

Pupil Perspectives on Inclusion and Support in schools

May 2019

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Glossary

AfC	Achieving for Children
EHCP	Education & Health Care Plan
ELSA	Emotional Literacy Support Assistant
IEP	Individual Education Plan
OFSTED	The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
RBWM	Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead
SENCo	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disability

Introduction:

The rationale for this focused project is to provide a follow up to the SEND Local Area Ofsted and the work that has been done on the Local Area’s Inclusion Charter (Appendix 8). A year on, to gain views from a wider range of children and young people in RBWM schools, the Local Authority designed the current project to explore the understanding of inclusion and pupils’ perceptions of how local services are delivering in accordance with the charter.

Parameters of the Project:

The project sought to gain pupils’ views with regard to their experiences as recipients of provision and/or their knowledge and understanding of the Inclusion Charter. It was decided that the schools should cover primary, middle and secondary age ranges and include a specialist provision. They should also represent a geographical spread across the local authority. Two primary schools, one middle school, two secondary schools and one specialist provision were involved. The project had a short timescale, so it was important to recruit schools as quickly as possible. The schools were therefore chosen via convenience sampling, from the knowledge and recommendation of colleagues from the Educational Psychology Service.

Pupil views were collected via focus groups, as they are exploratory and give access to a number of perspectives. Participants are motivated language users; they make lexical choices and their dialogue is purposeful as their stake in it is the ‘causal driver’ of the discourse (Whittle and Mueller, 2010; Potter, 2010). Stake refers to an individual’s vested interest for gain, protection or to defend their legitimacy (Whittle and Mueller, 2010). Morgan (2010) states that the nature of the content can affect the nature of the interaction, which is relevant to this project, as it explores participants’ potentially differing perspectives on inclusion and support. Interaction occurs and is shaped by and within a given context, so participant viewpoints are necessarily constrained by inherent socio-cultural influences (Adjei, 2013).

Composition of groups:

School	Year Group	Level of Need
Primary	6	EHCP
	5	SEND
	5	No SEND
	4	SEND
	4	SEND
Primary	6	EHCP
	6	EHCP
	6	SEND
	5	SEND
Middle	8	EHCP
	7	SEND
	7	No SEND
	7	SEND
	5	SEND
Secondary	8	EHCP
	9	No SEND
	9	No SEND

	10	SEND
	10	SEND
Secondary	7	SEND
	8	EHCP
	9	SEND
	10	No SEND
	10	No SEND
Specialist	14	EHCP
	14	EHCP
	14	EHCP

Methodology:

The SENCOs at the identified schools were contacted with an explanatory email and follow up conversations were had to confirm consent and arrange facilitation of the focus groups (Appendix 1). Schools were also sent an opt-out consent email to inform parents of the intention to carry out the focus group work with the pupils (Appendix 2). One school chose to send out opt-in letters to parents, which was agreed prior to them being sent out (Appendix 3). The focus groups were facilitated by an Assistant Psychologist and the Area SENCO from Achieving for Children (providing services for Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead). It was decided that the focus groups would be audio recorded to support facilitation of the groups, allow for the collation of themes and aid subsequent report writing. Schools, pupils and parents were informed that the audio would be deleted as soon as report writing was completed. Anonymity would be assured as no schools or pupils would be referred to in the report. A schedule of core focus group questions was devised, in consultation with a number of colleagues, to anticipate and elicit rich feedback (Appendix 4). A schedule of questions was equally devised for a subsequent discussion with the SENCO at each school, to evaluate the current practice of involving the child in the process of their support and to ascertain how schools capture pupil voice (Appendix 5).

Findings:

The focus groups were positively received by the schools, with active contributions from most of the participants. The groups opened with questions to familiarise the facilitator with the school and the participants and ensure the children were comfortable and understood why they were present. They typically lasted approximately thirty minutes. There was a general willingness from the majority of pupils to share their views, with only one secondary cohort noticeably more reticent to participate. It is possible that this was due to the composition of that particular focus group. Prior to facilitating the focus groups there was no decision made on whether the SENCO would be present. Out of the six focus groups, only one SENCO was absent, one sat out of sight and in the remaining four, either a SENCO or relevant staff member was present. After the initial focus group facilitation, an additional question was added to the schedule, to include an enquiry into any support pupils might have received from an external adult or service. The audio recordings for all focus groups were listened back to and transcribed to elicit themes. The following themes were identified across the focus groups: **Feeling safe** (safety of learning, security and belonging), **feeling listened to** (trust, relationship building), **feeling included** and **knowledge of the Charter**. These themes were somewhat expected, given the nature of the question schedule and the use of the Inclusion Charter as a focus. The themes are inextricably linked, but this report attempts to discuss any findings by addressing these themes individually. The pupils' perspectives and personal examples will be used to illustrate the extent to which they feel included in their support and those of local services.

