



City Family of Schools: parents' views of future educational priorities

Final Report to the City of London Corporation

Brunel University London

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Acknowledgements

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Introduction

The aim of this research study was to qualitatively examine engagement between City of London Academies Trust schools/colleges and the parent body. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF, 2024: n.p.) defines parental engagement as “teachers and schools involving parents in supporting their children’s academic learning”. Goodall (2022) provides a broader definition of parental engagement with learning, and describes education (learning for a particular end) and schooling as sub-sets of the wider sphere of children’s learning, and explicitly differentiates parental engagement with learning from parental involvement in schools, e.g. in the form of visits to schools for parents’ meetings and contact with schools. Despite some ambiguities in the definition of parental engagement, there is substantial evidence that the attainment of children from low-income households is lower than that of their more affluent peers, and that activities targeted at increasing the engagement of low-income parents in their children’s learning are beneficial (EEF, 2024). Key to successful parental engagement initiatives is staff development to enable teachers to support parents confidently and effectively, as well as to obviate the potential for deficit thinking towards particular groups of parents (Goodall, 2022; EEF, 2024).

Since the COVID-19 pandemic and school closure periods, persistent school absenteeism has risen (Children’s Commissioner, 2023). There are a number of clear contributing factors to this, central of which are “a breakdown in trusting relationships between parents and teachers alongside increasing unhappiness with the narrow academic curricula schools are measured by” (Eyles et al, 2023 n.p.). Strong home-school communications sit at the heart of recommendations to address this issue with the need to support individual children and families, and develop home-school relations (McDonald et al, 2023). Existing evidence confirms that research is needed to better examine the lived experiences of diverse families, notably those which are ‘under resourced’ (Major and Briant, 2023) and low income.

Research Objectives

Against this contextual backdrop, the Education Strategy Unit at the City of London Corporation commissioned Brunel University London to conduct qualitative research with low-income families to explore:

- i) parents’ views on current and future educational priorities within their child’s school;
- ii) parents’ experiences of school/college engagement with education provision; and,
- iii) ideas for further engaging parents in developing and shaping educational priorities.

The research was carried out by Dr Emma Wainwright, Professor Kate Hoskins and Ms Joanne Tallentire. This report presents the key findings on parents’ experiences of home-school engagement and communications, and parents’ future educational priorities.

Research Process

One-to-one interviews were carried out online using Zoom/Teams with nine parents with children at one or more City of London Academies Trust (CoLAT) school/college during November and December 2023 (Appendix 1: *Interview Guide*). Online interviews were used as a convenient, efficient and cost-effective means to collect data. Most participants had volunteered to be

interviewed following an approach made by their children's school/college and some volunteered as a result of contact with other participants. The ethnically diverse sample is comprised of mothers, one of whom is also a grandmother, with main caring responsibilities. Five are parents of children with reported varying special educational needs. A sub-set of five CoLAT schools/colleges are represented through the interview sample (Appendix 2). Full ethical approval for the research was given by Brunel's ethics review panel prior to the start of data collection and each participant consented to participation following receipt of a participant information sheet (Appendix 3).

This was a school- and self-selecting sample and we recognise that this limited the reach and diversity of those parents involved. Moreover, the short project timeframe and limited recruitment through CoLAT schools (with three schools responding to calls to support parent recruitment) means our sample size is small. However, as the findings indicate, there was strong consistency in responses across the sample to provide an important evidence base.

All interviews were fully transcribed and analysed thematically in relation to the project's key aims. In the presentation of data, extended verbatim quotations are included in italicised text to amplify the voice of the parents who participated in the research. All names have been pseudonymized to ensure anonymity.

Findings

The findings are presented in two sections. The first sets out the educational priorities identified by parents, and focuses on life skills, digital literacy, supporting transitions, discipline, and inclusion and individual needs. The second covers the theme of home-school engagement and focuses on parent-school communications and parents' views on how engagement can be further encouraged and enhanced.

