research, all members of staff were interviewed, while parents were given questionnaires to complete (see Appendix 4). Staff interviewed included class teachers, support staff, the family support officer, the inclusion manager and the headteacher. Staff were not given questionnaires in order to respect the senior management's wishes not to increase paperwork, which may limit findings due to a small sample. However Dawson (2009) argues that a smaller sample in qualitative research may be more beneficial as it allows for more in-depth analysis. On the other hand, a larger sample of parents' views were collected through questionnaires, though data gathered may be limited as many did not give detailed responses (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). Observational notes were also collected on how parents and children seemed to respond during parental engagement events and meetings. This included parental engagement events in school, an educational visit on which parents were invited to join, and meetings regarding inclusion. Ethical consideration was given to how this was done, and verbal consent was gained from staff, parents and pupils for notes to be taken, explaining clearly that no personal information would be noted and that they had the option to read these notes at any time. The parents that participated had children in settings ranging from a parent and toddler group, Flying Start and Nursery to Year 6.

The Foundation Phase pupils took part in group interviews. This was the sole method of data collection for younger children, as they would have struggled to complete a questionnaire independently. The children interviewed were a mix of boys and girls, from a variety of home backgrounds. Interviews were done in groups

in order to create the 'circle time' atmosphere and structure that the children are used to (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). However there is a possibility that this affected the children's responses, as the children may have been influenced by each other and so some responses may not have accurately reflected children's views.

Ethical considerations were given with regards to how interviews with young children should be constructed and carried out. Particular awareness was held of the difficulties in children's perceptions of the researchers' power and potential unease at an unfamiliar face asking questions about their experiences (Lastikka, 2017). As well as this, children may try to give the 'right' answer, rather than share their own opinions and experiences (Clark, 1999). It was thought that using a puppet to interview the younger pupils would provide a non-threatening medium through which to deliver the questions and elicit talk, an method which is well supported by researchers in this field (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Clark and Moss, 2011; Epstein *et al.*, 2008; King *et al.*, 2015).

Pupils in Key Stage 2 were given an online questionnaire to complete in order to gain a larger sample group. Although this has improved the range of views collected, it is clear through some of the responses that not all children understood the questions asked, or perhaps did not give enough time and thought to their response. A clearer picture of pupils' views may have been gathered if the large sample of questionnaires had been supported by more detailed responses through interviews. Audio recordings were made of all interviews to ensure responses were recorded accurately and avoid misunderstandings or missed points (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994:98)

Results and discussion

Generally there was a positive response to family involvement within the school from parents, with all parents responding that they feel 'very' or 'fairly involved' in their child's school life. Parents evenings were the most common area of school life that parents reported to have been involved with, followed by family engagement days and other events which provide training and support for parents, as well as opportunities for parents to take part in activities alongside their children, involving a variety of members and organisations from the community. Most children had

positive attitudes towards their parents involvement in school, or a wish for their parents to be involved in school, but correlating with research (WG, 2016), this became less so as children got older. All staff interviewed had a positive attitude towards parental involvement, feeling that it was very important to children's wellbeing, motivation and attainment and clearly had received a lot of input on how this can be done and the research that is behind it. This contrasts significantly to findings on staff attitudes in general, with fewer the 10% of teachers reporting to have had training (EEF, 2018) and a lack of input for trainee teachers (Grigg, 2015).

It was clear from research that staff in the school were very aware of the importance of supporting families in their parenting roles and were seeking ways in which they could best support that. Staff spoke of the importance of knowing families and their culture and backgrounds well, and that particular members of staff in key roles, such as the family support officer, the progress team lead and the inclusion manager, know the families exceptionally well and therefore know the unique needs they have and the challenges that they face. The family support officer is integral to this as she spoke of the fear that many parents have of being judged for issues that they are struggling with, and her ability to act as a non-threatening, non-judgement, approachable member of staff who is from their community and who they know is there to support them and advocate for them. Through links with community services, the family support officer is able to identify aspects of parenting that families may be struggling with, and liaise with the appropriate people in order to ensure parents are accessing the best support. For example, the community police officer is always available to speak to children about concerns parents have, for example, inappropriate behaviour within the community or the importance of wearing seatbelts in the car.

The school run many events and groups in order to support good parenting skills. There is a weekly 'find out Friday' session, which provides information, support, and training for parents in a variety of areas including behaviour support, managing a good routine, and health related topics. These sessions are arranged by the family support officer, but often run by relevant professionals from the local community. Several parents reported that they had benefitted from these sessions. It was also reported the sessions have been particularly popular with parents of children with

additional learning needs, as they have provided input on specific needs and how parents can support their children best.

Much of the focus for parenting support is on the early years. Staff emphasised the importance of developing good relationships with parents early on, which is achieved by home visits to families of 3 year olds before they start. There is also a Flying Start setting on site which promotes these early links. Staff felt that when these relationships are established early on, parents are much less intimidated by staff and more ready to receive advice and support. Parent and toddler groups (aimed at children who are not old enough for Flying Start) and family cooking activities encourage positive role models and support parents in how to play, read and interact with their children.

During cooking activities, input is given on healthy eating, budget shopping and cooking skills. It was observed during one of these sessions that parents attending lacked basic skills in food preparation and that these would be of great value to families. Parents are given copies of recipes made in school and a bag of ingredients to make them, with the idea that they go home and cook the same meal together with their children. During these sessions, easy, low budget numeracy and phonics games are provided, as well as time to read with the children while the food is cooking. In all interactions with parents, staff aim to encourage positive dialogue about children and model praise and positive language when speaking to children. Many staff are keen to counteract negative attitudes and speech towards the children as they notice a significant difference in confidence and self-esteem.

Communication between staff and parents within the school seemed mostly effective as the staff had been working hard for a number of years to develop good relationships with every parent within the school. Staff spoke of the importance of being welcoming to parents, having an open door policy and that parents are always able to contact staff directly if necessary. Staff in the school reported that all parents have access to the school email address, but also that they provide work phone numbers regularly to ensure parents know they are available. The family support officer regularly makes phone calls to check in with parents who the school are aware are vulnerable, and arranges meetings in her office, which is an informal and welcoming environment that is easily accessible to parents from the reception. This

room was always open unless the family support officer was holding a meeting. It is interesting that parents with children in other schools commented on their wish for a more direct way to contact staff when they need to.

