

IT'S ALL ABOUT COMMUNICATION

Communication between parents and pupils is the key to happier and more successful children. Karen Dempster explores just why this is

Communication is a critical component in building strong partnerships with parents, attracting and retaining first-rate teachers, building and protecting a school's reputation and, ultimately, in ensuring students can reach their potential. Driven by a passion to help schools communicate effectively, local resident Karen Dempster has teamed up with communications expert Justin Robbins, to provide school leaders with a practical guide on achieving best practice communication within schools.

How to Build Communication Success in Your School explores the power of parents and teachers working in partnership. "It is no coincidence that schools, where parents are engaged, are the ones producing strong academic results with the happiest children. Parents have the opportunity to influence their children's behaviour and to provide the relevant support," says Karen. "But," she points out, "of course there can be obstacles and our research identifies several issues, such as information overload, not being clear what is being taught, as well as the need for all communication to be faster and relevant."

Education consultant Joan Morris believes that parents should not



hesitate to approach the school if they have any issues. "Be honest with the school about personal difficulties: support for the child is a two-way process. Build a relationship of trust, resisting the temptation of a late-night email of complaint. Contact the Head of Year when necessary, go to parents' evenings and ensure that your child understands his report and feedback. Talking through problems is the key to success."

Aligned to the latest education standards and guidance, Karen's book offers an "inside out" approach

to create and communicate a compelling vision, culminating in leadership skills and supporting the day-to-day management of communications in schools. Ultimately, her message to parents is clear: "If you're becoming frustrated with communication at your child's school – don't let it fester – have your say."

HOW TO BUILD COMMUNICATION SUCCESS IN YOUR SCHOOL will be available to purchase in May at routledge.com; £22.99 (paperback) and £90 (hardback)