



Telford & Wrekin
Co-operative Council

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Children's Social Care &
Education and Skills

Engagement & Participation Strategy

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Review July 2025



POLICY GOVERNANCE

Title	Child/Young Person's Engagement and Participation Strategy
Purpose/scope	To inform how we work alongside children and young people to promote their voice and influence on an individual level and as a collective commitment to incorporating their voice and influence in strategic service delivery and practice
Subject key words	Voice, lived experience, influence, engagement, participation, relational
Council priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community• A community focused innovative council providing effective, efficient and quality services
Lead author and contact details	Louise Spragg – Principal Social Worker
Date established	July 2024
Date of next review	July 2025
Service Improvement and Efficiency Validation	Laura Moore, Service Delivery Manager, Service Improvement and Efficiency
Legal sign off	Not Applicable
Finance sign off	Not Applicable
Approver	Darren Knibbs, Director for Children's Safeguarding & Family Support

OUR JOURNEY

Understanding the lived experience of children/young people is central to recognising their strengths, the challenges they face and how we can work alongside them and their parents/carers to support promoting their best possible outcomes.

We are committed to ensuring that the support they received is designed around their individual wishes, feelings, lived experience and influence, at the right time that meets their needs.

Ensuring that their lived experience is captured at an individual level in respect of the support they receive, we have continued to enhance this area of practice within Social Care through – writing to the child, understanding the child's journey, the language we use and the ways in which we enhance our direct work approach.

We are also focused on how we ensure that children and young people's experiences, wishes and views influence and impact strategic design and practice development across children's services as one system.

We were aware we have existing mechanisms for engagement and participation across our services and the aim of this document is to capture the vision for this area in a central place. We also want to support the development of engagement and participation with children and young people's whose voices are harder to hear and other areas where engagement and participation could be strengthened. We are looking at how peer support and group work can enhance relational poverty that children and young people experience, minimise loneliness, provide a shared sense of community and improve emotional wellbeing.

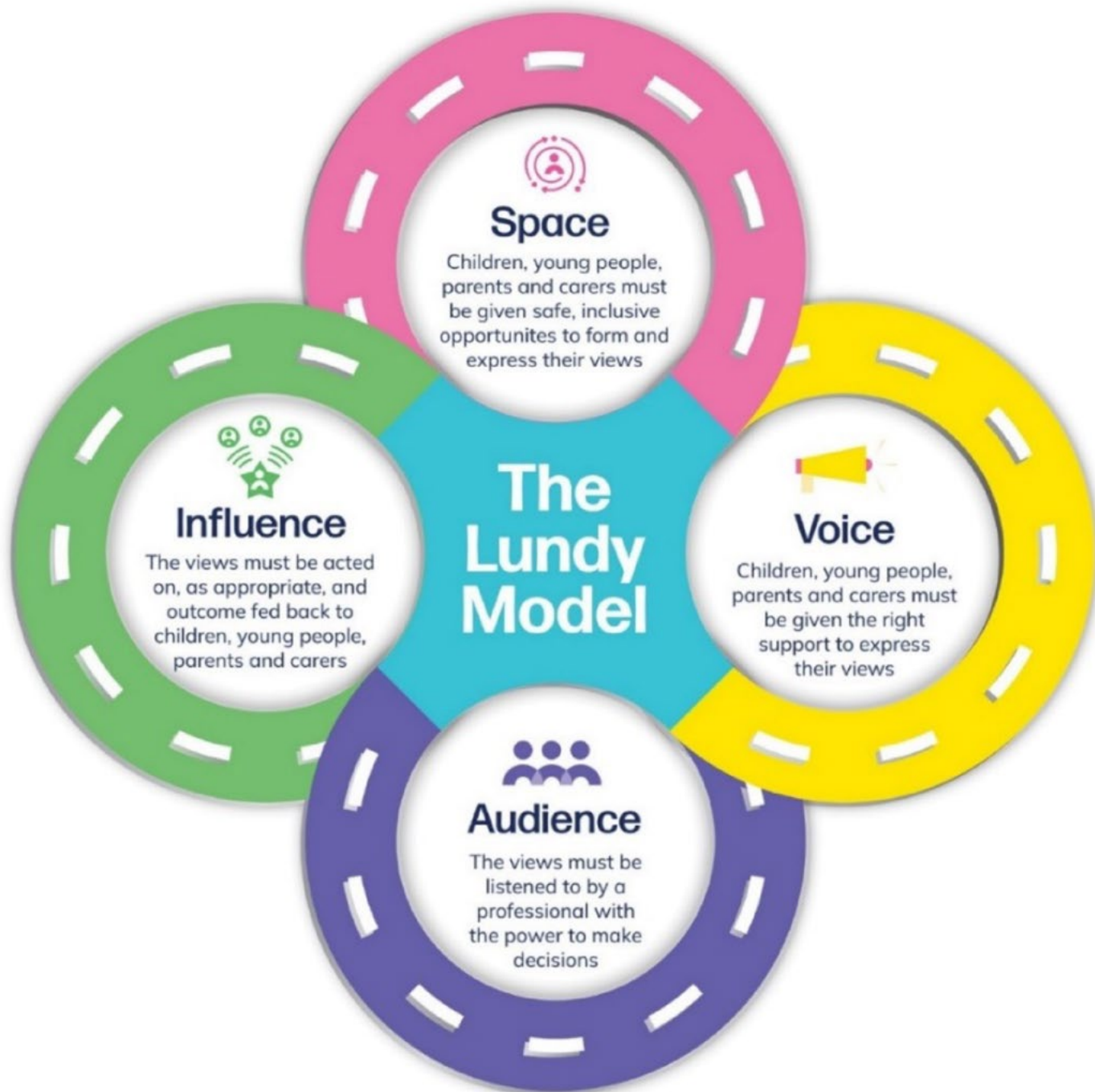
In order to build this strategy, we formed a working group of colleagues across services who are committed to understanding, advocating and championing the child/young person's voice and influence across our system. Our goal is to ensure that children and young people are not just recipients of services but can actively use their voice and influence to shape service design and delivery. A key part of this development is to consider across our multi-agency partnership, any gaps in our engagement activity in terms of demographics and capturing the voices of children and young people with protected characteristics. We also want to understand how each agency measures their success at capturing and ensuring the influence of the child/young person's voice.

