



Parents and Guardians can use this to consider the types of questions you may want to ask at parent-teacher conferences. Without questions, conferences can be more of a one-way dialogue than a helpful back and forth conversation. The questions below are structured so the conversation builds from emotional safety and strengths to academic performance. The reason is important too - children who feel emotionally safe and have supportive family and social structures are in a better position to grow and learn.

Examples of helpful questions include:

1. How is my child emotionally?

Ask your child's teacher whether they appear happy at school and whether they're playing an active role in class and in the playground. Ensuring your son or daughter is happy is vital to a fulfilling school experience so don't be afraid to voice any concerns you may have.

2. What are my child's strengths?

Teachers should tell you about any issues your child may be having but it's important to hear the good news too. Ask your child's teachers what strengths they've identified and in what areas they are performing particularly well.

3. How does my child perform socially?

Knowing how your child interacts with his or her peers is important so ask your child's teacher how they're getting along socially at school. Find out whether your son or daughter plays with other students in the playground and whether participation in an after school activity may help them to develop socially.

4. May I tell you what's happening at home?

Any changes in a student's home life can have an impact on their behavior and attainment in school. If anything has changed at home, let your child's teacher know so that they can offer extra support when appropriate.

5. May I tell you a little more about my child?

If your son or daughter is starting a new class or grade, the teacher may not know them very well yet. Telling the teacher how well your child focuses, what their strengths are and when they might need additional support can help to foster a good working relationship.

6. What needs improvement?

Asking your child's teacher to tell you what areas require improvement will ensure you can provide relevant at-home support. If your child is struggling with spelling, for example, you can spend more time on this at home.

Academic performance questions

Once you've obtained and disclosed relevant information about your child, you can begin to focus on their academic performance and attainment.

These questions may include the following:

7. What extra help shall we provide?

If your child needs help from a tutor, extra encouragement with homework or help staying on track, the teacher will be able to work with you to create an effective strategy. This will ensure you're able to deliver the additional help they need, regardless of what area they're struggling in.

8. Is my child staying on track?

Ask your child's teacher what your child's attainment goals are and where they are performing now. Find out if this performance is what the teacher expected and, if not, what you can do to help improve your child's attainment level.

9. Is my child falling behind in any subjects?

If your child is struggling at school, it's important to know as quickly as possible. By identifying any potential problem areas you can work with your child's teacher to help them.

10. What do these results mean?

Students take various tests and carry out numerous assignments at school, so it can be hard to know which are most important and what the results actually mean. Always ask the teacher if you're unsure what your child's results mean and whether you need to take any action.

11. Is my child putting enough effort in?

Find out if your child is rushing their work, slacking off or putting minimal effort into their studies. If so, you can offer structured homework time when your child returns home from school and help them stay on track.

Special needs questions

If your child has been diagnosed with any special needs, a parent-teacher conference provides a great opportunity to ask specific need-related questions.

These specific special needs questions include:

12. Are you aware of my child's IEP?

If your child already has an IEP in place ensure the teacher is aware of it and its contents. The IEP should set out your child's objectives in school and strategies to achieve them so it's vital their class teacher is fully briefed on what it contains.

13. How is the school accommodating my child's needs?

Ask your child's teacher how they're implementing their IEP on a daily basis and whether your child is on target to achieve his or her goals. If you're not happy with the existing routine, ask how it can be improved so that their IEP goals can be met.

General information questions

Before you leave a parent-teacher conference it can be helpful to confirm a few general details. It's easy to forget these types of questions so you may find it useful to [jot them down](#) before the conference begins.

These may include:

14. Can I contact you?

Asking whether you can contact your child's teachers and what their contact details are gives them the opportunity to tell you their preferred contact methods. Phoning the school may not be the best way to contact your child's teacher, for example, as it's likely they'll be in class when you ring. In non-urgent situations, teachers may prefer you contact them by email so that they respond outside of teaching hours.

15. How can I help?

Ask your teacher what support you can offer your child, his or her class and the school as a whole.