

The logo for Cardiff University, featuring the word "CARDIFF" in a large, white, serif font above the word "UNIVERSITY" in a smaller, white, sans-serif font, both set against a red rectangular background.

CARDIFF
UNIVERSITY

The logo for Cardiff University, featuring the words "PRIFYSGOL" and "CAERDYDD" in a white, serif font, both set against a red rectangular background.

PRIFYSGOL
CAERDYDD

Cardiff Parent Power: Empowering Families, Transforming Communities

Cardiff University × The Brilliant Club
Dr Anna Váradi

Introduction & Aim of Talk

- Overview of Cardiff Parent Power (CPP)
- Why **parents matter** in higher education
- Scaling grassroots impact

Parent Power Mission

Parent Power - Theory of Change



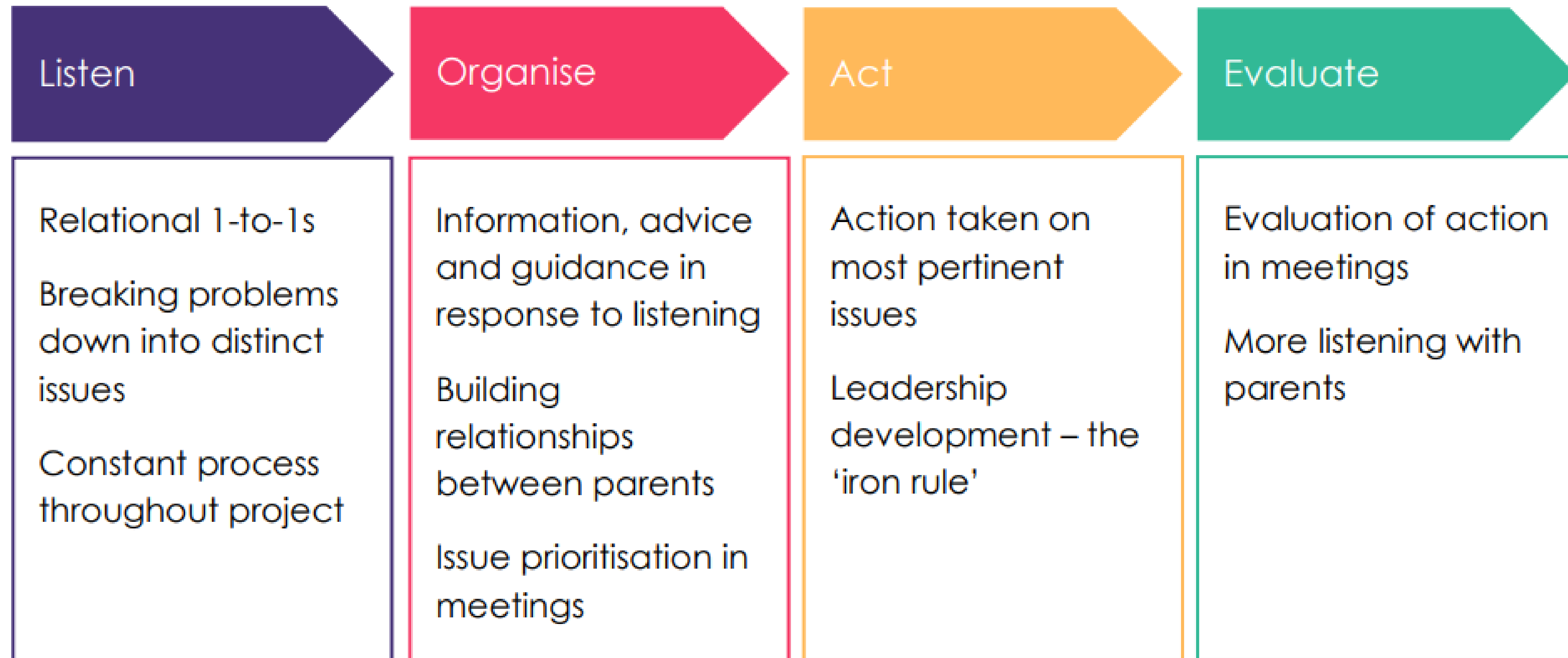
Tackling Education Inequalities

– Why Parents?

