

# Section 1

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**Statement of values and principles for working with parents in family learning and parenting skills programmes**

Throughout this document wherever we refer to parents we mean mothers, fathers, carers including grandparents and other adults with responsibility for caring for a child.

- All programmes should reflect the rights of the child set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) ratified by the UK in December 1991 (see <http://www.unicef.org/crc>)
- The principles of safeguarding are embedded into all programmes
- All practitioners recognise the boundaries of their own expertise and refer on to others where appropriate
- Mothers, fathers and those in a parenting role are acknowledged as having unique knowledge and information about their children
- All families are entitled to learn in a comfortable and confidential environment
- All programmes should be non-judgemental and anti-discriminatory and should seek to empower by building on and valuing parents' existing strengths, knowledge and experience
- All families are entitled to learning programmes that meet their individual needs and build on their skills
- All learners have the opportunity to be involved in planning and reviewing their programmes
- All learners are entitled to feedback on their own performance and achievements
- All learners are entitled to expert impartial advice and information on other programmes, progression routes and other sources of support
- All programmes respect and celebrate diversity
- Practitioners work in partnership with parents at all times
- All practitioners who work with parents should have specific training for that purpose

### Practitioners and their frameworks and guidance documents: a quick checklist

The table opposite identifies the range of quality frameworks and guidance documents being used by different occupational groups of practitioners and helps to identify which aspects of the Building Blocks will need further exploration in order to meet the requirements of a good quality programme. The references to each individual framework and guidance document are listed in Section 2.

Practitioner	May already be familiar with criteria related to quality frameworks and guidance documents listed below:	Will need to explore criteria related to:
Family Learning Tutor	CIF, NOS FL, Matrix	Ofsted, HS, TIS, CAF and others
Family Support Worker	ChC, JAR/APA	CIF, NOS, WWP, HS, TIS, PSG and others
Health Visitor	NSF, NICE	CIF, FSEAL, JAR / APA, HS, TIS and others
Family Centre worker	CAF, NSF, NICE, NOS WWP,	and others
Behaviour Support teacher	Ofsted, JAR/APA	CIF, FSEAL, NOS WWP & FL and others
Youth Offending Worker offering support to parents	YJB, JAR/APA	CIF, NOS WWP, PSG and others
CAHMS worker	NICE, NSF	CIF, NOS WWP, PSG and others
Teacher in school	Ofsted, JAR/APA	CIF, NOS WWP & FL, FSEAL and others
Healthy School Advisor	HS, Ofsted, JAR/APA, NSF	CIF, NOS WWP & FL and others
Voluntary sector parenting facilitator	PQASSO, NOS WWP	CIF, NICE and others
Parent Support Advisors	NOS WWP	CIF, NICE, HS, SS, PSG and others
Library Assistant working with parents	MLA	CIF, Ofsted, NOS WWP & FL and others

## Using the *Quality Matters: Think Family* guide

### At practitioner level

Facilitators/teachers/tutors providing either Parenting Skills programmes or Family Learning courses will find the table above useful in identifying the criteria within the Quality Matters guide that they are already familiar with and those that they may need to explore in more depth in order to develop their practice.

**Example 1:** a Health Visitor providing Parenting Skills programmes may already be familiar with the references related to NICE and NOP Guidance but will need to look at Block 1: Teaching and Learning statements which are referenced to the CIF in order to develop the adult learning aspects of their practice.

**Example 2:** a teacher in a school providing parental involvement workshops may already be familiar with Ofsted school-based guidance but will need to develop skills in working with parents by looking at the NOS, TIS and CIF referenced sections.

**Example 3:** an adult Skills for Life tutor delivering Family Learning programmes will already be familiar with CIF but may need to explore the Ofsted school-based references within this guide.

In addition, practitioners will be able to identify areas for development in their professional practice by using the Self-Assessment Tool.

### At Management of Service level

Managers from the statutory and non-statutory sector will be able to use the Building Blocks and the Self-Assessment Tool to monitor their programmes. They will want to ensure that their teams are made aware of the cross-service implications of a single guide and address any gaps across the Building Blocks.

Managers can also use the *Quality Matters: Think Family* guide to begin a dialogue with other managers to align quality improvement approaches and inform subsequent multi-agency planning through parenting support strategy boards and associated existing local networks of providers. The Self-Assessment Tool will also identify gaps in professional skills and competences across a range of disciplines and providers, which will inform children and adult workforce development and continuous professional development programmes across providers.

### At Local Authority policy, strategy and commissioning level

Commissioners of Family Learning and/or Parenting Support and related Family Learning and or Parenting Support Strategy Boards will also be able to use the Self-Assessment Tool to review the quality of a range of programmes they are responsible for, as well as implement and resource appropriate monitoring arrangements to improve current quality. Parenting Commissioners may need to assess which providers already have established monitoring systems in place which meet the relevant Inspectorate's requirements and consider building on this good practice. A possible route could be to commission the Lifelong Learning Service/ Adult /Family Learning Team to lead or manage the monitoring of quality working with a multi-agency monitoring and quality team across a Local Authority area.

Local Authorities are at different stages in terms of quality improvement for both Family Learning and Parenting Skills programmes. Reports from Ofsted indicate good quality in family learning provision in most cases, and significantly higher grades than other curriculum areas (ALI, 2006). There is an increasing range of Local Authority good practice approaches to quality improvement. The case studies look at two Local Authority approaches, one in Essex and the other in Cheshire. These are reported in the case studies in Section 5.