Feeling safe

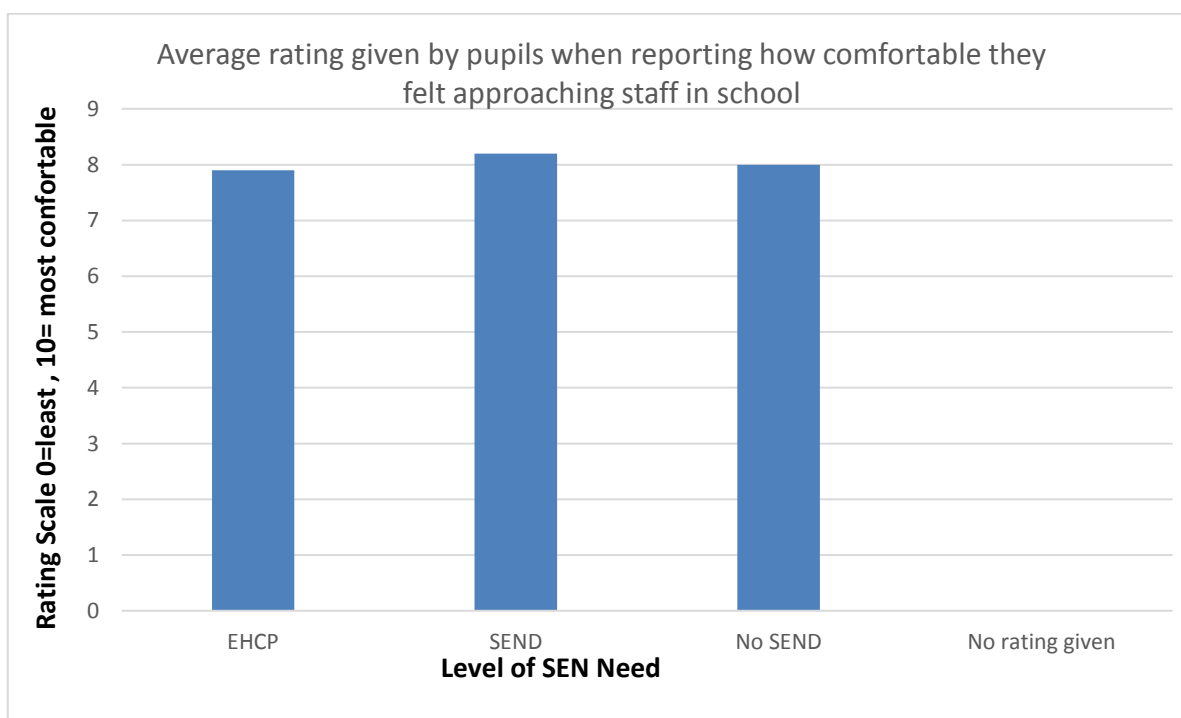
- *What is Working Well*

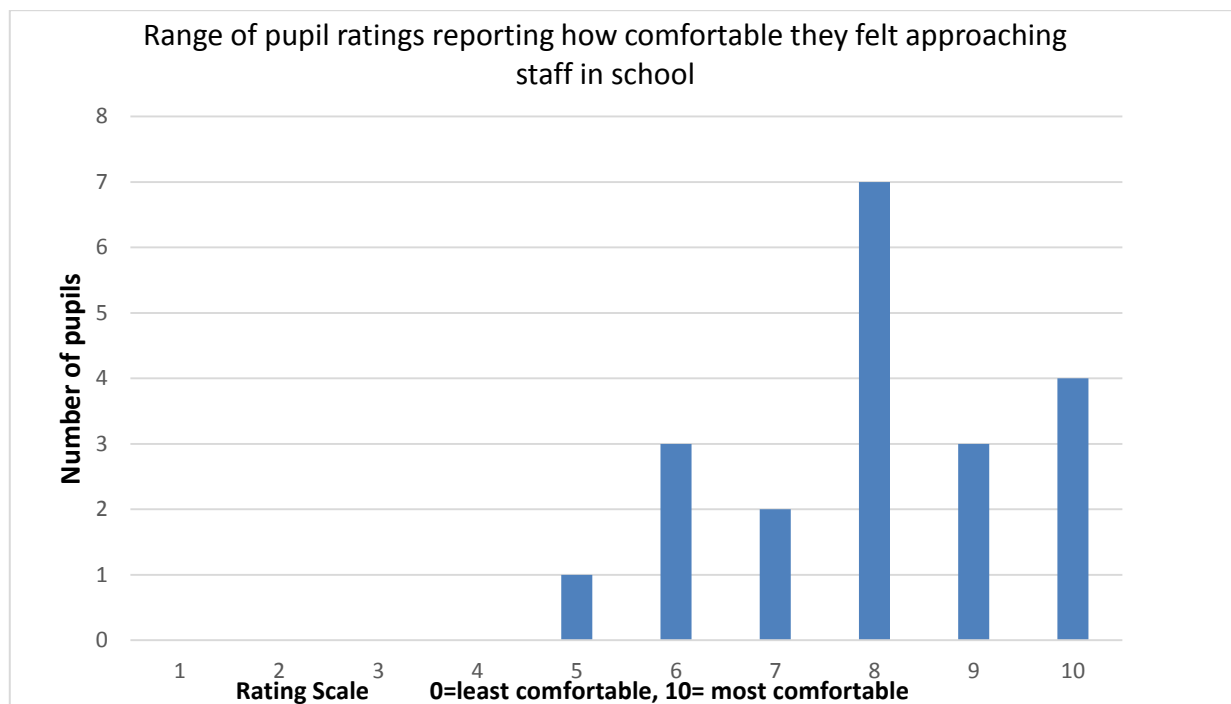
There was unanimity from pupils over feeling safe in their settings with pupils commenting on such aspects as; the supportive and inclusive nature of the school, the discipline creating a sense of order and safety, the approachability and trustworthiness of staff and there being mutual respect between staff and pupils. One secondary aged pupil referred to the transition support he had received in year 6. He felt he had been given a “chance to be listened to”. He felt it, “really opened up a lot of options. It made me feel a lot safer and a lot more in the school and not a lot more out of it”.

Pupils were asked to rate how comfortable they felt approaching staff for support on a scale of 0-10, with zero as ‘uncomfortable’ and 10 as ‘most comfortable’ (Appendix 6). Pupils generally felt very comfortable asking for help with no one giving a rating of less than 4, but qualified this with; the need to build a trusting relationship over time, that certain teachers they would not approach, identifying that they need to also learn without always asking for help and that peers can provide an important source of non-exposing support. The use of learning partners and ‘board, buddy, boss’ systems of peer support were referenced as useful; “it means we work together and help each other” and “asking a friend is sometimes less embarrassing than asking the teacher in front of the class”. This sense of security and belonging, and the value of relationship building, was highlighted by all schools as something the pupils value, with one SENCo commenting; “They recognise that we are thinking about what we can put in place that is going to benefit the children...It’s not just about inside the classroom, it’s about everywhere and all day”.

