Learning with Parents

Our Impact in 2023

www.learningwithparents.com

Learning with Parents

Our Vision

Every child is supported at home to fulfil their potential.

Our Mission

We support all families to have positive learning interactions together. We drive inclusive parental[1] engagement by partnering with schools and through leading the sector to learn what works.

[1] *We use the term parents to mean anyone that has parental responsibility for the child*

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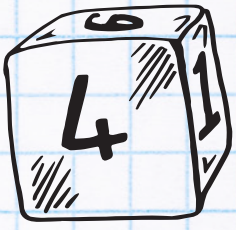


Welcome from our Chair

Dame Sally Dicketts
Chair of Trustees, Learning with Parents

2022-23 has been another impactful year for Learning with Parents, with many exciting new developments to our work. Through our Maths and English programme, we supported over 9,500 pupils and their families to have positive learning interactions at home.

This year also saw the launch of our digital reading log, which piloted with schools to huge success. This digital reading log presents a step change in our work, opening the door for us to support daily rather than weekly parent-child interactions. We are thrilled with the uptake of the reading log and believe it will act as a cornerstone for parental engagement, building habits of regular learning interactions at home for families we work with.

We've also made huge strides towards removing barriers to access for the families we work with. With support from The Access Foundation, over the past year we have removed compulsory parent logins, allowing parents instead to access our support through 'magic' links sent via email or text. This has led to a vast increase in the number of parent-child interactions through our programme, particularly for disadvantaged families.

On behalf of the Learning with Parents team, I am delighted to welcome you to our 2022-23 impact report, highlighting our work supporting every child to achieve their potential.

"Learning with Parents has helped make learning at home fun"

***Iwona** is a parent at a school in Norfolk. Her daughter is in Year 5 and they have been using Learning with Parents since Year 2.*

Before using Learning with Parents, I was struggling to support my daughter with learning at home. She needs some extra support in Maths and English and I didn't know how to help her, but wanted to be able to. She would often get tired and frustrated and because English is not my first language I didn't always understand the homework being set or how to help her.

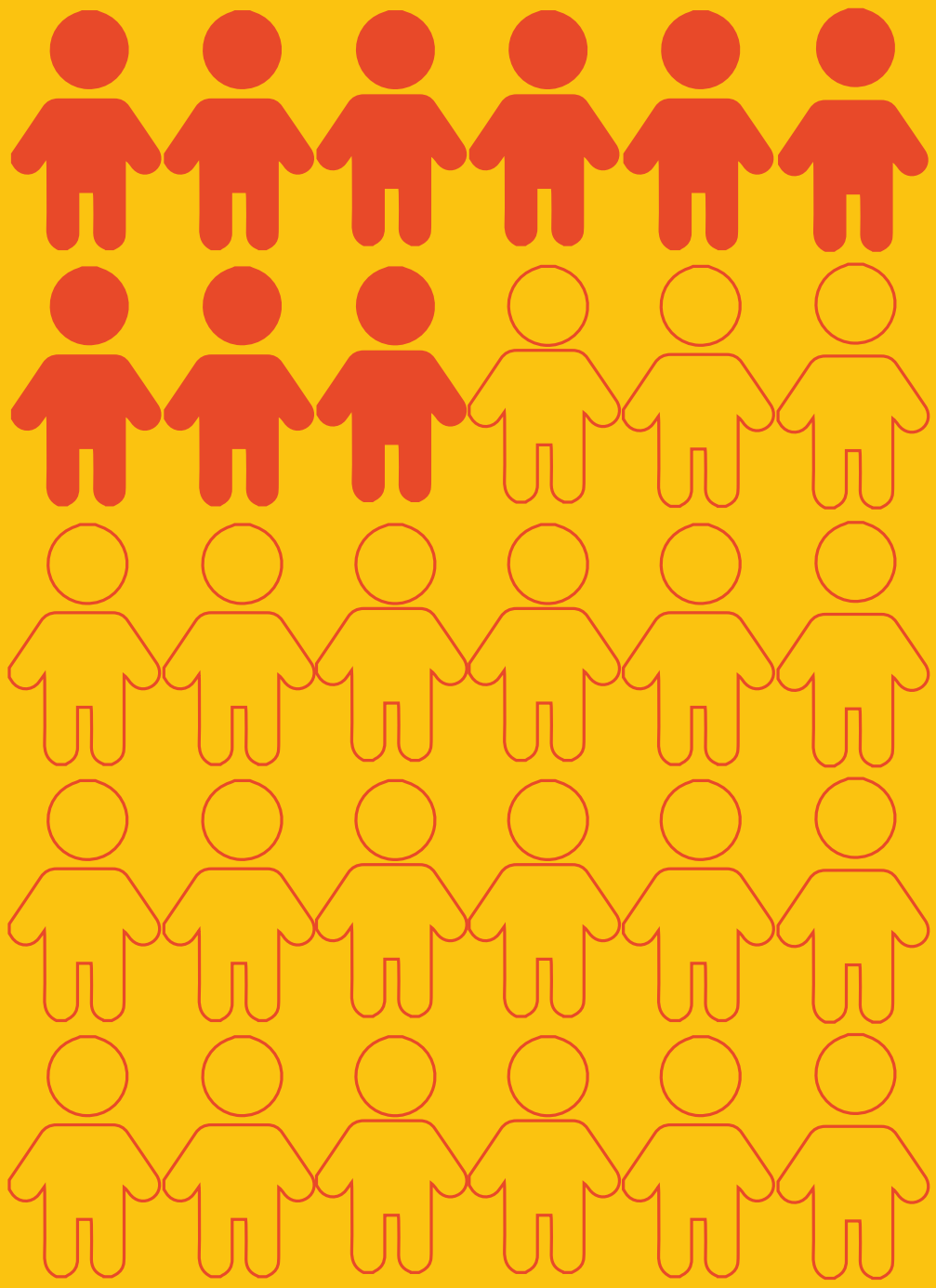
I was really excited when school started to use Learning with Parents - from the beginning it has helped make learning at home fun. My daughter instantly started to enjoy homework, and this is the most important thing for me. When she comes home from school, she asks me "What game are we going to play?"

