



Swindon SEND Co-production Charter

June 2026



For the Local Authority, Health, Education Settings, Third Sector and Families





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Swindon SEND Co-production Charter

For successful co-production with children, young people and parents/carers, it is important to plan for what may be referred to as the 5 C's – **collaboration**, **co-commissioning**, **co-design**, **co-delivery** and **co-assessment**.

The 5 C's have equal importance for the successful co-production of services now and in the future. It is a way to ensure that the Swindon SEND Local Area Partnership listen to the voices of children and young people at all stages of any project/new service.

To use the 5 C's, the Swindon SEND Local Area Partnership needs to commit to build relationships with children, young people and parents/carers as follows:

Collaboration	Co-commissioning	Co-design
We will build strong relationships with children, young people and parents/carers, based on communication, trust and mutual respect. We will grow shared values, shared goals and a common understanding of what needs to be achieved to continue to improve services for children and young people with SEND and their parents/carers. We will share responsibility with children, young people with SEND and their parents/carers and value their active contributions. We will share decision making and the implementation of decisions with children, young people with SEND and their parents/carers.	We will build in the voices of children and young people and parents/carers at the beginning of any new service/project to ensure all key stakeholder's voices are heard.	We will ensure the design of services remains relevant. We will include clear communication between service providers and parents/carers who use services.
	Co-delivery	Co-assessment
	We will ensure the voices of children, young people and parents/carers contribute to service delivery. We will explain why the services are needed, and the support systems in place to ensure better outcomes, for example by giving peer support to others, co-delivery of empowerment workshops.	We will ensure the voices of children and young people are heard in assessing what has worked well, what has not, and what changes are needed for further improvement. *Please refer to Appendix 4 – Glossary of terms to explain any words you may not understand.

Swindon's Co-production Charter Promises

The Swindon SEND Co-production Charter includes six promises related to improving the services and outcomes experienced by children and young people with SEND in Swindon. It is a demonstration of commitment and intent by the Swindon SEND Local Area Partnership to the principles and practices of co-production with children/young people with SEND and their parents/carers as a way of working that is embedded across and within the SEND system of services and support. The SEND Local Area Partnership will value all voices and opinions given by children, young people and parents/carers regardless of background, identity or ability, so that they feel valued and respected.

Swindon's Co-production Charter Promises

The Swindon SEND Local Area Partnership and services working with children/young people with SEND promise the following:

- 1

To give children, young people and parents/carers information that is accurate and appropriate
- 2

To tell children, young people and parents/carers who is going to listen and the difference their involvement could make in a service/project
- 3

To give children, young people and parents/carers the choice to be involved, and the time and support to make any choices
- 4

To listen to the views, experiences and ideas of children, young people and parents/carers and take these views seriously
- 5

To work with children and young people in a safe, fun and enjoyable way that supports their needs. All contributions that are offered will be valued
- 6

To listen to children, young people and parents/carers and learn from them to make things better for them, ensuring they are heard in all decisions about them

How the impact of the SEND Co-production Charter will be evaluated

The SEND Co-production Charter will be reviewed every 12 months and updated to ensure it remains relevant.

Stakeholders and services working with children/young people with SEND and their parents/ carers will be required to provide a self-assessment annually to SEND Strategic Partnership Board in September, starting 12 months after the launch of the SEND Co-production Charter. An example SEND Co-production Charter Annual Self-Assessment style is included in Appendix 1.

This annual self-assessment from stakeholders and services should demonstrate how co-production is embedded or developing within their organisation. It should include feedback on:

- How well the Swindon’s Co-production Charter Promises have been met.
- How the voices of children/young people with SEND, parents/carers are making a difference to services, for example, by showing feedback in a ‘You said, we did’ format.
- Any challenges or barriers faced in co-producing with children/young people with SEND and parents/carers.
- Details of when co-production has not been able to take place and why.

The impact of this SEND Co-production Charter will be monitored by the SEND Strategic Partnership Board annually after publication. Each service area should submit their self-assessment through their representative on the Board.



