

Children and Young People with SEND

Engagement and Participation

Framework 2023 – 2026



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Our Vision

“The children and young people of Herefordshire have a great start in life and grow up healthy, happy and safe within supportive family environments.”

This is our vision, which is in the council’s Children and Young People’s Plan 2019 – 2024¹.

We have a Children and Young People’s Partnership who worked with children and young people to create a five year plan that started in 2019. The plan is like a big jigsaw that everyone can be part of to make sure children and young people get the help they need to succeed. We want all children and young people in Herefordshire to:

- ✓ Be safe
- ✓ Be healthy
- ✓ Be amazing
- ✓ Be part of the community

Background

Section 19 of the Children and Families Act 2014 ² tells us how important it is for children and young people to participate ‘as fully as possible’ in the decisions that affect your lives. We understand that children and young people with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) might need extra support to participate meaningfully. As well as making sure that there are specific participation opportunities for children and young people with SEND, we will also make sure that universal opportunities are accessible and inclusive for all children and young people.

¹ Herefordshire Children and Young People’s Plan 2019 – 2024

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/18581/herefordshire-children-and-young-peoples-plan-2019-2024.pdf>

² The young person’s guide to the Children and Families Act 2014

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/359681/Young_Persons_Guide_to_the_Children_and_Families_Act.pdf

Who's involved?

This framework has been created with the following partners. Our thanks go out to:

- Children and Young People
- Parent Carer Voice Herefordshire
- Herefordshire & Worcestershire Integrated Care System
- Representatives from local schools, special schools, and colleges
- Herefordshire Council Social Inclusion Steering Group

Co-Production

We have a Co-Production Charter³ which was created in partnership with PCV Herefordshire, Herefordshire Council, Herefordshire Integrated Care System (ICS), and was adopted by Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS Trust, Wye Valley NHS Trust and SENDIASS. You can download it on the Herefordshire Local Offer. We are committed to working in co-production with children and young people and all other stakeholders.

Co-production is an equal relationship between people who use services and the people who are responsible for providing services. They work together from design to delivery, sharing decision making. Co-production requires dedication and commitment to achieve and sustain, but the rewards are worth the effort. Co-production can have a positive impact on achievement and progress and overall supports constructive compromise. The council's SEND Engagement and Market Development Officer is responsible for co-production with children and young people with SEND and their families.

³ Herefordshire Co-production Charter <https://pcvh.co.uk/coproduction-charter/>

Benefits of participation

Benefits for you:

Participation helps children and young people to develop confidence and a range of skills including:



Self-esteem



Communication



Teamwork



Problem solving

- Build your confidence and self-esteem through being valued and appreciated
- Learn and develop your skills in problem-solving, communication and planning that will help you in the future
- Help keep you safe, as it increases trust and confidence that your voice matters and adults will listen to you
- Make new friends and meet different people
- See the difference you make in the community

Benefits for organisations and services:

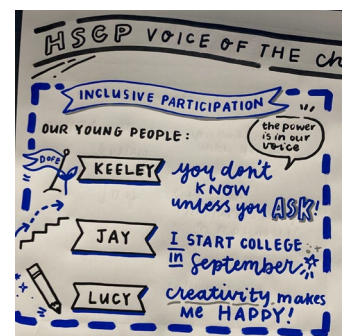
- We work with you to create services that meet your needs and help you achieve your potential
- Contributes to building more effective, relevant and long-lasting services for you
- It challenges us to make how we work more inclusive
- Strengthens accountability and transparency and being clear about what can be achieved

What we are doing well

We are committed to making participation work well for children and young people with SEND. We have ways you can participate, such as through our SEND Participation Network as well as 'Your Voice Matters'⁴ for Care Experienced Young People.

We have already completed the following participation work recently:

- Adapted health-related behaviours questionnaire in special schools - children and young people with a wide range of disabilities participated in a survey to tell us about their health-related behaviours and needs. The information gathered in the survey has enabled the Public Health department to plan and deliver projects to tackle the wider health inequalities that children and young people with SEND experience.
- Children and young people with SEND told more than 70 professionals from the council, health, voluntary and community services why it was important for their voice to be heard during the Voice of the Child conference in June 2022. This was linked with the launch of the Participation Toolkit⁵ that the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership created. Attendees called the presentations by the young people 'inspirational' and 'thought provoking' and said that it would change their practice in a range of ways including changes that enable children to drive decisions about their care and developing better ways for capturing the voice of children and young people with complex needs. This tells us how valuable it is to hear what children and young people can tell us.



