Buckinghamshire County Council

Person Centred Reviews

Guidance for Educational Settings
Introduction
In September 2014 the Children and Families Act, 2014 was introduced. The Code of Practice (CoP) was published to provide additional guidance for organisations who work with and support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. Some of the principles underpinning the Act and the CoP are outlined below:

- Participating in decision making
- Supporting children, young people and parents to participate in decisions about their support
- Involving children, young people and parents in planning services
- A focus on inclusive practice
- Supporting successful preparation for adulthood.

These principles have informed the development of Person Centred approaches in Buckinghamshire and their use in Annual Reviews.

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Annual Reviews
The Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs and Disability states that any child in receipt of an Education, Health and Care Plan or a statement of SEN should have their needs reviewed at least once annually. For children under 5 it is recommended the plan is reviewed at least every 3-6 months. This review must be held within 12 months of the date when the EHC plan was issued, and then within 12 months of any previous review. If the young person is transferring to another school or college the timing of the review will need to be altered to aid a successful transition.

At least two weeks before the start of each term the local authority will provide a list of children and young people who will require a review of their EHC plan or statement that term to head teachers and principals of all schools, colleges and other institutions attended by children or young people with EHC plans and statements. (CoP section 9.172).

The SEN Code of Practice states that reviews must be undertaken in partnership with the child or young person and their parents and must take account of their views wishes and feelings. Person centred reviews are the way that this partnership working can be achieved. As well as the detailed guidance provided in this booklet, further resources and training for children and young people, parents, schools, settings and external agencies is available from the Educational Psychology Service.
**A Person Centred approach – what is it?**

*Person Centred Planning discovers and acts on what is important to a person. It is a process for continual listening and learning, focusing on what is important to someone now and in the future, and acting on this in alliance with their family and their friends* (Sanderson).

A Person centred approach puts the child/young person at the centre of the planning and decision making process. The process involves the child/young person but is facilitated by an adult.

Our aims in Buckinghamshire are to:

- Put children and young people at the centre of the planning and decision making process
- Bring people together to celebrate successes and to address difficulties with honesty and compassion
- Help children and young people to learn how to express their views, how to listen and how to make choices
- Show children and young people they are listened to, respected and valued and belong
- Help people to get to know children and young people they support so they have a better understanding of their needs, wishes and can assess more appropriately the outcomes for them
- Make plans towards meaningful outcomes for children and young people and their families
- Show children and young people we have aspirations and hopes for their future and we will work collaboratively to ensure they have a good life

**Why do we need to do this?**

The research has shown that for too long the outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs have been limited. Negative descriptions have led to lowered expectations, reduced status and social roles for many young people with additional needs. Inclusion has aimed to offer children and young people with special educational needs the chance to lead an ordinary life. Person centred approaches allow us to really find out what is important to the child or young person, so that we can enlist the support available to pursue not just an ordinary life, but a good life.

*The life we would expect for all of our children.*
Person Centred Approaches – the benefits

Person Centred approaches have shown that:

- Children and young people take greater ownership for their learning, are more motivated, act more confidently and take greater pride in their achievements
- People see the child or young person in a new light, discovering more about their skills and resources
- Collaborative work maximises the strengths of the team around the child and young person, aiding joint thinking and planning
- A clearer focus on strengths and needs leads to better outcomes
- All involved can establish their roles in supporting the child and young person and they can identify how best to work together to achieve the set outcomes
- Targets are more individualised, personalised and meaningful
- Those involved are able to reflect on what approaches are working well and how effective the interventions are in helping the child or young person to progress
- School and community cultures become more positive and inclusive

Background

The Person Centred Approach is based on humanistic philosophy which emphasises the human capacity for choice, growth and fulfilment (Rogers 1961).

It arose in the 1980s in an attempt to redress the discriminatory practices and negative problems faced by people with special needs and disabilities.

