



Learning from Barnardo's Voice Initiative - Report>

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Foreword

This report summarises the learning from an innovative approach, to employ young people who had experience of being cared for by a local authority, to encourage participation in Barnardos and to build links and facilitate communication with the children and young people who use Barnardo's services. We hoped this approach would enable children and young people to talk more freely with young members of staff who had some similar, shared experiences.

The pilot was undertaken in two of Barnardo's Regions - London, East Anglia and Southern England (LEASE) and Yorkshire - and also in the Policy, Research and Influencing Unit (PRIU) and ran for two years. The initiative was managed by a steering group. Its philosophy was that the initiative itself should be a model of good participation.

As with any new initiative much has been learned through the process. There are some things which worked well and some things which we could have done better. Both the pilot Regions and the PRIU are now integrating similar posts within their staff establishments and a UK Co-ordinator (young people's participation) is now in post.

We now find ourselves in an exciting place.....the pilot initiatives are behind us, we have much learning to share and some excellent practice in services on which to build. As we move on it seems appropriate to finish this foreword with a contribution from one of the Voice workers,

"Don't do anything at all with children unless they understand what they will be doing and why. Don't waste too much money on publicity and just have a dedication to participation, to all children and young people, not just those in care, to everyone, young, elderly people, everyone that's using Barnardo's services."

Nigel Bennett
Director
Policy, Planning and Influencing
January 2003

Summary

The top ten findings

“It gives young people and Voice workers with experience of care a chance to change legislation from their own experience in the care system, making changes from inside out rather than the other way.” (Voice worker, PRIU)

“When you listen – really listen – to young people, they often know what is needed to be done.” (Senior manager, Head office)

1. The Voice Initiative has given employment, and learning and development opportunities to seven care-experienced young people.
2. The will and support to further develop participation was present at the top level in the pilot regions.
3. In line with the Corporate plan ‘With Children, For Children, participation has clearly been pushed forward in the two pilot regions, in the Policy, Research and Influencing Unit, in Barnardo's recruitment practice and in Marketing and Communications.
4. Barnardo's has gained added value from employing care-experienced young people.
5. Young people's reference groups have been established in both regions to bring young people together. These are working well in two areas of Yorkshire. LEASE region started a reference group in summer 2001 but it is not meeting at the moment pending the recruitment of new participation and Voice workers.
6. Barnardo's has gained significantly from Voice at a strategic level, developing tools such as job descriptions and induction protocols, mentoring contracts, information for young workers. Managers report some disappointment amongst the team that there has not been even more direct work with individual young people and groups of service users.
7. Through Voice, young people's panels are now contributing to the appointment of senior staff in both pilot regions and at head office.
8. Voice workers have given support to projects and to individual young people in the pilot regions and through the Policy, Research and Influencing Unit post.

9. Voice workers can provide positive role models of achievement and routes into work for current service-users.
10. The Voice team's input to training and regional induction is felt to have increased awareness of participation amongst new staff.

Recommendations

Barnardo's should:

- Commit to establishing a participation resource in each region and nation and consider including an element of young or care-experienced workers supported by a dedicated participation worker.
- Develop a statement of principles of participation – essentially a charter underpinned by practice guidance.
- Rewrite and rename the core standard on 'Responsiveness to users'. One suggestion is 'listening and responding'.
- Establish and publicise routes for feeding issues raised by young people and other service users to its decision-makers and top levels of management, regionally and nationally.
- Find an engaging way for young people to represent their views at the very top of the organisation, consulting with young people on their terms and on familiar territory.
- Develop training and accreditation for service users who are actively participating in the planning and running of our services. We should do this at a strategic level, regionally, nationally. One possibility is accreditation through the Open College Network.
- Embrace a variety of models of organising participation, one style may not fit all but each regional resource should be linked to the regional management team and therefore to CSMT.
- Recruit future young participation workers from a wide pool of young people so that young carers and young people with disabilities who are not necessarily care-experienced are also eligible.
- Consider developing one or more local young people's groups in each region/nation. The Voice Initiative's reference group model has been a successful way of helping young people to get to know others, to mix across age groups, to grow and develop social skills. Reference groups have been valued in both pilot regions. They also bring staff together to explore the issues raised by the young people and give them an opportunity to discuss participation and children's rights.

- Develop guidance on how we ensure young people consistently get appropriate recognition and reward for their time and commitment. Reward might be a certificate, payment of expenses, food, a trip out. Most important is thanks and respect whilst giving young people the opportunities to develop new skills, work experiences and build up a training portfolio.
- Ensure that services and service users who take part in events or share their views always get feedback about what has happened to their input and any outcome from it. This is still not routine practice across the organisation. We should develop a simple standard about the timescale for feedback.

Practical things to think about when involving young people:

- Don't have trips in school times, work it round the school holidays
- Make sure there is enough money
- Make sure there is transport
- Need food
- Ask everyone's opinions
- Be fair
- Make it fun not boring
- Doesn't matter if you get paid or not

What follows are some young people's definitions of participation:

- Co-operate with everybody or nothing will be sorted out. Work together as a team
- If somebody is talking to you listen to them or after they've finished you won't know
- Involve everybody not just one person it wouldn't be fair
- If your child is in a play don't just involve them involve everybody
- Involve everybody
- Asking everybody everything e.g. places to go
- Listen to what everybody says
- Not having favourites
- Everything needs to be fair
- Not wanting what you want
- Working together as a team

Good participation	Not so good participation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fun and games • Working together • Getting involved with other people • Getting paid • Getting a good part • Being fun • Getting good advice • Getting listened to • Being fair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not speaking clearly • Not enough involvement • Not enough information • No big rooms • Not getting listened to • Being boring • Not being involved • Not being fair • Not telling the truth

Section 1 Introduction:

Barnardo's and participation

Barnardo's vision for children and young people is "that the lives of all children and young people should be free from poverty, abuse and discrimination." It follows from this that Barnardo's top-level purpose is "to help the most vulnerable children and young people transform their lives and fulfil their potential."

We find it helpful to think about seven building blocks to a full and happy life that all children are entitled to experience. These are:

- having a voice and being listened to;
- the love and support of a family;
- a secure home;
- physical, emotional and spiritual health;
- protection from harm;
- good opportunities for education, training and employment;
- communities, groups and activities which enrich and involve them.

Barnardo's has made a commitment to support children and young people in being "treated as citizens now, with a voice in society". Many staff and volunteers

in Barnardo's projects up and down the four nations spend their daily working lives listening to children and young people and already work hard to make sure that children and young people who use the projects have a say in how they would like the project to be run.

The challenge for Barnardo's and other children's organisations is to help ensure that the activities and life experiences of the children and young people that it works with are enriching and involving, and that children and young people who come into contact with Barnardo's feel that they have been treated as valued citizens, with a voice.

What is the Voice Initiative?

The idea for the Voice initiative arose following a number of developments within the organisation which was beginning to look at the issue of user involvement. Two things contributed significantly to the development of the Voice plan:

- The implementation of the User Responsiveness Policy and the adoption of this as one of the Barnardo's Core Standards.
- A national staff workshop held in 1998, which made a number of recommendations about furthering the involvement of service users.

At Project level the issue of participation had generally been taken on board and a variety of methods were being used to involve children and young people in the delivery of their services. However, the views and opinions of service users were less well represented at a national level, either within the organisation or in external influencing activities. More recently, the Barnardo's Five Year Plan 'With Children, For Children' gives a high priority to participation and a corporate strategy group has been formed to ensure that children and young people's perspectives and participation are embedded at the core of how we work and a UK Co-ordinator has been appointed.

A steering group was formed. This comprised two managers, who were already in posts appropriate to leading the pilot in LEASE and PRIU, the Directors of Children's Services in the pilot regions and the head of the PRIU who began the development 18 months before the start of the pilot. In Yorkshire where there was not a manager in post (as there was in LEASE and PRIU) an Assistant Director was instead identified. During the lead-in phase these three lead individuals began to work with the senior staff teams and Director in the regions and with the staff of the PRIU to develop the pilot. The strong support from the Directors in the regions

meant that the pilot moved forward, was seen to be supported from the top and helped to ensure that projects co-operated with the initiative.

The Voice Initiative has been operational since November 2000. The core of the thinking behind the initiative is rooted in Barnardo's Basis and Values, particularly 'respecting the unique worth of every person'. We believe that all children and young people have the right and should be given the opportunity to have their views, opinions and feelings listened to, respected and taken into account in decision making processes. It is important that Barnardo's acts on this commitment and that we listen to children and young people's views on our services and policies and that we enable their voice to be heard by other policy and legislation makers.

The Voice Initiative is a pilot project based on the employment of young, mostly care-experienced, workers to encourage participation in Barnardo's, to build links and facilitate communication with children and young people who use Barnardo's services. Though mostly new to formal employment, some of the workers arrived with considerable experience of participating in service and policy development themselves and encouraging other young people to do the same. The initiative was a new development for Barnardo's although it built upon other examples of participation work. Listening to young people's views is not new in Barnardo's. Examples include:

- Projects training young people to do exit interviews with young people who leave the project;
- A project training young people as trainers to help internal and external audiences understand how young people experience the benefit system through an interactive game;
- The research and development team asking young people for their views in most pieces of work that they undertake;
- The 'Everybody In' (Ash et al 1997) research which trained young people as peer researchers and peer research which is currently being developed by Barnardo's Research and Development for Yorkshire region and in work for the Mental Health Foundation;
- Young people contributing their views on policy developments or proposed changes in laws that affect them to the Policy, Research and Influencing Unit.

However, this pilot initiative was the first time that jobs had been created for young people to work alongside young service users specifically to develop new ways of encouraging young people's participation within Barnardo's. As a result a great deal of attention has been focused on the Voice pilot. The initial aims of the Initiative were:

- To create opportunities for the views of children and young people who use Barnardo's services to be heard - so they can influence the service, the region and the organisation nationally, in ways that empower children and young people and help to develop self confidence and self esteem.
- To enable children and young people's voices to influence external policy and legislation, and to give the opportunity for young people to be involved in campaigning and lobbying.
- To contribute to Barnardo's policies being developed from more direct links with the views and experiences of children and young people.
- To give young people the means to communicate their opinions and views directly (to each other and adults), so that they have control and direction of what is said and how it is said without being channelled or filtered. This could be a newspaper, video or via the internet. The form of communication vehicle to be decided by children and young people, with assistance from Barnardo's.
- To raise the overall profile of children and young people throughout Barnardo's, either as employees, volunteers or as members of reference groups.

What was Voice about?

If the purpose of Voice was to provide opportunities for young people through employment - and through them to increase the opportunities for young people using Barnardo's services to have a voice, to influence the service they received and the organisational priorities - then its philosophy was that the initiative should in itself be a model of good participation.

- The workers should be influential in developing the vision of the initiative and should be able to shape the way the pilot was run.
- The workers should be empowered to help define the work that was undertaken.
- They in turn support young people in the pilot regions to decide what was important to them.

This meant that the tasks and roles were not tightly defined before the workers came into post. Once the workers came into post the managers and workers engaged in discussion about good practice in participation and how to move things on, for and with young people in Barnardo's.

How Voice was organised

To increase the chance of successful outcomes in a two year pilot the initiative was focused on developing work with older children and young people rather than being more thinly spread across the full age-range of children and families who make up Barnardo's service-users. The people involved were:

The steering group

Comprising: the Voice managers and their line managers; the then directors of LEASE and Yorkshire regions, Sue Woodcock and John Tebbet respectively; Liz Garret, head of policy in the Policy, Research and Influencing Unit and chaired by Nigel Bennett, head of the Policy, Research and Influencing Unit (and Liz Garret during Nigel's secondment to another post), Helen Hibbert of the Who Cares? Trust and Hugh Meredith of Children's Express.

The staff

The pilot was staffed as follows: in LEASE, manager – Irene Levine, and workers – Julie-Ann Graham, Natasha Nelson; in Yorkshire, manager - Jo Hunt, and workers – Gina McIntyre, Joanne Rhodes, Michelle Westerman; in the Policy, Research and Influencing Unit, manager – Pam Hibbert, and workers - Gina McIntyre , Simone Sadiq, Tommy Turner; in Marketing and Communications, Michael Phillips. The management group consisted of the three managers plus the workers.

In each of the two regions of Barnardo's – Yorkshire, and London, East Anglia and Southern England (LEASE), the two Voice workers were recruited to work with services in those areas to promote young people's participation. The regional teams have remained relatively stable during the two year pilot. A third worker who was initially recruited to cover maternity leave in Yorkshire had her contract extended to a year, after a successful bid for further voluntary funds.

In the Policy, Research and Influencing Unit the initial commitment to employing two young people was cut down to one post for a young person to work alongside Pam Hibbert, the Principal Policy and Practice Officer with responsibility for Participation. Six months later a further commitment was made to having two workers in post and a second worker was appointed to the unit. However shortly afterwards, following an extended probationary period the first worker was not confirmed in post and left Barnardo's and the second worker stayed only a few months before leaving on health grounds. There was then a gap and in spring 2002 one of the Yorkshire workers was seconded into the Unit for a year. Effectively the Unit has had a single worker in post during most of the two year pilot.