Rating Scale Information:

The graph below shows the average rating given by pupils according to their level of need. The scale ranged from 0-10, with zero as ‘uncomfortable’ and 10 as ‘most comfortable’. From this it is clear to see that differing levels of need did not affect pupils’ sense of security, in terms of approaching staff. The second graph shows how many pupils gave each rating, highlighting that no pupil gave a value of less than 5.





Feeling listened to

- *The Importance of Relationships with Adults*

The majority of pupils highlighted instances of positive adult support. Teachers were praised for their support; being available, even in their spare time and providing the necessary, personalised advice or explanation for the pupils to progress and achieve their best. One pupil even acknowledged that the teachers “try hard”. In a couple of instances, pupils commented on how particular teachers had shown empathy and taken a situation seriously, as compared to other staff members. Pupils talked of particular adjustments that the school had made to accommodate their additional needs, such as a lunch pass to avoid excess, upsetting noise, or access to a school laptop to decrease the writing workload. These helpful adjustments confirmed that their specific needs had been accounted for and they had been listened to.

The importance of building relationships was highlighted when a pupil said they have to “get to know the teachers even more, so you can tell them what you’re weak at, then they can help you”. Another pupil hinted at the respect they have for their teachers by saying; “you end up wanting to do well in their lessons”. For another pupil, trusting relationships was key; “for me it depends who is asking or who I am asking, as to how much I can say, as I don’t really tell people who haven’t helped me before”.

