

The national and international context of listening to babies and young children

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March 2009

This research and practice review was commissioned in 2009 as part of a scoping exercise by the Early Childhood Unit (ECU) of the National Children's Bureau, in preparation for developing a children's services' self-assessment resource in connection with listening to babies and young children. A significant interest and commitment to listening to young children has developed in the UK since 2000. It was important to see how far this had already been embedded across policies, guidance and resources before embarking on developing the new resource in 2010.

This document has supported the production of the new self-assessment resource - *Let's listen. Young children's voices - profiling and planning to enable their participation in children's services* (NCB, 2010). It helped ECU to build on and bring together existing good policy and evidence, and identify and concentrate on the gaps. *Let's listen* is aimed at early years practitioners, advisers, children's trusts and local authorities, and makes clear the contextual framework for listening to babies and young children which this review illustrates in full. It also provides a simple framework for assessing and planning listening practice in early years settings, and supporting local policy.

This PDF was issued by the Early Childhood Unit, NCB, in August 2010. The sections are:

UK Context ~ International perspectives ~ Approaches ~ Listening as a way of life ~ Tools ~ Practice examples ~ Legislative context ~ References

UK CONTEXT	
United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child	Article 12 Every child has a right to be heard in the development of policy and practice that affects them.
Childcare Act 2006	Section 3 (5) Duty on local authorities to ‘have regard to the views of young children in the designing, development and delivery of early childhood services’. .In discharging their duties under this section an English LA must have regard to such information about the views of young children as is available and relevant. DCSF guidance For services to be successful the voices of young children need to be listened to and actively taken into account. Children need to be recognized as ‘partners’ in the planning and commissioning of services. By regularly listening to young children, local partnerships can respond to children’s needs, identify barriers to learning and development, and ultimately work towards improving services for children and supporting children to achieve their potential.
Children Act 2004	... under section 7 Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 in relation to section 17 already places considerable emphasis on listening to children and taking ... 53 Ascertaining children’s wishes (1) In section 17 of the Children Act 1989 (provision of services to children), after subsection (4) insert— “(4A) Before determining what (if any) services to provide for a particular child in need in the exercise of functions conferred on them by this section, a local authority shall, so far as is reasonably practicable and consistent with the child’s welfare— (a) ascertain the child’s wishes and feelings regarding the provision of those services; and (b) give due consideration (having regard to his age and understanding) to such wishes and feelings of the child as they have been able to ascertain.” (2) In section 20 of that Act (provision of accommodation for children: general), in subsection (6)(a) and (b), after “wishes” insert “and feelings”. (3) In section 47 of that Act (local authority’s duty to investigate), after subsection (5) insert— “(5A) For the purposes of making a determination under this section as to the action to be taken with respect to a child, a local authority shall, so far as is reasonably practicable and consistent with the child’s welfare—

	<p>(a) ascertain the child’s wishes and feelings regarding the action to be taken with respect to him; and</p> <p>(b) give due consideration (having regard to his age and understanding) to such wishes and feelings of the child as they have been able to ascertain.”</p>
Every Child Matters: Change for Children programme	<p>Outcomes</p> <p>Be healthy – Children feel they matter</p> <p>Stay safe – Key to safeguarding</p> <p>Enjoy and achieve – Involved and competent children</p> <p>Make a positive contribution – Unique insights and information to offer</p> <p>Achieve economic well-being – Practitioners listen to parents’ priorities to balance priorities</p> <p>It is expected that children and young people should have a say about issues that affect them both as individuals and collectively, and that they should be involved in decision making at local as well as national level. All agencies involved with children and young people should involve them in a meaningful way which is effective in bringing about change and which becomes embedded with the organizational ethos.</p>
Early Years Foundation Stage	<p>Birth to 11 months</p> <p>8 to 20 months</p> <p>16 to 26 months</p> <p>22 – 36 months</p> <p>30 – 50 months</p> <p>40 – 60+ months</p> <p>A unique child:</p> <p>1.1 Child development – every child is a unique child with their own characteristics and temperament.</p> <p>A competent learner – play and other imaginative other creative activities help children to make sense of their experience and “transform” their knowledge fostering cognitive development.</p> <p>A skilful communicator – children learn to communicate in many ways not just by talking but in non-verbal ways, such as gestures, facial expressions and gaze direction in drawing, writing and singing and through dance, music and drama.</p> <p>1.2 Inclusive practice:</p> <p>Children’s entitlements – All children have an equal right to be listened to and valued in the setting.</p> <p>1.3 Keeping safe:</p> <p>Listen to what children tell you, and act on non-verbal signs from them, especially from children who are unable to voice their anxieties</p> <p>Discovering boundaries - When children receive warm, responsive care, they are more likely to feel secure and valued and to want to contribute to making the rules which make things “fair” for everybody.</p>

Making choices – Making choices is about things such as what they will do or what they will wear helps children feel some sense of control over their day. Remember that choices sometimes include choosing not to do something, such as choosing not to join in when everybody else is moving to music.

1.4 Health and well being:

Physical well-being

Emotional well-being

Positive Relationships:

2.1 Respecting each other

‘Every interaction is based on respectful acknowledgement of the feelings of children and their families’

2.2 Parents as partners

Communication

Learning together

2.3 Supporting Learning:

Listening to children – Babies, very young children and those with speech or other developmental delay or disability may not say anything verbally, though they may communicate a great deal in other ways.

By observing and listening they (effective practitioners) discover what children like to do, and when they feel confident, scared or frustrated.