1. Educational priorities

Life skills

The overriding theme that emerged from all of the interviews was parents' desire for schools to provide *life skills* education, in order to enable their children to make an effective transition to further/higher education and/or future employment. In addition to academic subjects, parents wanted their children to learn skills that would give them *financial literacy* and *prepare them for a future beyond school*. In particular, they wanted their children to leave school with the capabilities to manage personal finances, apply successfully for employment, negotiate the world of work with appropriate communication skills and behaviours, and to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

- Financial literacy education
Financial literacy education for KS3 and KS4 became a compulsory part of the National Curriculum (mandatory for local authority-maintained schools) in 2014 (Roberts, 2023). The OECD (2019, n.p.) defines financial literacy as:

“Knowledge and understanding of financial concepts and risks, as well as the skills and attitudes to apply such knowledge and understanding in order to make effective decisions across a range of financial contexts, to improve the financial well-being of individuals and society, and to enable participation in economic life”.

The Money and Pensions Service (2023) reports that the proportion of children receiving 'meaningful financial education' from parents and/or school is consistently just below 50%, with some groups of children, including those from lower-income households, less likely than average to receive this.

The majority of interviewed parents identified financial literacy as a key future priority for their children's education. This priority emerged unprompted and was associated with parents' concern that their children's education should prepare them for future lives:

Money management, definitely. (Sherelle)

Things like finances, how to do CVs, life skills basically, how to get a mortgage like, yeah basically life skills would be really beneficial.... [Schools should support] steps into the real world basically, so how to go about getting a job, how to go about saving, keeping a good credit rating, just normal things they're completely oblivious to. (Faye)

I think they should learn more 'out in the world' skills if that makes sense, not just basic maths, English, science.... So, making their learning more, more relevant for their everyday.... I feel like, even from primary school, I feel like they should start putting little bits in of what is actually going to happen in the big, wide world when you eventually go to work. (Jessica)

Personally, I don't think education, for example, knowing subject matters, is the only thing a school should be doing. For example, ... teaching them financial education. (Claudine)

They need to learn how to manage money ... and especially how times are now, where everything's like so expensive ... they need to learn in order to get the jobs that have the higher money.... So, if they learn like, if they teach them like how to handle their finances and stuff, then it will be a little bit easier for them. (Tessa)

It would be the life skills to be honest with you, yeah it would be the life skills. (Mary)

- Professional and personal behaviours

Closely associated with their views about their children learning financial literacy skills, parents wanted schools to support their children to gain professional skills and to acquire personal behaviours that would enable them to be successful in employment and to live independently as adults. By contrast to the financial literacy theme, there was greater variation in parents' perceptions of what these relevant skills and behaviours should include, with mention of time management, good oral communication skills, mutual respect, resilience and its link to mental health, self-discipline, and maintaining a professional appearance. Children learning how to cook healthily and navigate their way around a kitchen also featured in some of the interviews.

Very much get children ready for the work world ... good time management. (Salma)

Other organisations could come in and teach the young children about anger management.... I think education should be more holistic rather than subject only. (Claudine)

I think they should be doing a lot around mental health, teaching kids now, from a young age, how to regulate their own emotions. (Mary)

They already do certain little things don't they in terms of food tech and things like that but I just think they could possibly just be doing a little bit more. (Sherelle)

Maybe teaching them around the kitchen a little bit ... like teaching them how to manoeuvre around a kitchen, teach them about money, bills, real life things in life what they need to know.... I think they should start [at] primary ... they need to know about cleanliness [sic], cooking. They need to know all those things. They're just the basics, aren't they? (Mary)

Teaching them how to repair relationships, teaching them how to grow in healthy, wholesome environments and how to cook is very important. (Hayley)

Digital literacy

Five parents expressed concern about their children's social media usage and the potential or actual impact on mental health. Parents were aware that their children were learning about healthy social media usage and welcomed this.

