Isle of Wight Council

Children's services participation and engagement strategy

2026 to 2029

Your voice • Your ideas • Our future



Isle of Wight Family voice partnership
• Your voice • Your ideas • Our future •

Isle of Wight Council

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Your voice matters

Your voice makes a difference

Your ideas help us improve

We want to hear from you

Whether you are a child, young person, parent, carer or family member, your views, experiences, and ideas are important. By sharing what is working well, what could be better and what matters most to you, you can help improve services and shape decisions that affect children, young people, and families across the Isle of Wight.

We are committed to listening, working together and showing how your feedback helps make a difference. Your voice can help create better services, better support and better outcomes for children, young people, and families now and in the future.

About this strategy

This guide explains how children's services will listen to children, young people, parents, carers and families during the period 2026 and 2029. It explains how you can get involved, share your views and experiences, and help shape and improve services across the Isle of Wight.

This strategy is about working together to improve services for children, young people and families. It focuses on how your feedback, ideas and experiences can influence decisions, service development and future improvements.

We recognise that children, young people, parents and carers are experts in their own lives. By listening to and learning from your experiences, we can make sure services better meet the needs of local families.

For children and young people with special education needs and disabilities (SEND), there are opportunities to be involved in decisions about your individual support, as well as opportunities to help improve SEND services. This strategy focuses on how children, young people, parents and carers can help shape and improve services for everyone.

Why participation matters

Participation means having opportunities to share your views, ideas, and experiences. It gives children, young people, parents, carers, and families a chance to have their voices heard and influence decisions that affect their lives and the services they use.

By listening to your experiences and learning from your feedback, we can better understand what is working well, what needs to improve and what matters most to local families. This helps us develop services that are more responsive, inclusive, and effective.

Participation is about more than being listened to. It is about working together to make a positive difference. We want you to be able to see how your views have influenced decisions, helped improve services and shaped future developments across the Isle of Wight.

Together, we can help create better services, stronger communities and improved outcomes for children, young people, and families.

Our vision

We want every child, young person, parent, carer, and family to feel heard, valued, respected and included.

We believe that everyone has strengths, experiences and ideas that can help shape and improve services. We want people to have meaningful opportunities to share their views and influence decisions that affect their lives and communities.

We will work alongside children, young people, parents, carers, and families as partners, recognising them as experts in their own lives. Together, we will learn, improve, and create services that better meet the needs of children, young people, and families across the Isle of Wight.

By 2029, we want everyone to be able to see how their voice has contributed to positive change and helped shape the future of services.



Look out for our logo

When you see the Isle of Wight family voice partnership logo, it means there is an opportunity for children, young people, parents, carers, and families to share their views, experiences, and ideas. The logo is used by children's services and partner organisations to show that they are working together to listen, include, involve, co-produce and improve services across the Isle of Wight.

The logo helps you recognise participation and engagement opportunities wherever they take place, including in family hubs, schools, health services, community organisations, and other partner services across the Island.

When you see the logo, you can be confident that:

- your voice matters;
- your views and experiences are valued;
- we want to hear what is important to you;
- your feedback can help shape services and support;
- we will share how your involvement has helped make a difference;
- organisations are working together to improve outcomes for children, young people, and families.

Our commitment to you

We will listen to children, young people, parents, carers and families and make sure your views, experiences and ideas help shape services and support.

We will create inclusive opportunities for everyone to get involved and work hard to remove barriers that might make participation difficult.

We will value your strengths, experiences, and expertise, treating everyone with respect and ensuring participation is safe, welcoming, and accessible.

We will work alongside you as partners, recognising that the people who use services are best placed to help us understand what works well and what could be improved.

We will tell you how your feedback has been used, what actions have been taken and the difference your involvement has made.

Together, we can improve services and create positive change for children, young people, and families across the Isle of Wight.

How you can get involved

There are lots of ways for children, young people, parents, carers and families to get involved, share their experiences and help shape services across the Isle of Wight. Everyone's voice matters, and there are different ways to take part depending on what works best for you.