- *Unhelpful Adult Support*

One pupil suggested that adult support is not always welcome, stating; “sometimes I keep my problems to myself ‘cos it escalates”. She went on to explain that she had not found the support from an external counsellor helpful, stating that “I didn’t really want to speak because I had stuff going on”. However, this same pupil went on to say, “when I first started I didn’t think I would achieve as many things as I have now”, suggesting that in-school support has proved valuable.

Despite feelings of safety with regard to their learning, on occasion pupils reported that they did not necessarily feel adequately listened to. This was reported by one pupil who felt that her additional need was not given enough prominence within the school, with only one relevant assembly per year, thereby potentially compromising peoples' understanding. She hinted at the need for better teacher understanding of additional needs to improve how things are explained to them in class. Her views were slightly contradictory, as she felt that she "barely got any support", rated herself as '9' in being able to approach staff, but stated that she felt too shy to ask for more help. She received extra school support, but believed it "had not helped her at all".

Two other pupils hinted at the lack of teacher understanding of their additional needs, as they had been told they "should have been listening", if they said they had not understood something in class, but maintaining attentional focus is a challenge. These pupils welcomed suggestions of how they might be supported in class to remain on-task. They spoke eloquently and with insight about their additional needs and illustrated the need for this to be better understood by and communicated with their class teacher. Another pupil suggested 1:1 support for a particular piece of work, as after school sessions can be difficult to attend and lunchtime sessions can be too large and too exposing. Another pupil suggested more after-school clubs for core subjects.

In terms of what more could be done by schools, one pupil highlighted how he felt that teachers should tell someone else when they see a pupil who is repeatedly upset about something in class, stating; "I feel like it should move on from just the classroom".

Feeling included

Pupils reported feeling included in terms of feeling part of the community and (generally) being listened to; "the thing I like about this school is that they make everybody feel included...sometimes they help us with our opinions, by saying like, *Is that alright with you?*" Two pupils reported attending meetings with regard to their needs and their progress and knowing, "we need to try a bit harder to get to the level of everyone else". Pupils did not report being routinely included in meetings, with only five pupils specifically commenting on this. One pupil referred to being included in a meeting about plans for the next academic year; "it was good to make sure that I know what to do...so that school can pass on their ideas for me to the next school". This pupil found a similar discussion about their future career "very helpful and very thoughtful". Another pupil reported being involved in "a couple of meetings" and her peer stated that he was "perfectly fine with meetings". Where pupils had received external support, they reported feeling included in their next steps.

Despite there being a general feeling of consensus over being included, there is an underlying or implicit passivity or lack of agency. One primary pupil said she was "kind of" included in meetings. This particular pupil would relish more freedom and agency as she says, "I like having my own control and my own set of rules. Teachers tell me what to do – I feel encased in a box". Another primary aged pupil hinted at this lack of agency when he said; "we're hearing what we're getting better/worse at..." Staff and other adults can speak too readily and presumptuously on behalf of a pupil, either misunderstanding or disregarding their perspective (Fielding, 2001).

The importance of pupil voice and its broader conceptualisation as 'participation' is enshrined in legislation; The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), Every Child Matters (2003) and The Children Act (2004). Roger Hart's (1992) 'Ladder of Participation' provides a useful starting point to consider pupil participation (Appendix 7). All too often pupil participation is seen as being achieved,

when realistically pupils are included in a far more tokenistic and non-participatory manner. True participation begins to happen after the sixth 'rung' of the ladder, where decision-making is co-constructed. It is incumbent on staff to foster feelings of ownership and agency. Educational Psychologists should be advising schools on embedding such practice and enabling schools to construct ways of working that are emancipatory in both process and outcome (Fielding, 2001).

Knowledge of the Inclusion Charter

The charter was introduced in each focus group to ascertain pupil awareness of it and to direct discussion. Three out of twenty-seven pupils recognised the document from it being displayed in school. One of these three pupils, from a secondary school, commented; "I see this everywhere and I know what it is – about safety in school and how you can talk to someone about your home problems". She recognised it but didn't know what it was called. There was clearly a gap between familiarity with the poster itself and whether pupils felt schools were delivering on the statements within (Appendix 8). Across the schools there was a unanimous lack of knowledge or understanding about the Charter, until discussion started. The pupils were not necessarily uniformly asked whether they thought the charter statements were delivered in school. However, the nature of the questions, informed by the charter and the results of the discussion, meant that there was a realisation and acceptance that the statements were, at least in part, being delivered in school. Prior to one primary school focus group the SENCo prepared the pupils with a short discussion about the Inclusion Charter. She acknowledged their lack of awareness of it, but said that they would realise that a lot of what went on in school matched the statements.

