



Developing and implementing a Young Person Interview Panel for local authority appointments in Special Educational Needs and Disability positions

Barnet Educational Psychology (EP) Team and Specialist Inclusion Services recognise the importance of engaging, including and coproducing with children and young people to ensure we offer the most effective service delivery. As part of this concept, the EP Team amended their interview approach to ensure children and young people (C/YP) with special educational needs and disability (SEND) contributed to the appointment of new professionals to the Barnet EP Team. The aim was to collaborate with young people to provide a template for future C/YP involvement in the interview process for management positions in Barnet SEND and Inclusion Services.

Between May and July 2017 the EP Team implemented a process to incorporate a C/YP interview panel in their most recent recruitment process. To establish and develop a positive contribution, the Barnet wide Young Person Group (Barnet Development Team Youth – BDTY) were consulted to gain their perspectives on how to implement such an approach. Relevant training was delivered to a variety of YP with special educational needs and disabilities and feedback was sought from YP throughout. A local secondary school was identified and working closely with the school special educational needs coordinator, a cohort of YP were offered an opportunity to engage in the interview panel process.

This document outlines the process and benefits of the C/YP interview panel and illustrates how feedback from C/YP has not only impacted the decisions made on the new EP Team appointments but also on how future interviews for management positions in Barnet SEND and Inclusion Services will be conducted ('You Said – We Did' approach).

Barnet Inclusion Services perceive the following advantages of having a C/YP panel as part of the recruitment model:

Advantages to the service:

- The organisation is able to see how the candidate interacts with young people.
- Staff within the organisation develop new skills from working with children and young people in a formal setting.
- Children and young people offer a varied perspective on the recruitment process
- Involving children and young people demonstrates that the organisation values and takes into account the views of children and young people. This helps shape and improve services to better meet the needs of children and young people.

Advantages to the children / young person contributing to interview process

- Children and young people have their voice and recommendations heard by senior professionals and decision makers.
- It is excellent experience to add to a CV or job application.
- C/YP become more familiar and experienced with the interview process which will help with future interviews the young person attends
- Children and young people receive recognition/reward for their involvement in the recruitment process.

- Improved outcomes for children and young people, as they are able to influence and have their say on services which affect them.

Advantages to the candidate

- The candidate is able to interact with the children and young people that they may be working with, or for.
- They have the opportunity to demonstrate their practical ability to communicate with children and young people.
- The candidate is able to receive direct feedback from children and young people.

The process was coproduced with young people and their feedback was included in the decision making process. After the appointment, the Principal EP visited the young people at their school to inform them of the successful candidate and also to gain further feedback on the process they had engaged in. The young people received acknowledgement and rewards for their contribution (personal reference – see appendix 1.4, certificate and high street store vouchers).

As a result of the feedback received (see appendix 1.1), future management positions in Barnet SEND and Inclusion Services will follow a similar process to the one outlined in the following flowchart and will additionally include amendments that the young people highlighted after they had engaged in the complete schedule (i.e. YP to receive curriculum vitae from candidates prior to interview, YP will have a longer interview session and only one group of YP will interview all candidates to ensure equity in decisions).

The feedback indicated that the young people found the experience positive and there was a strong sense that they would like to engage in a similar process in the future (six of the eight YP scaled the statement ‘I would like to be part of future YP interview panels’ at 9 or 10 out of a possible 10). The table below provides an overview of the scaled questions used to gain feedback.

YP Interview Panel – Feedback on the process (7 young people contributed to the interview process)	
YP indicated their agreement with each statement utilising a scale of 1 – 10 (1 being ‘ completely disagree ’ scaling up to 10 ‘ completely agree ’)	
Statement	Av rating
1.I enjoyed being part of the YP interview panel	7.7
2. The training we had before the interviews helped me prepare and feel confident about taking part	7.6
3.I would like to be part of future YP interview panels	8.6
4. I would have liked more of a role in deciding how the YP interview was setup	4.3

The development and implementation process required a number of stages / steps which are illustrated in the flowchart *appendix 1.2*.

Appendices

Young Person Feedback – ‘The experience of being part of a Young person Interview Panel’

YP Interview Panel – Feedback on the process									
YP indicated their agreement with each statement utilising a scale of 1 – 10 (1 being ‘ <i>completely disagree</i> ’ scaling up to 10 ‘ <i>completely agree</i> ’)									
Young people (1 – 8)	YP1	YP2	YP3	YP4	YP5	YP6	YP7	YP8	Av rating
I enjoyed being part of the YP interview panel	6	7	8	8	8	9	8		7.7
The training we had before the interviews helped me prepare and feel confident about taking part	9	7	8	9.5	6	8	6		7.6
I would like to be part of future YP interview panels	7	10	4	10	9	10	10		8.6
I would have liked more of a role in deciding how the YP interview was setup	2	2	10	2	3	4	7		4.3
Positives					Even better if				
‘got to know more about interviews’ ‘Allowed young people to have a positive experience’ ‘I liked having a role in selecting people who will work with children’ ‘We could ask what we wanted’ ‘Everyone made us feel welcome and relaxed’					‘The same people interviewed all the candidates’ ‘If we could see the CVs before the interview’ ‘More time in the interview’ ‘More tips on how to relax’ ‘More power in the decisions’				
Additional comments									
‘Food was great’ ‘We were treated very nicely’									



Appendix 1.2 Process - Developing and implementing a Young person Interview Panel

Principal Educational Psychologist (PEP) meets with Barnet wide Young Person Group (Barnet Development Team Youth – BDTY). This group discusses potential process of a children & young person (C/YP) contributing to interviewing local authority candidates.