The team was very pleased to have good links with BITS and M&C built into the pilot. These added valuable strategic connections and brought different and valued perspectives. However, in Marketing and Communications at Head Office the planned post was lost in the course of a major cut to the department's budget. Instead an existing Communications Officer in the target age bracket of under 25 was identified to liaise with the initiative, provide support in promoting the initiative and support Voice workers in developing publicity materials and a communication vehicle for young people (to communicate with each other and with Barnardo's). This worked very well in the first year with the post-holder becoming very involved in the pilot. A link person for Voice from Barnardo's Information technology Service (BITS) was also identified but left Barnardo's during the first year. This link was not formally replaced although at the two-year point Voice workers are again well linked into current developments.

The evaluation

In the summer of 2000 an evaluation was planned to run alongside the Initiative. A draft plan was put forward to measure the types and level of participation before and after. The plan was to be revised once the workers were in post and had been able to revise the objectives so that the two remained closely linked.

In practice the development of the work was a gradual, organic process, meaning that there was not a point at which the objectives were 'revised', sealed and delivered. Barnardo's is a large, complex organisation with historical barriers to change. Managers, the steering group and the organisation had to step back and wait for workers to settle in, for networks to develop, for a more realistic timescale to emerge. So the evaluation has had to do the same.

This report evaluates the contribution of the work that has taken place and summarises the learning for the rest of the organisation, as we try to further develop participation in Barnardo's.

How the information was gathered

In autumn 2002, young people who had worked alongside Voice workers in services or through the Yorkshire reference groups were asked to give their views either in a group interview or by completing a short questionnaire (see Appendix 1 and 2 for the interview schedule and questionnaire). Young people from the following projects took part in the evaluation:

- Wakefield Young Carers
- Bradford Young Carers
- Friends

- The Leeds Young People's Reference Group (comprising of young Barnardo's service users from a range of projects across the Leeds, Bradford, Harrogate and Wakefield area.)

- Voice workers and managers were interviewed face-to-face in the summer of 2001 and again by telephone in summer 2002 (see Appendix 3 for the interview schedule).
- To attempt to track changes, a questionnaire was sent to projects in the pilot regions before the start of the Initiative (31 services replied). This was repeated one year into the Initiative (46 services or 61 per cent replied) and then projects were offered the opportunity to give further feedback in September 2002 (eight requested forms and disappointingly only one reply was received).
- Regional management team members in the pilot regions and head office staff and managers who have worked with or had input from Voice workers were surveyed. (see Appendix 3 for sample interview schedule).
- Minutes of meetings and workers' reports were analysed.

First, we give a general account of how the Initiative progressed, including the feedback and the lessons learned. Next follows detailed feedback on the Voice Initiative in each of the two Regions and then Head Office (covering Marketing and Communications, the Policy, Research and Influencing Unit and Human Resources.)

Defining and setting up the Voice Initiative

The year of planning by two of the three managers, an assistant Director in Yorkshire and other members of the steering group was a valuable time which allowed for debate and a philosophy to be developed to underpin the work. These debates contributed to the high profile given to participation in Barnardo's current five year plan and in the development plan 'With Children, For Children'. In the two pilot regions the Directors of Children's Services gave their support and commitment to a degree which would give the managers and workers confidence that the initiative was valued.

There was much debate in the planning stages about who to recruit to the posts and what their status would be. There had been suggestions that volunteers or young people on New Deal could be considered. However, the managers strongly believed that Barnardo's needed to demonstrate clearly the value it placed on these roles by ensuring that the workers were employees with the same rights and responsibilities as all other employees. This view prevailed.

The Voice managers took the decision to employ young workers to carry out developmental work with service users when it would be more usual for experienced workers to take on such work. This was the experimental nature of the pilot. They have recognised and struggled with the tension between empowering the workers to develop their roles and shape the initiative and providing the right level of support for workers in their first paid participation post, for some, their first paid job of any kind.

“When you go into development posts such as these, you usually have a very experienced person because all you have got is a job description, and they found that very unsettling. They wanted a whole list of tasks that they were supposed to go and do. You know like you would in a job when you first start working. And that again is another difficulty I think. Because it wasn't like that, it was something that was going to evolve over time. And if we were too prescriptive we would be working against the remit of the scheme.” (Voice manager)

The managers were attempting to share the opportunity for defining and developing the work with people who were mostly new to the job market and to paid participation work. Whilst writing the evaluation we heard a speaker repeat the following unattributed quote.

“If you want to change something you have to begin before you are ready.”

This quote seems to sum up the dilemma of the steering group and those involved in the planning. On the one hand, they were very concerned that the young workers should have a carefully planned and positive start to their jobs, but also that if they continued to plan and tie up all the loose ends without the workers in post, they would have lost the opportunity to involve the workers (and through them, other young people) in the shaping of the pilot. And so, they began.

Finding the right workers: Advertising the jobs

The steering group had debated the knotty problem of the definition of 'young person'. The posts required young people who could understand the experiences of children and young people who use Barnardo's services and, in keeping with the ethos of the initiative, the pilot was to offer employment opportunities to those young people who had missed educational opportunities but who had development potential. The decision was to target young people aged 18 – 25 with either direct experience of care or substantial experience or understanding of welfare systems for children and young people.

The job descriptions drawn up for the Yorkshire and LEASE posts were the same with some slight amendments for the Policy Unit post. Young people were consulted about the Job Descriptions and involved in the recruitment and selection of the LEASE and Policy posts. The jobs were evaluated at a relatively low salary because of the low entry level requirements, despite the relatively complex nature of the roles and tasks which would follow and the sometimes onerous travel requirements.

“I think the salaries of the workers were too low, and that they ought to be on the standard Barnardo's unqualified PW rate (particularly as some of their responsibilities, in my view are greater)” (Project leader, Yorkshire)

The issue of salary level should be re-considered for the future, perhaps with a re-grading built in once a level of competence has been reached. The posts were advertised via a flyer (see Appendix B) which was circulated to Barnardo's projects with links to young people, job centres and other organisations with links to care leavers and similar young people. The actual selection processes were similar but with each region/section organising their own selection procedure.

Most of the workers heard about the posts through their existing care-leavers networks or their involvement in participation work in Barnardo's. Some reported that the job description and person specification for the posts gave them a sense of recognition and excitement, feeling, “this is me”, “this is my job”, “I can do this”. The recruitment seems to have reached appropriate young people, some of whom were encouraged by staff in their projects to apply for the jobs.

Jobs aimed at people with experience of the care system, which offer the opportunity to help other young people to have a voice, are likely to create an emotionally charged situation. It can seem the first opportunity to make changes to a system which has shaped aspects of their lives. All of the current workers reported that they really wanted the jobs and most viewed the recruitment process as a test of their self-worth.

As such, schemes such as this, have a responsibility to provide a sensitive and affirming appointment process, especially for those who are not appointed. This evaluation has not, but probably should have, gathered feedback from those who were not successful in their applications.

Interviews

“When it actually came down to (the interview), it was really straightforward and they were so reassuring about everything and so friendly in their approach. The way they dealt with me personally, it made you sink down in your chair, it was

'take your time, don't rush to answer the question'. If they were a lot more formal with me and abrupt I'd have been a bit more withdrawn and not able to give as much as I could but they were just so reassuring and made me feel comfortable so I was able to come out of myself a bit more.' (Voice worker, LEASE)

Interviews for the Yorkshire posts were held in Leeds, and for the LEASE posts and the Policy, Research and Influencing Unit posts in Barkingside. However, the interviews followed a common format with a group discussion followed by an individual interview. Some young service users were involved in the workers' recruitment in LEASE.

Feedback from the Voice workers on applying for the job and the experience of being interviewed has been generally positive. The interviews were described as nerve-wracking because they all really wanted the jobs, but the recruitment was generally felt to have been fair and sensitive. Most interviewers were described as making a real effort to put candidates at their ease.

However, some workers found having to take an IT test very stressful. The task itself was felt to be relatively straightforward (even over-simplistic by one). But the word-processing of the task caused some feelings of hopelessness and conviction that the jobs would go to other, more IT competent or more literate applicants. As a lack of IT skills did not stop several of the workers being offered a job, it would have been enough to check that applicants were willing to acquire skills, rather than testing them in the already tense situation of an interview, for a much-wanted job.

Induction

Starting work is always a stressful time. For those Voice workers whose self esteem was damaged early on, there was a real mix of elation and fear about whether or not they were up to the job. The induction process helped to allay those fears and set the scene.

"Our induction programme made me a lot clearer, gave me a lot more of an understanding of Barnardo's as an organisation, so I found out about their background, where they come from, why they're here, what they've been doing, how long they've been here that made me a bit clearer about who I was actually working for. And then after our meetings with all the Assistant Directors; and the projects, the more I got out into the projects the more our role fitted into place and I could actually see what we were going to be doing." (Voice worker, LEASE)

The residential weekend was felt to be a good experience which helped the team to bond and which allowed time to begin the discussion of principles and practice. Some workers wanted more contact as a whole team than the regular

bi-monthly meetings which followed. However, staying away from home can cause difficulties for staff with dependants. Financial support to pay for childcare was provided for workers with children where necessary and in recognition of the low salary.

Project visits were the most important part of the induction process. This undoubtedly helped to bring the role to life for the Voice workers. Not surprisingly the workers were most animated when talking about meeting and working with young people. However, some Voice workers found that much of their induction visits could be taken up with explaining to staff who they were and what their role involved. As one worker said,

“By the time you got to see any young people at a project you had said it all to the staff and had enough of talking, you didn’t want to say it all again”. (Voice worker, Yorkshire)

Another commented,

“Everytime I met someone I had to explain who I was”. (Voice worker, Yorkshire)

Regions and nations can be supportive to participation initiatives by informing service managers and asking them to inform their staff teams in turn making sure that a single participation worker doesn’t have to do all the preparatory work.

Some of the workers found the amount of travel by public transport unjustifiably time-consuming and stressful during this time. Managers needed to ensure a balance between becoming familiar with a region and over-tired by travel. Time away from an office base could be stressful for inexperienced workers as it meant a backlog of email and administrative tasks on their return.

The pilot initiative showed that induction really did need to be an introduction to working life and practices. Managers had to guide workers through the early days with great care and did find that the workers’ inexperience meant that some did not have appropriate boundaries about such things as mobile phone use or attendance at meetings. They have developed protocols and an approach to induction for young workers from which Barnardo's can now benefit.

Support and supervision

“You have to be realistic that people who come to this job they don’t just need managing but they need nurturing. They need to be believed in. People like us

need people to say you're doing really well, you're doing well, keep doing it." (Voice worker, PRIU).

Some of the workers reported that the experience of being in care or their life experiences in general had diminished their self-esteem. Even though most felt that they had the required qualities and life experiences, some did not expect to be offered the job and were scared that they would not be able to do it. One even thought they had been offered the job mistakenly, believing 'they've got the wrong person'.

After some early teething troubles in Yorkshire, caused by the location of workers away from their manager, all of the workers have reported that they felt well-supported, with a high level of access to their manager and plenty of opportunities to discuss and reflect on their work. However, there have also been high levels of sickness absence and one worker left after a number of months on grounds of ill-health. This worker has remained in touch with their manager who continues to provide informal support.

Managing the workload

The learning from the early stages of the initiative was that some services would make work requests directly to the workers, sometimes whilst they were on an induction visit rather than channelling them through the managers.

In Yorkshire, the manager decided early on that a work request form would help to channel all work requests through her for the team to discuss at team meetings.

In LEASE where the manager shared an office base with her team, day to day discussion of work requests was easier. All three managers later moved to using work request forms, (see Appendix D) finding that this approach made it easier to channel and track the workload and also that the questions on the form helped services to clarify the nature of the help and support they wanted.

Employing young people to do development work

Looking back at the end of the pilot the Voice workers appreciated that they were given the opportunity to shape the role in the early stages. Six months into the posts they had reflected back on the early stages and some recalled that they had struggled with the responsibility and complexity of the role.

"I think it was a really good idea of Barnardo's to say well this is really good and we'll work it out as we go along, but it's not worked out like that. I mean we've

come into this job and I think there's insecurity of not knowing what we've got to do, because we've got the chance to mould it which is a good thing but we also don't know what we're doing sometimes and it feels a bit uneasy not having that security, ... do you know what I mean when you've got that reassurance that you know what you're doing." (Voice worker in LEASE)

Once in post, with project visits underway and concrete tasks, workers felt that the role became clearer. Initially at least, workers would have welcomed more prescriptive tasks. But there is a very real tension here. The managers could have consulted more with services in the pilot regions and established a work programme with more definite tasks to be allocated to workers once they were in post. But this would have meant a different philosophical approach in which the managers, not the workers and young people with the managers' support, defined the roles and carried out the developmental work. The latter approach would have lost the opportunity for service users to define the issues and tasks of participation alongside the Voice workers as they came into post and began to visit projects.

The chosen approach treated the Voice workers as equal stakeholders in the initiative. As the most exciting aspect of the initiative it has been appreciated and supported in principle. As an approach it also held risks. Inevitably and rightly the Voice workers are more experienced and skilled at the end of the pilot.

