

**Oxfordshire SEND Youth Forum:
What is it and how does it work?
(Terms of Reference)**

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The Terms of Reference have co-produced with members of the Youth Forum and will be reviewed annually.

1.Introduction

The Oxfordshire SEND Youth Forum aims to collect, thoughtfully consider and take action of the perspectives and lived experiences of CYP aged 3-25 across the local area. This will be done by collaborating with schools/settings to ensure a broad representation of CYP views, as well as those who attend alternative placements, or are home educated.

This will be done through raising awareness and championing their needs within the Council and with partner agencies, identifying where the Council and its partners in the SEND Local Area Partnership can improve SEND services, experiences and outcomes.

Participants between the ages of 16-25 can join the SEND Youth forum and participate in termly face to face meetings, with online meetings held on alternative months.

The SEND Youth Forum invites all CYP with SEND (with or without an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) in Oxfordshire to register and join, Professionals are invited to make a request to consult with the group.

2. Aims & Objectives (Our purpose in our words)

- To change the system, give people better support, and see what young people can achieve if we help them
- To give people opportunities to tell us their stories, feedback and what they want – online, through schools and at social events
- To hear about their lived experience – the good and the bad
- To enable CYP to engage with decision-makers in the Local Authority (LA)
- To represent that feedback and make sure that we get a response and share the positive work people are doing
- To make friends and make a difference

3. Code of Conduct (Ground rules)

To ensure that all members feel safe and comfortable in the SEND Youth Forum, the current members of the group have suggested and agreed to these ground rules when we meet:

- Everyone's voice matters
- We agree to disagree
- Encourage others and celebrate their efforts
- No bad words or swearing
- Ask for help if you feel unsure
- Respect personal space and boundaries
- Be respectful and listen to others

- Make sure you are honest
- Be kind
- Take care of the group materials and spaces
- Try new things and be open to activities
- Be supportive of each others ideas
- There are no silly questions
- Have fun!

New members will be sent copies of the Terms of Reference, Code of Conduct and Safeguarding information when they join.

In the unlikely event that concerns are raised about behaviour, please refer to Appendix 2 for guidance on how this will be addressed.

4. Membership

The SEND Youth Forum is open to any CYP aged 16-25 living in Oxfordshire with SEND. CYP will work towards obtaining views from CYP aged 3-15 via their school engagement work.

CYP are invited to complete an Expression of interest form here:

The Forum welcomes contributions from all CYP with SEND, and there may be other projects they can be involved with aside from taking part in the forum. There are a variety of roles available for CYP to be part of this process. SEND Youth Forum members need to be aged 16-25 but we would love to hear from any child or young person with SEND who is interested in giving their feedback on a variety of issues. There may be other roles available in the future, such as supporting at events, helping with advertising, social media, etc

5. Roles & Responsibilities

The SEND Youth Forum will be facilitated by the following staff from OCC:

- Jo Hoskin – Senior Youth Worker
- Lydia Martin – Senior SEND Project Officer

The Forum upholds the principles of co-production (see Appendix 1):

- Value every member
- Accessibility
- Respect
- Working together
- Confidentiality

The group aims to support CYP to take on additional roles and responsibilities, as and when they feel confident enough to volunteer for these.

6. Meetings

- Meetings are held termly in either County Hall or the Westgate Collaboration Space. We will try and use other venues around the county to make things more accessible where we can. Accessible taxis are provided, if necessary, but we encourage our members to use public transport or via support from the Independent Travel Training Team. Sometimes we may have to have online meetings in between.
- All members are invited and encouraged to propose items for discussion at meetings or between meetings.
- The meeting agenda is compiled and distributed by the facilitators a week before the meeting date.
- There are opportunities built into the programme for members to get to know one another and to have some light-hearted fun!

- Minutes of the meeting and an Action Log (things to be done, when and by whom) are agreed by the group and emailed to all members within 14 days following the meeting.
- Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure that as many forum members can attend comfortably.

Appendix 1

Co-production Principles

Value every member

- Everyone is considered equal
- No one person or group is more important than any other person or group

Accessibility

- Everyone has the same opportunity to take part in an activity fully in a way that suits them best
- This includes physical access but also clear, accessible information free from jargon
- Reasonable adjustments can be made to make sure that meetings are accessible to all

Respect

- Where there is disagreement, all members will challenge other people's viewpoint respectfully
- Members will first seek to understand through listening to what another member is expressing and then confirm that understanding
- Members will not only hear the words but fully embrace the meaning and value what is being said
- Members will respect different points of view and agree to disagree whilst trying to reach a consensus

Working Together

- All members will come together at the earliest opportunity to find shared solutions to problems
- Realistic frameworks for goals and working together will be set from the start to the end of a project

Confidentiality

- From time to time there may be issues around confidentiality and information sharing
- Members should not share information discussed in meetings without prior permission

Appendix 2

What will happen if people do not stick to the agreed ground-rules?

If someone breaks a rule, the facilitator will remind them of the ground rules. If they break a rule again, the facilitator will give them a warning. If they continue to break the rules, the facilitator will give them a second and final warning and will be asked to leave the meeting. An alternative way for them to contribute will be sought.

Appendix 3

Safeguarding

We believe that:

- Children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind
- We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them

We recognise that:

- The welfare of CYP is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take
- Working in partnership with CYP their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare
- All CYP, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Some CYP are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- Extra safeguards may be needed to keep CYP who are additionally vulnerable safe from abuse.

We will seek to keep children CYP safe by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct at Oxfordshire County Council
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- Recording and storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance (GDPR)
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with CYP and their families in a range of accessible ways
- Making sure that children, young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern
- Using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and other professionals appropriately
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our CYP and staff by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- Building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns

Designated Safeguarding Leads:

Joanna Hoskin Joanna.Hoskin@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

Lydia Martin Lydia.Martin@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The LADO gives advice and guidance to those who are concerned about an adult who works with children.

An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates that they may not be suitable to work with children

The LADO for Oxfordshire is Jo Lloyd

The LADO and Assistant LADO'S can be contacted
via lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk or call 01865 810603.



SEND
Youth Forum