⁴ Your Voice Matters for Herefordshire looked after children and care leavers
<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/care-leavers/participation>

⁵ HSCP Participation Toolkit [HSCP Voice of the Child Participation Toolkit - Herefordshire Safeguarding Boards and Partnerships](#)

- Parent carers and children and young people in Herefordshire were asked to prioritise the actions included in this participation framework. There were 200 responses from children and young people and their parent carers in total. Parent carers told us that they wanted us to prioritise children and young people’s participation at a strategic level and ensure it is embedded in all that we do. Children and young people told us it was most important to them that they had lots of opportunities for participation and that these activities led to meaningful and measureable changes. These priorities are reflected in our action plan in Appendix 1.
- The Chief Executive and Director of Children’s Services at Herefordshire Council have pledged to visit every school in Herefordshire by the end of 2024 to talk to children and young people and school staff and find out more about what it is like to be a young person in Herefordshire.

What we will do next

- Using the CDC’s Participation Audit tool⁶, we have found that we are doing well in several areas, but we know there are things that we could do better. We have used the audit to create an action plan so that we can work on the things we need to improve. We have coproduced our action plan with parent carers of children and young people with SEND. You can read our Action Plan in Appendix 1 at the end of this framework.

⁶ Council for Disabled Children Participation Audit Tool [Participation Audit Tool \(councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk\)](https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk)

Participation in the Herefordshire SEND System

We are committed to making sure that participation and engagement with you is an integral part of what we do when making decisions about the services and support we provide.

We will make sure that:	
Strategic 	Children and young people's engagement is well supported at a strategic level.
Embedded 	Engagement with and listening to children and young people with SEND is embedded in culture and practices.
Opportunities 	There are lots of opportunities for children and young people with SEND to take part in decision making.
Change 	Engagement work leads to measurable change and the changes are communicated back to you.
Inclusive 	Engagement opportunities are inclusive, you have equal access and know how you can get involved.
Accessible 	Engagement activities are accessible and you receive the right support to take part.
Set the agenda 	You are able to 'set the agenda' for engagement opportunities.
Meaningful 	You know how your contributions will be used and acted upon.
Staff Skills 	Staff have the right training to involve children and young people with SEND in decision making and learn from each other.
Monitor & Evaluate 	We work together to monitor and evaluate activities and services and you know how you can complain if you are not satisfied.

Monitoring and Evaluation

In order to make sure that good quality participation is happening and having a positive impact, we will monitor and evaluate our participation work regularly and report qualitative and quantitative outcomes. For each piece of participation work completed, we will evaluate the quality and outcomes with children and young people using a co-produced evaluation criteria.


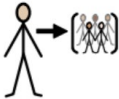



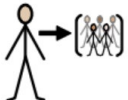


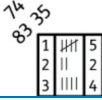


Sharing this framework




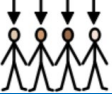

This framework is for all services in the Local Area SEND system, especially the ones that work directly with you, including Herefordshire Council and Herefordshire and Worcestershire's Integrated Care Board. It is available for anyone to download on our [Local Offer](#). Easy read documents about our participation work will also be available once they have been developed. When invited to tender, prospective providers of services for children and young people with SEND must include information about how they will work with children and young people to evaluate and improve their services. We will share this framework with schools and other settings so that they know how we will work with you.

This framework is a working document which will be updated every year to show the progress we have made and any new challenges we have faced. We would like your feedback on the framework; if you have anything you want to tell or ask us about it, please contact the SEND Engagement and Market Development Officer at Herefordshire Council whose contact details can be found alongside this document online.

Key words

Here are some of the words we use a lot in this framework and what they mean:

Co-production 	This is where adults work with you in partnership. We know you have strengths, skills and experience that are valuable and we work with you to design services for you.
Engagement 	To get people interested and want to take part.
Evaluate 	Consider how good or bad something was.
Impact 	What difference it has made.
Monitor 	Check how things are going.
Participation 	To take part in activities.
Providers 	Organisations that offer their services.
Qualitative 	Measuring what difference we are making by working together.
Quantitative 	Reporting how much difference was made using numbers and percentages.
Services 	Things that providers can do for you.
Strategic 	Plans about really important things.

