Evaluation of Parent Power: Final Report
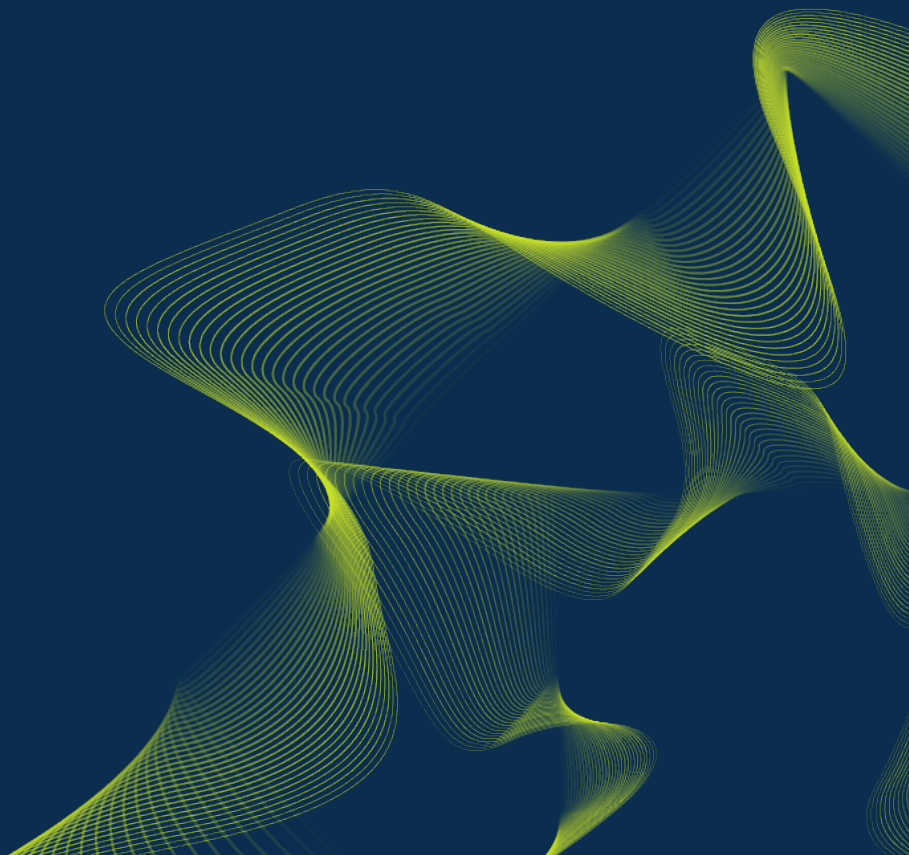
Gabrielle McGannon, Beti Baraki, Aida Wehaba, Chloe McPherson & Susannah Hume

List of tables and figures

List of tables

List of figures

Executive summary

Background

In this report we detail the findings from an evaluation of Parent Power, a community-based parental engagement intervention delivered by The Brilliant Club (TBC). The evaluation was conducted in partnership with TBC, and was funded by a grant from the UKRI Creating Opportunities Evaluation Development Fund (grant reference ES/Z502686/1).

TBC is a charity focused on increasing the number of less-advantaged young people accessing university and succeeding when they get there. Parent Power is a community engagement intervention run by TBC in collaboration with universities, multi-academy trusts, schools and local authorities. It is designed to empower parents and carers from diverse backgrounds to support their children's educational journeys. The intervention aims to create communities where parents are empowered to ensure their children have a fair chance at education. Parent Power operates chapters in local areas where parents are supported by a professional community organiser to identify issues they want to address, and lead campaigns to tackle them. The programme is focused on developing parents' leadership and community organising skills and their knowledge on accessing higher education.

In this report we provide an overview of the findings from an impact evaluation of Parent Power, as well as insights into experience and practice from qualitative interviews with community organisers and parents. For the impact evaluation we used a matched difference-in-differences approach with baseline data collected between May and December 2024, and endline data collected between May and July 2025. For the qualitative research we conducted semi-structured interviews with 22 parents who had engaged with the Parent Power programme for at least six months. The participants were diverse in their backgrounds across gender and ethnicity, though one local area was overrepresented.

Findings

Impact evaluation

Through the impact evaluation we sought to identify any statistically significant differences in four outcomes between a group of parents who signed up for Parent Power during the evaluation recruitment period, and a comparator group of parents who were as similar as possible but had not engaged with Parent Power. The four outcomes were:

- Measured knowledge of the higher education system;
- Perceived knowledge of the higher education system;
- Parental self-efficacy; and
- Leadership and community organising skills.

We found no significant differences on three of the four outcomes: measured knowledge of the higher education system, parental self-efficacy, and leadership and community organising skills. On one outcome, perceived knowledge of the higher education system, we found a small but significant positive effect. However, this was not stable across a range of robustness checks, so further research is required to determine the security of this finding.

It is likely that limitations in the data collection mean that the impact evaluation was underpowered to detect significant effects across the outcomes. The endline sample was small, and exploratory analysis also suggested that self-selection bias may be present in the treatment sample, with parents who signed up for Parent Power likely being more motivated to participate in parental engagement activities. Further, the group of parents who engaged with Parent Power had a maximum of 12 months to participate in the programme between baseline and endline data collection due to time horizons set by the funding for the evaluation. In the interviews, community organisers and parents suggested that they expect outcomes from Parent Power to take more than 12 months to materialise, so the impact evaluation may not have allowed enough time to pass for outcomes to emerge.

In keeping with good research practice, in this report we present findings from all analyses conducted as per the pre-registered analysis plan. However, we note the limitations of the results given the data constraints.

Insights from experience and practice

We conducted interviews with 22 parents across six chapters, and five community organisers. Almost all parents reported positive experiences and a range of perceived outcomes from engaging with Parent Power. The interviews also identified a range of enablers and barriers to programme participation and engagement.

Perceived outcomes

Parents reported feeling like they had a **better understanding of higher education processes and** alternative educational pathways, and **increased confidence** in supporting their children making decisions about their future after school. Parents also shared that they felt the increase in their knowledge of higher education systems led to a **shift in attitude** towards encouraging their children to aim higher when it comes to education. They also reported positive changes in their children, noting an **increase in ambition and motivation** to pursue higher education following university visits.

Most parents who took part in the interviews shared that engagement in the programme had led to **improved wellbeing and reduced isolation** through building new friendships and support networks. Many parents also reported that these relationships enabled them to **create new networks** and bridge differences with parents from different backgrounds. Some were able to leverage these new networks to meet their needs outside of campaign goals, mainly by leveraging the group's collective skills to address personal needs.

Community organisers reported parents **taking on leadership roles** and becoming **more active community members**. Some parents spoke of sharing their new knowledge with their social networks and engaging more often in advocacy efforts. This suggests that the programme was slowly starting to have an impact not only on the parents who engaged with Parent Power, but the wider community through parent-led campaigns. According to the interviews with both parents and community organisers, some chapters have shown early signs of exerting wider systemic influence through **setting up their own campaigns** and actively engaging with local councillors and MPs on issues such as breaking down stigma around mental health.

Parents and community organisers who participated in interviews found Parent Power to be valuable and **hoped for long-term impacts**. Overall, most parents and community organisers felt that **wider community impacts** would occur but need **more time to be realised**.

Enablers for participation and engagement

Parents who participated in interviews shared they were primarily **motivated to engage** with Parent Power to: gain more knowledge of the higher education system; better support their child's academic progress; and become better advocates for their children. Recruitment through **word of mouth** was seen by parents and community organisers as more effective in lead to consistent and sustained engagement.

Parents valued that the community organising model is underpinned by **building trust** and its **embrace of diversity** to work across differences through identifying common ground. Both community organisers and parents reported that **sharing personal experiences** and developing trust was key to increasing parental engagement in Parent Power. Parents felt that the community organising approach would help them achieve better outcomes for their children because they recognised that they held **limited power as individuals**, but by building collective strength and relational power in their chapter they could **achieve more together**. They also appreciated the opportunity to **collaborate with other parents** with the **shared goal** of creating a better future for the children in their local area.

In addition to the community organising model being a driving factor in engagement, other elements were identified as particularly effective in driving sustained participation. The **relational support** parents received from community organisers, such as the **one-to-one conversations**, was highlighted as key for providing parents the opportunity to tell their stories, share their concerns and goals, receive tailored support, and feel valued and listened to.

Parents also noted that **welcoming, diverse environments**, where regular communication and flexibility were prioritised. This included **regular group meetings**, as well as **WhatsApp group chats**, which were the primary form of regular communication that parents identified. Finally, many parents **valued access to activities**, such as trips to high-ranking universities; being invited to attend conferences; and access to seminars on topics of interest.

Additionally, **strong strategic partnerships** with external institutions were seen to add value and credibility to the programme.

Barriers to participation and engagement

Whilst parents and community organisers spoke positively of engagement, they also recognised a range of barriers to participation. Many of these barriers were practical, such as parents having a **lack of time** for Parent Power due to work schedules or access to childcare. Many parents also had **socio-economic constraints**, such as juggling multiple jobs and caring responsibilities. This limited the number of parents who could transition into deeper organising work. Some chapters also relied on a **small, core group** of highly engaged parents. This means that the absence of a few key leaders could impact the sustainability and stability of the chapter.

Other parents struggled with personal factors such as **low confidence**, or **lack of trust** due to negative experiences with previous similar programmes which failed to bring about long-term change. **Funding challenges and sustainability risks**, including community organisers being on yearly contracts, meant that relationship building, the core mechanism of change, could be interrupted before social capital and relational power is fully established.

Recommendations

Recommendations for future impact evaluations of Parent Power:

- **Increase the sample size** to allow for detection of smaller effects. This may require a longer recruitment period which may require additional consideration of baseline sample comparability.
- **Define the key elements of the intervention** that a parent must receive to count as treated. Greater clarity on the key elements of Parent Power and which parents are considered as having engaged with Parent Power will allow for more targeted analysis.
- **Allow for a longer period** between baseline and endline data collection and consider repeated data collection points. This will likely increase attrition so the baseline sample should account for over 50 per cent attrition at endline.
- When parents sign up to Parent Power, collect their children's **Unique Pupil Numbers** and necessary consents to allow for using administrative data to capture long-term outcomes such as progression to university or other higher or further education.

Recommendations to address programme challenges and barriers:

- **Provide multi-year funding and longer staff stability.** To ensure long-term sustainability of the programme, a key recommendation is for the program to provide community organisers with job stability for a longer term. The reliance on yearly contracts may be undermining the significant time, investment, and trust required for

effective relational organising work. While it may not always be possible to secure, multi-year funding would enable chapters to operate with longer-term security and enable community organisers to further build relationships and train effective leaders.

- **Implement long-term planning for chapters and campaigns.** Chapters should implement one-to-three-year plans with meeting topics, events, and trips shared several months in advance. This would help parents address their time poverty due to juggling multiple jobs and caring responsibilities and incentivise parents to plan ahead and fit Parent Power into their busy lives.

- **Revise early engagement content.** The programme should adapt its early engagement approach to retain parents with younger age children who are able to engage for with the programme for longer. The programme could further refine its information, advice and guidance content to include relevant non-higher education topics, such as secondary school transition, mental health support, and learning about local educational systems.

- **Provide campaign support and leadership development.** To ensure that parent-led campaigns remain sustainable, resources should be available for them to use. Parents who launch and take ownership of campaigns struggle to spend their limited time on fundraising. Parent Power should consider creating a funding pot that chapters with established campaigns can easily access. This will allow parents to focus their limited time on advocacy and organising. Training for parents should also be more specific and relevant to their campaign needs. One avenue that could be explored is to deliver this training through partnerships with universities to close any skills gaps.

Recommendations for funding of future research:

- **UKRI should continue to fund applied research such as evaluation** as it is of great benefit in both providing rigorous evidence on the effectiveness of established and/or innovative programmes, in signalling to the research community that this type of research is useful and desirable, and in fostering partnerships between academia and practitioners that results in skills development on both sides.

- Evaluation is a process that starts with understanding the implementation of the programme and its capacity and readiness to support an impact evaluation. **UKRI should consider the scope and timelines of future evaluation funding** to allow for appropriate development of an evaluation strategy that builds to impact evaluation of programmes such as Parent Power that use innovative approaches and seek to achieve long-term results.

- **UKRI should continue to support the development of networks and communities of academics and practitioners** interested in sharing learnings and conducting applied research and evaluation.

Recommendations for future research into community organising:

- The predominantly qualitative nature of the current evidence base means there is a need for **more robust and rigorous evaluations**. Funders, academics, and practitioners should collaborate to create a coherent plan on how to prioritise evaluations that are multi-level, longitudinal and experimental or quasi-experimental in design to address existing research gaps. Existing literature argues that there is a causal link between the internal changes that come from participating in community organising (e.g. confidence) and systemic or policy changes and wider community benefit. Future experimental or quasi-experimental evaluations should seek to **measure both individual-level outcomes and community-level outcomes** to test this proposed mechanism.

- There needs to be more clarity regarding which specific organising activities are the most effective drivers of change through **systematising or standardising inputs of community organising interventions**. Academics, funders and practitioners/community organisers need to work together with researchers and develop a standard for fidelity (quality) and dosage (quantity) of core activities. Standardising these processes will allow researchers to isolate the most effective drivers of change independent of the specific local context and better understand which activities are universally effective, and which only work in specific contexts.

- Systemic change and leadership development are slow to materialise. Therefore, short evaluations may not be able to capture the full impact of community organising interventions. **Longitudinal students lasting multiple years** are crucial to address this gap in the existing literature.

- There is a need for better access to and data collection from parents in low-participation areas. **Future research should consider novel ways to recruit comparator parents** to account for self-selection when randomisation is not possible.

We are grateful to TBC for their engagement and commitment to this evaluation. We hope that, although it has not been able to demonstrate an impact of the programme at this point, it provides useful learnings for the further refinement of Parent Power and demonstrates the need for further evaluation to establish impact. Producing high quality evidence of what works in widening participation has the potential to transform lives, and every step taken towards findings ways to effectively and fairly evaluate programmes such as Parent Power contributes to this goal. We are also grateful to UKRI for providing funding to enable this learning to take place.

1. Introduction

In this report we detail findings from an evaluation of Parent Power, a place-based parental engagement intervention delivered by The Brilliant Club (TBC). The evaluation was conducted in partnership with TBC, and was funded by a grant from the UKRI Creating Opportunities Evaluation Development Fund (grant reference ES/Z502686/1).

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Local context

A young person's likelihood of accessing higher education is significantly impacted by their family's socioeconomic status (Ní Chorcora, Bray and Banks, 2023). Governments and higher education institutions seek to tackle inequalities in access to education through widening participation efforts, but in recent years positive trends in widening participation in higher education have begun to falter. In 2023, the rate of students eligible for free school meals (FSM) progressing to university declined for the first time in almost 20 years, and the progression gap between students eligible for FSM and not eligible for FSM was the widest ever recorded (Department for Education, 2024).

Progression to higher education is also highly influenced by where a young person grows up. Certain regions have lower school attainment outcomes and lower university progression rates compared to other regions, irrespective of socioeconomic status (Amin, 2022; Farquharson, McNally and Tahir, 2022). For example, over half (50.7 per cent) of 15-year-olds who are eligible for FSM in inner London progressed to higher education by age 19 in 2021/22, compared to 29.2 per cent nationally, and fewer than a fifth (19.3 per cent) in the South West of England (Department for Education, 2023).

This escalating economic inequality and instability has led to a steep decline in public trust and in institutions' ability to solve problems, with people reporting low confidence that politics could work for them (King's College London, 2023). The current political discourse is often designed to push people apart, rather than encourage them to connect, depicting difference as a source of fear (Citizens UK, n.d.). Against this backdrop of economic, political and social fragmentation, there are increasingly limited opportunities for people to build meaningful connections with others, leading to declining trust between people, and individuals living in greater isolation (UCL Policy Lab, 2025).

Increasingly, research shows that traditional forms of political engagement such as political debates are not sufficient to overcome polarisation or tackle systemic issues. Rather it is when people build relationships and act together that, ultimately, they can bring about positive change (Lubrano, 2025). Further, despite disparities in education opportunities driven by location and socio-economic status, parents from all backgrounds and regions want to support their children's academic development and progression (The Brilliant Club,

2023). Therefore, TBC operates Parent Power chapters in local areas across the UK, using a community organising approach to encourage and facilitate parents' engagement with their children's educational outcomes and opportunities.

1.1.2 Parental engagement and community organising approaches

1.1.2.1 Parents' role in supporting educational outcomes for their children

Parent Power seeks to improve young people's chances of progressing to university by working with parents, rather than directly with children and young people. Based on previous research into parental engagement and parents' roles in widening participation, Parent Power aims to improve parents' knowledge of higher education systems and parental self-efficacy as a means to increase access to higher education for young people from under-represented backgrounds.

Research in the UK has shown that parents have a significant influence on their children's progression decisions (Mulcahy and Baars, 2018; Unifrog, 2024), with education progression also linked to parents' knowledge of the higher education system (Chowdry et al., 2013; Ní Chorcora, Bray and Banks, 2023). Parents' knowledge of education systems is particularly important at education transition points, such as when young people move from secondary school to higher education (Forster and van de Werfhorst, 2020). Increasing parents' educational cultural capital by improving their knowledge of these systems has been identified as a means through which to improve educational outcomes for children from lower socio-economic backgrounds (Sullivan, 2001; Fischer, Barnes and Kilpatrick, 2019).

Higher parental self-efficacy is also associated with improved educational outcomes for children and young people. Parental self-efficacy is a concept developed as part of social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986), and seeks to measures parents' belief that they can parent successfully and have a positive impact on child development (Wittkowski *et al.*, 2017). Higher parental self-efficacy is associated with a range of improved outcomes for parents and children. For example, research has shown that increasing parental self-efficacy can improve children's educational outcomes (Tazouti and Jarlégan, 2019), and help parents feel more confident in dealing with difficult situations and show greater perseverance (Lipscomb *et al.*, 2011).

Further, a recent umbrella review of parental self-efficacy interventions concluded that interventions that are effective in improving parental self-efficacy incorporate the three primary elements of Parent Power; parent education (through information, advice, and guidance sessions), skill development (through building leadership and community organising skills), and social support (through development of local chapters) (Waid, Abusaleh and Marsalis, 2025). Parents with higher parental self-efficacy also show a higher likelihood of acquiring new knowledge and skills and integrating this into behavioural change (Amin, Tam and Shorey, 2018). Therefore, an improvement in self-efficacy may also

improve parents' likelihood of taking on new information about higher education systems and putting this into practice when their child reaches education transition points.

1.1.2.2 Relational engagement and community organising approaches

Early research on parental engagement focused on the school environment and assumed a top-down approach when engaging parents as stakeholders (Horne, 1931, 1932; Epstein and Becker, 1982). However, more recent research has emphasised the importance of relational parental engagement. Studies suggest that the quality of relationships between parents and school communities has an impact on the rate and success of parental engagement with their children's academic outcomes (Warren *et al.*, 2009; Dove, Zorotovich and Gregg, 2018; Smith *et al.*, 2020; Jeynes, 2022). Therefore, Parent Power takes a relational community organising approach in working with parents.

Community organising model

Community organising does not have a single agreed upon definition, but for the purpose of this research we define community organising as "the process through which residents come together and build social power to investigate and take sustained collective action on systemic issues that negatively affect their daily lives" (Christen, Gupta and Speer, 2021, p. 3002).

The community organising model aims to address gaps in political engagement by bringing people together across different backgrounds and building power on common ground (Citizens UK, n.d.), seeking to limit the negative effects of polarisation and social or political divisions (Christen, Gupta and Speer, 2021). The model operates across three levels:

- **Individual**: community organising seeks to tackle isolation by creating spaces for connection, bringing people together to build interpersonal trust and social capital.
- **Systemic**: it aims to address the feelings of powerlessness by mobilising people and building collective power and encouraging action towards achieving systemic change for the benefit of people's local communities.
- **Social**: it fosters social cohesion by bringing people together across different backgrounds, thus building bridging social capital.

Parent Power applies a broad-based community organising model. This model organises institutions, and the people already involved within these institutions (e.g. schools, unions, charities, churches), across large enough local geographies (e.g. regions, cities, and boroughs) by creating alliances so they act together for the common good (Wills, 2012). The participants or residents of community organising projects are typically individuals who are already engaged with an institution (e.g. parents with children attending a specific school), and who are also the most affected by the systemic issues being addressed (e.g. educational inequality). Through listening campaigns and one-to-one meetings, residents develop a shared understanding of the issues they are seeking to tackle, and agree on a set of group priorities, strategies, and actions. Ultimately, the goal is to build power and apply

sustained pressure for systemic change, which requires ongoing engagement of members, continuously persisting and adapting to secure change (Christens, 2010).

Relational power

One of the fundamental principles of community organising is that power does not only reside in positions, wealth or institutions, but that it is relational; it is derived from connections and building trusting relationships. The main aim of the community organising model is to build relational power, defined as the "capacity both to influence and be influenced" (Loomer, 1976, p. 8). It is the idea of sharing "power with", which relies on collaboration to achieve collective a goal, rather than practice the traditional "power over" approach (Avelino, 2021, p. 428).

The main mechanism for building relational power is for participants to have one-to-one meetings with organisers, structured as brief, semi-structured conversations used to develop connections, trust and understanding of other people's stories (Christens, 2010). There are

1. **Internal change**: before systemic changes take place or positive action is achieved, an individual must first understand their place in the broader social political context, believe that change can happen and that they are necessary to contribute towards that change (Christen, Gupta and Speer, 2021). The process of building collective power starts with intentional one-to-one relationships between participants. This relational work leads to internal change for individuals' internal change, as part of which they experience a shift in perspective, confidence and understanding. They start to recognise their problems as systemic, and that their engagement is also crucial for achieving positive action (Christen, Gupta and Speer, 2021).
2. **Developing leaders**: identifying and developing leaders is core to community organising. Individuals are often conditioned to believe that they are limited or without authority to question others or take part in collective decisions as individuals. The role of the community organiser is to support participants to change this perspective. Their role as an organiser is to not lead but to identify and develop leaders. Community organisers aim to take a step back and create opportunities for emerging leaders to grow by taking more active leadership roles (Christen, Gupta and Speer, 2021).
3. **Relating across differences**: community organising builds connections across people of different backgrounds which is important for collective and effective influence (Citizens UK, n.d.). If the model restricts itself to building relationships within similar groups (bonding social capital), it might lead to fragmentation and power imbalances. Therefore, the model also fosters connections between individuals from different background and ideologies (bridging social capital) to facilitate a cohesive society and maximise influence (Gruescu and Menne, 2010).

The literature argues that community organising is not a linear process, but rather a dynamic and cyclical, which involves holding conversations, mobilising action and conducting

reflection and learnings and through these processes power is built over time. Christens and Speer (2015) identify these four steps to the process:

- Relationship development: this involves the core activity of community organising-the one-to-one conversations that take place to identify personal issues and shared concerns, building trust in the process.
- Research: once an issue is selected, leaders enter the phase of researching and investigating the policy landscape, collect evidence to support their demands. this steps ensures participants are informed about their issue area and are able to effectively challenges decision-makers and gain credibility.
- Action: participants /residents who had been building relational power, start holding public events and meetings to create pressure and hold decision-makers accountable
- Reflection and learnings: after every action, there is a reflection and learning phase, where residents and leaders assess what worked and what did not work and consequently adjust their strategies and activities for future action. this steps avoids stagnation and pushes residents towards innovative and sustainable solutions.

1.1.2.3 Research into the effectiveness of community organising

The literature suggests that community organising has shown positive signs of change for both those who participate in projects, and the communities within which projects are actioned. For example, Christen (2010) argues that consistent engagement in organising can improve individual outcomes such as confidence and self-efficacy, which in turn also improves mental health and social trust. In a 2015 review, Christens and Speer further classify these personal outcomes into five areas, which collectively represent the "internal change" described in section 1.1.2.2. The individual outcomes are:

- Affective outcomes which focus on emotions, feelings and beliefs which cover areas such as sense of belonging, identity, values, social trust and the emotional part of psychological empowerment which includes self-efficacy, personal control, competence.
- Cognitive outcomes which focus on skills development and increased awareness and understanding around systemic or structural causes of inequalities and social issues, as well as the belief that one has the knowledge to influence change.
- Relational outcomes which focus on relationships and social connections both within groups and across groups (bridging social capital) and network building.
- Behavioural outcomes which focus on observable actions, such as consistent engagement in community activities and actions
- Developmental outcomes which focus on personal development.

These personal outcomes then contribute towards building social capital within the local community. At the systemic level, there have been successful reforms through community organising which have involved shifts in resources and policy (Christen, Gupta and Speer, 2021). A notable example is the UK Living Wage campaign, launched in 2001 and led by

Citizens UK, a community organising coalition. While there may have been other contributory factors, the success of the campaign was driven by building relational power across diverse institutions including schools, business, and unions. This enabled it to establish the concept of the Real Living Wage. Since its launch, it has won over £2 billion in additional wages for low-paid workers (Citizens UK, n.d.). Outside of the UK, community organising has also shown successful examples across a wide range of issues, including educational reform, from securing financial resources for schools, to improving curriculum and teacher recruitment, and increasing parental engagement (Conner et al., 2012).

However, while these case studies are compelling, research into the effectiveness of community organising is limited. Research on community organising initiatives is dominated by qualitative studies and lacks causal evidence. For example, a recent literature review into citizen-led initiatives found that 80 per cent of studies identified used a qualitative approach, and none of the identified studies used an experimental or quasi-experimental design (Igalla, Edelenbos and van Meerkerk, 2019).

