



Working together to reach your goals

**Buckinghamshire  
Children and Young People's Trust  
Participation Plan  
April 2009 to March 2010**

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## 1. Introduction

This Plan has been produced in partnership with the multi agency Children and Young People's Trust Participation Group, in consultation with children and young people.

The Plan takes the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) as its strategic lead and builds on the work achieved under the four previous multi agency funded Trust Participation Plans, 2005 to 2009.

The aim of the Children and Young People's Trust Participation Plan is:

'To establish a framework for the active involvement of children and young people in decision making processes that affect their lives across Buckinghamshire so that services provided by all agencies better meet their needs.'

This Plan:

- Defines participation.
- Outlines why participation is essential to the work of the Buckinghamshire Children and Young People's Trust.
- Identifies representational issues.
- Identifies key actions to be taken.
- Details costings for these key actions.
- Specifies the total number of children and young people to be involved.
- Gives a contact for further information.

Mechanisms outside of this proposal will need to be established to ensure participation by parents, carers and professionals, although there could be overlap in delivery tools.

It should be noted that this Plan focuses on participation within the development of the strategic Children and Young People's Trust agenda, particularly the CYPP, and that there are many projects not detailed in it that contribute a great deal to enabling children and young people's participation in Buckinghamshire.

## 2. What is Participation?

'Participation is a term increasingly used by those working with children and young people to mean children and young people thinking for themselves, expressing their views effectively, and interacting in a positive way with other people; it means involving children in the decisions which affect their lives, the lives of their community and the larger society in which they live'. **(Introduction to Policy on Children's Participation - Save the Children)**

Although the concept of participation by children and young people has been around for a long time, the actual implementation is a relatively new area of work. However, attitudes are now changing and there is increasing recognition and understanding of the benefits of involvement to children and young people, organisations and to the community.

Barriers have had to be overcome in order to move forward. One example is the cultural change, which includes the recognition that children and young people with disabilities are also capable of making choices and decisions about their lives.

Consultation is a word that is often misinterpreted as participation. Whilst it has a valuable place in engaging children and young people, it should be seen as a first step in promoting participation and empowerment. Generally when consulting with children and young people power remains with those carrying out the consultation.

By contrast, actively involving children and young people suggests a joint ownership. Power is shared, and the children and young people are involved in the entire process. Where children and young people are involved in the processes, understand the issues and have the opportunity to give their views, there will be greater acceptance of the decisions made.

True participation is based on equality and the sharing of power. This is not to say that children and young people will 'take over' or 'get their own way' (a common fear of many adults).

Children and young people's opinions do not have more weight or validity than anyone else's, but they should have the same weight if they are based on equal access to information and resources.

In simple terms, participation means 'taking part', and in the fullest sense. Tokenism is no longer acceptable and it is now well acknowledged that participation cannot be 'bolted on' because it is seen as a good thing.

### **3. Why is participation essential to the Trust agenda?**

Participation by children, young people, parents and carers has been identified by the Children Act 2004, the National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services and Youth Matters as an essential element to their implementation.

There is also international agreement that children and young people have a right to be listened to and involved through Article 12 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989.

The Children and Young People's Trust Board has agreed to adopt The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, recognising Article 12's central role.

There is therefore a clear obligation to enable children, young people, parents and carers to be able to contribute at all stages of these national initiatives.

As a result, participation by these groups forms a key principle in the Every Child Matters (ECM) Framework for the Inspection of Children's Services (Principle 7, page 5).

In Buckinghamshire:

- Participation is a priority in the Buckinghamshire Children and Young People's Plan.
- Elements of Participation work have been identified by the Joint Area Review (September 2006) as needing further development. These are reflected in this Plan and state that the County Council and its partners should:
  - increase the impact of consultation with children and young people on the design and shape of services for them;
  - implement plans for the young people's Participation Network.
- Participation is a key element of the Local Government White Paper 2006.
- Community Engagement is one of the key strands of the Buckinghamshire Pathfinder.
- A number of existing organisations in Buckinghamshire include participation as a key element of their provision.

There is also the strong and logical argument that you should involve your 'customers' in the planning, design, delivery and evaluation of their services rather than just delivering services to them. In other words it makes 'good business sense'.

It is essential that both voluntary and statutory organisations are involved in the planning, delivery and evaluation of this work.

#### **4. Representation**

Children and young people will have different experiences of services based upon a number of issues including their gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability or ability, religion and living circumstances. These differences will need to be addressed with sensitivity.