They are able to tune in to, rather than talk at, children, taking their lead and direction from what the children say and do.

The more practitioners know about each child, the better they are able to support and extend each child’s learning.

2.4 Key person

Independence

Enabling Environments:

3.1 Observation, assessment and planning

Schedules and routines should flow with the child’s needs.

3.2 Supporting every child

Every child’s learning journey takes a personal path based on their own individual interests, experiences and the curriculum on offer.

When children’s needs are central to the learning process children are listened to.

3.3 The learning environment

Adults need to empathise with children and support their emotions.

Encourage children to help to plan the payout of the environment and to contribute to keeping it tidy.

3.4 The wider context – Transitions and continuity

	<p>Learning and Development</p> <p>4.1 In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children’s development. Whilst playing, children can express fears and relive anxious experiences. They can try things out, solve problems and be creative, and can take risks and use trial and error to find things out.</p> <p>4.2 Active learners need to have some independence and control over their learning to keep their interest and develop their creativity. Make learning plans for each child based on information gained from talking to them, their parents and your colleagues, and by observing the child.</p> <p>4.3 Sustained shared thinking involves the adult being aware of the children’s interests and understandings, and the adult and children working together to develop an idea or skill. Sustained shared thinking can only happen when there are responsive trusting relationships between adults and children. Document children’s learning through photos and words. Use these to talk to children and parents about the learning that has taken place.</p> <p>4.4 Areas of learning and development Personal, social and emotional development Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy</p>
<p>National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services</p>	<p>Aim and Standards Ensure the child is seen and communicated with using their preferred communication method or language. Children, young people and their parents participate in planning, evaluating and improving the quality of services</p> <p>Standard 3: Children and young people and families receive high quality services which are co-ordinated around their individual and family needs and take account of their views.</p>
<p>NHS Constitution</p>	<p>7 key principles: 4. NHS services must reflect the needs and preferences of patients, their families and their carers.</p>
<p>Quality Improvement Principles</p>	<p>A principled approach to continuous quality improvement based on the rights of children. - Ensuring settings consult children, young people and families on what they want to get out of attending the setting. - Mapping quality improvement standards, outcomes or benefits on to key frameworks such as ECM and EYFS. Including guidance and tools for gathering feedback from children, young people and families on what benefits they have gained.</p>

<p>INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES</p>	
<p>Beyond Listening. Children’s perspectives on early childhood services. Clark et al</p>	<p>Basis thesis: We need to do more than listen. We need to take account of what children have to say about the services that are designed to meet their needs.</p> <p>Rationales for listening to young children Listening as a means of enhancing children’s participation in shaping their own lives and environments Listening as a principle and practice in learning.</p> <p>If we believe that children possess their own theories, interpretations and questions, and are protagonists in the knowledge building processes, then the most important verbs in educational practice are no longer to “talk” to “explain” or to “transmit”... but “to listen”. Listening means being open to others and what they have to say, listening to the 100 (and more) language with all our senses. Renaldi</p> <p>Distinction between: Listening as a tool – requires hearing and interpreting what you hear And Listening as constituting a basic ethos of giving voice – requires ‘loyal’ facilitation and representations, making a common cause with children (Warming)</p> <p>1 chapter on approach: Rinaldi – Reggio Emilia</p> <p>3 chapters from researchers: Clark – England (Mosaic) Warming – Denmark (participant observation / ‘making common cause with the children’) Eide and Winfer – Norway (Interviewing children)</p> <p>3 chapters from practice: Driscoll and Rudge – England (profile books) Kinney – Scotland (4 principles of working practice: Putting children first, inclusion, quality and partnership) Carr, Jones and Lee – New Zealand</p>

	<p>Discourse – Kjørholt (Norway) 2 rationales for listening: rights discourse and relational ethics</p> <p>New Zealand – Redefinition of the purpose of assessment as being to notice, recognize and respond to competent and confident learners and communicators – so children’s voices have a large part to play in defining and communicating that learning.</p>
<p>Te Whariki – Early childhood curriculum New Zealand</p>	<p>Infant (Birth to 18 months) Toddler (1 – 3 years) Young child (2/12 to school entry) Principles: Curriculum is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - about reciprocal and responsive relationships (with people, places and things) - connects with family and community - is holistic - is empowering <p>Metaphor of <i>participation</i> in a learning community) rather than <i>acquisition</i> (of a collection of skills and knowledge).</p> <p>Strands:</p> <p>1 Well-being – the health and well-being of the child is protected and nurtured 2 Belonging – children and their families feel a sense of belonging 3 Contribution – opportunities for learning are equitable and each child’s contribution is valued 4 Communication – the languages and symbols of their own and other cultures are promoted and protected 5 Exploration – the child learns through active exploration of the environment</p> <p>Different levels of learning:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The learner engaged with the learning environment 2. The immediate learning environments and relationships between them 3. The adult’s environment as it influences their capacity to care and educate 4. The nation’s beliefs and values about children and early childhood care and education. <p>Learning Stories are a method of documenting everyday interactions. The comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a learning episode - a short term review - a what next?
<p>Dialogues with places – Reggio Emilia</p>	<p>Reggio educators believe that each child has unlimited potential and is eager to interact with and contribute to the world. Children act as <i>protagonists</i> in their own learning, encouraged by teachers to develop projects and solve problems among themselves. The teacher is a resource who can ‘lend’ help’, information and experience when necessary.</p>