The 2015 review (Christens and Speer, 2015) further identified three research gaps in the existing research. these include:

- **Lack of systematisation of community organising activities**: research has not yet clarified the mechanism of change, it is unclear which specific activity are the most effective drivers towards individual outcomes and systemic change.
- **Lack of comparative studies:** currently there is a lack of systematic, comparative research to identify if the strategies or findings of one context (i.e. specific local areas, specific demographic groups, or specific issues) can translate to another.
- **Unclear benefits to non-participants and wider community:** while there is research that suggests that those who participate in community organising can experience benefits (e.g. confidence, self-efficacy, better relationships), there is a lack of empirical evidence that shows those individual benefits translating into benefits for non-participating residents and the wider local community.

This research addresses this gap by taking a quasi-experimental approach to evaluating a community-led intervention. Further, this research also contributes to the literature on parental engagement by taking a quasi-experimental approach to measuring the impact of a community-based parental engagement intervention on parents' knowledge of higher education processes and parental self-efficacy.

1.2   The evaluation

To understand the impact of Parent Power, we partnered with TBC to conduct an evaluation of the programme. The impact evaluation used a matched difference-in-differences (DiD) approach to estimate the causal effect of Parent Power on four key parental outcomes: measured knowledge of higher education systems; perceived knowledge of higher education systems; leadership and community organising skills; and parental self-efficacy.

Alongside the impact evaluation, we conducted five interviews with community organisers employed by TBC, and *22* interviews with parents who had engaged with a Parent Power chapter for at least six months.

We acted as independent evaluators, with TBC contributing to the design of the evaluation to ensure it was feasible within the setting of the intervention. TBC also contributed to the early development of the outcome measures so that they were appropriately targeted and so that the wording would be understood by participants. Community organisers within each chapter also facilitated baseline data collection for the impact evaluation. Endline data collection for the impact evaluation was conducted by an independent data collection agency (Public First). We conducted all quantitative analysis independently. We also conducted all qualitative data collection and analysis, with support from TBC to recruit community organisers and parents.

1.3   Report structure

This report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 2** details the different elements of the Parent Power programme.
- **Chapter 3** describes the methodologies used in the impact evaluation and qualitative research.
- **Chapter 4** describes the findings of the impact evaluation and insights from experience and practice.
- **Chapter 5** combines the findings from the impact evaluation and qualitative research to provide insights into the Parent Power programme.
- **Chapter 6** outlines recommendations for both Parent Power in particular, and future research into parental engagement and community organising.

2. Parent Power

Parent Power is a community organising intervention designed to empower parents and carers from diverse backgrounds to support their children's educational journeys. It aims to create communities where parents are empowered to ensure their children have a fair chance at education. Parents are supported to identify and lead campaigns that address issues in their local area with the aim of developing parents' leadership and community organising skills and their knowledge on accessing higher education.

TBC has active Parent Power chapters around the UK, each supported by partnerships with local universities, multi-academy trusts, schools, and local authorities. Chapters are led by a trained community organiser who is employed by TBC. At the time of the evaluation, there were 16 Parent Power chapters, all in England and Wales:

- Abbey (Cambridge);
- Birmingham;
- Bradford;
- Cardiff;
- East London;
- East Oxford;
- Empoderando Familias (managed by King's College London)[1];
- Fenland;
- Knowsley;
- Mansfield;
- Newport;
- Norwich;
- Oldham;
- Peterborough;
- South London (managed by King's College London); and
- Swindon.

2.1 Chapter activities

2.1.1 Meetings and one-to-ones

Parents of secondary school-aged children are recruited through launch events and outreach through secondary schools. When parents sign up to join a chapter, they have an initial relational one-to-one with the chapter's community organiser prior to attending their first group meeting. Group meetings occur every six weeks during school term time (seven meetings across the year), usually in a space provided by one of the chapter's partner institutions.

There is a set format for the first three meetings, involving an information, advice and guidance (IAG) session, and a community organising session, detailed in Table 1.

---

[1] Empoderando Familias is for Spanish-speaking parents who live in South London.

Table 1: Parent Power meeting structure

Meeting	First session (IAG)	Second session (community organising)
First meeting	Student finance	Identifying a campaign issue
Second meeting	University options	Identifying a campaign target
Third meeting	UCAS application process	Decide an action targeted at a decision maker

After the first three meetings, there is no set structure for subsequent meetings, as they shift their focus to community organising activities. Between meetings, community organisers also meet with parents in one-to-ones. One of the partner institutions for each chapter also hosts an annual celebration event for the chapter.

2.1.2 Community organising

During the meetings, parents in the chapter identify an issue that is affecting educational equality in their local area. The community organiser supports parents to design and deliver a campaign. Examples of campaign issues include greater equity in access to work experience for secondary school pupils in Tower Hamlets, improved access to higher education via arranging visits to Russell Group universities for sixth form pupils in South London, and fighting for access to A-levels in Knowsley where there is no A-level provision within the local authority.

2.1.3 Tailoring

The intervention is highly flexible, with activities based on the interests of each chapter and the needs of their local community. Other than the delivery of the IAG sessions in the first three meetings of the year there are no prescribed forms for the group meetings or one-to-ones.

2.2 Theory of change

We developed a theory of change with TBC at the beginning of the evaluation to guide the research activities. The theory of change for Parent Power is included as Figure 1, below.

Situation

There is inequality in access to educational opportunities for children, especially in underserved areas. Many parents/carers in these areas feel that education is important for their children, but they may not have the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively support educational achievement. These parents'/carers' voices are often not heard, and they lack power in engaging with education providers and systems. Underserved areas often also have low levels of community connectedness, and limited leadership capacity can impact parents'/carers' ability to create change.

Aims

To increase the proportion of young people from under-represented backgrounds progressing to higher education and accessing post-16 education opportunities.

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
Process			Impact	
Funding relationships with universities and other local bodies.	**Initial 1-2-1s between parents and community organisers after sign up:** begin building relationship between parent and community organiser, parents identify barriers to educational achievement in their community, community organisers identify themes to address in first meeting.	250 have an initial 1-2-1 with a community organiser in the 2024/25 academic year.	**Awareness** Parents have increased awareness of the impact of educational inequalities in their community. Parents have increased awareness of how the local community can influence the higher education landscape.	Parents are empowered to act as changemakers in their communities.
Staff time from The Brilliant Club to manage staff, oversee partnerships, provide links between teams, lead internal development opportunities, and conduct internal monitoring and evaluation.	**Group meetings held every six weeks:** meetings are two hours and are in two main parts: the first section is questions and an IAG session, the second section is focused on community organising. Standardised resources are provided for the first three meetings:	72 meetings take place across 12 chapters in the 2024/25 academic year.	**Attitudes** Parents have increased motivation to engage in action to address educational inequality in their community. Parents see greater benefit in developing their knowledge about the education system and higher education.	Knowledge is developed and shared in communities to create change.
Trained community organisers for each chapter.	*Meeting 1:* focused on student finance knowledge (IAG) and identifying a campaign issue. *Meeting 2:* focused on knowledge of university options (IAG) and identifying a campaign target. *Meeting 3:* focused on knowledge of UCAS application process (IAG) and deciding on an action targeted at decision maker. *Meetings 4-7:* based on campaign progress and ongoing listening.	50 parents have at least three regular 1-2-1 with a community organiser in 2024/25 academic year.	**Action** Parents have increased knowledge of higher education systems and processes. Parents have improved leadership skills. Parents have improved skills in community organising.	Parent-led campaigns have positive impacts on educational opportunities available in underserved communities.
Partner universities to facilitate activities, input to IAG sessions in meetings, provide space for chapter meetings (where possible), host annual celebration events, and provide information about the local higher education context.		50 attend national workshop in 2024/25 academic year.		Reduced educational inequality in underserved communities.
Contact with schools to provide local knowledge.	**Regular 1-2-1s between parents and community organisers between group meetings:** continue building relationships between community organisers and parents; scope out leadership potential; understand connections parents have within the community; develop parents' knowledge and skills. The frequency and timing of meetings is flexible based on parents' needs and availability. Community organisers listen to parents to co-create place-based approaches.	12 campaigns launched in 2024/25 academic year.	**Sustained change** Parents have increased belief in their ability to support their child in their education. Parents are more confident in creating educational change in their community.	
Links with Citizens UK chapters.				
Tracking of parents to understand level of engagement and participation in each activity.	**National workshops:** applying to university via UCAS			

Assumptions

Promotion and awareness of Parent Power amongst parents in a community.
Senior level buy in from partner universities.
Availability of skilled community organisers.

Risks

Changing higher education policy landscape may impact funding.
Lack of interest from parents to get involved in Parent Power chapters and activities.
Higher education institutions and systems are not responsive to parents' campaigns.

Figure 1: Parent Power Theory of Change

3. Methodology

3.1 Impact evaluation

3.1.1 Research questions

The impact evaluation aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. What impact does Parent Power have on parents' measured knowledge of the higher education system?
2. What impact does Parent Power have on parents' perceived knowledge of the higher education system?
3. What impact does Parent Power have on parents' perceptions of their leadership and community organising skills?
4. What impact does Parent Power have on parents' sense of parental self-efficacy?

3.1.2 Design

The impact evaluation used a matched difference-in-differences (DiD) approach. This design estimates the causal effect of Parent Power by comparing changes in outcomes over time in a group of parents who engaged with Parent Power (treatment group) against a group of parents who did not engage with Parent Power but otherwise are as similar as possible to the treatment group (comparator group).

3.1.3 Outcomes and outcome measures

The four outcomes measured in this analysis are listed below.[2] The measures for each outcome were combined into a single survey. The full outcome survey questions are available in Appendix 2.

- **Measured knowledge of higher education systems**: this was measured by asking participants seven multiple choice knowledge questions on topics such as university applications, student finance, and university life.
- **Perceived knowledge of higher education systems**: this was measured by asking participants seven knowledge perception questions on a five-point scale going from "extremely uncomfortable" to "extremely comfortable". For example: "*Please rate how comfortable you are with doing the following:* Understanding how contextual offers work."

---

[2] For each measure, we only consider the questions participants responded to when identifying their average response. For example, if the battery includes seven questions, but respondents only answer four, we would calculate the average response only based on the four completed ones.

- **Leadership and community organising skills**: this was measured by asking participants six questions to rate their leadership and community organising skills on a five-point scale going from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". For example: "*Please rate your agreement with the following statement:* I can influence decisions affecting my local community."
- **Parental self-efficacy**: this was measured by asking participants eight questions to rate their own parental self-efficacy on a five-point scale going from "extremely comfortable" to "extremely uncomfortable". For example: "*Please rate how comfortable you are with doing the following:* Showing your child that working hard at school influences later successes."

3.1.4 Data collection

Data were collected from participants at two times, with a first contact to collect baseline measures, and a recontact to collect endline measures. Dates and samples are included in Table 2, below. All surveys were completed online, except for three baseline surveys in the treatment group, which were completed over the phone. Although provision was made for paper completion, if necessary, no surveys were completed on paper.

Table 2: Sample sizes and fieldwork dates

	Treatment group	Comparator group
Baseline data collection	n=160, May-Dec 2024	n=531, Dec 2024
Endline data collection	n=88, May-July 2025	n=258, May-July 2025

We collected baseline data from the treatment group via Qualtrics. All parents who signed up for Parent Power during the recruitment window (May to December 2024) were invited to join the evaluation and to complete the survey. At baseline, treatment parents were directed to join the evaluation and complete the survey in four ways:

1. When parents completed the Parent Power online registration form, they were directed onward to the evaluation consent form and survey.
2. At Parent Power launch events and during Parent Power meetings, community organisers reminded parents that they could join the evaluation and complete the survey and provided time for them to complete the consent form and survey during the event.
3. TBC sent emails and text messages to eligible parents reminding them that they could join the evaluation.
4. In the final weeks of baseline data collection, Public First contacted parents via email, text message and phone call.

At endline, data collection was managed by Public First, a polling and social research company. Parents were invited to complete the endline survey via email, text message, and phone calls.

3.1.4.1 Comparator group data collection

Recruitment, baseline, and endline data collection for comparator parents was managed by Public First. Comparator parents were recruited through online survey panels and completed the survey through Public First's own surveying platform. A quota was imposed for ethnicity (see section 3.1.5).

3.1.4.2 Survey structure

The survey included sections for all four outcomes listed above, plus questions to capture respondents' demographic characteristics including age, gender, ethnicity, education, and number of children. In the baseline survey, response rates to the demographic questions there were lower than expected, as these were optional. To address this, demographic questions were made mandatory in the endline survey. We use the endline survey demographics throughout the analysis.

3.1.5 Matching

We identified matching as a robust strategy to estimate the impact of Parent Power. In the protocol we specified that we would undertake matching in two stages. The intention was to recruit 1,000 comparator parents at baseline and then conduct a first round of matching to identify the 400 best matched comparator parents for follow-up at endline.

To ensure that the pool of comparator parents was comparable to the treatment parents, ten regions were identified that were statistically similar to the areas where Parent Power has active chapters. Public First identified recruitment regions based on deprivation levels, percentage of the population identifying as white, and percentage of the population holding a university degree. Further, due to the makeup of the baseline sample of treatment parents (described in section 3.1.6.1 below) it was necessary to set an ethnicity quota (40 per cent white, 60 per cent all other ethnicities) for the comparator parents to ensure that the groups were similar.

Meeting this quota within the identified comparator regions was difficult, so we decided to recruit a smaller comparator group that was more comparable to the treatment group, and then follow up with all comparator parents, rather than relaxing the regions and ethnicity quota and recruiting a larger comparator group to conduct a two-stage matching procedure. Therefore, at baseline, 531 comparator parents were recruited, and all were approached for the endline survey.

Table 3, below visualises the two-stage matching process initially specified, and the single-stage matching process used.

Details of the matching process and outcomes are specified in section 3.1.6.3 below.

Table 3: Matching approaches

Two-stage matching (planned approach)	Single-stage matching (applied approach)
1000 comparator parents complete baseline survey	531 comparator parents complete baseline survey
First round matching	
400 best matched comparator parents → Other comparator parents	Invited to complete endline survey
Invited to complete endline survey	258 comparator parents complete endline survey
250 comparator parents complete endline survey	Matching
Second round matching	Matched comparator parents → Other comparator parents
Other comparator parents ← Matched comparator parents	Included in final analysis
Included in final analysis	

3.1.6 Samples

3.1.6.1   Baseline sample

At baseline, 160 treatment and 531 comparator parents responded to the survey. Full sample descriptive tables are available in Appendix 1, while Figure 2, below visualises some of the key baseline demographics, and Figure 3 shows the distribution of the four outcome scores at baseline.

Figure 2: Baseline demographics

Parent ethnicity

Treatment	16% / 84%
Comparator	44% / 56%

■ BAME ■ White

Free school meals eligibility

Treatment	28% / 72%
Comparator	34% / 66%

■ No ■ Yes

Parent highest level of education

Treatment	4% / 16% / 12% / 6% / 31% / 19% / 11%
Comparator	2% / 12% / 12% / 6% / 40% / 28%

■ Other ■ Graduate degree ■ Bachelors degree ■ Some university ■ Vocational ■ Completed secondary ■ Did not complete secondary

Figure 3: Distribution of baseline outcome scores

Measured knowledge (baseline)

Perceived knowledge (baseline)

Leadership and community organising (baseline)

Parental self efficacy (baseline)

Group: Comparator, Treatment
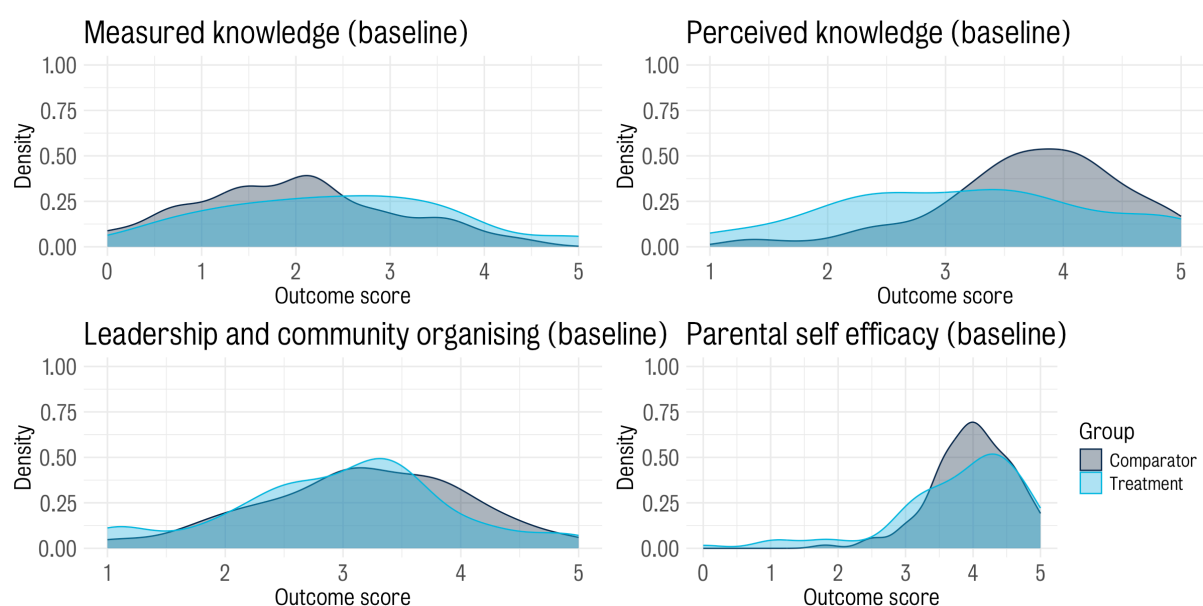
3.1.6.2 Endline sample

At endline, 88 treatment parents (55 per cent recontact rate) and 258 comparator parents (49 per cent recontact rate) responded to the survey. Full sample descriptive tables are available in Appendix 1, while Figure 4, below visualises some of the key endline demographics, and Figure 5 shows the distribution of the four outcome scores at endline.
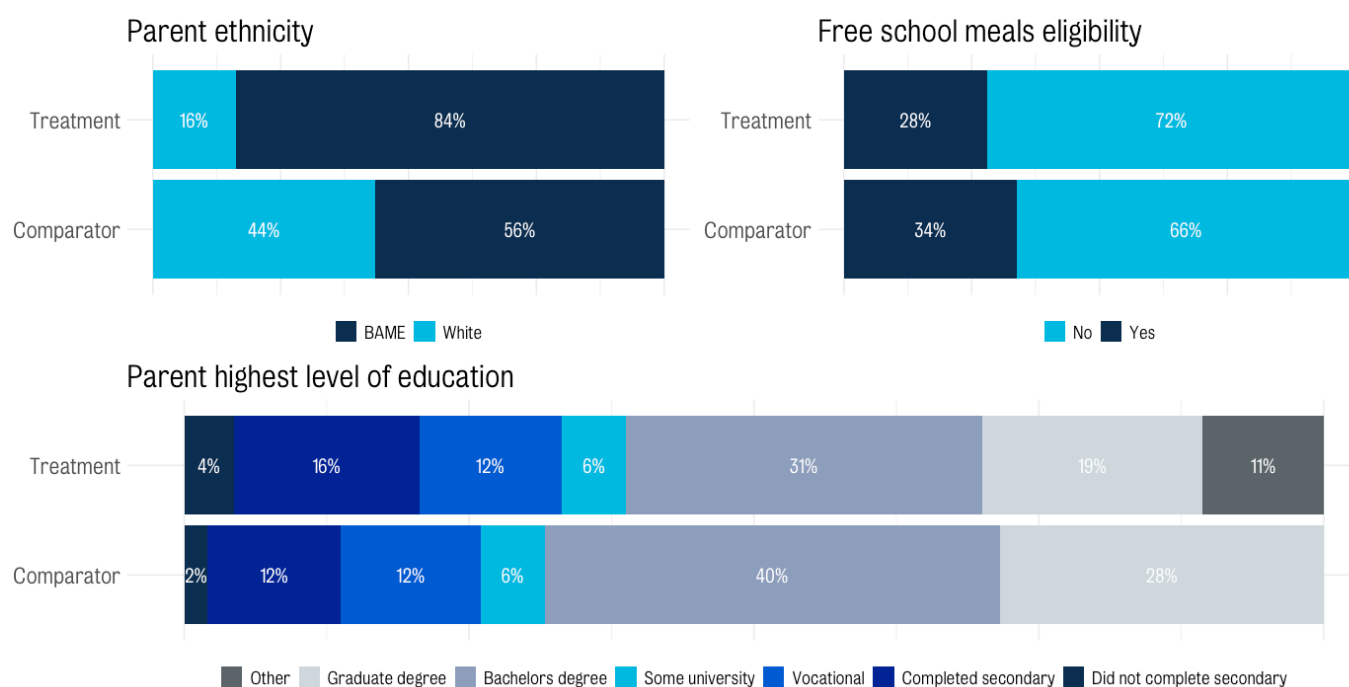
Figure 4: Endline demographics

Parent ethnicity

Treatment	18% / 82%
Comparator	43% / 57%

■ BAME ■ White

Free school meals eligibility

Treatment	35% / 65%
Comparator	23% / 77%

■ No ■ Yes

Parent highest level of education

Treatment	15% / 10% / 8% / 34% / 25% / 8%
Comparator	4% / 12% / 14% / 6% / 43% / 22%

■ Other ■ Graduate degree ■ Bachelors degree ■ Some university ■ Vocational ■ Completed secondary ■ Did not complete secondary
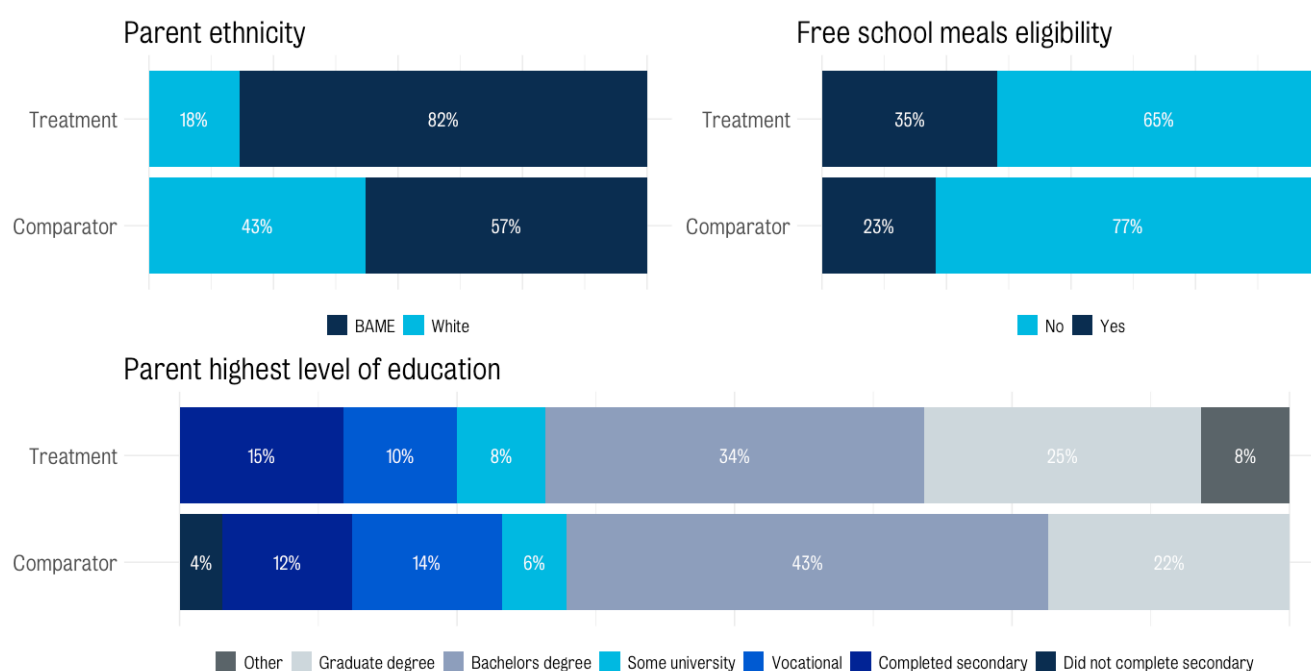
Figure 5: Distribution of endline outcome scores

Measured knowledge (endline)

Perceived knowledge (endline)

Leadership and community organising (endline)

Parental self efficacy (endline)

Group
■ Comparator
■ Treatment
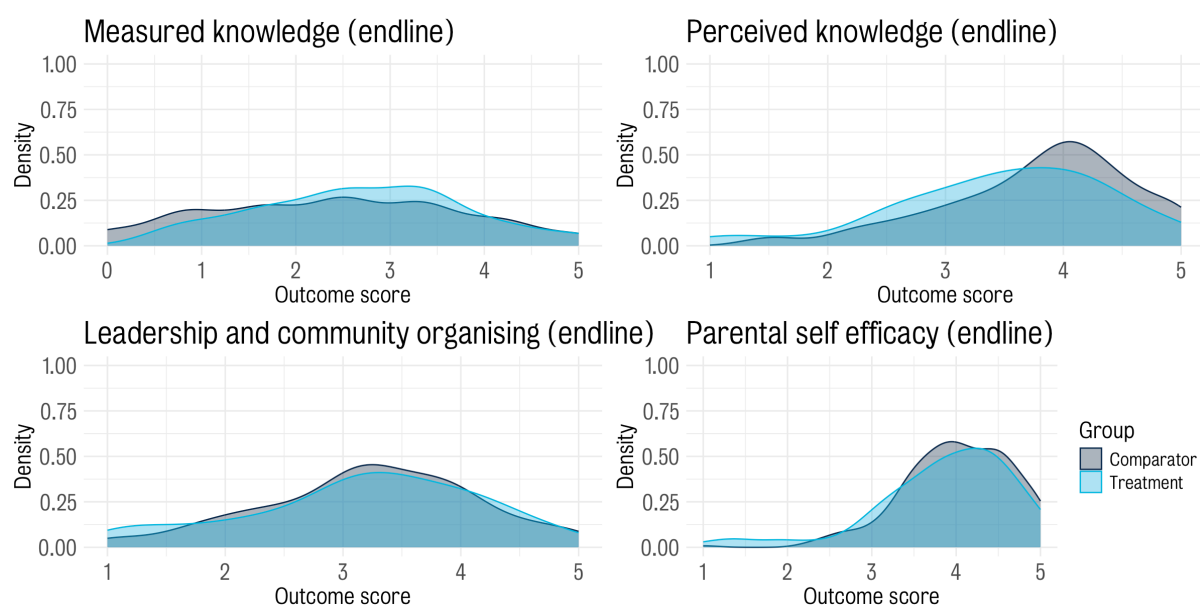
3.1.6.3 Matched sample

Matching was conducted using coarsened exact matching (CEM) via the `matchit` package in R. The protocol specified a range of parent- and child-level variables to be included in the matching.[3] However, inspection of the data showed a high level of variation

---

[3] Age, sex, ethnicity, highest level of education completed, employment status, region, IMD score of postcode, number of children under 18 in household, age(s) of children, gender of child(ren), whether child(ren) are eligible for free school meals.

in the profiles of respondents. Therefore, as the outcomes of interest relate to parents, the match used in the primary analysis only includes parent-level outcomes (gender, ethnicity, highest level of education, age, and employment status).