Appendix 1 – for Professionals/Service Providers

Example Service Area SEND Co-production Charter Annual Self-Assessment	
Name of Service Area:	
Name of person completing the annual self-assessment:	
12-month period covered by this self-assessment:	
Please answer the following questions in relation to your service over the last 12 months, giving examples. *Refer to the SEND Co-production Charter document, including the models of co-production and the Charter Promises as needed.	
How has your service used co-production with young people, parents/carers to improve service delivery?	
How well has your service met the Swindon’s Co-production Charter Promises? Please give details.	
How have the voices of children/young people with SEND and parents/carers made a difference to your service?	
What challenges or barriers have you faced in co-producing with children/ young people with SEND and parents/carers?	
When was co-production not able to take place and why? Please give details.	

You said	We did/We listened	We are doing
Eg: Young people said “we need shorter waiting lists for services”.	Eg: We have ensured there are services available that can support children/ young people and parents/ carers whilst they are on waiting lists to receive services, so they still get support.	Eg: We are commissioning more services, based on evidence of need. This should reduce waiting lists with service provider. We are working on being more transparent with families about length of waiting times.

Appendix 2 – for Professionals/Service Providers

What is Co-production and why do we need a Swindon SEND Co-production Charter?

Understanding and Defining Co-production

Co-production is about more than consulting with children and young people. It is about an equal, reciprocal partnership within which all stakeholders not only feel heard but really feel part of the decision-making process from start to finish.

Stakeholders are all the people/groups involved or that have a vested interest in what is being done, eg: writing a strategy or reviewing a young person's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

The vision of this SEND Co-production Charter, aligning with the Swindon Borough Council's (SBC) Children's Services Children and Young People's Participation Strategy, (copy not available at time of publication) and Adults Working Together Plan [Swindon's Adult Services' Working Together Plan 2024-2029 | Swindon Borough Council](#) is for all children, young people and the parents/carers who support them living in Swindon to be enabled to have their voices heard and acted upon at all levels, eg: within the individual support they receive and also strategically as to how services/organisations operate.

This is about children, young people and parents/carers being at the heart of services and being involved with planning and decision-making from the very beginning through to completion. It is about service providers working in a person-centred way with those using their services.

Why do we need a SEND Co-production Charter?

In June 2025, Swindon's SEND Local Area participated in a Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Review to prepare for the next Local Area inspection of services for children and

young people with SEND. Within the feedback from this LGA Peer Review, it was noted there was no well-known SEND Co-production Charter in place and recommended that one be drawn up and widely circulated to all local area partners. The SEND Co-production Charter should be instrumental in supporting services working together to improve the lives of children/young people with SEND and their parents/carers.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) 1992, Article 12 states that "Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously". [UN Convention on Rights of a Child \(UNCRC\) - UNICEF UK](#)

This SEND Co-production Charter has been co-produced with Swindon SEND Families Voice (SSFV) (Swindon's Parent Carer Forum), STEP Swindon (who are commissioned to support work in gaining the voices of children with SEND), and representatives from local area services covering Education, Health and Care for children and young people with SEND in Swindon.

The benefits of co-producing services with children and young people with SEND and their parents/carers are widely recognised. By asking those who use the services their opinions about what is needed including improvements, services are more likely to meet their needs and therefore have successful outcomes both for the children, young people and parents/carers, and for our local communities.

The aim of this document is to act as a guide to anyone wishing to co-produce with children and young people with SEND in Swindon. It is referenced in the SEND Inclusion & Alternative Provision Strategy and Plan 2023-28 [Swindon SENDi & AP strategy 2023-2028 | Swindon Borough Council](#).

There is already considerable participation activity within Swindon, but there is acknowledgement that more could be co-produced. It is hoped that this document will support more co-production within the services that work with children and young people with SEND, so their voices may be heard and influence what is available to them within their local community.



Appendix 3 – for Professionals/Service Providers

How the Co-production Charter was developed

Young people and parent/carers voices

In the Survey of SEND Services 2026 young people and parents/carers were asked whether they were regularly asked by practitioners/professionals to give their thoughts, ideas and opinions to be included in plans about them. The results are in the following table:

