



Dear parents,

My name is Dr Kathy Weston and I work as a researcher in the area of parenting, family life and education. I trained as a social scientist at the University of Cambridge and then went on to become an education researcher and author in the area of parental engagement in children's learning. The core of what I do involves **bridging the gap between research evidence and real-life**.

As a parent myself, I understand how busy and stressful parenting can be. We all want to do the best for our children, but what is that? We have all heard the phrase, "there is no manual" for raising children. However, the truth is, there is. Optimal approaches to parenting live within the research evidence and it is my job to locate those and share them with you. If you try and apply evidence-based tips in your parenting journey, they are much more likely to be effective.

### How do I locate the best quality research evidence?

- ✓ I am plugged into the research community and regularly liaise with some of the top researchers in the world on topics that matter to parents and teachers;
- ✓ I make sure, at all times, that I am staying on top of the latest evidence emerging (see: [www.drkathyweston.com/podcast](http://www.drkathyweston.com/podcast));
- ✓ I read a lot of the academic research (alongside my research assistant) and try and curate that advice into practical tip sheets (see: [www.drkathyweston.com/shop](http://www.drkathyweston.com/shop));
- ✓ I deliver weekly talks in schools to both parents and teachers (my favourite part is the Q&A, when I hear how material resonated with parents; messages they took away and still unanswered queries).

### How do I share it?

Principally via my talks, but this is set to change. It has been my dream to create a digital library resource, where parents can go in (whenever they like) and get the information they need, as and when they need it. Three years ago, I started thinking about how this resource might work technically and after a lot of hard work, have created something called **Tooled Up Education**.

Tooled Up is a library which has six main "departments" – mental health and wellbeing, behaviour, learning, digital life, family life and relationships and aspiration. I curate a variety of tip sheets, videos, podcasts and PDFs that relate to those themes.

### Why is it called Tooled Up?

At the beginning of all my talks, I refer to the metaphor of a mountain when describing our children's educational and life journeys. We wouldn't dream of sending our children up that mountain without the right toolkit, mindset and strategies for how to cope, when things don't go well! *Being Tooled Up* is about children being equipped



in a psychological sense, for what lies ahead. It is also about ensuring parents are conscious of their great role in shaping children's outcomes and aware of any obstacles that can threaten children's ability to thrive.

### Can we access resources on Tooled Up?

Happily, your school is keen to support parents and families as much as possible, and has agreed to become my first pilot secondary school for Tooled Up.

### What will this mean for me?

As a current parent of a child at Ashlyns' School, you will be given a unique access code that will allow you to read, watch and download any of my resources on the Tooled Up website from 1st May 2020.

### Do I have to subscribe to Tooled Up?

Tooled Up Education is for parents who want the best for their children, believe in an evidence-based approach and are prepared to take the time to try and apply tips at home. If you feel this is right for you, then you will be asked to subscribe to the system via a Google Form.

If you do not want access to the world of Tooled Up, you will not be required to join.

### How will I find what I need on the Tooled Up site?

We have created a search function on the site which should respond to the normal keyword searches. However, as your school is **my first pilot secondary school**, as parents, you are in a unique position to shape the content on the new site. If you do not find what you need on the TUE site, you can let us know.

Be please aware that, as this is the first time it is being piloted within such a large school community, there may be the occasional glitch.

### Next Steps

I really hope that you are excited about this opportunity for us to work together and I look forward very much to supporting your children and your family.

If you wish to join the Tooled Up community, **you will need to complete a short form.** We kindly request that this registration is complete before 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020.

With very best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kathy Weston'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Dr Kathy Weston M.Phil. (Cantab) LL.B.  
Founder, Tooled Up Education