For parents, the most popular method of accessing information about school by far was social media. This was reflected in staff's feelings that social media posts were the best way to communicate information about school life to parents, with one member of senior management noting that any videos with the children in them were particularly effective. For parents, social media was followed by newsletters and speaking to staff. Notice boards and blogs were the least popular, though it was noticed that not every teacher made use of the class blog. It may also be worth noting that class blogs and notice boards generally focussed more on what the children were learning than events and general information. This could reflect staff's feelings that parents engaged well with school events, but were more difficult to engage with children's learning.

When asked if they feel they receive enough information about what is happening in school one quarter of parents strongly agreed, almost two thirds of parents agreed and only one parent disagreed. In response to the statement that they feel they receive enough information about their child's learning in school, one third of parents strongly agreed, nearly two thirds agreed and again, only one parent disagreed. A couple of parents commented that they like to be kept up to date with what is happening in school and how their child is getting on. One parent commented on the importance of knowing dates in advance in order to book time off work. However staff did note that many parents forget when given significant notice, so many will send letters out well in advance of events, but also ask the family support officer to phone parents to remind them the day before, or remind parents regularly at the school gate when possible. They have also had difficulty in gaining consent forms from parents when those are needed. Some staff felt that it is likely that certain parents are struggling to read the letters, so are working hard to ensure that letters are kept short and that they only have one event on each newsletter, rather than a whole term of information on one letter. Staff also expressed the challenges of communicating information to parents of year 5 and 6 children, as most of them walk

to and from school on their own. Staff felt that sending texts home may be a beneficial way to begin communicating to parents.

The headteacher of the school expressed difficulties in communicating information about the curriculum and teaching and learning within the school. For a recent open day on curriculum change, great effort was made to communicate the event to parents, sending out regular leaflets. However nobody attended the event. The headteacher has found that the best way to communicate information was before events such as school plays, which are always well attended.

The school is very active in involving parents and families are regularly seen in school for meetings, continuous dialogue and events or groups. Parents who participated noted significant benefits for both them and their children when they are involved in school life. Parents appreciated feeling included and having time together in school as a family. They also expressed appreciation of the familiarity with staff and the school environment that it brings, both for them and their children. Parents also reported that their children love it when they come into school, that they enjoy doing things with their parents and several parents also commented on an increase in their child's confidence. One mother who participated in the questionnaire reported, 'it makes my daughter happy to show us her work in school and have us there to support her when she performs'. Staff also noted how excited children are to have their parents in school with them and it was clear from observation that this is the case. However this did also have a negative impact in that it was observed that children whose parents were not able to attend events and activities or whose parents did not deliver on promises to come into school became very upset and dejected, which had a negative impact on their learning and on their behaviour. For example, one child's mother had recently had a baby and had told the child several times that she would bring the baby in for the class to see. This child found it very difficult to manage their emotions on days that mum had promised to bring the baby in but did not. The class teacher and LSA reported that this child's mood and attitude towards learning was daily controlled by how her relationship was with her mother that day and whether there were family engagement events on as she knew that no one would come for her.

The school are keen to engage parents in volunteering as staff in the school and have been running a project that enables parents (targeting mothers in particular) to volunteer in the school and then undertake an NVQ in the local college, which is funded by the school who have a partnership with the local college. This was in response to research that found that it was the mother's qualifications that seemed to be an indicator of qualifications that children would go onto achieve. Aware that this was a community where many people do not remain in education after 16 years old, the school hope to improve parents job prospects, their attitudes to education, and encourage high aspirations that provide positive role models for the children in a culture where many there is a cycle of unemployment. The headteacher reported that this is putting money back into the homes and community which ultimately benefits the children. Staff felt that children were particularly proud of their mothers who were volunteering within the school and this was reflected in the interviews with the children.

Most parents/carers that participated were women, with thirteen mothers, one auntie and one grandmother. Only one father participated in the questionnaire, and it was noted from observation that there were significantly less men present at family engagement events than women. This may be due to work commitments, a significant number of single-parent families, or some children commented that their fathers worked away and would be away for significant lengths of time. A lack of involvement from fathers has been noted in research (EEF, 2018) and there are initiatives to try and target fathers to become more involved in their child's learning (Estyn, 2013). The school have been working on this, running an after-school club specifically for children and their fathers, running outdoor activities.

Many staff reported that their ultimate aim with parental involvement was to reach a point where all families are engaging with and support their children in their learning, and all other aspects of parental involvement were part of a process to ensure this happens. Some staff expressed concerns that their parental engagement initiatives were relatively shallow and questioned how the family engagement days were promoting supporting children's learning. However others felt that it was important to begin with simply developing positive relationships and encouraging parents to come into school, so did not feel that learning at home was a priority until this had been

better established. Staff were aware of how little time children spend in school and also opportunity that parents have to put children's learning into context in every day life.

As aforementioned, the school have struggled to engage parents with events relating to the curriculum and children's learning in school. Perhaps most significantly in comparison with this, is that one member of senior management reported that the school held an more able and talented (MAT) coffee morning, which provided information and training on how parents can best support children who are MAT. This was very well attended, perhaps suggesting that children whose parents are involved and actively invest in their learning progress further than those whose parents perhaps do not.

Of the 16 parents who participated in the study, 14 felt able to support their children with reading at home, 11 felt able to support their child with writing, and 10 parents felt able to support their children with both maths and other homework at home, though it was noted that lower numbers reporting feeling able to support children with other homework may be due to the fact that most homework given in the school seemed to be related either to maths or literacy. When asked whether they feel the school support them sufficiently to help their child with their learning at home, 2 parents strongly agreed, 13 agreed and 1 disagreed.

