



Notice of a public meeting of

Play Opportunities Scrutiny Review Task Group

To: Councillors Craghill (Chair), Fenton and Wells

Date: Wednesday, 2 November 2016

Time: 5.00 pm

Venue: The King Richard III Room (GO49) - West Offices

AGENDA

1. **Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting, Members are asked to declare:

- any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests
- any prejudicial interests or
- any disclosable pecuniary interests

which they may have in respect of business on this agenda.

2. **Minutes** (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve and sign the minutes of the Play Opportunities Scrutiny Review Task Group Meeting held on 9 August 2016.

3. **Public Participation**

It is at this point in the meeting that members of the public who have registered their wish to speak can do so. The deadline for registering is by 5pm on **Tuesday 1 November 2016**. Members of the public can speak on specific planning applications or on other agenda items or matters within the remit of the committee.

To register please contact the Democracy Officers for the meeting, on the details at the foot of this agenda.

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The Council's protocol on Webcasting, Filming & Recording of Meetings ensures that these practices are carried out in a manner both respectful to the conduct of the meeting and all those present. It can be viewed at http://www.york.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/11406/protocol_f_or_webcasting_filming_and_recording_of_council_meetings_20160809.pdf

4. Play Opportunities Scrutiny Review - (Pages 5 - 110) Interim Report

This report provides an update on the work carried out to date in support of this scrutiny review, and presents information on engagement techniques for ward councillors to use when engaging with children, young people and families in their local ward.

5. Urgent Business

Any other business which the Chair considers urgent

Democracy Officers

Catherine Clarke and Louise Cook (job share)

Contact details:

- Telephone – (01904) 551031
- Email catherine.clarke@york.gov.uk and louise.cook@york.gov.uk

(If contacting by email, please send to both Democracy officers named above).

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democratic Services Officers responsible for servicing this meeting:

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports and
- For receiving reports in other formats

Contact details are set out above.

This information can be provided in your own language.

我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

 (01904) 551550

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City of York Council

Committee Minutes

Meeting	Play Opportunities Scrutiny Review Task Group
Date	9 August 2016
Present	Councillors Craghill, Fenton and Wells

1. Election of Chair

The Task Group were invited to nominate a Chair.

Resolved: That Councillor Craghill be appointed as the Chair of the Play Opportunities Scrutiny Review Task Group.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members were asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interests or disclosable pecuniary interests which they might have in respect of the business on the agenda. None were declared.

3. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

4. Opportunities for Play

The Task Group considered a report that presented some initial information in support of this new scrutiny review on developing high quality play opportunities for children, young people and families across the city, and asked them to agree a method for progressing this review.

Officers gave an update and highlighted the background to the scrutiny topic. They discussed in detailed the four objectives and it was noted that a fifth one was also approved at the Learning and Culture Policy and Scrutiny Committee:

v, Look at where the gaps are across the city and where the lack of community capacity makes identifying need more challenging.

The Task Group went on to consider the importance of play within communities and noted the existing and future play areas across the city, including the gaps, and officers confirmed there was a poorer distribution of opportunities for teenagers.

The Task Group questioned how they could improve play opportunities across the city and engage with communities to identify potential schemes. Officers confirmed that councillors can use an allocation of their ward budgets to bring forward or develop new play schemes. All Members would become an integral part of this process and be encouraged to retrieve feedback from children, young people and families by visiting their local schools and user groups.

Officers went on to explain the consultation process and the different options available to bring a scheme together and confirmed they were currently advertising in various publications to identify potential capital projects.

The process invited suggestions from children, young people, parents and carers in York and the completed applications were due to be considered by a multi-agency panel and the successful schemes would be approved at an Executive Member for Economic Development and Community Engagement (Deputy Leader) Decision Session.

The Task Group went on to discuss the barriers to play and then considered the proposed timetable and the information they required to proceed with the review.

Resolved:

- i) That the update information on previous steps to encourage play provided in this report be noted.
- ii) That the consultation feedback contained within Annex D of the report be considered.
- iii) That at the next meeting officers provide:
 - case studies on the play schemes at Acomb Green, Clarence Gardens, Wigginton, and Strensall
 - examples of local good practice from engagement through to delivery of a project including feedback from users.

- examples of failed schemes to gain an understanding of why they were refused.
- iv) That a fifth objective be agreed:
- To look at where the gaps are across the city and where the lack of community capacity makes identifying need more challenging.

Reason: To progress this review in line with scrutiny procedures, and protocols.

Cllr Craghill, Chair
[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 6.30 pm].

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Play Opportunities Scrutiny Review Task Group**2 November 2016****Play Opportunities Scrutiny Review - Interim Report****Purpose of Report**

1. This report provides an update on the work carried out to date in support of this scrutiny review, and presents information on engagement techniques for ward councillors to use when engaging with children, young people and families in their local ward.

Background to Scrutiny Topic

2. At a Decision Session in June 2016 the Executive Member for Economic Development & Community Engagement (inc. Play) agreed:
 - i. The play policy should be updated to provide a clear steer to direct resources for the development of future play opportunities.
 - ii. Criteria for the release of the Council's capital programme for playground improvement.
 - iii. Allocation of £30k of the capital funding as match funding for the Rowntree Park scheme.
 - iv. A new playground inspection regime to reflect best practice and local experience.
3. Ahead of the Executive Member's Decision Session, a discussion took place at a Scrutiny Committee pre decision call-in, at which councillors agreed with the general principles of the paper and expressed hope the policy would clearly support the different play needs of both children and young people, and provide effective play areas to support children's natural inclination to play.
4. However, the discussion included a number of scenarios relating to the difficulties of developing play in community settings and the different perspectives that exist within communities.
5. Those conversations between officer and councillors indicated the need for this agenda to be taken up as a scrutiny topic, which in turn led to a scoping report being considered by the full Learning & Culture Policy &

Scrutiny Committee in July 2016. The Committee agreed to proceed with the review with the aim of developing improved play opportunities across the city and identifying ways of enabling communities to bring forward potential schemes. The Committee agreed to form this Task Group to carry out the review on its behalf and set the following review objectives:

- i. Examine national best practice and methodology and consider examples of recent good practice locally from engagement through to delivery of a project.
- ii. Identify future positive ways to engage with children, young people and families in order to evidence local need and inform the development of play opportunities at a neighbourhood level.
- iii. Examine how best to allay resident's concerns and improve buy in from the whole community, thereby improving community/ward cohesion
- iv. Identify best ways (methodology) to bring forward/ develop potential new schemes.
- v. Identify where lack of community capacity makes identifying need more challenging.

Consultation

6. In support of this review and to assist in the identification of any obvious gaps in current provision, at the first meeting of the Task Group in August 2016, the Council's Operations Manager (Strategy & Contracts) provided maps of the city showing current play sites for young children and those for teenagers.

Information Gathered

7. Background to the Play Agenda
The Children's Plan 2007 introduced by the Government of the time and subsequent play strategy consultation 'Fair Play' in 2008 placed children's play at the centre of one of the great challenges of our time i.e. how better to recognise and respond to children and young people as stakeholders and users of public space.

8. Play England (national charity) aims for all children and young people in England to have regular access and opportunity for free, inclusive, local play provision and play space. It provides advice and support to promote good practice and works to ensure that the importance of play is recognised by policy makers, planners and the public.
9. The Government and Play England believe that children's well-being, safety, learning and social development, as well as their essential enjoyment of childhood, are affected by the extent and the quality of their opportunities to play. This requires the cooperation of many different professionals and roles is needed to ensure a cohesive and effective approach. Council officers and members, children's services professionals, planners, developers, architects, housing managers, landscape architects and designers, play equipment suppliers, parks and recreation managers, community groups, health professionals and, of course, play practitioners, are just some of the people who have, or should have, an interest in promoting enjoyable play spaces that feel safe for children and young people.
10. Play space needs to be of high quality and good design to attract children and families and become a valued part of the local environment. Poor quality unimaginative space will not be attractive to children, will not be valued by the local community and will fall in to disuse and disrepair. Good design is a good investment.

Objective (i) – Examine national best practice and methodology and consider examples of recent good practice locally from engagement through to delivery of a project

11. At the first meeting of the Task Group in August 2016, Members considered information on National Best Practice and received information on local good practice from the Head of Communities & Equalities.
12. National Best Practice
Play England's guide to creating successful play spaces (Design for Play 2008) explains how good play spaces can give children and young people the freedom to play creatively, while allowing them to experience risk, challenge and excitement. The Task Group viewed the guide containing advice on how play spaces can be affordably maintained, and considered a number case studies provided within the guide as national examples of good practice – see a sample of those case studies at Annex A.

13. In 2009, as part of their commitment to the play agenda, the then Government invested £235 million nationally in a national Playbuilder Scheme. Its aim was to develop public open access to outdoor play spaces close to where children live that were safe, exciting, stimulating and accessible to all, and promote active, imaginative and adventurous play targeting predominately the 8 - 13yr age range. It was overseen by a multi agency steering group representing Play, Parks, Young Peoples Service, Extended Schools, City Development, Transport Safety, Grants and Partnership and Neighbourhood Management, North Yorkshire Police, PACT, CVS and the Executive Member for Children and Young People's services.
14. Local Good Practice
The Task Group received information on a previous scrutiny review carried out in 2010 through which scrutiny members participated in the consultation on revisions to the Council's Play Policy (2010-2013), together with an update previously provided to the Learning & Culture Committee in September 2011, on the implementation of the recommendations arising from that review. The Task Group noted that as part of that review, a comparison was undertaken of the play opportunities for 5-13yr olds across a range of different types of local residential areas/wards and consideration was given to the National Playbuilder Scheme ongoing at that time – see paragraph 13 above.
15. At the time of its introduction, York had a growing focus on the importance of play and the Playbuilder funding provided greater access to higher quality outdoor play areas which directly linked to York's then play strategy 'Taking Play Forward', and assisted in the Council's aim to raise the standard of play provision.
16. York was allocated £1,165,391, consisting of £1,120,453 capital and £44,938 revenue. The plan was to build 22 new and upgraded play sites across the city over a two year period, each to be developed in consultation, and with the participation of local children and young people, families, communities and representatives as appropriate.
17. However, following the general election and resulting change in Government, the Department of Education wrote to all Local Authorities announcing their need to identify savings from a number of capital budgets in 2010-11 where commitments were no longer affordable. This led to the Department of Education reviewing the planned spend on Playbuilder scheduled for the second-year of the project. In the case of York, a majority of the allocation had already been committed and

therefore the Council was able to complete the planned works at 19 of the 22 sites – see list below.

18. Play Areas with Major Investment Since 2008

Ward	Site	Funding source	Investment Date
Acomb	Viking Road	Playbuilder	2009/10
Bishopthorpe	Keeble Park	Playbuilder	2009/10
Clifton	Ashton Avenue	Playbuilder	2009/10
Dringhouses & Woodthorpe	Leeside	Lottery	2008/09
Guildhall	Clarence Gardens	106	2015
Haxby and Wigginton	Mancroft (Haxby)	Playbuilder	2010/11
Heworth	Barfield Road	Playbuilder	2009/10
	Bell Farm Adventure Playground	Playbuilder	2010/11
	Arran Place	Housing Revenue Account and 106	2014
Heworth Without	Stray Road	Playbuilder	2010/11
Holgate	Balfour Street (Back Park)	Playbuilder	2009/10
	Sowerby Road	Playbuilder	2009/10
	Garnett Terrace	Playbuilder	2010/11
Hull Road	Hull Road Park - main	Playbuilder	2010/11
	Hull Road Park – small	Housing Revenue Account	
Huntington & New Earswick	Orchard Park	Playbuilder	2009/10
Rural York West	Brecksfield (Skelton)	Playbuilder	2009/10
	Copmanthorpe Recreation Ground	Playbuilder	2010/11
Osbalwick & Dunnington	Dunnington Recreation Ground	Big Lottery Fund	2010
Strensall		Playbuilder	2010/11
Westfield	Chesney's Field,	Playbuilder	2009/10

	(Foxwood Lane)		
	Grange Lane	Playbuilder and Yorventure	2010/11
	Acomb Green	Big Lottery Fund	2012
	Cornlands Road	106 & Yorventure	2014
Wheldrake	Naburn	Playbuilder	2009/10
	Elvington	Playbuilder	2009/10
		Playbuilder	

19. Recent Successful Schemes in York

Since 2010 there have been four successful major refurbishment projects in York, each requiring major investment between £25k and £55k:

- Acomb Green – lottery funded. Community lead with Communities and Public Realm support
- Arran Place – HRA and 106 funds. Public Realm with significant Residents Association input
- Cornlands Road – HRA and 106 funds. Public Realm with support from the local Residents Association and York High School via a public consultation process.
- Clarence Gardens – 106 funds. Public Realm with support from Haxby Road Primary School.

20. The Task Group received detailed information on each of the schemes listed above, which highlighted the application of the strategic approach to developing play opportunities outlined in the latest version of City of York Council's Play Policy (Taking Play Forward 2016-19) i.e. that play opportunities should be developed taking into consideration the importance of community involvement and reflecting best practice. This was evidenced by the similar approach taken for each of the above schemes:

- Step 1 - Interested parties, local groups, schools in the vicinity etc were consulted on what they did and did not want, and a standard contract specification was adapted to meet those local community aspirations
- Step 2 - The community signed off the tender documents
- Step 3 - CYC ran the tender process which included an opportunity to meet community representatives

Step 4 - CYC gave consideration to which of the designs met the specification and addressed CYC's needs and aspirations best e.g.:

- Renovation as specified
- There was at least one significant feature item.
- There was new and varied seating included
- The predominant material used was metal; for longevity and to match the immediate surrounding equipment.
- Appropriate safety surfacing was to be provided; with a bias towards grass matting
- The design offered value for money

Step 5 - CYC shortlisted 3-4 submissions and carried out post tender consultation with the local community to choose the winning design.

Step 6 - CYC oversaw the installation

21. Funding

The current policy (Taking Play Forward 2016-19) recognises the importance of play within communities. This administration's commitment to invest is through the introduction of a capital programme, which provides a clear focus to respond in a targeted way and to direct funding to identify need.

22. That Task Group learnt that within the capital programme for 2017/18 there is £295k for play area improvements, £30k of which has been allocated as match funding for a Skatepark scheme at Rowntree Park. The remaining money is available to be spent on play areas that are either in the Council, Town or Parish Council control. It is proposed that its use should be guided by the 5 key principles within the current policy, as outlined below:

- Meet a clearly identified need
- Be developed through inclusive involvement and participation that empowers and encourages the community to take a lead
- Be based on the right of the child to access inclusive, quality and locally based play opportunities
- Promote and recognise the benefits of play and its impact on health and development of the child
- Be reflective of best practice

23. These principles form the funding criteria for allocation of the Council's capital programme for playground improvement schemes. Outside of this, Ward Councillors may also choose to allocate monies from their ward budgets to fund improvements to play areas in their wards.

Objective (ii) - Identify future positive ways to engage with children, young people and families in order to evidence local need and inform the development of play opportunities at a neighbourhood level

24. Recent Examples of Engagement

In support of objective (ii) the Task Group considered the consultation feedback contained within the council's 2016-19 Play Policy received from prominent strategies and children and young people from across the city, which was gathered as part of the consultation process to develop the 2016–2019 Children and Young People's plan.