[Child] is in Year 1, but I think that would be really good just in general that the schools do speak to the children and speak to them about internet safety properly. (Jessica)

[Child, year 7] hasn't spoken about internet safety and all of that if they've gone through that with her as yet.... Probably they have, but I think a bit more classes on keeping them safe online because we've got this kind of culture of social media and all of that. (Alisha)

They do focus on mental health in digital. And that's something it is, I think, that they do well. (Claudine)

Where children have access to social media ... time management has just gone out the window and they are not able to keep a job if they are not able to have good executive functioning skills and time management ... that is one and also, I think that children should be aware of the effects of social media on their [health]. (Salma)

Parents were less confident answering questions about whether learning about new technologies, such as robotics and AI, should be included. However, several parents felt strongly that their children's education should be more relevant to a rapidly changing digital world. This, in turn, would enable them to more successfully navigate future employment opportunities.

I think that with the way the world is changing, I think ... the education system and the model at the moment hasn't necessarily adapted to the changes yet. So, for example, you know it would be good to have more focus on robotics and tech ... you know, more future-orientated careers and dynamics and options. (Claudine)

I think it is crucial ... the way in which the world is changing you know ... robotics you know AI, all of these things have got to be brought in because if they don't move with the times they are going to fall behind ... and what jobs there be there, what jobs are bringing them the best outcomes for their happiness and financial gain and being able to support themselves. (Sherelle)

Supporting transitions

Parents of primary children spoke about the impact of the school year on children born early and late in the academic year, and the consequent need for a nuanced and individualised approach to their child's learning.

[Child, age 6] he is bored in school, he is always getting in trouble for talking because the work he is getting he can do like straightaway but then there is other kids that are younger than him in the same class that struggle with it so it is like, it is not fair that the older kids are missing out but the younger kids ... but they need more attention and more focus if that makes sense. (Jessica)

The transition from primary to secondary school was considered critical, with the importance of learning about school rules, discipline and detentions. Three parents felt too much emphasis is given to adhering to uniform policy, at the expense of children's learning, and that detentions were given too freely. In particular, parents perceived that children who experienced transition from primary to secondary during lockdown continued to struggle with this change.

Secondary schools I think they need to be a little bit more gentle cause that you know that these kids are moving over ... and it is kind of a bit overwhelming for them. They're a bit they can get a bit brutal with them very quick, can't they? (Mary)

To be honest with you, like since he started in year 7, that was when the whole pandemic was. So, he missed out a lot of year 7 and a lot of year 8 like a lot of the kids. So, for me, it's like they didn't really get the transition from primary into secondary. And usually for me, year 7 is like the learning year of secondary school, so it was like when the pandemic was over and then they got thrown back into school. It was like you've literally come from being a child to now having to be a young adult with no transitional phase. So, a lot of the kids were kind of lost and it's like a lot of them were getting into trouble. But the teachers get it, but I don't think they fully get it because the year 10s now, even some of the year 9s are the ones that's really struggling to focus on the school work. Whereas had the pandemic not had happened, they would have had the chance to kind of get the, you know, when you test the waters in year 7. the transition would have been a little bit easier for them, but it's like they've come out a primary school had the two years of being home schooled and then they've gone there and it's like, look, you have to do this work. There was no in between, which was hard for a lot of the kids. (Tessa)

Children's preparedness for the transition from school to employment and further and higher education was also highlighted, with parents' views noted above in the section on Life Skills.

Discipline

Closely related to concerns about the impact of the pandemic on children's transition from primary to secondary school, some parents highlighted concerns about secondary schools' approaches to discipline. Four parents with experience of secondary schools felt that discipline was too punitive and that teachers' time spent supervising detentions could be put to better use providing learning support.