SENCo Feedback:

There was variability across the schools in terms of the expectation of pupil attendance at their annual reviews or other relevant meetings. Pupil attendance at their own meetings is not uniform, with decisions made over their attendance by SENCos. At the middle school the SENCo encourages their presence, stating; "as they get older I try to involve them more in their target-setting and what they want to improve". However, she added that a pupil might not have a concept of what an EHCP means to them, refuse to engage with the support that is put in place for them and require repeated explanations of their additional needs. At one primary school "more cognitively able pupils" are invited to their annual review, with a pupil voice session done in preparation to guide the meeting. At the specialist provision children attend meetings "wherever possible" and if they cannot attend then staff will do consultation forms with them. At one secondary school pupils are habitually invited to meetings. The SENCo at this school referenced the good relationships that are built up, which allow for the identification of needs for support to be put in place. At the other primary school the SENCo reported that; "IEP meetings are done with parents as opposed to children", with no suggestion that the children are given the opportunity to attend. The child's targets are shared with them after the meeting by their teacher.

There was variability across the schools in terms of whether and how pupil voice is captured, aside from the requisite school council. For one primary school, capturing more pupil voice is "on the agenda", with time cited as a potential barrier to this. For the other primary school, pupil premium voice is currently captured with the wider cohort's wellbeing gauged through an "All about me" questionnaire, to inform Nurture or ELSA allocation. These questionnaires are done twice a year and communicated to parents. One school does a SEN survey for every child on the SEN register, and a similar one goes out to their parents, but in terms of other pupils' views, these are addressed through worry boxes in class. One

secondary school has pupil voice mapped out termly as part of their school improvement and is done via focus groups (Pupil Premium, SEN or year group) which are facilitated by the Head teacher or teachers. At the other secondary school a wellbeing survey is done by the whole school at the beginning and end of the year. At the specialist provision, there is a school council that meets termly, where class representatives bring forward any issues. Because of the high staff to pupil ratios, the school are able to “find out all the time what the concerns are”.

Constraints:

Time is suggested as a potential constraint as rapport building was done within the session as the facilitator was new to each setting. There were potential barriers to discussion, with some difference noted between the level of contribution from younger and older pupils. Some of the older participants were more reticent than the younger pupils, with some perhaps more affected by the possibility they might say something exposing. Their reticence is attributed to their specific needs, or lack of additional need, rather than their age, which refers back to the constraining socio-cultural influences in that context. Overall, responses were largely limited to within-school support at a level that was tolerable for pupils to share. Only a few pupils were prepared to comment on any external support they may have received. In this way, the project has provided evidence biased towards how pupils feel about the support their schools provide.

In five out of the six groups the SENCOs or an equivalent staff member, were present; four were visible and participated, one was out of sight and one absented herself. Where the SENCO participated, it is possible that at least one participant displayed demand characteristics. When asked if they felt comfortable asking for help, one pupil replied; “You should be very comfortable with your teachers and peers, because if you don’t ask then you won’t get anywhere...All the teachers ask you to go to them. You have to be honest.” When challenged as to whether she always lived by that, she replied with a grin that she was, “getting there”.

Conclusions & Recommendations:

Five out of the six focus groups were very discursive, with open contributions, which enabled the facilitator to identify how support could potentially be improved for some of the pupils. The ages of the pupils and the type of setting did not seem to be a significant factor in the differing feedback. Pupils were often insightful and eloquent about their needs, which should be harnessed and encouraged, rather than having their competencies underestimated. Despite acknowledgement that pupils feel safe and listened to in school, there is room for improvement. Given the variability of how pupil voice is captured, this is an aspect of current practice that is overlooked.

It is recommended that:

- Feedback is routinely captured on individual input to inform services.
- Pupil voice should be comprehensively captured in schools, rather than simply focusing on pupils on the SEN register. The school-wide questionnaire used in one setting revealed several previously unnoticed pastoral concerns.
- Pupils from a number of schools form a borough pupil voice group to meet each term, to inform wider service development.
- Given the aforementioned barriers to discussion, individual pupil voice feedback should be sought with regard to children and young people’s specific needs and support in school. In this

way, a more detailed understanding of their perspectives would be gained about support they receive from external services, over and above the support they already receive from their school setting.