Most children felt that their parents did things with them at home and helped them with their learning. Interestingly, several children commented on the amount of time their parents spend on technology such as phones and iPads. This was in response to being asked either what their parents do with them at home or how they help them to learn at home. As well as this, many children commented on how they like to play on their iPads at home. Similarly, staff member expressed concerns over the amount of screen time children were having, rather than engaging with their family members. Many children reported what they do with their siblings or cousins, rather than their parents. Some children commented that their parents have to go to work a lot, while another child said that mum helps by cooking and cleaning but does not play with them much. Many children, of all ages, expressed wishes that their parents would do more with them at home, particularly craft activities and going out with them.

One of the few events that no parents reported to have been involved with was 'friends of the school', which is the school's form of a PTA. Despite the small sample, this does correlate with comments from several members of staff, that this was an area that they had very little interest in and were struggling to engage parents with, despite great efforts. However all parents except one did report that they feel included in all decisions made regarding their child's education.

As aforementioned the school that participated in the research is a community school, which is embedded in the ethos of all decisions that are made. Staff value the relationship they have with various members of the community and how they can work together to achieve the best outcomes for the children and their families. The family support officer plays a central role in this, acting as link between families, staff and community services and professionals.

The role of the community has been particularly important in supporting families of children with additional learning needs. The inclusion manager reported that parents can find overwhelming when additional needs are identified and there are several agencies or professionals involved in meetings those needs. The school works with a vast variety of professionals, who are able to advise the school, be another voice for the child and help to provide a broad picture of the child's needs and support that is available. The school can arrange meetings to take place on site for the parents ease and comfort. Staff found that some parents struggle to make it to different appointments in different centres so holding them in the school ensures that the child can access these services.

Support is also available for parents who have varying needs, perhaps relating to social, financial or mental health issues. The school can help practically and are able to issue vouchers for the local foodbank, should parents need it. The family support officer is passionate about providing the best support for families, taking each case individually. The school as a whole care greatly about the community in which they work and are keen to improve prospects as a whole and not just within school life.

In conclusion, there is a strong case for prioritising family and community engagement within schools as it improves attitude and attainment for children, but also improves wellbeing and support for children, parents, families, staff and the

wider community. This is particularly significant for schools in areas of poverty. However attempts are futile unless whole-community strategic approach embedded in the school development plan (Deforges and Abouchaar, 2003; EEF, 2018) and although staff awareness and training is excellent with the school involved in research, the wider picture across Wales is that staff need more training and support in how to not just include parents in the life of the school, but use these relationships to encourage parents to support their children's learning. Deforges and Abouchaar (2003) also highlight the need for further research on 'how to apply knowledge in this field', and it has been noted that there is a lack of strong evidence on how best to implement parental involvement within schools (EEF, 2018).

Word count: 6539

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Ethics form

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

In order for research to result in benefit and minimise risk of harm, it must be conducted ethically. A researcher may not be covered by the University's insurance if ethical approval has not been obtained prior to commencement.

The University follows the OECD Frascati manual definition of **research activity**: “creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications”. As such this covers activities undertaken by members of staff, postgraduate research students, and both taught postgraduate and undergraduate students working on dissertations/projects.

The individual undertaking the research activity is known as the “principal researcher”.

Ethical approval is not required for routine audits, performance reviews, quality assurance studies, testing within normal educational requirements, and literary or artistic criticism.

Please read the notes for guidance before completing ALL sections of the form.

This form must be completed and approved prior to undertaking any research activity. Please see Checklist for details of process for different categories of application.

SECTION A: About You (Principal Researcher)

Full Name:	Carys Eleri Cook				
Tick all boxes which apply:					
Member of staff:	☐	Student:	☒	Honorary research fellow:	☐
Faculty/School/Centre:	SWWCTE: YR ATHROFA				
Campus:	Carmarthen				

E-mail address:	1500321@student.uwtsd.ac.uk		
Contact Telephone Number:	07599786633		
For students:			
Student Number:	1500321	Undergraduate	☒
Programme of Study:	BA Primary Education (QTS)	Taught Postgraduate	☐
Director of Studies/Supervisor:	Dr Sioned V. Hughes	Research	☐

SECTION B: Approval for Research Activity

Has the research activity received approval in principle? (please check the Guidance Notes as to the appropriate approval process for different levels of research by different categories of individual)	YES	☒	NO	☐
				Date
If Yes, please indicate source of approval (and date where known):	Research Degrees Committee	☐		
	Faculty Research Committee	☐		
	Other (write in)	☒	08/02/19	

Approval in principle **must** be obtained from the relevant source prior to seeking ethical approval.

SECTION C: External Ethical Guidance Materials

Please list the core ethical guidance documents that have been referred to during the completion of this form (including any discipline-specific codes of research ethics, and also any specific ethical guidance relating to the proposed methodology). Please tick to confirm that your research proposal adheres to these codes and guidelines.	
<i>The research is within the bounds of the classroom environment and in accordance with the SWWCTE school guidelines for parental consent as per SWWCTE/Athrofa letter.</i>	☒
<i>The research will be conducted within BERA (British Educational Research Association) guidelines- Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (2018).</i>	☒
<i>The research will follow EWC research guidelines.</i>	☒
<i>The research will adhere to the University research guidelines.</i>	☒

SECTION D: External Collaborative Research Activity

Does the research activity involve collaborators outside of the University?	YES	☐	NO	☒
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If Yes, please provide the name of the external organisation and name and contact details for the main contact person:	
Institution	
Contact person name	
Contact person e-mail address	

Where research activity is carried out in collaboration with an external organisation

Does this organisation have its own ethics approval system?	YES	☐	NO	☒
If Yes, please attach a copy of any final approval (or interim approval) from the organisation				

SECTION E: Details of Research Activity

Indicative title:	An exploration into the impact of family and community- school partnerships on pupil and parent motivation. Sub-questions: What impact do family-school partnerships have on pupils' motivation? What impact do family-school partnerships have on parents' engagement with and attitudes towards their child's education? What impact do community-school partnerships have on pupil and family motivation and attitudes towards education?		
Proposed start date:	11/02/19	Proposed end date:	29/04/19
Purpose of research activity (including aims and objectives) Outline the purpose, aims and objectives of the research activity, including key research questions. Show briefly how existing research has informed the proposed activity and explain what the research activity will add and how it addresses an area of importance. (Maximum 300 words) The research project aims to explore the impact of family and community-school partnerships on children, families and the wider school community. The Minister for Education and Skills (Lewis, 2015) states that parental engagement removes barriers to learning and improves pupil's attitudes. He also claims that community engagement has a positive impact on attainment and provides a relevant context for learning. The research will explore the extent to which this is true, capturing the views of children, practitioners, families and professionals in the wider community.			