They're very rigid in terms of their detention policies.... I feel I get the sense of the kids are very scared of the teachers and it's I can't explain it. Like they're very, very much scared in the sense where you can't say that or you can't do that or there's this worry constantly. (Alisha)

They should focus less on discipline and more on academics because I get positive reinforcement. But if you're always telling off a certain set of children, then they're gonna think that's a part of them. And they're always gonna be the ones that's gonna be getting in trouble. Whereas like you see, when you've got kids and they're doing things they shouldn't be doing, you will tell them don't do something. But if they keep doing it, we learn to ignore it until they learn that they're not getting the attention. So, I'm thinking if more of the time spent on teaching the kids that are like there and want to learn more than the kids that are just disrupting class. (Tessa)

Inclusion and individual needs

Five parents in our sample reported their child(ren) had special educational needs, and discussed how support for this was variable. Parents spoke of teachers and schools identifying difficulties, referring them for diagnosis and/or support, but recommendations not always being implemented. A number of parents felt that they needed to push schools to ensure that appropriate support was in place. Others were satisfied, especially where an EHCP existed.

I think they could have a lot more support for children who have you know extra needs.... I do feel I have to sort of push with the SENCO. (Sherelle)

The only negative thing I have to say about this school is that when the kids have an additional need, it seems like they're not in a rush to help you. (Faye)

Parents spoke in different ways about the importance of valuing diversity, accepting difference and inclusion. One parent suggested that children should learn sign language. Another praised the school's work to educate children and parents about hidden disabilities. Several parents mentioned that low-income families might have difficulties accessing a computer, which could be a barrier to them engaging with school online systems for sharing information about children's progress and homework.

I like in the primary school that they focus a lot on educating, even the parents they educate a lot about people with additional needs and hidden disabilities ... they make everybody feel included ... they educate the parents too ... they do a lot of education to include everybody, not just the parents with children with additional needs. (Faye)

I think the good thing, what it is that they do focus on is inclusion and diversity. So that's something I can respect because we do get some information about, for example, you know

different religious beliefs and celebrations, and you know it is acknowledged. And everyone does feel, you know, accepted within the school. (Claudine)

Enrichment

Parents valued enrichment activities provided by schools. For example, learning a modern foreign language was especially valued by primary school parents who considered it a useful skill:

Definitely a language. (Sherelle)

I like they have French lessons. So they're learning French as well. And I think language at a young age is really good because they pick it up so easily. (Jessica)

Booster classes and additional support where children are struggling with a subject was welcomed where available and mentioned as desirable by other parents. Again, this was highlighted by primary parents in the run up to Standardised Assessment Tests (SATs):

I feel now that they are in Year 6 there is a lot more support in engaging them in extra support for coming up for their SATS. (Sherelle)

2. Home-school engagement

Communications

- Primary schools

Parents spoke positively about the extent and type of communication with primary schools. They welcomed regular parent newsletters, e-mail communications and opportunities to attend meetings at school, e.g. to learn about curriculum and homework. They also valued access to online systems that enable them to keep track of their children's learning and homework. However, *interactive communication* that affords dialogue between the parent and teachers was most important to them.

Communication is good at the school. (Sherelle)

So, they are very good at communicating. They send emails all the time. If you email them asking questions or even ring up, they literally get back to you straight away. (Jessica)

They're always updating, they send out like a lot of communication, like you're always getting e-mails, text messages, saying ... there's always something going on, you always know what's going on. (Faye)

We do have a curriculum meeting, but it's just sittin' there and watching slides.... It's not interactive enough. It's just, you know, someone imparting all of this knowledge onto you. And if you get it, you get it. Maybe you don't. And maybe you forget. So just little reminders of this term we're now gonna go into.... If you're a parent that is proactive and wants to get involved with children's learning. Then you've got an opportunity to then assist them with that. (Sherelle)

- Secondary schools

By contrast the majority of parents of secondary school children felt that there was insufficient communication, that opportunities for interaction and dialogue were limited and that they had to be proactive and persistent in communicating with the school when their children had academic and/or social problems or difficulties. More generally, parents emphasised a wish for improved communication, with more frequent (at least termly) and in person interactions with teachers, with information to enable them to better support their children's learning.