	<p>Listening is an approach to life, a culture. A pedagogy of listening and relationships – an openness to the other’s thought and to the question of meaning. Through pedagogical documentation learning processes can be shared, discussed, reflected upon and interpreted. (DThe documented traces are used after not during the process</p> <p>Listening is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - emotion and reciprocity, - interpretation and meaning making - openness and sensitivity to connections - difference and change - the importance of doubt and uncertainly <p>Listening involves many senses and many languages ‘Listening to the hundred, the thousand languages, symbols and codes we use to express ourselves and communicate, and with which life expresses itself and communicates to those who know how to listen.’ Rinaldi</p>
Hightscope	<p>Active participatory learning programme. The HighScope Curriculum emphasizes adult-child interaction, a carefully designed learning environment, and a plan-do-review process that strengthens initiative and self-reliance in children and young people. Teachers and students are active partners in shaping the educational experience.</p>

APPROACHES		
<p>Listening to young children – The Mosaic approach Alison Clark and Moss, P.</p>	<p>Developed with 3 and 4 year olds. Adapted to work with children under 2, children who whom English is an additional language, keyworkers and parents. A multi-method approach enabling young children and adults to be involved in ‘meaning making’ together. Listening to young children’s perspectives of their daily lives. Integrated approach combining visual and verbal. Multi-method approach – 9 tiles (observation, child conferencing, parent interview, tours, cameras, maps, parents, practitioner +1 blank) Framework for listening to young children: * multi-method recognizes the different ‘voices’ or languages of children * participatory – treats children as agents and experts in their own lives * reflexive – includes children, practitioners and parents in reflecting on meanings; addresses the question of interpretation * adaptable – can be applied in a variety of early childhood institutions * focused on children’s lived experiences – can be used for a variety of purposes including looking at lives lived rather than knowledge gained or care received * embedded into practice – a framework for listening which has the potential to be used as an evaluative tool and to become embedded into early years practice.</p> <p>The voices of young children begin at birth (Pugh and Selleck 1996) and children can “speak” through their play, their actions and reactions (Goldschmied and Jackson 1994).</p>	<p>The Mosaic approach: Visual and verbal tools used to build up a living picture of children’s perspectives.</p> <p>Stage 1: Children and adults gathering documentation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observation including pre-verbal – listening to body language, facial expressions, movements and different cries. - Child conferencing - questions based on children’s perception of their daily experiences. - Cameras – for children to build visual pictures of their perceptions of the setting. - Tours – enabling children to take adults around the setting in order to talk to them about the environment. They can take responsibility for how the route is created, recorded and documented. - Mapping – children can create visual maps of the setting, providing scope for highlighting its most positive and negative aspects. - Role play – small play figures and play equipment. <p>(Other methodological ‘pieces’: Informal interviews with practitioners and parents. Magic carpet – Slide show of familiar and different places.</p> <p>Stage 2: Piecing together information for dialogue, reflection and interpretation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bringing the Mosaic together – sharing dialogue about the documentation and different

		<p>perspectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 case studies. <p>3 key ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The methods – combined use of tools which enable young children to express their ideas and feelings with confidence - The attitude towards children which this approach represents – children seen as experts in their own lives. - There is a value in each piece of the Mosaic. <p>The value is increased by combining other pieces of perspectives, including those of parents and keyworker.</p>
<p>An encounter with Reggio Emilia. Children’s early learning made visible. Kinney and Wharton</p>	<p>Documentation approach based on listening to children and observation of their interests and concerns. Centres around recording and commenting on children’ learning through photos, wall displays, videos and a variety of different media.</p>	
<p>Listen and Change – A Guide to Children and Young People’s Participation Rights. Participation Works</p>	<p>Definition of participation: The process by which individuals and groups of individuals can influence decision-making and bring about change. 5 degrees of participation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Youth-initiated, shared decisions with adults - Consulted and informed - Assigned but informed - Adult-initiated, shared decisions with young people - Youth initiated and directed 	
<p>NCB Report: Children and young people get involved in PALS</p>	<p>PALS (NHS Patient Advice and Liaison Service) Project aiming to give children and young people a greater voice and inclusion – nothing specific regarding young children. Good practice guide.</p>	

Children’s Workforce Development Council (CWDC)	Canterbury Christ Church University is working with the Children’s Workforce Network to create a database of children and young people’s views of their workforce.	
Giving a media voice for children. Children’s Rights Alliance for England’s guide for Journalists	The Children’s Rights Alliance for England looks at the role journalists and editors play in promoting children’s human rights and equality, and in ensuring that children’s voices and experiences are fully reflected in the media.	

LISTENING AS A WAY OF LIFE	
NCB Leaflets	<p>Are equalities an issue? Find out what young children think – N. Road</p> <p>Why and how we listen to young children – A. Clark</p> <p>Listening and responding to young children's views on food. A-M McAuliffe & J. Lane</p> <p>Listening to babies – D. Rich</p> <p>Supporting parents and carers to listen: A guide for practitioners – J. McLarnon</p> <p>Listening to young disabled children – M. Dickins</p> <p>Developing a listening culture – L. Williams</p>
When are we having Candyfloss? McAuliffe	<p>The Listening Cycle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Listen: an active process of receiving, interpreting and responding to communication - Document: recording a child's likes and dislikes helps practitioners remember as well as ensuring continuity of care if practitioners change - Reflect: essential to uncover what may not be obvious at first glance - Take action: key to gaining trust, children must see evidence that their views have been listened to - Feedback: the difference between being listened to and <i>feeling</i> listened to – even if the children's wishes cannot be met, honest feedback is essential
Quality Improvement Principles.	<p>A Framework for Local Authorities and National Organisations to Improve Quality Outcomes for Children and Young People</p> <p>12 principles.</p>
Exploring the Field of Listening to and Consulting with Young Children Research Report 445	<p>Good practice review in listening to and consulting with young children (under 5 years) to examine methodology and impact.</p> <p>Young children have raised the following key themes in the studies to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The importance of relationships, especially friends and key adults - The quality of food and drink and their access to these - Access to the outdoor environment, in particular use of favourite equipment. - The importance of having time for children to finish their 'projects' - Transitions to new settings <p>Definitions:</p> <p>Listening is understood to be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an active process of communication involving hearing, interpreting and constructing meanings • not limited to the spoken word