'Framework for Accomplishment' lists five key areas important in shaping people’s quality of life, and asserting that services should be judged by the extent to which they enable people to:

- Share ordinary places
- Make choices
- Develop abilities
- Be treated with respect and have a valued social role
- Grow in relationships
The **guiding principles** of person centred planning are that:

- Children and young people should be listened to and their feelings should be taken into account
- All children and young people have the right to be consulted about the services they receive
- All children and young people have a right to participate actively and equally in school life
- Children and young people should be valued partners who may play an important role in making their lives better
- The adults role is to empower children and young people to promote their independence and enable them to do things for themselves

**The process itself**

A Person-centered approach is a process that focusses on:

- Seeing people first, rather than diagnostic labels or their difficulties
- Using ordinary language and images, rather than professional jargon
- Promoting a person's skills, competences and resources in the context of their lives
- Strengthening the voice of the person, and those who know the person best, to have a clear idea of where they are at, their present needs, the resources available to them and to work together to identify and bring about desirable changes in their life

There are a number of person centred techniques and tools available. These tools can be very powerful in improving:

- Focused listening
- Creative thinking
- Better relationships

The tools when used well, with enthusiasm and commitment, can be an excellent way of planning with children and young people who might otherwise find it difficult to plan their lives, or may in the past have found that others have made plans and taken decisions for them. The impact on their lives can be significant.

The key to a great person centred approach is having the vision, the commitment and being able to put the child or young person first and foremost.
Who should be invited to the review:

People who play an important part in the child/young person’s life should be asked to attend or contribute to the review and given at least two weeks’ notice of the date of the meeting (CoP 9.176).

- Parents and carers
- A member of school/setting staff: SENCo; Teacher; Teaching assistant, Key person
- A Local Authority representative (SEN officer, Educational Psychologist, Social Care team member)
- Outside Agencies: Speech and Language therapists; Occupational therapists; Physiotherapist; CAMHS; Paediatrician; School Nurse, YOS, CEAS.
- For a child/young person in care – Social worker
- For a child/young person transferring to a different school – someone from the receiving school
- For young people in year 9,10 or 11 – Connexions staff; Careers advisor

For looked after children the annual review should coincide with one of the personal education plan (PEP) reviews in their Care Plan.
Preparation by the educational setting BEFORE the review

The following need to be considered prior to the review:

Invitations
- Agree all the people to be invited
- Ask the young person to either draw up their own invitations or add their personal touch to one of the templates included at the end of this guidance
- Send out the invitations four weeks before the review
- Send to interpreters if needed

Gathering information
- Discuss the child/young person’s contribution and ask them how they would like to present their information (see All About Me’ at the end of this guidance)
- Collate school report
- Request reports from professionals
- Circulate reports and advice/views received at least two weeks before
- These may need translating (into another language or braille) in which case longer will be needed in preparation.

The venue
- Where will the review be held
- Can the room accommodate the number of people expected
- Consider the seating arrangements – a semi-circle of chairs is more welcoming

Resources
- Collect resources – flip chart paper, pens, review sheets etc.
- Technology needs to be organised if being used
- Make an annual review pass/ badge for the child/young person
- Make a “Please do not disturb; important meeting in place” style sign
- List any rules or housekeeping issues (check whether a fire drill is due)

Preparation by the Educational setting ON THE DAY of the review
- Set up the room
- Set up the technology links if being used
- Place the sheets around the room, use the headings suggested (p8) or your own; or set up the interactive white board if being used
- Make the refreshments with the young person if appropriate
- Lay out your resources
Preparation of the child or young person for the review

The young person needs to be made aware of the purpose of the meeting. They need to see it as their review, where they take as active part as possible in the planning and participation of the review.

Some students may not wish to play a part or may experience difficulties in doing so. Means of communicating their thoughts, feelings and aspirations need to be considered prior to the meeting, so that their views are accurately represented during the review. Drawings, pictures, symbols and technology can be used to ensure the young person has as much of a voice or presence as possible.

Additional support where required for children and young people or parents and carers experiencing difficulties will need to be planned and organised prior to the meeting. This might include support for literacy, language, signing or an additional language.

The atmosphere and environment at the review should allow everyone to feel at ease. Music can be played and light refreshments always offered. The child or young person will be asked to decide on what might be appropriate.