- Wider training in schools should be provided on specific needs and the personal perspective of pupils with such needs.
- The Inclusion Charter should be used as a baseline for working with all children in all schools. It is suggested that the Area SENCo goes into schools as an Inclusion Charter Champion.
- Evidence from the focus groups is that it is not sufficient to just display the charter, as it is not universally noticed, is not currently used as a tangible resource, so is neither understood nor seen as applicable. Children and young people need to be introduced to it and engage with it, to understand it and be able to evaluate whether services are adequately delivering on the statements.
- That the Local Authority learn from the good practice in some schools, in order to work with all schools with regard to pupil participation; with those with individual needs and in supporting co-production when designing services.
- There should be a culture shift in terms of staff attitudes and belief in pupils' abilities, so that pupils are seen as competent agents and are actively encouraged to attend their own meetings.

References

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Appendices

Appendix 1

As part of our ongoing work to gather a range of children and young people's views and embed the Inclusion Charter, we are carrying out a small project regarding pupils' experiences with additional needs, including their understanding of the charter. The plan is to identify 4 or 5 pupils from 6 schools and gather their views via a focus group at each school, lasting approximately 45 minutes. This session will be facilitated by X and X, the Area SENCo. The session will be audio recorded, but any reporting on the session will be anonymous and the audio then destroyed. It would also be helpful to meet with you briefly after the session to ask you a few questions. There is a tight timescale for this project, so I am asking if you are able to identify the pupils in your school who you think would be willing to participate and let me know as soon as possible. Ideally we would have a range of pupils – one with no additional needs, some with EHCPs and some with wider SEND support. A summary letter will be sent to the school reporting on themes from the focus groups, with any individual comments anonymised. We have tentatively scheduled these focus groups for the very near future, however I am aware that we cannot secure any dates until we have firstly identified the pupils and then gained the appropriate consent.

Please find attached content for a consent letter, to be emailed from your school, to the parents/carers of the identified pupils, with a week to opt out.

Many thanks in advance for your help with this project.

Appendix 2

Dear Parent/Carer,

We would like to invite your child to take part in a Pupil Voice Project.

We are writing to advise you that the Assistant Psychologist from the Psychology and Wellbeing Service at Achieving for Children, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead will be running this project. The pupils will be asked for their views and feedback regarding their understanding and experiences around inclusion and additional needs/support. Each focus group will consist of up to 5 pupils and will last roughly 45 minutes. The session will be audio recorded, but any reporting on the session will be anonymous and the audio then destroyed. A summary letter will be sent to the school reporting on themes from the focus groups, with any individual comments anonymised. If we do not hear from you within a week of receipt of this email, we will assume you are happy for the work to go ahead.

Many thanks.

Appendix 3

To the Parents of

RE: Pupil Voice Project

The school have been contacted by one of the borough's Assistant Psychologists, about a pupil voice project regarding the Inclusion Charter that was launched across the borough last September.

A group of pupils with and without additional needs will take part in a focus group, run by X, where they will be asked for their views and feedback regarding their understanding and experiences around inclusion and additional needs/support, as part of ongoing work to gather a range of children and young people's views and embed the Inclusion Charter.

This session will be facilitated by X and X, the Area SENCo. Each focus group will consist of up to 5 pupils and will last roughly 45 minutes. It will be audio recorded, but any reporting on the session will be anonymous and the audio then destroyed. A summary

letter will be sent to the school reporting on themes from the focus groups, with any individual comments anonymised.

We have identified your child to take part in this focus group and below is a consent form for you to complete to indicate whether you wish your child to take part in the focus group or not. If you have any questions about the above, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.
Yours Sincerely,

Appendix 4

Pupil Voice Project – Focus Group Questions

Introduction: pupils to identify themselves.

Context & ground rules: adults to introduce themselves, where we are from, that this is a 'focus group' – so we will be thinking and talking about some important things in your school. Allow each person a chance to talk, so one person talking at a time.

Rapport building opener question:

Get to know your school/tell us about your school...