- a necessary stage in participation in a) dialy routines as well as in b) wider decision making activities.

Consultation which should involve listening is listening with a particular purpose:

- 'ways of seeking the views of children as a guide to action' Borland 2001)

6 case studies

Impact on e.g. parents, LA's

Importance of follow-up/feedback

Asking children what they think, but taking it no further will send a message that there is little real interest in their view –

Mooney and Blackburn 2002

TOOLS		
<p>Make a Change! Participation Outcomes Tool Knowsley</p>	<p>Knowsley Participation Charter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation is a Right - Participation is a Right, not a privilege - Knowsley Participation Standards (See below) 	<p>A simple tool to record and evaluate the outcomes of children and young people's active involvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What we said (what you wanted to happen and change i.e. who did you speak to) - What we did (what you did and who was involved i.e. what happened next?) - What changed (i.e. is anything better as a result of your involvement?)
<p>I Can, We Can, You Can Rhyming picture book Toolkit</p> <p>Keating, H. & Taggart, K.</p> <p>Available from: ican@theretoday.co.uk Knowsley</p>	<p>Definition of participation: "By allowing children to participate we include them in consultation, take their thoughts and feelings into account and allow them freedom of will within a safe environment. Participation from the start helps children to develop essential life skills, which benefit them as individuals and the whole of society."</p> <p>Participation Standards:</p> <p>1 Decision making Where possible, children and young people are involved in making decisions on how the service is delivered to them and what activities take place.</p> <p>2 Having a say and being listened to Children and young people are given the opportunity to express themselves in the services they are accessing.</p> <p>3 Working together Children and young people are given the opportunity to get together and share ideas.</p> <p>4 Change Change must happen when decisions have been made.</p> <p>5 Response</p>	<p>The toolkit links to each page of the picture book providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a rationale - a link to the foundation stage areas of learning - questions/answers/discussion - activities <p>There are points to remember including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - evaluate constantly by documenting your observations and the child's by using different skills and tools, e.g. listening, recording conversations, photographing, etc. - at the end of activity take time to find out what worked/what didn't and why. Discuss with children, colleagues and parents. - make up and develop your own decision-making games. - document information again. What did the children learn? What did you learn? <p>Services can apply for a Kite Mark standard. There are 3 levels of award (stars) based on current performance: Bronze – Not delivering participation very well but making a concerted effort to rectify the situation. Silver – Delivering participation well, but need s to improve</p>

	<p>Children and young people should be made aware of all outcomes resulting from their involvement.</p> <p>6 Training</p> <p>Children and young people are offered opportunities to inform them of their rights to participate and how to do so according to their individual needs.</p> <p>Each standard has supporting criteria.</p>	<p>on some aspects.</p> <p>Gold – Delivering participation to the best of ability, improvement not needed at the present time.</p> <p>Evaluation I undertaken by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-assessment standards form • Participation team visits to ‘check’ the evidence • Participation team talks to the children and young people to get their views and include them in the awarding of the Kite Mark.
<p>Children’s Commissioner for England</p>	<p>Website – early years section invites children aged 0 – 4 years to have their say by creating shapes and uploading content like drawings and photos in relation to questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How are people different? - What makes a good friend? - How are you feeling today and why? - What is your favourite thing to do at nursery? 	
<p>Hear by Right Standards for the active involvement of children and young people National Youth Agency</p>	<p>Standards framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared values - strategies - structures - systems - staff - skills and knowledge - style of leadership <p>Each standard comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - commentary - things to think about.. Questions to ask.. - evidence (paper, verbal, observation) <p>Each level includes mapping and planning.</p> <p>Measures:</p>	<p>Also What’s changed? Tool:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence of listening, planning and change

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - emerging - established - advanced <p>Ladder of participation – 8 levels of young people’s participation</p>	
<p>Listening and responding to young children’s views on food. A-M McAuliffe & J. Lane</p>	<p>Reflection space – How do you use food to celebrate difference and promote healthy eating with young children</p>	
<p>Leading to Excellence Ofsted</p>	<p>Early years and childcare provision: Twenty questions for children:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you enjoy doing most here and why? 2. Can you choose what you want to play with here? 3. Do you help the adults decide what activities to do? 4. If you want to change the toys you are playing with, can you easily do that? 5. Is there anything else you would like to do but cannot do here? 6. What things do you like to do here outside? 7. Do you play outside enough here? 8. Are there things you would like to do outside that you don’t already do here? 9. If you want a drink do you know where to go and can you help yourself? 10. Do you like the food here? 11. What are the names of all the adults here? 12. Do you feel safe here? 13. What are the names of all the adults here? 14. Do you know if anyone else lives here? 15. How do you know when you’ve done something well here? Who tells you? 	<p>Early years and childcare providers: Twenty questions: 14. How well do adults who work with you, parents and children contribute to ongoing improvements in your setting?</p> <p>Ten questions for local authorities and others supporting early years and childcare provision</p>

