



## Involving Young People

07 June 2005

Report to the City Council

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# How Young People are Involved in Decision-Making Within Education and What Difference This Makes to Policy and Practice

- A report by the Young People's Parliament Scrutiny Panel



*Pictured: The Young People's Parliament Scrutiny Committee*

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## Involving Young People

# Preface

**By Councillor Paul Tilsley**

Chair, Education and Lifelong Learning  
Overview and Scrutiny Committee



The Young People's Parliament Scrutiny Panel chose their own subject with which to undertake this review. Their only guide was that they had to select a topic which was of importance to them, and I am pleased to say that through this piece of work we have empowered them with a "voice."

It became clear, quite early on, that our young people felt excluded in matters that directly affected them and wanted to feel more involved in the democratic process of the City Council.

This report is entirely their work, which I am certain you will find represents a genuine insight into their thoughts, feelings and expectations. However, it is up to each of us, when considering its contents, to ensure that we make efforts to address the imbalance which currently exists. This is not to say that we are doing things wrong, merely that we can do things much differently than at present. Our young people have an important voice – let's listen to them!

I was pleased with the way that they approached this project, which was with vigor and energy. Their methodology included an interview with Tony Howell, the Strategic Director for Learning and Culture and I am thankful for his support. In addition, and amongst many things, I was able to attend one of their question and answer sessions, along with members of my committee, where our own experiences were explored.

I am particularly pleased with this review, which provides us with a true insight. Their views are important to us, all of us, because we all have a role to play in getting things right in response to their needs.

This report concludes with quite an ambitious set of recommendations, ones that will certainly change the way in which we approach when and how we consult with our young in the future.

The message is clear. In order to get things right we need to listen to our young people, and indeed, ensure that the right forums exist in order to do this effectively. Simply put, better decisions are made when we listen.

I would like to thank each and every member of the Young People's Parliament



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Scrutiny Panel for their enthusiasm, hard work and determination in producing this report. I would also like to thank Yousiff Meah, the Lead Review Officer, Kalsoom Zubebah-Khan, the Area Youth Officer for the Sparkbrook District and Paul Murphy, Curriculum Development Worker, for their continual support in leading this project to fruition.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Paul Murphy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'P'.



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# 1: The Young People's Parliament Scrutiny Panel

The Young People's Parliament was established in 1997.

They are a group of young people whose objective is to represent a voice for all young people in Birmingham and they meet weekly to discuss issues of importance to them.

The Young People's Parliament Scrutiny Committee was established in order to specifically undertake this review. Its members consist of interested individuals from the Young People's Parliament and members of the Small Heath Youth Forum.

Their committee is made up of 16 members who are all aged between 14 – 19 years.

This report is the result of their own work.



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# 2: Summary

- 2.1 The Education and Lifelong Learning Overview & Scrutiny Committee invited young people from the Young People's Parliament [YPP] to undertake a formal scrutiny of their choice. Following consultation it was agreed to look at how young people were involved in decision making in education; and a joint group of young people from the YPP and the Youth Service was established to undertake the scrutiny.
- 2.2 The scrutiny involved reviewing policy documents and evidence based practice; questionnaires to schools and youth projects; interviewing senior managers and some young people; and inviting the submission of written evidence.
- 2.3 In general we found that there was a high degree of support for involving young people in decision making; but whilst there were examples of things that impressed us, most activity did not go beyond the consultation stage.
- 2.4 There was an absence of policy in place to guide how young people are involved in decision making; and a need for the Council to adopt a formal quality standard in order to measure how well parts of the Council are doing.
- 2.5 We found examples of good things happening within the Youth Service, Schools, the Local Education Authority, and the Districts but this needs to be more widespread.
- 2.6 We also found that some pieces of work needed more support if they were to be successful. In particular the Young Peoples Parliament and Members of the U.K. Youth Parliament.
- 2.7 We felt that more needed to be done to inform young people of their rights to be involved in decision making; and the many opportunities for them to become involved needed to be co-ordinated.
- 2.8 Finally, we want to raise the issue of the low level of funding in Youth Projects and make sure that youth provision is available throughout the City.



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# 3: Introduction

## 3.1 Reasons for the Review

- 3.1.1 The idea for involving young people in the scrutiny process came from the Chair of the Education and Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee. He approached the Young People's Parliament to identify a topic of their choice to review. The Head of Birmingham's Youth Service was asked to lead on the process.
- 3.1.2 The Executive Committee of the Young People's Parliament convened a council meeting where it was agreed that young people wanted to examine whether involving young people in decision making made any difference. Young People were invited to become involved and a formal scrutiny panel was established made up of members from the YPP and members from the Small Heath Youth Forum.

## 3.2 Terms of Reference

- 3.2.1 The review had the remit of identifying how young people are involved in decision making within education, and what impact this had on policy and practice. The review also sought to identify examples of good practice.
- 3.2.2 The review covered the following areas:
  - Was there any evidence of what needed to be done in order to make a difference?
  - What was happening within formal education provision?
  - What was happening within the youth service?
  - Were there any examples of good practice in Birmingham?
- 3.2.3 Following an interview with the Strategic Director for Learning and Culture the review also sought information about what was happening within the Districts.



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### 3.3 Methodology

- 3.3.1 The young people had a two stage development programme before undertaking the review: 1. a group work development stage, involving a team building residential and a series of getting to know each other sessions; and, 2. a formal learning programme designed to increase our knowledge and understanding of the area of scrutiny which included a meeting with members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.3.2 The panel met every Wednesday evening between 6:30pm and 8pm in order to undertake training and review evidence gathered. Two Saturdays were set aside for interviews.
- 3.3.3 Evidence was gathered through four methods: A questionnaire for schools and youth projects designed by the panel. Interviews with Council Officers and young people. A request for written evidence from Council Officers and young people in response to specific questions. A review of government policy documents together with an internet search for evidence of good practice.
- 3.3.4 The panel had intended to undertake visits to projects both within Birmingham and outside, but due to pressures with exams, which disrupted things from time to time, we decided not to do this.
- 3.3.5 The panel were awarded a grant of £2,500 from the Learning and Skills Council in order to support their learning.

### 3.4 Definitions

- 3.4.1 In looking at the involvement of young people we have defined involvement as meaning the progressively more participatory stages of:
- **Information exchange**, where adults give young people information but young people are not involved in negotiating or developing a shared view on what to do as a result of this exchange.
  - **Consultations**, where young people express their view but the organisations make decisions and decide on developments.
  - **Support**, where young people decide what to do but need to rely on the support of others to enable it to happen.
  - **Acting together**, where young people and professionals put plans and actions together.
  - **Independent action**, where young people develop their own plans and have the capacity to deliver them independently.





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# 4: What we know about involving young people in decision making

## 4.1 A review of Research Papers, Government Policy Documents and Evaluation

- 4.1.1 The panel looked at the Government guidance for schools and LEAs set out within “Working Together”; reviewed documents from the National Youth Work Agency included within their website; and considered a summary of research evidence presented by the Head of Youth Service.
- 4.1.2 The guidance within the report “Working Together” identifies that successful LEAs and schools needed to have:
- Clear and visible commitment to involving young people with a route map to how to make it happen. These should be set out within clear policies and action plans that detail what results should be achieved.
  - Methods for valuing young people’s involvement such as providing information, feedback and celebrating achievement.
  - Equality of opportunity including providing special support when needed, and due regard for age and maturity.
  - Continual evaluation and review which measures success and involves young people in the monitoring and evaluation of success.
  - Quality standards to measure success.
- 4.1.3 The report identifies a range of methods for involving young people including school councils, peer support, peer mediation, planned consultations, and involving young people as researchers.
- 4.1.4 The National Youth Agency also highlights the need for “clear principles, explicit policies, discreet funding, committed elected members and senior managers; and appropriately trained and supported practitioners.” The NYA also advocate for the use of agreed quality



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standards for the development and delivery of services. These have been developed with the Local Government Association and are termed "Hear by Right" {Appendix A}

- 4.1.5 The review of research evidence also highlights these issues and in addition emphasised that young people need information about services before they can become involved; and the opportunity to be involved through a mix and match of approaches
- 4.1.6 Finally, the evidence suggests that senior managers and politicians must take responsibility making things work as it is often that workers working to support young people lack support, encouragement, resources and access to decision makers in order to enable young people to influence change.



