



The National Development Team
for Inclusion (NDTi)
<https://www.ndti.org.uk>

Department of Education consultation September 2022

Request for views: making surveys for children and young people accessible

The [National Development Team for Inclusion \(NDTi\)](https://www.ndti.org.uk) welcomes work to involve children and young people in the SEND inspections and seeks to listen to their views. . From our experience (see below) it is essential that inspectors from Ofsted and CQC hear children and young peoples views about how and to what standard support is provided in their area.

In August 2022, we invited young people with additional needs and their parents and carers to discuss the proposal to introduce surveys for children and young people with SEND into the inspection process (see Appendix 1 below) This short paper is to feedback back the points that were raised by the group.

More about NDTi

From 2014 – 2022 NDTi was commissioned by the DfE to deliver the [Preparation for Adulthood](#) programme. To deliver this contract we worked closely with partners in education, social care, health and the VCS across England. In each area we encouraged multi-agency practitioners and strategic leads in local areas to work with children, young people and their parents and carers to listen to their views and to coproduce local SEND improvement plans.

In 2020 NDTi developed Time to Talk and later [Time to Talk Next Steps](#) (a three year project funded by the National Lottery Community Fund 2021-2024) providing direct online support and motivation to young people aged 16-25 with additional support needs across England. The project is delivered in partnership with our partners [Contact](#), a national charity providing information and support to parents and carers of disabled children and young people. The design and work in the Time to Talk Next Steps is coproduced with young people.

Young people from the Time to Talk Next Steps Peer Support group and parent/carers of young people with SEND from our project Steering group contributed to this response to the consultation.

Things to consider when developing surveys for children and young people with SEND to inform inspections.

1. YP in our group said that people do not listen to them but they listen to the adults – this needs to change. In designing the inspection surveys the approach needs to be one that
 - regularly reviews whether inspectors are **genuinely listening**
 - is **open to creative ways** to ensure CYP voices are heard
2. It is important to include pictures on the survey. Not essential for these to be easy read but visual cues will make the survey more accessible.
3. If you are using easy read make sure the pictures are of children and young people and not older people.
4. Avoid using scales (1-10) – those with short term memory can struggle with these. Instead use options for not good/good/very good/excellent and use emojis alongside these.
5. Take a “be my sight” approach – with someone else to read through the survey questions on a zoom call as an option to improve accessibility.
6. Young people with VI have found that some survey are not accessible on certain software eg. some boxes are not read out to you. Check that the software used is fully accessible to people with VI (in our experience Apple is much better for accessibility eg. Apple Voice or Voice). Recite me is also a useful system – it has a toolbar which quickly changes the font of text for those with visual impairment.
7. Some CYP simply do not understand even what the Inspections are about – how do their voices get heard? Especially those who are non-verbal and might need an advocate to help them respond
 - a. Make sure children and young people have an understanding of what the survey is about – they understand what inspections are, what services are inspected and the importance of their views being heard.
 - b. This could be achieved by sending a short video beforehand.
8. Give CYP the option to meet with inspectors and/or speak to someone they trust and can easily communicate with – ask them in the survey “if you have something to tell us that you would like to talk about rather than putting in a survey who would you find it best to speak to?”
9. Make sure the survey is not too long

10. Having the survey up for a week is not realistic. Recommend it is up for a month.
11. Make sure CYP can easily see how to go back to the survey if they have to stop filling it in and need to go back to it rather than starting again.
12. Use language that is clear and easy to understand eg. "things that work well, things that could be better"

Below is important feedback from a young person in our group whose carer assisted her to respond to these questions and ensure her voice is heard;

Things that have worked well

- when teachers see past her diagnosis and just see her,
- when people actually care and are willing to change the way they work to include her ,
- when people listen to us as a family and recognise that even those who appear to be able/well-resourced sometimes need help too because the system is complex and hostile,
- when people work together and are creative about how to find a solution rather than sticking to how things are always done, when professionals meet their legal and moral duties

Things that have not gone well:

- when people do make assumptions which lead to v low expectations, when people try to talk over her or ventriloquise her words and pretend it is her saying it,
- when things are too complicated for her to understand but nobody takes the time to sit and explain them in ways she can understand (ie making references to things meaningful in her life),
- when she is excluded from processes/activities because it is too difficult to find ways to engage with her (which mean she shuts off and says its too hard/wont engage further)

13. Make sure CYP are told how their views will be used and what will happen after they shared their views.
14. Make sure inspectors meet with CYP through forums and peer groups.
15. Make sure there are different ways to respond to the survey and different formats for the questions. Some young people may find it hard to write things down but speaking can be easier.

Appendix 1

Wording below - Invitation to young people to contribute to the consultation in August 2022.

Can you join us to give your ideas on The Department of Education consultation? We will send out some easy read information on this shortly to share with young people.

The Department of Education is the government department which checks how different areas in England are providing information and services for young people with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They want to improve how children and young people with SEND can give their views when the area they live in is being inspected.

They want ideas from children, young people and parents and carers

The link to the information on this is here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/a-new-approach-to-area-send-inspections/a-new-approach-to-area-send-inspections-consultation-document#request-for-views-making-surveys-for-children-and-young-people-accessible>

Appendix 2

PDF document attached - Presentation slides used to explain the consultation to our children and young people prior to meeting in August 2022