<p>Co-production</p> 	<p>This is where adults work with you in partnership. We know you have strengths, skills and experience that are valuable and we work with you to design services for you.</p>
<p>Stakeholders</p> 	<p>Everyone that is involved in working with you and providing support, such as school staff, Herefordshire Council, the health service and Herefordshire parent carers who have a strategic group called Parent Carer Voice.</p>
<p>Tender</p> 	<p>Providers that want to sell their services to the council have to complete a tender process so that the council can make sure they will be able to deliver what we are asking for.</p>
<p>Universal</p> 	<p>Services for everybody.</p>
<p>Voice</p> 	<p>Sharing your ideas, feelings and comments in a way that works for you – this may not always mean speaking. We know that some children and young people with SEND have different ways of communicating.</p>

References

Council for Disabled Children Participation Audit Tool

[Participation Audit Tool \(councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk\)](https://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk)

The young person's guide to the Children and Families Act 2014

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/359681/Young Person s Guide to the Children and Families Act.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/359681/Young_Person_s_Guide_to_the_Children_and_Families_Act.pdf)

Herefordshire Children and Young People's Plan 2019 – 2024

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/18581/herefordshire_children_and_young_peoples_plan_2019-2024.pdf

Herefordshire Co-production Charter

<https://pcvh.co.uk/coproduction-charter/>

HSCP Participation Toolkit

[HSCP Voice of the Child Participation Toolkit - Herefordshire Safeguarding Boards and Partnerships](#)



Your Voice Matters for Herefordshire looked after children and care leavers




<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/care-leavers/participation>



Appendix 1 – Action Plan



Using the CDC Participation Audit Tool, we have identified participation and practice outcomes we need to develop based on the ten key areas in the audit. For each of the ten key areas, we have developed a set of objectives and ways we can measure our progress. Throughout the plan, where we refer to 'you', we mean all children and young people with SEND in Herefordshire. This is sometimes shortened to 'CYP' which means children and young people. We asked children and young people and their parent carers which ones mattered most to them. We got 200 votes all together. Children and young people told us the most important priority was lots of opportunities for participation and they wanted to be able to see the difference taking part made to them. The parent carers told us that it was most important that their young people could participate in strategic decision making and that there was a consistent way of working across Herefordshire.

Numbered references refer to the Herefordshire SEND Strategy 2023 – 2026 Action Plan e.g. 2.1, 4.3 etc which can be found on the [Local Offer](#).

Key Area	Objectives	Measure	Monitoring & Evaluation	Timeframe
<p>Strategic</p>  <p>Children and young people's engagement is well supported at a strategic level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will make sure that all the work we do, the plans we make and the services we review includes you and your parent carers from the start so that your views help shape the services you receive • Agree what we want to do with families and how we will work together in the future to change things. • Ensure that CYP views are reflected in our strategic planning as a matter of course (2.2). • Local CYP groups and services link strategically with local disabled people's organisations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A SEND Engagement and Participation Strategy is co-developed and published (2.1) and we can see the impact in children's feedback (dashboard measures e.g. annual review) • Our revised Co-production Charter is co-produced and published and the Parent Carer Forum report improved quality experience in meetings. • Young people have increased opportunities to be part of strategic decision making either directly or through other ways of sharing views (CDC). • SEND Summit brings together local CYP groups with organisations that work for and with CYP with SEND. 	<p>Reviewed and reported on annually.</p> <p>Reviewed and You Said, We Did report annually. Participation schedule and records. Increased opportunities for CYP with SEND to access universal activities.</p>	<p>May 2023</p> <p>April 2023</p> <p>Termly</p> <p>Termly</p>
<p>Embedded</p>  <p>Engagement with children and young people with SEND is embedded in culture and practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow our partnership work with you and your family so that you feel that your views are listened to as much as the views of the people delivering your services (2.3). • There are mechanisms for communication between management and young people and this part of the way we do things across all our services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A SEND Engagement and Participation Strategy is co-developed and published and we can see the impact in children's feedback (dashboard measures e.g. annual review) (2.1). • Engagement and young people's experience /feedback is built into our planning activities in a proactive and planned way. 	<p>Reviewed annually.</p> <p>Participation plans, schedule and records of engagement.</p>	<p>May 2023</p> <p>Termly</p>