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# 5: What we found in Birmingham

## 5.1 Schools

- 5.1.1 The information within this section is based on a sample size of 52 schools that completed a questionnaire sent out to all schools.
- 5.1.2 The survey found that there was a high level of support for involving young people in decision making. Schools said this made a difference through, for example, impacting on the sense of community, ownership of and pride in the school, improved behaviour and self esteem, higher achievement, and independent learning.
- 5.1.3 The most common method of involving young people in decision making was school councils supplemented by discussion groups and surveys.
- 5.1.4 There was a greater tendency to involve young people in giving their views with limited involvement in decision making or priority setting within schools: “[The School Council] must not be seen as a forum for young people to run the school, but more as a means of pupils representing their views for consideration” One school called it a “pupils point of view committee.”
- 5.1.5 There were some exceptional examples of involvement with, for example young people being involved in the recruitment of teaching staff; young people involved in the preparation and delivery of lessons, pupils involvement in departmental reviews; and an example of peer mentoring.
- 5.1.6 The impact of involving young people is mostly limited to changes to such things as school uniforms, improvement in toilet areas, and lunch time or meal arrangements.
- 5.1.7 There was little evidence to suggest that involvement of young people impacted on curriculum or teaching approaches. Where this was indicated it was limited to things such as the use of computers.
- 5.1.8 Again, one or two notable exceptions including pupils being used to teach as a change in approach to learning and the introduction of single sex swimming lessons.
- 5.1.9 Where young people were involved in discussing policy this most usually



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associated with their own behaviour in relation to conduct, racism, drugs and discipline.

5.1.10 Finally only a small number of schools {5} indicated that they had adopted a formal policy.

5.1.11 The panel also interviewed young people and were concerned that in one school, pupils felt that the elections for school councils was used as an opportunity for bullying with threats being sited as a key reason why people were elected. In another school, young people actively involved in school councils indicated their desire to have a greater involvement in key issues such as timetabling, quality of teaching; and fairness on how others are treated.

### 5.2 The LEA

5.2.1 The Local Education Authority impacts on young people both as individuals as well as through their role in relation to supporting policy and practice within schools or for particular groups of young people.

5.2.2 There was a lot of evidence that suggested that young people with particular needs were being effectively involved in the decision making processes at times when decisions were about them as individuals. There are a range of methods used to identify young people's views.

5.2.3 Within the area of social inclusion there were also mechanisms and support for particular groups of young people to influence decisions [looked after children, specialist school support service].

5.2.4 The Behaviour Support Services involve pupils through a range of measures such as attendance at planning meetings, school councils, circle time etc.

5.2.5 Where we felt that more needed to be done was in the area of policy development and monitoring and evaluation of the success of education as a whole.

5.2.6 It was clear that involving young people in decision making was supported. But we were unclear as to whether the LEA had a policy for this, what resources were provided to support this, and how young people were involved in developing new initiatives such as extended schools.

### 5.3 The Youth Service

5.3.1 The information within this section is based on a sample size of 64 youth projects that completed a questionnaire; interviews with the Head of Youth Service, an Area Youth Officer, young people from the UK Youth Parliament; and written evidence submitted by Area Youth



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Officers and the Youth Service's Interim Board of Young People.

- 5.3.2 The evidence indicated that involving young people in decision making was a core objective of youth projects and clubs with only one project indicating that they did not have an extensive approach to involving young people.
- 5.3.3 There was however no formal policies in place at a project level. Most workers indicated that it "was just the way we work".
- 5.3.4 Youth Forums or committees were the most popular method. The survey identifies however that youth work supplemented these with a range of other methods: evaluation forms, young people attending staff meetings, video consultations, websites, questionnaires/ surveys, peer led workshops, ballots/votes, discussion groups and participatory research. Most projects used a combination of these methods.
- 5.3.5 There was evidence of widespread opportunities for young people to engage in volunteering through becoming "young leaders" of youth sessions and programmes.
- 5.3.6 Some projects had formal junior or young leadership programmes; and some used peer education projects. Youth projects are also employing young people as youth workers.
- 5.3.7 The level and extent of approaches varied and whilst the evidence suggested that some significant changes were occurring as a result of involving young people, this was not universal.
- 5.3.8 The most significant impact of involving young people was on opening times; the curriculum [session plans] offered and decisions about age range or groups of young people the service was provided to.
- 5.3.9 In some projects significant change did occur such as: young people being involved in staff training; young people being involved in interviewing staff; the employment of young people as consultants or young leaders; the methods used to recognise young people's achievements; and in one project a decision that staff should wear uniforms {T Shirts} to be recognised.
- 5.3.10 Young people in youth projects tended to be involved in discussions about curriculum design and behaviour policies. One project has all policies developed with young people through a young people's policy group.
- 5.3.11 Youth workers indicated that involving young people in decision making increased attendance due to better relationships being developed between young people and staff; and the increased relevance of the provision for young people.
- 5.3.12 The Youth Service manages its provision through six areas. All areas have result targets for establishing mechanisms for involving young people in decision making; and all projects are required to have



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processes that involve young people. The practice for involving young people at an area level varies, with some areas having extensive mechanism whilst others prioritise the involvement at the level of youth projects

- 5.3.13 Some significant practice included young people being involved in all interviews for full and part time staff; the development of a city wide training programme for young people who are becoming or want to become young leaders; young people working alongside the area youth officer to visit and assess projects; young people being employed as young leaders; and young people managing and developing area wide consultation events.
- 5.3.14 At the service wide level, the Head of Youth Service indicated that the development of formal policy and practice was being developed with young people through the establishment of a City wide forum for young people called the Interim Board.
- 5.3.15 The Youth Service has recently appointed as a pilot six young people to act as staff for the youth service interim board and support their future development.
- 5.3.16 The Youth Service Plan includes action to increase the involvement of young people in the management and delivery of youth work. The three key actions to achieve this are currently: the introduction of results targets for areas; the development of the Board of young people, and the development of city wide training for young leaders.
- 5.3.17 There was, however, no formal policy or quality standard adopted.

### 5.4 Districts

- 5.4.1 The information contained within this section has been gathered through written evidence submitted by District Directors in response to specific questions raised by the panel.
- 5.4.2 The involvement of young people within the Districts is a key priority for all Districts.
- 5.4.3 There is no formal policy in place for involving young people and consequently Districts have not adopted a formal quality standard. All Districts have identified plans for developing this area of work.
- 5.4.4 The progress on this issue varies, as the Districts are at an early stage of development; however significant progress has been made within one District who have completed a youth commission, involving young people, which has led to plans for the establishment of a District young people's forum and the allocation of a budget to be managed by young people.
- 5.4.5 All Districts noted the need to work with the Youth Service and others



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on this agenda.