(this box should expand as you type)

Proposed methods

Provide a brief summary of all the methods that **may** be used in the research activity, making it clear what specific techniques may be used. If methods other than those listed in this section are deemed appropriate later, additional ethical approval for those methods will be needed. (Maximum 600 words)

Interviews: *Children may be interviewed individually or as a group regarding their experiences and reflections of family and community involvement in school. This will be undertaken in an age-appropriate manner, in an informal setting where the children know that participating is optional and they are free to withdraw at any time. I will either make notes of this, or record audio. The children will be informed of this and asked if they are happy for me to do so. I will observe and check how the children are feeling regularly and whether they are happy to continue. This may be done with indicator cards with cartoon emotions that children can change when they wish. No names will be used in the writing.*

Parents/carers/family members may be interviewed informally regarding their views on how the school has involved them in their child's education. They may be asked how this has influenced them as parents and their involvement in their child's learning.

School staff may also be interviewed as part of this research. They will be interviewed on how they implement and support family and community partnerships and the effects they have observed of this on pupil/parent motivation and attitudes towards education. They will also be questioned on how they feel this affects the whole-school ethos.

I may interview members of the community who are involved in aspects of school life.

Observations/Field notes: *I will observe both children and families in different settings; possibly in the classroom environment during the school day or in extra curricular activity in other areas of the school. I may observe interactions between staff and families but will obtain permission for this beforehand. I will keep an observational diary, taking notes relating to pupil and parents attitudes to school and learning. This will be done in a professional manner, and the class teacher will have access to the diary. No names will be noted in this.*

Video/audio taping: *this may be used as a method of recording interviews, if appropriate and if permission is given by both the school and the participants. This may also be used to record activities that involve families or the local community. None of this will be done without written consent from the school, and without permission from all participants. Photographic evidence may be used, only with permission from the school and all involved. It will be confirmed with the class teacher if there are any children who cannot be photographed.*

Questionnaire: *I may create and administer a questionnaire in order to collect qualitative and quantitative data for my research. This will be based upon training provided by the University in my second year of study regarding the safe, effective and responsible*

construction and distributions of a questionnaire. Depending on the direction my research takes, administer them to pupils, staff or parents/carers as the research progresses. Participants in the questionnaire will only be identified as to whether they are a pupil, parent, or member of staff. All other data will be anonymous. A cover letter will accompany the questionnaire which will explain to the participant the reason for and nature of the questionnaire, in a way that is appropriate to them. The questionnaire would be distributed physically and then placed in a pool for analysis. Participants will retain the right to withdraw their response until it is added to the pool; then there will be no fair means of identifying their response in order to return it to them. This will be explained in the cover letter.

Examples of pupils' work: *if appropriate and relevant, I may ask permission to gather examples of pupils' work. Consent will be given by the class teacher and the pupil. I may also ask children to respond in an interview through the medium of drawing or another artistic form. Again, consent for this will be given by both teacher and pupil. Children's names will not be used and confidentiality will be upheld.*

(this box should expand as you type)

Location of research activity Identify all locations where research activity will take place.
<i>The proposed study/research activity will be conducted in a large community primary school in a deprived area, a partnership school (details to be confirmed), and a large, diverse city primary school with a large percentage of ethnic minority pupils.</i>
(this box should expand as you type)
Research activity outside of the UK If research activity will take place overseas, you are responsible for ensuring that local ethical considerations are complied with and that the relevant permissions are sought. Specify any local guidelines (e.g. from local professional associations/learned societies/universities) that exist and whether these involve any ethical stipulations beyond those usual in the UK (provide details of any licenses or permissions required). Also specify whether there are any specific ethical issues raised by the local context in which the research activity is taking place, for example, particular cultural sensitivities or vulnerabilities of participants.
N/A
(this box should expand as you type)

SECTION F: Scope of Research Activity

Will the research activity include:	YES	NO
Use of a questionnaire or similar research instrument?	x	☐
Use of interviews?	x	☐
Use of diaries?	x	☐
Participant observation with their knowledge?	☐	x
Participant observation without their knowledge?	x	☐
Use of video or audio recording?	☐	x
Access to personal or confidential information without the participants' specific consent?	x	☐
Administration of any questions, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically, mentally or emotionally harmful / offensive?	☐	x
Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem?	☐	x
Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities?	☐	x

Use of procedures that involve deception?	☐	x
Administration of any substance, agent or placebo?	☐	x
Working with live vertebrate animals?	☐	x
Other primary data collection methods, please explain in this box	☐	x

If NO to every question, then the research activity is (ethically) low risk and **may** be exempt from **some** of the following sections (please refer to Guidance Notes).

If YES to any question, then no research activity should be undertaken until full ethical approval has been obtained.

SECTION G: Intended Participants

Who are the intended participants:	YES	NO
Students or staff at the University?	☐	☒
Adults (over the age of 18 and competent to give consent)?	☒	☐
Vulnerable adults?	☐	☒
Children under 18?	☒	☐
Prisoners?	☐	☒
Young offenders?	☐	☒
Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator or a gatekeeper?	☐	☒
People engaged in illegal activities?	☐	☒
Others (please identify):	☐	☒

Participant numbers and source

Provide an estimate of the expected number of participants. How will you identify participants and how will they be recruited?

The estimate expected number of participants will be 75 children, 1 head teacher, 10 teachers, 4 support staff, and 10 parents/carers.

