

Involving Children and Young People (CYP) with SEN and Disabilities in PEP meetings

Participation and the involvement of children and young people during PEP meetings is essential. For those CYP with SEN and/or disabilities, it is important that access and communication arrangements have been thought through and planned in advance.

Good Practice (Taken from York and Humberside SEN Partnership)

Six Key Principles	
CYP should understand that their VIEWS are as important as everyone else's views, in whatever way these views are expressed.	<i>Schools and settings should be proactive in creating an ethos in which children know that their views will be routinely sought, listened to and respected. Involvement of CYP should take account of ability and methods for communication.</i>
CYP should understand the PURPOSE and process of the meeting/review in which they are asked to be involved.	<i>During the preparation and planning process CYP should be given an understanding of how the review will work and how decisions will be made.</i>
CYP are given genuine OPTIONS about how to communicate their views.	<i>A process of preparation and planning is essential to ensure the views of all CYP are sought in a manner appropriate of communication used by each child. E.g. symbols, role-play, pictures, signing, art-work, questionnaire, options boards</i>
The agenda and the manner in which the meeting is run should be CHILD CENTRED.	<i>CYP's views should not be presented as an afterthought, when a decision has already been made. If papers are circulated before the meeting then the views of the CYP need to be shared at the same time. CYP should have access to papers in an appropriate format.</i>
CYP should be given a realistic understanding of the REMIT of the meeting/review and what decisions their views can change or have impact on.	<i>For those CYP that will be able to understand the remit of the meeting, the process should have been explained to them with the support of materials – booklets, videos, photographs, symbols</i>
CYP should be given information about the OUTCOME of any meeting/review in a manner that is meaningful to them.	<i>Feedback may be in the form of having a child-friendly plan using formats other than language that are appropriate to them. For some CYP the way in which they will understand the decisions made at the meeting will be by experiencing the changes.</i>

Child-Centred Approaches

- CYP can be involved in the preparation for the review, such as deciding the time of day that they would prefer or responsible for sending out the invites – *‘You are invited to attend my PEP meeting on.....’*
- The review should be welcoming for the CYP. The venue and time are arranged to fit the CYP’s needs. Timing and length of the meeting should be negotiated with the CYP.
- The adults need to acknowledge that the meeting is the CYP’s meeting.
- Language should be simple and clear, without being patronising.
- Person Centred Thinking Tools (originating from Helen Sanderson) - adapt them to the communicative levels of the pupil. This includes photographs, pictures and symbols.
- At reviews the pupils should be supported by members of staff who know them well to enable them to share their views confidently.
- School-based information books such as ‘All About Me’ often involve the children expressing their views, which can be used in the meetings.

Further information

Person-centred reviews: <http://www.helensandersonassociates.co.uk/person-centred-practice/person-centred-reviews/>