### **5.5 Young People's Parliament**

- 5.5.1 The Young People's Parliament has been a very middle class forum of young people; and there has been concern that this does not represent young people of Birmingham.
- 5.5.2 There are, however, plans to re-launch the YPP this summer and for links to be made with the Districts.
- 5.5.3 There does not appear to be a City Council Policy on the role of the YPP and insignificant financial support to develop the parliament as a voice for young people.
- 5.5.4 There is also no standard to assess the quality of how young people are involved.



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# 6: Things that impressed us

## 6.1 Highlights

- 6.1.1 Birmingham has five elected members of the U.K. Youth Parliament, who are working to develop a voice for young people. One member of the Youth Parliament, for example, is leading on the development of Sutton young voices. The number of young people involved in the election process is increasing.
- 6.1.2 The work of the Northfield District in assessing the needs of young people in their area through a District Young People's Commission. This involved young people and has led to things happening.
- 6.1.3 The young leadership programmes operating within the Youth Service in particular the employment of young people; together with the different ways young people are able to get involved.
- 6.1.4 The use of young people in the recruitment of staff within schools and youth services.
- 6.1.5 The level of commitment to involving young people across all parts of the education service.
- 6.1.6 The fact that the scrutiny committee asked young people to do this piece of work.





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# 7: Conclusions and Recommendations

## 7.1 Policy and Standards

### Conclusions:

7.1.1 *There is a lot of good quality work going on to involve young people in decision making within education. However this is not universally applied.*

7.1.2 *There is an absence of formal policy and quality standards for measuring success for involving young people.*

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
R1	That the City Council formally adopts the "Hear by Rights" Standards in order to address the gap in policy and quality standards.	Leader of the Council	September 2005
R2	That the Head of Youth Service agrees, with young people on the Youth Service Interim Board, a formal policy and action plan for the involvement of young people in decision making within the Youth Service, which includes the adoption of the "Hear by Rights" Standards.	Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning	December 2005
R3	That each District Director produces an action plan for achieving the standards, set out within the "Hear by Rights" Standard.	District Committee Chairs	December 2005
R4	That a formal policy for the involvement of young people in decision making, at a policy level, be produced in consultation with young people from the Interim Board, Young People's Parliament (YPP), and youth forums for young people with particular needs.	Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning	December 2005



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### 7.2 Involving young people at a Policy Level

#### Conclusions:

- 7.2.1 *The five members of the UK Youth Parliament are an ideal group to consult with on youth and policy issues.*
- 7.2.2 *The scrutiny process was useful but we felt that it might have been improved had we done it alongside members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.*
- 7.2.3 *Whilst work is happening at a project or school level more needs to be done to ensure that senior officers are influenced directly by young people.*
- 7.2.4 *The YPP is not an adequately representative voice of young people and requires additional commitment and support in order to be successful within its planned re-launch.*
- 7.2.5 *The Local Education Authority should ensure that policies and activities developed as part of extended school provision are developed with young people.*
- 7.2.6 *The employment of young people as staff is an impressive way of involving young people in decision making and the work of the youth service in developing young leaders is very good.*
- 7.2.7 *The approach taken within the Northfield District on plans for involving young people is significantly advanced and an example of good practice.*

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
R5	That all Directorates work with Members of the UK Youth Parliament in order to increase their impact on the Council.	Leader of the Council	February 2006
R6	That the Strategic Director for Learning and Culture meets with representatives of young people from the Youth Service Interim Board, YPP, UK YP and young people engaged through the special support service, in order to develop plans on how young people can be involved in decision making at this level, including plans for extra curricula activities.	Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning	December 2005
R7	That a report be produced, which reviews the work of the YPP, in order to ensure that it is adequately supported in becoming a representative voice for young people.	Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning	June 2006



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R8	That the Education and Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee allocate some seats on its committee for young people. This to be done in consultation with the Head of Youth Service.	Chair of the Education and Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee	July 2005
R9	That further opportunities for young people to undertake formal Scrutiny reviews be identified and for these reviews to be jointly undertaken with Committee Members with increased training provided to the young people.	Chair of the Education and Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee	July 2005
R10	That a review of the youth service be undertaken with regard to employing more young leaders and to identify how this practice can be extended.	Chair of the Education and Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee	June 2006

### 7.3 Improving Practice

#### Conclusions:

- 7.3.1 *School Councils are not generally enabling young people to become involved in matters such as quality of teaching, curriculum design and timetabling and matters of fairness. These are the issues that young people wish to influence.*
- 7.3.2 *Whilst only one example was cited, there is a concern that bullying is something that is crucial for young people and may impact on the involvement of young people in school councils.*
- 7.3.3 *The involvement of young people in interviewing staff within the youth service and, in some schools was something that impressed us. It was also something that young people we spoke to found valuable.*
- 7.3.4 *The work of the Northfield District has made progress in involving young people.*
- 7.3.5 *Evidence suggests that successful involvement of young people comes from a mix and match approach. Practice in some schools identified a good mix of approaches: use of councils, peer mentors, and pupils involved in supporting lessons. Similarly the Youth Service uses a lot of different methods.*
- 7.3.6 *Information on services and how to get involved is crucial to ensure that young people not usually involved in these activities have an awareness of how to get involved.*



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	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
R11	That a report be presented to the Education and Lifelong Learning O&S Committee on the quality standards being used to measure the success of schools, and how good practice is being promoted.	Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning	June 2005
R12	That young people be invited to work with the Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning on school policy on bullying.	Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning	June 2006
R13	That the City Council adopts a policy which encourages young people to be involved in the pre-selection process for all youth work, teaching and managerial posts within education.	Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning	June 2006
R14	That the good practice adopted in the Northfield District, concerning the involvement of young people, be shared across all Districts.	The Leader and District Chairs	September 2005
R15	That a campaign is developed with young people aimed at raising awareness of how young people can be involved in decision making.	Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning	December 2005

## 7.4 Youth Provision

### Conclusions:

*7.4.1 Young people are unlikely to become involved unless they are accessing services. There is insufficient provision for young people across the City and a situation where some parts of the City have provision and others do not.*

	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
R16	That the City Council reviews its investment in the Youth Service on an annual basis.	Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning	January 2006
R17	That a report is prepared on how the Youth Service is going to broaden the range of activities it covers to allow	Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning	December 2005



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more equal access in all areas.

R18	That the City Council introduces, for all areas, budgets managed by young people to determine how youth services are provided.	Leader of the Council	April 2006
R19	That in consultation with young people, progress towards achievement of these recommendations is reported to the Education and Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee in December 2005.  Subsequent progress reports will be scheduled by the Committee and young people thereafter, until all recommendations are implemented.	Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning	December 2005



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# 8: Evaluation

- 8.1. The Young People's Scrutiny Group are arranging a residential in order to undertake a full evaluation of the process and will report to the Chair of the Education and Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee once this has been completed.



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# APPENDIX

## A1.1 Hear by Right Standards Document

# hear by right

standards for the active involvement of  
children and young people

Harry Wade and Bill Badham



Local Government Association

The National Youth Agency



# Shared values

## Children and young people's participation is a visible commitment that is properly resourced

- There is visible commitment to the principle and practice from senior managers, elected members or trustees.
- Participation is built into the organisation and is reflected in its strategic planning, services, resources and communication.
- Relevant staff, elected members or trustees have the opportunity to develop the attitudes and skills to work effectively with children and young people.

## Children and young people's involvement is valued

- Children and young people are treated honestly and their contributions are taken seriously.
- Feedback to children and young people about the effects of their involvement is prompt and clear.
- Children and young people's participation is celebrated.