25. In addition the Task Group learnt that completed applications for future schemes are due to be considered alongside feedback from children and young people, and that to support this approach there had been a recent consultation exercise undertaken by Shine¹. This was publicised through the Shine newspaper, going out to all schools and libraries as well as associated websites and social media pages, and all ward Councillors were informed via email. A questionnaire was then made available, which some Ward Councillors distributed through their preferred community engagement processes. It was also distributed to various groups and individuals upon request - see copy of questionnaire at Annex B.
26. At the same time the capital programme was launched through Shine, and an application form and supporting information was made available for communities, groups and organisations to apply to the fund. The Task Group learnt that applications will only be considered if the location:
- Has been identified within the Open Space and Green Infrastructure Final Report September 2014, as being deficient in play provision.
 - Has not previously been in receipt of Playbuilder, or significant lottery or section 106 funds since 2008
27. Finally, the Task Group noted that at the end of the process, the Shine panel will recommend a final list of schemes to the Executive member for

¹ Shine - A multi agency panel consisting of representatives from the Council, Parish Councils, play organisations and young people's forums

formal approval, to ensure that money is allocated to those play areas with most need.

28. In considering the strategic approach to developing play opportunities detailed in paragraph 19 above, the Task Group received a detailed example of the stage 1 consultation/engagement undertaken for the refurbishment of Clarence Gardens play area, which involved children at the local school being consulted on:

- what age range and ability the new equipment should be for.
- what type of play activities were wanted e.g. swinging, climbing, spinning.
- whether several pieces of equipment or a few larger ones should be installed.
- if the equipment should have a theme e.g. trains or boats.
- should the equipment be mostly wood or metal.
- what other things would make the play area better – more seats for example.
- how we can improve the entrance to the play area.

Analysis

29. Having considered the maps showing the plays areas across the city, the Task Group recognised the limited opportunities available to teenagers, and noted that the proposed skate park for teenagers at Rawcliffe Country Park had stalled following feedback from residents regarding the scale of the proposals. The Task Group were pleased to note that the council is pursuing alternative proposals for a site upgrade for the skate park at Rowntree Park.

30. In support of Objective (ii), the Task Group recognised that moving forward, in response to the changes in managing ward budgets, Councillors will in the future be an integral part of the process for bringing forward / developing potential new play schemes. They therefore agreed that in order for Councillors to participate successfully in the process for bringing forward / developing potential new play schemes, Councillors would need to engage more with children, young people and families in their local ward and may need further support/training to do so. With this in mind the Task Group requested further information on suitable engagement techniques – see ‘Additional Information Gathered’ section below.

31. Having considered information on the previous play scrutiny review undertaken in 2010 (see paragraph 14 above), the Task Group recognised some of the issues identified at that time were the same as those they were trying to address as part of this review i.e. that in some areas of the city there was zero tolerance towards children playing in open spaces near homes, and that there were other barriers to play that needed addressing. The Task Group noted that as a result of the previous review it was recommended that Ward Committees, Parish Councils and Residents Associations reach out to their local communities and work with them to encourage a more positive attitude. It was also recommended that a pilot scheme be undertaken involving all the relevant agencies to:
- Work with children and parents through schools in the identified areas to identify what they perceive to be barriers to play.
 - Gather the views of other residents, local businesses and other interested parties.
 - Create a 'Safe Routes to Play' document for the pilot area.
 - Identify any improvements required to road crossings/markings to reduce the danger of traffic.
32. The Task Group were therefore keen to learn of the findings from the planned pilot scheme, particularly in relation to the perceived barriers to play and the views of other residents etc, as they agreed it would support their consideration of objective (iii) of this review i.e. 'To examine how best to allay residents concerns and improve buy in from the whole community' etc. However, having considered the information provided on the implementation of the recommendations arising from that earlier Play scrutiny review, the Task Group recognised it would not be possible to draw on any earlier findings, due to the way the work had been aligned into the pilot. The pilot introduced a new method for communities to bring forward schemes within their wards.

Additional Information Gathered

33. Engaging Children & Young People
The active involvement of children and young people works best when there is a visible commitment to their involvement, and their involvement is valued. YorOk² has produced an Involvement Toolkit of Resources to

² YorOK is the name of York's Children's Trust arrangements. Children's Trusts are local partnerships that bring together all partners and organisations responsible for providing services for children, young people and families, together—focusing on a shared commitment to improving children's lives.

support and encourage the engagement of children and young people, which contains a series of 'Listen to Me' booklets providing practical and innovative examples of how children can be encouraged to express their views. There is also a booklet aimed at parents and carers who are eager to help their children participate – see copy of Booklets at Annex C.

34. The Toolkit also provides a range of factsheets on different methods of engagement, and some extra support and guidance when involving disabled children and young people in participation and decision making activities – see Annex D.

Progressing the Review

35. **Objective (iii)** - *Examine how best to allay resident's concerns and improve buy in from the whole community, thereby improving community/ward cohesion*
36. As part of the previous Play scrutiny review, the Task Group undertook to consult with parents in their wards to understand and identify the barriers to play. At that time parents highlighted concerns around safety, busy traffic and bullying as reasons for not allowing their children to freely access play. In response the authority produced a leaflet 'Playing Out: A Guide for Parents' to help inform parents of the benefits of free play which contained a myth busting section – see copy of leaflet at Annex E.
37. As part of this review and in support of Objective (iii), it is suggested that in order to identify ways of improving tolerance towards children playing, the Task Group focus on the concerns of residents living in the vicinity of play areas and open spaces, and gather feedback from partners involved in previous schemes on their good and bad experiences at the different stages of the process, to evidence lessons learnt, and identify examples of how community cohesion / consensus has been achieved.
38. There may also be alternative examples of community cohesion being generated in support of other local issues the Task Group could learn from.

Objective (iv) - *Identify best ways (methodology) to bring forward/develop potential new schemes.*

39. In regard to this objective, the Task Group have already received detailed information on both the strategic approach to developing play opportunities outlined in the 2016-19 Policy, as applied to a number of recent successful schemes, and the method used to apply that approach (see paragraph 19). In order to gauge how successful that method was, the Task Group could choose to gather feedback from those consultees involved at the different stages in the process.
40. It is also suggested that the Task Group review the list of successful schemes as they are approved by Executive Member and examine any unsuccessful schemes to understand why they were refused.

Implications & Risks

41. Associated implications and risks will be identified as the work on this review progresses and will be included in the draft final report arising from this review.

Council Plan 2015-19

42. This scrutiny review supports the following council priorities:
- All York's residents live and thrive in a city which allows them to contribute fully to their communities and neighbourhoods
 - Delivering frontline services for residents is the priority
 - All children and adults are listened to, and their opinions considered
 - Every child has the opportunity to get the best possible start in life
 - Residents are encouraged and supported to live healthily
 - Focus on the delivery of frontline services for residents and the protection of community facilities.
 - Focus on cost and efficiency to make the right decisions in a challenging financial environment.

Recommendations

43. At this interim stage in the review, the Task Group is recommended to:
- i) Note the information contained within this report, including the new information contained within Annexes C, D & E.
 - ii) Agree a method for gathering information on the concerns of residents living in the vicinity of play areas and open spaces, and feedback from partners and consultees involved in previous schemes, in support of Objectives (iii) & (iv).

- iii) Explore and agree a method for achieving Objective (v) i.e. Identifying where a lack of community capacity makes identifying need more challenging.

Reason: To progress this review in line with scrutiny procedures, and protocols.

Contact Details

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Chief Officer Responsible for Report:

Dawn Steel
Head of Civic & Democratic Services

Report Approved **Date** 17 Oct 2016

Specialist Implications Officer(s) None

Wards Affected: List wards or tick box to indicate all **All**

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: None

Annexes:

Annex A – Sample of National Examples of Best Practice

Annex B – Shine Consultation Questionnaire Issued July 2016

Annex C – YorOK ‘Listen to Me’ Booklets

Annex D – YorOK Factsheets on Different Methods of Engagement

Annex E – ‘Playing Out: A Guide for Parents’ Leaflet

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Abbey Orchard Community Garden, Westminster

Client:	Peabody Trust
Location:	Abbey Orchard Road, Westminster, City of Westminster
Designers:	Farrer Huxley Associates
Project timescale:	2001–04
Capital cost:	Approximately £600,000
Funding:	Peabody Trust

Remodelling of this small internal courtyard space was completed in 2004, in association with major repairs to sub-surface drainage. Led by landscape architects' practice Farrer Huxley Associates, the scheme's brief focused on recreating a garden for residents to include an enclosed ball games area (5-a-side scale) along with play facilities aimed (notionally) at children aged between 6 and 12. The design was informed by the site history, and signage at the main entrance makes this explicit with a reference to the 'monk's vineyard and orchard'. Consultation was carried out with residents, including children on the estate.

The courtyard had been used previously as a car park, ball court and traditional style playground, leaving little space for more general recreation. The new layout makes good use of existing sight lines through the courtyard, and entrances into the space are aligned with the outer entrances into the courtyard area itself.

The ball games area is laid out on a diagonal axis, which adds a sense of movement to the underlying geometry of the space and means that it dominates the space less than it might have done otherwise. Recessed slightly to reduce noise from ball games, it forms a space in its own right. The play equipment sits informally alongside the ball games area in an area of wet-pour surfacing, and a number of oversized sculptures of fruit (apples and pears) sit at locations around the garden, helping to reinforce the historic concept underlying the layout. A hornbeam hedge and planted borders help to define the courtyard and to baffle noise.

A question remains over how feasible it is to introduce a ball games facility of this scale and kind into such a high density housing area, on a site where space is at a premium. Noise remains an issue, and the ball court fencing has been upgraded to reduce rattle.

The scheme is drawing young people from outside the immediate courtyard and estate, and some residents feel that these users discourage children and adults who live on the estate from using the space, identifying the need for better provision in other areas.

Creating a new landscape to meet the needs of a large number of residents of all ages in a limited space is difficult, and inevitably decisions can be made that have left some people disenchanting.

For more information, contact:

Landscape Regeneration Manager, Asset Management, Peabody Trust,
45 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7JB, tel: 020 7021 4422, www.peabody.org.uk
Farrer Huxley Associates, London office, Unit 4, Union Wharf, 23 Wenlock Road,
London N1 7ST, tel 020 7490 3625, fax 020 7490 3626, www.fha.co.uk.

Annex A



© Farrer Huxley Associates

The layout has been carefully designed to emphasise pedestrian routes through the garden.



© Farrer Huxley Associates

Aerial view of garden.



© Aileen Shackell

Giant fruit sculptures provide informal play opportunities.



© Aileen Shackell

Play equipment between the ball games area and shrub beds.

Balmaha Play Landscape

Stirling

Client:	Stirling Council
Location:	Balmaha, Loch Lomond
Designers:	Judi Legg, Play Space Designer, and Mike Hyatt, Landscape Architect
Project timescale:	Main contract completed in 2004, but work continues
Capital cost:	£45,000
Funding:	Stirling Council; Stirling Landfill Tax Trust; Leader Plus (European funding); Scottish Natural Heritage; Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park; Stirling Council Local Community Development Fund

Balmaha Play Landscape is situated near the shore of Loch Lomond next to a Visitors' Centre. It attracts a mixture of regular local users and visitors to the area. The main impetus for the design of this new play space was the connection between land and water and the way that people through history have lived in the local environment.

The central area represents a beach as the focus where water and land meet, where boats are hewn from mature trees and launched to fish the plentiful waters. The stilted structure echoes the ancient crannogs, which were built out into the water as living spaces where families, livestock and belongings could be defended. At low water, remains of ancient crannogs can still be seen on Loch Lomond. Local artists and craftspeople contributed to the design and construction of the play landscape, in the dugout canoes, the willow maze and the turfed stone wall.

Balmaha sits in one of the most naturally beautiful and bio-diverse areas of Scotland, yet children are often separated from it. The 'play area' is designed to be an integral part of the landscape, giving opportunity for children to experience and care for their environment.

There is a deliberate avoidance of standard play equipment in favour of mounds, dips, copses, wetland, and special places to allow the children to operate in a more authentic 'natural' environment. The use of the existing changes in level, of natural materials and undulating surfaces aims to provide a stimulating landscape, where children can experience the irregularity of life, and develop the real skills and abilities to assess risk. The play area is unfenced, blending naturally into the surrounding area and welcoming all comers. The design aims to create a play landscape that is a space that adults will enjoy sharing with their children whether they are local residents or visitors.

This project was supported in important ways by the Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park. Its strong community development programme led to local community initiation of this project and sustained involvement with its development.

For more information, contact:

Children's Services – Play Services, Stirling Council, Unit 12, Back O'Hill Industrial Estate, Back O'Hill Road, Stirling, FK8 1SH, tel 01786 430120, play@stirling.gov.uk
Sue Gutteridge, Play Consultancy, tel 0131 662 9984, suegutteridge@btinternet.com.

Annex A



Carved longboats at Balmaha.

© Aileen Shaddock



The hammock, Balmaha Play Space.

© Stirling Council Play Services



Equipment nicely located, close to a tree.

© Stirling Council Play Services



A fallen tree encourages jumping as well as climbing.

© Stirling Council Play Services

Bus Station Skate Park

Milton Keynes

Client:	Milton Keynes Council
Location:	Milton Keynes
Designer:	Richard Ferrington and Rob Selley
Project timescale:	Design started in early 2004 with construction taking place between January and March 2005
Capital cost:	£115,000
Funding:	English Partnerships and Milton Keynes Council with additional funding provided by EBMK.

Years of use by street sport enthusiasts had taken their toll on the city's infrastructure. Street sport enthusiasts were as concerned about the levels of damage as the authorities – they had never set out to vandalise the objects they use, and were keen to see them enhanced and protected.

An area at the former Central Bus Station was identified as a possible location for facilities, and negotiations took place with building owners English Partnerships. The space was already legendary in the street sport community, and had been skated for many years since its construction in 1980. A key concern was to create a new facility without losing its familiar feeling and quality. The heritage of the place had to be respected, and the local street identity needed to be reflected in the overall design.

An innovative approach was needed to engage members of the street sport community. Branding and communication were important strands. Using techniques established in street subculture – email, texting and logos (tags) – a communication and branding framework was devised. The SK8MK 'brand' was instrumental in holding the process together. The SK8MK message, 'Your city, Your sport, Your future, Get involved', encouraged people from the street sport community to participate in the process.

The new facility was purpose-built as a 'street style' facility, which recreates the environment and furniture of street skating. It is constructed from concrete, granite, terrazzo tiles and stainless steel. The robustness of the materials, combined with the smooth surfaces they offer, provide a very good play value for skateboarding. The materials used are of good quality and employ a carefully selected palette of construction materials, which complement the existing architecture of the city.

The central location of Milton Keynes Bus Station Skate Park is key – it creates a place where young people feel secure, rather than isolated in a remote corner of the park. The facility provides a challenging experience for young people and a place to meet friends.

The site blends so seamlessly with the location that people often say: "Is that it?" or "Where is it?" The facility does not detract from, but enhances the existing site.

For more information, contact:

Senior Landscape Architect, UDLA, Development and Design, Environment Directorate, PO Box 113, Milton Keynes Council, Civic Offices, 1 Saxon Gate East, Milton Keynes, MK9 3HN, tel 01908 252270, richard.ferrington@milton-keynes.gov.uk.

Annex A



© Aileen Shackell

The site blends well with the surrounding streetscape.



© Aileen Shackell

Improvising with 'loose parts'.



