

Surrey SEND Partnership Co-production Policy: Children, Young People, Parent Carers. (Note: When agreed, an accessible version of this policy will be produced and published on the Surrey SEND Local Offer website with working links)

1. Introduction

Good and effective co-production relies on strong relationships between all parties. It needs to be planned for and supported to be sustainable. This is particularly true for co-production work with parent carers, children and young people.¹ Sustainable, representative structures need to be in place to ensure that co-production is embedded and resourced. The purpose of this policy is to clarify what co-production means, how it is configured in Surrey and what are its boundaries.²

Surrey SEND Partnership is committed to ensuring that children, young people and parent carers are involved in discussions and decisions, not just about their own individual support but also in strategic planning, decision-making and commissioning. This commitment reflects new duties of co-production introduced in the SEND Code of Practice 2015 and is captured in Surrey's SEND Development Plan 2016-2020 (published Spring 2016).

This policy should be read alongside:

Surrey SEND Development Plan 2016-2020	Link
Parent Carer Forum's Memorandum of Understanding agreed with Local Authority and SEND partners	Link
SEND CYP Rights and Participation supporting documents	Link
SE7 Good Practice Guide	Link
Surrey's Co-production Self-Evaluation Tool	Link
MAPPIT (Early Support Multi-Agency Working evaluation tool)	Link

¹ Although this policy mainly addresses co-production work with families, its principles should apply to all partnership co-production work.

² Families are entitled to be involved in their own assessment and planning processes. This crucial but individual dimension of co-production and participation is described in the Education Health and Care process documents, Early Help documents, Children and Families assessment documents all published on the SEND Local Offer. See also Surrey's Customer Service Excellence Framework.

2. Definition of Co-production³

Co-production	Working together on the development of decisions that are made in an equal and reciprocal relationship right from the start
Participation	Working with strategic groups and decision making groups to decide what should happen and shape services
Consultation	Stakeholders/wider groups are asked what they think about particular developments or issues
Information	Information is disseminated from the department / provider about what is happening
No engagement	No information is provided and there are no working relationships with the department / provider

3. Scope of Co-production

The level of participation will be determined by the decision-making processes and mandate by which any particular piece of work is being developed. Co-production is a particularly appropriate approach for the reshaping of SEND services in light of customer feedback and families' experience. However, other levels of participation may sometimes be more appropriate depending on the situation. It is rare that 'no engagement' would be an appropriate level, however an example that would fall into this category is a confidential personnel matter. It is important that there is honesty and transparency about what level of participation is being engaged in. Clarity about the scope and limitations of any participation should also be made clear. For example, if Cabinet decision is required, it is important that the limits of the participation activity are understood.

³ This diagram is derived from work originally published by Sherry R. Arnstein and subsequently used to explore models of participation. This version was agreed by SE7 at SE7 co-production workshop 2016.

4. Co-production partners

The co-production partners covered by this policy are those represented by the SEND Partnership Board and the agreed representatives of Surrey's SEND parent carers, children and young people. It is important to have strong, inclusive, representative structures to support effective co-production work. This is recognised in the Department for Education's funding for the development of parent carer forums in every region across England, and in the work of the Council for Disabled Children's Making Ourselves Heard Network www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/moh

Families

Although the following sections deal separately with parent carers and children and young people, co-production and participation work should aim to bring them together where possible to represent the holistic views and experiences of families.

Parent Carers

The lead partner representing parent carers in Surrey SEND co-production work is Family Voice Surrey. The **Surrey SEND Development Plan 2016-2020** states that Surrey will, 'continue to work with and involve Family Voice Surrey, our parent carer forum, and other parent carer groups in developing better services'. In order to ensure the voice of all groups of parents is heard, additional arrangements and links will be put in place where necessary and communicated through Family Voice Surrey. The National Network of Parent Carer Forums has reported,

'The essential element is that parent carers work as a group in a forum, representing families living with a wider range of experiences and additional needs. Supported by training, governance processes, parent carer colleagues and linked to a wide membership of other families, these parent carer representatives can operate in a proactive way, bringing evidence of patterns where change is needed, and working as critical friends to the local authority.'

NNPCF June 2014 Progress Report p. 10.

Children and Young People

In order to ensure that the voice of the child or young person is central to SEND co-production work, a 0-25 rights and participation team will work with a network of SEND⁴ children and young people, that may also include their siblings. This network will be established across a range of settings, schools, colleges and the voluntary sector.

⁴ This includes those with an EHCP and those receiving SEN Support.

5. Supporting and Sustaining Co-Production

Good co-production does not happen by accident. In order to support and sustain it, Surrey SEND partnership will:

- model and promote good practice at a senior and a more localised level
- work with transparency and honesty, and will expect in return the corresponding degree of trust and confidentiality from its partners
- consider the needs of its partners in the production of agendas, timings of meetings and venues
- make arrangements for ensuring representative groups can access the necessary training to participate in co-production activities
- use the SE7 Good Practice Guide to encourage the development of good practice and collect case studies that demonstrate local good practice
- use the co-production self-evaluation tool to monitor the development of good practice, reporting annually to the Partnership Board on progress
- put in place clear agreements with key co-production partners that address mutual responsibilities, remuneration, logistical considerations, and accessibility
- review this policy at least every other year.