## Children and young people have an equal opportunity to participate

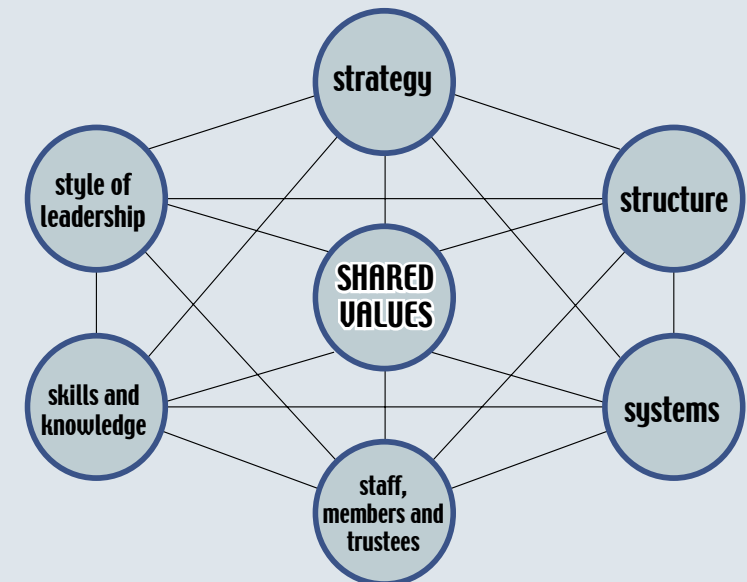
- All children and young people have a right to participate in the decisions that affect them.
- Children and young people feel welcomed and valued and are not discriminated against or prevented from participating effectively on grounds of ethnic origin, language, religion, culture, disability, age, gender, sexuality or location.
- Care and time is taken to go the extra mile to ensure children and young people facing greatest barriers to getting involved are aware of and can take up opportunities to have their say.
- Relevant training and support are provided to children and young people so that they can contribute effectively.
- Information is available to children and young people in good time and is accessible, jargon free and culturally appropriate.

## Policies and standards for the participation of children and young people are in place, evaluated and improved

- What the organisation is trying to achieve and the intended benefits are clear from the start.
- Children and young people evaluate the process and changes that result from their point of view and help apply lessons learned.
- There are agreed quality standards and codes of conduct for working with children and young people to ensure their participation is safe and sound.



# Standards framework



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Association of Principal Youth and Community Officers; Audit Commission; British Youth Council; C4Y, Brighton and Hove City Council; Carnegie Young People Initiative; Children and Young People's Unit; Children's Rights Alliance for England; Citizenship Foundation; City of Westminster Youth Service; Department for Education and Skills; Department of Health; Government Offices for the East Midlands, North West, South West and Yorkshire and Humberside; Institute for Citizenship; Investing in Children; Local Government Information Unit; Local Government International Bureau; London Borough of Bexley Youth Service; National Council for Voluntary Youth Services; Office of the Deputy Prime Minister; The Children's Society.

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The enclosed CD-Rom in the back cover contains the mapping and planning template, a PowerPoint presentation on Hear by Right, a briefing on different approaches for involving children and young people, and a resource list.



# Messages of support

“The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is delighted to endorse the revised version of *Hear by Right*.”

“It is vital to involve children and young people in local democracy, both to improve the quality of decision making, and to begin habits of democratic involvement. I believe that *Hear by Right* has a significant role to play in contributing to these goals. I look forward to the continuing adoption of these standards throughout local government.”

Nick Raynsford, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

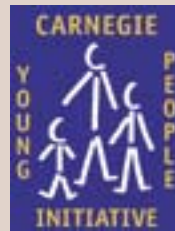


OFFICE OF THE  
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER



“Organisational standards for young people’s participation are a powerful tool to reform public success. *Hear by Right* will give any organisation a thorough MOT.”

Raji Hunjan and Robert Bell,  
Carnegie Young People Initiative



“The active involvement of children and young people in decision making is so important. For service providers and policy makers – so that services and policies are improved; and for children and young people themselves – so that their voices are heard and they can contribute fully to their local communities. The standards that this document sets out encourage us all to continue to work harder and smarter to ensure young people are working alongside us all as equal partners.”

Althea Efunshile, Director, Children and Young People’s Unit.



“The British Youth Council (BYC) supports the standards, as an important tool for helping young people be active citizens in their local communities. The standards help increase young people’s understanding of how their local authority works and provide a blueprint for local authorities on how to actively involve young people in all their decision-making.”



# Welcome



Young people are young citizens. They represent an important but often neglected section of every community that has its own needs, views and aspirations. Young people have the right to express their views and to be heard. It is therefore essential that councils and other local service providers consider the needs and aspirations of young people and that we involve them in decisions that affect their lives.

Children and young people are also the voters of tomorrow. Restoring public trust and involvement in the democratic process is crucially important. If we convince them that councils and other service providers are interested in them, they will be more likely to reciprocate that interest when they are older.

Hear by Right offers tried and tested standards for organisations to assess and improve practice and policy on the active involvement of children and young people. Pioneered by The National Youth Agency and Local Government Association in conjunction with a number of local councils they are now ready to be rolled out across the statutory and voluntary sectors. We commend them to you.

**Bishop Roger Sainsbury, Chair, The National Youth Agency.**



**Sir Jeremy Beecham, Chairman, Local Government Association.**



# Introduction

There are so many opportunities for children and young people to take an active part in shaping where they live, the services they use and the running of local and national organisations. They have a right to be involved in the decisions that affect them. Their participation is essential to improve services and respond to their needs. That much is recognised. There is now a wide range of tools to encourage effective participation across a range of settings, but fewer to help assess what has been achieved (standards). Standards are public and measurable promises to reach a level of activity or service. They need to be a catalyst for developing and evaluating an action plan for change, a long-term journey many will have already started.

Hear by Right offers tried and tested standards for organisations across the statutory and voluntary sectors to assess and improve practice and policy on the active involvement of children and young people. The Hear by Right mapping and planning template is available on the accompanying CD and also from [www.nya.org.uk](http://www.nya.org.uk). It is key to making sure these standards prompt planning to improve the quality of participation and services delivered. There is also a tool to assess the changes achieved on key issues. This second edition draws on the invaluable experience of children and young people themselves, policy makers and practitioners in nine pilot councils and from a range of organisations. *Hear by Right* is written especially for adults responsible for setting standards, measuring progress and drawing up action plans; but success in using them will be best achieved by sharing the principles and approach with the children and young people themselves.

## Shared values for the active involvement of children and young people

The active involvement of children and young people works best when:

### Children and young people's participation is a visible commitment that is properly resourced

- There is visible commitment to the principle and practice from senior managers, elected members or trustees.
- Participation is built into the organisation and is reflected in its strategic planning, services, resources and communication.
- Relevant staff, elected members or trustees have the opportunity to develop the attitudes and skills to work effectively with children and young people.

### Children and young people's involvement is valued

- Children and young people are treated honestly and

their contributions are taken seriously.

- Feedback to children and young people about the effects of their involvement is prompt and clear.
- Children and young people's participation is celebrated.

### Children and young people have an equal opportunity to participate

- All children and young people have a right to participate in the decisions that affect them.
- Children and young people feel welcomed and valued and are not discriminated against or prevented from participating effectively on grounds of ethnic origin, language, religion, culture, disability, age, gender, sexuality or location.
- Care and time is taken to go the extra mile to ensure children and young people facing greatest barriers to getting involved are aware of and can take up opportunities to have their say.