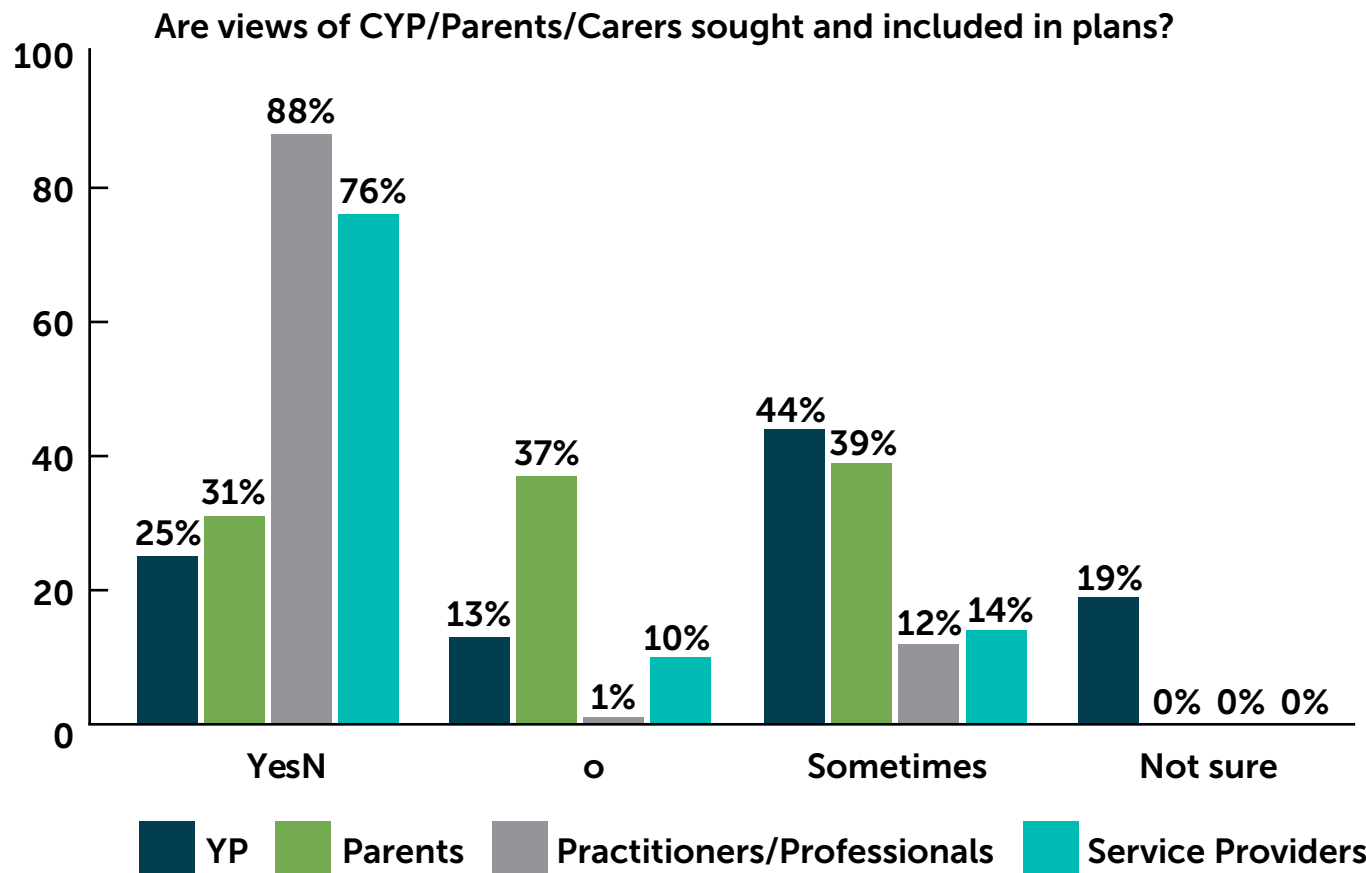


Figure 1: Comparison of views of children/young people and parents/carers included in plans

This shows that whilst practitioners/professionals and service providers report in the survey results that most/all of the time they are seeking the views of children/young people and parents/carers, the children/young people and parents/carers report that only sometimes their views are sought.

Also, in December 2025, we asked young people with SEND in Swindon what they felt was important to include in a SEND Co-production Charter. They let us know the following:

- They liked Lundy’s Model of Participation (2007), as it set the scene for how professionals can work with them to achieve positive outcomes.
- They did not visually like a ‘ladder’ model of participation, but preferred the pyramid version, for example Griffiths et al. (2021). This was due to the relationship building nature of the pyramid version.