© Aileen Shackell

Structures have been designed and specified to a high standard, and to stand up to high levels of usage.

Climbing Forest

Coombe Abbey Country Park

Client:	Coventry Council
Location:	Coventry
Project timescale:	January – July 2006
Designer:	Coventry City Council/TimberPlay
Capital cost:	£80,000
Funding:	Coventry Council Parks Service, capital works budget

Development of the detailed design for this scheme was carried out in close co-operation with English Heritage and the local Conservation Officer, to ensure that the finished scheme was appropriate for this Listed landscape. Consultation with park users, including interviewing carried out by teenagers, identified that more adventurous provision was needed for older children.

The Climbing Forest consists of a number of tall oak posts set into the ground, supporting a complex network of ropes, nets, rails and ladders, each set at varying heights. At over 4 metres tall and with a diameter of approximately 300mm, each of these posts echoes the form and density of the surrounding tall trees. The untreated posts, with their natural finish, blend naturally with the surrounding oak forest, and though the bark has been removed, their tree-like form makes the posts recognisably only a few (manufactured) steps removed from the surrounding tree trunks.

Though at design stage the feature was aimed predominantly at children and young people aged between 8 and 15, the Climbing Forest now caters for all ages, including adults in their twenties. The Climbing Forest is consciously 'non-age-specific' in appearance. It attracts boys and girls equally.

The Forest is carefully designed to accommodate a very wide range of abilities, with the lowest and highest climbing elements as low as 0.5 metre and as high as 4 metres above ground level. Children exploring the equipment are encouraged to work within their capabilities and to stretch themselves – when they are ready.

The scheme has been very carefully designed to provide an exciting and challenging play experience for older children. The manufacturer carried out a full risk assessment of the equipment throughout the design stage. Hand-holds in timber, and knots in climbing ropes, are carefully located and dimensioned to permit access at the lowest levels for younger children but to prevent their access to higher levels where longer legs and a stronger grip are essential for their safety.

The number of claims against the council has fallen since this scheme was implemented, compared to those arising from use of the existing traditional style play area. Vandalism in the woodland areas has also fallen since the scheme's completion

For more information, contact:

Coombe Abbey Country Park, Brinklow Road, Binley, Nr Coventry CV3 2AB, tel 024 7645 3720
 Coventry City Council, Coombe.countrypark@coventry.gov.uk, www.coventry.gov.uk
 TimberPlay, Aizlewoods Mill, Nursery Street, Sheffield S3 8GG, tel 0845 458 9118
 www.timber-play.com.

Annex A



© Aileen Shackell

There's room for lots of people to use the Climbing Forest at the same time.



© Coventry City Council

Collaborative, social play, for girls as well as boys.



© Aileen Shackell

Challenging play for older children too.

Chapelfield Play Area

Cowie, near Stirling

Client:	Stirling Council
Location:	Cowie near Stirling
Designers:	Judi Legg, Play Space Designer, and Mike Hyatt, Landscape Architect
Project timescale:	Planning started 2000. Opened 2006
Capital cost:	Approximately £110,000
Funding:	Section 75 (Scottish equivalent to Section 106) housing developers' contributions; BBC Children in Need; Stirling Landfill Tax Trust; Cowie Play Areas Group fundraising

In 2000, a child drowned in a farmer's pond in Cowie, an ex-mining village near Stirling. This tragedy prompted residents to campaign and fundraise for a local play area.

A suitable site was identified – the site of a neolithic settlement that was of archaeological significance and therefore not available for housing. Although children already played there, the site was contentious because it was adjacent to the pond where the child had drowned. It took time to work through painful feelings about the drowning and to achieve design solutions that addressed safety issues, without compromising the children's need for independence and to experience challenge and risk.

Ideas from a visit by local children to a pre-history park and information about the site's history have been built into the park design including shelters, cooking and seating areas, and a raised beach, along with mounds, tunnels, slides and a climbing wall. The design contains elements which feel familiar to the children who were involved. Relatively few pieces of equipment are set in a succession of carefully inter-connected spaces. Quite dramatic changes in level have radically changed the previously flat site. Although the site is quite small, the feeling that 'there's always something round the corner' encourages visitors to explore. The routes through the site invite the use of bikes and wheeled toys. The natural elements include ditches which can hold rainwater for a short time.

The site was originally treeless. Local children were involved in planting rowan, birch, Kilmarnock willows and Japanese maples. These planting sessions included environmental games, explanations and discussions about the importance of trees to wildlife and to people, the reasons for including native species, and how the children could help to look after them. The hedge that reinforces and will eventually hide the fence between the play area and the farmer's pond includes blackthorn, hawthorn and dog rose. There are also attractive shrub areas of witch hazel, holly and honeysuckle.

Some initial problems with misuse/over enthusiastic use of the site in the evenings by teenagers were dealt with firmly and constructively by local residents who have taken responsibility for locking the park at night.

For more information, contact:

Children's Services – Play Services, Stirling Council, Unit 12, Back O'Hill Industrial Estate, Back O'Hill Road, Stirling, FK8 1SH, tel 01786 430120, play@stirling.gov.uk
Sue Gutteridge, Play Consultancy, tel 0131 662 9984, suegutteridge@btinternet.com.

Annex A



© Stirling Council Play Services

General view from site entrance.



© Stirling Council Play Services

Semi-circular walls set into the mould are climbable on the inside face.



© Stirling Council Play Services

Plenty of room to ride a bike too.



© Stirling Council Play Services

Balance features alongside the footpath draw the visitor into the site.

Cowley Teenage Space

Lambeth

Client:	Estate Management Board
Location:	Cowley Estate, Brixton Road, LB Lambeth
Designer:	Snug and Outdoor
Project timescale:	Project completed in 2003
Capital cost:	£100,000 for whole scheme (plus £12,000–£15,000 for consultation/and Snug and Outdoor's design work)
Funding:	Estate Management Board

Snug and Outdoor were contracted in the summer of 2003 to consider improving provision for teenagers as part of a wider refurbishment project on the estate.

The aim of the project was to engage young people on the estate in an imaginative design process which ensured that their needs were at the heart of the new scheme to build an outdoor space for teenagers. The core of the consultation took place on the proposed site itself, which became a large-scale experimental area for two weeks. Objects such as large wooden cubes, ramps and platforms were utilised by the teenagers to shape the space for themselves and try out new ideas.

In addition, the Cowley Teenage Space website provided an interactive forum for the expression of opinions, and this also allowed the young people to post their own photos. With a multi-generational population, it was seen as crucial that everyone who had a view was able to express it.

The young people were keen to have their 'own' space, but wanted to ensure that the new layout would not be so exciting as to attract large numbers of visitors, even gangs, from off-site, and they wanted the space to be used flexibly and for different functions. And though ball games were to be provided for, the aim was that these should not dominate the space to the exclusion of other activities.

The new layout included a small combination 'low-key' ramp and mound; a 5-a-side football pitch and basketball area, and better entrances and planting around the boundary. Two different sitting places were also included, specially designed to accommodate the different ways in which boys and girls socialise – boys tend to sit in rows, and girls prefer to sit in a huddle.

The layout successfully accommodates both space for ball games and quieter social spaces for children and young people to sit and chat, as well as a feature for bikes, whereas most ball games areas have only the one function.

The Teenage Space has been redesigned to a high standard, and for the young people using the site this is appreciated – high quality design and materials tell the young people that they are valued. Complaints about teenage behaviour have dropped considerably, along with a decrease in vandalism and graffiti.

For more information, contact:

Snug & Outdoor, 127 Rathcoole Gardens, London N8 9PH, tel: 020 8374 2176
fax 0870 706 4654, enquiries@snugandoutdoor.co.uk, www.snugandoutdoor.co.uk.

Annex A



Entrance to Teenage Space: high quality design and specification.



Seating alongside the ball games area.



Informal seating/shelter structure.



Ramp for wheeled play is also a place to meet.

© Aileen Shackell

© Aileen Shackell

© Aileen Shackell

© Snug and Outdoor

Cutsyke Play Forest

Castleford

Client:	The Castleford Project
Location:	Cutsyke, West Yorkshire
Designers:	Steve Warren, Estell Warren and Sutcliffe Play
Project timescale:	The project was completed in April 2005
Capital cost:	£220,000
Funding:	Wakefield Metropolitan District Council and supporting regeneration agencies

Cutsyke, once a thriving West Yorkshire mining town, is now classed as an area of high deprivation where children's play facilities were, until recently, virtually non-existent.

The Cutsyke Play Forest – a 400-square-metre play forest with no designated ways in or out and no prescribed routes to follow – was the first community-led scheme to be completed as part of The Castleford Project, a major regeneration initiative involving Channel 4, Wakefield Metropolitan District Council and supporting agencies.

The local community played a leading role throughout, from the initial design and planning stages to completion. Children were at the heart of the project, and selected the final design from a number of plans submitted as part of the Channel 4 project.

The process of design was unusual and of interest for a number of reasons. The design was the subject of a competition, where the brief was written between Wakefield MDC and the community. The children of Cutsyke then chose the winner, Architects Allen Todd Associates, who had subcontracted the design to Landscape Architects Estell Warren.

Sutcliffe Play was contracted to develop the concept play forest design, essentially consisting of 6-metre poles, platform, slides and netting into a scheme that could be built. This involved an elevated open platform 4 metres above the ground, which could have been interpreted as contravening the European Standard EN1176. This problem was overcome by a RoSPA risk assessment of the scheme, which decided that the benefits outweighed the risks.

The success of this project depended on the close working between all partners from an early stage in the process.

The project has been successful in transforming former derelict council allotments into a showcase play scheme that has attracted interest from all over the world. Although designed for older children, with an adult scale to it, younger children are also attracted to the play forest, underlining its appeal to the community as a whole.

Cutsyke Community Group, with members aged 7 to 74, has taken complete ownership of the forest. The group has been presented with the Duke of York Community Initiative award in recognition of 'outstanding work to support and develop its local community'.

For more information, contact:

Sutcliffe Play, Sutcliffe Play Limited, Waggon Lane, Upton, Pontefract WF9 1JS
tel 01977 653200, www.sutcliffeplay.co.uk.

Annex A



© Nicola Butler

Cutsyke Play Forest and log seats.



© Nicola Butler

Even young children can reach right up to the top.



© Nicola Butler

Graduated risk and challenge for all ages.

Diana, Princess of Wales' Memorial Playground

Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea

Client:	Royal Parks Agency
Location:	Kensington Gardens
Designer:	Land Use Consultants
Project timescale:	Inception early 1999; project completion 2000
Capital cost:	£1.2 million
Funding:	The facility was funded by the DCMA/Royal Parks Agency

Soon after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, it was decided to commemorate her life by creating a high quality children's play space in Kensington Gardens by upgrading an existing facility on a site at the north side of the Gardens.

The scheme's layout was based on the story of *Peter Pan* (author JM Barrie had lived overlooking Kensington Gardens and often spent time there), and a number of elements from this classic children's novel appeared in the scheme: a pirate ship and treasure chest; teepees; and a ticking crocodile, lurking half-buried in the sand.

The main objectives of the scheme were to create a play space which would be as inclusive as possible, so that all children would feel welcome and ready to explore, whether disabled or non-disabled. It would provide a wide range of play opportunities, and a variety of different spaces – busy and quiet; peaceful and noisy. It would allow children to experience and enjoy natural elements – especially working with sand and water – and facilitate creative play, with children choosing how and where they wanted to play without the need to be dependent on adult assistance.

The site has been hugely successful, with around 3,000 children a week enjoying this play space. High levels of usage have meant that there have been some concerns with water quality. These have been dealt with by converting the recycling/filtration system with a non-recycling system using water from a borehole in the Gardens, with the water running into soakaways (via the sandy areas which provide so much play value).

Equipment provided for access by wheelchair users has been designed carefully so that it also appeals to those on foot. Firm, smooth wheelchair-accessible paths connect the main sandy spaces where wheelchair users can, with assistance, play in the sand along with non-disabled children. Impact absorbent sandy surfacing doubles successfully as a play feature in its own right.

Play-related desire lines have appeared through planting in numerous places, and these could now be accommodated by revising the layout locally, as appropriate.

For more information, contact:

Land Use Consultants, tel 020 7383 5784, www.landuse.co.uk.

Annex A



© Nicola Butler

Through the main activity on the site focuses on the pirate ship there are plenty of quieter spaces too.



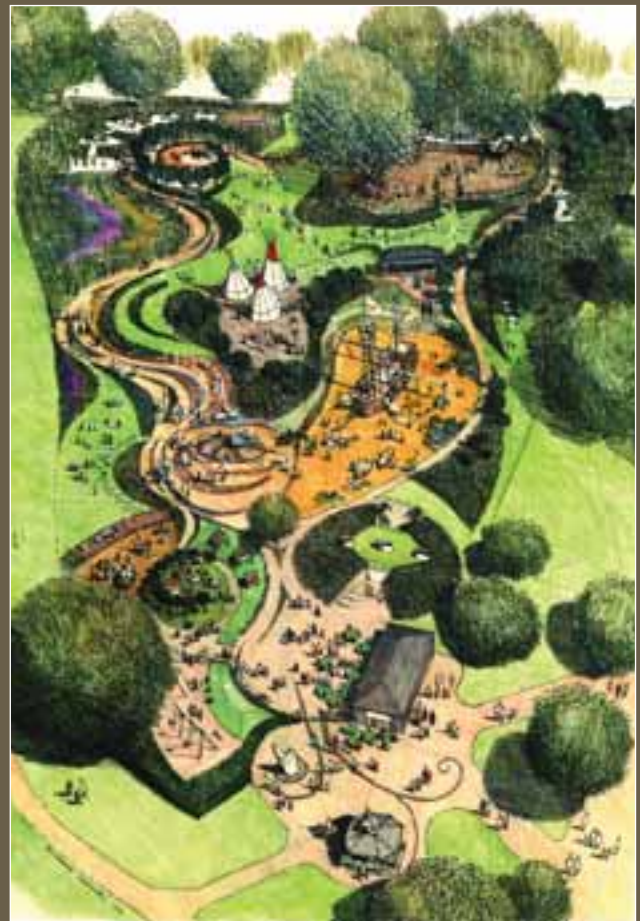
Aileen Shackell

Sand is used extensively as an impact absorbent surface with lots of 'creative' play value.



© Land Users Consultants

A drinking fountain like this can be a simple way of incorporating water into a site.



© Land Users Consultants

Artist's aerial perspective view of playground.

Dilkes Park

Thurrock

Client:	Thurrock Council
Location:	South Ockendon, Essex
Designers:	Thurrock Council's Cleaning and Greening department (Andy Furze, Head of department 1990–2002, with Peter Scott and Peter Golding); since 2002 Carol Spencer, project officer
Project timescale:	Regular changes since 1990
Capital cost:	£109,000 between 1998 and 2008 (ball court, shelters, sand volleyball court, play equipment)
Funding:	Since 1998 all capital funding has come from Veolia ES Cleanaway Mardyke Trust (Landfill Communities Fund)

Dilkes Park, was chosen in the mid 1990s by the Cleaning and Greening Department at Thurrock Council as the best location for new teenage provision. A combination of all-weather surfaced ball courts, floodlighting, and new youth shelters encouraged young people to move their activities out of the town centre and into the park.

