

PARENT-TEACHER MEETINGS



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MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO ENGAGE WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER.

PREPARE FOR THE MEETING

- Make a list of questions that you want to ask your child's teacher.
- Ask your child what they would like you to ask or tell their teacher.
- Think about any specific information you will need to let the teacher know, e.g. any health issues or changes that have had an impact on your child.
- Consider what special things you would like the teacher to know about your child.
- Look at previous reports and compare.
- Remember that the teacher is just a person like you.
- Ask your child what they'd like to know from their teacher.
- If your child is going to attend, discuss your expectations of their role in the meeting.

"When we scheduled meetings, we sent a note home asking parents to tell us what they wanted to find out...For example: trouble with homework, social issues, note taking, test taking, making friends. We were then prepared to address parent concerns without being blindsided."

David Leckrone, Teacher

AT THE MEETING

- Try to be on time. Teachers have to stick to a fairly tight schedule to fit everyone in. If you must cancel your appointment, phone the school to let them know, and re-book for another meeting.
- Begin on a positive note. Mention something that your child enjoys about school or their classroom.
- Keep your body language positive also, to further open communication.
- If your child is present, discuss everyone's expectations around why the meeting is being held.
- Check up on your child's social interactions at school as well as their academic progress. Ask the teacher how your child gets along with others and if there is anything that you should know about their social and emotional progress. Also ask about your child's work habits, behaviour, participation and learning style.
- Let the teacher know your child's interests, hobbies, strengths and areas where they need extra encouragement.
- Refer to your list of questions to make sure that you have not left anything out.

END OF THE MEETING

- End the appointment on a positive note, by shaking hands and thanking them.

BUILDING GOOD RELATIONSHIPS

Parent—Teacher meetings involve sharing information about learning outcomes through collaboration and open communication.

"If possible, after a parent-teacher meeting, follow-up with a phone call, written note, or email. The communication could thank the teacher for any recommendations made, extend an invitation for the teacher to call you at any time to keep in touch."

Colleen, Parent

WHEN YOU GET HOME FROM THE MEETING

- Speak honestly with your child about what you and their teacher discussed. Let them know the positives, and any problem areas that were discussed, as well as any plans that you and the teacher made to help your child make improvements.
- Start right away on any plans, changes and be consistent. This helps show your child that you consider them important and that everyone (parent, teacher and child) can work together to make positive changes. It also provides a model for your child on how to take on problems and turn them around.



THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Don't hesitate to make notes while the teacher is talking so that you will remember what they have said once you get home.
- Ask the teacher about the classroom rules and discipline, homework procedures and overall expectations for students.
- If the teacher raises concerns, don't get angry or defensive. Talking together about concerns is the best way to make sure issues are addressed before they grow bigger and that your child has the support they need to make progress.
- Ask questions, share ideas that have worked for you at home and be an active part of planning ways to make things better.
- Ask, "What is the most important thing I can do at home to support what my child is learning at school?"

OTHER WAYS TO KEEP IN CONTACT WITH YOUR CHILDREN'S TEACHER DURING THE YEAR

- Attend your school's P&C to meet with other parents and discuss the future of education
- Become involved in your school council or board
- Get involved with Busy Bee's, school canteen fundraising and other school activities
- Read the school newsletter
- Make an appointment or schedule casual meetings once or twice a term, unless serious concerns arise. Email is a great communication tool, but you should ask the classroom teacher which method of contact they prefer.
- Write a note if you have information that would be beneficial for the teacher to know.
- Telephone your child's teacher to schedule a meeting (preferably after school hours).
- If your child's work has a section for parental feedback, take the time to write a brief comment.

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