Several of the match quality tests specified in the protocol were not appropriate for the matched data post-coarsening, as they require continuous variables and most of the coarsened variables were binary. Therefore, a range of match options were tested, and pre- and post- match balance was visualised using love plots.

Figure 6 visualising the pre- and post-matching absolute standardised mean differences (SMD) of the covariates included in the match shows very high balance post-matching. This is expected given the CEM approach, which creates exact matches within bins of the coarsened variables. The covariates were coarsened to binary form for matching in a way that retained substantively meaningful categories (for example, working vs. not working). This ensured interpretability of the matched groups while avoiding overly broad bins that could mask important differences. This match retained 87 of 88 treatment units, so there was no heavy loss of observations. The matched group includes 192 comparator units. Due to weighting of the comparator units, this leads to an effective sample size of 122 comparator parents.

Figure 6: Plot of covariate balance
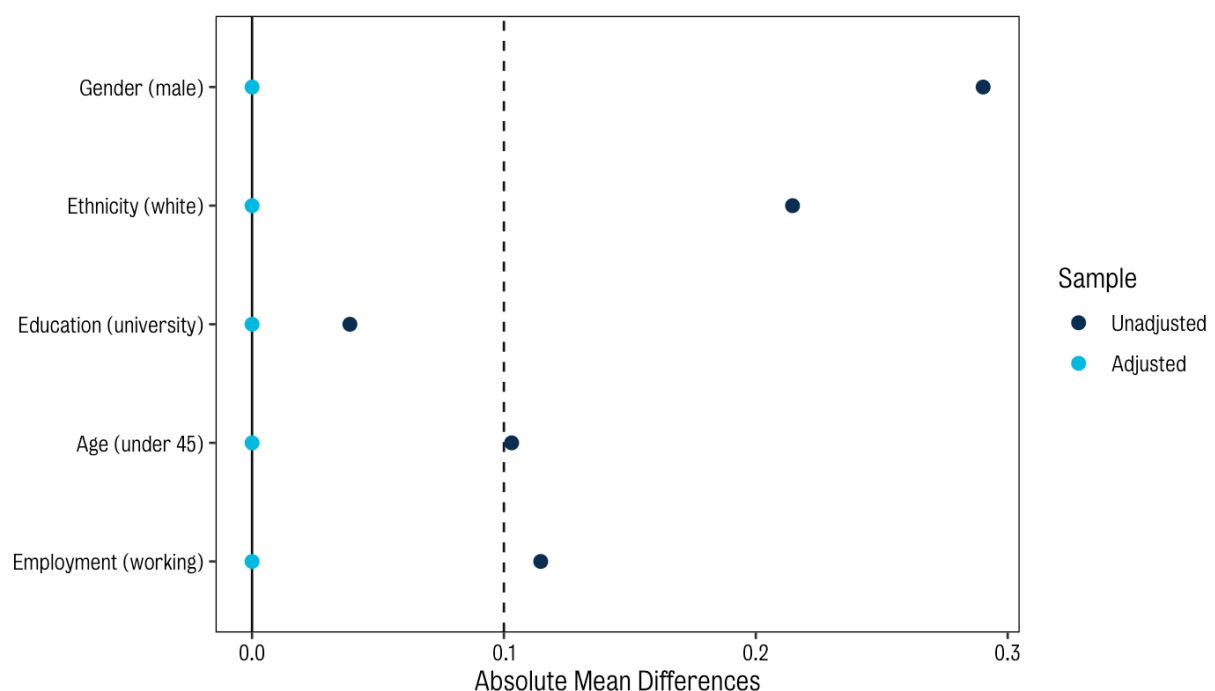
Following Greifer (2023), we visualised SMDs for the interaction of education and ethnicity, two parent-level covariates known to have large impacts on children's likelihood of progressing to higher education. Figure 7, below shows very high post-match balance on the interactions of education and ethnicity.

Figure 7: Plot of covariate balance with interactions
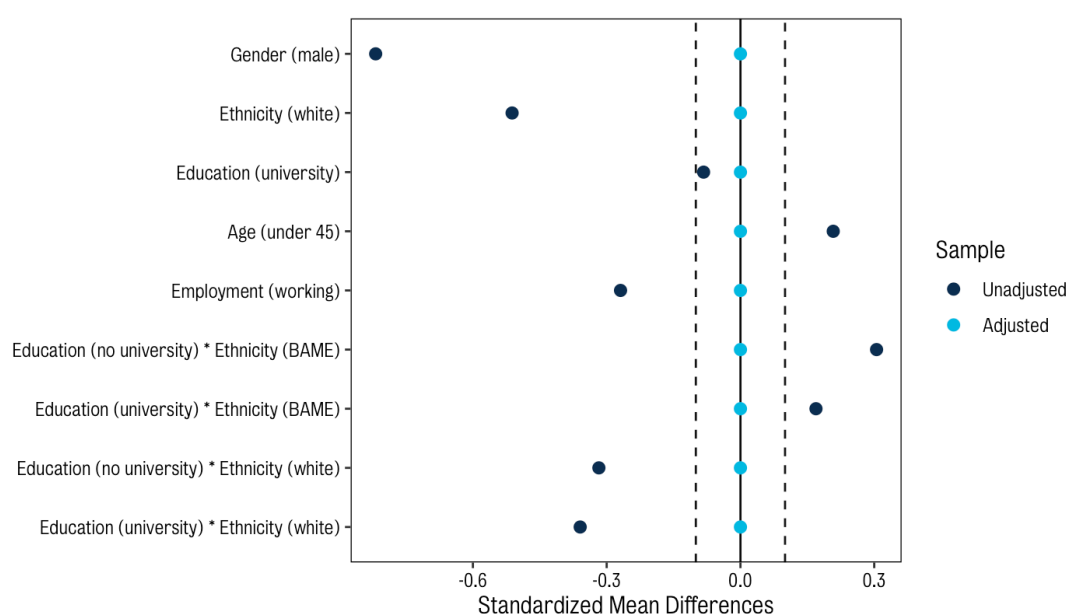
Finally, we regressed the child-level covariates specified in the match in the trial protocol on each of the endline outcomes to identify any significant associations. FSM eligibility was significantly associated with parents' endline scores on the measured knowledge outcome, and number of children was significantly associated with parents' endline scores on the leadership and community organising skills outcome. No other covariates were significant. Therefore, we added FSM eligibility and number of children to the parent-only match to test the impact on the match.

Figure 8: Plot of covariate balance including number and gender of children

Evaluation of Parent Power: Final Report | December 2025
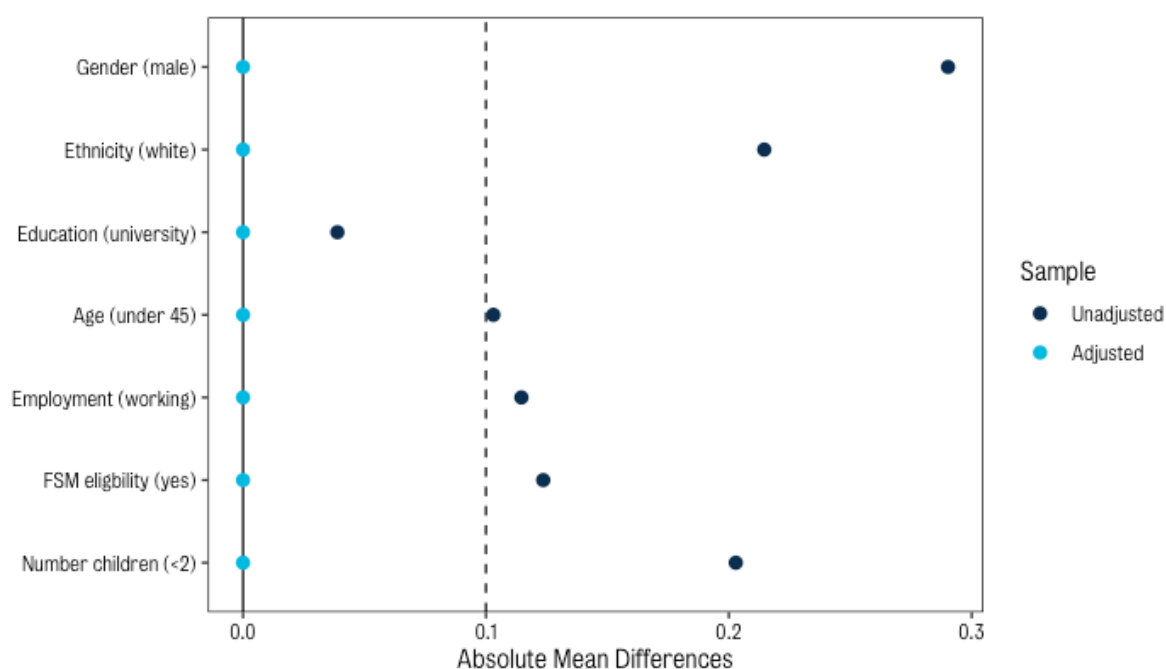
As shown in Figure 8, adding these covariates does not significantly improve the match. However, it does remove 15 treatment parents from the sample and reduce the matched comparator sample from 192 to 170. We therefore decided to progress with the parent-only match on the basis that it preserves a higher proportion of the sample and shows similar balance.

As the matching approach has deviated from the match specified in the protocol we have included additional matches as robustness checks. The robustness checks in section 4.1.2 include results of the primary analysis using the following samples:

1. All endline data (unmatched).
2. The originally specified match (parent- and child-level variables).
3. Matching on all originally specified variables but using Mahalanobis distance (1:1 with replacement) instead of CEM.

Region was not included in any of the models as the comparator sample was recruited from regions that were pre-matched to the regions of Parent Power chapters (see section 3.1.5). Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) quintile was also not included due to the low proportion of respondents who elected to provide their postcode in full (this was made optional given the highly identifiable nature of the data).

3.1.7 Analytical specification

We used an Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression with the following specification:

$$Y_{it} = \alpha + \beta_1 D_i + \beta_2 T_t + \beta_3 (D_i * T_t) + \beta_{4:10} \boldsymbol{X}_i + \varepsilon_{ct}$$

Where:

- Y_{it} is the outcome of interest for individual i at time t;
- α is the constant;
- D_i is the binary treatment indicator which is 1 for parents who engaged with Parent Power and 0 for comparator parents;
- T_t is set to 1 if time t is after the start of Parent Power, and 0 if it is before;
- X_i is a vector of characteristics of individual i that may be associated with the outcome of interest and participation with Parent Power: age, gender, ethnicity, highest level of education, employment status, number of children under 18 living in their household, schooling level of their youngest child, gender of child(ren), child(ren)'s FSM eligibility, and baseline outcome scores; and
- ε_{ct} is a cluster-robust standard error (clustered at the region level).

3.2 Insights from experience and practice

To investigate parents' experiences, and their perceptions of Parent Power, we utilised a qualitative approach to collect and analyse data, incorporating interviews with community organisers and parents who were engaged with the Parent Power programme.

3.2.1 Research questions

The qualitative research aimed to answer the following questions:

1. Why do parents choose to sign up for Parent Power, and what factors drive their engagement with programme activities?
    a. How do they perceive community organising and what role do they play in it?
2. Do parents perceive any impacts on their personal lives, their relationships, and local/wider community?
3. Do parents perceive any impact in terms of Parent Power supporting their children to access higher education?
4. What are the barriers and facilitators to implementing community organising activities within Parent Power (for both parents and community organisers)?
5. How do community organisers perceive their role in supporting parents and enabling engagement among parents?
6. How do community organisers and parents perceive the long-term impact of Parent Power on the wider community?

3.2.2 Design

3.2.2.1 Recruitment

Community organisers and parents received an email from TBC informing them about the research and including a link to a consent form. We contacted parents and community organisers who completed the consent form and invited them to either an online interview via Microsoft Teams or a phone interview. Parents who participated received a £25 online voucher in recognition of their time. At every stage of recruitment, we ensured that participants were aware that their participation was voluntary and that they could opt-out at any point.

3.2.2.2 Sample

We conducted a total of 27 semi-structured interviews with key participants involved in and engaged with the Parent Power programme between June 2025 and August 2025:

- Interviews with five community organisers working for Parent Power across five chapters.
- Interviews with 22 parents who were engaged with the Parent Power programme across six chapters.

Participants were purposively selected from lists provided by TBC, representing individuals who had been involved and engaged with the Parent Power programme for at least six months prior to the interview across their different chapter locations. The participants were diverse in their backgrounds across gender, and ethnicity, but one chapter was overrepresented in the final sample (12 of 22 interviews with parents). This approach aimed to capture a diverse account of perspectives and experiences across various locations while

ensuring those involved had been engaged for at least six months to build their perceptions about the programme.

3.2.2.3 Interviews

Participants had the option to conduct the interviews online or over the phone. We conducted the interview following discussion guides agreed with TBC (refer to Appendix 4). The interviews lasted between 45 minutes to an hour. All interviews were recorded after receiving consent from the participant. The interviews were transcribed in full by a professional transcription service.

3.2.3 Analysis

Transcripts were data managed to facilitate a case and theme approach. A thematic framework matrix was developed in NVivo, and data were summarised into it following the Framework Analysis approach (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003).

Following data management, the data were then analysed using a process of detection, categorisation and classification with the aim of identifying common themes (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). This stage in the process also involved team discussion to build a shared understanding of the data, and to encourage internal challenge.

4. Findings

4.1 Impact evaluation

We found no significant differences on three of the four outcomes: measured knowledge of the higher education system, parental self-efficacy, and leadership and community organising skills. On one outcome, perceived knowledge of the higher education system, we found a small but significant positive effect. However, this was not stable across a range of robustness checks, so further research is required to determine the security of this finding.

It is likely that limitations in the data collection mean that the impact evaluation was underpowered to detect significant effects across the outcomes. The endline sample was small, and exploratory analysis also suggested that self-selection bias may be present in the treatment sample, with parents who signed up for Parent Power likely being more motivated to participate in parental engagement activities.

Further, the group of parents who engaged with Parent Power had a maximum of 12 months to participate in the programme between baseline and endline data collection due to time horizons set by the funding for the evaluation. In the interviews, community organisers and parents suggested that they expect outcomes from Parent Power to take more than 12 months to materialise, so the impact evaluation may not have allowed enough time to pass for outcomes to emerge.

In keeping with good research practice, in this report we present findings from all analyses conducted as per the pre-registered analysis plan. However, we note the limitations of the results given the data constraints.

4.1.1 Primary analysis

Table 4 provides the estimated effect of participating in Parent Power on the four outcomes measured through this evaluation, and Figure 9 visualises the mean changes from baseline to endline for each of the outcomes by treatment group. The analysis presented in this section was conducted using the match specified in section 3.1.6.3 and the regression specified in section 3.1.7.

Table 4: Primary analysis impact estimates of Parent Power

	Estimate	P value	Confidence interval	Effect size
Measured knowledge	-0.11	0.32	-0.35 – 0.14	-0.09
Perceived knowledge	0.27	0.05*	0.01 – 0.53	0.30
Leadership & community organising skills	0.08	0.43	-0.17 – 0.33	0.09

	Estimate	P value	Confidence interval	Effect size
Parental self-efficacy	0.06	0.65	-0.28 – 0.41	0.09
Outcomes collected via survey. Controls for respondents' age, gender, ethnicity, highest level of education, employment status, number of children under 18 living in their household, schooling level of their youngest child, gender of child(ren), child(ren)'s FSM eligibility, and baseline outcome scores. Effect sizes are Cohen's d. See Appendix 3 for full regression tables. * p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001.				

Figure 9: Mean baseline and endline outcome scores by treatment group with counterfactual trends and 95% confidence intervals
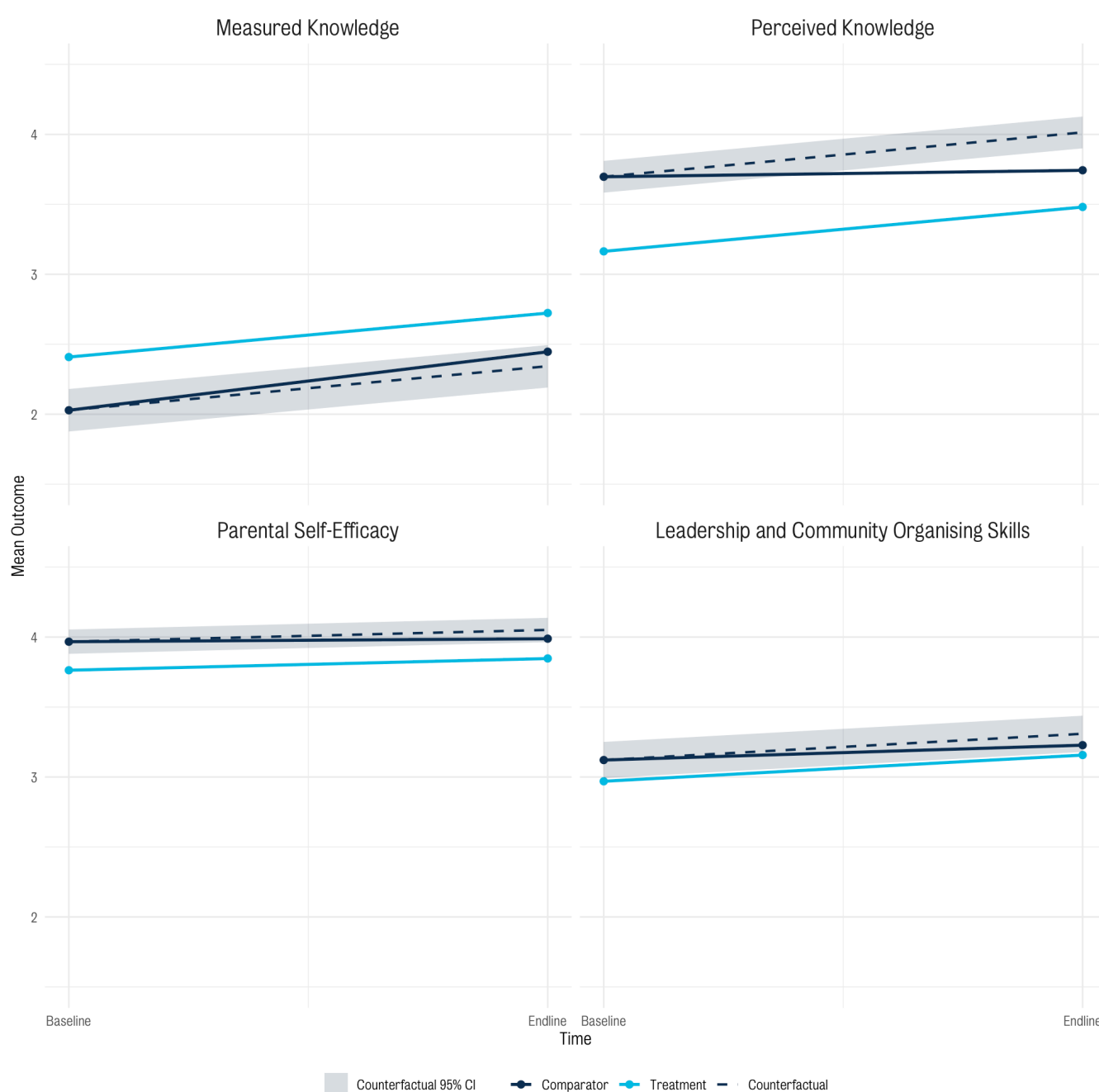
We find a small but significant effect for the perceived knowledge outcome. Receiving the treatment is associated with a 0.27-point increase on the five-point perceived knowledge scale. However, in four out of the five robustness checks (section 4.1.2) the effect was not significant. Therefore, this finding is unstable between analytical specifications. Given the instability of the effect, we do not believe that this is a secure finding, and further research is required to determine whether Parent Power has a significant positive impact on parents' perceived knowledge of higher education systems.

Overall, we found no significant differences between treatment and control across the three other outcomes measured. This means that, within the evaluation sample, participating in Parent Power did not significantly increase parents' measured knowledge of higher education systems, leadership and community organising skills, or parental self-efficacy. There are several reasons this may be the case. First, all the observed effect sizes are smaller than the estimated minimum detectable effect size (MDES) for the sample size of the primary match (Cohen's d = 0.44). Therefore, it is possible that the programme is having an effect, but the sample is not large enough to detect it. Alternatively, it is possible that these results reflect that Parent Power does not have a significant impact on these three outcomes.

It is also possible that participants were not materially treated, or in other words, that the parents who responded to the survey were not sufficiently engaged in the programme to experience any impacts. All parents who signed up for Parent Power from May to December 2024 and completed the baseline survey were invited to be included in endline data collection. While this preserved sample size, it also means that the analysis includes some parents who had little or no exposure to Parent Power activities. In the endline survey, treatment parents were asked how many Parent Power activities they had engaged with in the past 12 months. Figure 10 below shows that there was large variation in parents' level of engagement.

Figure 10: Number of Parent Power activities attended by treatment parents
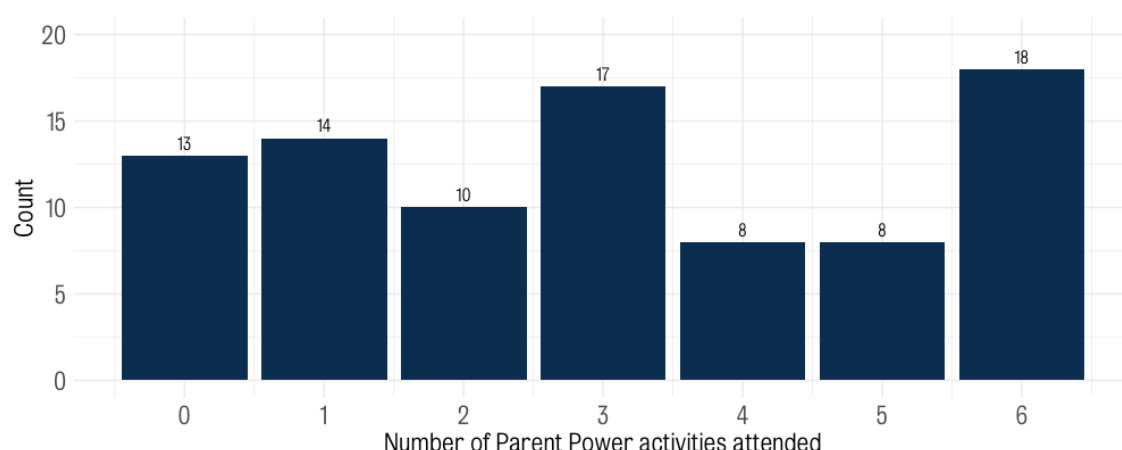
Of the 88 treatment parents in the endline sample, 13 (15 per cent) reported not having attended any Parent Power activities or said they did not know whether they had attended

any Parent Power activities (these were counted as zero), and 14 (16 per cent) reported only attending one activity. However, the mean response was three activities, and the modal response was six or more activities, suggesting that many parents who responded to the survey were highly engaged in the programme.

To check the impact that low engagement has on the results, we repeated the matching and analysis with the 13 non-attenders removed. As shown in Table 5 below, the results based on the two samples are very similar, suggesting that the responses from parents who did not attend any Parent Power activities, or did not remember attending any Parent Power activities, is not meaningfully attenuating the treatment estimates.

Table 5: Results of primary analysis and analysis excluding parents who reported engaging with zero Parent Power activities in past 12 months

		Estimate	P value	Confidence interval (CI)	Effect size
Measured knowledge	Primary analysis	-0.11	0.32	-0.35 – 0.14	-0.09
	Without 0 activities	-0.11	0.35	-0.39 – 0.17	-0.09
Perceived knowledge	Primary analysis	0.27	0.05*	0.01 – 0.53	0.30
	Without 0 activities	0.24	0.03*	0.03 – 0.46	0.27
Leadership & community organising skills	Primary analysis	0.08	0.43	-0.17 – 0.33	0.09
	Without 0 activities	0.10	0.32	-0.13 – 0.33	0.11
Parental self-efficacy	Primary analysis	0.06	0.65	-0.28 – 0.41	0.09
	Without 0 activities	0.11	0.42	-0.21 – 0.42	0.15
Outcomes collected via survey. Controls for respondents' age, gender, ethnicity, highest level of education, employment status, number of children under 18 living in their household, schooling level of their youngest child, gender of child(ren), child(ren)'s FSM eligibility, and baseline outcome scores. Effect sizes are Cohen's d. See Appendix 3 for full regression tables. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.					