(this box should expand as you type)

Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	☒	☐	☐
Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	☒	☐	☐
Will you obtain written consent for participation?	☒	☐	☐
Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will not affect their treatment or education (if relevant)?	☒	☐	☐
If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?	☒	☐	☐
Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	☒	☐	☐
With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?	☒	☐	☐
Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?	☒	☐	☐
Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation, in a way appropriate to the type of research undertaken?	☒	☐	☐
If NO to any of above questions, please give an explanation			

(this box should expand as you type)

Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
Will participants be paid?	☐	☒	☐
Is specialist electrical or other equipment to be used with participants?	☐	☒	☐
Are there any financial or other interests to the investigator or University arising from this study?	☐	☒	☐
Will the research activity involve deliberately misleading participants in any way, or the partial or full concealment of the specific study aims?	☐	☒	☐
If YES to any question, please provide full details			
(this box should expand as you type)			

SECTION H: Anticipated Risks

Outline any anticipated risks that may adversely affect any of the participants, the researchers and/or the University, and the steps that will be taken to address them.

If you have completed a full risk assessment (for example as required by a laboratory, or external research collaborator) you may append that to this form.

Full risk assessment completed and appended?

Yes ☐

No ☒

Risks to participants

For example: emotional distress, financial disclosure, physical harm, transfer of personal data, sensitive organisational information

The risk to participants if involvement in research without consent. Therefore, I will ensure that all consent procedures are in place by informing the children, staff, and parents of my research and explain to the children and other participants that they have the right to withdraw at any time, or consent for use of data which they do not wish to be used. I will ask the children if I can use their answers from interviews in my research and share my notes. This will be done in an age-appropriate way. I will also monitor the children's wellbeing and stop any activity if any child seems upset or uncomfortable.

(this box should expand as you type)

If research activity may include sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use) or issues likely to disclose information requiring further action (e.g. criminal activity), give details of the procedures to deal with these issues, including any support/advice (e.g. helpline numbers) to be offered to participants. Note that where applicable, consent procedures should make it clear that if something potentially or actually illegal is discovered in the course of a project, it may need to be disclosed to the proper authorities

N/A

(this box should expand as you type)

Risks to investigator

For example: personal safety, physical harm, emotional distress, risk of accusation of harm/impropriety, conflict of interest

The risk to the investigator is accusation of unprofessional practice. I will manage this by adhering to all aforementioned research guidelines (BERA, SWWCTE, EWC and Athrofa) and following my plan for ethical practice.

(this box should expand as you type)

University/institutional risks

For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection

There should not be any risk to the University if I manage the risk to the participant and the investigator as aforementioned. I will conduct the research and represent the results honestly. I will always comply with ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards as required by the statutory and regulatory authorities, as well as the University's Research Integrity and Ethics Code of Practice.

(this box should expand as you type)

Adverse outcomes

List measures put in place to limit any adverse effects or outcomes of research activity where appropriate. Include any emergency protocols.

I will manage the risk by following the BERA guidelines and following my plan of ethical practice. I will always comply with ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards as required by the statutory and regulatory authorities, as well as with the University's Research Integrity and Ethics Code of Practice.

Loss of data – upon collection of research I will assume full responsibility for the safekeeping of the data. To ensure the participant's response is safe and it will be kept in a folder on my person until the research has been analysed and utilised at which time the data will be destroyed.

If in the event that a participant's response is lost at the fault of the author or a third party, then the individual will not be able to be identified as no personal details are listed on the questionnaire.

(this box should expand as you type)

Disclosure and Barring Service

If the research activity involves children or vulnerable adults, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate must be obtained before any contact with such participants.	YES	NO	N/A
Has a DBS certificate been obtained?	x	☐	☐

SECTION I: Feedback, Consent and Confidentiality**Feedback**

What feedback will be provided to participants, how will this be done and when?

Feedback will not be given to participants as it is not relevant to the research. If participants request feedback then I will give a summary of data collected.

(this box should expand as you type)

Informed consent

Describe the arrangements to inform potential participants, before providing consent, of what is involved in participating. Describe the arrangements for participants to provide full consent before data collection begins. If gaining consent in this way is inappropriate, explain how consent will be obtained and recorded.

Participation assent – children

I will converse with the class teacher and senior mentor and inform them of the research and methods I will be undertaking, providing reason and rationale behind the research. However, I will verbally ask children whether they are happy to participate e.g. using emotion cards, explaining my research in an age-appropriate way. This will be an individual exercise so that children are encouraged to respond honestly in respect of their wellbeing and rights. Children will also be informed that they can approach me at any time to discuss their contribution to the research and explain whether they wish to participate.

Participation consent – staff/parents/carers

Members of staff/parents/carers will be asked to sign a document if they agree to take part in the research. If they are not willing to sign the document, then I shall not use them in my research. The consent form will include a box for participants to tick if they agree with the statements, e.g. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated 11/02/19 for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information and receive answers to any questions I have. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without explanation. I understand that any information given by me may be used in future report, articles or presentations by the research team. I understand that my name will not appear in any report, articles or presentations. I therefore agree to participate in the above study.

(this box should expand as you type)

Confidentiality / Anonymity

Set out how anonymity of participants and confidentiality will be ensured in any outputs. If anonymity is not being offered, explain why this is the case.

I will ensure that no individual data (raw scores, individual identifiable performance outcomes) are made available to Schools/Parents etc. Only non-identifiable summary/aggregate data can be provided in this way.

I will also place a statement on the consent form indicating that 'if you decide to remain anonymous, maintaining your anonymity will be a priority and every practical precaution will be taken to disguise your identity and all information will be kept confidential and only shared with the relevant people'.

(this box should expand as you type)

SECTION J: Data Protection and Storage

In completing this section refer to the University's Research Data Management Policy and the extensive resources on the University's Research Data Management web pages (<http://uwtsd.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/>).