	<p>16. What don't you like here and is there anything that makes you sad?</p> <p>17. Who can you talk to if you feel sad or unhappy when you are here?</p> <p>18. Can you spend enough time with your friends here?</p> <p>19. Can you move around here when you want to?</p> <p>20. What is the best thing about coming here? What is the worst?</p>	
<p>Ofsted early years self-evaluation form for settings delivering EYFS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Please tell us about the views of the children and their parents or carers who attend your setting. - Tell us how you know what their views are, for example if your parents complete a questionnaire. How do you know what the children's views are? - Give examples of any action you have taken to change your provision as a result of their views. 	
<p>Self-Evaluation Form for Sure Start Children's Centres</p>	<p>Make a Positive Contribution. Set out key activities the children's centre has undertaken to help children and families to make a positive contribution of the community and give an assessment of their impact. Factors to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - children's and families' starting points when first making contact with the centre - what measures do you take to assess the contributions children and their families and what has this shown you? - how do you encourage children to express their views and contribute to activities in the center, their local community or their family? - in what ways do you use good and innovative practice to improve outcomes? - are there any mitigating factors which have prevented you reaching the outcomes you wanted? - what is the centre's impact on groups who find services 	<p>Overall effectiveness in meeting this outcomes rated as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - outstanding - good - satisfactory - inadequate

	<p>hard to reach?</p> <p>Section 3: parental and community involvement. Please outline the ways you seek the views of fathers and mothers, children and the community. Please also outline the other ways in which fathers and mothers, children and the community are involved in the development and delivery of services and the strategic management of the centre and its services. Please summarise the overall effectiveness of parental and community involvement within the children's centre. This should cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ways in which children's views are sought - examples of action which has been taken based on the views of fathers and mothers, other stakeholders or children, with an evaluation of the effectiveness of this action. Examples of action which the children's centre has decided <u>not</u> to take. 	
<p>Listening to Young Children Lancaster Coram Family</p>	<p>Promoting Listening to Young Children – The Reader Listening to Young Children – Listening and Looking – The Practitioner Handbook</p> <p>Principles for participation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognise young children as experts in their own lives - Enable young children to express their views, opinions and aspirations – this will improve services and practices - Listening and participation can address and confront exclusion of children experiencing poverty and disadvantage and racism - Listening and participations skills amongst children and adults take time to develop 	<p>Observation Record Sheet</p> <p>11 shared experiences providing a mix of visual and performance arts-based ideas focusing on different aspects of communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The wish catcher - Tuning in - Visual walks - Painting - Musical conversations - Music and dance - Likes and dislikes - Exploring feelings - Creative design and problem-solving - Children's stories

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognise that children can make a meaningful contribution if given the appropriate methods and in a supportive environment - Listening to young children and enabling them to participate in decision-making processes increases levels of self-confidence and self-esteem - Rethinking child-adult relationships will need careful, continuous negotiation but eliciting children's views is validating and empowering - Acknowledge children as participants in the social and cultural world <p>RAMPS (Lancaster and Broadbent 2003)</p> <p>R – Recognising the many verbal and visual languages of children that allow children to express themselves in their own terms</p> <p>A – Assigning space for documentation and feedback so that young children have tangible proof that their views have been valued</p> <p>M – Making time to give children information that is relevant, make sense and focuses on what they want to know</p> <p>P – Providing choice by offering a range of opportunities for children to participate, for them to talk about their interests, experiences, concerns, feelings and aspirations <i>and</i> whether to participate or not</p> <p>S – Subscribing to a reflective practice to ensure that interpretations are checked and hearing becomes only the first step towards gaining understanding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capturing children's experiences <p>A spiral framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparation – What you can do and what to think about in preparing to offer the shared experience - Process – What happened. Examples with photos describing how some parents and practitioners have interpreted this shared experience and what the children did. - Reflection – Evaluating practice. Listening and practice tips compiled from children, parents and practitioners.
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<p>The Listening Book Kirklees</p>	<p>Approach based on the 10 Dimensions of Quality developed by Bertram T and Pascal C (2007) Effective Early Learning Programme:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Aims and objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation with children and young people policy - Children's involvement in the complaints and compliments procedures - Aims Policy - Child conferencing - Settling in 2. Learning experiences and curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Curriculum policy - Treasure basket play - Sensory area - Involving children with budgeting - Mirrors - Environmental sculpture - Mat time 3. Learning and teaching strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spaghetti play - Shaving foam - Autumn investigators - Canvas art - What shall we do today? - Transitions - Child's observation 4. Planning, assessment and record keeping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child's observation - Following a child's interest - Planning system - Weekly planning - Christmas activities - Easter planning - Record of achievement 	<p>For each aspect of the dimension the following are recorded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Setting - What was the activity? - Who was involved? - What are the potential opportunities for children to participate/express their voice? - Evaluation? - What happens next? <p>Toolkit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - References - Adult – Child/young person interaction – based on Laever's adult style observation schedule - Participation with young children - Child conferencing in action - Communication guide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Communication with younger children (Know my actions / What do I mean / Response) - Listening to non-verbal communication (Know my actions / Observe / Respond) - YCVN – Links to EYFS - Listening to Children audit linked to each dimension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are we currently doing this is good practice with regards to listening to young children? - What could we do to develop our practice? - What might be the barriers to Listening to Young Children? - Good practice guidance - An action plan format - My favourite areas of play
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children's take over day - Planning - Transitions - Young children's voices network - Mirrors - Materials 5. Staffing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interview for a cook - Staffing – interview questions - Stranger danger - Listening practitioners training 6. Physical environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visits and outings policy - The garden project - Health and safety games - Health and safety warnings - Cameras in action - Road safety - Garden area - Outdoor plan 7. Relationships and interaction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Behaviour management - Bullying policy - Key person system policy - Nutrition policy - Behaviour management policy - Bullying policy - Planning a healthy snack menu with children - Menu cards - Nutrition policy - My crèche session - Settling in - Tasting session - Healthy eating 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Home visits - Children's special books 8. Equal opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equality and diversity policy - Purchasing new equipment - Querks - Communication - Different eating styles - Adapting our menu - Growing topic 9. Parental partnership, home and community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children's prospectus - Lending library - Leaver's party - Information books - Partnership with parents - Record of achievement - Breastfeeding 10. Management, monitoring and evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting the development plan - Wish tree - New equipment - Children's take over day - OFSTED recommendations - A visit from OFSTED 	
<p>Early Support Service Audit Tool – Service Improvement audit and development charts</p>	<p>Focus on children under 5. 10 principles/standards.</p> <p>Standard 8. Families and children are involved in shaping and developing services.</p> <p>8.5 Family and child perspectives are used to build understanding of barriers to inclusion, so that these can be addressed at a strategic level.</p>	<p>5 point self-assessment rating scale:</p> <p>1 White No information available/not known</p> <p>2 Red No evidence that standard is met and no action plan formulated. An area of challenge to be addressed.</p> <p>3 Light amber Action to address issues planned.</p> <p>4 Dark amber Progress being made. There is an action plan to improve service provision against this</p>