"Both young women worked well with a challenging and diverse job description. They spoke with great candidness, perception and eloquence. They frequently asked the most pertinent and difficult questions." (Project leader, LEASE)

"I think the role and work of the two Voice workers is excellent." (Project leader, Yorkshire)

However, two project leaders, one in each pilot region reported that early encounters between Voice workers and young people in their projects were variable in quality, one saying that it had made young people reluctant to have further contact. This underlines the experience of the pilot that young or care-experienced workers need to be very well-supported and probably to co-work in the early stages. We have to think about the rights of current service users to have high quality experiences when they come into contact with young, inexperienced workers or ex-service users who moved into paid positions.

The Voice workers' contribution has been valued in both regions. Their work has developed during the two years to encompass a number of roles. They have a voice and represent young people's voices at many levels and in many places both in the regions and nationally within Barnardo's, and outside Barnardo's as well, perhaps most notably by helping the Social Services Inspectorate to staff the

newly-established Listening and Responding team which includes care-experienced inspectors.

Similarly all three managers have been complimented in feedback to the evaluation on the way they have carried out the rewarding but challenging role of supporting and managing the workers. Two out of the three were already specialists in children's rights and supporting the participation of young people. All three report that the pilot was a steep learning curve. They have gained skills in supporting and supervising young workers and have further developed their knowledge base. In particular the experimental nature of the decision to encourage workers to shape the role means that they have developed policies, tools and acquired learning from which the rest of the organisation can now benefit. Two of the managers worked with the SSI to establish, train and support care-experienced inspectors for the new Listening and Responding team and carried out inspections in 2001 and 2002.

One of the managers found that the challenging personnel issues that she faced in the early days were compounded by not being part of Barnardo's Children's Services structure. She found that she did not have colleagues readily available to take on supervision in her absence or support on personnel issues. Strategies, including mentoring, were put in place to address this. All of the managers were carrying out this role in addition to other responsibilities but two were already focused on participation work and Children's Rights work. The level of support needed by the workers in the early stages placed a strain on all the managers, but those who were part of Children's Services or engaged in specialist participation work were arguably better placed and supported to carry out the role.

The majority of concerns reported by project leaders halfway through the pilot were addressed to the perceived lack of support and training for the Voice workers. There was a great deal of training built into the first year in post but inevitably it took time for the workers to develop confidence and skills and for this to become apparent. The developmental nature of the work caused concern for one project leader about whether Voice workers always had the experience and skills to make the most of opportunities to engage with young people.

"Young people often do not have the life/work experience required to undertake this type of role." (Project leader in Yorkshire)

Both managers and workers have struggled to reconcile the tension between the developmental nature of the role and the need to provide workers with a clear structure to their first post-induction days at work. This is not to under-estimate the resourcefulness that managers have seen in the workers and the satisfaction that workers have gained from succeeding in developing the work. But both managers and workers have recognised that this has sometimes carried emotional costs and

at times the management role has required more emotional support than could have been foreseen.

Section 2 What has Voice achieved?: The work

“Within the Region the Voice workers have made an impact, they have their own experiences to bring, have made some really good links with children and young people in schools/projects and we have had to listen to them.” (LEASE RMT member)

“I really like the advent of Reference Groups in the region giving opportunities to consult on policy and also how young people have been creatively involved in staff selection.” (Yorkshire RMT member)

As expected, much of the first six-eight months was about building the team, inducting workers, and spreading the word about the initiative. However, Voice workers and managers also undertook some major pieces of work including:

- Advocacy work
- A day conference for children and young people in LEASE
- Consulting with young people about their political priorities
- Gathering views from young people
- Starting a regional reference group
- Developing innovative methods of gathering feedback
- Contributing to recruitment of senior staff at head office
- Presentations to regional induction days

At the end of the pilot the major areas of work covered in two years were:

- Involving young people in recruitment

“A panel of young people was part of the final selection process for the Director of Operations. The three final candidates had to prepare a presentation based on the participation of young people; present that to the young peoples’ panel and then be interviewed by the young people’s panel. The panel gave their views to the final council based panel.” (A head office manager)

In both of the pilot regions and at head office young people have begun to be involved in senior appointments at the level of scheme co-ordinator/project leader posts and above. This includes posts with national strategic roles such as the Directors of LEASE and Yorkshire and the UK Director of Children's Services.

The involvement of young people in recruitment has gone well. Regional managers are pleased, young people give positive feedback about the experience, Voice workers like doing the work to prepare the young people. Human resources and senior managers are pleased with the standard of the appointments made and the message that it sends to candidates (including those from our partner organisations) and appointees about Barnardo's growing commitment to participation.

- Organising young people's groups and events

"The reference group is about Barnardo's for young people." (Young person, Yorkshire)

" I think the Leeds reference group has been excellent. Several young people from our service have participated, and through this have had the chance to be involved in other ventures: DCS and ADCS interviews, presence at Marketplace for Barnardo's Council members, 'Amplify' event, meeting Gordon Brown." (Project leader, Yorkshire)

The Yorkshire reference groups have provided a forum for young people to meet and discuss wider issues and to meet with other young people without disclosure of the project attended. At the end of the pilot two reference groups are well-established in Yorkshire and the LEASE group which did begin to meet will start up again when new participation workers come into post. The reference groups are generally well-regarded in the feedback. The young people who attend the Yorkshire groups give their feedback below.

Whilst all young people were clear about their enjoyment of the group, some suggested that the group was not meeting their expectations. Some said that the pace of the group was too slow and that they wanted to take part in more focused activities (consultation and training) in addition to playing games. Whilst playing games and activities are crucial to group formation and the enjoyment factor of the group, the workers may need to focus the work more on Barnardo's linked activities in the future, in order to maintain the interest of some group members. However, whilst the tone of the feedback from young people was fairly critical the reference groups have met several times now and the same young

people are returning on a regular basis. Fun, the food and meeting other young people were all given as key reasons for attending the sessions:

“The food and the friendly environment...”

“You can meet other projects.”

In addition, young people also placed value on the opportunity to talk like adults. They indicate that they feel their views are being taken seriously and that they are seen as equal to the Voice workers. All young people from the reference groups, who took part in the evaluation, stated that the Voice workers listened to their views. There are challenges for group work when bringing together young people of differing ages, abilities and experiences. For the majority of the reference group members this did not bring up any issues. However, some young people did highlight potential problems and this is something that the Voice workers may need to bear in mind for future group:

- Consulting with young people in projects

“The Voice manager was able to do a piece of work with the young people around possible closure of the project. Feedback from the young people was powerful and impacted on RMT decision-making.” (LEASE RMT member)

Many of the projects in the two pilot regions were already engaged in or developing participation with young people. In some circumstances it was useful to have the Voice team help with a specific piece of consultation to gain an independent facilitator.

- Lobbying: Enabling young people to be heard in influential places

“Why should the government listen to young people? Because we are the future? (Young person, London, ‘Whose Government is it anyway? Young people’s views’ report)

Just before the last election a Voice worker worked with staff from research and development to meet with and ask 85 young people about the areas of their lives that are of most concern to them and about the messages they would like to give to government. The published report ‘Whose Government is it Anyway? Young People’s Views’ has since been used as a lobbying tool.

- Reports and Influencing work

The M&C link worker for the Voice describes the shift in emphasis that has taken place as a result of the Voice team's input. The Voice team have helped to produce and launch reports such as 'Whose Government is it Anyway?' and to support young people to take part in events such as the Labour Party conference fringe meeting organised by Barnardo's in 2002.

Young people are reported to be more involved in Barnardo's attempts to influence the world outside. Feedback from key members of staff such as policy officers who have worked closely with the Voice team indicates that they now routinely consider how to involve young people in their work as a direct result of their contact with the workers and managers of the Voice pilot.

- Working with the Social Services Inspectorate to develop the Listening and Responding team (SSI)

“Going along to speak to young people using Social Services was a really outstanding opportunity, as having had a care experience you were able to notice (things) from past experience and get it unpicked, to see if there was anything needing further investigation. Such as children's homes I visited where there were locks on the fridge and food cupboards, (and) young people were kept separate from one another in the house.” (Voice worker, LEASE region)

Two of the Voice managers, Irene Levine and Pam Hibbert were part of the team which developed the new Listening and Responding component of SSI inspections of local authority children's services. Several of the Voice workers have been involved in a total of 17 inspections of social services provision for young people as part of this new team. One of the Voice managers has distilled the learning from their experiences into a report and toolkit 'Voices and Choices: young people participating in inspections' (Hibbert, 2002), published by Barnardo's.

- A communication vehicle for young people

One objective of Voice was the development of a communication vehicle for young people which was not channelled through adults. When Voice was being planned the possibility of computer access for service users was under consideration. This was the focus of debate about a means for young people to communicate with each other and the organisation. In the pilot regions there are now PCs for service users in projects. But an electronic communication vehicle is still some way off. Voice has developed a newsletter as a first step. This was not prioritised and the first edition came out in September 2002 almost two years after the start of Voice.

Some other organisations run open-access websites (Article 12's website is run by young people) and most of the major children's organisations have interactive websites for young people. This is an area ripe for further development and Voice workers are continuing to investigate the possibilities for an password-protected area on the Barnardo's website for young people's use, to consult with young people about this and to look at the possible uses of appropriately protected email groups and chatroom sites.

- Providing support to Barnardo's practitioners and other staff

"Practitioners have been encouraged and supported in thinking about different ways of enabling young people to participate." (Yorkshire RMT member)

The input of Voice to induction training in Yorkshire was seen as a valuable way to raise the profile of participation with staff coming into Barnardo's. Voice workers have also attended meetings at many different projects in the pilot regions to discuss ways of encouraging participation and to carry out individual pieces of work including consultation with young people at a project in LEASE which was under threat of closure and in a LEASE residential services to re-start the residents' group.

- Providing valuable experiences for young service users

"I thought the day was really interesting, and every time I do something like this I feel more confident with myself. It was disappointing that we didn't find out straight away who got the job. When I've been to other interviews we usually get told that day. The Voice worker called me a week later to tell me who had got the job; it was the person we chose, I was really pleased. I felt like I had actually done something good. I really enjoyed the day, it was a good learning experience, and I know what I should be doing when I go for jobs now!" (Member of young people's panel for Yorkshire Assistant Director post)

The Voice Initiative has provided the pilot regions and PRIU with an additional resource, allowing the development of opportunities for young people to participate in some important decision-making processes. Along the way the young people identify some additional benefits: having fun; seeing how job interviews work; taking part in groups; being listened to; meeting with other young people.

Young people using Barnardo's services in the pilot regions have been coming into contact with Voice workers who are a few years older than them and who have had similar life experiences. They see them providing support to projects,

organising and running groups and meetings. At the Young Women's Project in LEASE a Voice worker helped a group to develop a video.

Some receive individual support and advice. In Yorkshire we asked young people whether they saw Voice workers as different from other workers. Most did not, which can be interpreted in a number of ways, as testimony to the achievements Voice workers have made in their professional development in two years and to other staff within Barnardo's who are seen as supportive, open to and interested in young people. However, a young person from a project that has had significant contact with a Voice worker explained that:

"They (Voice workers) don't help you, they let you do things for yourselves and give you options." (Young person, Yorkshire)

- Promoting participation at a strategic level

Examples of ways in which the Voice Initiative is helping to increase the profile and to develop the practice of participation in Barnardo's include:

- Presentations at Children's Services Management Team;
- A presentation to Midlands Regional Management Team meeting, August 2002, when a Voice worker and manager did a presentation and RMT members pledged to develop participation in specific ways within the region;
- In the Policy, Research and Influencing Unit, where policy officers now routinely consider how to involve service users in campaigning and influencing work;
- Development of job descriptions and induction protocols for participation and Voice workers;
- Development of mentoring contracts;
- In Barnardo's input to the Labour party conference which included a Voice worker on the panel at Barnardo's fringe meeting for the first time in 2001. The 2002 conference season was planned to include young people's involvement in Barnardo's fringe meeting and another meeting jointly organised with Shelter. The young people taking part have been consulted by the Events and Conferences co-ordinator (who was M&C link to Voice) about their input and offered support in planning their input;
- In Advertising & Communications who report that Voice input has been useful for providing insight to young people's perspectives on the content of adverts without intruding constantly on service users;
- At the National Resourcing Day when Voice workers attended to talk about their work to finance workers;

- In Fundraising section who reported that Voice workers and young people have been involved in visits from donors and supporters and have been included on induction training for their workers which has been motivating and informative;
- Presentations to Council about the work of Voice;
- Staff in M&C and PRIU report that our influencing activities and publications are more likely to include case study materials and to have service users at the launch. Some launch events have drawn upon the Voice team to bring young people's voices into the event. Examples include the Better Education, Better Futures and the Poverty report launches.

Group membership and tasks and tools developed include:

- Memberships of participation theme group and corporate strategy group.
- A simple form which has been developed for participation workers to record and pass information about policy issues raised by children and young people to the Policy, Research and Influencing Unit so that these can be collated and used to inform decisions about the issues that we will campaign on.
- Development of young people's panels to contribute to senior appointments which have strategic importance (Corporate Forum level so including DCS appointments as well as head office managers)
- Guidance on recruiting young people.
- Work request form.
- Consultation request forms.
- Job descriptions, mentoring contracts, induction protocols.