The videos in each topic are easy for me to follow and help me understand how she has been learning the topic in school. They are also a really helpful reminder for my daughter and she always understands what we need to do.

We find it is more fun when we do Learning with Parents as a family. We sit down together, watch the video on our phone and then play the game together. It is always a relaxing time for us. The other day she sat with her Dad for 40 minutes playing the Tutti Frutti game! As they were playing, I could see how much progress she is making and how much she now enjoys English.

As a family, we are all feeling more confident about learning at home together. Thanks to Learning with Parents, my daughter now has more confidence in Maths and English and importantly has more confidence to ask us and her teachers for help if she does not understand something. Learning with Parents has also given me and her Dad the tools to talk to the teachers more and ask them questions if we are unsure of something.

Nine children in the average classroom of thirty are living in poverty



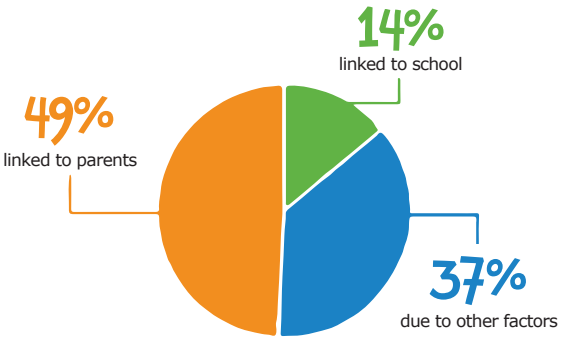
These children are more likely to fall behind in education. But it's about more than just attainment. Each of these children is more likely to be excluded, to become unemployed, to have poor health and even to end up in prison.

Source: Households Below Average Income, Statistics on the number and percentage of people living in low income households for financial years 1994/95 to 2021/22, Table 1.4b. Department for Work and Pensions, 2023

The Problem

In the UK, not all children have a fair shot at education.

By age 11, a disadvantaged child is on average nine months behind their richer peers in English and Maths[1]. As child poverty levels continue to increase[2], more and more children are not getting the education they deserve.



This is a critical moment in tackling educational inequality. The sector continues to focus overwhelmingly on what happens in classrooms, despite the fact that only 14% of the gap at age 11 is related to what happens in school.