One early teenage shelter in the park was not, by itself, enough to draw teenagers away from the centre. New shelters around the ball court were designed in close consultation with the young people, to allow both inside and outside use, and to include multiple exits (to discourage bullying). Two structures were included to accommodate more than one group of teenagers at a time.

The introduction of ball games areas and shelters was carried out alongside gradual refurbishment of the existing, nearby play area. This facility was a small, fenced play area, surfaced in rubber tiles. The council removed the boundary fencing, replaced some of the rubber surfacing with bark chips and, over time, extended the play area by adding other items of equipment. This is an ongoing process. Wherever possible, old equipment is left in place so new items add to the play opportunities on the site.

New equipment has been located at a low density in between existing mature trees. The lack of boundary fencing combined with careful locating of the equipment means that the play space has a natural, informal quality that is very appealing. Without any defined boundary, the play area blurs into the surrounding parkland. The massing of the trees means that not all of the equipment is visible together, which positively invites exploration. Footpaths through the park wind through the play space, informally, and the presence of passers-by makes the space feel safer.

Locating equipment informally within a natural environment has given the facility a strong sense of place. The approach to refurbishment does not depend on large capital outlay but can be implemented in an incremental manner as funding becomes available. Rubber, sand and bark have all been used as safety surfaces, giving a more varied feel.

For more information, contact:

Veolia ES Cleanaway Mardyke Trust, Parish Farm, South End, Much Hadham
Herts SG10 6EP, tel 01279 84 3675, andyfurze@aol.com.
Thurrock Council, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, Essex RM17 6SL
tel 01375 652350, cspencer@thurrock.gov.uk.

Annex A



© Aileen Shackell

Equipment is located informally between trees.



© Aileen Shackell

Without fencing the whole woodland becomes part of the play space.



© Andy Furze

This bench was installed in consultation with a local special school.

Horsham Park

Horsham

Client:	Horsham District Council
Location:	Central Horsham
Designer:	Landscape Architect Arlene McIntosh
Project timescale:	Project completed in 2003
Capital cost:	£230,000 for whole scheme (including £130,000 for relocating existing play equipment and purchase of new play equipment)
Funding:	From a parks capital budget

Horsham Park's new play space is seen as a great improvement on the previous facility, which was a traditional play area, largely surfaced in rubber wet-pour. The construction of the new Leisure Centre on the site of the old play space made replacement essential.

The aim was to provide a breadth of play opportunities for all children aged from birth to 14 years. A deliberate decision was made to move towards creating a play 'experience' rather than a play 'area'. The site is characterised by gently rising topography, with good views over the park, as well as a small number of mature trees. The new layout is designed to take advantage of both these aspects. Some equipment was retained and relocated. New equipment was placed within the remodelled hillside, which was carefully designed to enhance the existing tree planting. A 'valley' running down between these trees became a dry 'river' filled with sand and crossed by a bridge, designed by a local wood sculptor.

'Zoning' the equipment geographically, means there is no need for internal fencing to separate different age groups. Planting and ground modelling help create the feeling of different spaces and places to go to. Young people over 14 are also welcome.

The site is located close to a café and toilets and the new Leisure Centre and swimming pool. People now visit from as far away as south London, and use other park attractions such as the children's maze, a sensory garden, and children's entertainments.

Staff are delighted with high levels of usage and continuing positive feedback from users. 'Effort put in at planning and design stage and also in consultation has allowed us to look at the project in a holistic sense – this has allowed us to achieve so much more, for not much extra cost.'

The involvement of local artists, especially a wood carver, has introduced some unusual and tactile structures (seating and a bridge). These have not been any more expensive than off-the-peg items but are unique to this site.

The large sandy surfaces are enormously popular with the children, and have proved to be simple and inexpensive to maintain. The dry garden area and interpretation boards have provided an additional educational element to the play experience.

For more information, contact:

Parks Community Liaison Officer, Horsham District Council, Park House, North Street, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 1RL, tel 01403 215201, www.horsham.gov.uk.

Annex A



© Aileen Shackell

The bridge by a local woodcarver forms part of the entrance into the site.



© Horsham District Council

Planting makes the setting for equipment both attractive and playable.



© Horsham District Council

The totem pole sits surrounded by a lush planting scheme specially designed to need little watering.



© Horsham District Council

The play space includes different types of surfacing, to increase the variety of play experiences there.

Shine Your play area needs you!

Here at Shine HQ we are conducting a city wide study on our play areas and we would like your help to let us know which areas need improving and how?

This is your chance to help make improvements to your local area! and there are prizes up for grabs!

Win some excellent prizes!!!

We will be giving away outdoor play and sports equipment for the following groups:

Best school entry (Win £100 of sports equipment for your school)

Best individual entries (Top three entries all win some great prizes that you can take to play with in your local play area, courtesy of our friends at York City Football Foundation and York City Knights Foundation.)



Us this questionnaire to
tell us what you like.



Are you: a BOY or a GIRL How old are you:

About you - for prizes if you win!

Name:

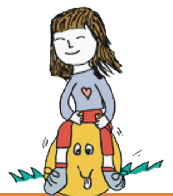
House Number: Street:

Postcode: Phone/email:

Part 1 - Where?

Which of the following play areas have you used before - tick all that you have played in:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ashton Avenue play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Esk Drive play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Outgang Lane play area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arran Place play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethel Ward Playing Field | <input type="checkbox"/> Playing Fields |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Askham Bryan College play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Folk Hall play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Poppleton Community Centre play area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Askham Bryan play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Fordlands Road play area | <input type="checkbox"/> QEII Barracks play area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Back Park | <input type="checkbox"/> Fulford Cross play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Rawcliffe Country Park play area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Back Park play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Garnett Terrace play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Rawcliffe Lane play area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Badgerwood Walk play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Garth End play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Rowntree Park play area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Barfield Road play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Glen Gardens play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Saddlers Walk play area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beckett Drive play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Heron Avenue play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Scarcroft Green play area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bishopthorpe play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Hollis Crescent play area | <input type="checkbox"/> School Lane play area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brailsford Crescent | <input type="checkbox"/> Homestead Close play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Siddings Gardens play area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bray Road play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Homestead Park play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Sovereign Park play area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brecksfield play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Hull Road Park | <input type="checkbox"/> Sowerby Road play area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Broadstone Way | <input type="checkbox"/> Humber Drive play area | <input type="checkbox"/> St Marks Grove play area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Broadway Grove play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Kensington Road play area | <input type="checkbox"/> St Nicholas Fields play area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Burton Stone Lane Community Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Kirklands play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Stray Road play area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carlisle Street play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Laburnum Farm play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Tang Hall Community Centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cemetery Road play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Landalewood Road Park | <input type="checkbox"/> Upper St Paul's play area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Churchfields play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Leaside play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Vesper Walk play area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clarence Gardens play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Mancroft play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Victoria Park play area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Copmanthorpe Recreation Ground play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Navigation Road play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Victoria Way/Geldof Road play area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crombie Avenue play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Nelson Lane play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Viking Road |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dewsbury Terrace play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Nicholas Gardens play area | <input type="checkbox"/> West Bank Park |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dunnington Recreation Ground play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Olympian Court play area | <input type="checkbox"/> Woodthorpe Green play area |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Orchard Park Community Centre play area | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Osbaldwick Lane Recreation Ground | |



How often do you visit a play area:

Nearly every day Nearly every week Maybe once a month Hardly ever

From the list opposite which is the best playground you've ever visited? Tell us why it is so good?

Tell us which play area from the list above do you think would be the best ones to improve on, you can pick up to three!

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

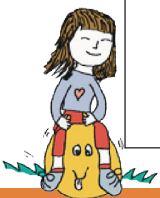
Part 2 - What?

What is your favourite thing to do in a play area?

Do you like thins that make you...

- | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go fast | <input type="checkbox"/> Go high | <input type="checkbox"/> Go through | <input type="checkbox"/> Go over | <input type="checkbox"/> Go round |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go slow | <input type="checkbox"/> Go low | <input type="checkbox"/> Go under | <input type="checkbox"/> Go up | |

If you were in charge of designing the playground are there other things would you think about, such as gardens, grassed areas, places to play ball games, riding your bike, access to it?
(Continue on separate sheets if you like and add photos if you want.)



When you are making your suggestions you might want to consider the The 5 Key Principals for Play. These are what we use to help us think about designing play areas. These will help you make a good report that shows that you have thought about all the important points you need to consider.

The 5 Key Principals for Play

- 1: Are changes needed?
- 2: Is your community involved?
- 3: Can everyone use your play area?
- 4: Does your play area offer good things to do?
- 5: Is it safe?

Now you get to be the designer!

Draw us some pictures or take some photos and attach them to your forms with an explanation of what would make your play area better. We would like to make a big display to show everyone in charge of play areas all your ideas!

Send your feedback to us at:

Shine – Idea's for Play Areas
Tim Waudby
Moor Lane Youth Centre
Wains Road
Dringhouses
York YO24 2TX

Or email: tim.waudby@york.gov.uk

Deadline for entries into the competition is **Friday 2 September 2016!**



References

Cavet, J. and Sloper, P. (2004) 'Participation of disabled children in individual decisions about their lives and in public decisions about service development'. Children and Society 18 (4) 278-290

Watson, D., Feiler, A. and Tarleton, B. (2007) 'I want to choose to'. A resource for teachers and others for including primary school age children with little or no speech in decision making. Bristol: University of Bristol

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Listen To Me



Guidance enabling participation and listening to children and young people



'Children have the right to say what they think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect them and to have their opinion taken into account'

UNICEF

UN Rights of the Child Article 12
www.unicef.org.uk



Photographs and comic strips can be used to share what children like to do with others





Dear Parent, carer and professional

Welcome to the "Listen to Me" series of booklets. We have always enjoyed listening to children and young people and know that most are very keen to be heard. Their opinions are really important to us and have definitely shaped priorities for services in the City of York. Clearly some children and young people require more support to be involved and we know that parents and practitioners are eager to help them do this.

I am therefore delighted to recommend these booklets to you. They include practical and innovative examples of how children can express their views. I want all children and young people in the City of York to know that they are valued and to have every opportunity to achieve their full potential. Being actively listened to is an important part of achieving that aim.

Pete Dwyer, Director, Learning, Culture and Children's Services

Principles of participation

This leaflet is for all adults: parents, carers and professionals who are working with children and young people.

This guidance aims to help you:

- listen to children and young people
- help children and young people to say what they want
- help children and young people to make decisions

This leaflet is designed to draw together good practice to support you in achieving this.

Guiding principles for parents, carers and professionals

- Children and young people's views are as important as everyone else's and should influence the decisions made about them
- Children and young people should be given support to communicate their views in the most effective way preferred by the child. Time and space should be allowed for creativity if this is required
- Children and young people need to understand why their views are being sought and with whom these will be shared
- Children and young people should be aware of all the information being shared about them (unless this could be damaging to their emotional well-being)

Participation is part of every day life for every child.



Meetings

The room matters

- Try to use an informal room setting, although getting people together often means using a school setting
- Creativity in moving furniture can give the room a celebratory feel. Try balloons
- Consider bringing the child into the room before the professionals arrive
- Encourage the child or young person to welcome people. It will help foster a sense of ownership
- Include food

How to organise the meeting

- Meetings can take different forms - be flexible
- If the child does not want to stay for the whole meeting, ensure they know their views will continue to be important after they have left
- Form filling can be done later to summarise discussions held in the meeting
- Give feedback afterwards, especially if the child chooses not to be there



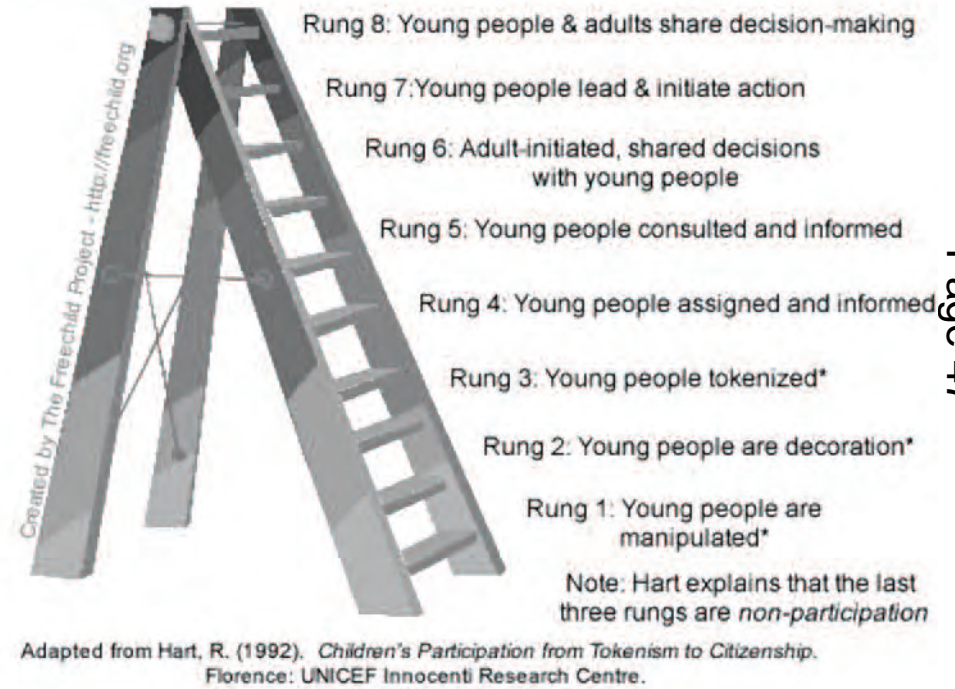


Choosing photographs for a review



Learning to travel independently

Roger Hart's Ladder of Young People's Participation



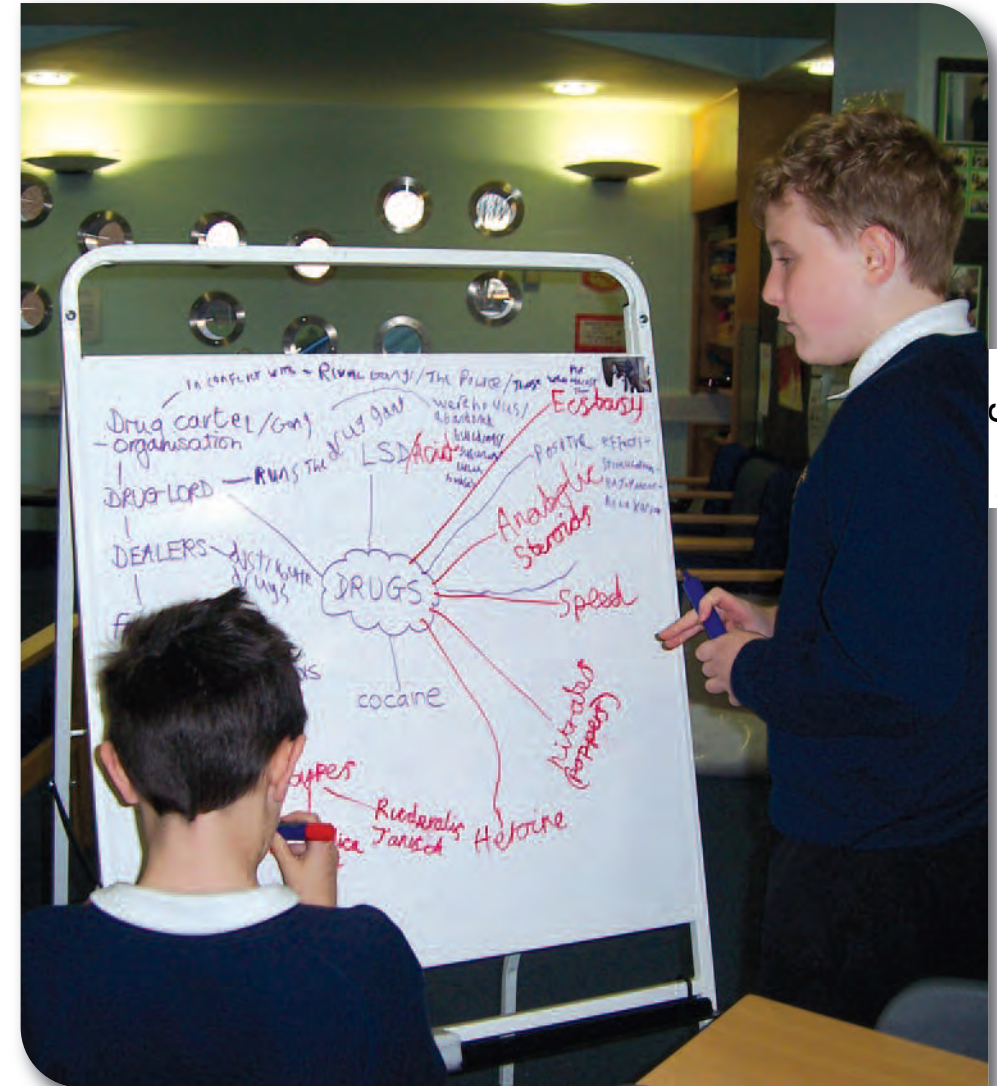
This image was sourced from <http://freechild.org/ladder.htm>

How well do we ensure that ...?