	YES	NO
Does the research activity involve personal data (as defined by the Data Protection Act)? "personal data" means data which relate to a living individual who can be identified— (a) from those data, or (b) from those data and other information which is in the possession of, or is likely to come into the possession of, the data controller, and includes any expression of opinion about the individual and any indication of the intentions of the data controller or any other person in respect of the individual.	☐	x
If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected: (this box should expand as you type)		
Does it involve sensitive personal data (as defined by the Data Protection Act)? "Sensitive personal data" means personal data consisting of information as to — (a) the racial or ethnic origin of the data subject, (b) his political opinions, (c) his religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature, (d) whether he is a member of a trade union (within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992), (e) his physical or mental health or condition, (f) his sexual life, (g) the commission or alleged commission by him of any offence, or (h) any proceedings for any offence committed or alleged to have been committed by him, the disposal of such proceedings or the sentence of any court in such proceedings.	☐	x
If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected: (this box should expand as you type)		

	YES	NO
Will the research activity involve storing personal data on one of the following:		
Manual files (i.e. in paper form)?	x	☐
University computers?	☐	x
Private company computers?	☐	x
Home or other personal computers?	☐	x
Laptop computers/ CDs/ Portable disk-drives/ memory sticks?	x	☐
"Cloud" storage or websites?	x	☐
Other – specify:	☐	x

For all stored data, explain the measures in place to ensure data confidentiality, including details of password protection, encryption and anonymisation:

Confidentiality will be upheld by not naming any participants on any data collected. Manual files (e.g. observational diary) will be kept on my person at all times while at the school and in University. Any laptop or 'cloud' storage that has data stored on it will be protected by a secure password and all correspondence between the tutor and myself will be through a password protected email account.

(this box should expand as you type)

Will the research activity involve any of the following activities:	YES	NO
Electronic transfer of data in any form?	☐	x
Sharing of data with others at the University?	☐	x
Sharing of data with other organisations?	☐	x
Export of data outside the European Union or importing of data from outside the UK?	☐	x
Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, emails or telephone numbers?	☐	x
Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals?	☐	x
Use of data management system?	☐	x
Data archiving?	☐	x
If YES to any question, please provide full details, explaining how this will be conducted in accordance with the Data Protection Act (and/or any international equivalent):		
(this box should expand as you type)		

List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity:

The researcher, supervisor and module co-ordinator.

(this box should expand as you type)

List who will have control of, and act as custodian(s) for, data generated by the research activity:

The researcher (Carys Cook).

(this box should expand as you type)

Give details of data storage arrangements, including where data will be stored, how long for, and in what form. Will data be archived – if so how and if not why not.

Participants that provide responses will have their data stored securely by the researcher. Once the data has been analysed by the researcher then it will be destroyed so that there is no physical, trace of the data. This process will also be in accordance to the Data Protection Act (1998).

The data collection period will range from 11/02/2019 until 29/04/2019. Following the 29/04/2019, there will no longer be a use for the data and all the data that will be destroyed at this point.

(this box should expand as you type)

SECTION K: Declaration

The information which I have provided is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I have attempted to identify any risks and issues related to the research activity and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants.

In submitting this application I hereby confirm that I undertake to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's [Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice](#)

Signature of applicant:	Carys Cook	Date:	08/02/19
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For students:

Teacher / Senior Mentor / Headteacher:	Dr. Sioned Hughes
Signature:	
Date:	

Supervisor:	
Signature:	
Date:	

Checklist: Please complete the checklist below to ensure that you have completed the form according to the guidelines and attached any required documentation:

☒	I have read the guidance notes supplied before completing the form.
☒	I have completed ALL RELEVANT sections of the form in full.
☒	I confirm that the research activity has received approval in principle
☐	I have attached a copy of final/interim approval from external organisation (where appropriate)
☐	I have attached a full risk assessment (and have NOT completed Section H of this form) (where appropriate)
☒	I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice.

x	I understand that before commencing data collection all documents aimed at respondents (including information sheets, consent forms, questionnaires, interview schedules etc.) must be confirmed by the DoS/Supervisor, module tutor or Head of School.
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RESEARCH STUDENTS AND STAFF ONLY

All communications relating to this application during its processing must be in writing and emailed to pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk, with the title 'Ethical Approval' followed by your name.

You will be informed of the outcome of your claim by email; therefore it is important that you check your University and personal email accounts regularly.

STUDENTS ON UNDERGRADUATE OR TAUGHT MASTERS PROGRAMMES should submit this form (and receive the outcome) via systems explained to you by the supervisor/module leader.

This form is available electronically from the Academic Office web pages:

<http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/>

Application Process

All staff research projects and all research students must submit the Ethical Approval Form to the **University Ethics Committee** via the Academic Office (pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk). Staff research directly in relation to personal study for taught undergraduate or Masters programmes should be submitted via the Faculty procedures explained below.

Taught masters and taught undergraduate research Ethical Approval Forms are considered **within Faculties**. Faculties will provide details of the specific processes for this. Where the Ethical issues within any single ethical application are of particular concern the Faculty will refer these to the University Ethics Committee. Any student activity that involves the collection of primary data needs to undergo Ethical approval, this includes assignment work as well as dissertations.

Notes for guidance in completion of this form

Section A: About You

Please complete all relevant sections

Section B: Approval for research activity

Research proposals must be approved in principle before applying for Ethical Approval. The proposal approval only becomes final when the ethical approval is received.

The process for proposal approval varies according to the individual and programme of study:

- Research students, by application on form PG1 to the Research Degrees Committee
- Taught students by review of research proposal within Faculties (Faculties provide specific details of these processes)
- Staff, by agreement by the Head of School/Assistant Dean

Section C: External Ethical Guidance materials

Many discipline areas are required to operate with the discipline specific codes of research ethics (for example health, psychology, education etc.), any such codes must be listed and you must tick to confirm that you have consulted with these.

Section D: External Collaborative Research Activity

Provide details of the external collaborative partners, where appropriate you might want to submit a copy of the external collaboration agreement with the Ethical Approval Form. If the partner requires the research to be subject to its own internal Ethical approval process then please provide details of that process and a copy of any final (or interim) approvals received from the organisation.

Section E: Details of Research Activity

Remember that the individuals reviewing this Ethical Approval Form may not have seen your research proposal, and also may not be experts in the specific area of your research. The information provided should therefore be jargon free and clearly stated.

Indicative Title: please use the same title as used on the research proposal.

Purpose: the Ethical approval process will want to ensure that the methods you propose are adequate and appropriate to address the research aims and objectives. Excessive additional data collection can be seen as unethical.