It is vital that we enable a wide range of children and young people to participate and take steps to actively include those children and young people who are often overlooked, such as those from black minority ethnic groups and those with disabilities.

Ensuring that all children and young people have the opportunity to participate regardless of their circumstances is a principle of equality upon which effective participation is based. This principle will be reflected in the delivery of this Plan.

It is essential to recognise that not everyone will want to participate or be consulted in the same way. A range of different mechanisms therefore need to be employed to appeal to different people and thereby enable better representation. This is reflected under the Key Actions section of this document.

#### **5. Feedback, evaluation and monitoring**

Feedback, in terms of what action has or has not been taken, to children and young people who have been involved is a vital element of the participation process and will be undertaken for each of the Key Actions listed below as required.

It is also essential for service providers to ensure ongoing evaluation and monitoring of progress on work that is taking place and that children and young people are involved and informed about this.

## 6. Key Actions

Action Number	Activity (April 2009 to March 2010)	Completion by	Number of CYP involved (minimum)	Status
1	Multi agency CYP Trust Delivery Participation Group continues to be operational.	In place.	Via links to existing groups.	
2	Monitor consultation/participation work (planned and outcomes) via Participation Group using Hear by Right Framework.	Ongoing.	N/A	
3	Review of children and young people friendly overview of local Trust/Plan developments, how to get involved etc on appropriate web sites.	September 2009.	20	
4	Participation Network promoted and utilised across the county. This will include formal groups e.g. school councils and informal groups e.g. looked after children in residential care and individual members and enable a more coordinated approach to participation initiatives.  The Network also includes Parent/Carer Groups (figures are not listed here).	March 2010.	1,000	
5	Participation Training – 2 courses delivered by young people supported by an adult, to those providing services to children and young people.	October 2009 and February 2010.	30 adults trained.	
6	Recruitment and Selection - Supporting Young People Training.	October 2009 and February 2010.	24 adults trained.	

Action Number	Activity (April 2009 to March 2010)	Completion by	Number of CYP involved (minimum)	Status
7	Participation Training – 2 courses delivered by children supported by an adult, to those providing services to children.	October 2009 and February 2010.	30 adults trained.	
8	Recruitment and Selection - Supporting Children Training.	October 2009 and February 2010.	24 adults trained.	
9	Hear by Right – delivery of 8 staff courses.	March 2010.	80 adults trained.	
10	<p>CYP Plan 2009/12 consultation.</p> <p>Establishing the views of a broad range of children and young people via a range of mechanisms including ‘airspace’ – a mobile video booth, web based surveys, face to face surveys and the Participation Network.</p> <p>The consultation will inform refresh of the CYP Plan 2009/12 and contribute to the Focus Groups below.</p> <p>This work will also contribute to the work of the various local community initiatives.</p>	September 2009.	500	

<b>Action Number</b>	<b>Activity (April 2009 to March 2010)</b>	<b>Completion by</b>	<b>Number of CYP involved (minimum)</b>	<b>Status</b>
11	<p>A series of Focus Groups to investigate the outcomes of a range of participation and consultation work that has taken place such as the airspace consultation, Youth Cabinets, Youth Parliament, Participation Events, BCC Residents Survey and Tell Us 4 Survey.</p> <p>This work will inform the refresh of the CYP Plan 2009/12.</p> <p>The Focus Groups will enable participation by children and young people in strategic planning, delivery and evaluation of the work of the Children and Young People's Trust.</p> <p>They will include refreshments and fun activities to encourage a broad range of children and young people to attend and acknowledge their contribution.</p>	October 2009	100	

Action Number	Activity (April 2009 to March 2010)	Completion by	Number of CYP involved (minimum)	Status
12	Undertake series of participation events with children and young people who are looked after, in partnership with appropriate organisations, to inform the work taking place in response to the Children in Care Bill.  This work will contribute to the work of the Trust and subsequently the CYPP.	January 2010.	50	
13	Consultation on/participation in Trust related materials/projects e.g. web site, leaflets.	As required.	Cannot give a figure at this stage.	
14	Local Delivery Programme – development of child/young person friendly materials and assisting in enabling the views of children and young people to inform the work of the Local Delivery Teams.	As required.	20	
15	MEP event – organisation and delivery, involving 15 young people, aged 11 to 19 years.	October 2009	15	
16	Trust Overview for Children – production of a leaflet or other suitable publication as chosen by children involved.	August 2009	20	
17	Participation Event (Influence the Influential) – involving young people, senior managers and elected Members	July 2009	30 young people and 30 adults	
18	11 Million Day – support a project for children and young people’s involvement in the Trust.	November 2009	20	
19	Production of a children’s version of the CYPP 2009/12.	June 2009	20	
20	Promotion of the UNCRC to children and young people in partnership with UNICEF staff.	Ongoing	Cannot give a figure at this stage due to work being at developmental stage.	