An overview of the impact of the Voice Initiative

Judging change is a difficult and complex task. Deciding whether the Voice Initiative has been responsible for changing things is even more difficult because participation has come to the centre-stage in Barnardo's in general. Everyone is talking about participation. The theme group has been in existence for some time, some projects have been doing participation work for years. The most recent five year plan "With children, For children" prioritised participation and a new strategy group was formed to push things forward. So what can we measure? How much can be credited to the Voice Initiative? Firstly, the debates which took place immediately prior to and during the planning of the Initiative helped to inform the thinking behind "With children, for children".

The Voice team obviously wants the Initiative to have been worthwhile and to have achieved change. They might then be expected to over-estimate the

amount of change but because they are very committed to participation they remain critical and have keen antennae for tokenism and fudge.

"I've seen changes everywhere. A head office manager was talking about young people and participation in fundraising and people were saying 'yes we can bring young people in', and they were talking about it in the wrong way and he was saying 'no we can't just bring them in and send them out again', so it's really filtered through to that level." (Voice worker, Policy, Research and Influencing Unit)

How influential has Voice been at a national level?

"There is the beginning of a voice for young people in the delivery of Children's Services" (Senior head office manager)

"Employment of care-experienced young people alongside professional and senior staff" (Head office manager)

Overall, participation appears to be more consistently on the agenda at a number of different levels within Barnardo's. It seems that the Voice Initiative can be credited with at least some of that change because it is often Voice workers and managers who have attended meetings, explained the issues, answered questions, challenged attitudes and reported back from young people.

Barnardo's Council wishes to consult with young people, and perhaps always did, but this Initiative has triggered discussion of how that can happen in a meaningful and young person friendly way. Council does not yet routinely consult with young people so in some senses little has changed, but neither has a rushed and tokenistic gesture been made. Voice has had input to Council and helped to plan Council member's visit to Yorkshire in 2002.

Some Regional Trustee groups are beginning to have the same debates about how to hear from young people on an ongoing basis. The Yorkshire Regional Trustees are to have a meeting with young people, facilitated by Voce workers when they visit the region in 2002.

In addition to the outcomes which can be seen in the latter stages of the pilot the early stages of debate and planning were also influential and often at a strategic level. The Voice planning group contributed to the debates which led to a high profile for participation in Barnardo's five year corporate plan and to Barnardo's Development Plan for 2001-2006, 'With Children, For Children.

The level of awareness and debate about participation seems to have changed. Understanding in key places has grown and we have seen some radical steps in recruitment practices in the pilot regions and head office. Feedback on the outcome of these for our internal processes has been very positive. When senior candidates from other organisations see young people playing a key role in important appointments for Barnardo's young people's involvement in recruitment can also be seen to have helped raise the public profile of participation.

Overall the number of young people taking part in events is thought to have increased and, more significantly, young people's participation has become a routine part of events planning. There is greater recognition that time needs to be set aside to meet with service users to plan events, to inform them about the focus of events and to ask what they would like to contribute.

Other gains for policy and practice at Head Office mentioned by key stakeholders:

- Discussions with Voice workers and access through them to children and young people using the services
- Accessing young people's views for reports and influencing work, for example 'Whose Government is it Anyway'
- Young people attending party conferences
- Involvement in the appointment of the Director and an Assistant Director for Children's Services in LEASE
- The Champions Day for young people
- Involvement of young people in staff selection processes
- Conscious attention to accessible and straightforward language
- Attention to accessibility in time and location of meetings
- Use of creative processes eg. drama, video
- Seeking accessible ways of communicating with children and young people and using these in work to influence policy and practice

The Voice in the Policy, Research and Influencing Unit (PRIU)

In the PRIU the main achievements and examples of the Voice's input include:

- An audit of involvement of children and young people in Theme groups
- Co-facilitating focus groups to produce 'Whose Government is it Anyway?' a report which gathered young people's views about government and political priorities and which was subsequently used as a lobbying tool.

- A presentation at Barnardo's AGM, jointly with LEASE Voice
- A presentation to SCIE on service user involvement
- Participation in the recruitment of the UK Director and Senior M&C post
- Discussion with the advertisement agency about Barnardo's adverts
- Meeting with the Children and Young People's Unit
- Devising questions for the Snakes and Ladders game at the Labour Party Conference
- Providing a panel member at Labour Party fringe meeting
- Presentation on participation to non pilot region
- Presentation at Advocacy seminar
- Facilitating young people's workshop at Advocacy Seminar
- Involving children and young people in setting up Barnardo's web site for children
- Supporting young people to attend Question Time of MP's at an All Party Group
- Presentation at internal staff workshop on Safeguarding Children
- Membership of Participation Theme Group and Corporate Strategy Group
- Membership of regional influencing group
- Liaison with British Youth Parliament
- Involvement in the planning and facilitating of Champions Day
- Involvement in SSI inspections and the management group for this work

Concerns reported include

- The amount of time and specific expertise involved in the management of the work needs to be recognised
- Involvement has to be real or young people lose interest.
- Need to ensure young people move on from their experience as service users when appropriate.

Developments in internal communications

One of the aims of Voice was to develop a young-person led communication vehicle in the pilot regions and to improve service users' access to IT facilities.

The Voice team has been successful in negotiating for PCs for service users to be installed in all projects in the two pilot regions. Not surprisingly the communication vehicle has been harder to develop but remains on the agenda. The first issue of a newsletter came out in September 2002.

The Voice team continues to liaise with key people in BITS to explore possibilities for a communication vehicle. At their last management meeting in September 2002 the team agreed to explore the possibilities for a password-accessible area on Barnardo's website and the use of email groups for young people.

The reference groups are another means of internal communication, a forum for consultation with young people and a means for young people to meet with others and exchange views and ideas. The Yorkshire groups have been consulted on 8 national and regional work requests and are run as a partnership between Voice, L&D, and Research and Development.

Marketing and communications work

"It has been useful for the advertising as it provides a young person's perspective without intruding constantly on service users." (Head office manager)

"Voice workers and young people have been involved where we have had visits from donors and supporters. They have also been included on induction which has been motivating and informative." (Head office manager)

In Marketing and Communications, consultation with young people appears to be much more embedded in practice than at the start of the initiative and the input of the Voice team has been credited with helping to push change forward. Major events such as Barnardo's fringe events at the Labour Party Conference now include young people in the planning as well as in the event.

Staff shortages have held things back. In the first year of the initiative the M&C link worker was effectively a full member of the Voice team attending team meetings and contributing to debates about the direction of work. In most of the second year he acted up to fill a vacancy in his department. This change of role meant that he was far less able to dedicate time to the Voice Initiative than he would have liked and could offer less input. In his view this has been 'to the detriment' of the initiative.

Had these two key support posts in M&C and IT been maintained they could have helped the Voice team to progress areas of work such as the further development of a communication vehicle for young people.

The lessons are that all levels of Barnardo's must commit to participation initiatives and build time and resources to support participation. Participation can be embedded throughout the infrastructure by writing responsibility for participation into job descriptions and building it into the workload of departments. The new UK

Co-ordinator post could usefully focus on establishing and maintaining support systems for regional participation workers and initiatives.

Looking at one issue in greater depth we can see the extent of change more clearly. Changes in recruitment practices are becoming established in the pilot regions and at head office. This is a good one to look at further to illustrate the wider or 'ripple' effects of good participation.

Changes in recruitment practice

"The ones we've just done, the young people were aged 11-13 and I did 4-5 sessions meeting with them, establishing the team, getting their confidence in me before the interviews. We're taking the learning from that about how long it takes, what it costs. I had to get three 12 years olds to Leeds and I didn't feel confident about taking them on the train so I got a taxi with them just to get them there as quickly as possible without having to get them out at 7.30 in the morning." (Voice worker, Yorkshire describing the time it can take to prepare a young people's panel)

Generally young people's involvement has gone well because the Voice workers have dedicated enough time to preparing them and supporting them in their role. Young people must be well-prepared if their input to recruitment is to be meaningful. They need support and time to hear about the vacant post, absorb the interview process, to think about what it is they want to know and then to prepare or familiarise themselves with interview questions and rehearse the situation. When young people are well-prepared and have good understanding of the processes involved it is fair for young people's views to be weighted equally with other parts of the process.

The Voice team has developed policy on young people's participation in recruitment and evaluates each appointment process so that the design of the interview procedures remains an evolving process. Young people need feedback even if it is just initially to thank them and tell them when the appointment will be confirmed (and why there may be a delay in a decision being reached or them being informed of that decision, perhaps because a candidate has not confirmed their acceptance).

To be sustainable it has been important to embed this new development in good recruitment practice. A head office manager made the point that young people are only one in a series of stakeholders in recruitment.

"In terms of recruitment the difficulty could be when the young people's panel have differing views from the final decision-makers. Fortunately in my particular

experience views were exactly the same. It is likely that any young people's panel would only be testing candidates for a small part of the whole process and as you are aware, decisions to appoint involve assessing all sorts of different criteria. Managing expectations in terms that views might differ is a really important point for me." (Senior manager, Head Office)

In commitment to equal opportunities and valuing diversity, recruitment processes must be scrupulously fair. Recruitment decisions usually involve balancing several elements and this has been made clear to the young people's panels so that they understand how much their input can influence the process, how their input will add to the recruitment process. They have been consulted about how a clash of views will be resolved.

Good preparation has been needed to enable them to play their part to the best of their ability and all feedback from human resources managers has been in praise of the work of Voice to prepare and support the young people's panels. Barnardo's now has policy available on the involvement of young people in recruitment. When young people are well-prepared they can be scrupulous in their wish to be fair. One young person who took part in recruitment describes how decisions were made.

"If two people said like, 'oh we want him', and two people said, 'I like her,' then we would look at the list and say who has said the most, not what were they like. Who has used the most things and why they would be good for doing the job. And try and make it the same: who is the real best person (for the job)." (Young person in Yorkshire who took part in a recruitment panel)

This young person appears aware of the need for a fair process and understands the importance of equal opportunities. A head office manager raised concern about how we develop expertise if different young people are involved each time. Voice in Yorkshire are involving young people who have an ongoing involvement through the local reference groups. If we provide training through projects and reference groups we can build up a pool of experience amongst service users. Service users move on but there could be a valuable role for ex-service users who are prepared to stay in touch and to help with future recruitment (perhaps as part of a panel with existing service users).

The ripple effect of good practice in participation

"The involvement of young people in recruitment of senior posts has been very successful. The young people have enjoyed the experience and council members and very senior staff involved e.g. national directors have really enjoyed working with each other. It has led the way for other people to be involved in these posts

that are key stake-holders. We have created a diversity panel which allows for staff reporting to these posts/those working closely with this post to also be involved in these key appointments.” (Head office manager)

Good participation, where young people are influential, respected, treated with responsibility and form an important part of an event or process, not an afterthought or add-on, is good for Barnardo's overall. Many of the staff who have come into contact with the Voice Initiative have commented that they have been reminded to look at their working practices and to review how good they are at communicating, how open they are to contact with service-users, how close or removed they are from the people who should be at the heart of Barnardo's work.

There can be further unforeseen benefits when we as an organisation start to think about how to involve young people more fully in all aspects of what we do.

“I am pleased with the progress being made and the quality of appointments being made by use of (the young people's panels). Candidates coming for jobs are also very impressed as this is an excellent example of our commitment to the people that these post-holders hold some responsibility for.” (Head office manager)

- Communicating well with young people can mean that project staff also feel better informed as they are often the route by which information reaches service users.
- Staff accompanying young people to take part in local reference groups or young people's forums also get to meet each other. Whilst project leaders get to meet together at senior staff meetings other project staff do not and so this can be an added bonus.
- Good participation practice in Barnardo's reminds our partner organisations and external candidates for posts that this is achievable and worth doing well.

What has changed in the pilot regions?

Things have undoubtedly changed in the pilot regions and we can see much more clearly the part that the Voice Initiative has played. Participation has been pushed forward in various ways:

- Direct input has been offered to some projects and service users.
- Regional management team members have developed greater understanding of what participation might mean in practice and have made further commitments to developing participation.

- Young people have begun to take part in staff recruitment.
- There are now reference groups where young service-users can meet each other and discuss issues that are relevant to their lives. Young people who attend these can exchange experiences of using Barnardo's services and ask questions about why things are the way they are.

One year in to the pilot, project leaders in the two pilot regions were surveyed about the initiative. (see appendix F) It was recognised that Voice workers have a demanding and challenging job. Generally, Voice workers were praised for their contribution to projects. However, one or two project leaders expressed concerns about the readiness of the organisation to support young and care-experienced workers without detriment to their well-being and also about the skill levels of the workers in the early stages.

Feedback from most regional managers was very positive about the quality of the work. The input to projects and the developments such as residents' meetings at 16+ project in LEASE and the reference groups in Yorkshire and LEASE were mentioned as noteworthy. The contribution to recruitment in both regions was praised and in particular the role of the Voice workers in supporting the young people to feel confident in the recruitment process.

The pilot has been welcomed for its impact at a strategic level in the regions, with developments in induction training, recruitment practises and a general furthering of the participation agenda. If anything there would seem to have been more impact at this level than at project/scheme level.

