

## **Getting parents involved: Barons Court Primary School**

Getting parents involved has huge benefits for all schools, especially small ones like Barons Court Primary school in Southend. We have only 186 pupils. Until two years ago, we had no food service of our own, meals were delivered from another, larger primary school.

When we decided to open our own kitchen, we knew we would have to rely heavily on parents and other community members to help out. We now have our own chef, but volunteers and governors help with food preparation every day. For example, one of our mums makes bread, and there is a governor who peels the potatoes on roast day. To make it easier to tap into the particular skills of volunteers, we use a four-week menu of simple dishes, advertised well in advance in our school newsletter and on our website.

Our food is wholesome and tasty- it won the Food for Life Partnership's bronze award recently – and our Orchard Bistro is a lovely place to be. Parents are welcome to join their children for lunch any day of the week. As our cook Liz says: “we like to have adults in the hall, the aim was always to have a family-style dining experience.”