



# Our impact in 2021





# Our Vision

Every child is supported at home to fulfil their potential.

# Our Mission

We are narrowing the attainment gap by supporting all parents<sup>1</sup> and carers to engage in their children's learning.

We do this by leading a group of organisations to improve home learning across the sector, as well as by providing a parental engagement programme to primary schools.



<sup>1</sup> We use the term parents to mean anyone that has parental responsibility for the child

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# Welcome from our CEO

**2021 was meant to be the year after the pandemic. But things have not got easier for children, parents, teachers and everyone else affected by COVID-19. Disadvantaged families continue to be hit the hardest.**

That is why charities like Learning with Parents are so crucial. We stand with the families who face the biggest barriers to engaging in their children's learning. Families that are too often dismissed as "hard to reach".

As I look back over the last year, I am incredibly proud of the work we have done. With support from the National Lottery, Credit Suisse and others we developed a new platform, ensuring that families across the UK had accessible resources to support their children's learning. We have developed our approach to motivating and empowering all families through projects with Nesta and the University of Chicago.

Through our partnerships with schools – and our collaboration with like-minded organisations – we are changing the narrative around parental engagement in disadvantaged communities.

On behalf of all the team, I am delighted to welcome you to our impact report, highlighting the work of Learning with Parents in 2021.



**Tom Harbour**  
CEO, Learning with Parents







# “We have fun with the activities as a family”

Before our son started school, we were wondering how we'd be able to encourage him to sit down and do his home learning together. As parents we're often busy and it's hard for us to know exactly what he's learning at school and how we can extend his learning at home. Using Learning with Parents helps us do this.

We find the videos really helpful, and they remind our son what he's been learning at school. Often while we watch the video he'll say, "Yes, yes, we did this with our teacher!" He then tells us more about his day at school and can connect his learning there with us at home. He's always excited that he's familiar with the topic and is often keen to teach it to us too.

The repeating patterns game was one of his favourites, and he was keen to challenge himself and show us he can do patterns with even more objects. The sharing fairly game was another favourite, and we used things from around the home for this one too. He certainly likes using his toys for games and getting to choose what to use!

He's really motivated by the reward scheme and loves collecting things for his character. He got a trophy called "Winter Winner" recently and got very excited, now he is looking forward to getting more such trophies into his cabinet. He also really like collecting stars - he's on 33 already and says he is hoping to get to 100.

We have fun with the activities as a family, and we hope to have lots more to play!

*Deepak and Durga's son is in his first year at Rotherhithe Primary School, London*