- Relevant training and support are provided to children and young people so that they can contribute effectively.
- Information is available to children and young people in good time and is accessible, jargon free and culturally appropriate.

### Policies and standards for the participation of children and young people are in place, evaluated and improved

- What the organisation is trying to achieve and the intended benefits are clear from the start.
- Children and young people evaluate the process and changes that result from their point of view and help apply lessons learned.
- There are agreed quality standards and codes of conduct for working with children and young people to ensure their participation is safe and sound.



# Why involve children and young people?

## Five reasons for active involvement

- It is children and young people's right to be involved in the decisions that affect them (Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, or UNCRC).
- Services will be more effective, better targeted and received. This saves money.
- The health of our democratic community depends on the active involvement of children and young people.
- Children and young people will benefit from being involved in decision making.
- Local and national policies encourage and require it and our performance will be evaluated on how we do this.

Of course children and young people also have the right not to get involved if they wish.

## What are the benefits of involving children and young people?

### Benefits for the organisation and its partners

- Information can be gained from children and young people as citizens and customers about their changing attitudes and needs, their views as to what constitutes quality in service provision and barriers to accessing services.
- Children and young people can bring fresh perspectives and new ideas about services,

policies and democratic processes, helping tackle key objectives and promoting social inclusion.

- Services and policies can be designed, delivered and evaluated based on actual rather than presumed needs. This saves money.

### Benefits for children and young people

- Children and young people can build on existing skills and develop new ones, increasing confidence and self-esteem.
- Children and young people may better understand particular organisations and how to influence them.
- Children and young people benefit from new and better services that are more responsive to their needs.

## Some of the tasks in which children and young people can be involved

Planning and organising	Doing and delivering	Checking, reviewing and learning
Identifying needs	Designing and undertaking promotional work, including self-initiated projects	Recording and analysing data using ICT
Mapping and assessing provision	Doing outreach work	Evaluating performance and results
Defining the key aspects of a good service	Managing own or helping to run joint projects and services	Reporting to various interested groups
Developing strategies, objectives and plans, including new projects that are user led	Campaigning for change in policy and provision	Gathering views from other children and young people
Defining quality and standards	Advocating for individuals or groups	Responding to comments, compliments, complaints
Planning training	Recruiting and training staff	Appraising staff
Assessing contractors/suppliers	Helping secure money and resources	Celebrating achievements and progress



## Benefits for the wider community

- There is a more vibrant local democracy through the active involvement of children and young people.
- Community cohesion is fostered through the inclusion of children and young people in local decision making.
- There is an empowering environment that raises aspirations among children and young people and the wider community.

Whatever the motivation, children and young people are citizens living in the same areas, using the same services, with similar rights and responsibilities as other people. They have the right to be heard and involved in shaping and evaluating services that affect them. The standards that follow provide a framework for organisations to think about what is being done to promote children and young people's participation and to develop an action plan to achieve measurable improvement in their active involvement and in the services that they use.

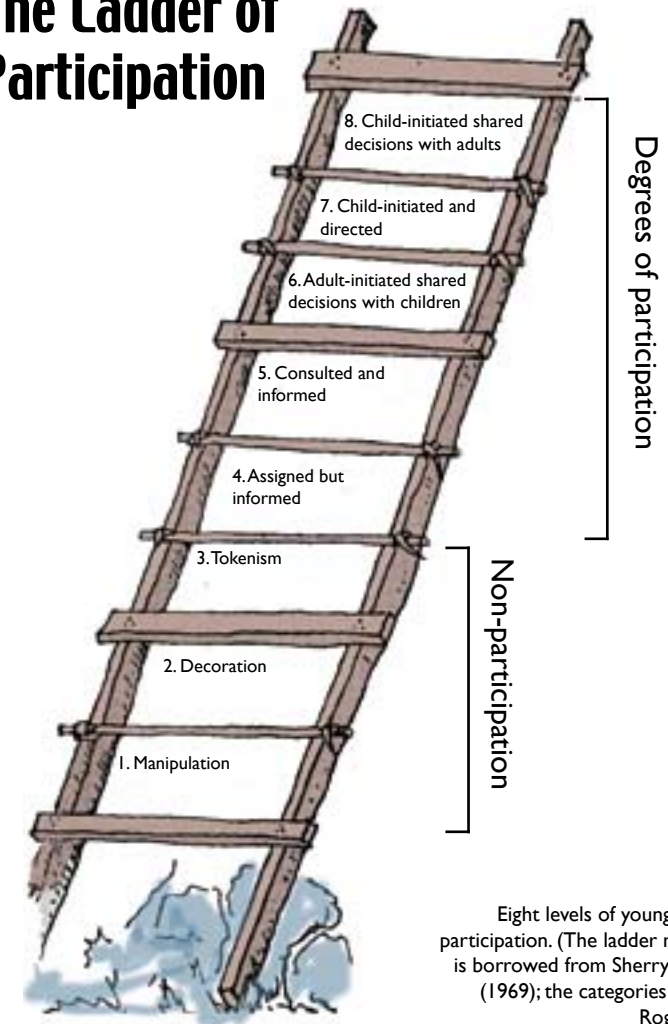
The Hear by Right mapping and planning template can be found on the accompanying CD or can be downloaded from [www.nya.org.uk](http://www.nya.org.uk)

## To what degree?

'Fundamentally, our aim is not to stop until children and young people's participation becomes a routine, unremarkable part of daily life,' said one local authority councillor. When Connexions Service staff were asked what roles children and young people could not do – assuming the necessary training, support and information – the answer was 'none'. In practice, how they get involved can vary enormously and is often thought of by using the ladder of participation by Roger Hart, adapted from Arnstein. This has eight rungs, climbing from manipulation, through adult-led but sharing decisions, reaching toward children and young people initiating and sharing decisions with adults.

The ladder highlights that participation can take various forms and to different degrees depending on a range of factors. It offers both a gauge to the nature of involvement and a guide to how its quality might be improved. A range of approaches and their relative strengths and weaknesses are set out in the companion briefing, *Involving children and young people in decision-making* (The NYA, 2003). The briefing also highlights important ways to make sure involving children and young people is done in a safe and sound way, covering consent, protection, access, rewards and evaluation.

## The Ladder of Participation



Eight levels of young people's participation. (The ladder metaphor is borrowed from Sherry Arnstein (1969); the categories are from Roger Hart).