This feedback is incorporated into the plan to develop and implement a C/YP interview panel for future appointments in the Educational Psychology Team and Specialist Inclusion Services



Principal EP (PEP) makes contact with a Barnet Secondary School. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and PEP discuss potential C/YP interview panel process.



After agreement of school involvement, the potential group of children and young people (C/YP) with SEND are identified. The school SENCO liaises with this group to establish if they would like to find out more.



Consent letter sent to parents of C/YP (via school SENCO) – *see appendix 1.5*



Principal Educational Psychologist (PEP) provides training the group of C/YP at school setting:

- Training on being interviewed (overview, skills, hints and tips) (interviewee)
- Training on being part of an interview panel (interviewer)



Format and process discussed with C/YP. Role being interviewed for is explained. Group begin to think about questions they may want to ask during the interview. Group establish what recognition / reward they perceive would be appropriate and motivating for taking part. Also what environment they would feel most comfortable in (room, refreshments etc). SENCO finalises questions with group and sends to PEP



SENCo and Principal EP agree format and establish logistics (timings, interview panel size etc.)



Candidates for the advertised role are informed of the interview process, including information on C/YP interview
Candidates asked to prepare a presentation on the 'Role of an Educational Psychologist' to deliver to C/YP



C/YP conduct group interview as part of the interview process (Barnet EP supports and observes)
Feedback is ascertained from group (scale of 1- 10) on how appropriate they perceived the candidate for the role – *appendix 1.3*

C/YP group scores contribute to overall scoring process for the candidates (decision making process)



Candidates for the advertised position are asked to give feedback regarding to being interviewed by the group of C/YP with SEND at end of overall interview process, to inform future processes.



C/YP receive recognition and reward for their time
(personal reference – *appendix 1.4*, certificate of contribution and £10 high street gift voucher)



Principal EP meets with C/YP to notify the group on the decision (who was appointed) and also gain feedback on the process (C/YPs views on positives and how the process could be improved)



Principal EP gains feedback from school SENCo on process – *see appendix 1.1*

Appendix 1.3

Barnet Educational Psychologist Post

Presentation to YP - Scoring Candidate Responses

Presentation title (5 minutes)

'The Role of the EP and the difference we make to children and young people'

Young Person Views / Feedback on candidates:

Positive comments from YP regarding the candidate – ‘How well did they answer your questions and what impressed you?’							
Ares for development – ‘What could they have done better?’							
On a scale of 1 – 10 how would you score this person’s presentation? <i>(10 being extremely positive and 1 being not positive at all)</i>				YP 1	YP2	YP 3	YP 4
On a scale of 1 – 10 how would you score this person on becoming a Barnet Educational Psychologist? <i>(10 being extremely positive and 1 being not positive at all)</i>							

EP Evaluation – The Barnet EP observing YP interview and candidates delivery:

Score	Rating	Assessment
1	Poor	Did not address / demonstrate key criteria points
2	Limited	Some key skills shown and concepts briefly touched upon, however a performance below what is expected for EP role.
3	Satisfactory	Some of the key criteria met, demonstrating some competent presentation skills
4	Good	Addressed majority of key criteria demonstrating effective presentation and engagement skills
5	Excellent	Addressed all of key criteria with excellent presentation skills

Information presented	Presentation Skills	Notes
<i>Clearly addressed the title provided and relevant to YP audience Illustrated clearly role of EP in child friendly language Was able to illuminate positive change EPs can influence Allowed YP to understand role of EP</i>	<i>Confident and assured presence / approach Made YP feel comfortable Appropriate for target audience (young people) Engaging - Good use of visuals / media Effective timing (did not miss out or rush any aspect of presentation) Appropriate amount of information on slides Utilised slides as cues rather than read directly from notes Ability to respond to YP questions appropriately and positively</i>	
Score:	Score:	
Presentation Total Score: / 10		
Name of EP observing:		Signed:

Appendix 1.4



— with —



Young Person - Professional Reference

Supporting Barnet Local Authority Recruitment Process

10.07.2017

To Whom it may concern,

This reference acknowledges the key contribution that [REDACTED] [REDACTED] made to the recruitment of a new Educational Psychologist to Barnet Specialist Inclusion Services.

[REDACTED] accessed training (delivered by the Principal Educational Psychologist) on interviews and the skills required to form part of a young person interview panel.

On 5th July 2017 [REDACTED] formed part of an interview panel that supported the recruitment process. Along with asking questions the young person had independently developed, [REDACTED] provided clear and specific feedback to help the local authority make an informed decision regarding appointing the appropriate candidate.

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