



Dorset Children's Trust



What is Participation?

Participation is involving children and young people in the decisions that affect them. This can be;

- issues about you
- things to do with where you live
- issues you may have as a group
- or issues children and young people working on behalf of other children and young people make, like a school or youth council

What is a Participation Strategy?

You have told us that you would like to be more involved in making decisions that affect you. The Participation Strategy is our plan of how we will do this. We have written a Participation Charter with a group of young people. The group have called the Charter "Our Say". This is a statement of your rights when you choose to get involved in decision making.

What is important when children and young people participate?

- Participation is a right and is recognised by the government.
- Every child and young person has this right but some children and young people will need extra help to enjoy this right.
- When children and young people are involved in making decisions you should be able to see what has been changed. If adults cannot change things they should be honest about why not.
- Listening to and involving children and young people is the responsibility of everyone that works with children and young people.

What are we going to do?

There are four main things that we are going to do to make sure we involve you more.

1. Provide more opportunities to get you involved. Not everyone likes to do things the same way. We will provide lots of different ways of listening to the views of children and young people and we will support those that find this difficult. We will also make sure that children and young people know about the things they can get involved in.

OUR SAY... PARTICIPATION STRATEGY



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2. Make sure that adults that work with you know how to listen to and involve you. We will also make sure that their managers check on how well they are doing this.
3. We will find out how things have changed and then make sure you are told about it in a way you understand. We have worked with a group of children and young people to write a Participation Charter which they have called "Our Say". This is a list of rights that you have when you get involved in decision making and this will make sure children and young people are taken seriously.
4. We will involve you in how we run our services. We would like you to tell us what you need; how we can help and how we are doing. You use these services and you are the best people to tell us how to make them better.

How we will know it's working?

Our goal is to listen to you and involve you in everything we do. Adults can always do more to involve children and young people in decision making. The people in charge, including managers and county councillors, will make sure this happens.

We will only really know if it's working if things actually change and improve for you. We will make sure that we provide lots of ways for you to tell us if this has happened.

Part of this is to set some targets that we can measure that show that things have changed.

With the strategy will also be an action plan and this lays out in far more detail all the things that we will be doing.

For more information:

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created by young people for young people