- *What are your favourite things about the school? What do you think would be helpful for a new child starting at _____?*
- *If you have any problems with your learning or your behaviour, how comfortable do you feel asking for help? (scale1-10 – on flipchart for support)*
- **Give the pupils examples; Time to talk through a problem with an adult, focussed time with an adult on a piece of learning.** *Who do you go to for support? Was the support helpful? Have you received support from an adult coming into the school?*
- **Show Inclusion Charter. We think it is really important that children are listened to and feel safe with their learning. Give scenario – Sometimes a pupil can struggle with their behaviour choices or with their learning.** *How are these pupils helped at _____?*
- *Is there a time you have been helped when something was a challenge?*
- *Did adults include you in what happened next?*
- *Can you give an example of when you felt listened to?*
- *If you needed more support, what else would you find helpful?*
- *Is there anything else you want to tell me that I haven't already asked?*

Summarise discussion - If anyone wants a follow up chat then (direct to SENCO).

Appendix 5

SENCo questions:

- *What would you say is the current practice of involving the child in the process of their support? (low level need/targeted need/EHCP)*
- *What do the children value, in your experience?*
- *How do you capture pupil voice to inform school practice/policies?*

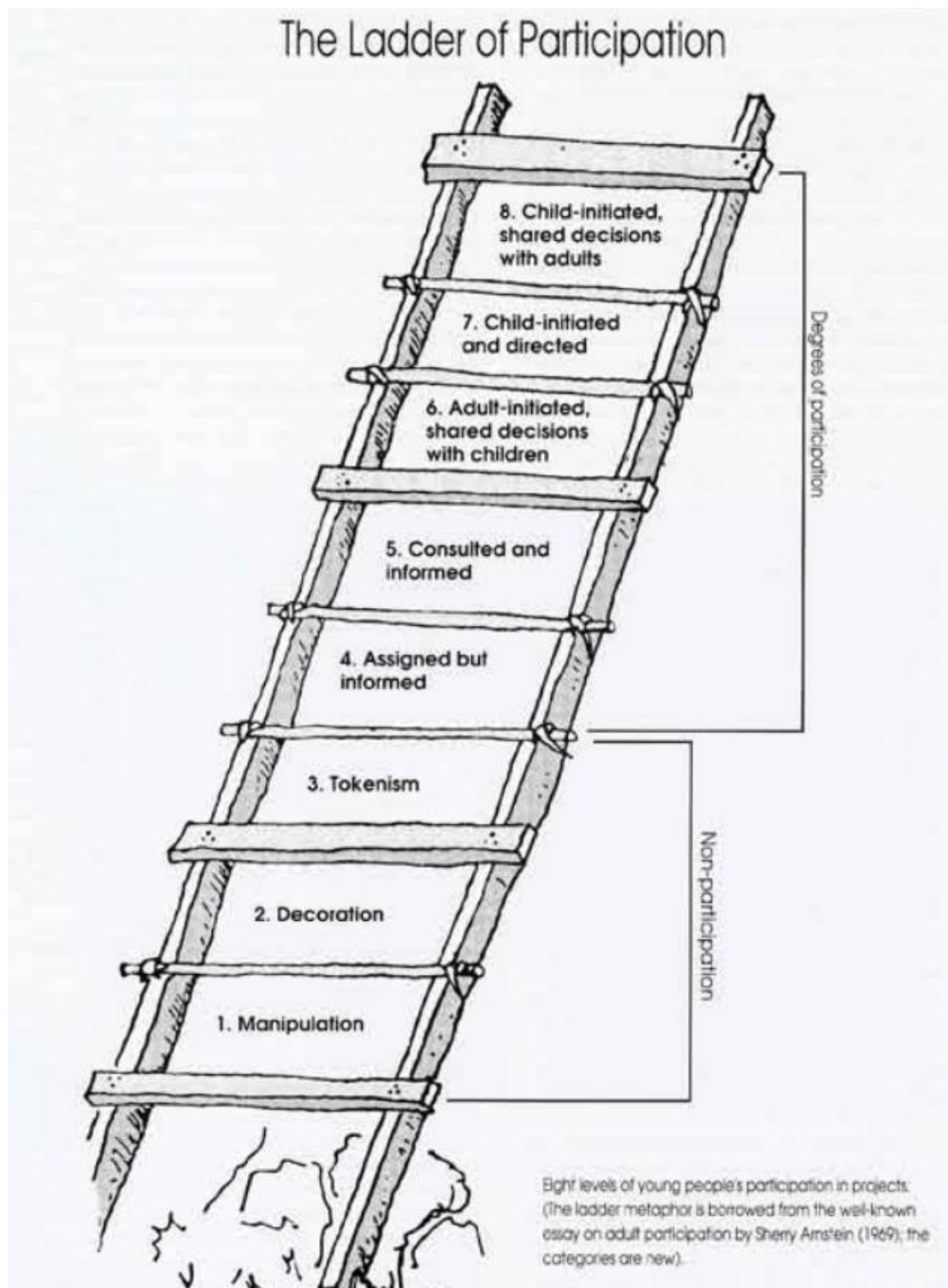
Appendix 6

Rating Scale Information:

