

Open Evenings and Parents' Evenings.

By Aimee Bates, editor and author
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The one thing more nerve-wracking than being face-to-face with parents is being face-to-face with lots of parents! Here are our top dos and don'ts for open evenings and parents' evenings.

Do ✓

- ✓ **Be prepared.** Give plenty of notice and allocate set times to parents so that you can have notes and examples of work at your fingertips and in the correct order.
- ✓ **Bring examples of students' work.** but also have examples of non-academic achievements in mind to illustrate your points.
- ✓ **Keep eye contact, smile and be positive.** Even if there is something negative to discuss, make sure you sandwich it between good feedback. Just being negative will disengage both the child and their parents.
- ✓ **Ask parents their concerns** and agree on a strategy. Call them to follow up and invite them to call you if there are any issues. Action the things you promise to do.
- ✓ **Invite parents to be more involved in their child's learning.** You can organise some 'come to school with me days' and suggest they help with reading, school trips and at school events.
- ✓ **Advise parents on ways they can help at home.** Many are unsure and will appreciate help, even if it's just directing them to a helpful website or suggesting some games to play.
- ✓ **Involve students. Invite students to talk about their work.** Why not set up some student-led conferences. Or get students to perform something from the course, for example a short performance and some songs.



Don't ✗

- ✗ **Get your students names mixed up!** Make sure you are organised. You could use a checklist of names arranged in order and tick them off as you meet them.
- ✗ **Just focus on the end of term.** Make sure you reflect on the student's performance over the entire year.
- ✗ **Compare pupils to the class average.** Instead, compare them to their individual target. It's important that parents have realistic expectations of their own child and celebrate their individual progression.
- ✗ **Be nervous or get angry.** Keep calm at all times. Being prepared and well-organised will help to keep nerves at bay.
- ✗ **Go over time.** Keep strictly to the allocated time for each set of parents. Having a meeting structure and being prepared will help you to stay on time.



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