You can get involved through:

- questionnaires and feedback opportunities;
- meetings, workshops, events, and community activities;
- participation groups, forums, and working groups;
- parent and carer groups, including opportunities to work alongside services to improve support;
- online engagement activities and consultations;
- creative projects such as art, photography, storytelling, and digital media;
- conversations with staff, professionals, and community partners;
- family hub events, coffee mornings and other local opportunities to share ideas and experiences.

We will offer a range of flexible, inclusive, and accessible opportunities so that everyone can participate in a way that feels comfortable and meaningful to them.

By getting involved, you can help influence decisions, improve services, and make a positive difference for children, young people, and families across the Isle of Wight.

Children and young people

You are the expert in your own life, and your views, ideas and experiences can help make services better for children and young people across the Isle of Wight.

We want to hear what is important to you, what is working well and what could be improved. By getting involved, you can help shape decisions, influence services, and make a real difference.

There are lots of ways to get involved, including youth groups, surveys, events, creative projects, online activities, and participation forums. Whatever your interests, skills or experience, there is a place for your voice to be heard.

We will make sure participation is safe, inclusive, and accessible, and we will let you know how your ideas and feedback have helped create change.

We will:

- listen to what matters to you;
- give you opportunities to share your views, ideas, and experiences;
- support you to influence decisions and help shape services;
- help you build confidence, skills, and leadership opportunities;
- work alongside you to improve services for children and young people.;
- show you how your feedback has made a difference.

Parents and carers

You know your child and family best. Your experiences, ideas and feedback help us understand what is working well, what could be improved and what matters most to local families.

We want to work alongside parents and carers as partners in shaping and improving services. By sharing your views and experiences, you can help influence decisions, improve support, and make a positive difference for children, young people, and families across the Isle of Wight.

There are lots of ways to get involved, including surveys, events, parent and carer groups, workshops, consultations, and opportunities to work with us to develop and improve services.

We will listen, value your expertise, and make sure you can see how your feedback has helped shape decisions and improvements.

We will:

- listen to your views, experiences, and ideas;
- value your expertise as a parent or carer;
- provide opportunities for you to share feedback and influence decisions;
- work alongside you to improve services and support;
- create inclusive and accessible ways for you to get involved;
- show you how your feedback has informed improvements and made a difference.



Making participation accessible

Everyone should have the opportunity to get involved and have their voice heard.

We know that people have different needs, experiences, and ways of communicating. That is why we will offer a range of opportunities to help children, young people, parents, carers, and families take part in ways that work best for them.

We are committed to creating inclusive, welcoming, and accessible participation opportunities where everyone feels valued, respected, and able to contribute.

If you need additional support to get involved, we will work, with you to identify what would help and remove barriers wherever possible.

We will:

- create participation opportunities that are inclusive, accessible, and welcoming.
- offer different ways for people to share their views, experiences, and ideas.
- provide information in accessible formats where needed.
- support children, young people, parents, carers, and families who may need extra help to take part.
- work to remove barriers that might prevent people from getting involved.
- ensure everyone has the opportunity to contribute to and influence positive change.

We want participation to reflect the diverse experiences, strengths and voices of children, young people, parents, carers, and families across the Isle of Wight.

Recognising your contribution

We value the time, experiences, ideas, and expertise that children, young people, parents, carers, and families share with us. Your involvement helps us learn, improve services, and make better decisions for local families.

We want everyone who takes part to feel valued and appreciated. Just as importantly, we want you to be able to see how your views and experiences have helped make a difference.

We may recognise and celebrate participation by:

- sharing how your feedback has influenced decisions and improvements;
- providing certificates, references, or recognition of your involvement;
- offering thank you vouchers where appropriate;
- celebrating achievements through events, communications, and participation activities;
- providing opportunities to develop confidence, skills, and leadership experience.

We will always make sure that recognition is fair, inclusive, and transparent.

