



Engaging with club parents and guardians

Before we start, consider the following questions:

How do you engage with parents?

What is a parents first experience of the club? Consider the scenario where a parent brings their child to the first training session – what would their experience be, what do they get from the club?

How do you approach parents to support your clubs operation?

How many of you mention volunteer opportunities either as an add on to a parent meeting, devote a few lines to it in a welcome letter or expect parents to offer their support to a club their child is part of?

Here are some simple ideas that will help your club engage with parents more positively and give

Parent meeting

- Consider tying the parents meeting into the players' taster day / recruitment day / registration evening. Parents go where their children go, so make it a convenient time to meet
- For the first session of your youngest age group team, organise a welcome session / meeting for your clubs parent
- Make attendance at this a mandatory aspect of their child joining your club BUT make it a positive experience by offering some refreshments such as teas, coffees and biscuits. It will be worth it if you get a couple of parents to volunteer
- Use the meeting as an opportunity to get parent survey completed (see below)
- Don't be afraid to ask parents questions – why they chose this club? What would they like to see from the club? What type of events would they support?

During this meeting detail

- Your clubs vision – what do you want your club to represent? where do you want to go and what do you want to achieve?
- Support required on the club – what roles, what skillset and commitment is required and can it be a job share
- Details costs for the season ahead BUT use it as a positive to place a value per week so they understand and appreciate what they are getting for their money. i.e. 2 contacts per week (1 training and 1 fixture) works out at £1 per week based on our monthly/annual subs. That is fantastic value so don't be afraid to shout about it!
- Social events and key dates for the diary – get them promoted early based around established dates (Halloween, Valentines Day etc. as they are dates that are easier to remember and thus triggering people's memory. Encourage parents to promote amongst their family and friends to raise the engagement within your community.
- Detail expectations of players, coaches, parents and the club – examples available

Parent information questionnaire

- Use a simple online platform such as Google Forms <https://www.google.com/forms/about/> - there is a template contact information survey you can use [here](#)
- This questionnaire can be completed via smart phone, tablet, iPhone, iPad or laptop. I would encourage the questionnaire to be completed on one of these platforms during the meeting so you know it has been completed.
- If you have access to a tablet, this can be passed around the parents while in the meeting so save time.
- How about inviting some of your youth players to go around with the ipads on the evening or having a stand for parents to complete the survey with them?

Key information to capture is

- Name
- Email address (work and personal)
- Address and post code
- Contact mobile phone number
- Occupation
- Employer
- Tick box for fixed role or flexible role

Project based volunteering

- Information relating to a parent's / guardian's occupation and/or employer could help identify possible volunteers with skillsets you are in need of as a club or skillsets that you haven't considered yet that could benefit your club.
- Parents/Guardians may not be willing to commit a regular traditional volunteering role as a coach but would be willing to commit time to a specific project that has a start and end date that is related to their occupation or employer.
- For example, how many parents/guardians within your club are graphic or web designers? I bet there's at least 1! Could they help re-design your website or provide engaging templates for your paper/digital flyers and posters? Without the information you will never know!

Example club roles that could be filled by parents

ON PITCH	OFF PITCH
Coach	Chairperson
Assistant Coach	Secretary
Coaching Coordinator	Treasurer
Team helper	Safeguarding Officer
Refereeing	Volunteer Coordinator
Groundsperson	Events Officer
	Communications Officer
	Sponsorship Officer
	Marketing

Considerations:

- Can these roles be shared with other parents / guardians
- Detail the expectations and commitments attached to each role
- Identify which roles require a commitment to be visible at training sessions
- if it's an off pitch role can they undertake the majority of the role in their own time? These type of roles may appeal more to due to their flexibility
- Can you put a maximum number of hours per week attached to these roles so people are clear on how much they are expected to commit
- Are any of these roles more time consuming at certain periods of the season i.e. Sponsorship Officer is likely to be more time consuming during the off-season in recruiting sponsors ready for the start of the new season