

Inspiration and Upskilling: Action Planning

A low-pressure session where families complete the Family action plan or Pathway planner with support from school or college staff.

Activity objectives

- To support families who require IT support, guidance or encouragement to identify steps to support their child.
- To help parents and students openly discuss aspirations and careers options.
- To help parents and students see how they can work together to explore the options further, through identifying actions and sources of support available.
- To help parents and students see school/college staff as valuable and trusted sources of support.

How to use it

- With one family or with a small group of families who might otherwise struggle to identify steps to support their child.
- May be most beneficial after parents and students have been presented with the options available.
- Can be delivered before the [Parents evening appointments](#) activity to help families get the most out of that session.

Delivery time

 35 minutes

Need to know

- Parents and students will need access to the [Family action plan](#) [Key Stages 3 and 4] or [Pathway planner](#) [Key Stages 4 and 5].
- This activity is for parents and young people to attend together.
- Works best delivered face to face.

Links to parental engagement recommendations

- Build trust with socially-disadvantaged families.
- Stimulate family conversations.
- Draw on parents as a resource.

For more information on recommended principles for parental engagement go to [Good Parental Engagement](#).

Contents	Page
Preparing the session with parents in mind	2
Delivery steps	3
Learning from the event	4

Inspiration and Upskilling: Action Planning

Preparing the session with parents in mind

Content & format






- Identify families who will need IT support, guidance or encouragement to complete action-planning tasks. You may want to talk to subject teachers and the SENCo to understand students' IT abilities and the equipment they have at home.
- Decide whether you will host several families at a time or whether families will need one-to-one support.
- Consider inviting a few families together to access IT equipment at school or college with support. If online, it may be easier to host one family at a time or do a small group overview and then follow up one to one.
- To enable you to support more families other staff could get involved in delivering this, for example, if families are being supported by your pastoral teams this activity could be built into their meetings.
- Prepare a list of resources to signpost parents to. There are resources in the [Family action plan](#), and you can find additional suggestions on the [Talking Futures resource hub](#) or your own school/college site.

Communication

- If possible, phone, text or email specific families in need of support to invite them to the session. Follow up with a reminder by text or email the day before the session, containing links to the [Pathway planner](#) or [Family action plan](#), as appropriate.
- For key stage 3-4 using the Family action plan, explain to families they will need to choose from these options on the web page to get the right plan for them:
 - My child has a very clear idea about what they want to do next
 - My child has a few things they like in school / college and has a bit of an idea what to do next
 - My child has no idea what to do next
- You may need to provide instructions on downloading the document ahead of the session
 - they have interactive boxes for families to type into, so it is best if they are able to download and save them onto their device, enabling them to come back to them in future.
- Consider sending paper copies of the planners home either with the student or by post before the session.
- If you are running the event in advance of parents' evening where options will be discussed, you may want to mention the session in your communication with all families. To maximise its effectiveness, ask parents who require support with action-planning to contact you so that you can target help to families most in need.
- In your communication to parents, explain that action-planning is a way for them to support young people with making decisions that are right for them. Parents and students can work together to explore options, through identifying actions and sources of support available.

Inspiration and Upskilling: Action Planning

Delivery steps

Step	Activity	Time
1.	Start by explaining the value of parents being involved in careers conversations. Emphasise that it is fine if parents do not have any personal experience or knowledge of the career path their child is interested in. Working together to research the options and using the support available at school/college is really important. If there is time play the Family conversations film for context.	 5 minutes
2.	Offer the student the opportunity to share their interests and aspirations and guide them with open questions to explain what they know about the education and career steps they have to take to reach their goal.	 5 minutes
3.	If families don't have paper copies of the Pathway planner or Family action plan , check whether they have been able to view and download them. Trouble-shoot any technical problems that they may be having. For example, if they are using a smartphone to view the planners, the interactive boxes may not work unless they are using a PDF viewer such as Adobe. Alternatively, they may prefer to write their answers on paper.	 5 minutes
4.	<p>For key stage 3-4 Support families to complete the Family action plan. As you go through, based on the student's aspirations, guide them to set actions as a family that will help build their knowledge and enable the student to make more informed decisions about their next step. You may want to suggest actions to address concerns they may have shared or correct any misapprehensions. For example, if the parent is worried about the salary potential of their child's preferred career, suggest they research progression opportunities in the sector.</p> <p>For key stage 5 Support families to complete the Pathway planner and work through the decision points with them. Facilitate a discussion around the implications of decisions such as moving away from home, and provide opportunities for parents to input their experiences to help inform the conversation. Complete the section together about where the student needs more help with decisions and who can help them. Encourage students to see how both their parents and their school/college can help. Ask the parent to suggest how they can contribute and let them know how the school/college can support them.</p>	 15-20 minutes
5.	Finish the session by encouraging families to set a timeframe for reviewing their plans so they can reflect on what they have achieved by that point.	 5 minutes

Inspiration and Upskilling: Action Planning

Learning from the event

- Consider checking in with families during the timeframes they have set to review what they might have achieved and answer any questions they have. This could be done at a future parent focused event or by email/text/phone call. A reminder on the student's record in your MIS or on Compass+ could help you schedule these.
- You could survey attendees to establish their engagement with the session, particularly if this activity is part of a package of interventions with the same parents and students. This could be done as part of your follow-up communications or by phoning each family to ask them how they found the activity. Example questions and a survey template are available [here](#).
- To gain a deeper understanding, evaluate the event within the context of your wider careers provision, both from the perspective of students and parents. Guidance on evaluation is included [here](#).



Feedback

Take part in our parental engagement project by providing valuable feedback on this resource by completing this [short survey](#)

SUPPORTED BY

