

Family Literacy in ETBs

Guidelines at a glance



1. Taking time to think about family literacy



Guideline 1.1

Retain a learner-centred ethos that values parents' role

The learner-centred ethos of the adult literacy service is something to be safeguarded and cherished. This remains true particularly for family literacy.

Guideline 1.2

Identify and agree terms used in family literacy strategies

Definitions are diverse and are important for who and what they include or omit. When developing a family literacy strategy, each ETB should include agreed definitions of key terms.

Guideline 1.3

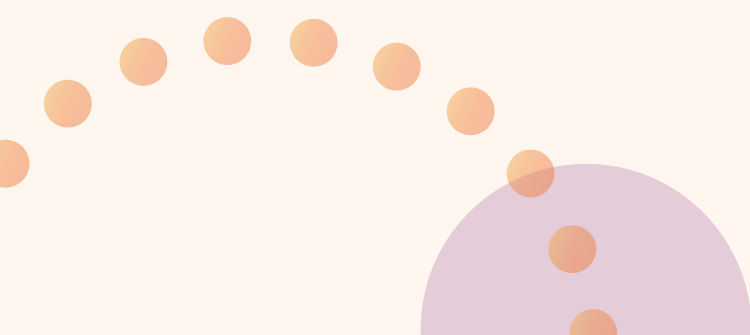
Focus on the value of learning relationships and resource this work

Recognising the value of learning relationships is fundamental to adequately resourcing family literacy work. These learning relationships will enable more extensive and effective family literacy delivery.

Guideline 1.4

Celebrate achievements in learning and other outcomes

A particularly joyful part of the adult learning process is acknowledging and celebrating achievements. Celebratory events affirm the work of learners and tutors. These events also shine the light on family literacy and often inspire other adults to take part in family literacy.



2. Developing and delivering learner-centred programmes



Guideline 2.1

Provide a range of relevant and accessible courses for learners

Each ETB will already have a range of programmes that are closely related to family, school and community interests. These should continue to be promoted effectively.

Guideline 2.2

Use a central repository of family literacy resources

There needs to be a central repository for all family literacy materials. This repository must be centrally managed and widely accessible.

Guideline 2.3

Prioritise access for learners with greatest need

Equitable strategies are needed to engage underrepresented groups in family literacy so that the benefits are extended to all family members.

Guideline 2.4

Establish clear and agreed ways to measure – and track – success at local level

Establishing criteria for success will be part of each local family literacy strategy. Accreditation should remain optional and effective alternative measurements of achievement should be developed.

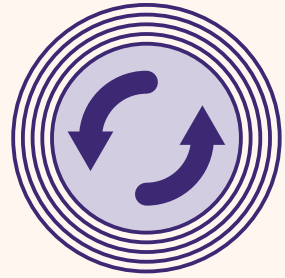
Guideline 2.5

Involve family literacy tutors, organisers and learners at all phases of the design, delivery and promotion

Family literacy tutors and organisers are best placed to support learners as they begin to identify additional learning steps.

When publicising family literacy to parents, learners themselves are most influential and have the greatest impact.

3. Future-proofing for flexible, responsive and appropriate family learning



Guideline 3.1

Remain familiar with, and contribute to, policy and research

Policy impacts on family literacy work. Equally, family literacy work should impact on policy. ETBs should consider recording and disseminating their own family literacy practice. This can influence local and national decision-making on family literacy.

Guideline 3.2

Create and maximise family literacy strategies that meet local needs and get the most value from funding

ETBs must continue to build robust collaborative family literacy partnerships. DEIS schools, libraries and CYPSCs, that have family literacy goals and budgets, will be core partners.

Guideline 3.3

Ensure there are sufficient learner supports

Learners benefit from opportunities for peer learning and ETBs can facilitate such opportunities. An online peer chat forum could be established so that parents and others can exchange ideas and learning.

Guideline 3.4

Ensure there are sufficient tutor supports

Sustaining supportive links between tutors is an important aspect of family literacy work. Ways of recompensing tutors for collaboration, administration and training should be planned into individual ETB structures.

Guideline 3.5

Ensure reliable data is gathered in a user-friendly way – and reported on to track learning outcomes

Data collection allows ETBs and funding agencies to track learner outcomes. In line with a learner-centred ethos, user-friendly data collection mechanisms need to be developed and put in place both locally and nationally.

What family literacy learners say

It's for my children

"I would do a course for my children before I would do one for myself. I'm at the bottom of a long list, so it's a good way to get mums and dads back to education."

I have two daughters in the school, and I get good support here. When my girls see me involved here in the school, they know I'm there and they like that...they get to see me and know what I'm doing and it's a nice certainty for them, it's reassuring for them.

I tell them that they go to school to learn and to be good human beings and to learn values...parents are the first teachers but the teachers are there to reinforce those.

The course was great, and I got a lot out of it for myself. I understood my child more, and we're building on that relationship and we're growing as a family.



What family literacy learners say

It's for myself and my family

At the moment, I am studying self-advocacy and computers and personal care. I'm here 3 years now. I was very nervous the first time I came because it had been so long since I was in education.

I find too I'm more confident speaking to the school teachers. I can ask questions now that I wouldn't have before.

My kids are so proud of me for coming back. They're chuffed, sometimes I hear them say 'Oh my mum's in college', you know and that's nice for me to hear.

My learning doesn't stop here...

I have found the courses in the school are stepping stones for us. And it's important to have those there for mothers.

I want to get out there, to get back into the classroom again and to do it. It's another step forward.

I will talk to somebody and say look it, I want to do something else now, and they'll help me decide. Yeah, from doing nothing, sitting feeling useless.

I tell them you have to keep learning because it's a new world every day and I want to make sure they are reading and thinking and I want to be a good example to them in that.

"I tell him learning is for the rest of his life and that he'll always be learning."