Key Area	Objectives	Measure	Monitoring & Evaluation	Timeframe
<p>Opportunities</p>  <p>There are lots of opportunities for children and young people with SEND to take part in decision making.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on the work of the Engagement Officer to improve communication across all partners and hear from you more regularly. • Varied approach and range of different delivery models and methods used to engage CYP. • To capture the voice of CYP in their individual plans (2.4). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities are scheduled that capture the views of CYP on a regular basis and in a range of ways. • A SEND Youth group meets regularly with a range of professionals including members and leaders and their voices are listened to. • Quality Assurance processes ensure voice of CYP is reflected in plans. 	<p>Participation plans, schedule and records of engagement. Participation evaluation records.</p> <p>EHCP QA and QA processes across Strategy work streams</p>	<p>Termly</p> <p>Termly</p> <p>Bi-annual</p>
<p>Change</p>  <p>Engagement work leads to measurable change and the changes are communicated back to you.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanisms exist which ensure professionals take on board the views of young people. • Evidence of impact of engagement work on processes and outcomes is collected from a range of stakeholders, using a range of methods, gathering qualitative and quantitative data. • Changes are communicated back to CYP and others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of participation process for professionals wishing to engage with CYP. • Proportion of CYP with SEND and their families who report that they received feedback on how their views have been used. 	<p>Participation process followed through records of engagement. Evidence of impact on services and activities – gathered from CYP and families. Evaluation records.</p>	<p>Annual survey?</p>
<p>Inclusive</p>  <p>Engagement opportunities are inclusive, you have equal access and know how you can get involved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather your views, and those of your family in a wide range of ways on matters that are important to you. • We will find different ways to listen to the voices of all children and young people so we can hear what you have to say; we will make sure there are chances for you to be involved in the way you want to be. • We will make sure that partnership working groups meet more regularly and always adhere to the culture of co-production which includes you and your parent and carers from the start 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement is built into our activities in a proactive and planned way. • CYP have accessible information about engagement opportunities and understand how they can get involved. • Revised Co-production Charter is co-produced and published and we can see the impact in children’s feedback (dashboard measures e.g. annual review) 	<p>Participation plans, schedule and records of engagement. Participation evaluation records.</p> <p>Reviewed and You Said, We Did report annually.</p>	<p>Termly</p> <p>Termly</p> <p>April 2023</p>

Key Area	Objectives	Measure	Monitoring & Evaluation	Timeframe
<p>Accessible</p>  <p>Engagement activities are accessible and you receive the right support to take part.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people are supported to develop their confidence, resilience and knowledge, so that they can participate in universal and specialist activities as appropriate (4.2) • Children and young people are supported to participate, where appropriate, in activities, and to make friends and develop positive relationships (4.3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and support is provided to enable CYP to participate in a range of ways. • Activities are scheduled that capture the views of CYP on a regular basis and in a range of ways. 	<p>Participation plans, schedule and records of engagement.</p> <p>Participation evaluation records.</p>	<p>Termly</p> <p>Termly</p>
<p>Set the agenda</p> <p>You are able to 'set the agenda' for engagement opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CYP have an equal contribution to setting the agenda for engagement opportunities. • Evidence from CYP is used to inform and plan local engagement opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CYP devise evaluation criteria which includes all aspects of engagement opportunities – assess, plan, do, and review. • CYP evaluation demonstrates input into local engagement opportunities. 	<p>Evaluation criteria.</p> <p>Participation plans, schedule and records of engagement. Evaluation records.</p>	<p>June 2023</p> <p>Termly</p>
<p>Meaningful</p>  <p>You know how your contributions will be used and acted upon.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow our partnership work with you and your family so that you feel that your views are listened to as much as the views of 'experts'. • Make sure you only have to tell your story once. • CYP are rewarded and recognised for their contributions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of CYP with SEND who report that the people who look after them care about their opinion. • Development of effective system for sharing information about CYP across all partners. • CYP devise reward and recognition 	<p>Data dashboard.</p> <p>Participation plans, schedule and records of engagement. Evaluation records. SEND Partnership monitoring of 'tell it once'.</p>	<p>Annual</p>

Key Area	Objectives	Measure	Monitoring & Evaluation	Timeframe
<p>Staff Skills</p>  <p>Staff have the right training to involve children and young people with SEND in decision making and learn from each other.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will help other people supporting you to know how to get the help you need • Provide information so people supporting you (including in schools and colleges and your family) can start to talk to you about your future and what could be possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPD for professionals working with CYP including peer to peer sharing of professional practice for gathering voice of CYP. • Effective annual reviews and transition planning demonstrated in EHCP processes. 	<p>Evidence of CPD provided to professionals.</p> <p>EHCP QA</p>	<p>June 2023</p>
<p>Monitor & Evaluate</p>  <p>We work together to monitor and evaluate activities and services and you know how you can complain if you are not satisfied.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from engagement activities is systematically collected using a range of methods and used to improve activities and services. • CYP help us plan and evaluate what we do and see if this has made a difference. • Evaluation findings are reviewed with CYP and the outcomes communicated. • Young people know how they can complain and have support to do so. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence from feedback and the impact it has had on a service or activity. • CYP devise evaluation criteria which includes all aspects of engagement opportunities – assess, plan, do, and review. • Evaluations findings are shared with CYP in a variety of ways. • Monitoring complaints from young people received through the Young Person’s Complaints Officer 	<p>Evidence of impact on services and activities – gathered from CYP and families.</p> <p>Evaluation records.</p> <p>Evaluation records.</p>	<p>Annual survey</p> <p>Termly</p> <p>Termly</p>