		<p>5 Green</p> <p>standard and some action had already been taken as part of that plan. Very good. Evidence that standard is being met and/or that any actions taken have improved outcomes for families and children.</p>
<p>Can you hear me? The right of young children to participate in decisions affecting them Lansdown, G. Bernard Van Leer</p>	<p>To be meaningful and effective, children's participation requires 4 key ingredients:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An ongoing process of expression and active involvement in decision making at different levels in matters that concern them. 2. Information sharing and dialogue between children and adults based on mutual respect and sharing. 3. Power for children to shape both the process and outcomes. 4. Acknowledgement that children's evolving capacity, experience and interest play a key role in determining the nature of their participation (O'Kane 2003). <p>And for very young children, the most meaningful opportunities will be created closest to their immediate environments.</p> <p>In early years settings adopting a commitment to listening to children and taking them seriously has wide-ranging implications at all levels of early years' provision. E.g. it can and should impact on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the individual decisions and choices children wish to make - children's influence over the structure, culture, organization and content of the setting, - children's contribution to the development and planning of provision - children's involvement in the monitoring and evaluation 	<p>Matrix for measuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - scope - quality - impact <p>of child participation.</p>

	<p>of the provision The right to participate means an involvement in decision making in respect of all services provided for children or impacting on them, from the micro-level of choosing what to play, to the macro-level of helping design and develop the nature of the provision. Respectful environments require the introduction of a culture rooted in a presumption that children are entitled to be involved, are competent to make a valid and valuable contribution, can provide a unique contribution based on their own experience and operate as active agents influencing the world around them.</p> <p>Quality standards in promoting effective participation. Impact of participation.</p>	
<p>Leuven Involvement Scale for Young Children Ferre Laevers Research Centre for Early Childhood and Primary Education Centre, Belgium</p>	<p>Effective Early Learning Programme – Child Involvement Scale (Bertram & Pascal) Focus on processes rather than outcomes 2 components: 1. A list of signals (channels for observer awareness to build a picture of the child): - Concentration - Energy - Complexity and Creativity - Facial Expression and Posture - Persistence - Precision - Reaction time - Language - Satisfaction 2. The levels of Involvement in a 5 point scale: Level 1. Low activity Level 2. A frequently interrupted activity</p>	<p>Complementary Adult Engagement Scale that centres on interactions between the practitioner and the child. Focus on 3 aspects of the adults' behaviour that are seen to critically affect the child's learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sensitivity – of the adult to the feelings and emotional well-being of the child including sincerity, empathy, responsiveness and affection - stimulation – the way in which the adult intervenes in the learning process and the content of such interventions - autonomy – the degree of freedom, which the adult provides for the child to experiment, make judgements, choose activities and express ideas. Also encompasses how the adult handles conflict and behavioural issues.

Ferre Laevers

Level 3: Mainly continuous activity
Level 4: Continuous activity with intense moments
Level 5: Sustained intense activity
Child Involvement Observation Sheet

Box Full of Feelings



A Box Full of Feelings is designed to support the social and emotional development of children and is built around the four basic feelings of happy, sad, angry and afraid. It contains 48 situational pictures – each basic feeling has 12 pictures, with a short story and questions on the reverse, 16 pictures of the emotion figures, 4 posters with emotion figures, 17 finger dolls, 4 carry-around houses of emotions, 4 masks depicting each feeling for children or adults to wear, a wheel of emotions with spinner (for games) CD of emotive music, instruction manual including photocopyable activities.

