



Hearing the voice of the  
children and young  
people

Suggested questions  
and conversation  
starters

It is really important to hear the voice of the children and young people (CYP) clearly throughout the Education Support Plan (ESP) and that their views and feelings are gained through an ongoing conversation using resources that nurture natural and comfortable dialogue.

Please see the list of **suggested** questions below for different aspects that may be useful for you in guiding that conversation. It is not designed as a set list of questions to work through.

1. What are you looking forward to this year/next week/next year/this term?
2. Tell me about your favourite day of the week/time in the day/thing to do at school.
3. What kind of job would you like to have when you are older?
4. What do you know about that job?
5. Why would you like to do that job?
6. What do you think would make you really good at that job?
7. Would you like to know more about that job or jobs that are similar?
8. How do you think school can help you get your dream job?
9. What qualifications do you think you might need to get that job?

## Education

This conversation should be around their thoughts on their education and their time in school with a focus on any recent transitions e.g. new school/class and their aspirations for the future.



## Social, Emotional and Mental Health

This conversation should be focused around **all** of their relationships and support networks in school and include **any** adults they have contact with and other children.

1. Who do you like to have lunch with/play with at breaktime?
2. Describe what lunchtime/break time is like for you.
3. Who do you like to sit next to in class?
4. Tell me about your friends
5. Who helps you when you are worried?
6. Tell me about the things you enjoy at school
7. Tell me about the things you are good at
8. Tell me about the things you find hard
9. What do you need help with?
10. What are you most proud of?
11. How do you feel when you are at school?
12. Do you feel safe at school?



1. What are your favourite subjects/lessons in school? Why do you like them?
2. Tell me about the subjects / lessons you find hard
3. What have you improved?
4. What have you achieved?
5. Have you received any certificates/awards/positive points...?
6. What are you most proud of in your learning? Can you show me a piece of work you are proud of?
7. What do you like to do after school?
8. Do you do any clubs/teams/hobbies? Is there anything new you'd like to try?
9. If you could be better at anything at all in school, what would it be and why?

## **Attainment**

This conversation should be around progress and attainment using specific data and work in their books. Consider asking subject staff/teachers/TA who work with them for feedback and use quotes from them to generate discussion points.



## Attendance

This conversation should be focused around their attendance and punctuality. Use up to date attendance data, including that from any other settings they may attend (alternative provision), to look for patterns around absence and lateness and form a conversation around it.

1. Tell me how you feel about your attendance?
2. What or who helps you to come to school?
3. Tell me about anything that makes it hard to come to school.
4. Is there anything that makes you worry about coming to school?
5. Is there anything that sometimes makes you late?
6. Describe what happens in the morning when you get up.
7. How do you make sure that you are ready for the day at school?
8. Tell me what happens in the evening. What do you like to do before you go to bed?



1. Do you know what your current outcomes are?
2. How do you feel they are going?
3. Do you think that you will achieve them by the next ESP meeting?
4. What other help do you need?
5. What would you like to work on next in school?
6. How would you like to do that?
7. Who is going to help you?
8. Can you think of anything you might need to help you?
9. How do you feel about the other outcomes that have been set for you?

## **SMART Outcomes**

This conversation should be focused on how they feel about their progress towards the desirable outcomes from the last ESP and their feelings about those that are to be set.



## Finally

Consider having a conversation that focuses on how they felt about the meeting, if they attended.

- **CYP are encouraged to attend the ESP meeting but understand that they may choose not to. If the CYP attended:**
  1. How did you feel when you were in the meeting?
  2. How do you feel the meeting went?
  3. What could the adults do to make the meeting more comfortable for you?
  4. Is there anything else that you would like to say?
- **If the CYP did not attend, please feedback to them afterwards to share the contents of the ESP and the meeting if appropriate.**





We encourage you to gain the views and feelings of your CYP through an ongoing conversation and to be creative in using other resources that nurture natural and comfortable dialogue.

## **Useful Resources**

[Cambridgeshire SEND Toolkit](#)

[Barnardos - "Say it your own way"](#)

[Early Help - "Voice of the child toolkit" \(includes a variety of worksheets and resources\)](#)

[Communi-crate worksheets](#)

[Voice of the child toolkit – Derby City Council](#)

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