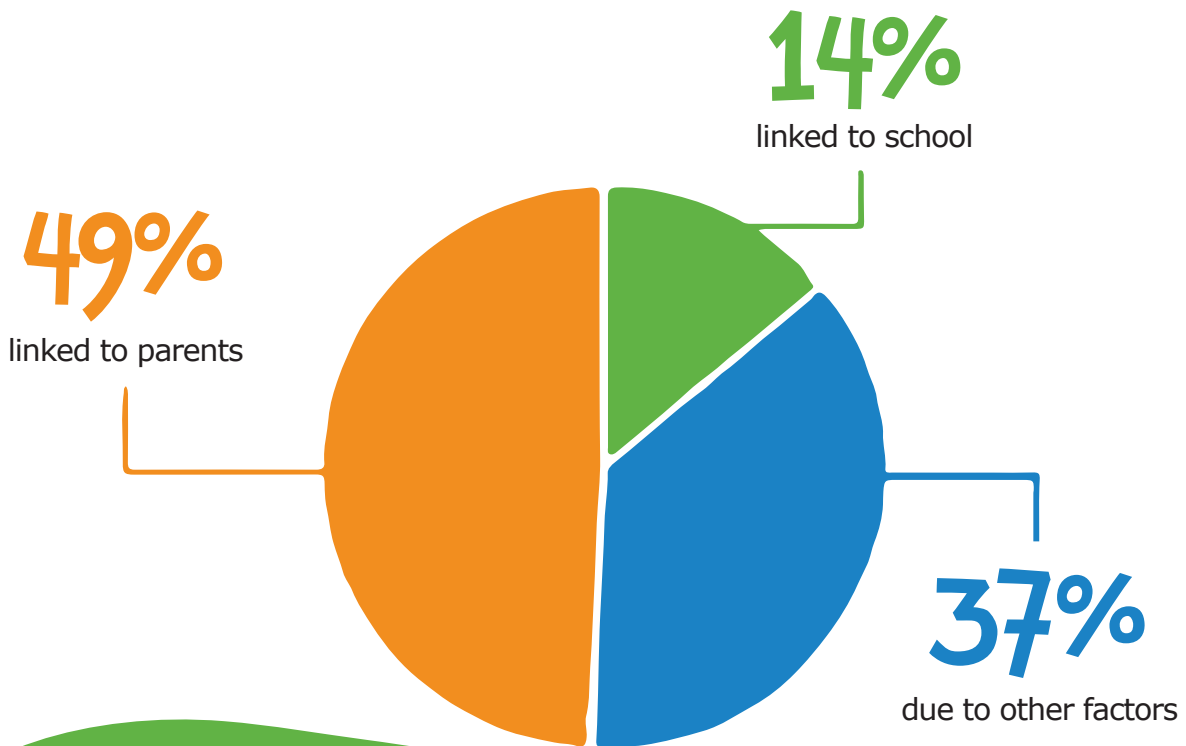
# The problem

There are  
**1.7 million children**  
living in **poverty**  
in the UK<sup>2</sup>

These children are more likely to fall behind in education. This impacts on their future life chances and continues the cycle of poverty

<sup>2</sup> <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics>

## What causes the achievement gap by age 11?<sup>3</sup>



“Despite all families having the best intentions, poorer children are less likely to do educational activities with their parents at home”  
- (Kalil 2020)

By the end of primary school poorer children are, on average, 9 months behind their more affluent peers  
(EPI, 2020)<sup>4</sup>

## The effect of COVID-19

Facing incredibly difficult circumstances, teachers and parents have stepped up to support children across the country. However, the pandemic has exposed the greater number of challenges faced by children in disadvantaged areas. In particular, the last year has laid bare the different levels of support that children receive at home.

Worryingly, children from disadvantaged backgrounds experienced an extra month of learning loss in reading and an extra 0.5 months in maths compared to their better-off peers (DfE, 2021). This is equivalent to undoing a third of the progress made in the last decade on closing the gap in primary schools (National Literacy Trust, 2021).

<sup>3</sup> Poorer children's educational attainment: how important are attitudes and behaviour?, IFS, 2010, <https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/poorer-children-education-full.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Education in England: Annual Report 2020, EPI, 2020, <https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/education-in-england-annual-report-2020/>



# Our solution

Our programme's mission is to develop parents' engagement in their child's learning and support all families to have enjoyable learning experiences together

Learning with Parents improves schools' parental engagement through homework. Teachers schedule our child-led videos and hands-on activities for families to play at home





### Teachers set topics

These are shared with parents via our platform, replacing homework



### Families learn together

They watch child-led videos and play fun, offline activities together



### Parents share feedback

Families share comments and photos with their class teacher

**All parents want the best for their children, but some require more support to turn their good intentions into daily habits and routines.**

To ensure all families are supported to learn together at home, we have designed our programme around three key steps: motivate, empower and reflect:

## Our programme helps schools to



- Child reward scheme
- Teacher training
- Behavioural nudges

- Easy to use on all devices
  - Child-led videos
- Offline activities requiring few resources
- Fun for all the family

- Comments and photos
- Engagement by pupil groups
- Termly impact summaries

# System leadership

## We are a charity with a big vision.

A big vision that no single organisation will be able to achieve by working in isolation. By collaborating with other organisations, we aim to build a fairer education system for all.

### Sharing and learning

Together with the Fair Education Alliance we founded the Parental Engagement Forum. The forum is a diverse range of organisations from large, national charities to place-based organisations working deep in local communities. Together we network, share best practice and explore the research about supporting disadvantaged families.