Due to the small sample, we have decided not to conduct a dose-response or any subgroup analysis, although these were specified in the protocol.

4.1.2 Robustness checks

We reran the primary analysis on three alternative samples to check for any large variance in results. The three alternative samples were:

- **RC1:** all endline data (treatment group n=88, comparator group n=258).
- **RC2:** a comparator group constructed via the originally specified match (parent- and child-level covariates) using coarsened exact matching (treatment group n=48, comparator group n=88).

- **RC3:** a comparator group constructed via matching on all originally specified covariates but using the *Mahalanobis* distance approach (1:1 with replacement) instead of coarsened exact matching (treatment group n=88, comparator group n=62).

We also re-ran the specification without any covariates (excluding the baseline outcome) with the sample used for the primary analysis **(RC4)**, as well as excluding a number of responses that showed demographic inconsistencies before rerunning the primary match and analysis **(RC5)**.[45]

Table 6, below shows the estimates from the primary analysis, and the five robustness checks. Across the four outcomes, the results from all five robustness checks fall within the confidence intervals for the primary analysis, and most fall within 0.1 points of the primary estimate. The third robustness check shows a significant result for the leadership and community organising skills outcome. However, given the relative stability of the point estimates for the outcome in the five other models (0.08-0.13) and the large increase in the point estimate under the *Mahalanobis* distance model (0.31), we believe this reflects poorer matches in that model.

Table 6: Estimates of primary and alternative samples

	Primary analysis estimate	RC1 estimate	RC2 estimate	RC3 estimate	RC4 estimate	RC5 estimate
Measured knowledge	-0.11 (0.10)	-0.13 (0.09)	-0.28 (0.20)	-0.09 (0.14)	-0.10 (0.10)	-0.11 (0.09)
Perceived knowledge	0.27* (0.10)	0.25 (0.09)	0.15 (0.15)	0.25 (0.15)	0.27* (0.10)	0.23 (0.10)
Leadership & community organising skills	0.08 (0.10)	0.13 (0.09)	0.05 (0.21)	0.31* (0.11)	0.08 (0.10)	0.05 (0.12)
Parental self-efficacy	0.06 (0.13)	0.05 (0.13)	-0.08 (0.20)	0.09 (0.15)	0.06 (0.13)	0.08 (0.14)
Outcomes collected via survey. Standard errors in parentheses. See Appendix 3 for full regression tables. * p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001.						

---

[4] 44 responses were removed from the full sample as part of this robustness check.
[5] Given that the vast majority of surveys were completed online, we did not conduct any robustness checks against mode of survey completion.

4.1.3 Missing data

Given the high level of attrition between baseline and endline data collection (45 per cent in the treatment group and 51 per cent in the comparator group) we followed the missing data process specified in the trial protocol. In a binary logistic regression, a participant's education, their child's eligibility for FSM, and their baseline outcomes on the parental self-efficacy outcomes were all found to be significant predictors of missing endline data at the five per cent level. Baseline outcomes on measured knowledge were significant at the one per cent level.

Given the high number of covariates that were predictive of missingness, and that treatment was not correlated with attrition, this suggests that the data were Missing at Random (MAR). As the primary analysis already includes all the significant predictors of missing data as controls, we did not implement any further adjustment to account for missing data.

4.1.4 Strengths and limitations

4.1.4.1 DiD assumptions

In this section we list the three key assumptions of the DiD design, providing a discussion of how we sought to meet them in our design and analysis of the data.

Parallel trends assumption

This assumption requires that, in the absence of treatment, the treated and comparator groups would continue to have parallel trends in the outcomes of interest in the post-treatment period (Callaway and Sant'Anna, 2021). For the DiD estimate to be valid, there should be no time-varying differences between the treatment and comparator groups (i.e., in the absence of Parent Power, the outcomes of the treatment group would be expected to run in parallel to the outcomes of the comparator group). This assumption is inherently untestable, but its plausibility can be assessed by comparing time trends in pre-treatment periods to see whether they are similar, and by considering any factors that might cause the trends to diverge in the post-treatment period (other than the treatment).

As we only have one pre-intervention data collection point in time, we cannot assess parallel trends in the pre-treatment period. The plausibility of meeting this assumption relies on our confidence in the matching and whether there is any reason to believe these groups would have diverged in their trends. Though we had to deviate from the match specified in the trial protocol, we believe that the consistency of the results across a range of matches shown in Table 6 suggests that this is a well-matched sample, and that the difficulties with the specified match stem from the sample size rather than sample characteristics.

However, it is possible that parents who engaged with Parent Power are more motivated to participate in parental engagement activities, and therefore in the absence of Parent Power may have engaged with other programmes that would have affected their outcomes. This is supported by the data shown in Figure 11 below. At endline, parents in the comparator

group were provided with a short explanation of the Parent Power programme and asked if they would be interested in engaging if Parent Power opened a chapter in their local area. Just below half (48 per cent) of parents said they would be interested, which may suggest that the treatment group were more motivated than the comparator group.

Figure 11: Comparator parent responses to whether they would be interested in engaging with a Parent Power chapter in their local area (endline)
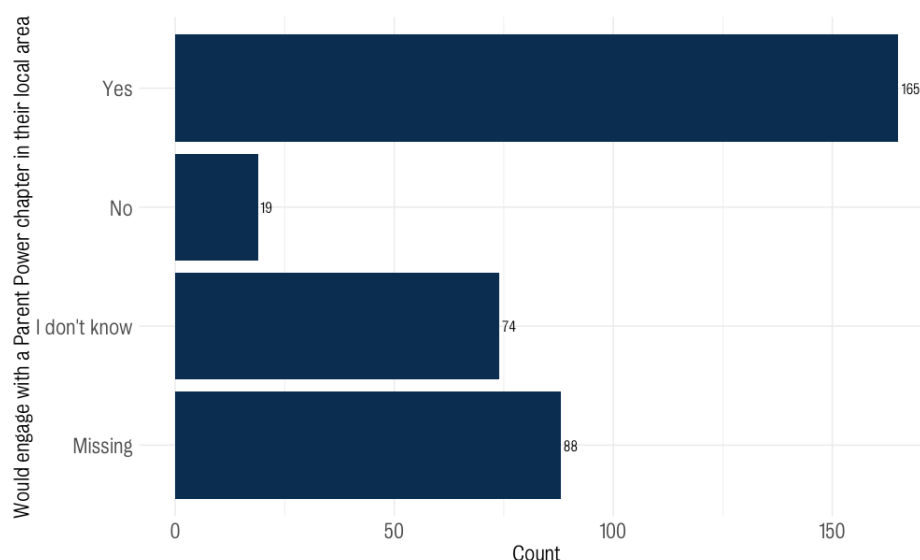
Exchangeability assumption

This assumption is related to the parallel trends assumption and requires that the allocation of treatment and comparator groups must be unrelated to the outcome trend in the absence of treatment. That is, it requires that there are no confounding factors that affect the outcomes of one group and not the other, meaning that any given set of units, or the whole set, could be exchanged from treatment to comparator (or vice versa) prior to treatment, without affecting the trends in outcome (Rudolph and Laan, 2017).

As shown in Figure 6, the matched sample achieved a strong balance on all the covariates of interest. This supports the exchangeability assumption as these covariates were identified as the most likely confounding variables for the outcomes. However, as shown in Figure 11 above there is reason to believe that the two groups may not be similarly motivated to participate in parental engagement activities. Only 48 per cent of comparator parents said they would engage with Parent Power if a chapter opened in their local area, while all of the treatment parents at least completed the initial sign-up for Parent Power. While matching achieved strong balance on the observed parent-level covariates, Figure 11 suggests a likely difference in levels of baseline motivation, which may itself influence outcomes. If there is an association between motivation and the outcomes measured, the exchangeability assumption may not hold.

Stable unit treatment value assumption

This assumption requires that the potential outcomes of one unit are not affected by those of other units. That is, the potential outcomes of parents in the comparator group will not be affected by the outcomes of the treatment group (or vice versa) (Sinclair, McConnell and Green, 2012).

As the comparator pool was drawn from regions where Parent Power does not have chapters and does not recruit participants, there is very little risk of spillover in the sample. To further safeguard against this, when selecting comparator regions we ensured that there was at least one local area between the comparator region and the Parent Power chapter region to avoid the risk of residents of neighbouring local areas attending a Parent Power chapter.

We also do not expect spillovers between parents in Parent Power chapters and social contacts who are not members of a chapter. Relational power is seen as a key mechanism for Parent Power. Therefore, the programme focuses on parents developing relational engagement within chapters instead of outside of the chapters themselves.

4.1.4.2   Sample size and timelines

A significant limitation of this analysis is the small sample size. The endline sample size meant the study is only powered to detect medium effect sizes (Cohen's d. 0.44 for the primary match). However, all of the effect sizes in the modelling were small, so it is possible that there are significant effects associated with Parent Power, but the evaluation was not powered to detect them. Parents also only had a maximum 12-month exposure to Parent Power, and many parents in the endline sample also had quite low engagement with the intervention. Given these limitations, the qualitative research in the following section includes parents who were highly engaged in Parent Power for at least six months to explore perceptions of impact.

Due to the timeline of the evaluation, it is also possible that parents did not have enough time in the programme to achieve material change in some outcomes of interest. Specifically, it was not possible to track longer term outcomes such as children's progression to university, so there are key outcomes of interest for Parent Power that this evaluation was not able to measure. The study timeline also meant it was not possible to fully validate the outcome measures used. A small pilot was conducted with newly signed-up Parent Power participants in May 2024 which found a normal distribution on the outcome scores. However, it was not possible to repeat the survey within the timelines and therefore we could not measure test-retest reliability.

4.2 Insights from experience and practice

4.2.1 RQ1: Why do parents choose to sign up for Parent Power, and what factors drive their engagement with programme activities?

4.2.1.1 Recruitment mechanisms

Parent Power uses both formal as well as relational or peer-driven communication methods to recruit parents. Some parents who participated in interviews found out about the programme via schools through various communication methods, such as letters, and emails. Community organisers also deliver in-person presentations at schools to raise awareness about the programme. Parent Power also relies on its existing network of parents for outreach activities and to recruit parents through word-of-mouth. Many parents found out about the programme through personal referrals from friends or neighbours, and information shared by other members of Parent Power, such as flyers promoting trips and events.

4.2.1.2 Motivations for joining the programme

Our interviews show that parents join the programme for four main reasons: to advocate for their children with schools, to gain more knowledge about the higher education system, to gain more skills and transferable experience for themselves and children, and to contribute towards making a positive change for children in their local community.

Many parents saw the programme as a platform to advocate for educational changes and **improve communication between themselves and their child's schools**. Before joining Parent Power, many parents reported feeling disconnected from their child's school and found it challenging to effectively support their child's academic progress or understand the future options available to them. Parent Power provided an opportunity for parents to share ideas and concerns and have their perspectives acknowledged.

> "When I found out about Parent Power, it just clicked in the right places because prior...I've always had to voice concerns and go fight my battles alone. To get work experience [for my children], anything to do with school...I've had to go and battle it by myself... [Parent Power] just let me take a bit more of a breath because I've got more people around me. I feel like I've got support. I don't have to shout as loud. I don't have to run around as much to find the information that I need or [my daughter] needs for her education. So that's why I joined." – Parent, Birmingham

Parent Power was seen as an opportunity for parents to **gain more knowledge and better understanding of the UK higher education system**. Many parents expressed awareness of the difference in navigating primary education compared to secondary education, particularly feeling unclear about the next steps for higher education, and the processes involved.

> "I just thought this is a really important organisation to be involved in...I immediately signed up, because I had no knowledge or understanding myself of further education in any way, shape or form, and certainly not at the university level. I thought, I have to join. I have to get involved. And it was from that point I've been a member of Parent Power"
> – Parent, Oldham

Parents also perceived Parent Power as equally beneficial for both the parents and their children as it allowed them to **gain more skills and experience**. Their children gained guidance on university entry and post-college opportunities. For parents, the programme offered the chance to develop skills, confidence, and access new experiences.

> "It sounded very appealing for my son, who's now in Year 10. And I thought he could learn from it and I could also help grow in my career in making maybe a career change. And it has helped me, as well as my son." – Parent, Birmingham

Finally, a key theme that was shared by some parents was the motivation to make positive changes not only for their own children, but also for others within the local community. These parents expressed a desire to **contribute towards addressing local inequalities.** Parents acknowledged the challenges of coming from under-resourced areas and how inequalities tend to limit freedom of choice and opportunities for shaping future pathways, particularly around higher education. They also emphasised that access to, and understanding of, higher education plays a vital role in **improving opportunities locally.** There was shared recognition of the need for change, which parents understood would require collective effort and collaboration.

> "Well, the lack of choice, the lack of freedom, I think that's the biggest motivator. Where we live... there's not much going on, nobody is doing anything about it. With... Parent Power, I thought, it would be good to do something together, to change something around this area." – Parent, Fenland

For some parents, their drive to get involved stemmed from personal challenges or their experiences coming from difficult backgrounds. One parent, for example, described his experiences as a refugee and his determination to ensure that his son and other young people would not face the same struggles he had faced, including lack of educational support or access to accurate information to make informed decisions about their future.

> "The other thing which motivates me is, I came as a refugee... I went through what my son is going through at the moment, but at the time, I didn't have any support, so I have had to navigate through a lot of hurdles... So I always think to myself that, I wish I had all the information I know, I could have made a much better decision in my life. So I don't want my son... and other youngsters to go through what I have gone through. So that motivates me to go to be in the team." – Parent, Cardiff

4.2.1.3 Factors driving engagement

Many parents initially reported having little or no expectations of the programme when they first joined. Factors driving initial engagement varied and included the programme's inclusive nature, the opportunity for collective action and the benefits parents obtained through joining the activities.

Early involvement led parents to develop a clearer idea about the programme. Many noted that the sessions were informative and sparked their interest. Some parents highlighted the fact that Parent Power operates an **inclusive and welcoming community** organising group, bringing together parents of different ages, from different ethnic backgrounds and with different socio-economic statuses, allowing them to network and share ideas. This inclusive approach helped create a supportive and shared purpose and was seen as particularly appealing.

> "But this Parent Power seem to engage... inclusive for everybody. It wasn't just the specific you have to be on benefits, you have to be a SEN kid...it felt like it was inclusive of incorporating everybody, so I thought, this is actually some opportunity to get some benefit for my children." – Parent, Bradford

Another central theme that sustained engagement was the social aspect of the programme and the opportunity parents obtained from working together as a community. Many parents valued the support of the community organiser and the chance to collaborate with one another. The commitment to the chapter's success created a **sense of shared goals and purpose.** This clear purpose, in turn, nourished a motivation to continue to campaign for the issues that mattered to parents. Additionally, parents were able to **connect and build friendships with others** they might not usually have met. Many spoke about how this **sense of community cohesion** was motivating in and of itself, with participants also noting that the social interactions had a positive impact on their **mental health and wellbeing**.

> "There's a bit of a community cohesion type thing going on, I find. So where parents are bringing parents together. And, you know, there's lots of advantages with that. I mean, from an academic perspective and also from a social perspective, it allows for parents from different backgrounds to come together on one platform. You're getting to know people that you might not normally have the opportunity to speak to. So that's good for your mental health, for your well-being, for isolation." – Parent, Bradford

Parents were also able to sustain their engagement through active involvement through three main programme activities: regular group meetings, one-to-one relational meetings with community organisers, and opportunities to attend external events.

Group meetings were often held at schools, providing a space for parents to receive updates, hear from guest speakers, and share ideas with each other. Parents described these as valuable for having a space for gaining information and feeling part of a collective. Additionally, community organisers used WhatsApp group chats as the primary form of

regular communication with parents to share live updates about upcoming events, group meetings and campaign plans, which many parents appreciated.

One-to-one meetings with community organisers were described as particularly impactful, giving parents the chance to share their stories, ask specific questions, access tailored support and deepen their understanding of the programme. Parents explained that this was often where their main concerns were addressed and where they felt most listened to.

External events were also a strong motivator for engagement. Parents spoke enthusiastically about experiential activities such as trips to universities such as Cambridge, conferences, and seminars on a range of issues including apprenticeships. These opportunities were described as eye-opening, both for children and their families, as they helped to raise aspirations, making access to higher education feel more achievable.

4.2.2 RQ1(a): How do they perceive community organising and what role do they play in it?

In the interviews, many parents viewed community organising as a process that moved people from attempting to address their concerns individually and on their own, to building collective strength within their chapter and pursue shared goals and positive action. Parents' roles within community organising were varied and depended on individual preferences and chapters' specific campaign. They ranged from being involved in a passive manner through attending meetings, to taking part in active leadership roles.

4.2.2.1 Building collective power/relational power

Parents said they view community organising primarily as an effective method for building **collective strength and relational power**. They recognised they are usually isolated with limited power as individuals, but felt they can achieve more together as a collective rather than alone.

Parents also highlighted how community organising was an effective method for people to work on **finding common ground and identify shared goals**, noting that collective strength and relational power is key to achieve change. The key elements that were mentioned as part of community organising were parents building trust, supporting and empowering each other to take action, and collectively creating opportunities for positive change.

> "You know, it's really good to see how much we can achieve for our community when a few heads join together. And it would not be possible if there was no Parent Power, because at the end of the day... Parent Power is what brought us together." – Parent, Bradford

Additionally, parents saw a key element of community organising was its **embrace of diversity**. Parents highlighted that community organising brings together a diverse range of

people from multiple backgrounds to work across their differences on issues they agree on. Many felt that this is particularly important for groups that are often marginalised, underserved, or socially disadvantaged, as it provides a platform for their voices to be heard. For some, this was felt to be particularly important in areas facing significant deprivation.

> "Especially [here], where it's quite severely deprived of many things. So you need that community involvement, especially…Parent Power, where they can help…they can basically give…information of what [we] need." – Parent, Bradford

4.2.2.2   Commitment and adopting a broad perspective

Parents also acknowledged that effective participation in community organising required **commitment** as achieving objectives established through community organising relies on **consistent attendance, punctuality, involvement and engagement.**

Additionally, parents also reported that participation means **adopting a broad perspective** to ensure activities and goals support all children, and contribute to the community's future, rather than focusing solely on individual self-interest. **Active listening** was mentioned as playing an important role in facilitating collaboration, given the diverse backgrounds and perspectives within the group.

> "So you have to be able to listen because we have so many different viewpoints, so many different parents from different backgrounds. So you have to be able to listen and then organise what you've heard" – Parent, Bradford

4.2.2.3   Parents role in community organising group

Parents' role varied depending on the chapter's campaign focus and parents' individual preferences. Parents' main responsibilities included attending meetings to gain relevant knowledge, participating in discussions to address their concerns, and disseminating relevant information within their networks and communities. Beyond this, some preferred to participate by listening and learning in a more passive manner, opting not to take on leadership roles.

> "I don't want to be one of those leaders in the group. The way I see my role in the group is more of as a contributor rather than a leader, because I like the idea of [the community organiser] being the leader, but developing skills and leadership skills and supporting others who may not have those skills at this time." – Parent, Oldham

Some shared that while the Brilliant Club handled much of the logistics such as organising trips and events, parents were well-placed to do outreach, share opportunities within their networks and encourage other parents to participate. They viewed their role as attending events and motivating others to join.

> "I've invited quite a few families...It's just building relationships, chatting to them. They always thank me when I invite them...[they say] all this is happening, we'll come, we'll support it. It's just seeing different families getting involved." – Parent, Knowsley

4.2.2.4 Pathways to leadership roles

Not all parents chose to restrict their role to outreach, some parents had chosen to act as leaders in the group. A key objective of the programme was to enhance leadership skills among willing ordinary parents, enabling them to take part in advocacy independently, without significant assistance from the community organiser. Leadership opportunities were offered through slow and gradual empowerment, as parents were given the opportunity to build confidence and skills through delivering speeches at events, sharing updates during meetings, and delivering presentations to wider audiences.

> "We don't force people to say things or do things, but we encourage people... we prod them. And then they start talking, engaging, and you can see you know, they have taken on sort of leadership roles. If you give them a bit of responsibility as well, like, say, for instance, 'So in the next meeting, would you say a few lines here or there or would you say something about it?' And then you can see people start coming out and it's good because it's empowering the individuals there as well." – Parent, Oldham

Although not all parents took on the leadership opportunities, most acknowledged that the programme fostered **personal growth** regardless, with many reporting **increased self-confidence.**

> "Everyone is building confidence. They are growing as people...progression... in their career, learning new skills, being good role models to their children. So it's paying into the community, because parents are doing things that they didn't even know they had the ability and the confidence to do." – Parent, Bradford

To better support the uptake of leadership roles, parents expressed a need for more **tailored or relevant training** in community organising methods. Access to courses relevant to their chapter's focus was seen as necessary to perform their tasks effectively and with confidence. One parent noted that the training received was beneficial, suggesting that access to relevant courses could assist parents with new or unfamiliar tasks. Others noted that insufficient training relevant to their chapter limited their ability to engage effectively and perform their duties with confidence.

> "That is something that I would like, please, because it's not even something I've ever done before...it would be brilliant if I could actually get training for something like this, or do a short course which would give me more knowledge and skills." – Parent, Bradford

4.2.3 RQ2: Do parents and community organisers perceive any impacts on the parents' personal lives, their relationships, and local/wider community?

We found that both community organisers and parents observed a positive impact of Parent Power on parents' personal lives and their relationships. Due to a reported increased understanding of higher education, parents **felt empowered** to start making personal changes that had a positive impact on themselves and their mental health, as well as their children, and others around them. According to the community organisers, Parent Power moved parents from being isolated and somewhat uninformed, to informed individuals showing **early signs of becoming active community members**.

4.2.3.1 Parent Power's impact on parents' personal lives

A key outcome reported by community organisers and parents was that with **increased knowledge and understanding** of how the higher education system works, **parents felt more able to share informed advice with others.** This led to **increased confidence and a sense of personal empowerment,** where parents felt more able to support their children effectively and disseminate information to others.

> "The university trips have had massive impact... it's only when we visit them that they realise that actually, you know, why should we be excluded from these wonderful institutions because of our economic and financial situations or where we are from?... If we change our thinking and we broaden our horizons and we become more knowledgeable about the whole system, then our children can access these institutions, and it's all about changing the way we think. So I think the university trips provide the biggest light bulb moments for the parents." – Community organiser

Both parents and community organisers also highlighted the **improvement in wellbeing and reduced isolation** reported by parents involved with Parent Power. The in-person group meetings and WhatsApp groups provide a **source of friendship** for many parents. They provide essential opportunities to share their concerns and reduce their sense of isolation. The programme also provided parents a safe space to discuss their concerns together without judgement, creating strong bonds.

> "And it provides parents with... friendship and a bit of a like a listening ear. And parents go away feeling better that you know, these big issues in society are not just being ignored but actually we're talking about them. And they go away feeling less isolated." – Community organiser

These connections often occurred between parents who may otherwise have not felt they had much in common. Parents realised that despite their differences, they were all driven by the same goal in relation to their children's educational outcomes and aspirations. This process of finding common ground across differences **breaks down stereotypes and builds**

bonds across differences (bridging social capital), community spirit and networks for the individual parents.

> " A lot of friendships across cultures are formed, and a lot of understanding of cultural differences are happening. Breaking down stereotypes and finding that we're all the same, what drives us is the same, our aspirations for our children. These are all wonderful things that we see as an effect of having a group like [area] Parent Power." – Community organiser

4.2.3.2 Securing early wins, taking ownership and leveraging social capital

Parents shared that the programme supported them to build **social capital** and spoke of members bonding with those who shared their background, as well as those from different backgrounds, and lending support to one another. Several parents involved with the programme spoke of finding value in offering support within these parent communities. Bilingual parents were able to translate the information provided by Parent Power to support and use it to inform and engage parents who do not speak English. Parents who already worked in education found value in the opportunity to further support members of their chapter using their specialist or professional knowledge. This was frequently raised in relation to helping other chapter members' children complete their university applications.

> "I can speak to more people, especially people have language issues or not as aware of things and what's going [on] around them...if you have information yourself, then you could pass it on as well." – Parent, Bradford

Additionally, both parents and community organisers observed some of the parents were already **securing wins and achieving their goals**. A key local campaign launched in one of the chapters was free tuition club for children in years 9-11. Parents from this chapter expressed the hope that their tuition club would have a long-term community presence and make a difference to their local community. As part of this, parents started **showing agency and taking ownership** of achieving and sustaining their collective goals.

Further, outside of the tuition club campaign, the parents of that chapter started to leverage the social capital they had built to create opportunities for mutual support and self-development. Some of the examples mentioned were sessions on DIY home repairs for women, and specialist support offered by professionals within the group. This shows a critical step where the parents moved beyond the campaign and started **relying on each other** to meet a range of practical and personal needs within the community.

> "With the tuition group, it's not just tuition. There's also other things involved. For example, they want to do DIY for women... Or there's one lady who can help you with medical [knowledge] because she's a pharmacist... them kind of things, have a big impact on the community because then people know where to turn, rather than just thinking, oh no, I don't have anybody to help me" – Parent, Bradford

For one parent in particular, the programme had a significant impact on their personal life through gaining employment. Through taking on the role as treasurer for her Parent Power chapter, she reflected on how the experience helped her re-build her confidence and develop new skills.

