



Involving Young People in the Recruitment Process

Practical
Tips for Staff

Thriving children, fulfilling their dreams.

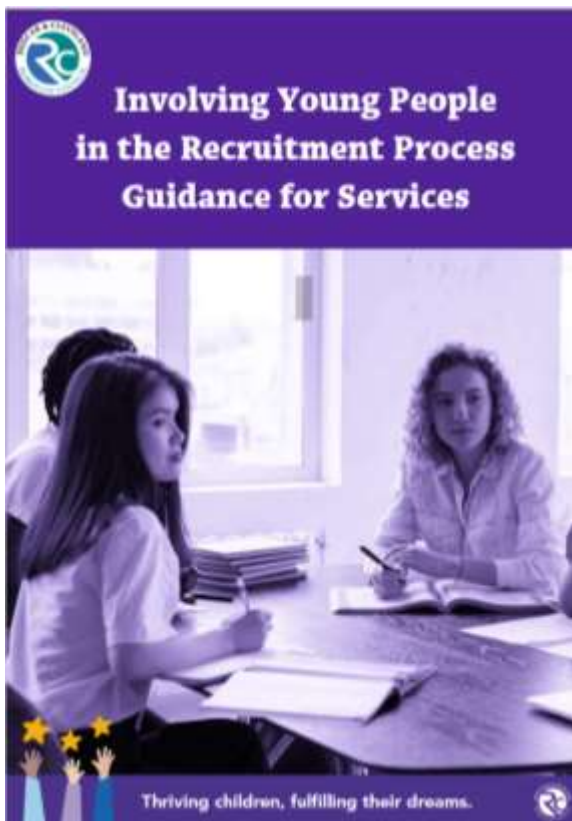


Involving Children and Young People in Recruitment

Activity: Practical Tips for Staff

This document outlines some top tips and ideas for facilitating young people’s involvement in the staff recruitment process through Young People’s Interview Panels and is intended for staff members who will support young people to be involved both before and on the day of candidate interviews.

More information on our service standards and expectations around involving young people in this process, including information about safeguarding, rewards, consent and risk assessments, is included in the ‘Involving Young People in the Recruitment Process Guidance’ document.



Before the interview

PREPARE

Time planned for before the interview (one preparation session minimum) should aim to make sure that **young people know how to do what they are being asked to do** and that they know the **reason they are being asked to do it**.

The job description for the role this should be made available to young people, explained and discussed in preparation for the interview. **Young people should have the opportunity to talk about the skills, knowledge and experience expected of the candidate** and how they will know if an interviewee ticks these boxes.

Young people should come up with a selection of questions they would like to ask candidates. They might be general questions such as “How will you make sure young people’s opinions and concerns are listened to?” or very specific to the group of children they represent (for example, specific to the experiences of children with SEND or children who are in care). Record the questions for young people to refer to on the day (using the Young People’s Panel Question Template and Score Sheet) and encourage young people to think about what they think a good answer would be.

SET EXPECTATIONS

Establish ground rules with all young people at the beginning about what is expected of them. This will include listening to the other young people’s opinions even if they don’t agree.

Set expectations about the entire process, the part the young people will play and the outcome. This includes trying to **make decision-making structures transparent** so young people know who is making what decision. It’s likely their opinion about candidates will not be the only thing the service need to consider before making a final decision. It’s useful to remind the young people that their opinion is very important, but it is only part of the decision-making process.

Explain confidentiality and ask them not to discuss any information outside of the recruitment process.

BREAK THE ICE

As with any group, make sure young people are introduced to each other and that there’s an opportunity for young people to get to know each other better. This is especially important if the young people don’t already know each other and will help to make young people more confident to take part in discussion and debate key issues.

Interview Day

MAKING YOUNG PEOPLE COMFORTABLE

Make sure there's enough time to **welcome young people** when arriving at the building and to show them around (if interviews are in person), including access to toilets.

Ensure timings enable young people to have **adequate breaks** and refreshments/food breaks are planned. Check food allergy details on consent forms, prior to making arrangements for food to be provided.

An **opportunity to meet with the staff panel** on the day can help to show young people that their contribution is valued. This might include meeting them before hand to introduce themselves and discuss what's going to happen and/or meeting with them after interviews so the staff panel can hear their thoughts and thank them for their contributions and time.

LANGUAGE

Avoid acronyms and jargon. Young people may not feel confident to speak up if they don't understand. If a candidate or staff member uses an acronym or jargon, please ask them to explain what it means if none of the young people ask themselves.

MAKING A DECISION

It's a good idea to discuss before the day who will ask candidates the questions. Some groups of young people may ask the worker supporting them to do this if they don't feel confident to, however it's good practice to **encourage the young people to lead questioning** if they are comfortable doing so.

Use the Young People's Panel Question Template and Score Sheet so young people can make notes if they would like to during the interviews and record their scores. Remind young people that the adult panel will probably want to see their score sheets to help them make their decision and so any notes they write will be seen by others.

Give young people time to give their feedback on candidates, where there are differences of opinion taking time to **work together and discuss them before coming to a final decision.**

DEBRIEFING

Allow opportunity for the group to discuss what went well and what could be improved on next time. Ask young people to complete the short Young People's Voice Survey with their ideas and experiences, which will help us to implement improvements in the recruitment process across all of our services.



After the Interview

CLOSING THE FEEDBACK LOOP

It's important that we **recognise young people's contribution** and show that we value their time. Services can use, and amend where needed, the Certificate and Thank You Letter templates for young people. These could be prepared in advance and given to young people on the day or sent out afterwards.

If sending letters to young people after the interview day, and a decision has been made that can be shared, **notify young people of the outcome**.

As a directorate we report on all the opportunities for young people to influence our services and make decisions. **Inform the Service Improvement and Participation Officer** that you have involved young people in the recruitment process so that this can be reported, and young people's influence celebrated.

Send any responses to the Young People's Voice Survey to the Service Improvement and Participation Officer, who will collate them and ensure any suggestions are reviewed and where appropriate acted upon.