They don't really contact you at all, so ... unless you go to them, you don't get any feedback about how they're doing.... The secondary school could do a lot more like that where they get parents involved to come and put their points of view across. (Faye)

And I know that academies are quite strict and they are very structured, but they also need to listen to the voice of the parents because you know we're ultimately the ones doing the other work, doing the majority of the work with the children. (Alisha)

Ideas for enhanced engagement

The parents in our sample demonstrated significant engagement with their children's learning and educational experience. They welcomed the ability to access information via online platforms, though some expressed concerns about low-income families' access to resources, such as laptops and printers for homework, which limited their scope for engaging with digital information. Interviewed parents were asked if they were interested in having more involvement in their children's school and the majority said they were.

Parents of secondary-age children, in particular, wanted more in-person opportunities to share their ideas and concerns with schools, as well as with other parents. They missed opportunities to speak to staff and parents in person that are common at the primary school gate. All parents suggested regular (e.g. termly) meetings, surveys, and online forums, for parents to have dialogue with teachers but also potentially to meet and have dialogue with other parents.

If they want people's honest opinions, I think they would have to circulate surveys more regularly, or even down to do questionnaires at the end of each term or each half term. So, if it's all done like termly or half termly, then more parents will probably get the chance to interact.... They [parents] actually find it difficult to speak to people face to face, so if it's just something that they've gotta fill in and send back to the school, it's easier for them to do that. (Tessa)

I think as well that maybe even if it's twice a year, bring the parents in, see what they want.... Say, we've got plans like the teachers could say, 'oh, we've got plans to bring this in what do you think... Everyone come in to the school' [or] like year groups ... that would be good as well. And then that way everyone gets to have their say. (Jessica)

You know, doing a meet the teacher whether it's not only just face-to-face, but also on zoom as well. Providing that flexibility. Now. It would also be ... doing kind of monthly. Well, I mean ... like termly check-ins. I think, with the parents. Just to say, you know this is how your child's

term went, you know this is, what is that we'd like to see in terms of improvements moving forward. And this is what they've done well. You know, I think more stuff like that. (Claudine)

[An] interactive platform I think would give parents reassurance but also allow parents to communicate with teachers and other parents in regards to the children's school. (Salma)

Moreover, the need for all parents to be involved in school decision-making was recognised, rather than a perceived small number of more vocal and confident voices.

They seem to just stick it to the parent governor thing, don't they? They need to branch that out a little bit more. It's if they do an annual meeting, or things like that where every parent got the opportunity to come in and give feedback. Not just a small cliquey set. (Mary)

I think they could have more of a parent forum ... they do have some meetings – but they could probably have more parent forums to engage the parents, to come to voice their views and opinions. (Alisha)

Conclusions

Overall, parents spoke highly of CoLAT schools and compared them favourably to their experience and knowledge of other schools. The parents in our sample were involved with their children's education and learning both at home and school, and they communicated the value of strong home-school engagement. There was a clear desire among parents to be further involved in their children's learning and to support them through their education and into work.

Parents' educational priorities are shaped by what they perceive to be in their children's best interests and are influenced by the everyday challenges facing low-income households. The key priorities, linked to enhanced life skills, squarely focus on providing children and young people with the knowledge of how best to succeed in and navigate through everyday life beyond the confines of school. This is especially important for some families with limited social and cultural capital and where the limits to parents' own knowledge and skills are felt.

The importance of parental voice and being part of a school learning community is emphasised throughout these findings. Parents want to be involved in their children's education and be given opportunities to express their views and have their voice heard. Parents would like to see a broader range of communications used by schools, including in-person, online, interactive and anonymised forums through which they can contact schools, have dialogue and discussion with teachers, and comment/feedback on their own and their children's experiences.

