

South West Grid for Learning Trust
Merlin Learning Platform

Top tips: Engaging with parents

more
magic,
less
dust



The South West Grid for Learning
is a charitable trust dedicated to
the advancement of education
through information and
communication technologies



1. Integrate elements of SWGfL Merlin into the existing school website so that parents become familiar with the look and feel.
2. Hold a Merlin morning or drop in session for parents to find out more about the learning platform and how staff and pupils use it. Encourage pupils to show their parents how they log in and access their work.
3. Provide a publically accessible area of Merlin keep it regularly updated with news, events, documents, timetable changes, sports events, music and drama rehearsals etc.
4. Create Our Places for classes that parents can view with their child and find out about what their children are learning, homework that has been set, links to useful sites and resources, photographs of events that have taken place in school etc Staff and pupils could post photographs or keep a blog whilst they are away on a residential visit, keeping parents up to date and engaged.
5. Encourage parents to work together with their child on developing the e-portfolio as a learning journal, adding text, photos, audio and video evidence of learning that has taken place outside of school e.g. judo club, horse riding events, gymnastics, football etc
6. Pupils and parents with limited access to ICT resources in the home could be encouraged to make use of SWGfL Merlin using the schools resources as part of an ICT club or family learning initiative.
7. Invite parents to an E-safety event where you can highlight the potential benefits and issues relating to online activity and share the benefits of SWGfL Merlin to support communication and collaboration. If allocating parent log in, theses can be given out at the event.
8. Invite parents to a launch event for SWGfL Merlin and encourage staff and pupils to showcase their use of SWGfL Merlin and other technologies. If allocating parent log in, theses can be given out at the event.
9. If parents have their own log in, they could be encouraged to participate in online discussions related to areas of learning, using their views and pupils own views as starting points to further discussion and writing.
10. If parents have their own log in, they could be used to consult and involve parents on whole-school initiatives, issues and policy and be encouraged to participate in surveys related to a particular aspect of school life.
11. Persuade a keen group of parents to manage their own Our Place to support the work of the school e.g. PTA place to advertise fund raising events and obtain offers of help with projects.
12. If your parent association uses a social networking site to communicate such as facebook, consider linking a Merlin blog through to a facebook page via the RSS feed. Any links would take the user back into Merlin to the blog.

The Merlin team have been hand-picked from schools, and organisations who know what schools need. Since its ambitious beginning, Merlin has undergone exciting transformations. We'd like you to get as excited about it as we are.



To find out more about the magic, including how to get started with the Parental Engagement Tools visit www.swgflmerlin.org.uk/parents

If you have any questions regarding the new features please contact:
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