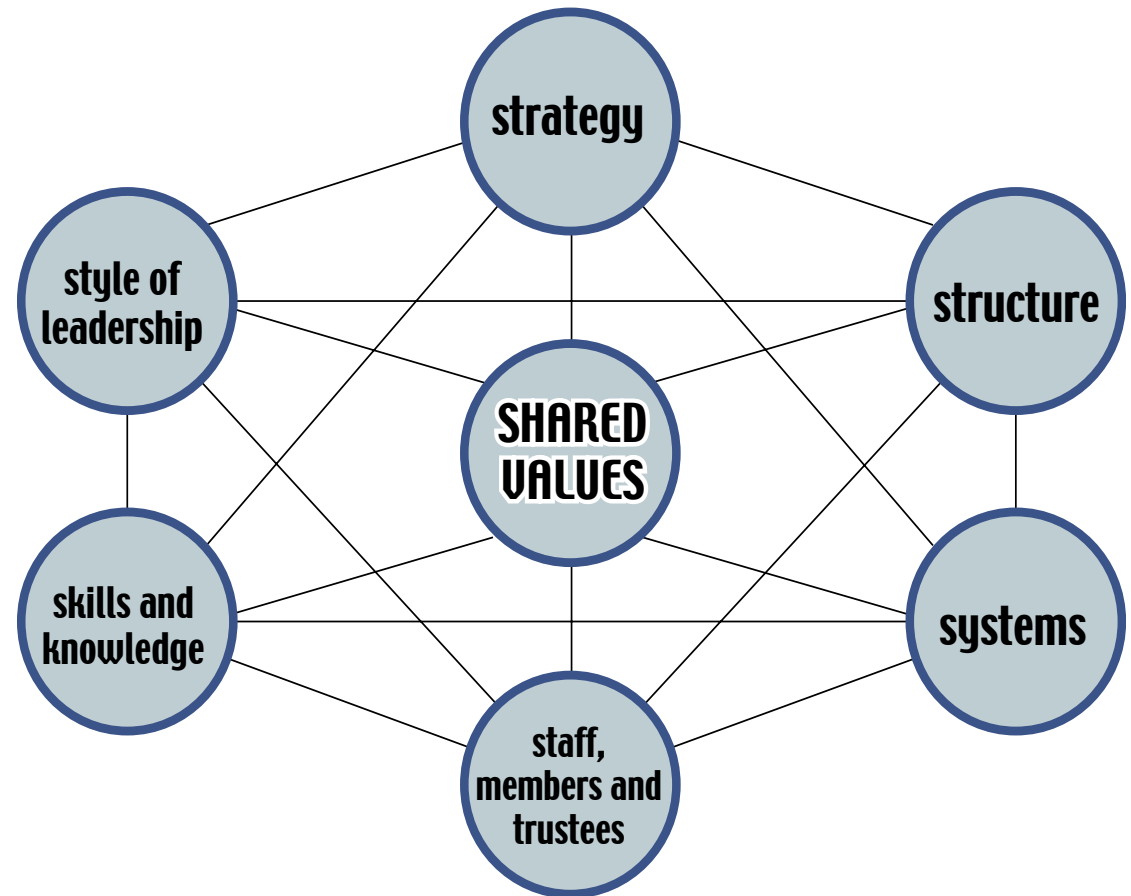


# The standards

The Hear by Right standards framework is designed to help secure sustained and beneficial participation of children and young people and to encourage continual improvement in an organisation's activities. It is intended to be applied to all services that affect children and young people, directly or indirectly. The framework encourages inclusion of a wide range of children and young people, while urging care in choosing approaches appropriate to different ages, abilities and understanding. There are seven standards: **shared values, strategy, structure, systems, staff, elected members and trustees, skills and knowledge, style of leadership**. They form a model of how to achieve change in an organisation, showing how each relies on the other to move forward. The shared values are at the core of the framework. The standards require self-assessment at three levels of performance, described as emerging, established and advanced. Each level builds on the previous one.

The tables that follow cover each of the seven standards, with commentary, questions, ideas for evidence and indicators for each level. Evidence may be from paper, verbal records or direct observation. It may be gained from practitioners, managers, elected members or trustees as well as from children and young people themselves. The suggested key indicator for each section is picked out in bold. Some sections and indicators will be more relevant than others, depending on the context. They are there to be adapted, applied and used to improve the quality and impact of children and young people's participation. They can be summarised by the question: Is there evidence of dialogue with children and young people and is there evidence of change as a result? (*Investing in Children*, Durham County Council.)

The mapping and planning template on the enclosed CD-Rom enables organisations to map the evidence and plan together to implement change. There is also a tool to assess the changes achieved on key issues.



# Standard shared values

## Commentary

The active involvement of children and young people is of benefit to them, the wider community and the organisation and what it wants to achieve. It is vital to have strong agreement about the shared values so that there is unity of purpose, resolve to put in the required resources and commitment to make sure children and young people most often left out are included and responded to.

## Things to think about ... questions to ask ...

- Is there a strong commitment to involving children and young people at the heart of the organisation's core values?
- Who actually shares these values? Do the children and young people as well?
- How can you show this?
- Who has been involved in shaping the nature of children and young people's involvement? Have children and young people themselves?
- What are the benefits of involving children and young people for the organisation and its services, its paid staff and elected members or trustees and children and young people themselves?

## Evidence (paper, verbal, observation)

- Vision or mission statements
- Policy statements
- Charter
- Publicity
- Recruitment and selection material
- Media reports
- Success criteria or performance indicators
- What do children and young people say about how this standard is being met?

## Emerging

- 1.1 The active involvement of children and young people is a central commitment
- 1.2 The organisation adopts shared values for children and young people's participation
- 1.3 **Children and young people take part in defining clear objectives and boundaries for their involvement**
- 1.4 Induction of key staff, elected members or trustees includes discussion of why and how to involve children and young people
- 1.5 Professional development of key staff includes discussion of why and how to involve children and young people

## Established

- 1.6 The organisation adopts the UNCRC, recognising Article 12's central role
- 1.7 **A charter of shared values is developed with children and young people to demonstrate that their involvement is built in, not bolted on**
- 1.8 Children and young people are involved in evaluating and feeding back on progress and change

## Advanced

- 1.9 A charter of shared values is agreed with partner organisations and community groups
- 1.10 Children and young people help review and redefine the shared values and charter as necessary
- 1.11 **The charter of shared values is used to set policy and review performance across the organisation and with partners**

# Standard strategy

## Commentary

A strategy for involving children and young people is most likely to succeed if it involves them directly in its development and review. It needs to be clear about the expected balance of benefit for everyone. At the emerging level, the organisation is likely to take the lead, but must be clear about room for change in the strategy through children and young people's input. They will soon spot tokenism and withdraw their support. At the advanced level, children and young people will take a full part in review processes. There also needs to be honesty about what can and cannot be changed and what are the limitations due to the organisation's responsibilities. The individual or committee champion needs to ensure coherence across all organisational commitments and that the strategy leads to action for change. Strategies must include capacity building to sustain, develop and regenerate the involvement of a range of groups of children and young people.

## Things to think about ... questions to ask ...

- Does the strategy have the backing of those with power to deliver and of the children and young people who are meant to benefit?
- Are the benefits to children and young people in improved services clearly expressed and measurable?
- Are there clear timescales and resources to deliver the strategy?
- How are you monitoring and reviewing the strategy and the impact of children and young people's involvement?
- Is the champion able to influence and coordinate?
- Are the various strategies linked up to maximise benefit?
- Are there areas that children and young people shouldn't be asked to scrutinise? Why?

## Evidence (paper, verbal, observation)

- Audit of the active involvement of children and young people
- Publication of relevant existing strategies
- A summary that is accessible in style, language and distribution
- Remit of relevant champion or committee
- Reports from relevant seminars and conferences
- Action plan and timetable for organisational development
- Published strategy review document by children and young people
- Strategies accessible to children and young people
- What do children and young people say about how this standard is being met?

