

Office of the Children’s Commissioner **for Jersey**

Initial Participation Strategy **2019/2020**

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Purpose

1.1 The Commissioner for Children and Young People (Jersey) Law 2019 details that the Commissioner must take “reasonable steps to involve children and young people in the work of the Commissioner”, taking their views seriously while making sure that their rights and welfare are promoted and protected. It states that the Commissioner must ensure that children and young people in Jersey -

- are made aware of who the Commissioner is and what the Commissioner does;
- know the ways in which they can get in touch with the Commissioner;
- understand the ways in which the Commissioner may respond to issues children and young people raise; and
- are asked about what they think about our work and future work.

1.2 The legislation also states that the Commissioner must pay attention to the United Nations Convention on Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The UNCRC is an international agreement that says what governments must do so that children can grow healthily, learn at school, receive protection, have their views listened to and be treated fairly. The UNCRC was ratified in Jersey in 2014.

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1.3 This initial Participation Strategy sets out how this office will:

- Support children and young people in Jersey to learn about their rights;
- Listen to children and young people regarding their rights in Jersey;
- Influence the Government of Jersey and all organisations whose decision making, and actions, have an impact on children even when their role is not directly linked to children;
- Speak up for children.

1.4 A children's rights approach as defined by the UN Committee underpins this strategy and the work of this Office. We will listen to children and this will influence the work of this office.

1.5 This Strategy applies to all staff and all of our work. We will take a whole organisation approach to Participation with children and young people.

1.6 This initial strategy will be reviewed in October 2020.

2.0 Our Objectives

2.1 This strategy identifies the following initial priorities for this office:

1. To raise awareness of children's rights in Jersey and the role of the Children's Commissioner.
2. To increase the involvement of children in the work of the Office.
3. To promote and share good practice in Participation within the office and across Jersey.
4. To develop a system for capturing and evaluating the participation activity of the office.

3.0 Lundy's Voice Model Checklist for Participation

3.1 Article 12 of the UNCRC states that children have a right to express their views both individually and collectively and for these views to be given due weight by adults.

3.2 There are a number of models of participation including Hart's Ladder of Participation (Hart, R, A Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship, UNICEF, 1992), Shier's Pathways to Participation (Pathways to Participation: Openings, Opportunities and Obligations, Children & Society, 2001), Treseder's Model of degrees of participation (Empowering children and young people: promoting involvement in decision-making., 1997), Lansdown's Model (Promoting children's participation in democratic decision making, UNICEF, 2001) and Lundy's Model of Participation ('Voice is not enough: Conceptualising Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child', British Educational Research Journal, 2007).

Many of these models have focused on reworking the upper rungs of Hart's ladder from children being listened to through to child led participation. All of the above models are helpful in

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understanding different forms of participation. Lundy’s model has been chosen by this office as it provides a framework for understanding the qualities of rights-based participation.

3.3 Lundy states that irrespective of the degree of participation there are four interrelated factors that require consideration for children to participate and for adults to fulfill the obligations of article 12 of the UNCRC, these being consideration of Space, Voice, Influence and Audience. Lundy provides a useful checklist for organisations to consider to ensure that they are able to fulfill the requirements of article 12 fully when working with children and young people. This strategy and the approach to participation of this Office will be based on the Lundy model of participation and Voice checklist.



National Strategy on Children and Young People’s Participation in Decision-Making (2015 – 2020)
Irish Department of Children and Youth Affairs

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4.0 Our Participation Principles

4.1 Children have the right to be supported to take part in decision making that impacts on their lives, their families and their community and have their views listened to.

4.2 Children and Young people must be supported to participate in a way that enables them to express themselves and their views. Participation activity will be adapted to reflect age, development and evolving capacities of children.

4.3 The right of children to participate applies to all children without discrimination.

4.4 Children should be kept informed about how their views have helped make changes.

4.5 Children do not have to participate if they do not feel comfortable or do not want to. It is always their choice.

4.6 All staff and volunteers will engage with children, young people and relevant adults as part of their day to day work and will support the delivery of this strategy.

5.0 Our Initial Action Plan

<u>What</u>	<u>How</u>	<u>By Who</u>	<u>By When</u>
1.To raise awareness of children’s rights in Jersey and the role of the Children’s Commissioner			
	Undertake baseline research with Jersey children/young people/parent/carers regarding the current experience of children’s lives in Jersey	Andrea Le Saint, Tara Murphy, External Support	April 2020
	Continued roll out of the Rights Respecting Schools Programme to all Jersey schools (aim for all schools to reach Silver by July 2020)	Victoria Bisson	July 2020
	Development and launch of the OCCJ website	Communications Officer	July 2019
	UNCRC at 30	Deborah McMillan, Andrea Le Saint, Samantha Idiong, Sally Johnson, Tara Murphy, Susan Smail and	November 2019

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		Communications Officer	
	Deliver training to the Youth Advisory Panel on children's rights to support them in their role	UNICEF	June 2019
2. To increase the involvement of children in the work of the Office			
	Support the ongoing membership of the Youth Advisory Panel	Andrea Le Saint, Sue Smail and all team	X6 meetings per year
	To increase membership of the Youth Advisory Panel to be more inclusive	Andrea Le Saint and the Communications Officer	By June 2020
	Establish a network of Human Rights Champions in schools and the community.	Andrea Le Saint/Samantha Idiong/Communications Officer	To begin September 2020
	Develop a toolkit for engaging children in participation activity and for feedback	All team	June 2020
3. Promote and share good practice in Participation			
	Support the development of an adult stakeholder Participation Advisory Group (PAG) for practice development of participation in Jersey and to extend invitation to government to be part of this.	Andrea Le Saint	October 2019
	Conduct all staff training in relation to participation	All team - UNICEF	June 2019
	Establish an ethical protocol for work with children	Andrea Le Saint and Samantha Idiong	July 2019
	Develop an agreed and shared set of Jersey standards in participation	All team, PAG, children and young people	May 2020
	Develop a framework for giving feedback to children on participation activities.	Andrea Le Saint, Sally Johnson, Sam Idiong	September 2020
4. Develop a system for capturing participation activity			

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	Review of Current recording systems used by other jurisdictions.	Andrea Le Saint, Samantha Idiong and Tara Murphy	April 2020

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