The feedback in autumn 2001 (see appendix F) showed that most service managers in the two regions (91 per cent) were aware of the aims of Voice and eighty per cent had had contact with a Voice worker, three quarters had been visited, a third reported that a Voice worker had met with young people and a third that a Voice worker had attended a team meeting. Half of the service leaders had requested help from Voice. Half of these wanted help to involve young people in decision-making processes and a third wanted help setting up a group for young people, thirteen per cent wanted support or advocacy for young people. Most gave positive feedback about the response to requests for help. The 23 respondents who had requested help, ranked the time taken to respond on a scale ranging from excellent to poor:

Response time	No. of respondents
Excellent - good	16
Average - poor	2
No answer	5

Respondents were also asked to assess the quality of the help they received from Voice workers. Fewer than half responded but of these nine out of the ten ranked the quality as excellent-good, one as average-poor.

Respondents were also asked to rate selected statements about the Voice initiative on a point scale from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree:' 78 per cent agreed or strongly agreed that the voice initiative is much needed. 89 per cent agreed or strongly agreed that having young workers is a positive development and just under half felt that a more senior worker would be more appropriate.

What have the Voice team contributed in Yorkshire?

- Meetings with young people at projects to discuss participation
- Voice workers attending community meetings in residential projects
- There is a new impetus and momentum for participation at a regional level
- The development of reference groups in Leeds and Kirklees
- Practitioners have been encouraged and supported in thinking about different ways of enabling young people to participate
- Recruitment, co-ordination and facilitation of young people's panels has added value to the selection of senior staff positions
- Training and supporting of the young people who take part in recruitment
- Voice was felt to have underlined the strategic importance of listening to children and young people and their issues and concerns and improved consultation and communication generally
- Presentations to the AGM by Voice staff
- Input to RMT by the Voice manager
- Membership of a Voice worker on a local authority strategy group on participation helped Barnardo's to influence policy development
- Encouraging young people to use opportunities to influence and inform staff, managers and planning processes
- Input to training such as the communicating and listening course

Reported gains for policy and practice in Yorkshire

- The impetus and momentum given to participation;
- The reference groups
- Practitioners have been encouraged and supported in thinking about different ways of enabling young people to participate;
- Recruitment, co-ordination and facilitation of young people's panels has added value to selection process

- Voice has helped to underline the strategic importance of listening to children and young people and their issues and concerns and improved consultation and communication generally.
- Membership of a Voice worker on a local authority strategy group on participation helped Barnardo's to influence policy development;
- Membership of Influencing planning group.

Reported gains for projects

- Presentations at Senior Staff Meeting have stimulated debate about participation.
- Voice workers direct contact with projects was felt to have made staff more sensitive to the need to involve young people.

Has the level of participation increased in Yorkshire through Voice?

“Some of our young people have been enthusiastic participants of the reference group, and the other spin-off activities. This has coincided with some work within our service, trying to increase user-participation, and these young people have been keen to be involved in this also.” (Project leader, Yorkshire)

Generally feedback was that yes, young people’s participation in the region can be said to have increased. This was felt to have been achieved through:

- the reference groups;
- one to one work with young people;
- the training and supporting of young people to participate in staff recruitment;
- Voice workers involvement with service managers and their staff putting participation further up the agenda.

What have the Voice team contributed in LEASE?

- Meetings with young people
- Attending community meetings in residential projects
- Meetings with young people where there have been complaints from a young person or concern about an incident
- Encouraging young people to use opportunities to influence and inform staff, managers and planning processes
- Input to recruitment for senior staff, an Assistant Director and Director of Children’s Services
- Discussion and report from young people about the future of a service
- Contribution to corporate working

- Presentations to Council and the AGM
- Visit to Regional Trustee Group to plan dialogue with young people
- The development of a reference group for the region
- The input of the co-ordinator to RMT
- Input to children's week at FITA
- Video work with a group at the Young Women's Project
- Contributed to the launch of the new presidency of Barnardo's at High Close School

Reported gains for policy and practice in LEASE

- Raised awareness of participation and increased chances of young people being involved more directly Influencing practice across Children's Rights Services
- Input to consultation documents
- Bringing young people's views to the forefront of practice
- Getting feedback from young people on services
- Recruiting staff who are Rights focused
- Involvement of young people in recruitment
- Support for young people in complaints, reviews
- Routine attention in RMT to how to include young people's views
- Payment for young people involved in participation initiatives
- Influence of planning and policy development
- Young people are now part of recruitment panels for staff
- Regional brochure more reflective of the involvement of children and young people

Reported gains for projects in LEASE

Those managing projects reported these as being:

- Knowing more about young people's views, for example at FITA
- Input to recruitment
- Input to individual young people
- Organising meetings of young people
- That participation is becoming much more embedded in the day to day work of projects, no longer an add on but a necessity
- Young people at High Close School have raised drug issues, and the need for a sports hall

Has there been increased participation in LEASE ?

Evidence in support of this was cited:

- at 16+ project;
- at residential projects;
- at High Close School, pupils were described as having more influence, being better included, being enabled to raise issues of importance to them; and
- with regard to complaints, by giving a young person someone independent to speak to;
- in recruitment of key posts including the new Director;
- at the young people's day;
- by giving projects ideas on good practice in involving young people;
- young people were felt to be more of a focus for projects
- by gathering young people's views and supporting them in contributing to consultations about the future of some projects.

Where further development is needed?

In a two year pilot the initiative could not address every area of need and was focused on young people in order to allow the workers to develop their skills and to do the work that they attempted to a high standard. The pilot initiative was focused on older children and young people (although the feedback from some people in the pilot regions indicates that they were not aware, or had forgotten about this decision). The evaluation gathered feedback about future priorities. The two which emerged were:

- The participation of younger children.

"If you ask a three year old what they think about something they will have a strong opinion." (Voice worker in LEASE)

The lack of work with younger children was regretted by some regional managers in both pilot regions, and by some of the Voice workers. This reflects the state of play in Barnardo's as a whole and also in many other organisations where consultation and participation work with younger children is at an earlier stage of development. Current attempts to address this include Penny Lancaster's 'Listening to Younger Children Project' at Coram Family which is due to report in 2003 and Carlyne Willow's work at the Children's Rights Alliance where she has been surveying methods of consultation with under-12s and developing guidance for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, also due out in 2003.

- Supporting the participation of children with disabilities

Feedback also indicated that some people in the pilot regions had hoped for support in developing specialist skills in consulting with children with disabilities. The pilot did not set out to develop specific work with children with disabilities although the reference groups have tried to be inclusive in their practice and there has been work with projects which work with children with disabilities. However where possible work has been planned to be inclusive and the reference groups are a good example of this inclusiveness.

For the future we can learn from good practice located in Barnardo's projects. In winter 2002 we will collect the learning and produce a toolkit of participation techniques including ways of working with disabled children. The Council for Disabled Children is currently working with Triangle to summarise approaches to consulting disabled children for the Department of Health.

- We can still be tokenistic

The desire to involve young people can go wrong when it is carried out in a hurry and not properly thought through. In August 2002 the LEASE Voice team was asked at short notice to identify a young person to visit Barkingside to meet with the representatives of a major corporate sponsor. A Voice worker did as asked, identified a young person, met with them to rehearse what they might say about the Barnardo's project that they attend and the next day accompanied them across London to Barkingside.

In the event the young person did not get chance to speak but, together with the Voice worker, was asked to accompany the corporate sponsors as they walked across the green and then to return later to accompany them as they walked back across the green. The young person was upset that this was not a very meaningful experience, and that they did not get a chance to talk about their experiences or to say the things they had rehearsed with the Voice worker. The young person told the Voice worker in question not to ask them to do anything again.

The worker found this a frustrating experience, and reported feeling under pressure to find and bring a young person 'as if they were a tin of beans'. Good experiences sow seeds for change and bad experiences curtail potential. We cannot put individual Voice workers and young people in positions where they will feel used or ignored. Voice and participation workers have to be able to say no to timescales which make a good outcome unlikely. Better still we should not put them in this position. We must listen when the staff who are the link with service users suggest alternative approaches and we must ensure that senior staff are understanding of the principles and practicalities of good practice in participation.

Barnardo's working practices: Protecting the focus of participation initiatives

Interviewer "What have you learned?"

Voice worker "How to do paperwork well."

Voice workers report that they have learned and gained many, many things during the two year pilot, including in their own words:

- Confidence – training opportunities (including driving lessons!)
- Changes – only recently seen the impact
- Realising how much I want to do this sort of work
- Personal development/awareness/confidence
- Young people are different and have choices
- Learning to compromise – working in a team
- Changed the view on B's
- How talented young people are
- Sense of responsibility
- Some sense of not always achieving what I set out to do – letting people down

The quote above is a slightly naughty way to make a point about Barnardo's, rather than about Voice. However, this may explain why several workers also said that they have not had as much contact with young people as they would have liked during the pilot. Whilst accurate completion of paperwork is a valid thing to learn, it does highlight a problem in a large and complex organisation. The philosophy or purpose of a participation initiative can be undermined by everyday working practices. Anyone working in a large national organisation can feel distracted from what they see as being their primary purpose by the small things which add up - administration, email of dubious relevance and meetings in distant places that could just as well have been conducted by phone.

Essentially we need to decide the primary purpose of employing young or care-experienced workers. Then ask how we preserve that primary purpose. A focus of induction could be to help new workers anticipate what will await them after two-three days away from their workbase. Or we can take a preventive approach and place a line-manager or more experienced worker as a filter between the volume of routine communication and young participation workers allowing time for them to become established. We could question whether we plug every new Voice or other young participation worker straight into the networks and groups which

generate routine email and other tasks which take time to absorb and which demand a response. For an inexperienced worker the time taken to keep up with routine information can overwhelm the primary purpose of their role.

It took the investment of time for the pilot team to debate and shape the philosophy of the initiative as well as to become familiar with the organisation and the initial tasks of the job but this has resulted in Voice workers who are clued up about the strategic level of working in Barnardo's and a team who have been able to have a voice at a number of different levels and to stimulate debate and change in many ways and in many places throughout the organisation.

What should Barnardo's do next?

"I wish to see the continued commitment to developing an organisation that works primarily WITH children and young people. Continue to employ some young people who have experienced care and other services but develop all the other dozens of opportunities to promote participation" (Head office manager)

"If it's a job (working with) young people then young people should be able to do the interviews... It's a good idea to have the children because if they're gonna work with children (they have) to face up to them. " (Young person, Yorkshire)

There is very strong support from across the organisation - in the pilot regions, at head office, in human resources sections, in marketing and communications - for some form of dedicated resource for participation in each region/nation. There are many ways this could be developed, existing staff with time bought out to develop participation work or dedicated staff, perhaps including both professional and young or care-experienced workers who develop practice together with our service users. There is strong support amongst service managers for participation resources remaining in regional control rather than being a head office resource.

Young people gave feedback on what participation workers should do. Some of the young people who took part in the evaluation reported that they were still not very clear about the role of the Voice workers. Therefore it was difficult for some to make suggestions about what Voice could do in the future. However, their ideas illustrate some of the issues that are important to young people: bullying, education, being involved in decisions that affect their lives.

- Ask young people what they want

"(They could) send out a questionnaire to get information on what is most important to young people." (Young person, Yorkshire)

- Bullying

This was a key issue for young people and one with which they wanted more support. They felt it would be useful to raise awareness of the issue through workers who weren't linked to school.

- Recruitment of staff

Young people felt that if a post involved working with young people, young people should always be part of the recruitment panel.

- Support young people to be involved in decision making about their lives.

This was an area highlighted in particular by young people in the looked after system:

"Get more young people on UNUs (parenting) panels." (Young person, Yorkshire)

- Education

Some young people felt that more support was needed to encourage young people to access courses, go to college etc. and they felt that Voice workers could assist this process.

Models for continuation

Leadership and management

The three managers of the pilot initiative were also responsible, with the help of the steering group, for the overall direction of the pilot and adopted an open and democratic approach. However, maintaining this approach took time and time was in short measure given the demands of the pilot and of their other roles and responsibilities. By the end of the pilot all felt that they would have benefited from an overall lead from a single director and that further expansion nationally would require co-ordination of the various initiatives. The UK Co-ordinator (Young People's Participation) post will address those needs and encourage further development in areas where there has not yet been any.

The learning from this pilot also provides strong support for line management of participation project workers to be at Assistant Director level (LEASE being different, see below) and for an AD in each region/nation to lead on participation to ensure that someone is driving it at that level and to complete the chain between regional workers and initiatives and the UK Co-ordinator and

Participation Strategy group. Projects could be asked to nominate a worker to lead on participation and to provide a point of contact for the regional participation worker and AD lead on participation.

From the end of 2003 is it likely that five regions/nations will have a participation worker who will link to the UK Co-ordinator who will lead and shape the opportunities to share learning. A further possibility as a 'team' emerges nationally is to develop specialisms within that resource. A model already exists in the PRIU where Research and Development staff are based in regions, link to theme groups and develop specialist knowledge in a subject area in addition to supporting a region. Policy Officers lead theme groups and also have a regional link. Participation workers need not link to themes but could focus on different issues where we need to develop and extend our practice. Two areas where further development is needed are the participation of children with disabilities or inclusive participatory practice; and the participation of younger children. Both the LEASE and the North-West posts are likely to focus on developing participation opportunities for children with disabilities.