In contrast, 49% of the gap is linked to what happens at home[3].

Only by supporting all parents can we hope to tackle educational inequality and ensure that every child has the chance to fulfil their potential.

Our Solution

We support all families to have positive learning interactions together. We drive inclusive parental engagement by partnering with schools and through leading the sector to learn what works.

As a tech based solution, we generate a lot of data. Nobody knows how to do parental engagement perfectly yet, as the barriers are so complex and varied. Our approach is therefore to test things out, generate insights and iteratively improve our programme and how primary schools work with families, and become more inclusive and impactful over time.

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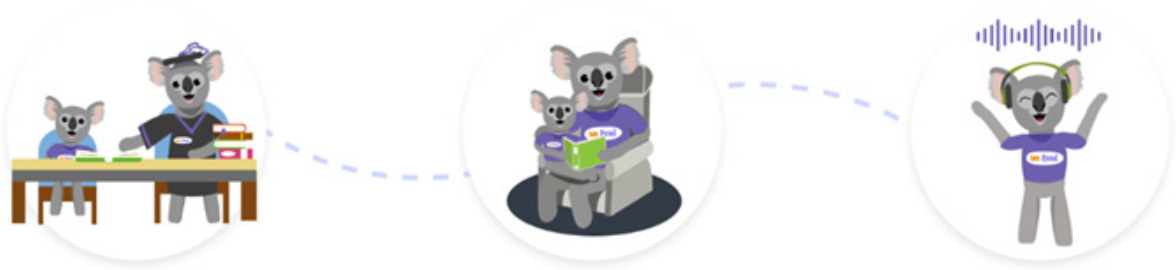
[1] Education in England: Annual Report 2020, EPI, 2020, https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/education-in-england-annual-report-2020/
[2] The Cost of Child Poverty in 2023, Donald Hirsh, Child Poverty Action Group, 2023, https://cpag.org.uk/news/cost-child-poverty-2023
[3] Poorer children's educational attainment: how important are attitudes and behaviour?, IFS, 2010, https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/poorer-children-education-full.pdf

Our Programme

Reading

Our parental engagement journey with schools starts by focussing on reading.

Our digital reading log is an inclusive way for schools and families to record reading, replacing physical reading records



Teachers can record pupils reading in school

Parents are sent reminders to read together regularly at home

Teachers and parents share meaningful reading clips & comments

With our schools dashboard, teachers can easily track engagement levels for their children. Families are motivated to sustain and enjoy frequent and positive reading interactions at home.

Maths and English

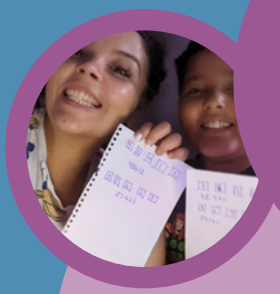
Over time we work with schools to build on the positive reading habits that the reading log fosters. Our full programme replaces traditional Maths and English homework with fun activities which have parent-child interaction at their heart.

Teachers set topics
These are shared with parents via our platform, replacing homework.

Families learn together
They watch child-led videos and play fun, offline activities together.

Monitor Engagement
Teachers keep track of parental engagement in their class.

The impact of our work



9,595
pupils were registered on our platform

"Ellie sat with dad and Cara to share a story, she really enjoyed this." - Ellie's Dad

Families completed
35,212
hands-on activities together

"Archie absolutely loved this one! He loved moving up and down the stairs and found it very funny." - Archie's parent

"For me it was quite hard to arrange different activities for my kids, but through these activities we spend more time playing and learning together." – Khaled's mum

Learning with Parents 2022-23

72%
of parents said they had done a game or activity again since it was first set

73%
of parents said they enjoy doing Learning with Parents activities

59,190
comments were left by pupils and parents

"Isha loved it and made up many stories while playing, walking, writing and helping us. Isha was excited to see the story coming alive."
- Isha's parent

"Zoe read so well. It is amazing to see how well she is doing, and the enjoyment too!" - Zoe's parent

A digital solution

Tackling digital exclusion with Vodafone

This year we received a donation of SIM cards from Vodafone through their *charities. connected* initiative, which aims to tackle digital exclusion. Each card comes with 40GB of data a month, plus free calls and texts, for six months. Our partner schools can request SIM cards for any families struggling to access our support due to a lack of data or WiFi.