School	Year Group	Level of Need	Self-reported Rating scale value	Pupil Comments
Primary	6	EHCP	10	Really comfortable because it is really kind of a bit fun.
	5	SEND	10	Not given
	5	No SEND	8	I feel safe with my teachers and my friends
	4	SEND	7	I feel very comfy asking
	4	SEND	10	Not given
Primary	6	EHCP	8	Get to know the teachers even more so you can tell them what you're weak at then they can help you.
	6	EHCP	7	I don't want to just keep asking cos then I'll never learn anything, but I need to ask sometimes – because you don't push your limits and see how much you can do.
	6	SEND	9	Not given
	5	SEND	Not given	Not given
Middle	8	EHCP	9	You should be very comfortable with your teachers and peers, because if you don't ask then you won't get anywhere.
	7	SEND	8	Asking a friend is sometimes less embarrassing than asking the teacher in front of the class.
	7	No SEND	5-7	When I first started I was below 5 and didn't know who to go to for support. But now I am more comfortable because now I know who I can go to.
	7	SEND	8	For me it depends who is asking or who I am asking, as to how much I can say as I don't really tell people who haven't helped me before.
	5	SEND	4-6	4 is when I'm not in the right mood and 6 is when I'm in a happier mood, allows me to communicate better.
Secondary	8	EHCP	8	Not given
	9	No SEND	Not given	Not given
	9	No SEND	Not given	Not given
	10	SEND	8	I feel comfortable talking to the teachers about my learning.
	10	SEND	Not given	Not given
Secondary	7	SEND	8	I haven't been here for a long time. I am probably an 8 because I feel I can easily go to X about work and school life.
	8	EHCP	6	I would put myself as a 6 because I have only been here for a year or two and there are only 1 or 2 teachers I would go up to.
	9	SEND	9	Because you know they are basically trying to help you. It hasn't always been a 9, it's been up and down, it has gradually grown as you go along. You gradually start to understand why they're trying to

				do it and how.
	10	No SEND	9-10	From year 7 to year 10, it goes from a lower number up to a higher number, so now it's at least a 9, maybe a 10, cos you've got to know the teachers more and they've got to know you more, so there's more of a trust relationship between them.
	10	No SEND	Not given	Not given
Specialist	14	EHCP	10	I've never been really nervous. I know a lot of people. If I've got any problems I go to X. I go to a lot of people. I go round the school and try and find other staff to talk to.
	14	EHCP	5	In the middle. I go to people I feel comfortable with.
	14	EHCP	Not given	Not given

Appendix 7



Appendix 8

Everyone Matters

We believe that all children and young people in Windsor, Ascot and Maidenhead, including those with additional needs, have the right to be included in local services, so they can thrive and reach their potential.

Inclusion Charter for children and young people

This charter sets out what all children and young people should expect when accessing services



Services welcome and value all children, young people and their families to...	So you can....
Make sure that you feel listened to and treated with respect	Have your say and feel safe
Work together to understand and support any reasonable adjustments that you may need	Belong to a community, such as your local school, leisure centre, club, etc
Talk with you and your family to help us understand your needs and solve problems together	Feel understood and helped to achieve your best
Speak to other professionals who support you, so you only have to tell your story once	Tell someone what you want to achieve and how we can help

Understanding equality, diversity and inclusion (Equality Act 2010)



Appendix 9

Everyone here pretty much feels like family.

...Nice to know that I am included and that no one is left out.

Usually when a teacher explains things, it is from a person who doesn't have anything wrong with them. Speaking through a dyslexic mind really helps me.

When I first started I didn't think I would achieve as many things as I have now. You look back at all the work you have done and you can see you are going places.

It's not easy for teachers to understand what people are going through...I feel like some teachers could have spoken to other people...when people are constantly being upset about something.

...the teacher really helped me and I felt really listened to because I have always had trouble at school.

Pupil Perspectives

There should be a culture shift in terms of pupil participation and staff attitudes and belief in pupils' abilities, so that pupils are actively encouraged to attend their own meetings.