The staffing and organisation of region/nation based participation resources

If regions/nations are to commit resources to dedicated participation posts they need to consider carefully the options for the grade and type of staff appointed. Some of the options are discussed below.

The model that LEASE is to adopt of a participation worker plus a care-experienced or 'Voice' worker who are located together addresses concerns during the pilot that less experienced workers need close, preferably daily, supervision and a high level of informal support especially in the initial stages. LEASE is unusual in that it has a Children's Rights Co-ordinator who will manage these workers. In other regions/nations they should have a clear link to, and preferably line management by, an AD.

Several members of the team voiced the concern that having more than one Voice or care-experienced worker in post together could lead to unhealthy competition and a degree of jealousy. However, the conclusions drawn from this differed. One view was that care-experienced workers should be appointed singly alongside a 'professional' worker. Another that, whilst this might be the case, young people respond differently to care-experienced workers and not only gain more from contact with them but give more honest feedback and input. Therefore if Voice or equivalent workers largely shadow and work alongside a more experienced participation worker, we lose the empowerment factor of a direct

connection between young service users and care-experienced employees. However the shadowing model does address the concern that in the early stages Voice workers may not all have the skills to maximise the opportunities they have with young people.

To underline the support for employing more than one Voice worker per region, one of the current workers pointed out that Barnardo's loses something if our service users never have the opportunity to meet alone with care-experienced workers because they are always accompanied by a 'professional' participation worker. This worker felt that whilst it would still be exciting, participation work would become less 'buzzy'. Their view was that a single care experienced worker always accompanied by a participation worker would be received differently, greeted with the reserve that young people can have with practitioners.

A halfway (though expensive) position would be to overlap the appointments of care-experienced workers so that as one young person has enough experience they work on their own with service users, another is appointed to allow them to gain skills before the previous worker moves on. Or, a care-experienced or young worker could spend half the week alongside the participation worker, more in the beginning, gradually developing solo work with young people. This could deliver the benefits of appointing service users as employees but at the same time provide close supervision, support and joint working of developmental, more difficult or unfamiliar work whilst skills develop.

Current developments

The UK Co-ordinator (Young People's Participation) is now in post to focus and lead Barnardo's further development of participation work and is planning the co-ordination of the next stages of Barnardo's work on developing participation.

In early 2003 a national audit of participation is being planned. Two regions have independently carried out a participation audit of their projects. The audit will provide the UK Co-ordinator with baseline information and inform their developmental work.

In the North-West a participation worker has been appointed and will in time appoint a young person to work alongside them, this post will focus on the participation of children with disabilities.

In the North-East a participation worker is in post and has appointed two young people to work alongside them.

In LEASE the pilot scheme is to be extended through the appointment of a participation worker and a Voice worker and is to be focused on the development of expertise in supporting the participation of children with disabilities. The workers will continue to be managed by the Children's Rights officer.

In Yorkshire, the pilot was extended through the funding of posts beyond the two year pilot. The funding for 2003-2005 has been agreed from the regional cash envelope and s.64 money is being sought. A qualified and experienced participation worker and a Voice worker post will be funded. Their work will be focused on the support and further development of reference groups in the Yorkshire region. This marks a vote of confidence in the work and achievements of the pilot, as the funding was agreed in competition with other bids. The worker will continue to be line-managed by the existing Voice manager who will take a more strategic role in the region in relation to participation.

In Wales a participation worker is in post.

Conclusion

Participation is the responsibility of the whole organisation. The Voice Initiative was a pilot carried out to see what can be developed when ex-service users are employed to promote participation, not to do it for us. It is important that no-one sees responsibility for change as lying solely with a single initiative, or with participation workers or those who manage them.

Barnardo's decision to place participation centre-stage sanctions the importance of listening to young people not only as a principle but also as a way to plan work, shape services and influence the whole organisation and the outside world in turn.

The learning from the Voice Initiative should help to shape the decisions we make and provide tools to help other parts of Barnardo's adopt and develop good practice. 63 per cent of service managers surveyed during the pilot disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposition that a Head Office participation unit would be a better option (than a regional initiative). There is clear support that participation initiatives should be organised and located in the regions/nations. There is also clear support for continuing to employ young or care-experienced workers, although we also have clear warnings to heed about the potential cost to young workers when their life experience means that they invest a great deal in the opportunity to see and fix things from the other side.

The main gains from maintaining the ethos of the pilot through a Voice-type resource in each region/nation would be threefold.

1. Barnardo's would begin to develop further routes into employment for service-users.
2. The organisation would gain by having dedicated participation workers plus workers who have fewer barriers to communication with young people.
3. Current service users would have contact with workers who embody positive outcomes for young and care-experienced people.

The workers and managers have taken on strategic work in the pilot regions and the organisation as a whole. They have been keen to see change and sometimes frustrated by the pace of decision-making and the patchiness of change but also excited by the developments that have come about as a result of the pilot initiative. The challenge now is to build on the achievements and lessons of this pilot and to think strategically about participation: about the links and working practices that need to be in place to ensure that change moves through the organisation and is not defeated by historical or organisational barriers or unintended outcomes.

Participation work bears some comparison with partnership working. Both involve many people, multiple factors and levels of working. In both it is difficult to decide who and what has generated change and to what degree the different elements can be praised or blamed for change or lack of change.

The Voice Initiative could not have moved things forward without a willingness to engage with the challenge at many levels within Barnardo's and if many projects in the pilot regions were not already engaged in participation work. Indeed several of the Voice workers came to these jobs because they had been encouraged to participate in the Barnardo's services that they attended, and had gained confidence and skills as a result. In trying to assess how much change to attribute to the Voice Initiative it is important that we do not pull apart the partnership between regional management, Barnardo's services, head office, staff and service-users because, as with all partnerships, it is likely to be greater than the sum of its parts.

We are at an exciting place in Barnardo's. We have a pilot initiative behind us, we have a great deal of learning to share, we have experienced managers and workers and we have some excellent practice in our services on which to build current and future developments.

Appendix A- Guidance on employing young or care-experienced workers based on the learning from Barnardo's Voice Initiative 2000-2002

Recruiting young or care-experienced workers

- Word of mouth can be an important factor in informing young people who may wish to apply. Projects where young people have been active in participation are a good focus of recruitment.
- Interviewers should dress less formally than usual, not sit behind a table, be relaxed and friendly, make sure they themselves are comfortable with young people and are not unduly nervous.
- Avoid unnecessary tests such as IT tests. If training will be given and poor results won't stop someone being appointed don't run the test, what you need to measure is willingness to learn.

Where should workers be located?

- Project bases can offer greater potential for contact with relevant workers, the chance to learn from practitioners and closer contact with service users.
- Location with or close to line managers is essential to enable regular contact and close supervision of workers.

Preparing your organisation and practitioners

- Consult service users and staff about what participation input is needed
- Once you have undertaken some consultation decide on priorities and give clear feedback about which tasks and issues participation initiatives or workers will be able to take on and if possible in what order.
- Make sure that new workers will not have to explain to your frontline staff what they are doing, they will need to devote their energy to explaining it to your service users. Service managers have an important role to play in informing their staff about participation initiatives and young participation workers.
- Make sure participation initiatives have clear routes of communication with decision-makers.
- Prepare a work request form to channel all requests for help through the manager (examples attached at Appendix D). Make sure project leaders and practitioners know how to request work.
- It is important that a new initiative does not communicate the message that other workers have no further responsibility for developing participation so outline the

boundaries of participation workers roles and the continuing expectations of services and other staff.

Induction

- Workers who are new to a formal work environment need an induction period which is effectively a 'guide to work'. For example this could explain: confidentiality, appropriate behaviour at work, appropriate use of work-provided mobile phones and email, time-keeping, attendance, standard work practices such as sending apologies if unable to attend meetings, reasonable expectations between employer and employees, boundaries between private and professional life.
- Lengthy induction packs are not appropriate and must be broken down into manageable chunks delivered and worked through with workers at a realistic pace allied to practical tasks wherever possible.
- Induction to visits to projects and services should be focused on explaining the work of the organisation to the new worker they should not be used to generate work requests, this should be made clear to services.

Training and accreditation

- Are there NVQ or equivalent training or learning opportunities at a local college? If not could you develop accreditation by working with an agency such as the Open College Network. Can you build in some funding to support learning and development through external courses.
- Not all young workers will want to do training when they have started a new job.
- You may need to develop or look for additional training on self-esteem, confidence, assertiveness as care-experienced young people can suffer lack of self-esteem and starting a new job may raise anxieties about performance.
- In an organisation with a widespread practice base support with driving lessons may be appropriate.

Supervision and support

- In the early stages the work taken on by a relatively inexperienced or care-experienced worker must be highly structured and closely supervised.
- Daily contact with a supervisor will be necessary in the early stages for young or care-experienced workers.
- Shadowing practitioners and co-working with professional participation workers may be needed.
- Weekly meetings and monthly supervision should still be scheduled in addition to daily contact.

- A care-experienced young person can have low and fragile self-esteem. Care should be taken to make their transition into work a positive one with clear tasks, good supervision, early wins built in and the chances of negative results minimised with forward planning and close supervision.

Mentoring

- Specify the difference between the mentor's role and the role of line management.
- What records will be kept by a mentor, where and in what form, who will have access to them.
- Who will supervise and support the mentoring work? When, how, what will be recorded, who will have access?
- Will there be any circumstance in which the mentor can not give an assurance of confidentiality?

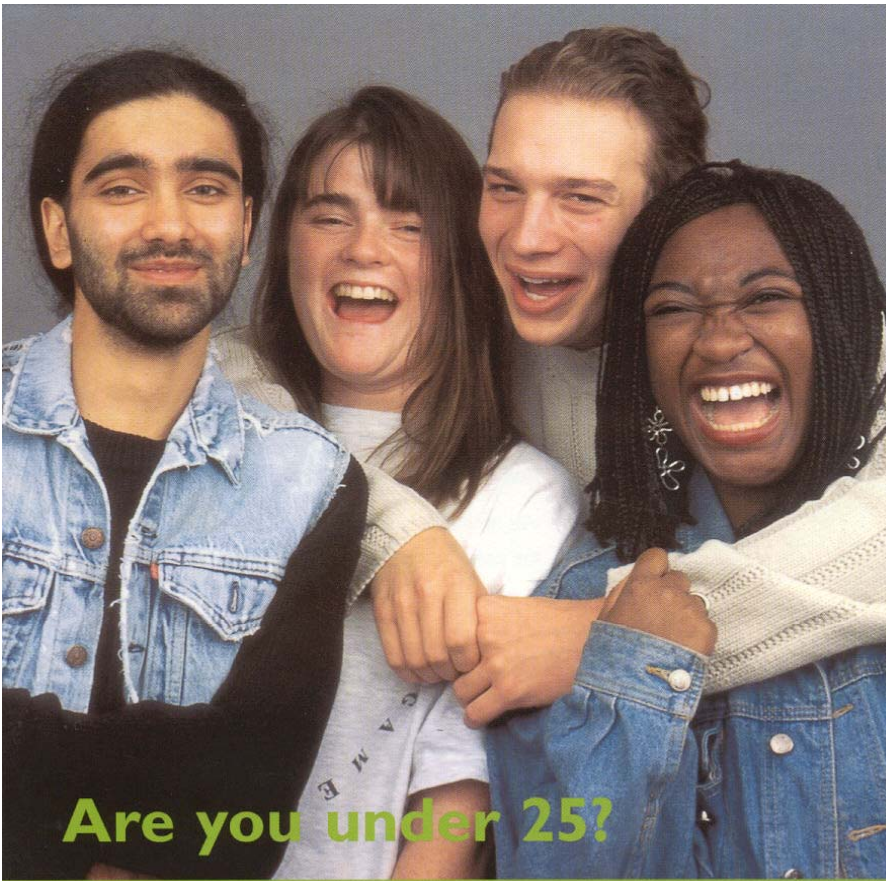
Managing workloads for young or care-experienced workers

- It is very important that relatively inexperienced young workers or young people who are doing participatory activities are not asked to field or assess work requests or to take on unrealistic or inappropriate work.
- Workloads need careful management with realistic timescales for the task, two examples (at Appendix E) could be used to help young or care-experienced workers plan a timescale for a piece of work.
- Turn down work if it cannot be done well in the time allowed, explain why this is.
- Be aware when work is likely to raise issues that are similar to life experiences of young or care-experienced workers.
- Have support mechanisms in place

Exit Strategies

- In time-limited posts a planned exit strategy is needed
- Workers should be supported and given time to write or update a CV and portfolio of evidence detailing their achievements, training and skills.
- Time should be allocated to support workers to look and apply for further posts
- Exit interviews can be useful to document and affirm all the positive outcomes from a work placement.

Appendix B - Voice Initiative Recruitment Flyer




Are you under 25?

thinking about working with children and young people or in community work?

interested in giving children and young people a right to be heard and listened to?

If so, we'd like to hear from you.