Over 200 families have benefited from the SIMs so far, with hugely positive feedback from schools on the difference they have made.

> *"We gave out nearly 40 SIM cards to parents in our school community. As a result, we saw families engage in the Learning with Parents activities who were not doing so previously."*
> - Kevin Bowskill, Vice Principal, Phoenix Infant Academy

The potential of a digital reading log

Our digital reading log solves problems for parents and helps them to be a part of their child's reading journey. It is easier than a paper reading log as it only requires a phone - there is no chance of losing it, and no need for a pen. Through our audio recording tool, parents can capture and hear their child's progress over time, as well as gaining a window into the reading that happens at school.

The digital reading log also simplifies reading for schools. Teachers receive live engagement data for their class including comments, photos and audio clips. This saves teachers time, as it is easy to identify who hasn't been read with.

We first piloted the reading log with four partner schools in January 2023, to overwhelmingly positive feedback from teachers and families:

> *"The digital reading log has had a real impact on one child in particular. Her and her mum used to read infrequently at home when we used the paper logs but now they read most days. Her literacy has improved a lot this year and the log has definitely contributed to this."*
> - Caleb Cookson, teacher at St Andrew and St Francis CofE Primary School

Our partnership with The Access Foundation

Removing barriers to access through passwordless logins

We know that remembering login details can be a significant barrier to accessing our programme for many families. With the support of The Access Foundation, we've spent much of the last year optimising parent logins to our platform to address this issue. We've removed compulsory parent passwords and instead introduced embedded 'magic' links. These are sent via text or email and allow parents to click straight through to their account. Additionally, we've streamlined account creation for all users, reducing six plus steps to just two.

This has enabled more frequent parent-child interactions and reduced administrative workload for our charity. There has been a 94% reduction in password queries. We logged over 45,000 accountless parent-child interactions in the first 8 months of the project alone.

"We're absolutely delighted that our grant has had such an unexpectedly positive impact on the use of the Learning with Parents Platform. This is a perfect example of where a simple idea can surpass expectations when it is well executed and supported by a great team. We look forward to seeing how far this new platform can go in terms of transforming the lives of children and their families through the love of learning." - Piers McLeish, Trustee at The Access Group Foundation

What teachers say

"Since launching Learning with Parents in September 2022, we have seen families who have never engaged with home-learning before engage in the videos and activities."

- Tracey Holmes, Headteacher
Killamarsh Infant and Nursery School

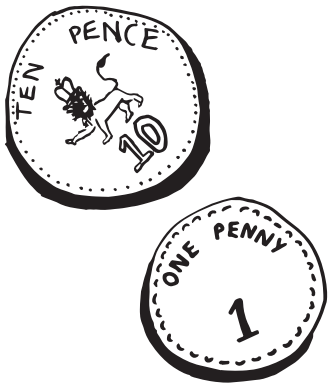
"The Learning with Parents activities are supporting the families in my class to enjoy learning together at home - some have said it is helping them have more 'family time' together at the weekends and parents are enjoying helping their children with both the English and Maths activities."

- Hanane Benhamama, Class Teacher, Millbank Academy

"We have a lot of families who have English as an additional language in our school. They have found Learning with Parents really useful as it gives them reassurance that they are doing learning at home right. The videos give them the confidence to support their children and they even use the videos to practise their own English."

- Bernadette Bonnar, Assistant Headteacher,
St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School

Expanding Our Offering



Supporting financial literacy

Money habits are mostly shaped at home between the ages of 4 and 7, particularly around core skills such as counting and choice making. For this reason, we believe that our programme is uniquely placed to make a significant impact on the financial literacy skills of children that we work with.

The most effective financial education has been shown to involve direct experience, beyond the classroom, with engaged parents and carers. These elements are at the heart of our new financial literacy resources. Our programme provides practical activities for children from 4 to 11 to do with their families, ranging from paying for an item in a shop, to budgeting for a day out, to discussing the persuasive strategies advertisers use. The activities were designed in collaboration with parents and teachers and are specifically intended to be relevant and accessible to families on limited budgets.