Action Number	Activity (April 2009 to March 2010)	Completion by	Number of CYP involved (minimum)	Status
21	Involvement of children and young people in commissioning of services.	As required.	Whilst it is not possible to give a figure at this stage it is hoped that all Trust partners will be committed to involving children and young people in commissioning.	
22	Involvement of children and young people in staff recruitment for Trust related posts.	As required.	Whilst it is not possible to give a figure at this stage it is hoped that all Trust partners will be committed to involving children and young people in staff recruitment.	
23	Children and young people to review the Participation Plan and produce a new plan for 2010/11.	October 2009	15	
	<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF YOUNG PEOPLE INVOLVED:</b>		<b>1810</b>	
	<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF TRAINED:</b>		<b>188</b>	
	<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF ATTENDING EVENT:</b>		<b>30</b>	

## 7. Costings

The below costs are for the whole programme/age range. The majority of the costs are for direct work with children and young people, with a small proportion of costs allocated to support this work.

ITEM	COST
Trust overview and how to get involved	£400
Participation Network promotion and administration	£1,000
Participation Training (staff) x 4 courses	£4,000
Recruitment Training (staff) x 4 courses	£4,000
Hear by Right Training	£3,000
Trust Board Participation	£1,000
Children in Care Project	£2,500
CYPP Consultation	£11,000
CYPP Focus Groups	£1,500
Consultation on/participation in Trust related materials/projects e.g. web site, leaflets.	£1,000
Local Delivery Programme	£2,000
MEP Event	£200
Children's 'What is the Trust?' leaflet	£800
Children's version of CYPP	£1,000
Participation Event	£4,000
11 Million Day	£200
Involvement of children and young people in commissioning of services.	£1,000
Involvement of children and young people in staff recruitment for Trust related posts.	£1,000
Participation Action Plan review	£400
Contingency	£1,000
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>£41,000</b>

It is proposed that this cost be divided between the below Children and Young People's Trust Board member organisations:

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Proposed Contribution</b>
Aylesbury Vale District Council	£5,000
Buckinghamshire County Council	£5,000
Buckinghamshire Hospital Trust	£2,500
Buckinghamshire Mental Health Trust	£2,500
Chiltern District Council	£3,000
Learning and Skills Council	£5,000
Buckinghamshire Primary Care Trust	£5,000
South Bucks District Council	£3,000
Thames Valley Police	£5,000
Wycombe District Council	£5,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£41,000</b>

It is aimed that a total of 1810 children and young people will be directly involved in a variety of ways between April 2009 and March 2010. This gives an indicative outlay cost of only £23.00 per head, as well as the strong possibility of services better meeting children and young people's needs and being delivered more effectively.

In addition to this 188 staff will have the opportunity to receive training which will lead to more effective participation for other children and young people in the future and 30 staff will be invited to attend a participation event.

External funding and training opportunities will also be sort in order to further develop participation work.

## **8. Delivery of the Plan**

The Participation Plan will be delivered via a Service Level Agreement between Children and Young People's Services and the Community and Youth Engagement Service.

The Head of Community and Youth Engagement will Chair the Participation group and provide administrative support to this group.

Funding for a Participation Worker and 0.5 Administrator will be provided by Commissioning and Business Improvement Division, Children and Young People's Services, Buckinghamshire County Council. This equates to a contribution of £56,282.

Additional staffing support will be provided via the Partnership Delivery Team, Commissioning and Business Improvement Division.

It is also important to acknowledge that many organisations make in kind contributions to the participation agenda. These include the use of meeting rooms, providing transport for children and young people and staff time which enhances the delivery of the participation agenda a great deal.

## **9. For further information**

Please contact:

Mary Lewis, Community and Youth Engagement Service, Buckinghamshire County Council

01296 382889 or [mlewis@buckscc.gov.uk](mailto:mlewis@buckscc.gov.uk)

## **10. Glossary**

CYPP            Children and Young People's Plan.