- Unequal university access - including in Cardiff
- Example: Lisvane 80% vs Cathays North 23.7%
- Parents' influence = 4 months' extra progress on average*
- Parents guide post-school choices
- Large gaps in HE knowledge/resources

* Education Endowment Foundation

The Parent Power Model



Setting up Cardiff Parent Power

- Launched in February 2022
- Initial focus on *Grangetown* & under-represented families
 - 4 local schools involved
- Cardiff University: funding + information
- The Brilliant Club: community expertise
- *Grange Pavilion: community hub*



Parent Campaigns

1. Contextual admissions
2. Work experience opportunities
3. School/university engagement
4. Widening Participation campaign

Contextual Admissions campaign

- Parents pushed for **clearer admissions info**
- Implemented by Cardiff University

Giving communities power: Developing contextual admissions with parents

Charlotte Hallahan, Nia Oatley and Asha Noor explain how engagement with the community can help a university develop an admissions policy that takes account of context

COMMENT | 14/05/24



Charlotte Hallahan

Charlotte Hallahan is Senior Policy and Communications Officer at The Brilliant Club



Nia Oatley

In October last year, a Cardiff parent group successfully campaigned for Cardiff University to improve how it shares information on how students can apply for contextual admissions.

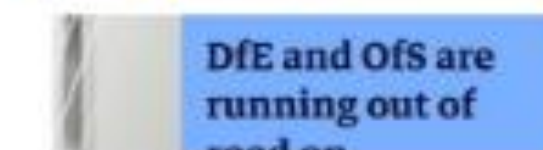
This was a fantastic win for Cardiff Parent Power, a group of parents and carers who work to enact educational change in their local areas and will have a positive impact on how the university engages with Cardiff families going forward.

There are currently significant disparities in access to university study, with students from low-income backgrounds less likely to progress to higher education than their peers.