The importance of Early Years

We know that parental interventions are more effective the earlier in a child's life they start. If families can be supported to enjoy learning together from the Early Years stage, then they are more likely to continue to engage in learning at home throughout their school lives.

To these aims, we are expanding our work to include ages 0-4. Our Early Years activities involve lots of talk and positive interaction, are fun for parents and children alike, and offer clear learning aims so that parents feel confident.

Parental Engagement Forum

Despite clear evidence of the impact of parents on children's learning, there is little knowledge about how best to support learning at home. Together with the Fair Education Alliance, we founded the Parental Engagement Forum as a space for organisations working with parents to come together to share ideas and insights.

The forum is a diverse range of organisations from large, national charities to place-based organisations working deep in local communities. Together we network, share best practice and explore the research about supporting low-income families.

In the 2022-23 academic year...

- 39 organisations were represented at forum meetings
- Eight different organisations presented on their work supporting parents, including the Department for Education and the Centre for Social Justice
- Topics covered included the role of fathers in learning, support for families experiencing long-term absence, and the potential of nudge technology as a tool for engaging parents

Staff highlights

from 2022-23

A few members of our team share their personal highlights from the last year...

"A highlight for me has been doing my first trip to film our Maths videos with a partner school. It has been amazing to see the whole process, from planning the content to seeing the topics live on the site and receiving such enthusiastic feedback from families."

- Paula Fieldhouse, Content Manager

"We work really hard to ensure that we are following best practice in the fields of IT security, privacy and data protection. A highlight for me for this year was going through an external audit and securing Cyber Essential Plus accreditation - it was a great endorsement ."

- Peyman Owladi, CTO

"It's been really exciting to see our team grow so much this year. Three new members of staff have joined, increasing our capacity in fundraising, content development and school support. This has made a massive impact!."

- Alice Oliver, Fundraising and Operations Officer

"My highlight has been making our platform more accessible for families through passwordless logins. It has been really exciting to hear from schools about how this has helped families engage in the programme and reading log!"

- Amelia Ernest-Jones, School Partnership Manager

"This year we were delighted to reach the final 16 in the Centre for Social Justice Awards! It was a huge honour to be shortlisted for their Family category."

- Sally Fallows, Fundraising and Partnerships Manager

Finances

2022-2023 has been a very successful year from a financial perspective as we have seen our income levels more than double compared to the previous year. This has been a great endorsement of our programme and testimony of the commitment of our partners and donors to supporting us towards achieving our mission.

Our expenditure in 2022-2023 increased in line with our income as we invested in developing our digital reading log, made tech enhancements to streamline access to our platform, grew our team to increase support to school partners and expanded our content.

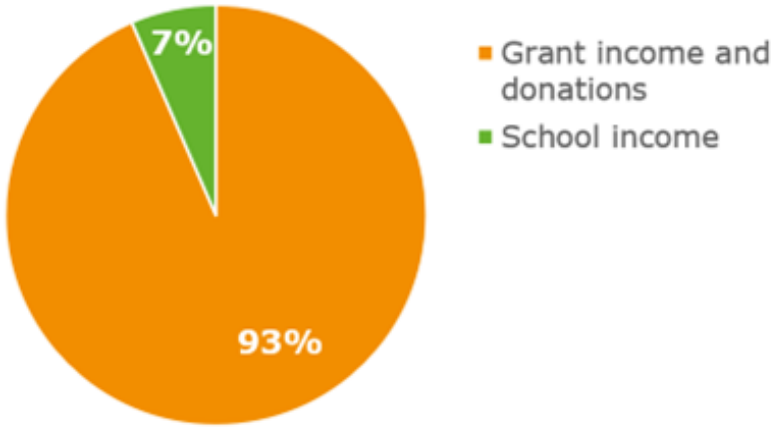
70% of our funds were spent on charitable activities. These costs include: programme delivery staff who create our content and work with our schools; tech costs associated with maintaining our site and developing new features; and costs for filming videos and other materials developed to support parental engagement.
Support costs include: staff recruitment and training; premises costs; staff welfare; insurance; non-programme staff salaries; and depreciation.