- we ask for the views of children and young people with profound, severe and complex difficulties
- children and young people are able to choose how to present their views and are supported to do this
- we explain to children and young people that we will be able to do some of the things they ask for but may not be able to do everything
- children and young people understand the purpose of gathering their views
- children and young people understand the purpose of any meeting or review

Decision making

Children and young people may want to invite people to attend **their** meetings.



Some ideas to reflect a child's choices

Children and young people could:

- Give a presentation
- Share something made or valued eg model, cake or diary
- Bring a portfolio to include significant achievements eg travels independently to school or can now remain calm while near a dog in the park
- Show a video of their favourite activity
- Display a photo gallery
- Share a school work portfolio

Adults could:

- Bring a record of the child's response to an activity
- Listen to records of conversation, with the child or young person's permission
- Describe a child's response to photographs of their activities

Useful questions for children and young people

What do we like and admire about...?

What is important now for...?

What is important in the future for...?

What is working well...?

What is not working...?

What issues would you like to raise...?

Taking Active Part

Support for Children and Young People Taking Part

Ineffective



Taking Part



Effective

A one-off meeting just before the review

Participation is tokenistic, such as filling in a form just before the meeting

Children and young people feel powerless

Regularly collecting children and young people's views over time

Providing a range of options to enable children and young people to express their views

Enabling children and young people to feel central participants

'Done to'



Taking Part



'Done With'

Adults assume they know what children and young people want

Children and young people do not understand what is happening to them and why

Children and young people feel they are not included in plans

Adults support children and young people to share a picture or representation of themselves

Adults ensure that children and young people understand that their views matter even when they cannot be acted on

Children and young people know that their views are central to planning

Children and young people feel powerless

Children and young people feel central participants



Listen To Me

I know what I want to do

Page 51

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Attach a picture of yourself



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What is this booklet for?

The booklet draws together examples of good practice and aims to encourage adults to be creative in helping children to express their views. What works best for one child, may not be appropriate for another.

The booklet is not designed for children to look at on their own. You may want to attach a picture of your child to the front cover when you share this booklet with them.

Please use the ideas in this booklet and ask the children how they would like to express their views.

**Thanks to Aiming High for Disabled Children
for funding this booklet.**

References

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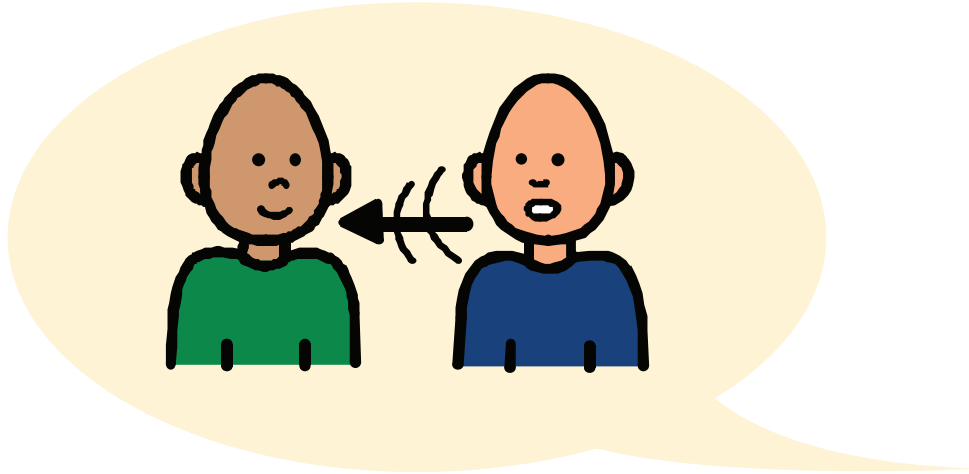
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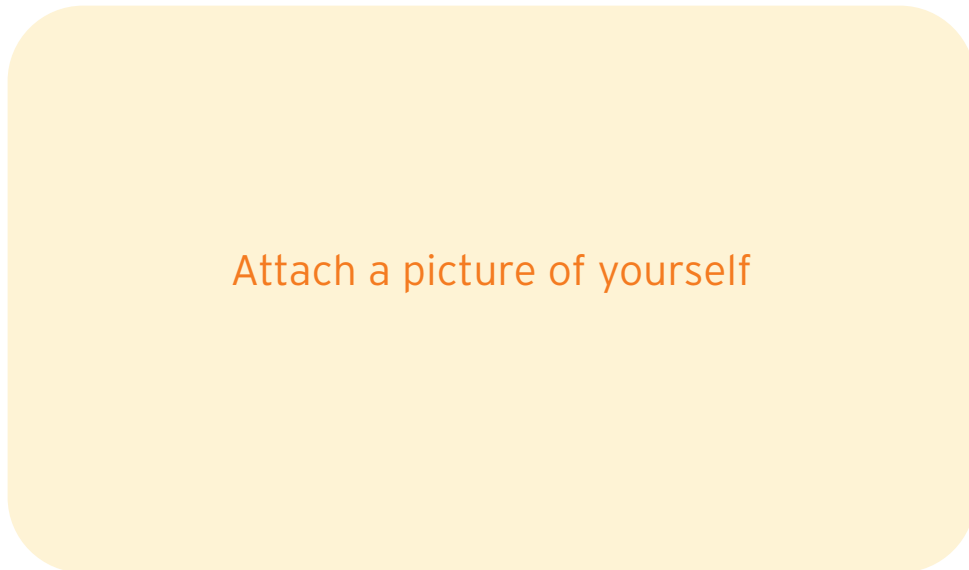
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After the meeting the key person will talk to me about what will happen next...



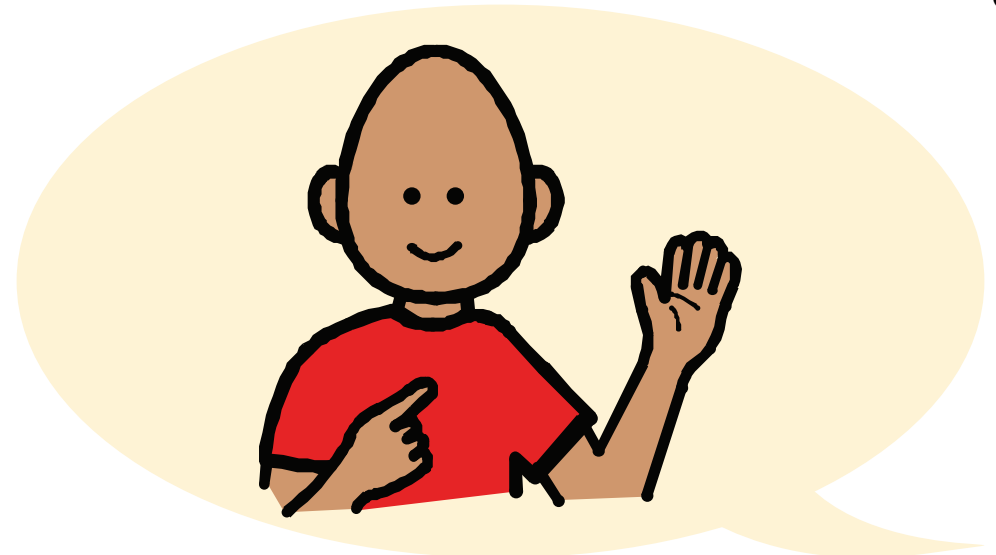
It is all about me



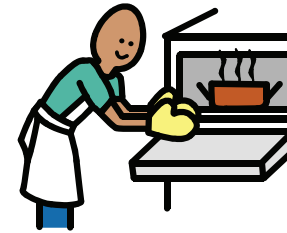
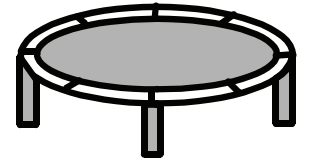
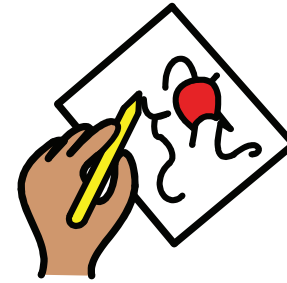
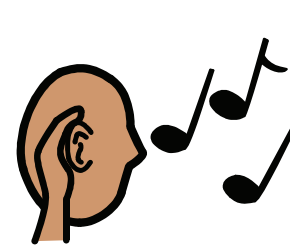
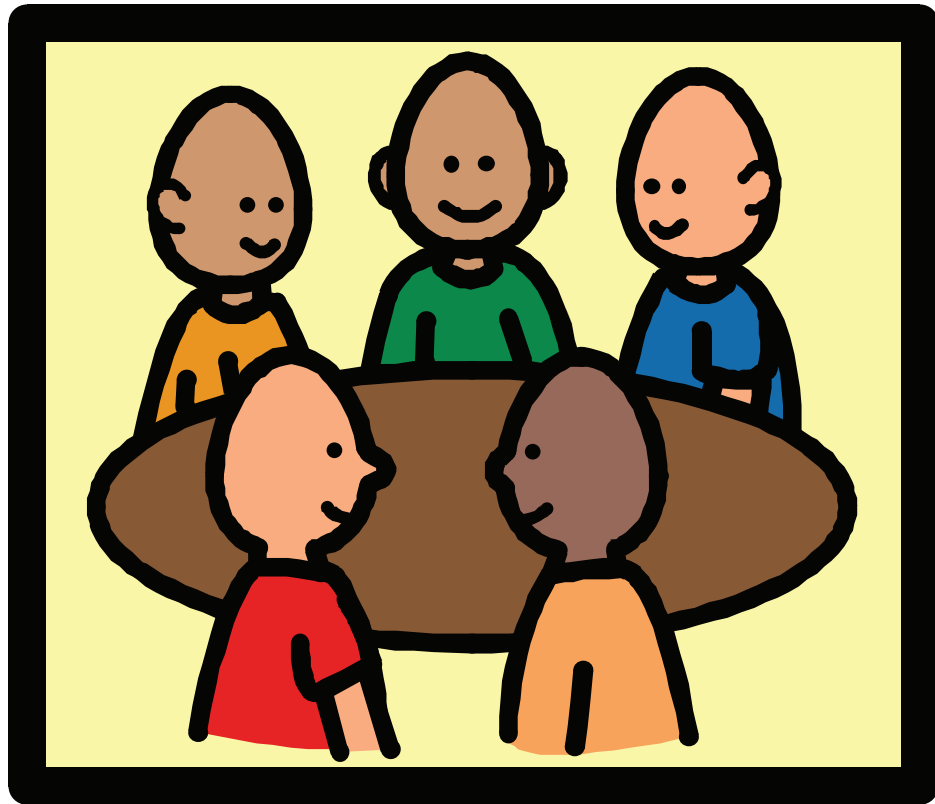
Let's use this booklet



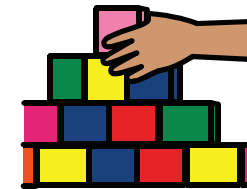
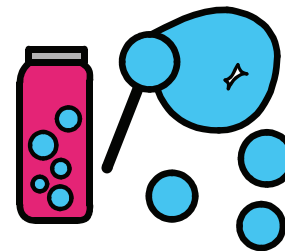
to find out about me...

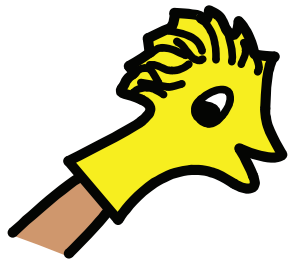
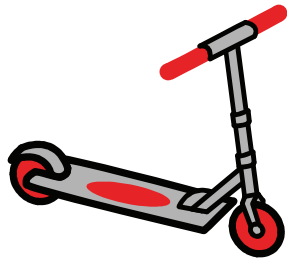
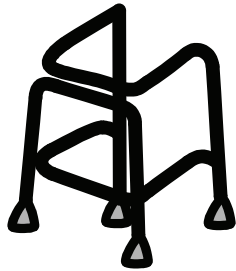


Soon there will be a meeting about me and the things I can do...

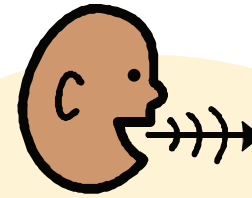


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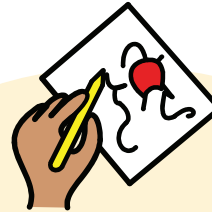




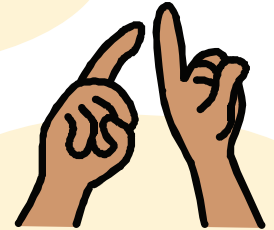
At the meeting I can...