In addition, in Spring 2024, autistic young people in Swindon were asked what was important to them, when working with professionals/practitioners. Some of their responses were:

- **Have an ability first mindset.** This means focussing on our abilities and not the label of a disability. Autistic people often have amazing abilities.
- **Simply talk to us about how best you can support us.** Assume competence on the part of the autistic young person and hear from us as much as possible before consulting our parents/carers. Don’t assume that we cannot speak for ourselves.
- **Consider alternative communication methods.** This is especially true of nonverbal young people, although a verbal person may be very articulate but struggle to speak at length in a conversation, often because of anxiety. Offer us options such as writing and drawing too. Get creative.
- **Consider special interests.** Talk to us about our special interest/s and be curious. It helps with bonding, and you will often learn something new!
- **Be prepared for a wide range of responses, don’t get easily offended.** It’s unlikely that an autistic young person or any young person will want to offend you if you are genuinely listening and trying to help them.

Within the Survey of SEND Services 2026 responses, parents/carers gave us the following feedback in relation to what has worked well for them in the past year (list is not exhaustive):

- Project Search has been brilliant, hoping the programme continues so it can help more young people.
- School/College support has been really helpful to meet the child’s needs.
- More special school places to meet child’s needs
- The support received from Swindon Carers, SIAS, Swindon SEND Families Voice, Special Tots.
- Reasonable adjustments when taking exams/tests.

Within the same survey responses, parents/carers let us know what may be helpful to support their child/young person whilst they are on a waiting list to receive support:

- Ensuring all professionals working with the child/young person know they are on the waiting list so other support can be offered whilst they wait (graduated response).
- To have one person (key worker) allocated to provide advice and support to the child/young person and parent/carers whilst they wait, and to contact them periodically to reassure them they have not been forgotten.
- More information about waiting lists, preparation and alternative services. Regular updates on status of waiting list.

The Co-production approach

Children and young people with SEND fed back that they preferred Lundy's Model of Participation (2007) 'Voice' is not enough: conceptualising Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child - Lundy - 2007 - British Educational Research Journal - Wiley Online Library and Griffiths et al. (2021) building blocks of collaboration Together We Can Do So Much: A Systematic Review and Conceptual Framework of Collaboration in Schools - Amy-Jane Griffiths, James Alsip, Shelley R. Hart, Rachel L. Round, John Brady, 2021.

Below are visual representations of these two participation models.

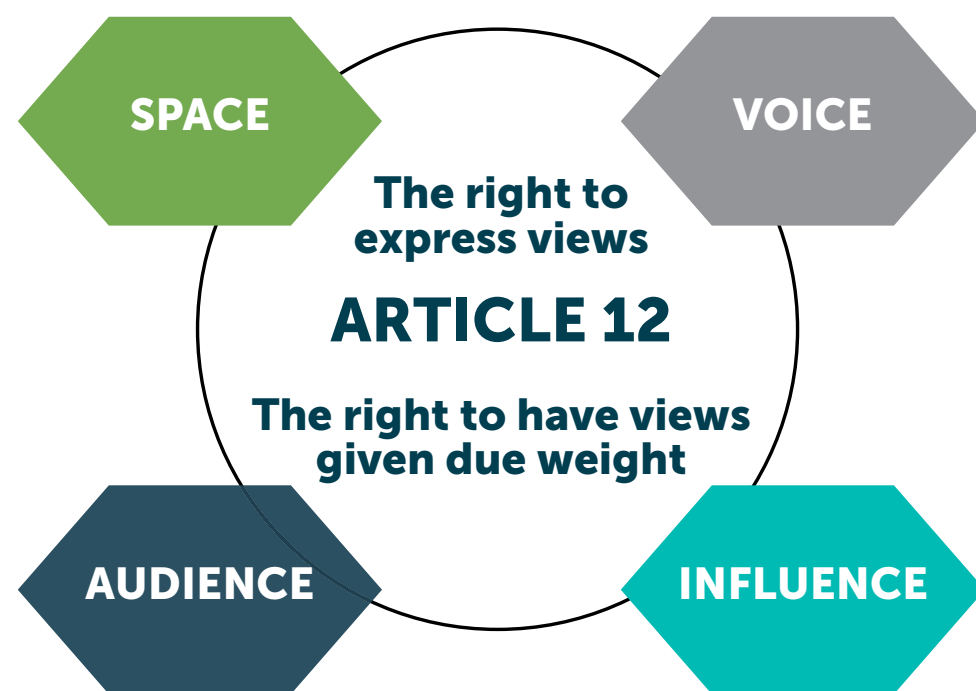


Figure 2: Lundy's Model of Participation (2007)