<p>Working Together. Listening to voices of children – DCSF (unpublished draft – NOT for circulation)</p>	<p>Levels of participation: (hierarchy of increasing empowerment and responsibility)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children are listened to - Children are supported in expressing their views - Children’s views are taken into account - Children are involved in the decision making process - Children share power and responsibility for decision making. <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children’s rights and well-being - Active citizenship - School improvement - Community enhancement <p>Principles of participation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear commitment to children’s participation - Children’s participation is supported - Children have equality of opportunity to be involved - Children’s participation is continually reviewed - Quality standards are met 	<p>Effective participation checklist:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the benefits you want to achieve - Provide a range of opportunities - Provide support to develop skills of effective participation - Address equal opportunity issues - Decide who will oversee children’s and young people’s participation
<p>Disability Audit Tool</p>	<p>18.3 Policies, practices and procedures of all services are regularly reviewed, in partnership with children and their parents, to remove barriers and progressively improve access, and to ensure that disabled children and their families are not disadvantaged.</p> <p>18.7 Services and facilities comply with responsibilities under Disability Discrimination legislation, including the duty to take the views of disabled children and their families into account.</p>	

<p>My needs, wishes and feelings. CAFCASS</p>	<p>A pack to promote children's involvement in Family Court hearings. Model based on Child's context in terms of their relationships with people, their emotions and the setting By considering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child's wishes, hopes and expectations - Child's desired outcome from the proceedings - Engagement and proactive involvement - The child's overall development and Every Child Matters - Risk analysis from the child's perspective - Feelings of the child about past, present and future - Child's short, medium and long-term needs and support needed 	
<p>All About Us Campaign for Learning</p>	<p>A child and family record book for families with babies and children from 0 to 11. 5Rs of Lifelong Learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Readiness - Resourcefulness - Resilience - Responsibility - Reflectiveness 	
<p>Family Reading Connects Family involvement toolkit</p>	<p>Evaluation grid. 4 EYFS themes with sub-headings Classification: Developing Establishing Enhancing</p>	
<p>Assessing emotional and social competence in Primary School and Early Years Settings: A review of</p>	<p>Identification and review of instruments which assess or measure emotional competence in children aged 3 – 11 years in three difference but related contexts – early identification, profiling and monitoring. Also covers instruments assessing social competence. Section 4.9 The importance of the child's voice – self-</p>	

approaches, issues and instruments Edmunds, L. and Stewart-brown, S. DfES (2003)	assessment	
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PRACTICE EXAMPLES		
<p>Participation – Play Train</p>	<p>Hands-on training, creative children’s consultations and research for organisations and individuals working with children aiming to promote the creative potential of children to help make childhood an inspiring journey of discovery. Projects focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enabling children to participate in planning and decision making - using creative arts to encourage expression and participation - encouraging adults and children to work in partnership. <p>Approach – consultation is about a dialogue that informs both parties based on the following core values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child-centred - Inspirational - Fun - Inclusive - Approachable - Client focused - Innovative - Collaborative <p>The process – Observation, Delivery, Reflection</p> <p>Reflective practice is a key element in the consultative process. Children and young people are encouraged to</p>	<p>Dudley Early Years and Childcare used Playtrain regarding childcare with children 6 months to 14 years. Wow! This is Big: Early years research consultation project. - 30 under 5’s visited 2 arts and cultural venues. Children expressed themselves through play, photography, drawing, stories and discussion with facilitators. They were also observed sharing their ideas and helping each other come up with solutions to problems.</p>

	take a lead on their investigation and exploration of the research questions. The adults involved create a 'frame' for the children and young people to work within. The consultation ends with a final shared reflection on the findings and perspectives of all involved.	
Spaces to play Clark and Moss	<p>Aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to involve children under 5 in decision-making processes - to explore how young children's perspectives can become the starting point for changes to an outdoor play space <p>Tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - observation, cameras, book making, tours, map making, magic carpet, child interviews, practitioner and parent interviews <p>Stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - gathering the perspectives of children and adults - discussing and reflecting on the perspectives of children and adults - deciding areas of continuity and change 	<p>Key messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Time and patient is required to gather children's perspectives - There is a value to young children working together to share knowledge and explore meanings - It is important to make young children's perspectives visible to adults with the power to bring about change
Walking with children Sure Start Armstrong Newcastle	<p>Environmental Project with 3 – 4 year olds going on sensory walks</p> <p>Use of cameras to record likes and dislikes</p> <p>Dissemination event – Creating change</p>	
CHOOSE Save the Children	<p>Use of equality training and awareness raising in order to develop 'whole setting' inclusive approaches and strategies for consulting disabled children and their non-disabled peers in two London nurseries.</p> <p>Development of guidelines for effective listening.</p>	

Built Environment Birch et al University of Sheffield	What makes a hospital 'child'friendly?' Inpatient and outpatient children aged 4 – 16. Variety of methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - interviews - photo elicitation - participant observation - mapping of movements and activities 	
Children's Voice Brighton and Hove Children and Young People's Trust	Children's Voice project. Case study approach inspired by Penny Lancaster training. Themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outside environment - Planning - Birth to three - Ethos - Feelings - Tips for using cameras 	Case studies presented in the following format: Preparation Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is your favourite activity in nursery? - Is there anywhere you don't like to play? - What do you like to play with? - Why do you think you come to nursery? - What do the grown-ups do in nursery? Reflection Way Forward <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who do we think it's important to listen to children? - What does 'good listening' involve? - What behaviours prevent us from listening? - How do children show and tell their views in the nursery? - How do we record children's views? - How do we respond to children's views? - Is there anything that we don't do already that we should be doing? - Why is it important to look as well as listen?
Are you listening to me? Oxfordshire	Case Study approach to listening to children under 2. Tracking and observing – everyday stories (Elfer and Selleck) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What actually happened? - What might that mean? 	Co-construction of quality with babies who attended the nurseries. 7 powerful messages emerged: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Please treat me with respect, don't do things to me without helping me to understand what is coming next