This is an overarching strategy with each individual agency holding their own plans for participation, co-production and engagement which will be overseen and governed by the engagement and participation working group.

This is a multi-agency partnership and collective approach to ensuring the wishes, views and influence of children and young people is at the centre of our support. This document seeks to provide the scaffold and is firmly set within the National Reforms for Social Care.

To ensure meaningful participation we are utilising the Lundy Model as a framework.

THE LUNDY MODEL



Summary of our approach to engagement and participation based on the Lundy model.

SPACE

Children and young people we work alongside will have time to express their wishes, views and feelings about their current circumstances and the support they receive. Children and young people's lived experience will be understood by all agencies who work alongside with them and will include, views of significant people important to them, observations, and views of people who know them best, to ensure their lived experience is understood.

There will be specific opportunities for children and young people who are willing and able to attend events providing feedback on our service design and delivery to improve practice. There will be a wide range of opportunities for children and young people to advise agencies of their experiences and the support they receive. This feedback will influence service delivery and design. We will consider how we can support a collective voice to improve the experiences of children and young people who find it harder to be heard.

VOICE

Children and young people will be provided with the opportunity to voice their worries, concerns and strengths and these will be championed by practitioners who work alongside them.

Any records held will have the child's voice, journey and lived experience at the centre.

They will be supported in the best possible way to express their views and for their lived experience to be understood.

AUDIENCE

Children and young people we work alongside will have time to express their wishes, views and feelings about their current circumstances and the support they receive. Children and young people's lived experience will be understood by all agencies who work alongside with them and will include, views of significant people important to them, observations, and views of people who know them best, to ensure their lived experience is understood.

INFLUENCE

Children and young people we work alongside will have time to express their wishes, views and feelings about their current circumstances and the support they receive. Children and young people's lived experience will be understood by all agencies who work alongside with them and will include, views of significant people important to them, observations, and views of people who know them best, to ensure their lived experience is understood.

HOW WE RECOGNISE AND VALUE PARTICIPATION ACTIVITY

Various incentives for children and young people to become involved such as:

- meeting new people;
- acquiring new skills;
- building self confidence;
- learning about decision making and seeing their ideas come to life;
- engaging in an area of interest.

Reward/remuneration – to recognise the value of their voice and contribution this can include:

- supporting a project of interest;
- vouchers;
- attending events;
- group activities;
- competitions;
- employment/training opportunities.

Recognition – acknowledgement of their contribution and specific skills they have gained:

- certificates;
- awards;
- references;
- training and development.

How it works:

- children and young people sharing expertise and lived experience insights at all levels.

Senior Leadership Team:

- role modelling expectations of gaining and capturing the voice and lived experience of the child/young person;
- quality assurance activity to ensure this is taking place, identify best practice and areas of development;
- lead and contribute to child/young person engagement events;
- ensuring that wishes, feelings and views are acted on and shared with the work force;
- working alongside the workforce to generate and lead on new ideas to participation;
- champion the lived experience and views of children and young people- in terms of their individual support and how their views also influence wider service delivery;
- have high aspirations and ambitions for children and young people and actively champion these.

Participation strategy oversight group – continue to promote the governance of the strategy.

All Practitioners:

- continue to champion child/young person engagement and participation, actively seek new innovative ways to capture the wishes, feelings and influence of children and young people.

Links to key documents informing the strategy and further reading:

[**SEND & Alternative Provision Strategy**](#)

[**SEND Working Together Charter**](#)

[**Corporate Parenting Strategy**](#)

[**Youth Offer**](#)

[**Working Together to Safeguard Children**](#)

[**Telford & Wrekin Belonging Strategy**](#)

How this translates to practice:

- virtual school input and events throughout the year, with specific areas of focus reflected by the corporate parenting strategy and promise;
- corporate parenting strategy young people's panel;
- Telford and Wrekin Send and alternative provision – Working Together Charter- informing delivery;
- Education and skills provide participation events every school holiday for children who are care experienced, who are being supported via alternative provision or who have a allocated Social Worker;
- care experienced focus groups;
- engagement events for children receiving support from family safeguarding, strengthening families, CATE, CWD;
- how we increase the voices of care experienced young people – in terms of surveys, direct involvement in reviews, assessments and participation days;
- feedback gathered from these events shapes training, service design and practice delivery;
- development and refresh of QR codes and forms to include child and young person's viewpoints, this being translated to the workforce to make change and celebrate successes;
- development of communication aids to gain the views and experience of children and young people with communication needs;
- Child's voice being the focus of audit activity;
- further development of areas that children and young people to engage and participate to be reviewed over the next 12 months.