> "And then I was given the job, the finance person, so the treasurer for the Parent Power [chapter]. And to be honest, it's really helped me grow as well as my son... because it's empowered me as a parent because I was out of work for such a long time, I had a 15 year career break, and I didn't even know that I could do some of the things that I have done. So I've grown a lot." – Parent, Bradford

4.2.3.3 Perceptions of how Parent Power affected the local and wider community

Community organisers and parents both observed **early signs of their influence in the local and wider community,** though they recognised these were in the very early stages. Through uniting like-minded and highly motivated parents, Parent Power created a group that felt equipped to make long-term changes in their area.

From the perspective of both community organisers and parents, parents began taking ownership of their group, moving from collective discussions of issues, to **setting up campaigns to address these concerns**. For example, in one chapter a campaign has been set up by parents to address the lack of mental health support for their children, which they believe has a negative impact on their children's wellbeing and educational outcome. Some parents have **met with local councillors and MPs** showing early stages of **seeking to influence politics**.

> "it's having a positive impact. Like I said, we're working together, trying to get the council to do more [on children's mental health]. Now the council, they're doing different hubs where the young children, or young people can just drop in, which means that help is more accessible. Yes, [Parent Power] definitely has impact, we work together on different issues, whatever issue arises." – Parent, Oldham

Parents getting involved in community organising is also seen to foster community cohesion and encourages network building. Community organisers reported were working together with parents to **build their network with wider institutions** (schools, universities, local charities) and people of influence (e.g., councillors) to ensure that Parent Power has a visible presence in the local and wider community. Parents were also recruiting other parents they knew through word of mouth. This suggests that **network building is happening both at individual and institutional level,** with the aim to build community strength and wider alliances.

> "I think with Parent Power... [parents have] realised working together they go a lot further and achieve a lot more... now, my recruitment I don't really send messages to schools anymore. A lot of my recruitment is parents, so parents want the best for

> other members of the community...they are inviting them in and saying, 'Let's get involved in this or that'... they want the wider community to benefit from this as well. They're not just saying, 'I'm just doing what I'm doing forget anybody else'. They're now seeing the benefit that working together, they can achieve so much more." – Community organiser

Some parents felt that these improved networks were already producing positive results. A lack of communication from schools was one of the key factors that motivated parents to join Parent Power. Due to having **improved influence in schools** through the Parent Power community, some parents reported now receiving more frequent updates from schools about their children's education and more information about higher education directly from their children's schools.

> "I've seen that there's been an increase in the amount of information we are getting [from my child's school] about education and about higher education. Before it wasn't like that. And now, ever since engaging Parent Power, and Parent Power wrote to the school to ask them what there is there for our children and asking for more information. It has spurred them into action, and they are providing more information for parents and children as well regarding higher education. So I think that has been an impact coming from Parent Power." – Parent, Peterborough

Finally, community organisers shared that through regular discussions on often stigmatised issues, such as mental health, Parent Power is starting to contribute towards **breaking down stigmas at a community level**. This was particularly evident when chapters campaigns were taken up by wider institutions, such as universities and local politicians. Since most campaigns have only been running for less than a year, the wider systemic changes the campaigns are aiming for cannot be seen yet. However, community organisers were optimistic about the trajectory of the programme and believe that these changes will come about with continued action.

> "So we found that by coming together, talking, we have broken down the isolation and the stigma that surrounds issues such as mental health, so that that in itself is very empowering." – Community organiser

4.2.4 RQ3: Do parents and community organisers perceive any impact in terms of Parent Power supporting their children to access higher education?

We found that both community organisers and parents believe that Parent Power has a positive impact on supporting children's access to higher education and their broader educational journey. The key outcomes identified across the two groups ranged from increasing knowledge and awareness about higher education and other educational

47

pathways, to shifts in attitudes and behaviour in both parents and children that make accessing higher education feel more achievable.

4.2.4.1 Increased knowledge and awareness of the higher education system and other educational pathways

One of the key outcomes reported by both community organisers and parents was the increase in parents' knowledge and awareness of the higher education sector and processes. Through Parent Power, parents accessed university visits, support to learn how to navigate university websites, information on the importance of personal statements, and sessions on completing UCAS applications, among other things. This helped parents develop **practical skills**, but also changed **parents' attitudes towards higher education pathways**. Community organisers shared that parents initially dismissed higher education as inaccessible to people like them, but this changed after engaging with Parent Power.

> "When we went for the first trip, I knew absolutely zero about education system...Now, I've got clear information how my kids will manage to go to university if they would like to. They were very helpful, absolutely, in a massive way." – Parent, Fenland

> "A lot of our parents didn't know much about the higher education sector at all, and it was because they didn't have that knowledge, they just automatically did not even consider it as an option for their children and didn't really push their children as much into that direction. But now, because of Parent Power, they've been to visit a few universities. Every meeting...we build that bank of knowledge through the information, advice and guidance... So now because of that knowledge [university has] become very accessible to them, whereas before they had these thoughts like, 'Oh, that's not for us. That's for the rich and famous'... But now... if the child wants it, it's very much accessible. And it's very much doable and affordable." – Community organiser

Both parents and community organisers shared that **increased awareness and knowledge** was not restricted to the higher education system but also included alternative educational pathways, such as modern apprenticeships, Higher National Diplomas, and online education centres. Through the provision of holistic information about the education system, parents reported that the programme enabled them to help their children identify the best option for them, based on their personal strengths, interests, and future career goals.

> "One of the events at the university were about all the different pathways to a career. I was aware there's all these apprenticeships, all these other routes, but I wasn't confident in them. I've always been following the standard way, which is... GCSE, A Levels and undergraduate university course, whereas there's loads and loads of different options now... Without Parent Power, I would have [had] no idea, we would have probably missed out on all that." – Parent, Bradford

4.2.4.2 Shifts in attitudes and increased aspirations

According to both community organisers and parents, gaining better knowledge about higher education and other education pathways led to an increase in parents' **confidence and shifts in their and their children's attitudes and aspirations**. Parents moved from initially believing that higher education is not for people like them, to actively encouraging their children to aim high.

Community organisers that university visits, in particular, are popular and highly effective facilitators in shifting aspirations for parents. Visiting prestigious institutions like the University of Oxford and the University of Cambridge and understanding the available support systems that exist for students provides a tangible and direct experience for parents to shift their attitudes around **belonging and the accessibility of these institutions.**

> "Taking parents to Cambridge University. Oh my God, it was just the most amazing experience because I had so many parents come up to us and said, 'We would never have thought of Cambridge University for my child living in [this area], living in poverty, disadvantage, it's one of the universities that we wouldn't even think of our child would go'. They've gone [to visit and] they've been made to feel welcomed. They've been given all this information of how they can be supported, how their child can be supported… and they come back and they said, 'Oh my God, that is something I would love my child to go and I am going to really, really push my child to aim for that'." – Community organiser

Additionally, parents also reported that, following university visits, they noted positive impacts on their children too, particularly an **increase in their children's ambition** and **motivation to continue to higher education,** as they began to see themselves in those institutions. The information provided by the programme helped the children decide which career they wanted to pursue, motivating them to work towards a long-term goal.

> "We visited University of Oxford, Jesus College. And my son went with me. We met a… number of students from the university, mostly from the same background as my son… my son engaged with them quite a lot. And, by the time we've come back from the visit, I did see quite a marked difference in the ambition the motivation from my son" – Parent, Cardiff

4.2.4.3 Shifts in parents' engagement and quality of support

Community organisers and parents reported that the internal changes that parents experienced such as increased awareness, knowledge, and confidence led to positive changes in behaviour, especially in how parents supported their children. Parents shared that the programme had a positive impact on how they support their children's education on a practical and emotional level, including **being more involved and having more conversations** with their children about higher education at home. Parents also said they

feel more able to provide the necessary resources and tools their children may need to succeed and achieve their academic goals.

> "When we talk, we have common ground and understanding because I know what my children know. So we can discuss that and what their plans for the future are." – Parent, Peterborough

Additionally, parents also shared that, due to learning more about mental health issues via the chapters' specific campaigns, they were able to become **more understanding and compassionate** with their children and offer better quality of support. They consciously reduced pressure on their children, providing support for their academic attainment while being conscious of the possible impacts on their mental health.

> "I think I'm just a bit more understanding and kinder, and I think because of the stuff that we've been doing around mental health... I'm becoming more of a compassionate parent as a result of Parent Power because I don't compare myself with other parents and put pressure on my children about achieving, because in the past it was like, you know, like families competing of whose children doing better and I get that and I get the fact that...we want them to reach their potential. But we don't want it to be at a cost of their mental health. So I think I'm kind of being more mindful of that. So I want my children to reach their potential, but at the same time, I want to be a compassionate and kind parent throughout it." – Parent, Oldham

4.2.4.4   Increased advocacy

According to community organisers, some parents went beyond directly supporting their own children's education and started engaging in **advocacy.** Parents moved from initially feeling lost and having doubts regarding the higher education system to **actively collaborating with the community organisers and other parents,** asking questions, discussing, and strategising on how to better support their children.

> "I get parents contact me saying, 'My child wants to do this, can you give me more information on this?', or, 'Can you do a talk on this?', or, 'Can we arrange a visit to this...?'... because I feel like they've had the encouragement of, 'Actually, there is a way'." – Community organiser

Parents became increasingly engaged in their children's educational journey, a change that was also shown when they started to **use their voices to advocate** for better opportunities for their children, as well as increase their networks and building the **initial phases of collective strength** and relational power.

> "They become more involved because they have that knowledge now, and they have that voice. They have that empowerment that, you know, we can actually talk about this... so we see a lot more involvement, and there's a lot of passion there...they want their children to have every opportunity... these aspirations, these concerns have

always been there, but [the parents] just did not know how to express them and having like-minded parents who they can talk to... and they share information with each other, share ideas. So it's wonderful to see... people become more actively involved, more empowered...to get more involved in their children's education." – Community organiser

4.2.5 RQ4: What are the barriers and facilitators to implementing community organising activities within Parent Power?

We found the implementation of community organising activities faced three main challenges: systemic barriers, personal barriers, and programme level barriers. The main facilitators identified by both community organisers and parents can be categorised into two areas: the practical and logistical flexibility of the programme, and the relational practices between community organisers that underpinned the successful delivery of the programme.

4.2.5.1 Systemic barriers: competing demands on parents' time

Both community organisers and parents agreed that one of the most significant barriers to deeper engagement amongst parents was the **socio-economic constraints** parents faced in their daily lives. According to the community organisers, **time constraints** were one of the main issues parents faced. This barrier was a common point of discussion across the range of parents they worked with, and its effect was often compounded by the current cost of living crisis. Many parents were working multiple jobs as well as juggling other pressures such as caring responsibilities for both their children and other family members such as their elderly parents. These demands on parents' time significantly limited their ability to move from attending meetings to engaging more deeply in community organising work, despite many having the passion and desire to bring about positive change.

> "Parents literally are the busiest people on the planet. And now, in this day and age, there's so much pressure on parents because services have been cut... not only are they having to care for their children, provide, you know, put a meal on the table for their children every day, they're having to take up more work to be able to cope with the cost of living crisis and also look after their elderly relatives as well, or disabled relatives if they have them...I think the passion is there, the interest is there, the desire for having a community group such as Parent Power and being part of it is definitely there. And it's just time because, and it is because of all the pressures that parents are facing." – Community organiser

Parents agreed with this, stating logistical barriers such full-time jobs, work schedules, transport, and childcare made it difficult to commit to programme aims. These competing demands made it difficult for many parents to deeply engage with the programme.

> "So, some meetings [I] have not been able to attend just because of the time. And so if they're starting at five, because I work full time, it can be impossible to get to a meeting for five... I would definitely maybe encourage meetings to start a little bit later. So working parents can get there and then also just making sure that they're nice and concise as well." – Parent, Bradford

4.2.5.2 Personal barriers: low confidence and low trust

Both community organisers and parents identified **low confidence and lack of trust** as a barrier. Parents reported that when they first joined Parent Power, they had low confidence and limited knowledge of the higher education system. This can act as a barrier to them speaking up and contributing their ideas in the group as the meetings can initially be intimidating.

> "And at the beginning, at the outset, I wasn't confident enough to be able to speak in a group, at the outset, because parents are looking at you like as, 'What you on about?', you know? Some parents have different experiences with the school. I've had a different experience with the school. Some parents think it's, you know, the school is fantastic and it's been all, you know, you get a lot of information, but I feel the total opposite and you don't want to feel like you're contradicting anybody that's there." – Parent, Bradford

Similarly, community organisers reported that some parents are initially hesitant about fully engaging and committing their limited time to Parent Power, due to **prior negative experiences** with similar projects, which failed to bring about long-term changes to their local area.

> "I took up the opportunity to go because I thought it's been established in other areas, so it's actually a good opportunity to get first-hand information as to what it is all about and whether it's genuine. Whether it's going to work or if it's just something that, you go to a meeting and nothing materialises after it" – Parent, Bradford

4.2.5.3 Programme barriers: funding, and sustainability

Funding challenges were identified as significant barrier for most chapters by both community organisers and parents. Some parents faced challenges securing sufficient funding for their campaign activities and had to explore alternative fundraising solutions. Parents dedicated time to **brainstorming ideas to raise money to support their respective campaigns.** One parent mentioned feeling a sense of obligation to participate in fundraising efforts, despite not anticipating this as part of their role as a Parent Power member. Many described fundraising efforts as demanding and challenging.

> "I think the biggest one is funding. Funding is massively underdeveloped within any community. To get tuition, to get rooms booked, you know, those are all bound by funding and those have been our probably biggest obstacles. But we've come together

> as a community. We've done fundraising together. We managed to get funding recently as well from the lottery fund. But, you know, funding is always going to be like a major issue, really. I don't think there's a lack of passion." – Parent, Bradford

Also tied to funding constraints, community organisers highlighted the **pressure of short-term funding** such as being on **yearly contracts,** with one also reporting concerns over **pay and financial insecurity.** They found this creates insecurity, and stress for the community organisers and undermines the long-term sustainability of the programme.

Additionally, some of the chapters were seen as being **reliant on a small group of highly engaged parents**, leaving the success of the programme in a precarious balance, should the dynamics of the group change. For example, highly engaged parents or leaders who face personal crises, such as bereavement, and need to take a step back can affect the progression of the chapter's community organising work as the group may be overly reliant on them to keep things moving. Community organisers aim to be sensitive in these situations, leaving the door open for their return, but having a small number of highly engaged parents can be a barrier, as when one or two of them drop off, it can cause disruption within the small group of active community members.

> "There are parents that were very engaged, like I said, the ones who have had bereavements. I just don't contact them anymore and, if they want to come back to me, they can. Obviously, I don't want to push it, but I haven't heard from them for a while." – Community organiser

Community organisers also noted that not all parents are interested in fully engaging in the community organising activities. Some parents are only interested in being involved in a **limited capacity.** Their primary interest is to access information and advice on how to support their children to access higher education. They may perceive the community organising aspect of the programme as not relevant to them. Community organisers recognise that there is a wide range of engagement amongst parents, including those who are only interested in accessing information, but still believe there is value in getting them involved at that level.

> "My area is probably one with the most parents involved. However, I do get some parents who will just attend meetings, but they don't want to be involved in anything else. And I've tried. I've tried to contact them. I've tried to have one-to-ones, and then I think, 'Well, if nothing else, at least they're coming to the IAG sessions', and so I don't pester them too much. I give it a couple of times." – Community organiser

Additionally, some community organisers felt that elements of the programme design created **challenges for retention and engagement**. Some parents who initially attended meetings ended up dropping off the programme once they realised their children were not yet in the right age-range to benefit from the Parent Power programme. Some parents noted

that the programme's aim to recruit parents with children from key stage 3 (Year 7 to Year 9) upwards might fail to engage parents at the right time. Similarly, some parents also identified challenges in recruiting or encouraging parents to get involved in the wider community organising work, as many outside of the programme viewed these activities as not relevant to themselves or their children.

> "The sad thing is, it's difficult trying to get more people engaged, you know, coming together. That's the difficult part. We would like to see Parent Power grow with more members, but there's not many as we like to be, so it's difficult. You can't force people to come to the meeting and or be a member. You know you can only invite and that's the difficulty. Like you ask people they know they've got nothing to lose. They can gain knowledge to have it. But that's the difficulty. I'd like to see it grow further." – Parent, Oldham

4.2.5.4 Facilitators: practical and logistical flexibility

Both parents and community organisers emphasised the removal of physical or logistical barriers to participation as key facilitators in engagement with Parent Power's community engagement activities. **Accessible, welcoming and well-known meeting locations** such as local schools played a crucial role in facilitating parent participation. Parents emphasised that having meetings in easily accessible local venues was highly beneficial, allowing them to attend more consistently and engage with the programme effectively.

> "I think the schools letting us use their area to have these meetings, or the college allowing us to have the meetings in their theatres. I think that's helped us quite a lot… location was very important when we were setting up these meetings, because if people couldn't make it or they thought they were gonna be late, they would just miss it." – Parent, Bradford

Community organisers also mentioned **offering flexibility** to parents as another key facilitator. This included offering online meetings or shifting meeting days or times to align with parents' needs. Additionally, effective communication through sharing meeting notes for those who did not attend meetings via WhatsApp group chats was also highlighted as a facilitator. Parents were able to receive clear and up to date information about their chapter's activities even if they had missed a meeting.

> "I think it's being super flexible…we're doing it online because, like logistically, some parents can't get to the community centre at a certain time. Some people have got, like, three, four children who are at different clubs, whereas putting it online means everybody can attend…We've always made sure people who can't attend can get like a recording or some notes sent over so they can be part of the decisions that we make in the group as well, and have an update about like decisions that have been made" – Community organiser

> "Like I said, the person that's coordinating all is good communication, making the information available, and easily accessible. All the information is clear. What the programme is about, attending the events, the community events or gatherings that are on, and information just to attend them. Times have been quite good on an evening, so there's flexibility around that so I've not really struggled with accessing information or participating in anything." – Parent, Bradford

Finally, community organisers noted that they aim to create a welcoming environment and shared that **providing food and refreshments** was another facilitator to help create a family-friendly and social atmosphere that encourages parents to attend and return to meetings.

4.2.5.5   Facilitators: relational practices

Parents unanimously appreciated their community organisers **for their supportiveness, responsiveness, commitment of time, and effective resolution of issues.** Community organisers were flexible in their role and prioritised building rapport with parents through **one-to-one conversations** and keeping in touch via WhatsApp, **showing genuine interest** in parents' lives. This approach was reported to help create genuine bonds that go beyond a solely professional relationship, and make **parents feel heard and valued.** Parents shared that this helped alleviate initial concerns they had when joining the group, and fostered a sense of inclusion and value for each parent's presence and perspective.

> "She was very accommodating. The fact that I work full time, she came to my home… she just worked around me. I had a one-to-one meeting with her. She wanted to bring me on board. Yeah. So she built that relationship with me, and I felt like a valued member and a trusted member, and my contribution mattered." – Parent, Oldham

According to the community organisers, the **structure of the meetings** themselves facilitates engagement. The meeting is split into two halves, with the first focusing on IAG, and the second half focusing on discussion of issues, campaigning and taking action. This structure equips parents with immediate knowledge to support their children, while also validating their wider concerns and empowering them to work towards positive change.

> "We split our meetings into two halves, and the first half is always about information, advice and guidance that builds within Parent Power…So after each meeting…they go away more knowledgeable, more powerful, to support their children in their education. But then the second half of the meeting is talking about the issues that our children face… and what we as parents can do about it… this strategy in the meetings…allows parents to build a bunk of knowledge, like I said, but then also channel their frustrations and their anger in a positive way and actually feel that they [are]… creating change for the next generation and for themselves." – Community organiser

4.2.5.6 Facilitators: strategic partnerships and networks

Finally, community organisers highlighted that having **strong proactive partnerships with other institutions** such as universities (including Russell Group institutions and local universities) are key facilitators. These partners not only provide the IAG sessions but also add significant value and credibility to the programme. Community organisers' ability to **leverage external networks** was reported to be crucial for successful delivery.

Additionally, community organisers reporting relying heavily on their **internal network** for support. Their **peer team of community organisers** and support from **TBC management** were perceived as essential facilitators. This structure offers community organisers a safety net, and additional resources for navigating problems.

> "I'm really lucky that The Brilliant Club is a very open space, a really safe space to be able to talk to colleagues… I always feel like, really comfortable to be able to kind of speak up… So we have community meetings [of community organisers] and we can all sort of all share our round questions so that kind of helps. I do feel really, really supported. Definitely." – Community organiser

4.2.6 RQ5: How do community organisers perceive their role in supporting parents and enabling engagement among parents?

Community organisers who participated in interviews had been involved with Parent Power ranging from six months to two and a half years, with most having been in their role for approximately two years. They identified a range of ways in which they support and empower parents within the programme.

The organisers perceived their role as having two primary functions. First, they focused on **mobilisation**, bringing parents together and growing their chapters. Their second overarching purpose was **empowerment,** acting as facilitators who provided parents the opportunity to come together and work in unison **towards a political goal or social change.**

> "I bring together parents to meet and talk about the barriers our children face in their education, in achieving success in that education and talk about how we as parents can campaign to fight those barriers and support our children through their education." – Community organiser

4.2.6.1 Leveraging personal expertise and awareness for community change

Several community organisers had backgrounds working in education such as teachers and lecturers, and they wished to use their **existing expertise** to help parents navigate the educational system. Some perceived limited potential for enacting meaningful change from within the education system, so sought to improve outcomes by becoming community

organisers and engaging both parents and schools. For others, their role was personal, rooted in their **lived experience as parents**. In fact, one community organiser assumed the leadership role after engaging as a Parent Power member, gaining community insight and practical knowledge that enhanced her capacity to support other parents and offer an informed and tailored approach to engagement.

> "I was a teacher for about 20 years in a lot of different establishments. I have my own children... I knew I wanted to do something that was going to support people and make things better... this [role] was the obvious one that I wanted to go for because it was to do with education and it was to do with making sure that everyone had access to information and to supporting their families. That fitted me as a parent, but also me as a teacher, as well as fitted the fact that I wanted to do something that would make a positive difference." – Community organiser

Community organisers also drew on **their own knowledge of systemic issues** within the education system across many levels. They identified a key systemic failure in raising student awareness of higher education opportunities and saw their role as empowering parents to address this gap through collective effort.

> "Because of the lack of information provided to these young people from school, a lot of their parents were not educated in the UK, that it was just a lack of understanding of what was available out there and what they want to do. Because of the government taking funding away from schools for careers advice, they were not getting any robust careers advice... I want to empower parents cause I feel like parents are a key. Because we spend the most time with our children. Who better to inform our children of educational choices, than us?" – Community organiser

4.2.6.2 Relational approaches

Community organisers employed a range or recruitment strategies to engage parents in the programme. Many shared that their approach was **grounded in building relationships** rather than confined to increasing the number of parents in their chapter.

Initially, many community organisers used indirect outreach methods such as emailing schools about Parent Power and including information about the programme in school newsletters. This approach was considered promising due to the large number of students and parents it could reach, but ultimacy yielded inconsistent levels of interest and engagement. Therefore, many community organisers moved to other outreach activities, such as arranging events within schools to promote Parent Power. Although some community organisers found these events beneficial for gaining interest, others saw little engagement, highlighting the limitations of top-down communication.

> "Initially, we scope out local schools that would like to be involved in Parent Power, and then we might have an online chat, talk about the benefits of Parent Power, the school's involvement, how much they'd be involved throughout the course of the process of

> establishing a chapter. Then I would go and do a school launch. So go into the schools, the school would advertise it, we'd try and advertise it as well. And then, do that kind of recruitment programme that way. What we've done in [area] for the first time is that I've worked there, so I've gone in as a face that's in the community talking to families." – Community Organiser

Community organisers felt that relational methods such as **word of mouth and using pre-existing networks** were the most effective. They observed the benefits of **leveraging existing personal and professional networks** for recruitment over impersonal outreach methods such as emails and newsletters, referencing greater trust.

> "She was very happy and excited about Parent Power. That meant that she shared our invitation with all of her contacts at every single school in [region]. That was much less scattergun because it was people she already had a connection with. She understood and believed in what I told her about Parent Power, so she believed it was important. That was really good… I built up quite a big network." – Community organiser

Community organisers encouraged parents to utilise word of mouth by sharing their experiences with other parents. This helped to increase their social capital, creating a sense of community and helping to develop a network from the moment parents join.

> "Parent on parent recruitment is one of the most effective ways, like a parent who's already part of Parent Power, when they talk to other parents about their experiences and how it's benefited them to be part of this group, that's the most effective way of recruiting other parents we found, so, yeah, there's a lot of that as well." – Community organiser

Once a parent was recruited, **relational one-to-ones were organised** and considered an effective strategy to sustain engagement from parents. This gave parents the opportunity to gain information and develop solutions to ongoing concerns.

> "So every time a new parent registers with me, I have an initial one-to-one with them. They register with me, I send them messages we have a little conversation on the phone. Then I say, 'Can I have a one-to-one?', and I like a face-to-face one-to-one… it's just a free-flowing conversation. It's a relational conversation, for them to understand why I'm doing this, and what I'm here for, and for me to understand what their needs are." – Community organiser

Community organisers worked to ensure these relationships continued throughout parents' engagement with the programme. Beyond regular meetings, the community organisers ensure they are **easily reachable**, often using WhatsApp groups as means of communication with the parents in a chapter.