Carry out a one page profile to identify key points –

Some Buckinghamshire schools recognise one page profiles as a useful resource to gather information about strengths, interests and support needed for all children and are undertaking them in PSHE lessons.
Communication considerations

English as an additional language
If a child, young person or family have English as an additional language the following considerations need to be made:
- Would the child prefer to present their views in their first language
- Is an interpreter needed for the child or for the family
- A longer period may be required for the meeting to allow for the translation of any documents/information
- Ensure translators are available for the family during the meeting

Limited literacy
If the child or young person has limited literacy, this should be known and arrangements can be made such as using a scribe or technology. If the family have limited literacy, this may not be known. Prior knowledge about the parent or carer’s level of literacy would help to plan for the meeting. The following should be considered:
- A meeting beforehand with the child or young person and parents or carers to check how comfortable they feel about speaking in the meeting. They may ask for a representative or the facilitator to speak for them.
- The facilitator should ensure all participants feel comfortable in writing their views and respond sensitively to any difficulties
- A scribe can be assigned should parents wish for this
- Views can be established by means of technology, for example audio recordings or videoing which could be played at the meeting

Hearing loss
A signer may be required to facilitate communication for children/young people or parents/carers who are deaf or who have hearing loss.

How involved are the children and young people in your reviews?

Child as a participant
Child as a partner
Child at heart of decision making and planning process
Child Consulted
Child Represented
Child Considered
Child Informed
Child Absent
Participatory
Non-Participatory
**Timing**

Meetings should generally be scheduled for around 1 ½ hours. The facilitator should be clear at the beginning of the review that time needs to be used as effectively as possible. Parents/Carers and Professionals are often busy and need to have a clear indication of how much time will be spent. Where possible arrange a number of reviews to take place on the same day to ensure the professionals’ time is most effectively managed.

**Examples of timings are given but these are only notional and will be refined as the process is evaluated.**

- **Refreshments** 5 mins
- **Welcome and outline of purpose of the review** 5 mins
- **Offering of views (written up on sheets)** 20 mins
- **Discussion of each sheet (to clarify and expand so that the action planning is easier)** 30 mins
- **Action planning** 10 mins
- **Changes to the last statement of SEN or EHCP** 15 mins
- **Consensus on plan and outline of next steps** 5 mins
- **Thank-you and Goodbyes** 5 mins

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**Physical Needs**

Consideration of the physical needs of all participants will need to be given.

- Ensuring that the flip chart papers or screens are at eye level and easily accessible for the child, young person and parents or carers with mobility issues
- Having space within the room for people in wheel chairs to move freely around
- If no space is possible then consider alternative ways of gaining views, for example circulating a piece of A4 paper that each person can write their views on
- If signing is being used to facilitate communication then additional time needs to be given to allow for this
Facilitation during the meeting

The Head Teacher, Principal or SENCo would normally facilitate the meeting. They would start by welcoming everyone and explaining briefly why the meeting is taking place.

The role of the chair/facilitator is to help people participate in the process, keeping them on track and helping everyone to identify realistic and positive decisions. They need to ensure everything is recorded.

An overview of the review using the headings to illustrate key points should be given. The focus is on joint working. Each participant will be asked to give their view on the following:

1. **What the child or young person’s strengths are** – what they like and admire about them. This can also include any activities or hobbies they enjoy doing.

2. **What has gone well and what evidence is there for this** - This allows people to identify what has happened to promote progress. Looking at the evidence is added to help people reflect on what is making a difference.

3. **What is important to and for the child or young person in terms of their outcomes NOW.**

4. **What is important to and for the child or young person in terms of their outcomes in THE FUTURE.**

5. **Review of the outcomes.**

6. **What is not working well.**

7. **Actions needed.**

The facilitator needs to briefly outline simple rules:

- Keep language simple (no jargon)
- Everyone’s contribution is valued
- Listen without interruption
- Spelling mistakes are o.k.!
- Confidentiality – information needs to be shared on a need to know basis
- Switch off or put mobile phones on silent!
Below are the suggested headings for the meeting. Some examples are given below for areas that the facilitator may wish to explore with participants.