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Points for reflection - What did we find out? - What did we change? - What impact have the changes made on our provision? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Please really talk to me and get to know me and my family. Please be less busy – stay and play with me, understand what is coming next. - I need a key person in the nursery to be close to, who will listen to me and understand me, and keep me safe and included. - Please make places in my nursery where I can find spaces to move freely, be tranquil, as well as places that are busy and bustling with my friends and things to do. - You need to understand what I am interested in and the ‘project’ I am working on. Please try not to interrupt me when I am busy. I want you to give me the materials or attention that will nourish my ‘schema’. - Please give me experiences that challenge me, and new things to touch, taste, hear, smell and see. I like being out and about, as well as in our familiar room. - I have lots of ways of communicating – please listen and watch the ways that I do it.
Audit of Children and Young People’s Participation and Involvement in Decision-making. Middlesbrough January 2007	Audit using Hear By Right Standards Framework. Results analysed by standard and age group: Early years 0 to 4 years	Recommendation: The Audit has highlighted the need to develop and improve participation and involvement of children aged 0 – 5 across the CYPSP. It is recommended that this is facilitated through the development of a CYPSP Participation Strategy and Action Plan for children aged 0 – 5.
Re-focus – Sight lines	Introduction to Reggio approach. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observation - Interpretation - Documentation 	
Listening to Young Children St Helens	Example of web based document for children to access in relation to participation strategy. Use of Hear By Right and Mosaic approach. Widgit programme and PECS used to promote inclusion.	

Our voices matters – St Helens (Dead Cat Dreaming – Gary King)	Babies painting activity Steps to engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tokenism - Listened to - Involved - Engaged 	
Children should be heard The Children’s Society - Rotherham	Consultation with Under 8’s. Example of an environment project.	
It’s not fair! The Children’s Society	Definition of the child Best things about being a child in Britain Worst things about being a child in Britain	
Changing places together – The Children’s Society	Community regeneration project – Ready Steady Change	
Picture This	50 ways to use a camera – activities related to Foundation Stage	

LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

<p>Children's Plan 2020 Goals</p>	<p>Enhance children and young people's wellbeing particularly at key transition points in their lives.</p>		<p>Every child ready for success in school with at least 90% developing well across all areas of the EYFS Profile by age 5.</p>	<p>All young people participating in positive activities to develop personal and social skills, promote well-being and reduce behaviour that puts them at risk.</p>	
<p>Every Child Matters Outcomes</p>	<p>Be Healthy Mentally and emotionally healthy</p>	<p>Stay Safe Safe from bullying and discrimination. Have security, stability and are cared for.</p>	<p>Enjoy and Achieve Achieve personal and social development and enjoy recreation</p>	<p>Make a Positive Contribution Engage in decision making and support the community and environment. Develop positive relationships and choose not to bully and discriminate. Develop self confidence and successfully deal with significant life changes and challenges. Develop enterprising behaviour.</p>	<p>Achieve Economic Well-being Live in decent homes and sustainable communities</p>
<p>Public Service Agreements and DCSF Departmental Strategic</p>	<p>PSA12 Improve the health and well-being of children and young people</p>	<p>PSA13 Improve children and young people's safety PSA21 Build more</p>	<p>PSA10 Raise the educational achievement of children and young people.</p>	<p>PSA14 Increase the number of children and young people on the path to success PSA21 Build more</p>	

Objectives		cohesive, empowered and active communities PSA23 Make communities safer	PSA11 Narrow the gap in educational achievement between children from low income and disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers PSA15 Address the disadvantage that individuals experience because of their gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief	cohesive, empowered and active communities	
National Indicators Quality of Life Indicators	NI50 (PSA12/DSO1) Emotional health and well-being – children & young people user perception	NI69 (PSA13/DSO2) % of children who have experienced bullying NI17 (PSA23) Perceptions of anti-social behaviour	NI72 (PSA10/DSO3) Achievement of at least 78 points across the EYFS with at least 6 in each of the scales in Personal Social and Emotional Development and Communication, Language and	N110 (PSA14/DSO6) More participation in Positive Activities	NI23 Perceptions that people in their area treat one another with respect and dignity

<p><i>Service Measures</i></p>	<p><i>NI51(PSA12/DS01) Effectiveness of child and adolescent mental health (CAMHS Services)</i></p> <p><i>DS01 Number of new and renewed public play areas (a new indicator on children and young people's satisfaction with play spaces)</i></p> <p><i>NI127(PSA19) Self reported experience of social care users</i></p>	<p><i>NI34 (PSA23) Domestic violence resulting in the death of a person</i></p> <p><i>NI61(DSO2) Timelines of placements of looked after children following an agency decision that the child should be placed for adoption</i></p>	<p>Literacy</p> <p><i>NI92 (PSA11/DSO4) Narrowing the gap between the lowest achieving 20% in the EYFS Profile and the rest</i></p> <p><i>NI109(DS)4 Delivery of Sure Start Children's Centres</i></p>		
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