

City of York

Safeguarding Children Partnership



City of York Safeguarding Children Partnership

Children's Rights and Involvement

October 2021

Our vision

Every conversation starts with the child.

We commit that all partners across the city support children and young people to understand their rights, to have a voice and to realise their rights.

When we refer to children's rights we mean so in relation to the United Nations Convention on Rights of the Child¹ (UNCRC). This relates to all principles set out by the UNCRC, with a focus on the four 'general principles' of:

- Non-discrimination (article 2)
- Best interest of the child (article 3)
- Right to life survival and development (article 6)
- Right to be heard (article 12)

Involvement Opportunities

Everyone in York has a responsibility to support children and young people to realise their rights and to be heard. There is no single voice 'team' and every person, practitioner and agency is responsible for playing their part. Children and young people have a range of different opportunities to be engaged and involved. These break down into individual, group based or whole population opportunities.

Individual involvement

- At an individual level children and young people are involved in decisions that affect them.
- Through individual experiences their voice is heard and acted upon.
- For example through Education, Health and Care Plans, advocacy cases, support from children's social care.
- Where possible this should be aggregated to identify trends to inform wider service planning and evaluation.

Group involvement

- Through participation groups, children and young people are involved in service design, delivery and evaluation.
- There are a range of regular participation groups across the council and wider city.
- These are often groups around themes of interest, e.g. young carers, children in care, age ranges, geography etc.
- There are also ad-hoc groups and events to consult on specific issues.
- The CYSCP through the voice group maintains an overview of groups operating across the city.

Whole population involvement

- Periodically there may be "whole population" consultation exercises, often as part of wider involvement activity.
- "Whole population" could refer to open consultations across all children and young people. This may need mixed methodology to effectively reflect views.
- It could also refer to the whole population of particular groupings. For example, care leavers or those with SEND.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child establishes a fundamental set of rights for children and young people. Article 12 sets out children and young people's right to express their views and opinions about decisions that affect them and for those views to be taken into account.

¹ <https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/>

How the City of York Safeguarding Children Partnership involve children and young people

The meaningful involvement of children and young people is a golden thread that runs through every aspect of how the safeguarding partnership functions. There is no single group or route for how children and young people are involved. Rather it is a multi-layered approach to ensure there is direct and indirect involvement of children and young people at all levels of our work. This approach is summarised below.

Children's Rights and Voice

- The CYSCP has made a significant and shared commitment to support children and young people to understand their rights, to have a voice and to realise those rights.
- The CYSCP will drive forward this work over the course of the next three years through partners and the Voice and Involvement Sub-group.
- The CYSCP will report on progress through its annual report.

CYSCP Development Days

- Young people from the network of participation groups are supported to engage in CYSCP development days.
- There is designated and dedicated time for young people to lead a discussion and provide strategic input into the work of the partnership.
- Young people decide on their input and what they want to share.

Voice Pledge and Assurance Reports

- All CYSCP subgroups are signed up to the Voice Pledge. This acts as a way of ensuring voice and involvement is embedded in every day business. Voice and involvement is not the responsibility of 'others', the Pledge affirms our collective responsibility to voice and involvement.
- Regular Assurance reports to the CYSCP from its subgroups all address how voice and involvement is reflected throughout their work. Where this is absent or not sufficiently meaningful it is both challenged and supported by the partnership

Seeing the big picture

- There is a rich range of existing voice and involvement work that is taking place across the city.
- Key reports and recommendations from voice and involvement work taking place across the city will be shared with the CYSCP to inform their work.

The Voice Network

- The Voice and Involvement Sub-group will support and coordinate the network of multi-agency routes by which children and young people can be involved.
- The CYSCP uses the network to gain feedback on key matters and members of the network are able to raise issues to the partnership for a response.

Quality and support

- Partners will work with the Voice and Involvement Sub-group to support the delivery of high quality and meaningful involvement activity.
- This includes sharing of best practice, sharing resources and building the capability of the partnership to meaningfully engage young people. This is through the use of quality standards and direct training from children and young people.