> "I have a lot of WhatsApp conversations on a daily basis. It is fantastic, and any parent needs to get hold of me they just send me a WhatsApp and we arrange if it needs to be a face-to-face conversation we'll meet up, if it's just over the phone or just some messaging, anything they querying, anything" – Community organiser

4.2.6.3 Community organisers as facilitators

A key strategy utilised for long-term sustainable engagement is the community organisers role as a facilitator rather than a saviour. The community organisers aimed to encourage parents to position themselves as **leaders and take ownership of the group collectively** as well as **promoting shared decision making**. Community organisers often identified active members of the group and helped them to take leadership roles. For example, one chapter created a Saturday Club where parents formed a board and were involved in all decisions from securing funding to managing the club's activities.

> "The biggest achievement we've had is, we've got a Saturday Club that's been going on for three months. It's by the parents for the parents. We've got the board members of that...set up an incorporated constitution... the chair, the secretary and treasurer, are all parents whose children go to the school." – Community organiser

Community organisers also implemented this approach when planning meetings and seeking out additional resources. By **responding to parents' needs and interests**, rather than their own beliefs about what was most important, **community organisers aimed to ensure parents felt heard and empowered, and develop trust**. In turn, they could develop a better understanding of the value of networks and social capital and increase their participation in discussing collective issues and campaign issues with the wider group.

> "A big thing, I think with engagement is making sure the meetings are relevant to them. Whatever they've been bringing up... whatever the topic is. A parent who joined recently is really passionate about mental health. We're having two experts come to the meeting, a different one coming in September in relation to mental health support for young people." – Community organiser

Despite this, community organisers also shared that engagement levels do vary among parents. They acknowledged that deep engagement in all chapter activities is not possible for all parents. Therefore, one of the key strategies the community organisers spoke about was to also ensure they continue to manage and communicate with a diverse range of parents and **stay responsive to their differing needs.**

4.2.7 RQ6: How do community organisers and parents perceive the long-term impact of Parent Power on the wider community?

Community organisers and parents expect positive long-term impacts from Parent Power, but feel that their campaigns have not been active for long enough for those impacts to be realised yet. Community organisers highlighted two main areas of impact. First, they believe parents would **continue to take ownership and drive their own change.** Secondly, they expect that Parent Power will **initiate systemic progress on issues such as educational inequalities, higher education access, and increased resources for communities**. Parents reported feeling hopeful for **sustained improvements** to their community but noted that lack of consistency in parent engagement had made it harder to see long-term impacts.

4.2.7.1 Sustainable growth

Community organisers shared that they see the Parent Power model as sustainable. Many mentioned that they had seen chapters continue to grow organically through word-of-mouth and parents see the direct results and benefits they have achieved for themselves. Community organisers reported that when parents recruit other parents through sharing their own positive experiences, the impact on others is stronger as there is already an **established trust between existing members and new ones, and the chapter becomes self-sustaining and grows organically**.

> "Long term, I think the parents are going to sustain this. I feel like, parents who have joined us and realised that there's so much benefit to it. They are then relaying that to other parents... I really do think it's going to grow and more and more parents are going to get involved and more parents will realise that the more involved they are, the better it is for the community." – Community organiser

4.2.7.2 Empowered communities creating systemic changes

One of the long-term impacts parents and community organisers highlighted was the continuous focus on **bringing together isolated individuals and communities to create a base of close-knit empowered community members**. This was expected to lead to greater resilience among the community to fight against systemic barriers and bring about positive change.

> "I think the long term impact that I could see is the fact that, as a collective group, our voice is stronger and louder and that we do have the power, individually, it might not be loud, but as a collective it is... it does leave you with that hope and confidence that, you know what? We can be part of the change, and we can change things... and not have those self-limiting beliefs that... what am I going to do? What can I do? My circumstances are not good. I'm poor and my kids are always going to be poor... but being part of this group, the long-term benefits [is that], we're changing the mindset. And I think if we change that mindset of parents, they influence their children and then

> it's almost like we're trying to change the generational mindset. So, yeah, I think long term, it can help change trajectories of people for generations." – Parent, Oldham

According to the community organisers, the long-term vision involves achieving systemic changes across the issues and campaigns parents choose to work on and bring about positive change for all families, not only for those who are part of Parent Power. Ideally, this would include improving educational opportunities at a local context with more children raising their aspirations.

> "It's going to improve social mobility. It's going to empower the parents, and their young people might see this and see the benefits of community and that they can take that to their friends and then their children. It's something that's going to be sustainable for many years. I really, really hope." – Community organiser

Parents acknowledged that this change would take time and emphasised the importance of consistent parent engagement to achieve programme goals.

> "I think so, I think it will be interesting to see because I think it's still early days. It's only been a year and whether they manage to keep parents engaged after the kids have moved on is going to be interesting to see, because it will be beneficial to the group in itself, if you can retain these parents because it feels like you're having to start all over again if you get new parents on board, you're going through the whole thing again. I think you need parents long term, to be able to make it a success. They have said what they want to achieve and parents are behind them." – Parent, Bradford

4.2.7.3   Programme improvements

We also asked community organisers and parents about any programme improvements they would like to see. Most of their advice for programme improvements focused on addressing **operational and financial** barriers. Parents also raised wanting to focus on **allocating more resources** to increasing parent and child engagement.

Community organisers shared the significant stress and difficulties encountered in delivering the programme due to **yearly contracts**. The dependence on short-term funding creates instability as the role demands significant time and emotional investment to build relationships and trust, often with parents who have complex lives and socio-economic disadvantages. Community organisers suggested contract length should be at minimum two years long to allow for the deep relationship building necessary for parents to build trust and obtain the necessary skills for them to succeed.

> "My contract ends this month… And I still don't know what's happening, whether or not I'm gonna be working in [the chapter next year] or not." – Community organiser

One community organiser also felt that the freedom of each chapter to develop their own goal, whilst a crucial element of the community organising model, can make the goals of overall programme appear unclear to outsiders. One suggestion was for a clearer public identity of the programme as a whole.

> "We're all going to look very different because sometimes…. It just comes across a bit woolly or not clear what Parent Power is because we're not all doing the same [thing]".
> – Community organiser

Both parents and community organisers felt that continuing to increase the programme's focus on mental health support would be beneficial to parents, their children, and the wider community.

> "A few more sessions around the emotional wellbeing, or on mental health and things. If they have something around that, that would make a huge impact on the parents and the children. Obviously, children go through different stages in life, they're quite emotional, parents are quite emotional. It's just having more courses around how to better yourself, how to cope with stress, about the emotional wellbeing." – Parent, Bradford

Parents also suggested having a **more structured timeline** with meeting topics, events, and trips shared months in advance to help plan personal commitments. A programme schedule would let them prioritise key meetings and avoid conflicts. They also proposed a **one-year and three-year plan** to keep the chapter focused on long-term goals.

Finally, parents noted that the programme's growth and impact would depend on **committed parent participation**. They suggested engaging parents from Year 7 as it was felt that an earlier engagement point would lead to a significant gain in confidence, and higher chances of parents staying involved as their children continue secondary school. However, this this would inevitably mean adjusting programme content to make it relevant for parents with younger children. Strengthening engagement would also encourage parents to remain long enough to see their ideas realised and benefit the community.

> "It takes time for a parent to become confident enough to be able to partake in activities as well. So you want to be able to engage with. That's what I'm saying. You want to be able to engage with, start from Year Seven, almost then, every year you're engaging new parents that are coming into Year Seven, for example, if you are sticking with secondary schools, because then you've always got, for at least three or four years, parents that are going to be engaged with the programme and that are going to be confident enough to be able to go out and arrange activities or arrange work experience or… whatever is required for those kids at that time." – Parent, Bradford

4.2.8 Strengths and limitations

The qualitative findings were rich in data, but there were limitations relating to scope and generalisability. The study aimed to capture the perceived impact of community organising via purposively selecting participants who had been highly engaged with the programme for a minimum of 12 months. However, due to challenges with recruitment, half the sample consisted of parents who were highly engaged for a period of six to 12 months. The other half had engaged for more than one year. This means that around half of the sample reflects the experiences of parents who have become highly engaged in the initial or intermediate stages of their community organising journey. This limits the ability to draw full conclusions about the programme's full impact after a year or more of sustained organising.

Additionally, participants were purposively selected by TBC. This likely introduced some selection bias, allowing for parents who were the most motivated and active to take part in the research. Therefore, the findings may not be representative of the wider Parent Power population, given the varied nature of parents' engagement. Furthermore, one chapter was overrepresented in the parent interviews, so the findings offer limited scope for generalising across the diverse Parent Power chapters.

5. Discussion and conclusion

In the impact evaluation, we found no significant differences between treatment and control parents on three of the outcomes: measured knowledge of higher education systems, parental self-efficacy, and leadership and community organising skills. We found a small but significant effect on perceived knowledge of higher education systems, however the results were unstable across the robustness checks, so we do not believe this is a secure finding at this stage. While it is possible that this is due to the programme having no effect on any of these outcomes, it is more likely that limitations in the data collection mean we were unable to detect any effects. The final sample size was small, only 88 treatment parents completed the endline survey and, following matching, we had an effective sample size of 122 comparator parents. Assuming an alpha of 0.05 and power of 80 per cent with a baseline/endline correlation of 0.5 (the correlation for the measured knowledge outcomes), the minimum detectable effect size with this sample was 0.44, a medium effect. To detect small effects with the same assumptions (Cohen's d = 0.2), we would have required almost five times the total sample (n=1012).

Exploratory analysis also suggests that there may be self-selection bias. Although the matching achieved strong balance on the observed covariates, we found that treatment parents may be more motivated to participate in parental engagement activities than comparator parents in the sample. All treatment parents at least signed up for Parent Power, even if they did not go on to engage with activities, whereas only 48 per cent of comparator parents said they would be interested in signing up for Parent Power if a chapter opened in their local area. This suggests that unobserved characteristics such as motivation may not have been fully captured in the matching. If these characteristics are associated with the outcomes measured the exchangeability assumption is not met, and the results may not hold.

Further, it is possible that parents who participated in the evaluation did not have enough time to engage with Parent Power for change to happen. Parents in the treatment group completed the endline survey six to 12 months after they signed up for Parent Power. Interviews with parents and community organisers suggest that effects from Parent Power are expected to take over 12 months, so the data collection timeline may have been too short to allow these changes to occur before endline data collection.

The interviews also suggested that the most notable outcomes of participation in Parent Power might go beyond parents' engagement with higher education systems. Community organising is conceptualised to work on multiple levels as it facilitates change in individual participants and their relationships, before engendering wider systemic change. Before parents can challenge the wider system, a change in perspective, skills and confidence needs to take place. Interviews with parents and community organisers suggest that this had taken place. Parents first experienced shifts in aspirations through the experiential activities like university visits. This challenged the deep held belief that university was out of reach for people like them, and this in turn created an attitudinal shift in terms of increased aspiration.

Once this internal shift happened, some parents started to move towards positive action, becoming leaders and advocates for their children and local community. This is a critical transformation, moving them from taking a passive role, to embodying active organiser figures and leading efforts to address systemic failures in education provision.

The community organisers acted as facilitators and not saviours, following a key principle of the approach to not directly act on behalf of parents, and successfully developing parents as leaders, encouraging them to take part in shared decision making. This process creates campaigns that can run independently without parents being dependent on the community organisers and capable of addressing local issues. The programme has started to show this through securing early wins such as launching a free tuition club.

The main operational barrier for parent engagement was the time constraints they face due to their socio-economic statuses, which limited the ability of parents to fully engage in community organising work, despite showing passion and interest. While the programme is fully flexible in relation to timing and location to accommodate parents' needs, it does not seem to fully address this systemic issue affecting a significant number of parents. This means the pace of the organising has and likely will have to continue to adapt to the economic situation parents find themselves in.

The other barrier the programme faces is the issue of yearly funding and contracts for community organisers. The deep relational work needed to build trust and social reform requires a long-time. However, reliance on yearly contracts may be undermining the work of the community organisers by creating stress and limiting their ability to effectively train leaders.

In conclusion, the Parent Power programme provides some promising initial evidence that community organising can provide a platform to engage parents in the work to improve access to higher education. The key learning from our research is that while impact metrics such as measured knowledge and self-efficacy may fail to identify change within a short period of time, the programme is already showing promising results in relation to improved aspiration and relational power, both ingredients of longer-term systemic impact. Our interviews have shown there are early signs of parents setting up their own campaigns and taking ownership of them with the aim of providing better opportunities for the children in their local area, both for education, and for other issues including mental health. To accurately assess the programme's effectiveness in achieving its long-term goals (systemic change, sustained leadership), future evaluations will have to adopt a longer term, longitudinal inquiry approach, with repeated data collections across two or more years after parents originally join Parent Power. A longer timeline would allow parents to fully build relational power, develop as leaders, and launch campaigns, as well as hopefully allowing researchers to secure evidence of measurable local changes.

6. Recommendations

Recommendations for future impact evaluations of Parent Power:

- **Increase the sample size** to allow for detection of smaller effects. This may require a longer recruitment period which may require additional consideration of baseline sample comparability.
- **Define the key elements of the intervention** that a parent must receive to count as treated. Greater clarity on the key elements of Parent Power and which parents are considered as having engaged with Parent Power will allow for more targeted analysis.
- **Allow for a longer period** between baseline and endline data collection and consider repeated data collection points. This will likely increase attrition so the baseline sample should account for over 50 per cent attrition at endline.
- When parents sign up to Parent Power, collect their children's **Unique Pupil Numbers** and necessary consents to allow for using administrative data to capture long-term outcomes such as progression to university or other higher or further education.

Recommendations to address programme challenges and barriers:

- **Provide multi-year funding and longer staff stability.** To ensure long-term sustainability of the programme, a key recommendation is for the program to provide community organisers with job stability for a longer term. The reliance on yearly contracts may be undermining the significant time, investment, and trust required for effective relational organising work. While it may not always be possible to secure, multi-year funding would enable chapters to operate with longer-term security and enable community organisers to further build relationships and train effective leaders.
- **Implement long-term planning for chapters and campaigns.** Chapters should implement one-to-three-year plans with meeting topics, events, and trips shared several months in advance. This would help parents address their time poverty due to juggling multiple jobs and caring responsibilities and incentivise parents to plan ahead and fit Parent Power into their busy lives.
- **Revise early engagement content.** The programme should adapt its early engagement approach to retain parents with younger age children who are able to engage for with the programme for longer. The programme could further refine its information, advice and guidance content to include relevant non-higher education topics, such as secondary school transition, mental health support, and learning about local educational systems.
- **Provide campaign support and leadership development.** To ensure that parent-led campaigns remain sustainable, resources should be available for them to use. Parents who launch and take ownership of campaigns struggle to spend their limited time on

fundraising. Parent Power should consider creating a funding pot that chapters with established campaigns can easily access. This will allow parents to focus their limited time on advocacy and organising. Training for parents should also be more specific and relevant to their campaign needs. One avenue that could be explored is to deliver this training through partnerships with universities to close any skills gaps.

Recommendations for funding of future research:

- **UKRI should continue to fund applied research such as evaluation** as it is of great benefit in both providing rigorous evidence on the effectiveness of established and/or innovative programmes, in signalling to the research community that this type of research is useful and desirable, and in fostering partnerships between academia and practitioners that results in skills development on both sides.
- Evaluation is a process that starts with understanding the implementation of the programme and its capacity and readiness to support an impact evaluation. **UKRI should consider the scope and timelines of future evaluation funding** to allow for appropriate development of an evaluation strategy that builds to impact evaluation of programmes such as Parent Power that use innovative approaches and seek to achieve long-term results.
- **UKRI should continue to support the development of networks and communities of academics and practitioners** interested in sharing learnings and conducting applied research and evaluation.

Recommendations for future research into community organising:

- The predominantly qualitative nature of the current evidence base means there is a need for **more robust and rigorous evaluations**. Funders, academics, and practitioners should collaborate to create a coherent plan on how to prioritise evaluations that are multi-level, longitudinal and experimental or quasi-experimental in design to address existing research gaps. Existing literature argues that there is a causal link between the internal changes that come from participating in community organising (e.g. confidence) and systemic or policy changes and wider community benefit. Future experimental or quasi-experimental evaluations should seek to **measure both individual-level outcomes and community-level outcomes** to test this proposed mechanism.
- There needs to be more clarity regarding which specific organising activities are the most effective drivers of change through **systematising or standardising inputs of community organising interventions**. Academics, funders and practitioners/community organisers need to work together with researchers and develop a standard for fidelity (quality) and dosage (quantity) of core activities. Standardising these processes will allow researchers to isolate the most effective drivers of change independent of the specific local context and better understand which activities are universally effective, and which only work in specific contexts.

- Systemic change and leadership development are slow to materialise. Therefore, short evaluations may not be able to capture the full impact of community organising interventions. **Longitudinal students lasting multiple years** are crucial to address this gap in the existing literature.
- There is a need for better access to and data collection from parents in low-participation areas. **Future research should consider novel ways to recruit comparator parents** to account for self-selection when randomisation is not possible.

7. References

Amin, A. (2022) *'Communities, places and inequality: a reflection', IFS Deaton Review of Inequalities*. Available at: https://ifs.org.uk/inequality/communities-places-and-inequality-a-reflection/ (Accessed: 16 September 2024).

Amin, N.A.L., Tam, W.W.S. and Shorey, S. (2018) 'Enhancing first-time parents' self-efficacy: A systematic review and meta-analysis of universal parent education interventions' efficacy', *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 82, pp. 149–162. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2018.03.021.

Avelino, F. (2021). 'Theories of power and social change. Power contestations and their implications for research on social change and innovation', *Journal of Political Power*, 14(3), pp. 425–448. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/2158379X.2021.1875307.

Bandura, A. (1986) *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ, US: Prentice-Hall, Inc (Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory), pp. xiii, 617.

Bandura, A. (2006) 'Guide for Constructing Self-Efficacy Scales', in F. Pajares and T.C. Urdan (eds) *Self-efficacy Beliefs of Adolescents*. IAP - Information Age Pub., Incorporated.

Callaway, B. and Sant'Anna, P.H.C. (2021) 'Difference-in-Differences with multiple time periods', *Journal of Econometrics*, 225(2), pp. 200–230. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeconom.2020.12.001.

Citizens UK (n.d.) *Organising Together Across Difference*. Available at: https://citizensuk.contentfiles.net/media/documents/CitizensUK_OrganisingTogetherAcrossDifference_digital.pdf (Accessed: 1 December 2025).

Citizens UK (n.d.) *Campaign Wins*. Available at: https://www.citizensuk.org/campaigns/campaign-wins/ (Accessed: 1 December 2025).

Chowdry, H. *et al.* (2013) 'Widening participation in higher education: analysis using linked administrative data', *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society: Series A (Statistics in Society)*, 176(2), pp. 431–457. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-985X.2012.01043.x.

Christens, B. (2010). 'Public relationship building in grassroots community organizing: Relational intervention for individual and systems change', *Journal of Community Psychology*, 38, pp. 886-900. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.20403.

Christens, B. and Speer, P. (2015) 'Community Organizing: Practice, Research, and Policy Implications', *Social Issues and Policy Review*, 9(1), pp. 193–222. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/sipr.12014.

Christens, B., Gupta, J. and Speer, P. (2021). 'Community organizing: Studying the development and exercise of grassroots power', *Journal of Community Psychology*, 49, pp. 3001-3016. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.22700.

Conner, J., Zaino, K., and Scarola, E. (2012). '"Very Powerful Voices": The Influence of Youth Organizing on Educational Policy in Philadelphia', *Educational Policy*, 27(3), pp. 560-588. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/0895904812454001

Department for Education (2023) *Widening participation in higher education, academic year 2021/22*. Available at: https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/widening-participation-in-higher-education (Accessed: 16 September 2024).

Department for Education (2024) *Schools, pupils and their characteristics, Academic year 2023/24*. Available at: https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics/2023-24 (Accessed: 23 April 2025).

Dove, M., Zorotovich, J. and Gregg, K. (2018) 'School Community Connectedness and Family Participation at School', *World Journal of Education*, 8(1), pp. 49–57. Available at: https://doi.org/10.5430/wje.v8n1p49.

Epstein, J.L. and Becker, H.J. (1982) 'Teachers' Reported Practices of Parent Involvement: Problems and Possibilities', *The Elementary School Journal*, 83(2), pp. 103–113. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1086/461298.

Farquharson, C., McNally, S. and Tahir, I. (2022) *'Education inequalities', IFS Deaton Review of Inequalities*. Available at: https://ifs.org.uk/inequality/education-inequalities/ (Accessed: 16 September 2024).

Fischer, S., Barnes, R.K. and Kilpatrick, S. (2019) 'Equipping parents to support their children's higher education aspirations: a design and evaluation tool', *Educational Review*, 71(2), pp. 198–217. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2017.1379472.

Folkes, L. (2018) 'Community organising and Citizens UK: Can tangible social change be achieved through institution-based apolitical politics?', in J. Ibrahmin and J. Roberts (eds) *Contemporary Left-Wing Activism Vol 2*. 1st Edition. London: Routledge.

Forster, A.G. and van de Werfhorst, H.G. (2020) 'Navigating Institutions: Parents' Knowledge of the Educational System and Students' Success in Education', *European Sociological Review*, 36(1), pp. 48–64. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcz049.

Greifer, N. (2023) *Assessing Balance*. Available at: https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/MatchIt/vignettes/assessing-balance.html (Accessed: 17 September 2024).

Gruescu, S. and Menne, V. (2010) *Bridging Differences: What Communities and Government can do to foster Social Capital*. London: Social Market Foundation. Available at: https://www.smf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/Publication-Bridging-Differences-

[What-Communities-and-Government-can-do-to-foster-Social-Capital.pdf](#). (Accessed: 1 December 2025)

Horne, H.H. (1931) *This new education*. Nashville, TN, US: Abingdon Press (This new education), p. 280. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1037/14900-000.

Horne, H.H. (1932) *The Democratic Philosophy of Education*. New York: The Macmillan company.

Igalla, M., Edelenbos, J. and van Meerkerk, I. (2019) 'Citizens in Action, What Do They Accomplish? A Systematic Literature Review of Citizen Initiatives, Their Main Characteristics, Outcomes, and Factors', *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 30(5), pp. 1176–1194. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/s11266-019-00129-0.

Jeynes, W. (ed.) (2022) *Relational Aspects of Parental Involvement to Support Educational Outcomes: Parental Communication, Expectations, and Participation for Student Success*. New York: Routledge. Available at: https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003128434.

Jeynes, W. (2024) 'A Meta-Analysis: The Association Between Relational Parental Involvement and Student and Parent Outcome Variables', *Education and Urban Society*, 56(5), pp. 564–600. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/00131245231179674.

King's College London (2023) *Confidence in institutions*. Available at: https://doi.org/10.18742/pub01-126.

Lipscomb, S.T., Leve, L.D., Harold, G.T., Neiderhiser, J.M., Shaw, D.S., Ge, X. and Reiss, D. (2011) 'Trajectories of Parenting and Child Negative Emotionality During Infancy and Toddlerhood: A Longitudinal Analysis', *Child Development*, 82(5), pp. 1661–1675. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2011.01639.x.

Loomer, B. (1976). 'Two Conceptions of Power', *Process Studies,* 6(1), pp. 5-32. Available at: https://doi.org/10.5840/process19766126.

Lubrano, S. (2025) 'This article won't change your mind. Here's why', *The Guardian*. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2025/may/18/change-mind-evidence-arguing-social-relationships. (Accessed: 1 December 2025).

Mulcahy, E. and Baars, S. (2018) *Partners in Progression: Engaging parents in university access*. London: LKMco. Available at: https://www.cfey.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Partners-in-Progression.-Engaging-parents-in-university-access.pdf. (Accessed: 1 December 2025).

Ní Chorcora, E., Bray, A. and Banks, J. (2023) 'A systematic review of widening participation: Exploring the effectiveness of outreach programmes for students in second-level schools', *Review of Education*, 11(2), p. e3406. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1002/rev3.3406.

Ritchie, J. and Lewis, J. (2003) *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. London: SAGE Publications.

Rudolph, K.E. and Laan, M.J. (2017) 'Robust Estimation of Encouragement Design Intervention Effects Transported Across Sites', *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society Series B: Statistical Methodology*, 79(5), pp. 1509–1525. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/rssb.12213.

Sinclair, B., McConnell, M. and Green, D. (2012) 'Detecting Spillover Effects: Design and Analysis of Multi-Level Experiments', *American Journal of Political Science*, 56. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2012.00592.x.

Sites, W., Chaskin, R.J. and Parks, V. (2007) 'Reframing Community Practice for the 21St Century: Multiple Traditions, Multiple Challenges', *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 29(5), pp. 519–541. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9906.2007.00363.x.

Smith, T.E., Sheridan, S.M., Kim, E.M., Park, S. and Beretvas, S.N. (2020) 'The Effects of Family-School Partnership Interventions on Academic and Social-Emotional Functioning: a Meta-Analysis Exploring What Works for Whom', *Educational Psychology Review*, 32(2), pp. 511–544. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-019-09509-w.

Sullivan, A. (2001) 'Cultural Capital and Educational Attainment', *Sociology*, 35(4), pp. 893–912. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038501035004006.

Tazouti, Y. and Jarlégan, A. (2019) 'The mediating effects of parental self-efficacy and parental involvement on the link between family socioeconomic status and children's academic achievement', *Journal of Family Studies*, 25(3), pp. 250–266. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/13229400.2016.1241185.

The Brilliant Club (2023) *Parent Power at The Brilliant Club*. London: The Brilliant Club. Available at: https://thebrilliantclub.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Parent-Power-brochure.pdf. (Accessed: 1 December 2025).