Proposed Methods: the Ethical approval process seeks to ensure that you understand the methods that are intended, and that the implementation of those methods will be appropriate and without unnecessary impact on respondents. Please be specific.

Location: this needs to mention geographical location and also local situation (for example, within Local Authority Offices in Cardiff, using a private room but close to other individuals). If you are collecting data within an organisational setting then you need to explain the permissions that you have obtained to do this.

Research Activity outside of the UK: please complete this section in detail, and note any guidance you have received. Also describe your own familiarity (or not) with the location that you will be utilising.

Section F: Scope of Research Activity

Please tick ALL of the research activities that might be undertaken. If any additional types of activity are intended then please add an extra box and describe these.

If you have answered no to all questions in F then sections G and J do not need to be completed. Section H should be considered, and may be completed. Signatures are still required in section K.

Section G: Intended Participants

Please tick all categories that might apply.

Numbers & Source: if you are using a series of different methods or research activities please list numbers for each stage/phase. Be clear about how you will find respondents. Will you use intermediaries, and if so how? How will you ensure compliance with your sampling strategy?

Information for participants: all participants should be appropriately informed about the research, what is expected of them and what will happen to the information that they provide. The Ethical review process does not ask to see this documentation, but requires this to be reviewed and approved by the Director of Studies in the case of research students, the supervisor/module tutor in relation to students on taught programmes and the Head of School/Assistant Dean in relation to staff research.

Section H: Anticipate Risks

All research carries some level of risk. The answers you provide to questions in this section will be reviewed to ensure that you have an appropriate understanding of the type of risks involved and how you can mitigate against these risks. If you have completed a full risk assessment, as required for example for laboratory work, field work, clinical tests, diving operations, or by a collaborative partner, you may append that to this form. In that case, please tick the box indicating this has been provided. You will not then be required to complete Section H.

Risk to participants Think very carefully about how your actions/questions/discussions might affect the people you are involving as participants. You might identify the risk as small but it would still be a risk. Many types of question have the potential to make respondents less content with their life / job; you need to recognise and try to ameliorate any such effects

If these are business owners, time with you may reduce profit.

In some locations physical risk is very real to both participants and yourself, please consider this.

Risk to you, the researcher Think about where you will meet people, if there are any dangers involved in the location. If you are meeting people as individuals think about using a public place. In general do not visit people in their own homes or remote locations. If you are talking to individuals about certain issues think about how their responses might affect you emotionally. What about the risk of collecting insufficient data?

Risk to the University When undertaking your research, you are acting as a member of the University (student or staff). Professionalism is important, so it is important to be well organised and well prepared. Punctuality, clarity etc. are all part of this. What will you do to ensure this? You must ensure you do not harm the good name of the University in any way and do nothing to undermine the reputation of the research it conducts and sponsors. Upholding high standards of conduct and integrity are vital in this regard. You must also conduct the research in such a way to minimise the potential for claims of negligence made against the University, its researchers and any collaborating individual or organisation. In this respect you should always comply with ethical, legal and professional frameworks, obligations and standards as required by statutory and regulatory authorities, as well as the university's Research Integrity and Ethics Code of Practice. Research misconduct in this respect can take many forms, including:

- fabrication: making up results or other outputs (eg, artefacts) and presenting them as if they were real
- falsification: manipulating research processes or changing or omitting data without good cause
- plagiarism: using other people's material without giving proper credit
- failure to meet ethical, legal and professional obligations: for example failure to declare competing interests; misrepresentation of involvement or authorship; misrepresentation of interests; breach of confidentiality; lack of informed consent; misuse of personal data; and abuse of research subjects or material
- improper dealing with allegations of misconduct: failing to address possible infringements such as attempts to cover up misconduct and reprisals against whistle-blowers

Adverse Outcomes. Think carefully about the possibilities, and cover here

Section I: Feedback, Consent and Confidentiality

Feedback to participants: outline your approach. Will interview transcripts be shared with respondents to check accuracy? Will summaries of questionnaire analysis be made available to respondents in some way? Will an overview report be provided? How and when?

Informed consent: Draft letter / e-mail / or heading (or footer) section of questionnaire must be approved by DoS/supervisor (if research student), supervisor/module tutor if taught student, or Head of School / Assistant Dean if a member of staff.

Confidentiality/Anonymity. Explain clearly how you will ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

Section J: Data Protection and Storage

Before completing this section it is necessary to read the University's Research Data Management information. The questions that follow are designed to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act as well as established research protocols.

Many research activities will involve electronic transfer of data and use of data management systems in the summarisation and analysis of data. You will need to explain these in relation to compliance with the Data Protection Act.

Think carefully about who will have access to your data, this will include supervisors and examiners. Also that a thesis will be made available via the University library and the British Library system. If you are seeking an access bar for a period of time after completion then mention it here. If you will provide a copy of your findings, or intend to give a presentation, to a facilitating/ supporting/accessing organisation then explain that in this section. But also think about the general principle of data sharing, as explained in the Research Data Management information.

In terms of storage of data please ensure security, and also mitigate against loss of data.

Section K: Declaration

Ensure the appropriate countersignatures have been provided

Look carefully at the checklist and ensure that you comply with and tick all that are relevant to your research.

Appendix 2: Cover Letter

Rhif Adnabod Cyfranogwr:

Participant Identification
Number:

FFURFLEN GANIATÂD CYFRANOGIAD

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Teitl Y Prosiect: / Project Title: An exploration into the impact of family and community-school partnerships on pupil and parent motivation.

Dear Participant:

My name is Carys Cook and I am a student on the BA Primary Education (QTS) course at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David Carmarthen.

I would like to invite you to participate in my research project. This project will explore what schools are currently doing to involve families and the wider community and aims to discover how these partnerships impact children's learning experiences, with particular focus on motivation. Through your participation in the questionnaire and/or interviews, I hope to ascertain different views on family and community involvement in the Foundation Phase/Key Stage 2.

All questionnaires/interviews will be kept strictly confidential to the researchers involved and at **NO** time will individual questionnaires be released to the general public. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary so you can withdraw from the questionnaire/interview at any stage.