The research suggests that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and school closure periods are still being felt by families. This is apparent in a number of ways for both parents and children, including through challenges in educational and learning transitions, the use and navigation of online resources and social media, and through perceived changing terms of engagement with schools.

Recommendations

Key recommendations emerging from this research are as follows:

- A clear and sustained set and schedule of parental communications which enable regular engagement and dialogue between home and school.
- Opportunities for parents to meaningfully have their voice heard and play a part in growing the school learning community.
- Further research on educational priorities with a larger and more diverse sample of parents/carers with an additional quantitative element.
- Research to explore the following issues:
 - the perceived extent, role and use of parental voice within schools;
 - successful post-pandemic transitions into and through school(s), and the main challenges facing and support needed by children and parents;
 - parents and children's struggles over attendance, and the potential of home-school engagement to support remedial action.

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Interview topic guide: Parents' views on future educational priorities

Purpose: Low-income parents/carers with children attending one of the 10 CoLAT schools will be invited to discuss experiences of school and their perceptions and understandings of the role of education, with particular emphasis on future educational priorities.

Introductory questions

1. Participant's name and age; number and age of children; where in London they reside; how they describe their ethnicity
2. Details of children's school, year group, length of time at school
3. Details of children's overall experience of school and learning.

Parental engagement and current priorities

4. How does the school engage parents in their children's learning?
5. How do you find out what your child is learning and how they are learning?
6. Does your child's school prioritise a particular way of learning or have a particular specialism? Are there other priorities you are aware of? (Probe for details and how they know this.)
7. What do you think the school's current priorities should be?

Future priorities

8. Thinking about your child's future, what do you think would be most useful for them to learn at school and why? (Top of mind responses and then probe for areas below.)
 - work-related priorities: AI, tech, skills training, more vocational learning,
 - personal priorities such as financial capability, mental health, digital safety
 - academic subject priorities e.g. relating to global challenges - climate change, viruses
 - further learning/ university, training, employment landscape
 - impact of cost of living crisis

Future engagement with parents

9. What ideas do you have about how the school could further engage parents and families in shaping their priorities? Probe for different forms of engagement.
10. Are they interested in being involved in these discussions with their child's school?

Thanks

Thank participants. Explain offer of £50 voucher as thank you for participation.

Check whether we can contact with any further questions if needed. And that they can contact us if they have anything further to feedback.

Participants

Pseudonym	Age	Ethnicity	Residence	Children at CoLAT schools	School
Sherelle	49	Black British	Hackney	Twin girls, Year 6	City of London Primary Academy Islington
Jessica	34	White British	Islington	Boy, Year 1	City of London Primary Academy Islington
Salma	39-44	Moroccan	Bermondsey	Boy, Year 12	City of London Academy Southwark
Faye	39-44	White British	South East London	Two girls, Years 8 & 10 Boy and girl, Year 6 & Reception	City of London Academy Southwark Redriff Primary City Academy of London
Alisha	39	Black British Caribbean	Homerton	Girl, Year 7	City Academy Hackney
Claudine	37	Black British	Hackney	Boy, Year 10	City Academy Hackney
Mary	49	British Irish	Old Street	Girl, recently finished year 6, and two grandsons, years 1 and 5	City of London Primary Academy Islington
Tessa	41	Black Caribbean	Hackney	Boy, Year 10	City Academy Hackney
Hayley	51	Irish	North Islington	Boy, Year 10	City of London Academy Highgate Hill