UCL Policy Lab (2025) *This Place Matters*. London: UCL. Available at: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/policy-lab/sites/policy_lab/files/this_place_matters_ucl_citizens_mic_july_2025.pdf. (Accessed: 1 December 2025).

Unifrog (2024) *How does Gen Z plan for the future: 5 key findings from our survey of 21,000 UK students*. London: Unifrog. Available at: https://cdn.unifrog.org/downloads/How_does_Gen_Z_plan_for_the_future.pdf. (Accessed: 1 December 2025).

Waid, J., Abusaleh, K. and Marsalis, S. (2025) 'Approaches to strengthen parental self-efficacy: An umbrella review of systematic reviews', *Children and Youth Services Review*, 177, p. 108483. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2025.108483.

Warren, M.R. *et al.* (2009) 'Beyond the Bake Sale: A Community-Based Relational Approach to Parent Engagement in Schools', *Teachers College Record*, 111(9), pp. 2209–2254. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/016146810911100901.

Wills, J. (2012) 'The geography of community and political organisation in London today', *Political Geography*, 31(2), pp. 114-126. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2011.11.003

Wittkowski, A. *et al.* (2017) 'Self-Report Measures of Parental Self-Efficacy: A Systematic Review of the Current Literature', *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 26(11), pp. 2960–2978. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-017-0830-5.

Appendix 1: sample tables

The table below summarises the baseline and endline samples. To ensure anonymity, any cells smaller than five (but not 0) have, where possible, been combined with other categories. Where it was not possible to combine the category with another category these cells have been recorded as <5.

Variable	Baseline sample		Endline sample	
	Treatment (n = 160)	Comparator (n = 531)	Treatment (n = 88)	Comparator (n = 258)
Age				
Under 35	14 (9%)	59 (11%)	<5	21 (9%)
35-44 years old	77 (48%)	221 (42%)	46 (52%)	99 (38%)
45-54 years old	57 (36%)	192 (36%)	35 (40%)	97 (38%)
55+ years old	6 (3%)	58 (11%)	<5	41 (16%)
Prefer not to say/Missing	6 (4%)	<5	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Gender				
Female	118 (74%)	277 (52%)	74 (84%)	145 (56%)
Male	34 (21%)	247 (47%)	13 (15%)	113 (44%)
Prefer not to say/Missing	8 (5%)	7 (1%)	<5	0 (0%)
Ethnicity				
Black, Asian or minority ethnic	120 (75%)	296 (56%)	68 (77%)	114 (56%)
White	26 (16%)	231 (44%)	16 (18%)	112 (43%)
Prefer not to say/Missing	14 (9%)	<5	<5	<5
Highest level of education				
Did not complete secondary school	7 (4%)	11 (2%)	0 (0%)	10 (4%)
Completed secondary school	26 (16%)	62 (12%)	13 (15%)	30 (12%)
Vocational or similar	20 (12%)	65 (12%)	9 (10%)	35 (14%)
Some university but no degree	9 (6%)	30 (6%)	7 (8%)	15 (6%)
University bachelor's degree	50 (31%)	212 (40%)	30 (34%)	112 (43%)
Graduate degree	31 (19%)	151 (28%)	22 (25%)	56 (22%)

Variable	Baseline sample		Endline sample	
	Treatment (n = 160)	Comparator (n = 531)	Treatment (n = 88)	Comparator (n = 258)
Prefer not to say/ Missing	17 (11%)	0 (0%)	7 (8%)	0 (0%)
Employment status				
Working full-time	67 (22%)	360 (68%)	36 (41%)	177 (69%)
Working part-time	36 (42%)	76 (14%)	24 (27%)	38 (15%)
A homemaker or stay-at-home parent	20 (12%)	50 (9%)	13 (15%)	25 (10%)
Unemployed and looking for work	16 (10%)	21 (4%)	7 (8%)	<5
Retired	<5	6 (1%)	<5	<5
Student	<5	9 (2%)	<5	5 (2%)
Other/ Prefer not to say/ Missing	15 (9%)	9 (2%)	5 (6%)	6 (2%)
Number of children under 18 years old living in household				
0	0 (0%)	6 (1%)	<5	11 (4%)
1	39 (24%)	184 (35%)	21 (24%)	91 (35%)
2	46 (29%)	222 (42%)	26 (30%)	94 (36%)
3	46 (29%)	96 (18%)	23 (26%)	53 (21%)
4	18 (11%)	18 (3%)	13 (15%)	7 (3%)
5+	11 (6%)	5 (1%)	<5	<5
Children eligible for Free School Meals				
No	101 (63%)	338 (64%)	54 (61%)	195 (76%)
Yes	45 (28%)	180 (34%)	31 (35%)	59 (23%)
Other	14 (9%)	13 (2%)	<5	<5
Year group of child(ren)				
Year 7	43 (27%)	121 (23%)	30 (34%)	55 (21%)
Year 8	39 (24%)	108 (20%)	21 (24%)	54 (21%)
Year 9	52 (32%)	88 (17%)	30 (34%)	47 (18%)
Year 10	42 (26%)	119 (22%)	24 (27%)	50 (19%)
Year 11	31 (19%)	108 (20%)	19 (22%)	53 (21%)
Year 12	18 (11%)	93 (18%)	10 (11%)	48 (19%)
Year 13	13 (8%)	111 (21%)	6 (7%)	49 (19%)

Appendix 2: outcome measures

Outcome	Question	Response coding
Measured knowledge	How do students typically apply to university?	Students apply through a centralised service called UCAS where they can submit their application and select up to 3 courses at different universities. (0) Students apply through a centralised service called UCAS where they can submit their application and select up to 5 courses at different universities. (1) Students apply through a centralised service called UCAS where they can submit their application and select up to 7 courses at different universities. (0) Students apply by sending a completed application and cover letter via email or post to each university they want to apply to. (0)
Measured knowledge	For students in Sixth Form, how does the university application timeline usually work?	For most courses, students apply to study at university in January during Year 12, receiving offers from universities in May and confirming their choices after A-level Results Day. (0) For most courses, students apply to study at university in January during Year 13, receiving offers from universities in May and confirming their choices after A-level Results Day. (1) Students can apply to study at university at any time during Sixth Form up until May. (0) Each university has a different deadline for submitting applications and confirming places, so the timeline varies. (0)
Measured knowledge	Currently, in England, when and how do graduates repay their student loans?	Repayments begin immediately after graduation at a fixed monthly amount for all graduates. (0) Repayments begin once graduates earn more than £21,000 per year and are calculated at 9% of their total income. (0) Repayments being once graduates earn more than £21,000 per year and are calculated at 9% of any income that they earn above £21,000. (0) Repayments begin once graduates earn more than £25,000 per year and are calculated at 9% of their total income. (0)

Outcome	Question	Response coding
		Repayments begin once graduates earn more than £25,000 per year and are calculated at 9% of any income that they earn above £25,000. (1)
Measured knowledge	When do students need to apply for student finance for it to be in place at the start of their course?	When they submit their university applications. (0) When they have received their results and know which university they will be attending. (0) Between March and May in the year that their course begins. (1) When they arrive at their chosen university and enrol in their course. (0)
Measured knowledge	Once a student has received decisions on all university applications that they submitted, what do they need to do next?	Log into UCAS and rank all university offers that they have received in order of preference. They will automatically be awarded a place at their first-choice university if they meet the requirements of the offer. (0) Log into UCAS on results day and decide which university they will attend. They do not need to reply before results day. (0) Log into UCAS to respond to all university offers that they have received, choosing one offer that they would like to accept and declining all remaining offers. (0) Log into UCAS and reply to all university offers that they have received, making a firm acceptance and an insurance acceptance before declining any remaining offers. (1)
Measured knowledge	Which of the below is the correct definition of an undergraduate course?	A course that students can study while they are at college or sixth-form that helps them to prepare for university. (0) An introductory course that supports students to manage the academic transition between college/sixth-form and university, usually lasting one year. (0) A university-level degree course that involves studying a small number of subjects in detail, usually lasting three years. (1) A course that students complete in their final year of university to prepare them for the graduation ceremony. (0)

Outcome	Question	Response coding
Measured knowledge	When moving away from home to study at university, where do students usually live?	Students usually live in accommodation provided free of charge by the university for the duration of their course. University accommodation is guaranteed for all students in all years of study. (0) Students usually live in accommodation provided, which the student needs to apply for and pay for, during their first year of study, and then move into private accommodation for the remainder of their course. (1) Students usually live in private accommodation, which they need to organise and fund themselves, for the duration of their course. (0) Students usually live in private accommodation, which is organised and paid for by the university, for the duration of their course. (0)
Leadership and community organising	Please rate your agreement with the following statements: People in my community pull together to improve our local community.	Strongly disagree (1) Somewhat disagree (2) Neither agree nor disagree (3) Somewhat agree (4) Strongly agree (5)
Leadership and community organising	Please rate your agreement with the following statements: I feel connected to people in my local community.	Strongly disagree (1) Somewhat disagree (2) Neither agree nor disagree (3) Somewhat agree (4) Strongly agree (5)
Leadership and community organising	Please rate your agreement with the following statements: I can influence decisions affecting my local community.	Strongly disagree (1) Somewhat disagree (2) Neither agree nor disagree (3) Somewhat agree (4) Strongly agree (5)

Outcome	Question	Response coding
Leadership and community organising	Please rate your agreement with the following statements: I have the power to bring about change in my local community.	Strongly disagree (1) Somewhat disagree (2) Neither agree nor disagree (3) Somewhat agree (4) Strongly agree (5)
Leadership and community organising	Please rate your agreement with the following statements: I can talk to people in my local community about higher education in the UK.	Strongly disagree (1) Somewhat disagree (2) Neither agree nor disagree (3) Somewhat agree (4) Strongly agree (5)
Leadership and community organising	Please rate your agreement with the following statements: I am able to support other families in my local community who are thinking about higher education	Strongly disagree (1) Somewhat disagree (2) Neither agree nor disagree (3) Somewhat agree (4) Strongly agree (5)
Parental self-efficacy[6]	Please rate how comfortable you are with doing the following: Sharing your ideas or presenting to your local community group	Extremely uncomfortable (1) Somewhat uncomfortable (2) Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable (3) Somewhat comfortable (4) Extremely comfortable (5)

---

[6] Questions in this scale have been adapted from Bandura (2006).

Evaluation of Parent Power: Final Report | December 2025

Outcome	Question	Response coding
Parental self-efficacy	Please rate how comfortable you are with doing the following: Presenting your ideas to those outside your local community group	Extremely uncomfortable (1) Somewhat uncomfortable (2) Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable (3) Somewhat comfortable (4) Extremely comfortable (5)
Parental self-efficacy	Please rate how comfortable you are with doing the following: Getting your child to see school as valuable	Extremely uncomfortable (1) Somewhat uncomfortable (2) Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable (3) Somewhat comfortable (4) Extremely comfortable (5)
Parental self-efficacy	Please rate how comfortable you are with doing the following: Getting your child to work hard at their schoolwork	Extremely uncomfortable (1) Somewhat uncomfortable (2) Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable (3) Somewhat comfortable (4) Extremely comfortable (5)
Parental self-efficacy	Please rate how comfortable you are with doing the following: Getting your child to stay out of trouble at school	Extremely uncomfortable (1) Somewhat uncomfortable (2) Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable (3) Somewhat comfortable (4) Extremely comfortable (5)
Parental self-efficacy	Please rate how comfortable you are with doing the following: Helping your child get good grades at school	Extremely uncomfortable (1) Somewhat uncomfortable (2) Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable (3) Somewhat comfortable (4) Extremely comfortable (5)

Outcome	Question	Response coding
Parental self-efficacy	Please rate how comfortable you are with doing the following: Getting your child to enjoy school	Extremely uncomfortable (1) Somewhat uncomfortable (2) Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable (3) Somewhat comfortable (4) Extremely comfortable (5)
Parental self-efficacy	Please rate how comfortable you are with doing the following: Showing your child that working hard at school influences later success	Extremely uncomfortable (1) Somewhat uncomfortable (2) Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable (3) Somewhat comfortable (4) Extremely comfortable (5)
Perceived knowledge	Please rate how comfortable you are with doing the following: Understanding post-16 educational pathways available for students	Extremely uncomfortable (1) Somewhat uncomfortable (2) Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable (3) Somewhat comfortable (4) Extremely comfortable (5)
Perceived knowledge	Please rate how comfortable you are with doing the following: Supporting your child's post-16 education choices	Extremely uncomfortable (1) Somewhat uncomfortable (2) Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable (3) Somewhat comfortable (4) Extremely comfortable (5)
Perceived knowledge	Please rate how comfortable you are with doing the following: Understanding the university admissions	Extremely uncomfortable (1) Somewhat uncomfortable (2) Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable (3) Somewhat comfortable (4) Extremely comfortable (5)

Outcome	Question	Response coding
	process (UCAS) in the UK	
Perceived knowledge	Please rate how comfortable you are with doing the following: Understanding how contextual offers work	Extremely uncomfortable (1) Somewhat uncomfortable (2) Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable (3) Somewhat comfortable (4) Extremely comfortable (5)
Perceived knowledge	Please rate how comfortable you are with doing the following: Understanding the student finance system in the UK (e.g. loans for tuition fees, loans for living costs)	Extremely uncomfortable (1) Somewhat uncomfortable (2) Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable (3) Somewhat comfortable (4) Extremely comfortable (5)
Perceived knowledge	Please rate how comfortable you are with doing the following: Understanding degree apprenticeships	Extremely uncomfortable (1) Somewhat uncomfortable (2) Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable (3) Somewhat comfortable (4) Extremely comfortable (5)
Perceived knowledge	Please rate how comfortable you are with doing the following: Discussing the possibility of university education with your child	Extremely uncomfortable (1) Somewhat uncomfortable (2) Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable (3) Somewhat comfortable (4) Extremely comfortable (5)

Appendix 3: regression tables

Primary analysis

	Measured knowledge	Perceived knowledge	Leadership & community organising	Parental self-efficacy
(Intercept)	2.06 (0.41) *	1.96 (0.63)	2.37 (0.53) *	3.52 (0.44) **
Treatment status	0.48 (0.21)	-0.49 (0.10) **	-0.08 (0.12)	-0.16 (0.10)
Timepoint	0.42 (0.07) ***	0.05 (0.04)	0.11 (0.05)	0.02 (0.05)
Treatment status * Timepoint	-0.11 (0.10)	0.27 (0.10) *	0.08 (0.10)	0.06 (0.13)
Age: 18-24	-1.90 (0.42) **	0.75 (0.24) *	0.62 (0.20) *	-0.82 (0.35) *
Age: 25-34	-1.30 (0.39) *	1.52 (0.33) **	0.97 (0.53)	0.58 (0.20) *
Age: 35-44	-0.92 (0.27) **	1.21 (0.20) ***	0.51 (0.37)	0.24 (0.16)
Age: 45-54	-0.70 (0.25) *	1.31 (0.23) ***	0.43 (0.26)	0.31 (0.19)
Age: 55-64	-0.86 (0.28) *	1.24 (0.31) **	0.31 (0.44)	0.30 (0.32)
Age: 65+	-1.03 (0.40) *	1.45 (0.35) **	0.52 (0.43)	0.66 (0.32)
Gender: male	-0.46 (0.17) *	0.13 (0.12)	0.42 (0.12) **	0.10 (0.13)
Gender: other	-0.26 (0.43)	0.37 (0.26)	-0.34 (0.20)	-2.14 (0.19) ***
Ethnicity: other	-0.75 (0.37)	-0.07 (0.36)	-0.18 (0.13)	-0.33 (0.24)
Ethnicity: white	-0.18 (0.14)	-0.16 (0.10)	0.02 (0.17)	-0.03 (0.10)
Education: some secondary school	0.29 (0.49)	-0.60 (0.35)	-0.86 (0.39)	-1.19 (0.56)
Education: completed secondary school	0.91 (0.29)	-0.17 (0.48)	-0.81 (0.40)	-0.03 (0.38)
Education: vocational or similar	0.77 (0.20)	-0.18 (0.41)	-0.57 (0.37)	-0.07 (0.35)

	Measured knowledge	Perceived knowledge	Leadership & community organising	Parental self-efficacy
Education: some university, no degree	1.04 (0.33)	-0.16 (0.55)	-0.88 (0.44)	-0.11 (0.42)
Education: bachelors degree	1.20 (0.22)	0.24 (0.41)	-0.33 (0.29)	0.02 (0.32)
Education: graduate degree	1.32 (0.23)	0.31 (0.45)	-0.31 (0.41)	0.09 (0.37)
Education: other	0.66 (0.39)	0.09 (0.47)	-0.64 (0.32)	0.11 (0.36)
Employment: other	-0.06 (0.37)	0.10 (0.26)	-0.07 (0.20)	-0.27 (0.17)
Employment: retired	1.60 (0.30) ***	1.01 (0.31) **	1.46 (0.36) **	0.69 (0.38)
Employment: student	0.09 (0.61)	0.54 (0.24)	0.61 (0.20) *	0.18 (0.11)
Employment: unemployed	-0.34 (0.36)	-0.15 (0.19)	0.03 (0.30)	-0.03 (0.18)
Employment: working full time	0.32 (0.25)	0.19 (0.16)	0.15 (0.19)	0.11 (0.15)
Employment: working part time	0.22 (0.27)	0.04 (0.14)	0.19 (0.15)	-0.04 (0.15)
Number of children	-0.08 (0.06)	0.06 (0.05)	0.10 (0.05)	0.05 (0.04)
Youngest child in sixth form	-0.02 (0.17)	0.21 (0.11)	0.18 (0.15)	0.08 (0.10)
Female child	-0.15 (0.15)	0.08 (0.11)	0.19 (0.09)	-0.03 (0.11)
Male child	-0.14 (0.16)	-0.01 (0.12)	0.13 (0.12)	-0.05 (0.06)
FSM: yes	-0.37 (0.19)	0.13 (0.17)	0.28 (0.14)	-0.02 (0.13)
FSM: other	0.57 (0.41)	0.23 (0.27)	0.26 (0.17)	0.21 (0.10)
R^2	0.17	0.19	0.18	0.16
Adj. R^2	0.12	0.14	0.12	0.11

	Measured knowledge	Perceived knowledge	Leadership & community organising	Parental self-efficacy
Num. obs.	557	557	558	557
RMSE	1.15	0.84	0.87	0.69
N Clusters	34	34	34	34

Primary analysis without treatment respondents with zero Parent Power activities

	Measured knowledge	Perceived knowledge	Leadership & community organising	Parental self-efficacy
(Intercept)	2.01 (0.47) *	2.10 (0.72)	2.42 (0.58) *	3.58 (0.51) *
Treatment status	0.47 (0.19)	-0.49 (0.12) **	-0.08 (0.12)	-0.19 (0.10)
Timepoint	0.43 (0.07) ***	0.04 (0.04)	0.11 (0.05)	0.02 (0.05)
Treatment status * Timepoint	-0.11 (0.11)	0.24 (0.08) *	0.10 (0.09)	0.11 (0.12)
Age: 18-24	-1.62 (0.43) **	0.75 (0.27) *	0.51 (0.26)	-0.95 (0.33) *
Age: 25-34	-1.26 (0.45) *	1.56 (0.36) **	0.96 (0.57)	0.58 (0.24)
Age: 35-44	-0.87 (0.30) *	1.13 (0.24) **	0.45 (0.37)	0.22 (0.20)
Age: 45-54	-0.68 (0.28) *	1.27 (0.25) ***	0.40 (0.26)	0.33 (0.20)
Age: 55-64	-0.80 (0.28) *	1.16 (0.35) **	0.26 (0.44)	0.29 (0.35)
Age: 65+	-0.98 (0.42) *	1.36 (0.41) **	0.50 (0.41)	0.67 (0.34)
Gender: male	-0.39 (0.18)	0.12 (0.12)	0.41 (0.11) **	0.08 (0.13)
Gender: other	-0.33 (0.44)	0.35 (0.29)	-0.31 (0.21)	-2.14 (0.19) ***
Ethnicity: other	-0.30 (0.65)	-0.40 (0.65)	-0.43 (0.34)	-0.55 (0.49)
Ethnicity: white	-0.16 (0.13)	-0.15 (0.11)	-0.01 (0.16)	-0.05 (0.09)
Education: some secondary school	0.26 (0.62)	-0.67 (0.39)	-0.88 (0.39)	-1.20 (0.54)

	Measured knowledge	Perceived knowledge	Leadership & community organising	Parental self-efficacy
Education: completed secondary school	1.07 (0.31)	-0.19 (0.51)	-0.88 (0.45)	-0.06 (0.42)
Education: vocational or similar	0.77 (0.24)	-0.18 (0.45)	-0.59 (0.41)	-0.08 (0.39)
Education: some university, no degree	0.89 (0.41)	-0.23 (0.63)	-0.85 (0.46)	-0.02 (0.44)
Education: bachelors degree	1.21 (0.23)	0.18 (0.45)	-0.37 (0.32)	0.00 (0.36)
Education: graduate degree	1.37 (0.30)	0.29 (0.50)	-0.35 (0.45)	0.09 (0.41)
Education: other	0.94 (0.48)	0.06 (0.55)	-0.75 (0.48)	-0.03 (0.46)
Employment: other	-0.40 (0.38)	0.12 (0.29)	0.03 (0.23)	-0.13 (0.15)
Employment: retired	1.43 (0.37) **	1.08 (0.34) *	1.48 (0.38) **	0.68 (0.41)
Employment: student	-0.06 (0.80)	0.30 (0.19)	0.68 (0.19) *	0.15 (0.14)
Employment: unemployed	-0.59 (0.39)	-0.23 (0.26)	0.04 (0.31)	-0.03 (0.20)
Employment: working full time	0.17 (0.29)	0.14 (0.20)	0.20 (0.20)	0.10 (0.16)
Employment: working part time	0.09 (0.31)	-0.00 (0.17)	0.21 (0.16)	-0.04 (0.17)
Number of children	-0.06 (0.06)	0.06 (0.05)	0.11 (0.05)	0.05 (0.05)
Youngest child in sixth form	0.04 (0.19)	0.25 (0.13)	0.18 (0.13)	0.08 (0.11)
Female child	-0.09 (0.18)	0.04 (0.13)	0.17 (0.10)	-0.06 (0.14)
Male child	-0.10 (0.17)	0.02 (0.13)	0.14 (0.12)	-0.05 (0.07)
FSM: yes	-0.37 (0.20)	0.07 (0.20)	0.25 (0.15)	-0.03 (0.13)

	Measured knowledge	Perceived knowledge	Leadership & community organising	Parental self-efficacy
FSM: other	0.99 (0.30) *	0.25 (0.37)	0.17 (0.26)	0.14 (0.14)
R^2	0.17	0.20	0.18	0.16
Adj. R^2	0.12	0.14	0.13	0.11
Num. obs.	527	527	528	527
RMSE	1.15	0.83	0.87	0.69
N Clusters	34	34	34	34

Robustness check 1: sample made up of all endline data

	Measured knowledge	Perceived knowledge	Leadership & community organising	Parental self-efficacy
(Intercept)	2.27 (0.61) *	2.68 (0.83)	2.15 (0.74)	3.75 (0.48) **
Treatment status	0.46 (0.18)	-0.44 (0.09) **	-0.07 (0.13)	-0.14 (0.09)
Timepoint	0.44 (0.05) ***	0.06 (0.03)	0.06 (0.03)	0.02 (0.04)
Treatment status * Timepoint	-0.13 (0.09)	0.25 (0.09)	0.13 (0.09)	0.05 (0.13)
Age: 18-24	-1.60 (0.59)	0.10 (0.70)	0.24 (0.35)	-1.00 (0.52)
Age: 25-34	-1.52 (0.38)	0.63 (0.90)	0.47 (0.53)	0.05 (0.42)
Age: 35-44	-1.22 (0.35)	0.34 (0.82)	-0.01 (0.39)	-0.24 (0.41)
Age: 45-54	-0.98 (0.34)	0.38 (0.79)	-0.10 (0.37)	-0.21 (0.38)
Age: 55-64	-1.06 (0.38)	0.55 (0.84)	0.10 (0.44)	-0.09 (0.42)
Age: 65+	-1.02 (0.51)	0.38 (0.71)	0.33 (0.47)	0.06 (0.51)
Gender: male	-0.33 (0.10) **	0.25 (0.07) **	0.33 (0.09) **	0.09 (0.11)
Gender: other	-0.21 (0.35)	0.28 (0.23)	-0.32 (0.16)	-2.20 (0.18) ***
Ethnicity: other	-0.72 (0.34)	-0.05 (0.39)	-0.19 (0.12)	-0.32 (0.25)

	Measured knowledge	Perceived knowledge	Leadership & community organising	Parental self-efficacy
Ethnicity: white	-0.07 (0.09)	-0.07 (0.07)	-0.03 (0.15)	-0.02 (0.08)
Education: some secondary school	0.38 (0.59)	-0.13 (0.39)	0.20 (0.94)	-0.71 (0.71)
Education: completed secondary school	0.99 (0.30) *	-0.07 (0.27)	0.02 (0.65)	0.20 (0.32)
Education: vocational or similar	0.78 (0.28)	0.00 (0.26)	0.24 (0.69)	0.18 (0.32)
Education: some university, no degree	1.05 (0.43)	-0.06 (0.32)	-0.04 (0.70)	0.14 (0.35)
Education: bachelors degree	1.26 (0.25) *	0.35 (0.25)	0.48 (0.70)	0.31 (0.32)
Education: graduate degree	1.47 (0.38) *	0.46 (0.25)	0.51 (0.64)	0.40 (0.32)
Education: other	0.75 (0.35)	0.23 (0.35)	0.21 (0.74)	0.38 (0.32)
Employment: other	-0.23 (0.34)	0.05 (0.29)	-0.04 (0.21)	-0.30 (0.18)
Employment: retired	0.66 (0.45)	0.64 (0.28)	0.71 (0.41)	0.49 (0.23)
Employment: student	-0.09 (0.61)	0.53 (0.25)	0.66 (0.23)	0.17 (0.13)
Employment: unemployed	-0.35 (0.31)	-0.26 (0.24)	0.04 (0.31)	-0.04 (0.15)
Employment: working full time	0.09 (0.21)	0.17 (0.16)	0.19 (0.18)	0.09 (0.13)
Employment: working part time	0.07 (0.23)	0.02 (0.15)	0.24 (0.15)	-0.08 (0.12)
Number of children	-0.05 (0.06)	0.06 (0.04)	0.10 (0.05)	0.05 (0.03)
Youngest child in sixth form	0.00 (0.15)	0.14 (0.10)	0.03 (0.12)	0.01 (0.09)