Barnardo's
GIVING CHILDREN BACK THEIR FUTURE

Appendix C - Advice from the Voice Team to anyone else considering doing this sort of work

You need to:

1. Help/enable young people to build own initiatives/projects;

2. Identify the need more clearly and define the work better;
3. Have good managerial support and understanding of where young people are coming from – transition from users to employees;
4. Not to forget why you're doing it;
5. Have real dedicated time for workers and managers – not an “add on”;
6. Employ adequate support staff
7. Consult/involve young people from the beginning;
8. Consider location/geography more carefully – focus areas or areas of work.
9. Bear in mind differences.
10. Not rush and make sure resources are in place before starting.
11. Make sure timescales are realistic and include time for “finding out” as well as “doing”.

Appendix D Work request forms

Appendix D Work request forms

Request for Work by the Voice Initiative

The Voice Initiative has now been running for six months and we are delighted, if a little overwhelmed by the requests for involvement and work. Please can we ask you complete this form for all work requests, this will help us with planning the Voice work and also ensure you get a good and appropriate service from us.

Aims of the Voice Initiative

- To create opportunities for the views of children and young people who use our services to be heard – so they can influence the service, the region and the organisation nationally, in ways that empower the children and young people and help to develop their

self confidence and self esteem.

- To enable children's and young people's voices to influence external policy and legislation, and to give the opportunity for them to be involved in campaigning and lobbying.
- To enable Barnardo's policies to be developed from more direct links with the views and experiences of children and young people.
- To give children and young people the means to communicate their opinions and views directly (to each other and adults). So they have control and direction of what is said and how it is said, without being channelled or filtered. This could be a newspaper, video, internet site etc.
- To raise the overall profile and visibility of involving children and young people throughout Barnardo's, either as employees, volunteers or members of reference groups.

Who from your Project/Section/Organisation will work with the Voice worker/s?

What contribution will this work make towards improving/increasing participation in your Project/Section/Organisation?

What will be done as follow up to this work?

Please return this form to:

For completion by the Voice Manager

Decision: YES/NO

If no, why not?

If yes, work allocated to:

Work to be reviewed on:

Review outcome:

Any other comments:

Form to request attendance and input at a reference group meeting

Name	
Location/Contact Details	
Job Title	
Are you representing a specific group?	
Aims of your request?	
What will the request involve?	
Do you want to attend a reference group meeting?	
What are the time scales for your work?	
How will you feedback to the children and young people you have consulted with?	
Any other information you think we	

may need	
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Appendix E Planning work: How much time will it take?

If you are asked to gather young people's views about an issue you will need enough time to do all the different steps. Plan how much time you will need against each of the steps.

- plan and prepare questions and activities,
- decide how you will record what people say: will you write it down, will you ask them to write it down,
- contact staff and children or young people,
- explain what it's all about,
- carry out your activities with the children or young people,
- look at the information received,
- identify any gaps and decide whether you need to speak to anyone else
- report back in an appropriate format and
- give feedback to the young people about any outcome.

If preparing young people to help with recruiting a new member of staff, you will need to:

- Contact and meet with young people who may be interested
- Explain the recruitment process and their part in it, explaining how much their views will be taken into account and what will happen if their views are different from those of an adult panel
- Explain the particular post that is being recruited if it is unfamiliar to them although it is best to involve young people who understand at least some of the tasks of the post or who know the project/service
- Give them time and support to decide what they want to know from candidates and to write questions
- Check that these are compatible with those of the other panel
- Practice asking questions and recording answers
- Arrange travel and help getting to the venue
- Provide somewhere comfortable to wait, refreshments and someone to be with them, possibly activities while they wait
- Decide how their information will be fed back to any other recruitment panels

- Provide a forum for them to discuss the process
- Provide feedback about
 - who got the job and why,
 - how the decision was reached and
 - how their views helped in making the decision.

Appendix F Baseline information on participation in the pilot regions

In advance of the pilot initiative the steering group collected baseline data on types and levels of participation in projects and schemes in the two pilot regions. This exercise was repeated in autumn 2001 and autumn 2002 to map the degree of change. We cannot assume that all developments are due to Voice but it is useful information to have to plan further work and to inform the wider debate on participation within Barnardo's.

Projects in LEASE and Yorkshire were asked to complete the baseline questionnaire. Thirty-one questionnaires were completed and the results are as follows.

Staff Recruitment and Appraisal

1. Do service users have input into Job descriptions or Person Specs?

- 26 projects had no involvement although almost all said this would be a good idea with proper support and training for service users.
- 5 projects did have service user involvement, of these one was for a specific post only.

2. Do service users sit on interview panels?

- 18 projects had no service user involvement.
- 13 projects did have service user involvement, some specified:

Occasionally

Only older users

Users involved in group exercises x 2

Users involved in interview around Barnardo's values questions

Panel of young people and staff as well as one of professionals address different areas of the Person Spec.

Users involved in the process but not the formal panel

3. Do service users participate formally in the induction of new staff?
 - 29 projects had no service user involvement.
 - 2 projects had service user involvement, one outlined that new staff attend a young people's group and meet a sample of service users as part of their induction.
4. Are service users aware of the appraisal system for staff?
 - 29 projects said service users were not aware of this
 - 1 project replied 'possibly', 1 project said that some users might be aware.
5. Are service users asked their views for individual appraisals?
 - No projects sought the views of users with regard to staff appraisals.

Consultation and Communication

1. Does the project have a newsletter or any other form of regular consultation with all users, other than individual reviews?
 - 16 projects had either a regular newsletter or feedback questionnaire.
 - 15 projects had no regular communication with users other than individual reviews.
2. Are service users represented on the Steering Group/management Committee of the project?
 - 10 projects did have service user representation.
 - 3 projects had no steering group or management committee.
 - 1 project said it was not appropriate for service users to be represented.
 - 17 projects had no service user representation.
3. Does the project have a users group or committee that meets regularly?
 - 16 projects had regular user groups or other young people's forums.
 - 1 project had plans to start a group.
 - 14 projects had no regular user groups or forums.
4. Do service user groups contribute to the annual report?
 - 17 projects had service user input to annual reports either directly by way of articles, artwork and poetry or indirectly by way of comments and views expressed in feedback forms or individual reviews.
 - 14 projects had no user input to annual reports.

External

1. Have service users been involved in research undertaken either nationally or locally?

- 23 projects said service users had been involved in research. A very broad range of activities was cited from local planning groups, Barnardo's re branding, universities research questionnaires and project outcome research among others.
 - 8 projects said service users had no involvement in research.
2. Have service users been involved in any campaigning or lobbying?
- 8 projects said service users had been involved in areas including professional training, conferences, media work and making a Barnardo's video.
 - 23 projects said service users had not been involved in campaigning.

Opportunities

1. Are service users involved in mentoring or peer support?
- 10 projects said service users were involved, 3 of these specified that it was informal.
 - 1 project said 'not officially'.
 - 1 project said they operate an anti bullying group
 - 1 project said they have a school prefect system.
 - 17 projects had no mentoring or peer support systems.
2. Do ex service users have the opportunity to become volunteers within the project?
- 17 projects said there were opportunities or encouragement for ex service users to be involved as volunteers.
 - 14 projects did not offer this opportunity.

Other Comments Made

- Involving young people effectively takes time and resources but it is worth it.
- The scheme is still new but we hope to develop more user involvement.
- Users are asked for their views for the annual inspection (residential).
- Users are asked to complete a questionnaire at the end of their involvement with the project.
- Users have self advocacy groups
- Young people draw up individual profiles for their files
- Young people from the project have recorded a song and released a CD.
- The project would be interested in being involved in the pilot scheme.
- The potential to involve users in the future development of CRMS, especially the user comment screen.
- As part of the core standards we are currently looking at developing more creative ways of involving and consulting with children and families.

- Working in a main stream school, user groups would segregate students. We encourage users to get involved in school structures such as the school council.
- We try to involve young people wherever possible in developing services.
- Young carers are actively involved in producing training to other agencies via presentations, video and written pieces. These are used to tell service providers how users experience the service.
- The process of user involvement takes time and patience.
- Ex-service users can be members of the adoption panel. The panel has a useful role in bridging between service users and professionals at the project.

Appendix G The 2001 Voice Initiative and user participation survey

Methodology

Questionnaires were sent to all 76 projects within the LEASE and Yorkshire regions in September 2001. Sections 1 and 2 mainly comprised tick box answers, with some questions that required respondents to answer on a point scale from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree.' Space was provided for respondents to make further comments if necessary. The third section sought examples of participatory work within projects. Respondents were asked to describe the work undertaken in less than 100 words. Forty six out of seventy six questionnaires were returned giving a return rate of 61 per cent, high for a postal questionnaire. The purpose of the questionnaire was threefold: 1) To gather project's views on the voice initiative 2) To obtain general information on user participation within projects 3) To find examples of good practice in user participation.

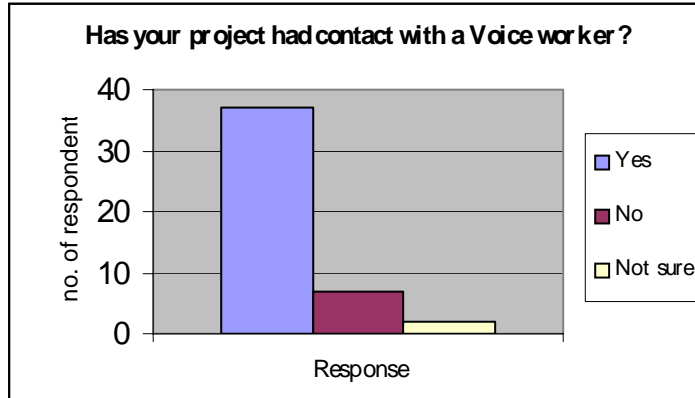
Ninety one per cent of respondents were familiar with the aims of the Voice Initiative. An extensive advertising and publicity campaign probably contributed to this high level of familiarity with Voice (eighty nine per cent of respondents had received literature about the initiative).

Before its introduction, only 27 of the 46 projects which responded reported that had definitely being consulted about setting up a participation initiative. However, a further 11 were unsure whether or not they had been consulted. When asked whether they felt they should have been consulted the response was mixed:

Response	No. of respondents
Yes	12
No	11
Not sure	6

No answer	9

Eighty per cent of those who responded had had some form of contact with a



Voice worker.

A high percentage of projects had contact via a phone call or a visit. Visiting projects was part of the induction process for Voice workers. The following table records the ways that projects had contact with Voice workers:

Form of contact	% of respondents
Visit	73%
Telephone call	73%
Written contact	59%
Attended project meeting	30%
Met with young people	30%
Other	19%
Please specify:	
▪ Sits within the project	
▪ Attended training	
▪ Contact via senior staff	
▪ Worker joining to set up consultation process	
▪ Involved in consultation day	
▪ Through SLYP response	

Half had requested help/input from the Voice workers. The following table identifies the ways in which their assistance was required:

Form of help/ input needed	% of requests
Involving young people in the decision making process	52%
Set up a group for young people Type of group set up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a consultative group ▪ an advisory group ▪ consultation on new legislation ▪ to organise a conference for young people to have a voice ▪ drop in/ moving on ▪ to produce a video 	35%
Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ as a consultant regarding recruitment ▪ to evaluate young peoples experiences of a project's services ▪ support for 2 groups at a scheme ▪ to visit young people ▪ to visit a project 	30%
Support/ advocacy for young people	13%
Complaint about an agency other than Barnardos	4%
Complaint about Barnardos	0%

The 23 respondents who had requested help, ranked the time taken to respond on a scale ranging from excellent to poor:

Response time	No. of respondents
Excellent - good	16
Average - poor	2
No answer	5

Respondents were also asked to assess the quality of the help they received from Voice workers. Fewer than half responded but of these nine out of the ten ranked the quality as excellent-good, one as average-poor. Respondents were also asked to rate selected statements about the Voice initiative on a point scale from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree:'

Statement	Strongly Agree	agree	Neither agree/ disagree	disagree	Strongly disagree	No ans.
The voice initiative is much needed	15	21	6	1	0	3
Having young workers is a positive development	23	18	2	1	0	2
A more senior worker would be more appropriate	2	2	11	16	9	6
A Head Office participation unit would be a better option	0	1	10	18	11	6

Projects were also asked to describe how service users had participated over and above using the services at the project during the past year. The following table details the way in which young people contributed:

Contribution made	% of projects whose users contributed
Contributed to annual report. <i>How did they contribute?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Drawings ▪ Quotes/poems/written contributions ▪ Evaluations 	59%
Input to steering group by passing views on to staff	30%
Sat on steering group	15%
Have been asked for feedback on service	80%
Helped plan the way the service runs	33%
Had input when appointing staff/volunteers <i>How did they have input?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Drawing up job description ▪ Short listing ▪ Present at interview 	33%
Are asked for feedback for staff appraisals	13%
Provide mentoring or peer support	17%
Ex service users volunteer at the project	26%

80% now ask young people for regular feedback about the project's services. However, giving regular feedback to young people is less common with just over 50% keeping their service users up to date.

