

Engagement and participation of children and young people with SEND in St Helens

In St Helens we believe it is a priority to support, challenge and improve practice around listening to and acting upon the views of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). We wanted to see what children with SEND thought of this priority, so we explained to a group of children that we want to work with them to improve how adults listen and act upon their wishes, feelings and experiences. We asked if they thought this was important. Here is what they told us:

Adults are bigger than children, we are small; it's their job to do it.

Make the adults learn about this, it's important.

In class it's important to be heard.

Yes, because if children aren't listened to then who would know about their problems as well as the good bits.

When children have a problem they need to be listened to, it's important.

It is like plugging a plug into the system. You need to plug in to hear what's being said.

Can we help make it better too?

We clearly heard children say it was important for us to work together to improve practice.



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So what did we do next?

Asked our children what we should be working on

Set up a practitioner group

Described what practice is like now

Researched what is good practice and learnt from others (Mott McDonald)

Assessed ourselves against this good practice

Identified areas that need action

What do we need to do now?

1. Establish a ***Children with SEND Engagement Group*** - the top priority is to set up a number of ways in which children can be heard, lead projects and develop ideas.
2. Children with SEND Engagement Group supported to ***describe what good engagement looks like*** for them.
3. Children enabled to develop a ***bank of questions*** to inform a 'One Page Profile'.
What are the best questions to ask to understand what makes someone unique?
4. Children and adults to ***deliver training on resources*** to improve practice. What tools help build relationships, engage or capture views.



Any ideas? Get involved?

Do you have a passion for this priority? Are you wanting to make a difference? Do you know children who would like to have a say? Contact Helen Sharratt, Children and Young People's Consultation Officer –

helensharratt@sthelens.gov.uk – 01744 671866

Visit the Local Offer website: www.sthelens.gov.uk/sen



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