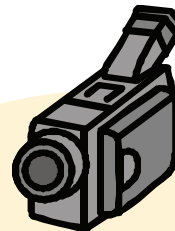
talk



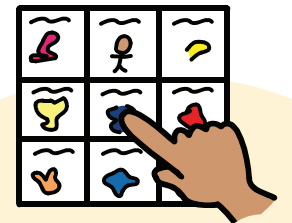
draw



sign



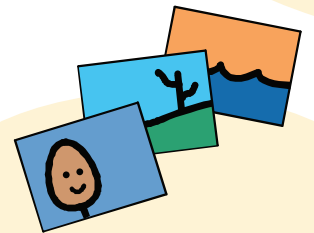
show a film



use symbols

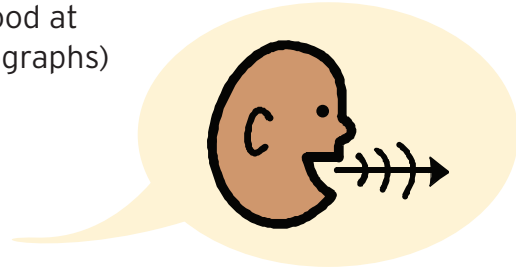


use my talker

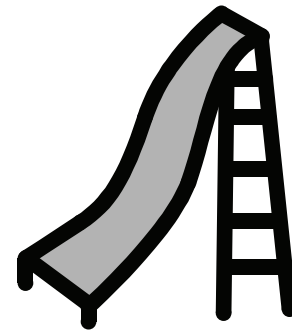
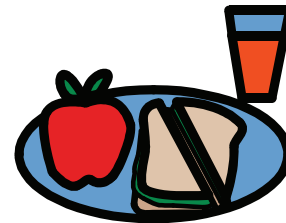
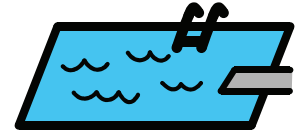


show Pictures

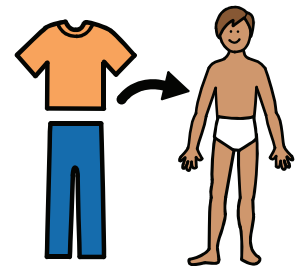
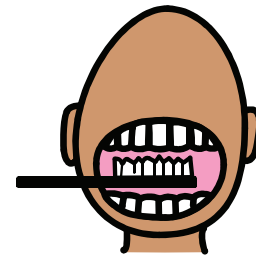
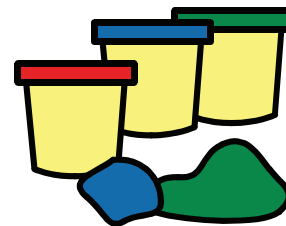
I can tell everyone what I am good at
(Attach pictures/symbols/photographs)



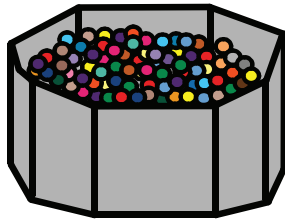
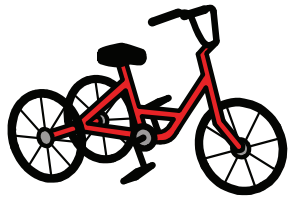
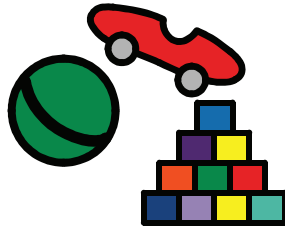
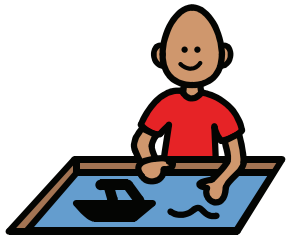
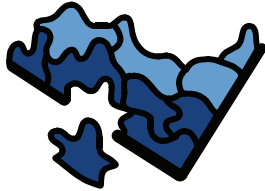
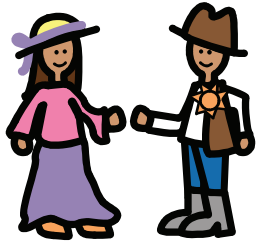
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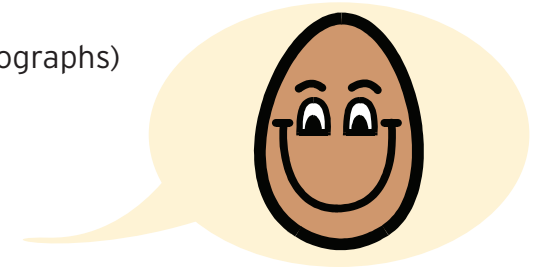
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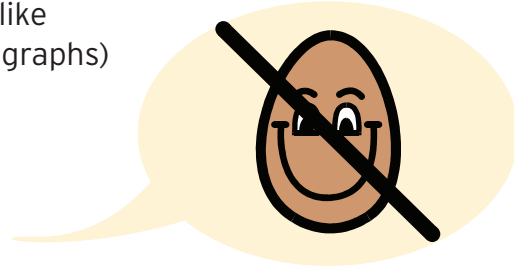
I can use symbols to tell you about me. Here are some examples.



and what I like to do
(Attach pictures/symbols/photographs)



I can tell everyone what I don't like
(Attach pictures/symbols/photographs)



and what I need help with
(Attach pictures/symbols/photographs)



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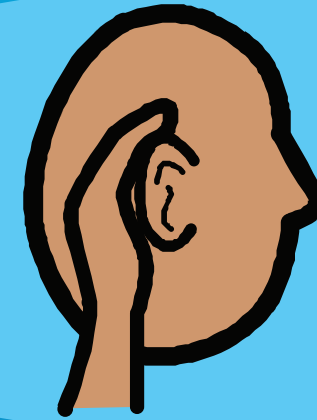
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Listen To Me

I know what I want to do

Page 59

Attach a picture of yourself



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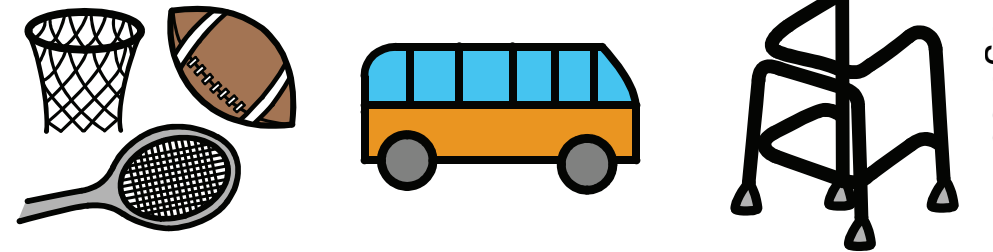
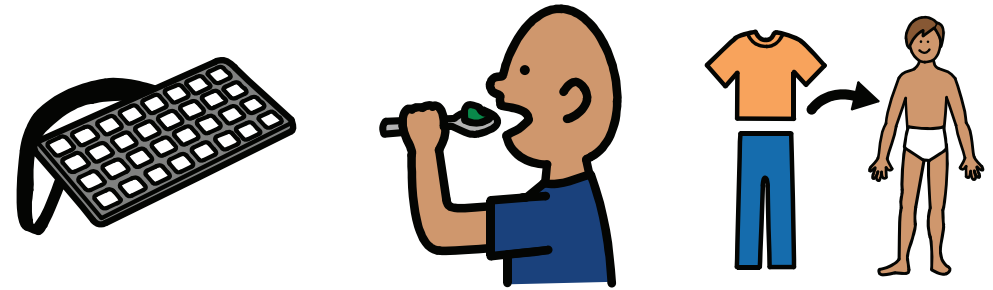
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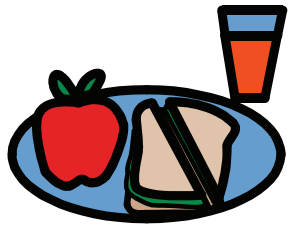
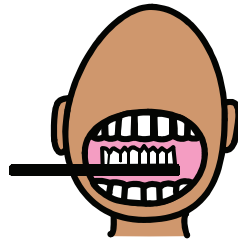
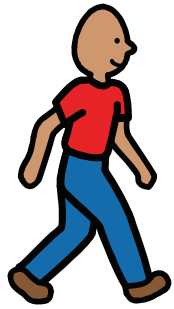
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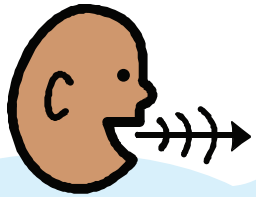


About me

- It's my life - my views are really important
- I want to be able to tell you what I think
- I want to talk about what really matters to me
- I need to know who will be helping me to make plans
- There are lots of different ways I can tell people about me, but I may need some help
- If there is a meeting about me I want people to know what I am thinking even if I am not there

I need to know what will happen next

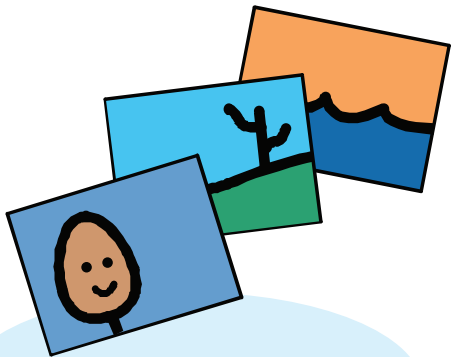
There are lots of ways I can tell people what I want to say....



I can talk about what I like and don't like



I can ask someone to say what I want



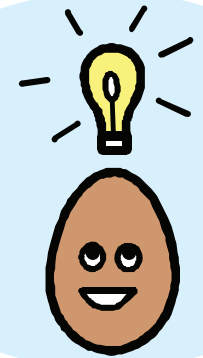
I can show pictures



I can show things I have done

Listen To Me

My ideas matter

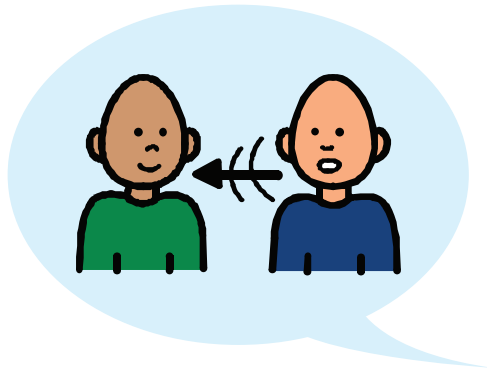


It helps us all to make better plans

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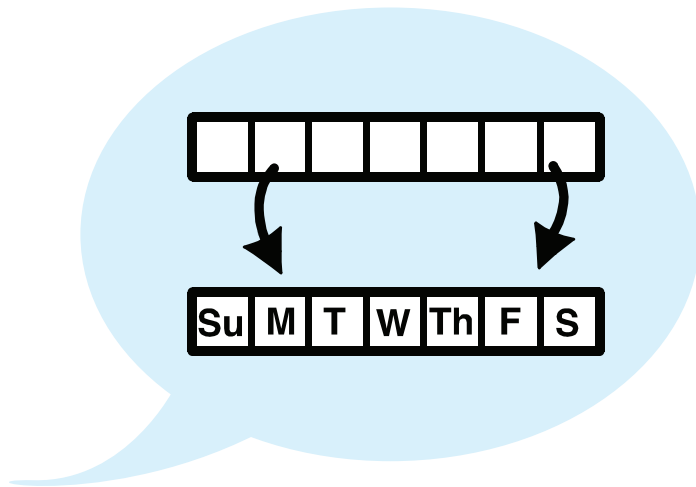
After the meeting

Someone will talk to me about the meeting, especially if I am not there for all of it.



We talked about...

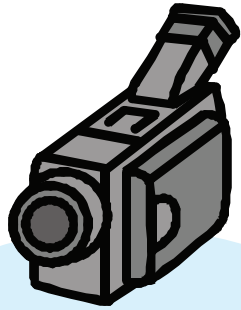
I will hear about what is going to happen next.



We are going to...

Meetings

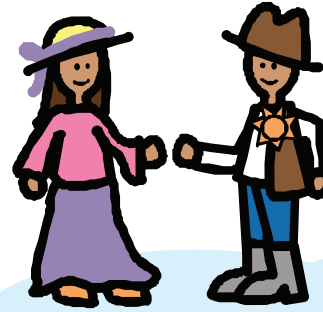
- When there is a meeting about me I can go if I want, maybe for a short time
- I can tell people who I would like to be there
- I will be told who else may be at the meeting
- We will talk about what may happen next



I can make a video



I can make a booklet about me



I can act it



I can show you my school work



I can use symbols



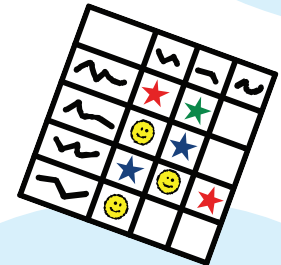
I can sign



I can show you something I've made



I can make a 'photo story' with my pictures



I can show my star chart and tell you all about it

Are you talking
about me?

Listen To Me
I know what I want to do

Page 65

Attach a picture of yourself

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If you would like this information in an accessible
format (for example in large print, on tape or by
email) or another language please telephone:
01904 551550.

This information can be provided in your own language.

我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim
własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جا سکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

☎ 01904 551550



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There are four booklets in the "Listen To Me" series. Please read the guidance booklet first, which explains how parents, carers and professionals can support children and young people to make important decisions about their lives. One example would be to help children prepare for their review meetings.

Booklets 1 - 3 are to be used by adults with children and young people. All three booklets provide the same information, but each is written to suit children and young people at different stages of development. Parents, carers and professionals should choose the most appropriate booklet.

What is this leaflet for?

The booklet draws together examples of good practice and aims to encourage adults to be creative in helping children to express their views. What works best for one child, may not be appropriate for another.

The booklet is not designed for young people to look at on their own.

You may want to attach a picture of your child to the front cover when you share this booklet with them.

Please use the ideas in this booklet and ask the young people how they would like to express their views.

Thanks to Aiming High for Disabled Children
for funding this booklet.

After the meeting

- Someone will talk to me about the meeting, especially if I was not there for all of it
- I will hear about what is going to happen next

References

Cavet, J. and Sloper, P. (2004) *'Participation of disabled children in individual decisions about their lives and in public decisions about service development'*. Children and Society 18 (4) 278-290

Watson, D., Feiler, A. and Tarleton, B. (2007) *'I want to choose to'*. A resource for teachers and others for including primary school age children with little or no speech in decision making. Bristol: University of Bristol

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Wright, K. (2008) *'Multiple and Complex Needs: Researching the views of pupils with multiple and complex needs'*. Support for Learning 23 (1), pp 32-40

Secretary of State Report on progress towards disability equality across Children's Education Sector DCSF.

CONTACT: Jess Haslam, Mill House, North Street, YORK, YO1 6JD
Tel 01904 554302 **Email:** jessica.haslam@york.gov.uk

Meetings

- When there is a meeting about me I can go if I want, maybe for a short time
- I can tell people who I would like to be there
- I will be told who else may be at the meeting
- We will talk about me



Listening to me

- helps people know more about me
- helps us all make better plans

About me

It's my life - my views are really important

I want to be able to tell you what I think

I want to talk about what really matters to me

I need to know who will be helping me to make plans

There are lots of different ways I can tell people about me, but I may need some help

If there is a meeting about me I want people to know what I'm thinking even if I'm not there

I need to know what is happening next

I want to show what I can do well



I can tell people what I want to say

I can say what I like and do not like

I can show pictures and photographs

I can tell someone what I want and ask them to say it for me

I can show my work

I can make a video

I can act it out

I can use symbols

I can make a presentation about me

I can sign



References

'Parent Participation: Improving Services for Disabled Children'.

Produced by Council for Disabled Children. Available from website www.cafamily.org.uk
Tel 020 7608 8700

'The How To Guide on Parent Participation.' Together for Disabled Children. Available from website www.togetherfdc.org.uk and can be downloaded in chapters.



CONTACT: Jess Haslam, Mill House, North Street, YORK, YO1 6JD
Tel: 01904 554302 **Email:** jessica.haslam@york.gov.uk

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CANDI, Children and Inclusion, is the forum for parent/carers of disabled children and those with additional needs.

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Listen To Me

Guidance from parents for parents and carers

Taking an active part in meetings with your child

Written by Jo Whitehead
on behalf of CANDI and
City of York Council





Introduction

This booklet is for parents and carers of children with Special Educational Needs/Disability, SEND, to help you prepare your contribution to your child's review. Parents know their child the best and are experts in living with disability or an impairment. For children with communication difficulties, parents often have the most valuable information to share.