The most important way we recognise your contribution is by showing how your voice has helped create positive change for children, young people, and families across the Isle of Wight.

Measuring success

We want participation to make a real difference for children, young people, parents, carers, and families across the Isle of Wight. We will regularly ask people about their experiences and use what we learn to improve services, support and opportunities to get involved.

Success is not just about how many people take part. It is about whether people feel heard, valued, and able to influence change. We also want people to be able to see how their feedback has helped shape decisions and improve services.

To understand the difference participation is making, we will ask:

- Do you feel listened to and heard?
- Do you feel respected, valued, and included?
- Have you had meaningful opportunities to share your views and experiences?
- Has your feedback helped improve services, support, or decisions?
- Can you see the difference your involvement has made?

We will use this feedback to keep learning, improving, and working together with children, young people, parents, carers, and families to create better services and outcomes for everyone.

Most importantly, we want people to feel confident that their voice matters and that their involvement helps create positive change.

You said, we did, so what?

Your voice matters, and we want you to know how your feedback helps make a difference. When children, young people, parents, carers, and families share their views, experiences, and ideas, we will listen, learn, and take action, where we can.

We are committed to being open and transparent about how participation influences decisions, helps improve services and creates positive change.

We will:

- listen to what children, young people, parents, carers, and families tell us;
- use your feedback, experiences, and ideas to help improve services and make better decisions;
- tell you what we have done in response to your feedback;
- show the difference your involvement has made and the outcomes that have been achieved;
- share updates through participation groups, family hubs, the local offer, our website, and other communication channels so you can see how your voice influenced change.

Because participation is not just about being heard, it is about making a difference together.



You said, we listened

Turning your feedback into positive improvements

Here's what changed

You told us	What we did	The difference it makes
Communication could be clearer.	Introduced monthly updates.	Everyone stays better informed.
Response times need to improve.	Streamlined our process.	Quicker responses and resolutions.
Contact routes were unclear.	Created a dedicated contact point.	Easier access to support.
Information was hard to find.	Improved guidance and resources.	Greater confidence and satisfaction.
You wanted more opportunities to share feedback.	Put actions into place.	Better outcomes for everyone.

A real example

You told us	We listened	The result
"We needed a clearer point of contact."	We created a dedicated partnership mailbox an introduced an escalation process.	Queries are reaching the right people more quickly, helping us respond faster and reduce delays.

Thank you!

Your feedback helps us improve the way we work together.

Please keep sharing your ideas, suggestions, and experiences so we can continue making positive changes.

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Our goal by 2029

By 2029, we want every child, young person, parent, carer, and family to have meaningful opportunities to share their views, experiences, and ideas.

We want people to feel heard, valued, respected and included in decisions that affect their lives and the services they use.

We want children, young people, parents and carers to be recognised as partners in helping to shape, improve and influence services across the Isle of Wight.

We want everyone to be able to see how their feedback, experiences and ideas have helped create positive change and improve services and support.

Our ambition is simple: every voice matters, every contribution is valued, and working together leads to better outcomes for children, young people, and families.



Key messages

- Your voice matters and can help make a difference.
- We will listen to your views, experiences, and ideas.
- We will work alongside children, young people, parents, carers, and families as partners in shaping and improving services.
- We will use your feedback to help improve services, support, and outcomes.
- We will create meaningful opportunities for people to get involved and influence decisions.
- We will value the strengths, experiences, and expertise that children, young people, parents, carers, and families bring.
- We will work to remove barriers and make participation inclusive and accessible for everyone.
- We will share what has changed because of your feedback and show the difference your involvement has made.
- Together, we can create positive change and improve services for children, young people, and families across the Isle of Wight.

Every voice matters. Every contribution is valued. Together, we can shape better services and brighter futures for children, young people, and families.

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- large print;
- audio format;
- different languages;
- other accessible formats on request.

How to find further information or request this information in another format:

Please email: cscparticipation@iow.gov.uk or call 01983 823169 and ask for Katie or Maiya, our participation and engagement officers.