Lundy's Model of Participation (2007) sets out the environmental factors to consider when starting participation work with children and young people. It identifies the need for:

- **SPACE:** Children must be given safe, inclusive opportunities to form and express their view
- **VOICE:** Children must be facilitated to express their view
- **AUDIENCE:** The view must be listened to
- **INFLUENCE:** The view must be acted upon, as appropriate

What matters to children and young people

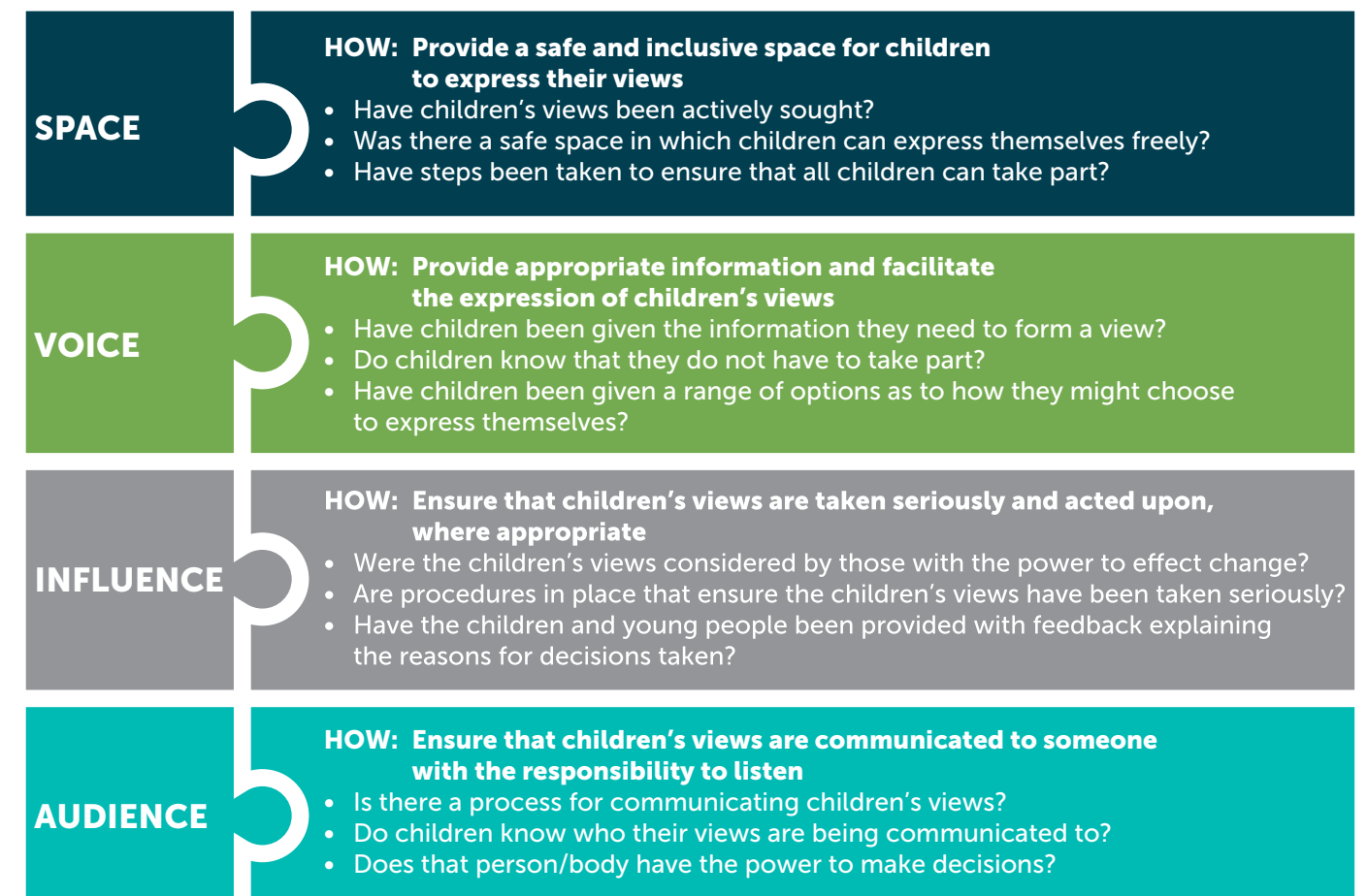


Figure 3: Lundy's Model of Participation (2007)