Annual reviews are meetings which take place every year to enable everyone who is involved in the education of a child or young person with SEND to meet and discuss progress and to agree targets for the coming year. The statutory document, 'the statement', is also reviewed and a decision made on whether it should be maintained or amended if necessary.

The York Parent Partnership Service leaflet 'Parent Guide to Annual Reviews' gives more details about assessment and statements. For more information contact 01904 551551



Sometimes meetings may also involve other people from **Children's Social Care services and this is known as a 'Joint Review'**. It is helpful because it means people who work with your child get a good picture of what is happening in their life and can work more closely together.

Usually your child's class teacher, any support staff and other professionals (for example Speech and Language Therapists, Social Workers or Educational Psychologists) will be invited to attend. You can talk to school about who you would like to invite and your child may write the invitations. It is important to know that although people are invited, they may not be able to attend due to their other commitments. Professionals may send a report to school if they are not able to attend. This does not mean your child is a low priority, and they will still provide input into your child's educational review.

You should receive a report at least 2 weeks before the meeting and you can ask for a friend to come with you or for support from the Parent Partnership Officers at City of York Council, who will be pleased to help.

You can talk to school about arranging a room so that it doesn't look so formal and you might like to think about refreshments for people, perhaps some of your child's favourite foods. You could even have balloons, pictures or certificates to make the meeting feel more like a celebration of their achievements.



The Meeting

The most important people at the meeting will be your child and you.

Your child's contribution

Review meetings should have the child or young person at the centre of all the plans.

This booklet is part of a series of five booklets called Listen To Me, which aims to help you listen to your child and assist them to make decisions and speak for themselves.

Your contribution

We have written some ideas to help you prepare for the meeting, think about what you need to say in your contribution and to feel confident to give your views.

It is a good idea to keep a small journal that you can add to all year. There may be a time when your child has done something very special and it can be easy to forget after a time.

Try not to leave thinking about your contribution until the last minute; it is better to write a few sentences at a time over a few weeks.

Your contribution does not have to be a written report. These can sometimes feel a bit formal. You might like to try:

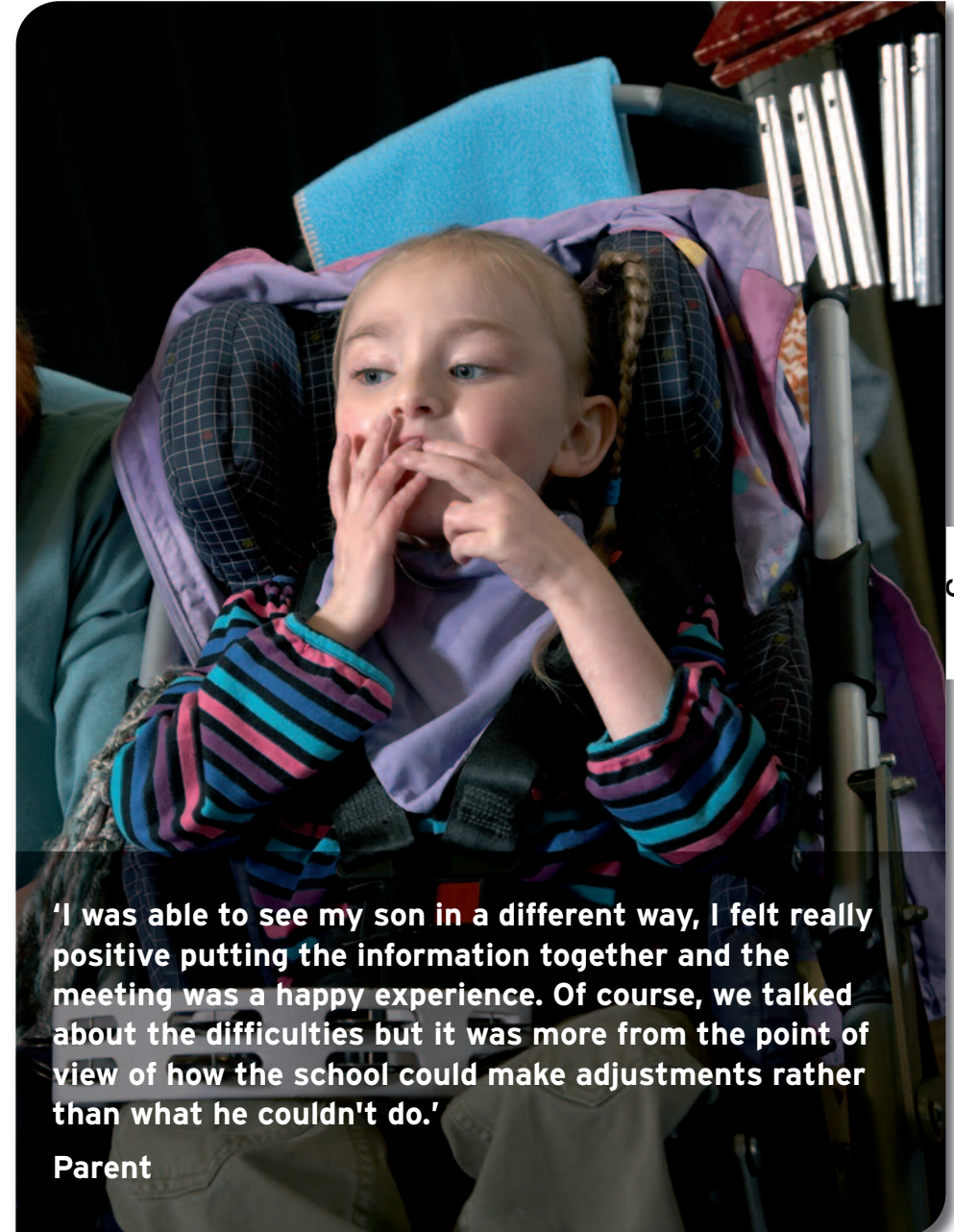
- Taking in a photo album and talking about it
- Providing a journal of events
- Making a photo slideshow or PowerPoint presentation.





Remember that other people don't know about life at home. You can share information about:

- How you think your child has been getting on since the last review
- The things they are good at and what they like to do
- The things they need help with and what they don't like to do
- Your concerns about behaviour or emotional difficulties
- Whether you think the current arrangements at school are working well
- Whether there have been any major changes at home during the past year
- What you would like to see your child or young person working towards this year.



'I was able to see my son in a different way, I felt really positive putting the information together and the meeting was a happy experience. Of course, we talked about the difficulties but it was more from the point of view of how the school could make adjustments rather than what he couldn't do.'

Parent

ENGAGING WITH SPECIFIC GROUPS

DISABILITY



Hearing Impairments

There are many ways in which you can make it easier for people with hearing impairments to engage.

- Don't speak too fast, and speak clearly.
- Make the topic of conversation clear; if lip-reading, knowing the topic of conversation can help greatly in understanding words.
- You may need to speak slightly louder, but be sure not to shout.
- Make sure that your whole face is visible and that you don't turn away when addressing someone with a hearing impairment.
- Pause at the end of each sentence, and repeat yourself if asked to. When using sign interpreters or lip-readers, this can help give them a break.
- You may need to write down things if they are particularly difficult to communicate.
- Maintaining good eye contact is important.

At meetings:

- Provision of a hearing loop at meetings. Many meeting rooms at City of York Council, West Offices have hearing loops available for personal use or installed in the room.
- Using British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters. For meetings longer than 2 hours, you may need 2x interpreters. Remember, the BSL interpreter will need to sit facing the person receiving the interpretation.
- Speech to text reporters.
- Lipspeakers.

Visual Impairments

It is important to prepare if you know you will be engaging with someone who has a visual impairment. There are varying degrees of visual impairment, so the requirements of individuals with visual impairments will vary. There are various things you will need to consider:

- Is the venue easily accessible?
- Is the entrance well lit?
- Will the person need a guide/a member of staff with them at all times?

Visit: www.yor-ok.org.uk

- Will the person have a guide dog? If so, you need to think about the dog's basic needs as well (water, ease of access to outside).
- Ensure all information you wish to communicate is in either audio form, in Braille or larger font size depending on the person.

Mobility

Planning and preparation is vital when engaging with people with mobility needs.

Things you will need to consider:

- Transport to and from the venue.
- Car-parking/drop off points near the entrance of the building.
- Is the venue easily accessible? Are ramps or lifts available?
- Are the doors wide enough for wheelchair access?
- Will the individual have easy access to toilet facilities for disabled people?
- The comfort of the individual – seating arrangements etc.
- Will all planned exercises and activities be inclusive?
- The frequency of comfort breaks.
- They may have a Personal Assistant or carer with them.



Learning Difficulties

Things to consider:

- People with learning disabilities will often be accompanied by a carer, such as a family member or support worker. It is very important to make them both aware that during a consultation activity, it is the views and opinions of the disabled person that you would like.
- People with learning difficulties may have a range of disabilities.
- Make sure you address the disabled person when communicating, and not the support worker.
- Speak clearly and prepare to be interrupted, or to be asked to go over things again.
- Have your information available in Easy Read eg use large print, pictures or symbols.
- Offer assistance where needed and always try to ensure the disabled person understands the consultation activity.

Mental Illness

Things to consider:

- It may not be obvious that someone has a mental health issue, and as mental health issues are often stigmatised, people may not want to share this information.
- Mental health needs are variable, so try as best as possible to accommodate specific needs, e.g. ask the person what makes them feel comfortable.
- You can get advice from York MIND on consulting with people with mental health issues.

You can ask people on the invitation if they have any special requirements or support to attend your consultation or event. However it is essential to ensure that the venue is accessible, that there is a hearing loop and PA installed and that information is clear and easy to read. It may be helpful to establish some ground rules at the start of the event so everyone feels that their views will be respected.

Visit: www.yor-ok.org.uk

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Active Participation

Description	An active way of involving children that involves physical activities to select given options. A 'run around' style system that encourages children to vote with their feet, by moving their chosen answer.
Age Range	3+
Time	10-15 minutes
Cost	Production of option card/pictures
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotes physical activity - Can be adapted to cater for varying abilities, skills and co-ordination levels. Participants can run, skip, hop, stride etc the list is endless - Fast response - Good for groups with a low attention span and high energy levels - An inside or outside activity - Group activity – all can be involved at once
Drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nonverbal – limited feedback from children uses closed questions therefore don't gain opinions - Children may just chose an option because their friend has, may not give a true response - Can be tiring for the children if too active - Need to think about how you will capture the results as they happen quickly.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need space for running around - This method is a great way to get children actively involved and gain limited feedback quickly
Example	Used at the end of session to gage enjoyment levels. By placing 3 different coloured mats on the floor in a variety of positions in the room. Different colours can suggest different answers e.g. Red-Yes, Blue-No, Green –Not Sure. Children are then asked closed questions and move to the mat that shows their answer. Need to carefully plan questions to ensure that children are able to respond with Yes or No answers to maximise active involvement.
Contacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sport and Active Leisure Team - 553366 - Play Team - 554699

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Circle Time

Description	A structured way of encouraging discussion in groups. Children discuss an issue or problem whilst sitting round in a circle, often at floor level. There is often a toy or item that is passed round. If you are the person holding the toy you are allowed to speak. The toy is then passed to another person in turn allowing them the opportunity to speak if they wish.
Age Range	3-18
Time	30-45 minutes depending on the size and age of the group
Cost	Just time if met in current provision
Benefits	Passing a toy around means that all those that want to can have a say It prevents one person domination the discussion Holding a toy means that children have something to focus on while they are speaking
Drawbacks	Some children may feel intimidated at first about speaking to the group and may need time to get used to the idea Children may choose not to reveal their actual thoughts You may need a facilitator to ensure one person does not speak for lengthy periods
Other	This method is often used in primary schools, particularly with infant aged children to encourage them to gain confidence to speak in groups.
Example	At primary school, children discussed issues around different feelings. This included how they would feel if they were starting somewhere new because a few new children were starting the class.

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Collages and Art Work

Description	The potential for children to express their views through artwork is unlimited. At a simple level children can represent their feelings through creating pictures of facial expressions. They could also produce pictures of things they like or dislike or produce artwork based on their ideal environment to live. Children could work in groups or individually. Children and young people can be involved in producing publicity/ information for services, designing colour schemes or layout of facilities.
Age Range	2-18
Time	Ranging from a short session of 20 minutes to a longer project over a number of weeks.
Cost	Cost of materials used and time, possible cost of professional artist to support the process.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A range of art mediums can be used - Children have free expression on what they draw or make - The children do not have to have a finished product - The time it takes to produce the art can be used to talk about their opinions
Drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The meaning behind the artwork could be misinterpreted - You need to think carefully about how you are going to interpret and present the results. - This process will not appeal to all groups.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paint is always a popular tool. Let the children experiment with different effects using different kinds of brushes or other items to apply the paint - Use vegetables or foam to cut shapes for printing - Create pictures using sand and salt for different effects - College materials, sections of old clothes, sequins, pictures from magazines, junk materials, cardboard boxes and containers from household items can be used for different effects - Let children take photographs of features from their local area. Print the images onto paper. Children can illustrate ways to improve the environment. - Take photos of different facial expressions e.g. happy, angry, excited and disappointed. Print the images onto acetates. Children can create a collage of pictures or words of what makes them feel those emotions. Stick the acetate with the child's image over the top – the pictures underneath can be seen through the acetate. The children can decorate a frame. - Could the work be put on display for others to see? - Some children may wish to discuss what their work is about
Example	A group of young people worked with a professional design company to produce a leaflet informing other young people about a new strategy. The young people considered design. Colour, text styles, format as well as the content of the leaflet.

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Diary Room

Description	Just like 'Big Brothers' Diary Room, a space can be designed that allows children to be asked questions whilst their responses are filmed. Questions can be put onto a laptop for the children to click through, or you can have a question master.
Age Range	5+
Time	Will depend on how many questions you have and how many children you ask the questions.
Cost	Hire or purchase of equipment e.g. laptop, video camera etc.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is carried out in a private space and encourages free speech - Results are instant - Today concept with children and Young People - You can ask open questions - The camera also captures body language when responding to questions - Good one to one method
Drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can be expensive to hire/purchase equipment - Limited responses as it works on a one to one basis - Can be complicated to record responses/outcomes - Not everyone likes to be filmed - Consents need to be obtained from parents/carers before filming to ensure that they are aware of how the film is going to be used. - Has limitations for those who are confident, articulate or aren't able to respond verbally.
Examples	National Play Day 2006 used this method to record children and young peoples views contributing to the development of York's Children and Young People's Plan
Contacts	Carol Pugh 01904 552355.

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Dragons Den/ Question time

Description	A panel situation which sees children and young people able to challenge and ask questions or consider options of real decision makers
Age Range	10+
Time	1-11/2 hours- plus preparation time with the panel, which could be done over a number of sessions
Cost	N/A
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Builds the skills and experience of young people involved - Allows immediate answers from the decision makers to young person
Drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requires a lot of preparation from the panel of young people including writing and research questions aswell as gaining skills and confidence - Decision makers don't always know how to respond at an appropriate level to children and young people and therefore will require some facilitation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limits number of young people involved - You need to consider how you will capture responses and ensure they are used to create change. Can decision makers be asked to produce a written response after the event?
Other	Watch the TV programme to gain an understanding or the concept of this idea
Example	Children and young people have been involved in question time events at the Guildhall where they ask prepared questions of a range of officers and other decision makers in the City.