## Emerging

- 2.1 Resources and expertise are mapped for the participation of children and young people
- 2.2 There is a senior individual or committee championing children and young people's rights and needs and their active involvement
- 2.3 **Children and young people contribute to the strategic plan for active involvement**
- 2.4 The strategic plan is agreed and in place, backed by necessary resources

## Established

- 2.5 Other plans in the organisation are complementary
- 2.6 There are regular reviews of the strategy's impact, with clarity about intended benefits to all involved
- 2.7 **Partnerships are in place to promote the active involvement of children and young people**

## Advanced

- 2.8 **Children and young people take an equal part in reviewing the strategic plan, identifying change achieved and that which is still needed**
- 2.9 The strategy includes resources to sustain, develop and regenerate children and young people's involvement
- 2.10 The strategy sets out the links between local and any regional or national structures and initiatives for the active involvement of children and young people



# Standard structures

## Commentary

Structures to set up and sustain active involvement need to be accessible to a range of children and young people, avoiding over-reliance on a small group and responding especially to those most often left out. They need to be open to regular rebuilding and renewal. While advisory boards and committees have their place, they can be intimidating. Many successful models are more local or task specific, where children and young people's involvement can be more relevant, engaging and fun. Whatever the structures, they must be rooted in shared values and be explicit about how much power is shared with children and young people in the context of the needs and constraints of the organisation.

## Things to think about ... questions to ask ...

- What structures will best serve the interests of all involved, particularly excluded children and young people?
- Have children and young people been asked what approaches best suit their needs and where and when they prefer to meet?
- What structures already exist inside or outside the organisation that support the active involvement of children and young people?
- Which children and young people tend to be included and excluded from active involvement? How can this be responded to?
- Are a range of relevant approaches being used as illustrated in the briefing *Involving children and young people in decision making*?

## Evidence (paper, verbal, observation)

- Information from reference group of children and young people
- Recommendations from relevant professionals who work with excluded children and young people
- Audit of active involvement of children and young people in community organisations and specific services
- Who's not here? – a review by children and young people and adults of who is and who isn't involved, with steps agreed to make structures more inclusive
- What do children and young people say about how this standard is being met?

## Emerging

- 3.1 There is a senior individual or committee champion who oversees the implementation of the active involvement strategy
- 3.2 **Children and young people are consulted on best structures for their active involvement**
- 3.3 There are structures to review regularly the nature and extent of children and young people's involvement

## Established

- 3.4 **There are structures that make sure a range of children and young people's views are built in to decision making**
- 3.5 Links with other relevant groups and organisations are established and maintained to ensure the inclusion of marginal groups
- 3.6 Structures for children and young people are adequately resourced and supported by adults

## Advanced

- 3.7 **Children and young people are joint partners in decision making and scrutiny structures on issues affecting them**
- 3.8 There is a dedicated budget for allocation by children and young people
- 3.9 Links with a range of regional and national organisations and initiatives are established, maintained and resourced

# Standard systems

## Commentary

Setting up structures for children and young people's involvement is in some sense the easier task. Challenging established adult ways of working, power and attitudes may be harder to tackle. Yet, if we don't, progress will be short lived and attempts at active involvement will be ineffectual, frustrating and damaging. Systems are needed to support and sustain activity and record outcomes. Organisations may want to involve children and young people at short notice. But care should always be taken to consider the impact on them and to ensure practice is safe and sound, thinking through children and young people's consent, safety, access, rewards for involvement, training and support needs.

## Things to think about ... questions to ask ...

- What systems and procedures are needed to ensure participation is conducted safely and in a sound manner?
- Are they in place and shared and reviewed with children and young people and partner organisations?
- How can we ensure widespread involvement of a range of children and young people?
- How are inclusive practices and policies promoted, for example, on refreshments, venue, communication and timing of meetings?
- How is involvement acknowledged and rewarded?
- Can you prove children and young people's impact on decision making? What review and evaluation systems are there?

## Evidence (paper, verbal, observation)

- Policies and procedures
- Records of consultations with children and young people in developing policy and procedures including about access
- Policy on remuneration known by children and young people
- Published suggestions, compliments, complaints and appeals procedures for children and young people
- Recruitment procedures and job descriptions
- Feedback from different interest groups
- Celebration of successes
- What do children and young people say about how this standard is being met?

## Emerging

- 4.1 **Systems are in place for the safe and sound conduct of children and young people's active involvement, covering consent, protection and safety, access, complaints, rewards**
- 4.2 Relevant budgeting and financial systems are in place
- 4.3 Communication systems are in place for recording, reporting on and celebrating active involvement
- 4.4 Relevant job descriptions require commitment to active involvement
- 4.5 Appraisal of relevant staff includes review of contribution to active involvement work

## Established

- 4.6 Agreed ways of regularly reviewing and evaluating progress are in place
- 4.7 Systems such as compacts with partner organisations reflect commitment to active involvement
- 4.8 **Children, young people and partners are involved in reviewing and updating relevant policies and procedures**
- 4.9 Evidence of meeting Hear by Right Standards is sent to The NYA for inclusion on Hear by Right web pages for wider sharing and learning

## Advanced

- 4.10 Children and young people negotiate appropriate rewards within agreed budgets
- 4.11 **Children and young people, staff, elected member or trustees evaluate regularly children and young people's active involvement**
- 4.12 Systems can track successful progress and changes back to the involvement of children and young people

# Standard staff, elected members and trustees

## Commentary

Staff, elected members or trustees support and contribute to the development of practice and policy on the active involvement of children and young people in decision making. Many will need only to appreciate the benefits to support change, though some may be reluctant to share power. The leadership of individuals or committees will be crucial. Recruitment, selection and appraisal are all important ways to help bring about change in an organisation. Having dedicated people supporting the active involvement strategy will prove vital, combining direct work skills with children and young people with strategic impact. These posts will need to be resourced adequately. Children and young people will be important in the design and delivery of training to staff, elected members or trustees.

## Things to think about ... questions to ask ...

- How do you make sure staff, elected members or trustees really do support the active involvement of children and young people?
- What do you do when they don't?
- How can you best involve children and young people in recruitment and selection?
- What is the best way to involve children and young people in the design and delivery of training?
- Where can you get sufficient resources to ensure adequate dedicated staffing for active involvement work?
- Which partners are best placed to support children and young people's participation across the organisation or in the community?

## Evidence (paper, verbal, observation)

- Recruitment and selection involves children and young people in key appointments relevant to them
- Relevant job descriptions and person specifications include promoting children and young people's participation
- Staff appraisal specifically covers active involvement work
- The induction and training or personal development programme for key staff, elected members and trustees
- Protected budgets for staffing youth involvement posts
- Identifying specific spend on active involvement
- Promotion of active involvement in key organisational publications
- What do children and young people say about how this standard is being met?

## Emerging

- 5.1 **Key individuals (executive, elected member, trustee) champion the involvement of children and young people**
- 5.2 There are specific staff resources to support and develop children and young people's participation in the organisation
- 5.3 There is a staff and management training strategy on active involvement
- 5.4 There is an elected member or trustee training strategy on active involvement

## Established

- 5.5 **Children and young people take part in recruiting key staff and trustees**
- 5.6 Some senior staff have specific responsibilities to support active involvement of children and young people
- 5.7 Some elected members or trustees have specific responsibilities to support the active involvement of children and young people

## Advanced

- 5.8 There is established support for elected members or trustees in their work on active involvement
- 5.9 **Staff attend induction or training involving children and young people**
- 5.10 **Members or trustees attend induction or training involving children and young people**
- 5.11 Young people are employed in the organisation, for example, as trainers, researchers or mentors

# Standard skills and knowledge

## Commentary

The most successful approaches to the active involvement of children and young people in decision making include capacity building for them to develop the skills and confidence to participate fully. Access to information they can understand is also important for them to be able to make informed choices and decisions. For adults, training and support is also essential to overcome the stumbling blocks of how to begin and how to manage change, to share power and to work effectively to reduce the risks and maximise the benefits. One valuable additional result of such training will be a wider change in adult perceptions of children and young people.