During this period, Learning with Parents increased our reserves from two months' running costs, to three. This gives us a good degree of security in a rapidly changing context and will allow us to respond to new opportunities which may arise.
Finally, during this financial year, we paid back a Bounce Back loan secured during the Covid-pandemic.

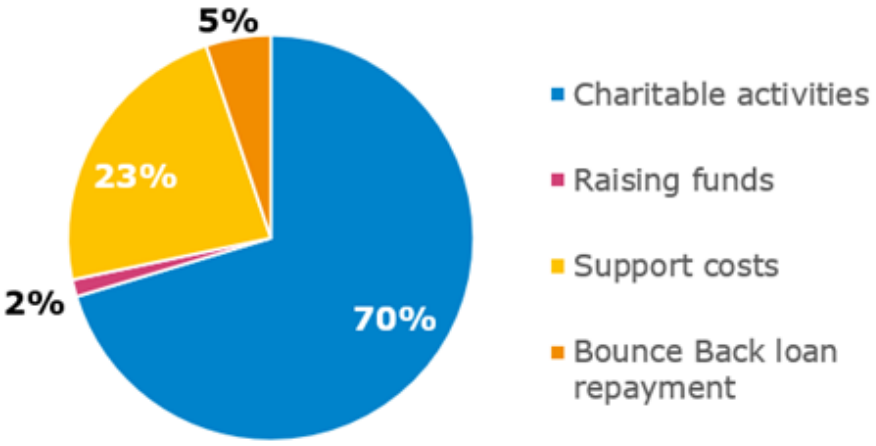
A full set of accounts are available on the Charity Commission website.

	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
Income and endowments from:		
Donations and legacies	613,389	240,107
Charitable activities	42,912	48,793
Total incoming resources	**656,301**	**288,900**
Expenditure on:		
Raising funds	7,423	3,000
Charitable activities	381,027	223,346
Other	125,295	76,734
Bounce Back loan repayment	27,988	-
Total outgoing resources	**541,733**	**304,603**
Reconciliation of funds:		
Total funds brought forward	83,473	97,640
Total funds carried forward	198,041	83,473

Breakdown of income (2022-23)



Breakdown of expenditure (2022-23)



Thank you from our CEO

We are rightly proud of our charity's numbers. This year we supported families to have over 35,000 interactions together. But it's the stories behind these numbers that really capture my imagination. If you haven't already read Iwona's story on page two, I urge you to go back and read about that family's home learning journey over the last four years. I love that we have helped in some way to make their time at home more fun and more playful. Also, do check out the blog on our website, which is full of stories from families, schools and colleagues that we couldn't squeeze into this report.

This year marked a step-change in our work to break down the barriers that some parents face to engaging in their children's learning. Funding from the Access Foundation allowed us to remove passwords for families accessing our platform, massively simplifying the flow for parents with low IT literacy. Our partnership with vodafone has meant that not having access to wifi or enough data to access our site has been circumvented for over 200 of our families. We are chipping away at the different barriers that parents face, using evidence to inform our work.

2023 was also the year that we kicked off some really exciting new areas of work. In January we piloted our reading log, which will become the foundation for parental engagement across all of our schools going forward. With backing from IG, we started to learn about what it means to support financial literacy at home, particularly in low-income households. In the coming years we will pilot work in this area, as well as in early years, which we know is such a crucial time in child development.

Huge thanks to the funders that have made all of this possible, and to the incredible schools, teachers and families who bring our work to life. I am looking forward to continuing to grow and learn together in the years to come.

T. J. Harbour

Tom Harbour
CEO, Learning with Parents

Thank You

THE MERCERS' COMPANY

Garfield Weston FOUNDATION

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AWARD WINNER 2023-25 Fair Education Alliance

CVC

Promethean

IG Group

The Access Foundation

CSJ AWARD FINALIST 2023

Vodafone Foundation

Fair Education Alliance

Huge thanks to the organisations above for supporting our growth and impact over the last 12 months.

Ensuring every child is supported at home to fulfil their potential

To get in touch,
email **hello@learningwithparents.com**
or call us on **0117 471 9070**

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