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Graffiti Wall

Description	A wall where children can record their thoughts on a topic or their provision. Boundaries need to be decided for the wall: what can/cannot be written and the time period they have to write/draw their comments. The children are then left to comment on the topic if they wish to do so. Ideas and themes will develop, especially if left for a week or more, and children may comment on and add to each other's ideas. The ideas can then be recorded and grouped for further discussion.
Age Range	4-18
Time	Agreed by the children and the facilitator More ideas will be created the longer the wall is left
Cost	Cost of materials and time
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Other than the basic rules, the facilitator does not influence the process - Children can write whatever they wish within the agreed boundaries, e.g. no offensive language or comments to individuals or communities. - Children can add comments to others to spark off new ideas - Can be anonymous so children may be more willing to comment openly and honestly
Drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is no guarantee that all voices will be heard, particularly if dominated by individuals or small groups - Pictures can be drawn instead of writing but may need explaining - Reviews may be difficult if the subject is about people's thoughts. They may want to remain anonymous - If anonymous it may be difficult to understand why a comment was written
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make a mock version of a wall from different material, e.g. a roll of wallpaper or an old bed sheet. Draw or paint comments and ideas onto this. - Stick cardboard boxes together to create a 3D effect
Example	Year 6 children at Woodhouse West School had a mock graffiti board in their class for the afternoon to record their thoughts on how the 'Kids Stuff' page of the Sheffield Children's First Newspaper could be improved

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IT and Texting

Description	A website or texting service can be used to gain feedback from Children and Young People
Age Range	Those who have access
Time	N/A
Cost	Setting up a website or texting service can be costly therefore it may be a good idea to look at sites or services that can do this on your behalf. There will also be a cost to those logging on or texting their responses. You may need to publicise the survey in order to get people to respond.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responses can be anonymous - Reach out to a large audience - Today's concept for young people
Drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Texting limited – one question – one answer, plus the amount of detail you can give - Cost implication for young people - Excludes those who don't have access to a computer or mobile phone - No softer information relation to the person who has responded, age, gender etc. One respondent/ group could respond many times. - Users of these types of services require a level of knowledge to be able to use them.
Example	The Family Information Service currently uses a texting service which allows another option for people to find out more about the services that they provide.
Contacts	FIS – YorOK website and texting service Yorsay - 554440 CVS – 621133

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Mapping What is Important

Description	Large sheets of paper for the children to map their most important areas. The activity can be done individually or in larger groups. Practitioners can have pictures of areas already for children to stick on their map and the level of adult intervention can vary depending on the theme of consultation.
Age Range	3+
Time	Can be done for one activity or over a longer period of time if there is enough enthusiasm.
Cost	Cost of paper, pens, paint, photographs.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Get a picture of things that are most important to the children - Children can work as a team - Can give children a sense of history as they look back on old maps to see what has changed for them during their time at school/nursery - Encourages the children to look at their local community, area - Links to making a positive contribution, knowledge and understanding of the world and a skilful communicator
Drawbacks	Can take a long time and can be difficult to draw conclusions
Other Info	Could do as a long term project starting with looking at areas within the nursery, local community etc and then take photos, draw pictures and discuss as a group before starting to make the maps.

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Observation

Description	Much can be learnt and interpreted as children and young people play and participate in activity. Responses to situations, challenges and everyday activity can provide information.
Age Range	0+
Time	Build in observational time when planning
Cost	May need additional staff to supervise as well as observe and record.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See first how child/young person responds to situations - Play is a none threatening environment - Can provide information relating to individuals or how interaction takes place in a group situation - Can interject to clarify with those participating - Good for groups/individuals who have limited communication skills - Provides real feedback about how children/ young people use services and facilities
Drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will depend on how the individual is feeling or responding on a particular occasion, therefore need to observe over a period of time - Need to think about recording your findings against what you want to find out in the first place - You may need to check your interpretation of observation back with children and young people
Contacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Early Years and Extended Schools Service – Development Team – 554592 - Play Team - 554699
Example	In developing service provision at the new children's centres staff observed which activities young children choose, and also which foods they ate, this information has been fed in to the programme, e.g. there is always a choice of 2 healthy drinks available as they noticed that children responded well to being able to choose.

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Parachute games

Description	A large circle of material, often in bright colours, with reinforced handholds. The parachute can be used for lots of different activities, encourages both competitive and non competitive play, team building and reinforcing sharing and taking turns. Games can also be used to get responses to questions and to find out information from children in a relaxed, informal setting.
Age Range	3+
Time	20 min+ (or as long as there is enthusiasm!)
Cost	The cost of the parachute, then just time
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are lots of different games – children can make up their own versions - Children learn team building skills - Children learn to take turns - Can be used indoors and outdoors - Available in different sizes depending on the size of your group
Drawbacks	You will need a large, flat area of land
Other	<p>Parachute games are suitable for all children and can be adapted to their age and abilities</p> <p>It takes a lot of teamwork and a joint effort to get the parachute moving</p> <p>Try moving the parachute in waves, creating a mushroom shape in the air or keep a ball bouncing in the middle of it</p> <p>For more ideas on games visit:</p> <p>http://home.san.rr.com/rstuff/games/parachute.html</p> <p>http://www.teachingideas.co.uk/pe/parachute/contents.html</p> <p>http://www.funandgames.org/parachute_games.html</p>
Example	This is a popular game at Phillimore Activities Club. The group raises the parachute high in the air to form a mushroom shape. A statement such as 'everyone with blue eyes' is shouted out and the children that it applies to have to swap places underneath the parachute. You can find out information about the group and their likes and dislikes in this way by asking questions such as 'Who enjoyed making masks?'

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Photography with still or video cameras

Description	Children and young people can use cameras, digital cameras or video cameras by themselves or in groups. They can be used to identify and illustrate things that are important to them. You can work with a group of children and young people as a film crew where they record the views/ experiences of their peers or community. They may wish to highlight particular areas of concern, for example within their home environment.
Age Range	3+
Time	30 minutes to 1.5 hours or a longer term project over a number of weeks
Cost	Cost of hiring or purchasing equipment Note: When purchasing disposable cameras, it is cheaper to buy those with processing included in the price. Cost of a professional photographer/ film maker. You may also think about how you will present the finished product and cost in publication or editing time and costs.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children can decide what to record and why - You can produce an accessible and powerful message from children and young people - Polaroid and digital cameras give an instant image - Writing and drawing skills are not needed - Children can express opinions freely on video (as long as it is not offensive to individuals or communities) - Digital cameras are cheap to run once you have bought them and younger children may find the big screen easier to use - Detail of images can be extracted and enlarged from a digital camera
Drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can be expensive if using one camera per child: limit the number of photos or use one camera between a group - Time to develop films can prevent discussion about images recorded - Video footage only shows one side of an argument - People may play up to the camera/video - Some people do not like being recorded <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be prepared for a few 'rabbit ears' or hand gesture pictures - If using film, any music you use will need copyright clearance.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The context surrounding the photo needs to be discussed to remember why it was taken - Books could be made from the images taken to record the children's thoughts and opinions - Consent needs to be obtained from parents and children to ensure they are aware of how the photos and videos will be used.
Example	Gleadless Valley Streetkids were given a disposable camera to film their home environment. This was then collated into a document that was presented to councillors and other officials in a bid to improve the poor condition of their play areas
Contact	Carol Pugh 01904 552355.

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Planning for Real ®

Description	Planning for Real ® is a whole process of community consultation, which looks to involve the whole community to formulate an action plan that takes forward the decisions made. The concept focuses on a 2D model of a building, community area or neighbourhood. An eagle eye view provides a basis for participants to discuss, explore ideas, and explore issues
Age Range	7+
Time	This is a great project based method which can start from making the model (it can be a map or they can work with sand/ playdough/ clay to produce one), through to implementing and creating the action plan.
Cost	Visits into the community for research, and model making materials
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very visual - Can allow complex discussion including consequence based options - Hands on, everyone can be involved regardless of age/ability - Explore real situations - Can make it budget related by giving people 'cash' to spend on options - Can put a sense of realism on the project – what will work against, what won't. - Provides a focus for discussion in a none threatening way - Can promote multiple solutions
Drawbacks	Whole process can be time consuming
Other	For more information about this concept visit www.nif.co.uk/planningforreal

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Puppets and Masks

Description	Children can use puppets to initiate conversation or re-enact situations that have happened. Masks can be used in the same way. They can give the child a sense of security and confidence when speaking.
Age Range	2-18
Time	30 minutes +
Cost	About £6 if bought in a shop Puppets could also be made from simple materials
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some children find it easier to talk to something they do not perceive as 'real': it helps some children express views if it is 'not really them talking' - Puppets and masks could be used to explore feelings
Drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some children might find it embarrassing to talk to a puppet - Some children may choose to discuss sensitive or confidential information – be prepared!
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Masks can be decorated with any materials. Paint, sticky shapes, glitter and sequins work particularly well. Masks can be cut to cover the whole face or part of the face - Puppets can be made from a variety of materials. You could use old socks, paper maché, paper plates glued onto lolly sticks or wooden spoons
Example	The puppets could be used to encourage the children to think about specific issues important to the children. For example, the puppet could represent a new child at the provision and the children could discuss how they would look after it. The puppet could represent a child who does not understand rules to involves children in thinking about problem resolution. The puppet could also be used as an advice tool. The children could ask the puppet advice on things they were unsure of.

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Smiley Faces

Description	Three large sheets of paper one with smiley, blank and miserable faces. Children have stickers to put on the face they feel summarises their feelings about any subject discussed.
Age Range	2+
Time	20 minutes
Cost	Cost of paper and stickers
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quick feedback on subjects - Children can work as a team or individually - Encourages the children to spend some time reflecting on what they like and dislike - Links to making a positive contribution, maths, personal social and emotional development and a skilful communicator
Drawbacks	Children may put stickers on all faces and so may not give valid results
Other info	Can vary the activity depending on the age of children. Children can draw their own happy/sad faces and have narrative to explain why. Could have three large jars/containers what children could decorate each one as happy, sad or indifferent then all the children are given a ball and the topic is discussed and they place their ball in the container which mirrors their feelings.

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Story Telling

Description	A creative approach to explore issue based topics. Stories can be used to describe personal experience, they can be autobiographical or fictional. Children may resolve the issue by exploring the ending to stories by producing a number of optional endings, which in turn can create discussion. Can be done in verbal or written format
Age Range	5+
Time	Can be done for one activity or over a period of time.
Cost	Paper, pens and pencils, or recorder. May also want to purchase/loan props or resources as a visual aid to work through the process. Could work with a professional writer to support the process.
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uses lots of skills –writing, planning, drawing - Produces a reference point to revisit - Can be focused to one child or as a group activity - There's options to how a story can start, develop and end, as well as the characters involved - Can produce very powerful messages about children and young people's experiences of services
Drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have to carefully handle sensitive topics, as it may evoke personal experiences - Children have different ability levels in relation to writing – may wish to consider using picture stories, puppets or figures as an alternative. - You need to consider issues around maintaining confidentiality/ anonymity. - You need to consider how you will process and use what you find.
Other Information	You can make story telling into a larger project combining it with other things such as video and photography as well as visual arts, drama and dance.
Contacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Library Service - 554282 - Community Artists
Example	A group of young people who have used mental health services worked alongside a professional writer, they told their stories of using services and then worked to combine these into a script which formed the basis for a short film. The film was used at conferences and in service planning to put forward young people views about services.

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Post – it notes

Description	Children are encouraged to think about their opinions in response to questions or ideas. Place questions around the room on large sheets of paper. Children can write an answer on post-it notes and stick it to the appropriate question. These can then be mapped onto a wall and moved around into related topics and themes. They can then be prioritised later, creating the order for discussion.
Age Range	4+
Time	Leave for the length of the session or over a few sessions if possible to allow children to reflect and comment.
Cost	Pens, paper and post-it notes
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All the children can be involved - Children can draw pictures as well as write their answers - Children can verbalise answers whilst another person writes them down - All ideas are treated equally before they are prioritised - Putting them into themes shows the links between related ideas and could spark off new ones
Drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good relationships and skilful workers are needed to encourage involvement and help overcome possible confidence problems with writing and drawing - Children should be fully informed of any limitations to the project (e.g. Money, time, resources) to avoid raising children's expectations
Other	This is a great activity to spark off others. It could lead to the outline of an agenda at a formal meeting, create ideas for a questionnaire or prioritise options for planning
Example	The Children's Voices Event used post it notes and questions written on sheets of flip-chart paper to find out what the children thought about their local areas and play schemes. The posters were stuck up around the room for the length of the session and post-it notes and pens left by each poster for the children to comment at any time during the day.

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Remember when...

Wasn't it fun when you played out?



playing with friends

making your own fun



having adventures

climbing trees



building dens

freedom to explore



finding special places

getting dirty

Do your children have the same freedoms?

Playing out: busting some myths

It's natural to worry about children's safety when they play out, but some worries are not backed up by the facts...

Stranger danger is at an all time high.

✗ myth

Child abductions in the UK have not increased for the last 30 years (1). Media headlines about the number of "stranger danger" cases make us think they are more common than they really are. (1) NSPCC figures.

✓ fact

Roads too dangerous to let children out on their own.

myth ✗

Decrease in child road injuries in Britain (1). In 1976 there were 668 fatalities amongst children aged 0-15. By 2008 this had reduced to 124. (2)

(1) NSPCC figures.
(2) Department of transport figures.

✓ fact

If we don't let our children out to play, we run a real risk of harming their health and happiness.

Helping children to play out

If a child is lost or in trouble, most adults will help - talk to your child about this.



Learn road safety - walk around local roads with your children, point out danger spots and help them choose safe routes.



When your children are old enough to go out without you, give them time and space limits, and ask them to phone if they get delayed.



Make sure your children know how to use public transport.



Play out with your children in all weathers. Playing out isn't just for fine days.



Make sure your children know how to contact you in an emergency.



Get to know other parents, so that you can keep an eye on one another's children.



Look out for safe and fun places in your neighbourhood where your children can play.



Make sure your children can ride a bike safely - look out for 'bikeability'.



Make sure your children learn how to swim.



For further information phone:
01904 553426



For further information visit:
www.yor-ok.org.uk/play



For further information phone:
01904 553426

All children need play!

Children play because it's fun, but play is good for them too. Play, especially outdoors, helps children to:



build relationships

learn about the world

learn respect for others

feel happy and confident

become independent



become fit and agile

try out new skills

solve problems



learn how to cope with risks

test their abilities



“Play is what I do when everyone has stopped telling me what to do.”

Helping your children to play out

The City of York Council have invested in many parks and open spaces to develop more play areas for children.



York also offers many informal play spaces, all provide ideal environments for children to engage in play.

The City of York Council Play Team provide a range of projects and initiatives that deliver and promote quality play opportunities and experiences.

This information can be provided in your own language.

我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

☎ 01904 551 550

If you would like this information in an accessible format (i.e. large print, on tape or e-mail) then call 01904 551 550.



This leaflet was funded by the Revenue grant of the Playbuilder Initiative.

Playing Out: A Guide for Parents



For further information phone:
01904 553426



For further information visit:
www.yor-ok.org.uk/play

Children who miss out on outdoor play, are missing out on a big part of their childhood!