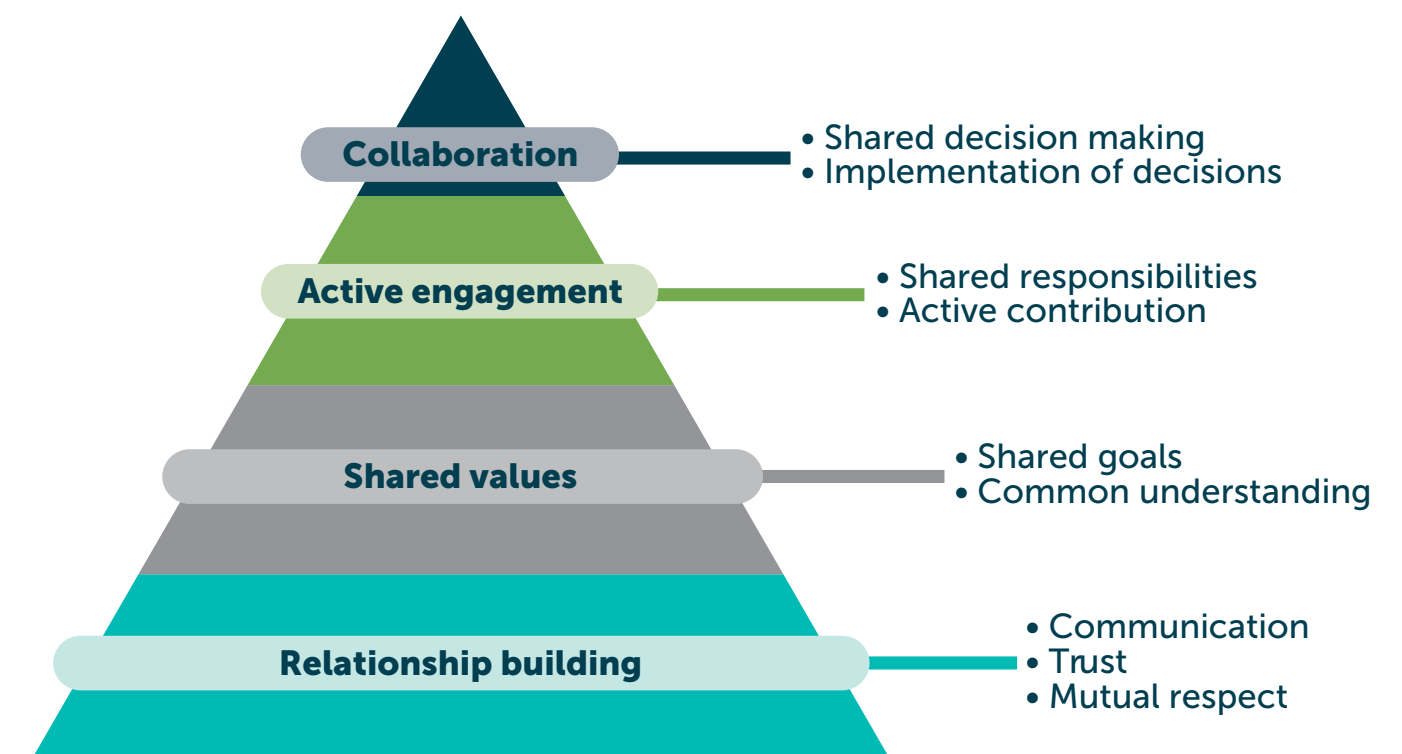


Figure 4: The building blocks of collaboration, based on Griffiths et al. (2021)

The Co-production approach

Griffith et al.'s (2021) building blocks of collaboration, emphasize the importance of relationship building when completing co-production work with children and young people with SEND. A trusted adult will gain more honest and open feedback from children and young people who may otherwise either not respond or give answers they think the adult may wish to hear.

