

INVOLVING CHILDREN IN THEIR PLANNING MEETINGS SUGGESTIONS FOR GOOD PRACTICE

Wherever possible children should participate in their own planning meetings. The following guidance will help you support them to do this in an effective and purposeful way.

Before the meeting

The Named Person has responsibility for ensuring the child is fully informed and prepared for their meeting.

- It is important to discuss with the child/young person who should be invited and who they would like to attend their meeting. You may want to involve them in sending out invitations.
- Give consideration to the venue, time and length of the meeting
- The child needs to be given a **choice** about **whether or not they want to attend their**
- **planning meeting**. It is important to support the child/ young person to make an informed **choice**. The child may choose to only attend for part of their meeting.
- The child needs to have information about what will happen at the meeting and who else will be
- attending. They need to know what support is available to enable them to attend their meeting.
- Adults must acknowledge that the meeting is the child's meeting. The expectation is wherever possible the child should attend.
- Adults should be informed in advance of the planned agenda and made aware if the child will be
- attending.

Expressing Views

A key adult needs to meet with the child to discuss how they want to express their views prior to and during the meeting. Methods of participation need to be flexible and take account of the child's age, abilities, and preferred style of communication.

The form "**My Views for My Team**" should where suitable be completed with the child in preparation for their meeting. Alternatively it can be used as a guide to help focus discussions with the child to enable an adult to gather their views. It is important that the purpose of this form is discussed with the child and they are given a choice about whether or not they wish to complete it.

This form can be adapted to the needs/ abilities of the child, for example:

- An adult may need to scribe for the child
- It can be helpful to complete the form on the computer
- A child may prefer to draw their responses to the questions
- For a child with significant learning/ communication needs, it may be helpful to use photographs or visual symbols.

Ask the child for their permission to share the completed form. Where appropriate they should sign the form.

At the meeting

Participation at meetings should be in a way that is meaningful and appropriate to the child's needs and wishes.

- Everyone should be welcomed and introduced.
- The meeting agenda should be explained and outlined to everyone present at the start of the meeting.
- Language needs to be clear and simple and jargon avoided.
- The child/ young person should bring and/or present their prepared information. They may have identified a key adult to support them with this before the meeting.
- Give time for checking back with the child that they understand what is being talked about and for
- answering any questions they have.
- The child should be consulted about and actively involved in developing their plan any decisions that are made during the meeting

After the meeting

- The child should be given a copy of their plan
- A key adult needs to take time to discuss this with the child and check that they are in agreement.
- An evaluation form has been developed to get feedback from the child about their experience of their planning meeting.