CONSENT FORM

City Family of Schools: Parents' views on future educational priorities

Dr Emma Wainwright

APPROVAL HAS BEEN GRANTED FOR THIS STUDY TO BE CARRIED OUT BETWEEN 01/11/2023 AND
31/01/2024

The participant should complete the whole of this sheet.		
	YES	NO
Have you read the Participant Information Sheet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you received satisfactory answers to all your questions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Who have you spoken to about the study?		
Do you understand that you will not be referred to by name in any report concerning this study?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you understand that:		
• You are free to withdraw from this study at any time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• You don't have to give any reason for withdrawing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Choosing not to participate or withdrawing will not affect your child's education or your relationship with your child's school/college	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• You can withdraw your data any time up to December 2023	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to my interview being audio recorded.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to the use of non-attributable quotes when the study is written up or published	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The procedures regarding confidentiality have been explained to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree that my anonymised data can be stored and shared with other researchers for use in future projects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to take part in this study.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signature of research participant:	
Print name:	Date:
Researcher signature:	
Print name:	Date:

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET



Study title

Parents' views on the purpose and role of education and future educational priorities.

Invitation Paragraph

You are invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

What is the purpose of the study?

The study is concerned with understanding parents' views on the purpose and role of education and future educational priorities. We are especially interested in hearing from low-income families and those from diverse ethnic backgrounds. Research is needed to better include and understand the variety of opinions on children's education, learning and futures.

Why have I been invited to participate?

You have been invited to take part in this research as you are:

1. a parent/ carer of a child(ren) currently in a City of London Academies Trust school/ college
2. a parent/ carer from low-income families (those in receipt of free school meals)
3. over 18 years of age

Do I have to take part?

As participation is entirely voluntary, it is up to you to decide whether or not you take part in this research. If you do decide to consent to taking part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and you will be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time, without having to give a reason. Any participant can withdraw their data after their interview has ended by December 31st 2023.

A decision not to take part or to withdraw will in no way affect your child's schooling or your relationship with your child's school.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you participate you will be asked to take part in an online or in-person one-to-one interview with a researcher at a time and location convenient to you. The interview will focus on your views of your

child(ren)'s learning and school, and your priorities for their education. The interview will last approximately 30 minutes and will be audio-recorded.

Are there any lifestyle restrictions?

There are no lifestyle restrictions associated with this research.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There are no anticipated disadvantages or risks associated with taking part in this research.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Taking part will enable you to further reflect upon your child(ren)s education and learning. You will also receive a £50 shopping voucher at the end of the interview as a thank you for sharing your views.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

Confidentiality will be assured with one exception: if during the course of the research evidence of harm or misconduct come to light, then it may be necessary to break confidentiality. We will tell you if we think we need to do this, and let you know what will happen next. All information which is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. The data will be retained until December 2024 after which it will be securely destroyed. Any information about you which leaves the University will have all your identifying information removed. With your permission, anonymised data will be stored and may be used in future research – you can indicate whether or not you give permission for this by way of the Consent Form.

Will I be recorded, and how will the recording be used?

The interview will be audio-recorded and will be kept securely. Once the interview has been transcribed and pseudonyms used to protect individual identity the audio recordings will be deleted/erased.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of this research will be evaluated and shared with the City of London Academies Trust and the City of London Corporation to inform their education strategy. Results will also form the basis of academic publications. Participants will not be identified in any report or publication about the study.

Who is organising and funding the research?

This research is funded by the City of London Corporation. The research is organised by Dr Emma Wainwright (emma.wainwright@brunel.ac.uk) from the Department of Education, Brunel University London.

What are the indemnity arrangements?

Brunel University London provides appropriate insurance cover for research which has received ethical approval

Who has reviewed the study?

This study has been reviewed by the College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee.

Research Integrity

Brunel University London is committed to compliance with the Universities UK [Research Integrity Concordat](#). You are entitled to expect the highest level of integrity from the researchers during the course of this research.

Contact for further information

If you are based in the UK and interested in participating, please contact Emma (emma.wainwright@brunel.ac.uk) for information and to arrange an interview.

Contact for complaints

For complaints, please contact the Chair of the Research Ethics Committee: Dr Katja Sarmiento Mirwaldt, cbass-ethics@brunel.ac.uk