	Measured knowledge	Perceived knowledge	Leadership & community organising	Parental self-efficacy
Female child	-0.04 (0.12)	0.05 (0.12)	0.10 (0.10)	-0.04 (0.09)
Male child	-0.07 (0.15)	-0.02 (0.12)	0.10 (0.11)	-0.03 (0.06)
FSM: yes	-0.45 (0.19) *	0.13 (0.14)	0.22 (0.11)	0.00 (0.09)
FSM: other	0.52 (0.42)	0.22 (0.27)	0.25 (0.14)	0.21 (0.09)
R^2	0.18	0.20	0.16	0.16
Adj. R^2	0.14	0.16	0.12	0.12
Num. obs.	691	691	692	691
RMSE	1.14	0.81	0.86	0.66
N Clusters	35	35	35	35

Robustness check 2: sample constructed via match specified in trial protocol

	Measured knowledge	Perceived knowledge	Leadership & community organising	Parental self-efficacy
(Intercept)	3.89 (1.02) **	1.69 (0.75) *	1.20 (0.66)	3.56 (0.66) ***
Treatment status	0.27 (0.27)	-0.38 (0.19)	-0.25 (0.15)	-0.09 (0.07)
Timepoint	0.46 (0.09) **	0.06 (0.07)	0.12 (0.10)	0.05 (0.05)
Treatment status * Timepoint	-0.28 (0.20)	0.15 (0.15)	0.05 (0.21)	-0.08 (0.20)
Age: 25-34	-1.23 (1.16)	1.31 (0.33) *	1.07 (0.55)	0.40 (0.33)
Age: 35-44	-1.46 (0.46) *	0.87 (0.34) *	0.62 (0.47)	0.08 (0.44)
Age: 45-54	-1.00 (0.52)	1.20 (0.34) **	0.42 (0.30)	0.26 (0.38)
Age: 55-64	-1.48 (0.43) **	1.29 (0.41) *	0.59 (0.48)	0.21 (0.51)
Gender: male	-0.58 (0.24) *	-0.22 (0.18)	0.22 (0.32)	-0.17 (0.26)
Ethnicity: other	0.38 (0.18)	-0.94 (0.33) *	-0.68 (0.19) *	-1.16 (0.17) **

	Measured knowledge	Perceived knowledge	Leadership & community organising	Parental self-efficacy
Ethnicity: white	-0.42 (0.25)	-0.44 (0.24)	0.08 (0.28)	-0.14 (0.15)
Education: some secondary school	0.62 (0.58)	-0.29 (0.53)	0.81 (0.35)	-0.15 (0.40)
Education: vocational or similar	-0.02 (0.48)	0.00 (0.50)	0.28 (0.31)	0.11 (0.27)
Education: some university, no degree	0.31 (0.44)	-0.31 (0.37)	0.32 (0.76)	0.30 (0.36)
Education: bachelors degree	0.67 (0.45)	0.12 (0.43)	0.61 (0.30)	0.15 (0.21)
Education: graduate degree	0.54 (0.45)	0.14 (0.41)	0.63 (0.28)	0.19 (0.17)
Education: other	1.57 (0.41) *	0.75 (0.83)	1.13 (0.63)	0.69 (0.44)
Employment: other	0.55 (1.07)	0.56 (0.36)	0.43 (0.51)	-0.89 (0.48)
Employment: student	0.87 (0.87)	1.62 (0.78)	0.80 (0.52)	0.13 (0.45)
Employment: unemployed	-0.99 (0.46)	0.97 (0.53)	1.82 (0.53)	0.97 (0.46)
Employment: working full time	0.06 (0.61)	1.08 (0.38) *	0.62 (0.42)	0.36 (0.47)
Employment: working part time	-0.19 (0.67)	0.81 (0.38)	0.68 (0.39)	0.15 (0.49)
Number of children	-0.12 (0.08)	0.08 (0.09)	0.06 (0.07)	0.02 (0.09)
Youngest child in sixth form	-1.42 (0.35)	-0.79 (0.66)	-1.04 (0.69)	-1.11 (0.56)
Female child	-0.30 (0.36)	-0.17 (0.14)	0.15 (0.23)	-0.14 (0.14)
Male child	-0.45 (0.37)	-0.21 (0.24)	-0.07 (0.23)	-0.22 (0.18)
FSM: yes	-0.78 (0.30) *	-0.04 (0.39)	0.20 (0.35)	-0.16 (0.44)
FSM: other	0.74 (0.15) *	0.12 (0.18)	0.07 (0.16)	0.13 (0.23)

	Measured knowledge	Perceived knowledge	Leadership & community organising	Parental self-efficacy
R^2	0.23	0.19	0.16	0.18
Adj. R^2	0.15	0.10	0.06	0.09
Num. obs.	271	271	272	272
RMSE	1.07	0.85	0.88	0.74
N Clusters	28	28	28	28

Robustness check 3: sample constructed through matching with Mahalanobis distance

	Measured knowledge	Perceived knowledge	Leadership & community organising	Parental self-efficacy
(Intercept)	1.97 (0.61) *	3.71 (0.58) ***	2.49 (0.52) **	4.33 (0.37) ***
Treatment status	0.52 (0.22) *	-0.37 (0.10) **	-0.10 (0.15)	-0.05 (0.14)
Timepoint	0.41 (0.12) *	0.06 (0.12)	-0.12 (0.07)	-0.01 (0.07)
Treatment status * Timepoint	-0.09 (0.14)	0.25 (0.15)	0.31 (0.11) *	0.09 (0.15)
Age: 35-44	0.55 (0.35)	-0.03 (0.24)	-0.22 (0.34)	-0.26 (0.18)
Age: 45-54	0.72 (0.25) *	-0.06 (0.23)	-0.34 (0.31)	-0.18 (0.18)
Age: 55-64	0.00 (1.07)	0.24 (0.46)	-0.04 (0.55)	-0.27 (0.65)
Age: 65+	-0.04 (0.32)	0.33 (0.34)	0.10 (0.43)	-0.70 (0.29)
Gender: male	-0.21 (0.17)	0.28 (0.18)	0.34 (0.16)	-0.06 (0.23)
Gender: other	-0.63 (0.58)	-0.16 (0.23)	-0.51 (0.27)	-2.21 (0.20) ***
Ethnicity: other	-0.86 (0.36)	-0.20 (0.33)	-0.14 (0.19)	-0.26 (0.35)
Ethnicity: white	-0.38 (0.15) *	-0.40 (0.19)	0.03 (0.20)	0.05 (0.20)
Education: vocational or similar	-0.00 (0.33)	0.23 (0.28)	0.43 (0.16)	-0.24 (0.36)

	Measured knowledge	Perceived knowledge	Leadership & community organising	Parental self-efficacy
Education: some university, no degree	0.10 (0.23)	0.05 (0.33)	0.08 (0.34)	-0.02 (0.37)
Education: bachelors degree	0.22 (0.39)	0.58 (0.21) *	0.74 (0.14) **	0.03 (0.17)
Education: graduate degree	0.53 (0.39)	0.56 (0.30)	0.58 (0.24)	-0.07 (0.23)
Education: other	-0.43 (0.52)	0.36 (0.32)	0.33 (0.30)	0.11 (0.25)
Employment: other	0.19 (0.39)	0.06 (0.29)	-0.58 (0.37)	-0.77 (0.22) *
Employment: retired	1.88 (0.59) *	0.93 (0.50)	1.05 (0.42) *	1.68 (0.45) *
Employment: student	0.09 (0.72)	0.58 (0.43)	0.62 (0.36)	0.37 (0.24)
Employment: unemployed	-0.38 (0.38)	-0.33 (0.19)	0.04 (0.23)	-0.11 (0.19)
Employment: working full time	0.13 (0.21)	-0.10 (0.19)	0.01 (0.21)	0.08 (0.20)
Employment: working part time	0.17 (0.26)	-0.19 (0.15)	0.13 (0.22)	-0.14 (0.19)
Number of children	-0.22 (0.11)	-0.10 (0.10)	0.06 (0.08)	-0.01 (0.07)
Youngest child in sixth form	0.45 (0.51)	0.40 (0.34)	0.07 (0.25)	-0.18 (0.26)
Female child	-0.20 (0.32)	-0.22 (0.19)	0.14 (0.14)	-0.25 (0.12)
Male child	-0.32 (0.30)	-0.24 (0.22)	-0.04 (0.15)	-0.18 (0.13)
FSM: yes	-0.33 (0.27)	0.01 (0.22)	0.30 (0.18)	0.00 (0.20)
FSM: other	0.48 (0.70)	0.13 (0.27)	0.18 (0.43)	0.07 (0.24)
R^2	0.23	0.21	0.19	0.15
Adj. R^2	0.15	0.13	0.11	0.07
Num. obs.	299	299	300	300

	Measured knowledge	Perceived knowledge	Leadership & community organising	Parental self-efficacy
RMSE	1.14	0.88	0.87	0.78
N Clusters	27	27	27	27

Robustness check 4: sample from the primary analysis but without covariates in model

	Measured knowledge	Perceived knowledge	Leadership & community organising	Parental self-efficacy
(Intercept)	2.03 (0.07) ***	3.70 (0.08) ***	3.12 (0.11) ***	3.97 (0.06) ***
Treatment status	0.38 (0.12) *	-0.53 (0.12) **	-0.15 (0.15)	-0.20 (0.10)
Timepoint	0.42 (0.07) ***	0.05 (0.04)	0.11 (0.05)	0.02 (0.05)
Treatment status * Timepoint	-0.10 (0.10)	0.27 (0.10) *	0.08 (0.10)	0.06 (0.13)
R^2	0.04	0.05	0.01	0.01
Adj. R^2	0.04	0.05	0.00	0.01
Num. obs.	557	557	558	557
RMSE	1.20	0.88	0.92	0.73
N Clusters	34	34	34	34

Robustness check 5: sample excluding 44 responses with demographic inconsistencies

	Measured knowledge	Perceived knowledge	Leadership & community organising	Parental self-efficacy
(Intercept)	1.71 (0.58) *	3.32 (0.42) ***	2.51 (0.55) **	4.12 (0.35) ***
Treatment status	0.40 (0.22)	-0.40 (0.08) **	-0.03 (0.14)	-0.19 (0.10)
Timepoint	0.43 (0.07) ***	0.08 (0.04)	0.10 (0.05)	-0.00 (0.05)
Treatment status * Timepoint	-0.11 (0.09)	0.23 (0.10)	0.05 (0.12)	0.08 (0.14)

	Measured knowledge	Perceived knowledge	Leadership & community organising	Parental self-efficacy
Age: 35-44	0.47 (0.26)	-0.26 (0.31)	-0.46 (0.40)	-0.35 (0.19)
Age: 45-54	0.71 (0.22) *	-0.16 (0.31)	-0.55 (0.47)	-0.26 (0.20)
Age: 55-64	0.63 (0.46)	-0.13 (0.28)	-0.60 (0.38)	-0.20 (0.21)
Gender: male	-0.51 (0.20) *	0.08 (0.12)	0.48 (0.13) **	0.06 (0.14)
Gender: other	-0.21 (0.52)	0.30 (0.27)	-0.35 (0.27)	-2.04 (0.20) ***
Ethnicity: other	-0.42 (0.40)	-0.35 (0.35)	-0.22 (0.13)	-0.40 (0.27)
Ethnicity: white	-0.19 (0.15)	-0.17 (0.10)	0.04 (0.19)	-0.05 (0.09)
Education: some secondary school	-1.01 (0.28) **	-0.65 (0.23) *	-0.35 (0.33)	-1.66 (0.18) ***
Education: vocational or similar	-0.20 (0.32)	-0.06 (0.30)	0.29 (0.15)	-0.08 (0.22)
Education: some university, no degree	0.28 (0.40)	-0.09 (0.34)	-0.01 (0.52)	-0.09 (0.50)
Education: bachelors degree	0.23 (0.37)	0.39 (0.19)	0.51 (0.16) *	0.05 (0.14)
Education: graduate degree	0.41 (0.36)	0.44 (0.27)	0.51 (0.23)	0.07 (0.16)
Education: other	-0.26 (0.52)	0.21 (0.26)	0.20 (0.28)	0.17 (0.17)
Employment: other	0.03 (0.37)	0.06 (0.29)	-0.10 (0.26)	-0.26 (0.19)
Employment: retired	1.91 (0.51) *	0.92 (0.47)	0.99 (0.61)	0.80 (0.37)
Employment: student	0.05 (0.72)	0.31 (0.39)	0.48 (0.25)	0.16 (0.15)
Employment: unemployed	-0.35 (0.39)	-0.24 (0.20)	-0.03 (0.36)	-0.06 (0.20)
Employment: working full time	0.30 (0.28)	0.16 (0.18)	0.10 (0.22)	0.13 (0.18)

	Measured knowledge	Perceived knowledge	Leadership & community organising	Parental self-efficacy
Employment: working part time	0.17 (0.29)	-0.08 (0.17)	0.15 (0.18)	-0.10 (0.20)
Number of children	-0.08 (0.08)	0.05 (0.06)	0.11 (0.05)	0.06 (0.04)
Youngest child in sixth form	-0.07 (0.20)	0.20 (0.12)	0.17 (0.16)	0.03 (0.10)
Female child	-0.16 (0.15)	0.07 (0.12)	0.21 (0.11)	-0.00 (0.10)
Male child	-0.20 (0.17)	-0.02 (0.13)	0.11 (0.12)	-0.06 (0.07)
FSM: yes	-0.37 (0.23)	0.11 (0.17)	0.24 (0.17)	-0.09 (0.12)
FSM: other	0.28 (0.66)	-0.02 (0.23)	0.24 (0.32)	0.20 (0.24)
R^2	0.17	0.18	0.16	0.17
Adj. R^2	0.12	0.13	0.11	0.12
Num. obs.	489	489	490	490
RMSE	1.14	0.84	0.88	0.70
N Clusters	32	32	32	32

Appendix 4: changes from trial protocol

The following changes were made from the approach specified in the trial protocol (osf.io/n54uv).

Matching approach

In the protocol we specified that we would undertake matching in two stages. The intention was to recruit 1,000 comparator parents at baseline and then conduct a first round of matching to identify the 400 best matched comparator parents for follow-up at endline.

To ensure that the pool of comparator parents was comparable to the treatment parents, ten regions were identified that were statistically similar to the areas where Parent Power has active chapters. Public First identified recruitment regions based on deprivation levels, percentage of the population identifying as white, and percentage of the population holding a university degree. Further, due to the makeup of the baseline sample of treatment parents it was necessary to set an ethnicity quota (40% white, 60% all other ethnicities) for the comparator parents to ensure that the groups were similar.

Meeting this quota within the identified comparator regions was difficult, so we decided to recruit a smaller comparator group that was more comparable to the treatment group, and then follow up with all comparator parents, rather than relaxing the regions and ethnicity quota and recruiting a larger comparator group to conduct a two-stage matching procedure. Therefore, at baseline, 531 comparator parents were recruited, and all were approached for the endline survey. At endline, 258 comparator parents responded to the survey. The final matched sample was then constructed from these 258 comparator parents who provided baseline and endline responses.

Match quality tests

The protocol specified the following match quality tests following Greifer (2023):

- First, we will assess the pre-matching differences across treatment and comparator groups on relevant covariates, on the basis of absolute standardised mean differences.
- We will then assess the post-matching standardised mean differences, graphically and in values.
- We will also conduct Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests to identify differences in the distribution across key relevant covariates, especially if some imbalances are detected by the differences in means.
- We will also evaluate other pre- and post-matching indicators such as variance ratios, to assess the difference in variance on covariates across treatment and comparator

group; and empirical cumulative density functions, to provide further information on the differences at distribution level for key covariates.

However, following coarsening the majority of variables were binary, therefore it was not possible to conduct Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests, or calculate variance ratios or cumulative density functions. The other tests were followed as specified.

Additional tests from Greifer (2023) were included to account for the tests that could not be conducted on binary variables. This included visualising standardised mean differences for the interactions between covariates that were likely to have the highest impact on outcomes of interest, and regressing covariates on endline outcomes to identify any significant associations.

Primary analysis

The protocol specified a range of parent- and child-level variables to be included in the matching.[7] However, inspection of the data showed a high level of variation in the profiles of respondents. Therefore, as the outcomes of interest relate to parents, the match used in the primary analysis only includes parent-level outcomes (gender, ethnicity, highest level of education, age, and employment status). To check whether the change in the specification had a meaningful impact the originally specified match was included as a robustness check.

Region was also not included as a covariate in any of the specifications as the matched comparator group was recruited from a range of regions that were pre-matched to the regions where Parent Power has chapters on the basis of

Region was not included in any of the models as the comparator sample was recruited from regions that were pre-matched to the regions of Parent Power chapters on the basis of deprivation levels, percentage of the population identifying as white, and percentage of the population holding a university degree.

Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) quintile was also not included due to the low proportion of respondents who elected to provide their postcode in full (this was made optional given the highly identifiable nature of the data).

Exploratory analysis

No exploratory analysis was conducted due to the small endline sample.

Robustness checks

Robustness checks were completed as specified in the protocol with the following amendments:

---

[7] Age, sex, ethnicity, highest level of education completed, employment status, region, IMD score of postcode, number of children under 18 in household, age(s) of children, gender of child(ren), whether child(ren) are eligible for free school meals.

- Given the small number of phone responses (three) and paper responses (zero) to the survey we did not conduct any matching that excluded these respondents.
- As we used a different specification for the primary analysis, the match as originally specified in the protocol was included as an additional robustness check.
- An additional robustness check was included that excluded 44 responses from the comparator group that had demographic inconsistencies in the baseline/endline survey responses that raised data quality concerns.

Appendix 5: topic guides

Community organisers topic guide

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in an interview about your [role as a community organiser on the Parent Power programme].

I work for King's College London, a public research university and higher education institution.

Today's discussion will cover how you adapt the programme to local contexts, your perception of the impact of the programme on participating parents and the wider community, the success and challenges in recruiting and sustaining parent participation, and the barriers and facilitators to delivering Parent Power. The interview will last between 45 minutes to an hour.

Participation is voluntary, and you can stop at any time. If you do not want to answer a question, please let me know and we can move on. Before we begin, I want to go through some general information with you:

- Everything discussed in this interview will only be used for this research. The information you provide today will only be viewed by the research team.
- We will write a report based on our findings for [ADD]. The information your share today will be anonymised in the report. Please feel free to answer the questions as openly and as honestly as possible.
- With your permission, I would like to record the interview, which would then be transcribed – I'll take notes as we talk, but it helps to have a backup. The recording and transcription will be stored securely and will only be accessible to the KCL team. It will be deleted [ADD TIME] after the end of the project.

Do you have any questions?

Are you okay with being recorded?

[Turn on recording – announce when recording has started]

Consent

Please confirm that you understand what the research is about, how your data will be used and stored, and that you are happy to take part in the interview.

Background

1. Can you briefly describe your role within the Parent Power programme
2. How long have you been a community organiser for Parent Power/TBC?
3. What motivated to pursue this role?

Recruiting strategies

1. What strategies or recruitment methods do you use when recruiting parents to the Parent Power programme?
2. Did you face any challenges while trying to recruit parents to the programme?
3. How do you work with parents to support their engagement in community organising?

Adapting programme to local contexts

1. What strategies do you use to foster engagement?
    a. Probe for specific practices and strategies for fostering engagement within community organising.
2. How do tailor your strategies or adapt the programme to different groups or local contexts?
    a. Probe for method of leading local people towards common goal, methods for building relationships/networking, method of workshop delivery.
3. How do you support parents in community organising?
4. What strategies do you use to encourage leadership development within the programme

Barriers and facilitators to delivering Parent Power

1. Have you encountered any challenges in retaining parents to stay involved in the programme?
2. What are the key facilitators that have helped you successfully engage and support parents in the programme? Are there any strategies that increase the success of delivering community organising activities?
3. How do you navigate obstacles that arise during the course of the programme?

Perceptions of Parent Power' Impact on Higher Education

1. How do you think the community organising model has impacted the parents' involvement with HE or their children's academic future
    a. Probe on if/how parents change the way they engage with their children's education or advocacy for educational opportunities

Perceptions of impact on parents and wider community

1. How do you think participating in the Parent Power programme has impacted the parents?

  a. Probe for confidence, leadership, ability to advocate for children and community
2. Are there any activities that you believe have the highest impact on the parents?
  a. Probe for education workshops, 1:1 with parent, meeting 4-7
3. In your opinion, what impact, if any, has the programme had on the wider community?
  a. Probe on impact/influence in relation to higher education, other campaign parent-e change.

Sustainability

1. How do you see the long-term impact of Parent Power on the community and its sustainability?
  a. Probe for changes the community has made or will continue to make as a result of PP

Closing

1. If you could make any changes or improvements to Parent Power, what would they be?
2. What are your hopes for the future of the programme, and what would you like to see happen next for Parent Power in your community?
3. Is there anything else you would like to add before I turn off the recording?

[Turn off the recording]

Thank them for participating.

Parents topic guide

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in an interview about your experiences on the Parent Power programme.

I work for King's College London, a public research university and higher education institution. We have been commissioned by UKRI to partner with The Brilliant Club to complete this evaluation. The aim of the evaluation is to see how and if the Parent Power programme makes a difference for parents and their children.

Today's discussion will cover your reasons for engaging in the Parent Power programme, your perception of and your role in community organising, how Parent Power has supported you, any barriers or facilitators to engaging with the programme and your perceptions of the impact of engaging with Parent Power. The interview will last between 45 minutes to an

hour. Upon completing the interview, you will receive a £25 gift voucher in recognition of your time.

Participation is voluntary, and you can stop at any time. If you do not want to answer a question, please let me know and we can move on. Before we begin, I want to go through some general information with you:

- Everything discussed in this interview will only be used for this research. The information you provide today will only be viewed by the research team.

- We will write a report based on our findings for the UKRI. The information you share today will be anonymised in the report. Please feel free to answer the questions as openly and as honestly as possible.

- With your permission, I would like to record the interview, which would then be transcribed – I'll take notes as we talk, but it helps to have a backup. The recording and transcription will be stored securely and will only be accessible to the KCL team. It will be deleted [ADD TIME] after the end of the project.

Do you have any questions?

Are you okay with being recorded?

[Turn on recording – announce when recording has started]

Consent

Please confirm that you understand what the research is about, how your data will be used and stored, and that you are happy to take part in the interview.

Background

1. Can you tell me a bit about your background and why did you decide to join the Parent Power programme?
    a. Which chapter are you a part of?
    b. What were you hoping to learn/gain from joining Parent Power? Any goals you had in mind when you signed up?

Engaging in Parent Power programme

1. What motivates you to engage with the programme activities?
2. Are there any programme activities that you find more/less engaging?
    a. Probe for: group meetings, 1-2-1 relational meetings, community organising and campaigns.

Perception and role in community organisation

1. How would you describe 'community organising' as it relates to Parent Power?

2. What has your experience (including roles you played) in community organising been like?
    a. Can you share examples of activities/roles you have taken part of so far
    b. Probe for: leadership development and engagement in collective action.

Perception of Parent Power's impact on their children's education

1. How has Parent Power supported your understanding of and engagement with higher education? Probe: understanding access to HE
    a. Has your behaviour changed in how your support your child's education as a result of Parent Power?
2. What impacts, if any, has Parent Power had in supporting your child/children in accessing higher education?

Barriers and facilitators to engagement

1. What have been some of the challenges you have experienced when engaging with community organising within Parent Power?
    a. Any specific examples that made it difficult to fully participate in the activities
2. What are the factors made it easier or have helped you engage with the Parent Power programme?

Impact on personal lives and wider community

1. What impacts, if any, does Parent Power have on your personal life?
    a. Probe for: their relationships and their local/wider community.
2. How do you think Parent Power has impacted your local community?
    a. Probe: have they seen any changes in their local community?
    b. Probe: any example of community's involvement in educational inequality or other social issues
3. Do you think Parent Power has any long-term impact on the wider community or the parents involved?
    a. Probe for: how PP has influenced long-term goals for the community/parents involved

Conclusion

1. If you could change anything about the Parent Power programme, what would it be?

Closing

1. Is there anything else you would like to add before I turn off the recording?

[Turn off the recording]

Thank them for participating and confirm contact details for receiving the incentive/gift voucher.

The Policy Institute

The Policy Institute at King's College London works to solve society's challenges with evidence and expertise.

We combine the rigour of academia with the agility of a consultancy and the connectedness of a think tank.

Our research draws on many disciplines and methods, making use of the skills, expertise and resources of not only the institute, but the university and its wider network too.

Connect with us

kcl.ac.uk/policy-institute

@the-policy-institute

@policyinstitute

policy-institute@kcl.ac.uk

policyatkings.bsky.social

@policyatkings