17 out of the 46 respondents have young people in their projects that have been involved in regional or national policy/ lobbying or research in the last year. The following table details how young people were involved:

Type of involvement in policy and research	No of projects whose young people were involved
---	--

Responded to internal documents	35%
Responded to consultation on proposed legislation <i>If so which?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Children (Leaving care) Act 2000</i> ▪ <i>CLCACT</i> ▪ <i>Initiative for Government new drugs initiatives</i> ▪ <i>Lobbying at Parliamentary session</i> ▪ <i>United Nations</i> ▪ <i>Social Exclusion letter r.e. Education of children in care</i> 	29%
Shared views with RMT via staff	29%
Attended RMT	12%
Shared views with council/ Barnardos.	24%
Been interviewed for research By whom? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Barnardos</i> ▪ <i>ECPAT</i> ▪ <i>SSI</i> ▪ <i>OFSTED</i> ▪ <i>SCF</i> ▪ <i>SSD</i> ▪ <i>Joseph Rowntree Foundation</i> ▪ <i>SEU</i> ▪ <i>Connexions</i> 	88%
Taken part in a focus/discussion group	53%
Lobbied local Government	24%
Lobbied national Government	12%
Other <i>Please specify:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Joint review panel</i> ▪ <i>National Voice Initiative</i> ▪ <i>R.e. HAZ funding</i> 	18%

14 out of the 17 projects whose young people were involved in policy or research, received feedback about the outcomes and use of materials. The following table

indicates how many young people tended to be involved in participation over and above using the project's services:

Number of young people actively involved	No. of projects whose young people were involved
0-5 young people	12
6-10	5
11-15	7
16-30	3
30 plus	2
No answer	17

When asked whether the same service users tend to get involved, only half of the respondents answered the question. Of those who did, 42% felt that it was the same people who tended to get involved but also felt that a good cross section of young people actively participate. However, 80% felt that there are some groups that they struggle to get involved for various reasons. The following examples were given:

- Young people with severe learning difficulties and extremely poor communication
- Young homeless people
- 15 plus (in residential care)
- All of them- many come for individual services
- Children who find it very difficult to communicate
- Disabled children with profound communication difficulties
- The ones who are more difficult to engage- have chaotic lifestyles.

85% of projects felt that young service users could participate more actively in their project/scheme. Respondents were asked to rank the following methods on a scale of 1- 9, with 1 being the most effective way for young people to get involved and 9 being the least effective. The following list is in descending order, with 'giving feedback to the project' scoring highest most often and 'other' scoring highest the least often:

1. Give feedback to the project
2. To have their own groups/ committees
3. Help projects to plan their services
4. Contribute to the annual report
5. Lobbying/ influencing work

6. By helping to appoint staff
7. Give their views to the steering group/ committee
8. Take part in policy or research
9. Other- mentoring

Respondents were asked what they felt could be done to encourage service users to participate more. Contact with other projects scored highest and the list is in descending order:

1. Contact with other projects
2. Training
3. Examples of methods used
4. Written advice/guidance
5. Access to support from regional participation worker

Respondents also gave their own suggestions as to how service users could be encouraged to participate more:

“More staff, motivating young people is very time consuming”

“Funding/resources”

“Better access in all sense of the word”

“Training opportunities for young people”

“Quality support”

“Knowledge of individual’s circumstances so that things are not made worse”

Appendix H The Learning and Messages about Voice from the Voice Management Group

Gina McIntyre, Julie Graham, Michelle Westerman, Natasha Nelson, Joanna Rhodes, Michael Phillips, Jo Hunt, Irene Levine and Pam Hibbert

Individual views

1. What was the most important thing about Voice for you?
 - Being given chance – realised my own ambitions

- Most important – to express how young people feel – their views not “professional” or personal views. Changing ways of thinking. Accountability: Responsibility, Opportunities, and Impacts.

2. What did you enjoy the most?

- Contact with young people – positive experiences and memories.
- Debunking myths of managers.
- Chance to speak out – conferences
- Groups and events
- Results
- Broad arena of participation

3. What did you enjoy the least?

- Nothing changes and acceptance of this by some people
- Not always feeling trusted – treated like “young person”
- Too many meetings and jargon
- Change not quick enough
- Attitudes – professionals service not young people
- Blame – always on lack of resources but best resource is you
- Paperwork
- Not being able to work things out – being out of my hands – limitations of post
- M&C role – unclear role sometimes
- Motivation and focus – pay not enough
- Team work – not always effective
- Taking on new work before others pieces completed

4. One thing you would have liked to be different or one thing you would have changed?

- Pre training
- More yp groups
- Better support/contact with rest of Voice
- More joint work/tasks
- More control/chances to change things
- Role confusion – advocate v participation worker
- Better communication and keeping in touch
- Not large enough initiative
- Loss of some people and their knowledge not replaced

- Lack of involvement of c&yp in planning etc
- The model – not able to move things forward quickly
- Structure – B's too large for people to pick up easily – development task needed more induction for Voice workers.
- The intensity of the job wasn't clear from the beginning
- Managers – dual roles
- Link to National Participation Post
- Try and not be so controlling
- Try and not be so controlling

5. The most important thing you learnt from Voice?

- Confidence – training opportunities (Driving lessons!)
- Changes – only recently seen the impact
- Realising how much I want to do this sort of work
- Personal development/awareness/confidence
- Young people are different and have choices
- Learning to compromise – working in a team
- Changed the view on Barnardo's
- How talented young people are
- Sense of responsibility
- Some sense of not always achieving what I set out to do – letting people down

6. The most important thing you think you have contributed to Voice?

- Given young people confidence
- Speaking out
- Relationships with young people/personality
- Ideas
- Willingness to learn/openness
- Caring
- Empowering young people
- My experiences
- Positive role model to young people
- Making sure Voice/young people are involved – keeping eye on the agenda
- Support to workers
- Enthusiasm
- Organisational skills

Messages to Barnardo's from the Voice Workers

- Be honest about the end of Voice!
- More openness from staff in organisation) model
- 1.1. Between staff and staff) participation & consultations
- 1.2 Between staff and Organisation) with staff team
- Projects need to communicate between each other, etc. conferences, meetings.
- Don't expect Voice to work with short notice e.g. 3 days
- There should be handbook on Participation and Consultation and training in participation for all staff
- Treat all employees with the same respect and values – Voice workers are staff not young people.
- Need to see end result
- Barnardo's does not really listen properly - too many people and procedures in the way
- Need to see that decisions are being made – and told about them
- There are too many meetings and too much talking without any action
- Future participation workers need to be employed on a salary which makes them feel valued
- We know (unfortunately) that full participation won't happen overnight
- Voice workers should be involved in a higher level of decision making
- Make participation a priority - and show us that it is.

MESSAGES FOR THE REGIONS

- There has to be a regional responsibility for participation
- A member of staff at each project needs to have responsibility for participation
- There needs to be 1 participation manager and 2 workers in each region. The managers are responsible to the new head office participation director/officer
- All regions need to then meet regularly to pass on best practice
- Managers need to be open to change

MESSAGES FOR COUNCIL

- Need to be more approachable and accessible
- They should do more project visits

- Young people (with plenty of preparation time!) should make presentations to Council
- There should be a children and young people's Council

MESSAGES TO MANAGERS

- Don't be patronising
- Let us be involved in decision making
- Don't filter our opinions/information
- Trust your workers

MESSAGES TO BARNARDO'S FROM VOICE MANAGERS

For the Whole Organisation

- if we are going to involve young people do it properly or not at all e.g. staff recruitment interviews - young people need to be involved in the whole process, preparations, interview, feedback, recognition.
- if we do not invest the resources and time then it is tokenism
- we need a strategy and Core Principles for the whole organisation on Participation (like Children's Society)
- not a short term, time limited goal - long term commitment and resources are needed.
- need for the Strategy Group to take on board the learning from the pilot and include in strategic goals
- Voice cannot come up with the all the answers

For Management

Employment of young people:-

- not making the task too big
- proper adult/worker support
- location considered
- more defined role – trainee status
- need for training

For young participation workers

- participation worker need help to identify what they can or can't do re tasks
- understanding that there are not choices about some things – expectations of the job

BUT we feel that we have all done well with an intangible complex job

Appendix 1: Focus Group Topic Guide for Young People

Introduction

- Introductions: to people and the research
- Summary of what the interview will involve. Groundrules and confidentiality.
- Where the information from the interview will be going: Voice evaluation report
- Issues: if you don't want to answer a question you don't have to, if you change your mind about taking part you can leave at any time
- Recording - tape recorder, notes and anonymity.
- Any questions?

THE VOICE

Tell me about your contact with the Voice worker.

Prompt:

- Which Voice worker was it?
- What did they do?
- When and for how long did they work with you (length of sessions and frequency)?
- How many young people did they work with?

So what was it like working with the Voice worker?

Brainstorm ideas: use colour coded post-it notes for good, not so good, change

Prompt:

- What was good?
- What was not so good?
- Is there anything you would change? Or that could have been done differently?

What impact did the Voice worker make on you/the situation?

Prompt:

- Did anything change?
- Did the Voice worker make a difference to you or your situation?

- Did anything happen that you didn't expect?

Are the Voice workers different to other workers? E.g. social workers, project workers

Prompt:

- If no, why. If yes, why (e.g. extra support, participation etc)
- What is the role of the Voice workers in Barnardo's?
- How did they involve young people in your project? E.g. listening to them, asking for their views etc
- Level of young people's participation in their project

What else could the Voice workers do to give young people a Voice in Barnardo's?

Brainstorm ideas on flipchart paper.

Prompt:

- Activities, Support

PARTICIPATION

Aim:

- To explore young people's understanding and definition of participation
- To develop ideas about what works, what doesn't work

Exercise 1

What is participation?

Discuss the concept of participation or 'getting involved' (depending on the language used and level of understanding amongst young people). Ask the young people to create a poster that explains participation to other young people who do not know what participation is. Young people to write the word participation in the middle of the page and then write or draw the things that describe participation around it. Give the young people a pile of speech bubbles to write on and stick on the page.

Prompt questions:

- Definitions of participation (e.g. having a Voice, being listened to, citizens now)
- Sorts of activities: individual decisions, recruiting staff, consultation, research, public speaking, media,

Materials: A4/A3 paper, coloured pens, speech bubbles, glue

Why should young people be able to participate/get involved?

Prompts questions:

- Legal right: Article 12 of the UN Convention
- Government

- Young people are citizens now
- What happens when young people are not listened to/allowed to become involved?

Exercise 2

Participation – the good and not so good things (pros and cons)

Ask the young people to think about the times that they have been involved in something whether with the Voice, at the project or school etc. What was good about it what was not so good? Young people to write the word participation in the middle of the page and then write or draw the things that were good (on red arrows) and the things that were not so good (on blue arrows).

Prompt questions:

PROS:

- What made you want to stay involved/keep motivated?
- What changes did you see as a result of your involvement?
- What skills do young people learn as a result of being involved?
- How does young people's involvement benefit other people?

CONS:

- Was there anything that wasn't so good about being involved?
- Would you have changed anything? What could have been different?
- What do you think stops young people from getting involved?

Materials: A4/A3 paper, coloured pens, arrows, glue

What are the practical things that need to be thought about when involving young people?

Prompt:

- Information
- Training: adults and young people
- Support
- Resources (time, money, transport)
- Motivation/reward

Conclusion

- Ask if anyone has worked on a one-to-one basis with the Voice Worker or is part of the young people's reference group and would be happy to fill in a short questionnaire about their experiences?
- Thanks
- Feedback: full report, summary, verbal feedback from me

- Vouchers

Appendix 2: Young People's Questionnaire

THE VOICE YOUNG PEOPLE'S QUESTIONNAIRE

This information is completely anonymous. If you don't want to answer a question, skip it. Call on for more information.

Please tell us about the contact you have had with a Voice Worker. What did they do?

.....
.....
.....

Did anything change because the Voice worker was involved? If yes, how? If no, why do you think that was?

.....
.....
.....

Do you have anything else you want to say about your contact with The Voice worker?

.....
.....

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME! Please give the questionnaire back to your project worker in the envelope provided.

Appendix 3 Sample Interview schedule

VOICE INITIATIVE FEEDBACK FROM PROJECTS IN YORKSHIRE AND LEASE REGIONS

Which region are you in? Yorkshire/LEASE (please circle one option.)

A) Please describe any contribution by Voice workers to your project

B) Please describe any way in which you think your region has gained by having Voice workers in post.

C) Please describe any way in which Voice workers have helped to increase the participation of young service-users in your project?

D) Please describe any developments at your projects as a result of Voice, for example, changes in policy or practice, development of new materials?

E) Have any of your service users been involved in a young people's reference group in your region? Yes/no. If yes, please give feedback on what you think the group is achieving.

F) Have any young people from your service been involved in staff recruitment in the region (or at head office for LEASE projects?) If yes please describe.

G) What do you think have been the most successful or innovative aspects of the Voice Initiative?

H) Have you had any concerns about the Voice Initiative?

I) How could these be addressed?

J) Do you wish to see the Voice Initiative continue? Yes/No. In what format?

L) What is the main learning point about participation that you would draw from the Voice Initiative?

Thank you for your time. Initial feedback and recommendations will be discussed with the Voice team in September and a full report written in October.