

About participation

Vision

Our vision is that all children and young people have equal opportunity to meaningfully participate in the decisions that affect them at the individual, operational and strategic levels.

We aim to embed participation across the local authority, including in schools and services. Children and young people will be empowered by developing the skills and knowledge required to be decision-makers in their own lives.

Understanding of participation

We recognise that all children and young people's right to participate in decision-making is enshrined in Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989, and that this right is reinforced in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006.

At a national level, this right is enshrined in law via Section 19 of the Children and Families Act 2014, the SEND Code of Practice and the Care Act 2015.

We acknowledge that good participation does not just mean listening to children and young people, but also acting on their input and giving them good feedback about the decisions we make.

In order to make sure that all children and young people's voices are heard, we must make sure that appropriate and accessible participation opportunities are available. This includes ensuring that children and young people have the skills and support they need to take part in a way that works for them.

Good participation should be embedded as standard across services, and should be a consideration from the very earliest stages of the commissioning cycle.