The Voice Network

The Voice Network is a collaboration between multi-agency partners that work across the city to engage and involve children and young people. Each member of the network work independently and engages children and young people of different ages, interests and from different communities (geographical and identity).

The relationship in the network is one of mutual support - sharing best practice, resources and collaborating on projects. The network also works together to enable direct routes for young people to have their voices heard across the city and reach key strategic forums and decision makers.

Show Me That I Matter

Children in Care Council
(care experienced young people
aged 11-16)

York's Youth Council

Youth Council
(young people aged 11-18)

Door 84 (Community group)

Door 84 is a registered charity and one of the leading providers of services to Children, Young people in York and the surrounding areas. Their vision is to empower service users to achieve their potential and lead happy, safe and fulfilled lives.

The Island (Community Group)

Supporting some of the most disadvantaged, vulnerable and isolated children and young people to realise their potential through positive mentoring, relationships and activities.

Snappy (Community Group)

A small charity, based in York, dedicated to maximising the personal development of children and young people with wide ranging disabilities.

Lollipop (Community Group)

Lollipop offers opportunities for children and young people with any degree of deafness from mild to profound and their families to meet and build friendships with others, with whom they share their experiences of deafness. 0-25 years of age.

Speak Up Youth

A youth club for any young person in care aged 11-16 (or up to 19 with disabilities or additional needs). Young people can get involved in games, arts, crafts, sports and occasional workshops.

York Inspirational Kids

A support group for parent carers of children and young people who have a disability and/or additional need and live in the York area.

Choose2Youth

Choose2Youth provides support for young people with disabilities across York and North Yorkshire, by creating a full programme of opportunities for personal and social development.

CAMHS (Participation group)

The group involves current and ex-users of CAMHS to talk about the service and how it could be improved.

York Inspirational Kids Post 16 Group

A youth group for children and young people aged 16 or over with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities.

Refugee Action York (RAY)

This youth club is run in association with RAY (Refugee Action York) for ages 11-19 years. This club is for refugees, first generational teens with dual heritage or those with asylum seeker status.

Moor Lane Youth Club (Cops vs Kids)

To help improve police engagement with children and young people. 'Cops vs Kids' aims to build positive bridges with the youngsters, as well as seeking support from their parents and guardians.

68 Youth Club

68 Youth & Community Centre York is a youth centre serving the local area. They are experienced in providing youth activities and services for young people.

Club Wilber

Club Wilber provides a supportive environment and an opportunity to get together for families living with Vision Impairment in the Yorkshire area.

MySight York

MySight York is a thriving independent charity supporting local people to live well with sight loss. They run events for families and young people.

Access4All

A strategic group for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities. The group aim to support the constant improvement of SEND services.

Young Carers Revolution (YCR)

A group of young carers and young adult carers aged 5-25 who explore and tackle the issues effecting their lives. YCR aim to work with decision makers, professionals and the wider public to raise awareness, challenge stigma and effect change.