### Collaborating on resources

Through developing our core programme, we have become experts in designing and creating resources that empower all families to engage, particularly those facing the biggest barriers. We have used this expertise to support organisations across the last year, including Oak National Academy, BBC Bitesize and Tapestry's 'Summer of Play'.

### Supporting practitioners

Highly trained practitioners, working deep in their local communities, have huge potential to support those parents facing the biggest barriers. However only 10% of teachers have received parental engagement training (PTA UK, 2017). We have run free best practice sessions for practitioners in collaboration with NRICH, EEF and others.

We trained  
**400**  
**teachers**  
through our online parental  
engagement events



# The impact of our work



# Across the UK



1,900

children and their families  
using our programme in  
Yorkshire and the Humber

50,000

activities explored at home  
across the country

886

families of children eligible  
for Pupil Premium using  
the platform

1,091

teachers across the  
country accessing  
our support

204

classes across London

2,555

activities played in  
the Southwest





# Teacher case study

**We have families using the platform and engaging in their child's learning that wouldn't usually be confident in helping their child with homework**

A lot of our families struggle to support their children's learning. They do want to help, they're just not always sure how.

We're a school in a very deprived area in Leeds and started Learning with Parents to help parents engage in learning at home. Our school has an ambitious mission that every child will go to university or a real alternative. Whilst the parents are behind this, they don't always have the resources, knowledge, or confidence to get involved in home learning with their child.

Learning with Parents is great at supporting this. We have families using the platform and engaging in their child's learning that wouldn't usually be confident in helping their child with 'homework' or home learning. They enjoy the hands-on activities as they are easy to follow and keep them engaged.

There is one child in my class whose parents don't speak much English. I have been so pleased to see her completing the activities and uploading photos as I don't think they would normally have the confidence to help with home learning. It's clear to me they are really trying to support her.

The games and activities use everyday objects found around the house so families can watch the videos and then complete activities away from the computer. This is also really helpful for families that only have one device in the home.

As teachers we also really like how the topics on Learning with Parents align to our curriculum. It means we can easily set topics and can schedule them in advance. Parents will often ask us 'how do you teach this?' and now that we use Learning with Parents, we can remind them to watch the videos and to see the methods their child has done in school.

Now the foundations have been laid, we are looking forward to seeing engagement build and develop as students move through year groups and our school continues to grow.

*Alice Monaghan,  
Dixons Trinity Chapeltown, Primary Maths Lead*



# A message from our chair

**I am incredibly proud that our data shows the significant impact we are having on over 8000 families across the UK. But what excites me most is that this is just the start for our dynamic young charity.**

Back in 2019, one of the big hurdles we foresaw was persuading people that a fair education system needed to look beyond the fantastic work done by schools. The closing of schools during the pandemic caused incredible disruption and hardship, but it did also act to focus minds on the role of parents in children's education.

Combined with unwavering support from Credit Suisse, Zing, The Fair Education Alliance and others, this shift in focus has allowed us to drive forward a new vision for an education system in which every child can fulfil their potential.

## **A huge moment in time**

We find ourselves at a profound moment in the future of our children's education. It would be easy to return to the system we had before the pandemic, in which poor children fall behind their peers, entrenching multigenerational poverty. But we have a unique opportunity now to build a fairer way of supporting parents, a fairer education system and a fairer society.

- **If we act now, we can transform the way that families are supported**
- **If we act now, we can bounce back stronger from the effects of COVID-19**
- **If we act now, we can build a fairer education system for generations to come**



**Amy Mitchell**

**Chair of Trustees, Learning with Parents**



# Thank You

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UnLtd



nesta



THE DULVERTON TRUST



Social Enterprise  
Support Fund



The Rank Foundation  
a pebble in the pond

Huge thanks to the organisations above for supporting our growth and impact over the last 12 months.

# Ensuring every child is supported at home to fulfil their potential

To get in touch,  
email [hello@learningwithparents.com](mailto:hello@learningwithparents.com)  
or call us on **0117 439 0930**