**What do we like and admire?**
- Strengths
- Hobbies, interests, extra-curricular activities
- Learning style - strengths
- Personal characteristics
- Responses to responsibility/challenge

**What is working well?**
- Learning - what methods/strategies/interventions have been effective?
- Social skills; Sense of belonging
- What evidence have we got for this?
  - Charts/graphs/ comparison of levels/ages

**NOW**
- What is important to...

**IN THE FUTURE**
- What is important to...

**NOW**
- What is important for...
  - Leisure
  - Education
  - Health
  - Care
  - Relationships

**IN THE FUTURE**
- What is important for...
  - Leisure
  - Education
  - Health
  - Care
  - Relationships
**My outcomes**

(written before the meeting taken from previous review)

These can be referred to at any point within the process

If SMART targets have been written they should play a major part in all aspects of the discussion

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**What is not working**

Learning needs not being met

Interventions not as effective as thought

Behaviour needing a different approach

Health needs unaddressed or requiring review

Focus on preparation for adulthood missing

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**Actions needed**

These should take into account prior targets, reflected on throughout the meeting to enable short and long term aims to be met.

They need to be realistic and clear.

A new provision map needs to be drawn up to show who will do what, when and how.

Targets for expected progress should be included, with an indication of how these might be measured.

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**Does my statement or plan need to be amended, converted or ceased?**

- Are the outcomes in my statement/EHCP met?
- Can my needs be met by the support already in school?
- Do my additional needs no longer slow down my access to the curriculum?
- Do I have friendships with other children?
- Do I need daily adult supervision or lots of support daily?
- Have I made consistent progress in my main areas of need over time and could my additional needs be met by support already available in school?
The meeting must focus on the child or young person’s progress towards achieving the outcomes specified in the EHC plan or SEN support plan or objectives specified in their statement. The meeting should also focus on what changes might need to be made to the support that is provided to help the child/young person to achieve those outcomes or objectives, or whether changes are needed to the outcomes or objectives themselves.

According to the SEN Code of Practice an outcome can be defined as:

‘The benefit or difference made to an individual as a result of an intervention’
(CoP 9.64 – 9.68).

Further guidance about writing outcomes is available in the document ‘ Guidance for Professional Report Writing’ together with further resources, advice and training available through the Educational Psychology Service.

Recording the review

The details of discussion at the child/ young person’s person centred review should be formally recorded on the form entitled ‘Headteacher’s Report of the Annual Review Meeting and Recommendations’ and returned to the SEN Team. This form is available on the Bucks Grid for Learning and/or the Bucks SEND website:

http://www.bucksc.gov.uk/SEND.

If changes have been made to the EHC plan or statement a copy of the document with the recommended changes should be sent to SEN with the Headteacher’s Report. Schools should keep their own records of the information shared at the person centred reviews by storing written or audio visual contributions made by those in the meeting as well as documents completed in preparation for the meeting.
Invitation Templates

Dear

You are invited to my Annual review. This will look at:

- What I do well
- How you help me (your role)
- What I want to achieve
- How everyone can help me to do that

It is on: (date)
At: (time)
In : (place)
From: (child/young person's name)

Dear

You are invited to my BIG / Important review. This will be ALL about ME.

We will look at:

- What I do well
- How you help me (your role)
- What I want to achieve
- How everyone can help me to do that

It is on: (date)
At: (time)
In : (place)
From: (child/young person's name)
Below are a number of ways in which the child or young person’s views can be gathered to contribute to their person centred review. Parent/Carer forms are also offered.

ALL ABOUT ME

My Person Centred Annual Review – CONFIDENTIAL

CHILD / YOUNG PERSON’S CONTRIBUTION

This review is all about

(Add name)

Insert photo or symbol chosen by the child
What I like about me.

What is working well?

What is not working so well?
What is important for me NOW

What’s important for me in the FUTURE

What are the outcomes I am aiming for (SENCo to fill out before handing to child/young person)
What would I like to see happen? What do I want to be better?

Any other information you think is important
What I like and admire about (name of child/young person). What are their strengths?

What is working well?

What is not working so well?
What is important for (name of Child/Young Person) NOW?

What’s important for (name of Child/Young Person) in the FUTURE?

What are the outcomes my child/young person is aiming for? (SENCo to fill out before handing to Parent)
What would I like to see happen? What do I want to be better for them?

What actions can I or others take to help (name of Child/Young Person) progress?

Anything else you would like to add