My questionnaire/interview should take about 5-10 minutes to complete, but there is no time constraint. There are also no right or wrong answers. Attached to this letter is a consent form. I understand that your time is at a premium but your opinions are very valuable to me.

After careful and precise analysis of the data obtained from this questionnaire, I will be happy to provide you with a copy of the findings at your request. The results of this questionnaire/interview will hopefully enhance my understanding of the impact of family and community involvement in the primary school.

I thank you in advance for your time and participation. If any questions do arise, feel free to contact me at your convenience.

ENW A CHYFEIRIAD YR YMCHWILYDD	NAME & ADDRESS OF RESEARCHER
	Mrs Carys Cook c/o Dr Sioned V Hughes University of Wales Trinity Saint David Carmarthen SA31 3EP

Appendix 3: Consent Form

Rhif Adnabod Cyfranogwr:

Participant Identification Number:

FFURFLEN GANIATÂD CYFRANOGIAD	PARTICIPATION CONSENT FORM
Teitl Y Prosiect: / Project Title: An exploration into the impact of family and community-school partnerships on pupil and parent motivation.	
Enw'r Ymchwilydd / Name of Researcher: Carys Cook	

1	Cadarnhaf fy mod wedi deall y wybodaeth a roddwyd gan Carys Cook ar gyfer ei chynnig ymchwil. Rwyf wedi cael y cyfle i ystyried y wybodaeth, gofyn cwestiynau, ac rwyf wedi cael ateb boddhaol i'r rhain.	I confirm that I understand the information given by Carys Cook for her research proposal. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.	
2	Deallaf fy mod yn cymryd rhan o'm gwirfodd a bod croeso i mi dynnu'n ôl ar unrhyw adeg, heb roi rheswm.	I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.	
3	Deallaf y gellir defnyddio unrhyw wybodaeth a roddir gennyf mewn adroddiadau, erthyglau neu gyflwyniadau gan y tîm ymchwil.	I understand that any information given by me may be used in future reports, articles or presentations by the research team.	
4	Deallaf na fydd fy enw'n ymddangos mewn unrhyw adroddiadau, erthyglau neu gyflwyniadau.	I understand that my name will not appear in any reports, articles or presentations.	
5	Cytunaf i gymryd rhan yn yr astudiaeth uchod.	I agree to take part in the above study	
Enw'r Cyfranogwr Name of Participant		Llofnodwyd Signature	

Ymchwilydd Researcher	Mrs Carys Cook	Llofnodwyd Signature

Cewch wrthod cymryd rhan yn yr astudiaeth hon. Cewch ddod â'ch cyfranogiad yn yr astudiaeth hon i ben unrhyw bryd. Os penderfynwch barhau'n ddienw, bydd sicrhau hynny'n flaenoriaeth a chymerir pob cam ymarferol i guddio pwy ydych. Os yw'n well gennych fod yn anhysbys, ni fydd unrhyw wybodaeth yn eich enwi ar dapiau sain na thrawsgrifiadau o'r cyfweiliad hwn nac o unrhyw un arall. Ni fydd neb yn clywed unrhyw dapiau sain nac yn gweld unrhyw drawsgrifiadau heb eich cydsyniad o flaen llaw. Bydd deunyddiau a grëir yn sgil y cyfweiliad hwn neu unrhyw gyfweiliad arall yn aros yn gyfrinachol.

You may decline to participate in this study. You may end your participation in this study at any time. If you decide to remain anonymous, maintaining your anonymity will be a priority and every practical precaution will be taken to disguise your identity. If you prefer anonymity, there will not be any identifying information on audiotapes or transcripts of this or any interview. No-one will hear any audiotapes or see any transcripts without your prior consent. All materials generated from this or any interview will remain confidential.

Ar ôl llenwi'r ffurflen, dychwelwch hi yn yr amlen a ddarperir (lle bo'n berthnasol). Rhoddir un copi i'r cyfranogwr a chedwir y gwreiddiol yn ffeil y tîm ymchwilio yn:

When completed please return in the envelope provided (if applicable). One copy will be given to the participant and the original to be kept on the file of the research team at:

ENW A CHYFEIRIAD YR YMCHWILYDD

NAME & ADDRESS OF RESEARCHER

Mrs Carys Cook
c/o Dr Sioned V Hughes
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David
Carmarthen
SA31 3EP

Appendix 4: Questionnaire

1. What is your relationship to the child/children in the school? (e.g. mother, grandfather etc)

2. What year group(s) do you have children in?

3. How involved do you personally feel in your child's school life? (please **circle** your choice)

Very involved

Fairly involved

Not very involved

Not at all

involved

4. (a) Which of the following have you been involved with? (please **tick** next to choices)

- *Conversations/meetings with the family engagement officer*
- *Springboard*
- *Find out Fridays*
- *Family sessions/engagement days*
- *Forest/beach school*
- *Friends of the School*
- *School trips*
- *Families and Schools Together (FAST) programme*
- *Community choir*
- *Parent/toddler group*
- *Dewi project (Lego club, Dad and kids)*
- *Parents evening*
- *Meetings regarding inclusion/additional learning needs*

- (b) If other, please state:

(c) What impact do you feel these have had on you as a parent? (please **circle** choice)

Positive impact

No impact

Negative impact

(d) Please give your reasons:

(e) What impact do you feel these have had on your child? (please **circle** choice)

Positive impact

No impact

Negative impact

(f) Please give your reasons:

5. Do you feel you are able to help your child at home with the following? (please **circle** choice)

Reading

Writing

Maths

Other homework

6. Please consider the following statements and **circle** the answer you feel best fits your opinion:

a) The school provides enough support for me to help my child at home.

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

b) I receive enough information about what is happening in school.

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

c) I receive enough information about my child's learning/support in school.

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

d) I feel included and valued in all decisions made regarding my child's education.

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

7. How do you find out information about what is going on at school? (please circle)

Website Social Media Newsletters Blogs From other parents
Notice boards Speaking to staff Texts

8. Do you feel any of the following prevent you from coming into school? (please circle)

Work Looking after a younger child Health problems Not feeling
comfortable in school

If other, please state:

9. If applicable, is there any way you would like the school to further support you in this?

10. Any additional comments:

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