A number of different formats can be successfully used:

- Inviting all stakeholders to meet together in person to share their views on a particular topic.
- Setting up a number of smaller meetings with different stakeholders to share their views and combining the feedback to gain a consensus of views.
- Some meetings may be virtual, eg: using MS Teams.
- The co-production meetings may be guided by pre-agreed questions for stakeholders to consider or may brainstorm starting with a blank piece of paper and only a subject.

To gain the views of children and young people with SEND, different or bespoke methods may need to be tried, for example (not exhaustive):

- Short one-to-one sessions with a trusted professional,
- Using the child/young person's chosen communication method, especially if they are non-verbal,
- Children drawing pictures to represent their views,
- Professionals asking short questions with yes/no answers,
- Completing activities, where professionals may come alongside them and 'chat' with them.

The information on Lundy's Model of Participation (2007) can support children and young people to share their views. There is also a 'Methods of Engagement' booklet available on the Swindon Hub for Education [SEND Resources & Information Page](#) | [Swindon Hub for Education](#) to support gaining the views of children and young people who may be non-verbal.



Appendix 4 – Glossary of terms

5 C's	Collaboration, Commissioning, Co-design, Co-delivery, Co-assessment.
Collaboration	Where two or more people or organisations work together to complete something.
Co-commissioning	Where two or more people or organisations work together to agree what services are needed and then put those services in place.
Co-design	Where two or more people or organisations work together to create services, products or policies.
Co-delivery	Where two or more people or organisations work together to ensure the services, products or policies happen.
Contributions	Effort given to a common cause, eg: giving opinions on how to make services better.
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan
HfE	Hub For Education website, where we display information for professionals.
Implementation	To put in place, eg: to start a new service.
LGA	Local Government Association
MS Teams	Microsoft Teams (online meeting stream)
SEND	Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities
SEND Shadow Board	A group of young people that give their views and opinions on changes, updates and improvements to SEND Services. Their views are fed back to SEND Strategic Partnership Board.
SBC	Swindon Borough Council
SSFV	Swindon SEND Families Voice (the local Parent Carer Forum)
Shared values	Beliefs and principles held by a group of people, that guide their behaviours and decisions.
SIAS	Swindon's SEND Information, Advice and Support Service for children, young people with SEND and parents/carers.
Stakeholders	Individuals, groups and/or organisations with a strong personal or professional interest in the success, failure or actions of a business or project, in this case co-production of services for children and young people with SEND.
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1992.

Appendix 5 – References and links

Adults Working Together Plan
[Swindon's Adult Services' Working Together Plan 2024-2029 | Swindon Borough Council](#)

Lundy's Model of Participation (2007)
['Voice' is not enough: conceptualising Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child - Lundy - 2007 - British Educational Research Journal - Wiley Online Library](#)

Methods of Engagement booklet
[SEND Resources & Information Page | Swindon Hub for Education](#)

SEND Inclusion and Alternative Provision Strategy 2023-28
[Swindon SENDi & AP strategy 2023-2028 | Swindon Borough Council](#)

SEND Training Module 7 – Co-production –
available on request from Localoffer@swindon.gov.uk

SEND Training Module 13 – Working with Children and Young People with SEND –
available on request from Localoffer@swindon.gov.uk

SIAS SEND Information, Advice and Support –
[Providing free and accurate information, advice and support about SEND to help you feel confident in making descisions about your education or the education of children and young people you have responsibility for](#)

STEP Swindon Home – [Step Swindon](#)

[Swindon Borough Council's Children and Young People's Participation Strategy](#)

Swindon Local Offer – [SEND Local Offer | Swindon Borough Council](#)

Swindon SEND Families Voice – swindonsendfamiliesvoice.org.uk

The building blocks of collaboration, based on Griffiths et al. (2021) –
[Together We Can Do So Much: A Systematic Review and Conceptual Framework of Collaboration in Schools - Amy-Jane Griffiths, James Alsip, Shelley R. Hart, Rachel L. Round, John Brady, 2021](#)

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1992 –
[UN Convention on Rights of a Child \(UNCRC\) - UNICEF UK](#)

We See.
We Hear.
We Care.
We Act.
We Learn.