## Things to think about ... questions to ask ...

- How can adults be helped to listen to and learn from children and young people?
- Who should take overall responsibility for this training and how can children and young people be involved in skilling-up adults?
- How important is it to reduce jargon in agendas, papers and discussions involving children and young people? Or is this the language they need to learn?
- How can decision making be more inclusive and accessible to less confident or less experienced younger people?
- How can expectations be both realistic and challenging, without patronising or overloading children and young people?
- How will children and young people get information they need to participate?

## Evidence (paper, verbal, observation)

- Budgets for training and capacity building
- Training programmes for members, trustees, staff and children and young people
- Evaluation of training undertaken
- Children and young people involved in developing, delivering and evaluating training
- Partners involved in developing, delivering and evaluating training
- Accreditation scheme and records about children and young people's active involvement
- Policy on children and young people's access to information
- What do children and young people say about how this standard is being met?

## Emerging

- 6.1 **There is training for children and young people to develop confidence and competence, including in negotiation, presentation and finance**
- 6.2 There is training for staff to be confident and competent in involving children and young people
- 6.3 Children and young people have access to information to allow choice and opportunity to take part in decision making

## Established

- 6.4 There are joint training events with partner organisations on the active involvement of children and young people
- 6.5 **There is an annual skills audit and staff development plan on the active involvement of children and young people**
- 6.6 There are accreditation pathways for children and young people on their active involvement

## Advanced

- 6.7 **Children and young people help plan, deliver and evaluate active involvement training to staff, members, trustees and partners**
- 6.8 Consultancy and mentoring support is resourced and available for adults and children and young people to promote active involvement
- 6.9 There are accreditation pathways for staff and elected members or trustees on active involvement

# Standard style of leadership

## Commentary

Leadership is always vital, especially during a time of change. Promoting the participation of children and young people means change in an organisation's culture and requires leadership with courage and clout among staff, elected members, trustees and children and young people themselves. While dedicated staff will be needed to establish and develop good working practices with children and young people, support at a senior and executive level will be essential to champion the cause and build in the structures, systems and resources for maximum impact. As active involvement gets bedded in, leadership style will become increasingly based on partnership and cooperation among members, staff, partners and children and young people.

## Things to think about ... questions to ask ...

- What is the best style of leadership to help one-off examples of involving children and young people get established in the decision-making fabric of the organisation?
- How can champions show enough leadership without letting everyone else off the hook?
- How will the organisation demonstrate to children and young people that it is serious about their involvement?
- Will leaders hold firm to their commitments when the pressure is on, things go wrong and finances are tight?
- Will the organisation demonstrate to partners the benefits of the active involvement of children and young people?
- How will leaders manage conflicting views among children and young people, staff, elected members, trustees and partners?

## Evidence (paper, verbal, observation)

- A high profile champion, with clear remit and enough seniority to manage change
- An annual report identifying and celebrating progress in promoting children and young people's participation
- Evaluations from seminars and training with children and young people and partner organisations
- Published compact with partner organisations that reflects commitment to children and young people
- Minutes of meetings explaining leadership decisions
- What do children and young people say about how this standard is being met?

## Emerging

- 7.1 Key managers, elected members or trustees give open support to children and young people's active involvement in influencing the organisation and its services
- 7.2 **Managers support innovation on active involvement, accept the risk of mistakes and are committed to learning and reflection**
- 7.3 Leaders in the organisation publicly acknowledge and celebrate the active involvement of children and young people and willingly share problems and solutions

## Established

- 7.4 Senior staff, elected members or trustees take an active part in key consultation and participation events
- 7.5 **The organisation works with its partners to promote the active involvement of children and young people**
- 7.6 A leadership programme for managers and children and young people is established, based on the principles of active involvement
- 7.7 Children and young people shadow senior staff and are able to undertake work experience with them

## Advanced

- 7.8 The organisation demonstrates an open style of leadership, collaboration and shared objectives with partner organisations
- 7.9 **Children and young people hold the organisation to account and have a key role in scrutiny processes**
- 7.10 Leadership of specific projects and appropriate services is shared between children and young people and adults



# Top ten useful resources

It can be baffling just thinking about where to start! These top ten resources include a general introduction to children and young people's participation as well as some practical resources to get going and some specialised resources to help respond to those most often excluded.

## Introduction to the Field

**Cutler, D.** (2002), *Taking the Initiative: promoting young people's involvement in public decision-making in the UK – update*. Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, free. Tel: 020 7401 5460.

**Willow, C.** (2002) *Participation in practice: children and young people as partners in change*. The Children's Society, £11.95. Tel: 020 7841 4415.

## Skills and Toolkits

**Aylward, N., Jackson, C. and Merton, B.** (2002), *The Learning and Skills Council Guide to Engaging with Young People: putting learners in the driving seat*. Available at <http://www.lsc.gov.uk/National/Documents/SubjectListing/LearningCultures/EngagingLearners/default.htm>. Hard copies are available from the LSC on 0870 900 6800.

**Shepherd, C. and Treseder, P.** (2002), *Participation – spice it up!* Save the Children, £18.95.

**Treseder, P.** (1997), *Empowering Children and Young People*. Save the Children, £15.

Available from Plymbridge Distributors on 01752 202301.

**YouthBank** (2003) *UK Toolkit*, £40. Tel: 0116 285 3709. E-mail: [sales@nya.org.uk](mailto:sales@nya.org.uk).

## Inclusion

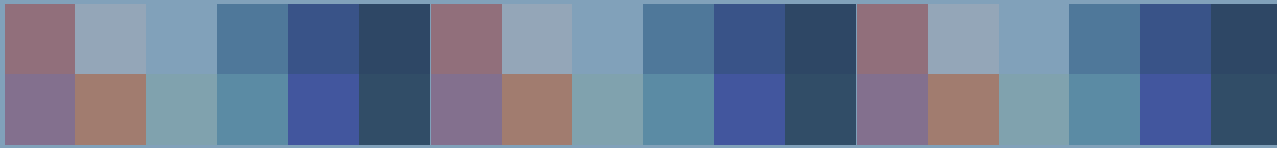
**The Children's Society** (2001, 2003), *Ask us!*, £5.50. Tel: 020 7841 4415.

**Miller, J.** (1996), *Never Too Young: how young children can take responsibility and make decisions*. Save the Children/National Early Years Network, £10. Tel: 01752 202301.

**Ward, L.** (1997), *Seen and Heard: involving disabled children and young people in research and development projects*. YPS, York, £6.50. Available on 01904 431213.

## Standards

**National Council for Voluntary Youth Services** (2002), *Keeping it Safe: a young person-centred approach to safety and child protection, standards and guidelines*. £30. Tel: 020 7422 8630.



# hear by right

standards for the active involvement of  
children and young people

**Hear by Right** offers tried and tested standards for organisations across the statutory and voluntary sectors to assess and improve practice and policy on the active involvement of children and young people.

The standards framework in **Hear by Right** is based on the Seven S model of organisational change: Shared values; Strategy; Structures; Systems; Staff, elected members or trustees; Skills and knowledge and Style of leadership. It relies on self-assessment, divided into three levels of 'emerging', 'established' and 'advanced', with each level building on the last. This ensures that young people's involvement is built in and not just bolted on.

The accompanying mapping and planning template on the enclosed CD-Rom is an important tool for organisations to make the most of the **Hear by Right** framework. The mapping section enables organisations to gauge progress against each standard, indicating evidence, including from children and young people themselves. The planning section helps organisations identify future areas of progress, what priority they are to be given and who and what resources are needed.

ISBN: 0 86155 300 4

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Local Government Association

  
The National Youth Agency