Ways to involve and engage

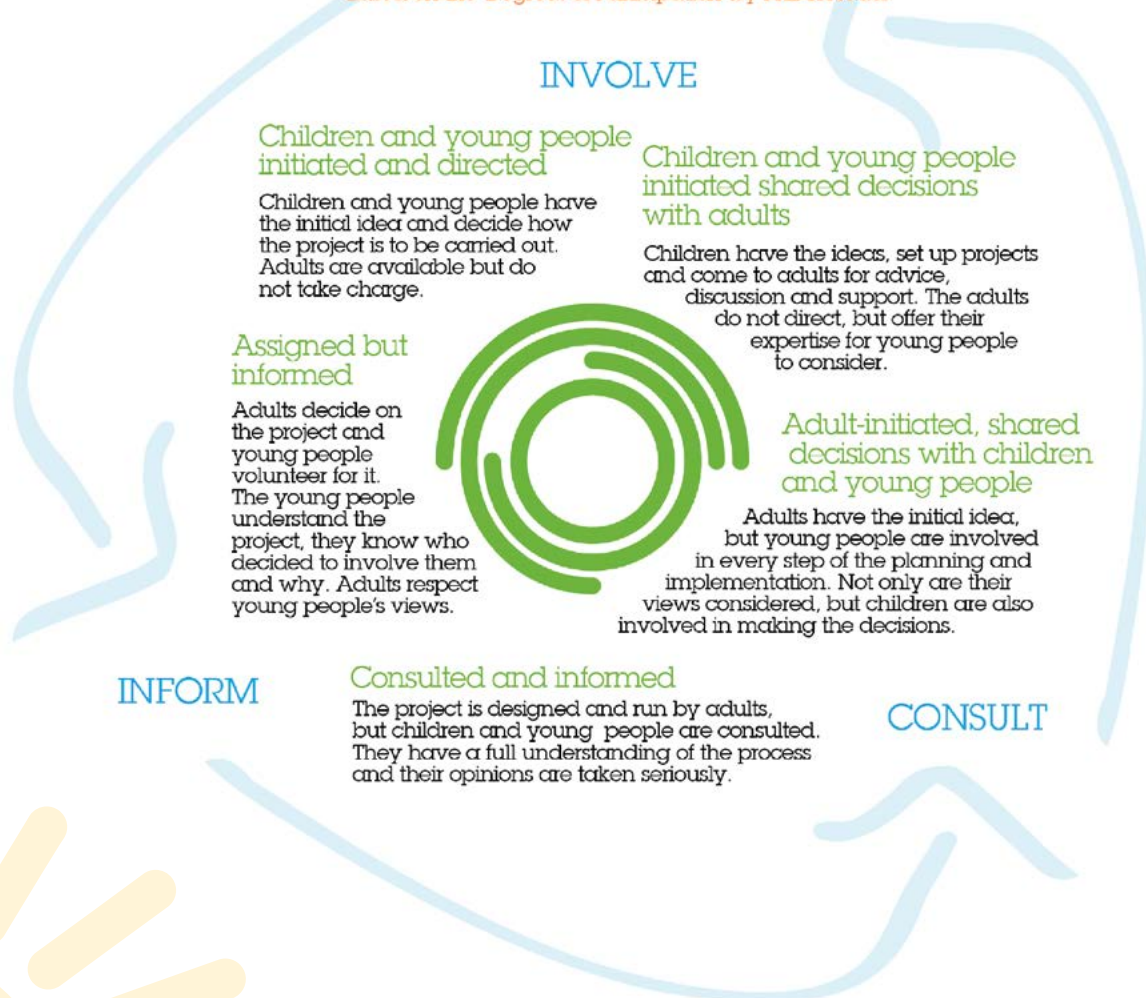
When it comes to engaging and consulting children and young people there are lots of different options. To get the best results think about the young people you are wanting to engage and the best way of reaching them. The best results are often achieved by including children and young people in the planning of any engagement activity. Some examples of different ways to engage with children and young people is shown below.

These are a taster of some of the key methods available but many more can be found by visiting www.saferchildrenyork.org.uk/voice.

- Establishing a participation group
- Setting up a focus group for one off engagement
- Using evaluation / feedback tools
- Online surveys
- Social media
- Planning for real
- Mystery shopping / Young inspectors
- Post-it notes / Jam board
- Circle time
- Interviews
- Diary room
- Media production / campaigning
- Observation
- Graffiti wall
- Active participation / Parachute games

Involving children and young people in decision making...

Based on the 'Degrees of Participation' by Phil Treseder



Principles of joint partnership (co-production)

The model of joint partnership sets out some underpinning principals for effectively engaging children and young people. The basics of these include:

- We value the importance of children, young people and their parents/carers as fundamental and key stakeholders in all decisions and planning that affects their lives
- We value feedback and celebrate success
- We work in a reciprocal way and support one another
- We continue to grow our networks of people
- We are equal, diverse and accessible
- We blur the boundaries between receiving and delivering services

How to find out more

You can see examples of voice and involvement work and access support and resources by visiting <https://www.saferchildrenyork.org.uk/safeguarding-information/childs-lived-experience>.