Less advantaged students are still 14 times less likely to proceed to higher

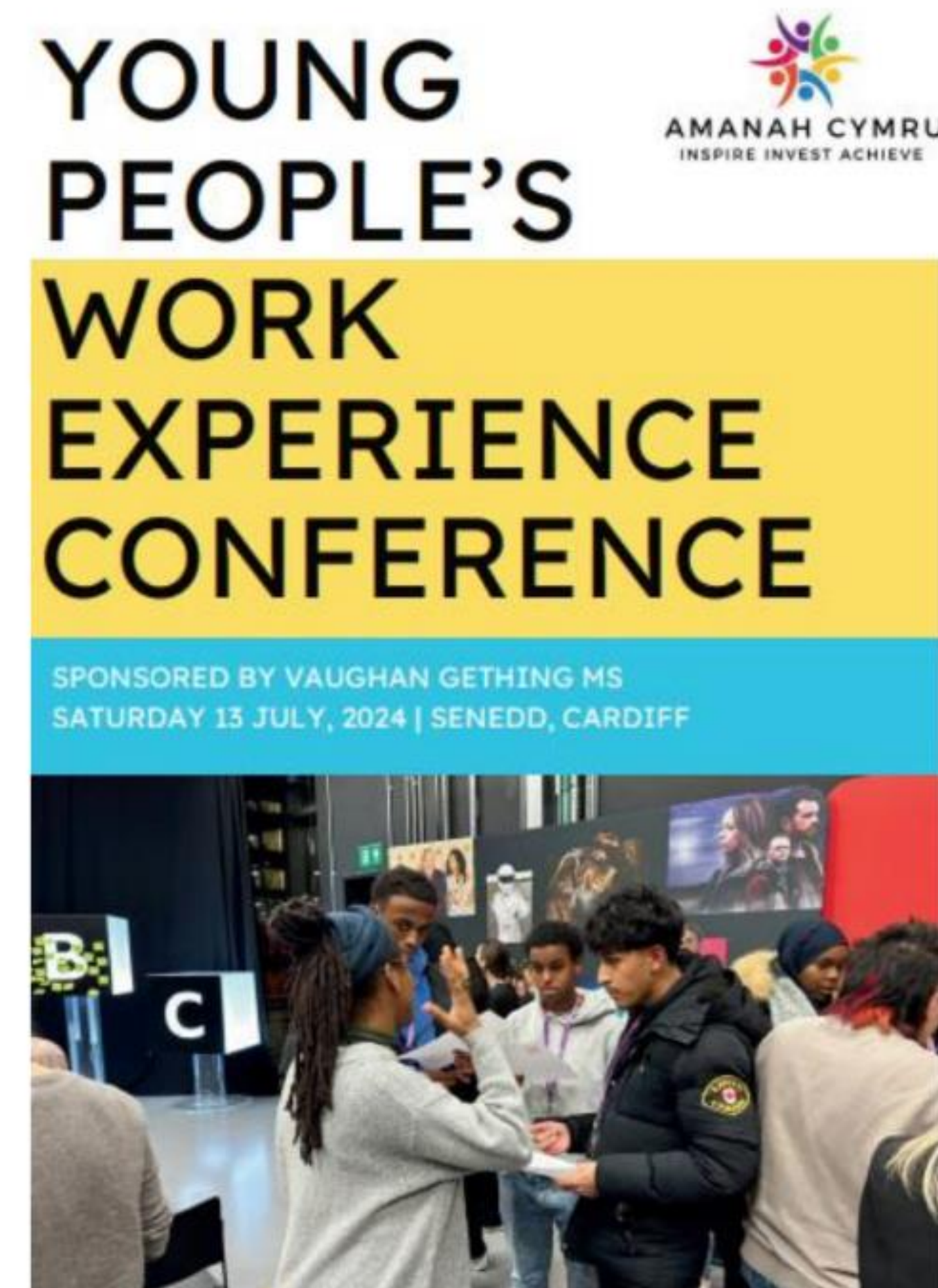


Latest articles



Work Experience campaign

- Won **expanded access** to CU Engage Work Experience
- Conference at the **Senedd**, sponsored by Vaughan Gething (80 young people, 40 parents)
- NHS, South Wales Police, and other employers offering placements



Bespoke HE Visits

- Cardiff University Law School (mock trial & seminar)
- Bespoke Cardiff University Campus Visit
- Open Day Bristol
- **Parents becoming HE champions**





$\frac{4.7}{5}$

Parental rating of
Cardiff University Trip



100%

of surveyed parents
agreed the trip was
positive and they gained
knowledge about the
university



100%

of surveyed parents
agreed that they felt
better prepared to
support their child to
make a decision about
university after the trip

Impact on Parents

- **Parents go from learners → leaders**
 - Leadership group established in 2024
- Parents co-create strategy input
- Parents leading campaigns, writing advocacy letters, and taking on public speaking engagements

Challenges and Lessons

- Spreading the word across communities
 - Build trust first
- Balancing information vs organising
 - Mix training and action
- Sustaining consistent engagement
 - Keep engagement flexible

“ Parent Power Cardiff has been amazing. It has given me the confidence to ask the questions I've always wanted answered but have been too nervous to ask. The team have really put us at ease and not made us feel like our questions are silly. They have listened to us and nudged us in the right direction to make changes for the challenges we face. I really like that I'm part of a community of like-minded individuals who all just want to support their children to access higher education- or at least have the opportunity to access higher education, if that's what they want. ”

Kelly Attard, Cardiff Parent Power





Diolch am wrando
Thank you for listening