



Annual Report  
April 2017 - March 2018 [WWW.SOMERSET.GOV.UK](http://WWW.SOMERSET.GOV.UK)



## Introduction

This report has been created by the Engagement and Participation Team for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (referred to as SEND for this report).

The team have created this report to document their journey from April 2017 - March 2018, focusing on some **key events** that have taken place over this year.

This report contains embedded documents which can be accessed by clicking on the links in the key evidence column.

If you would like any more information please contact:

[SENDParticipationTeam@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:SENDParticipationTeam@somerset.gov.uk)



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jemma Lang'.

**Jemma Lang**

Engagement and Participation  
Officer for Special Educational  
Needs and Disabilities

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Luke Foster'.

**Luke Foster**

Young Person's Champion for Special  
Educational Needs and Disabilities

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nicole Tucker'.

**Nicole Tucker**

Young Person's Champion for Special  
Educational Needs and Disabilities

The team categorise each meeting they attend as:

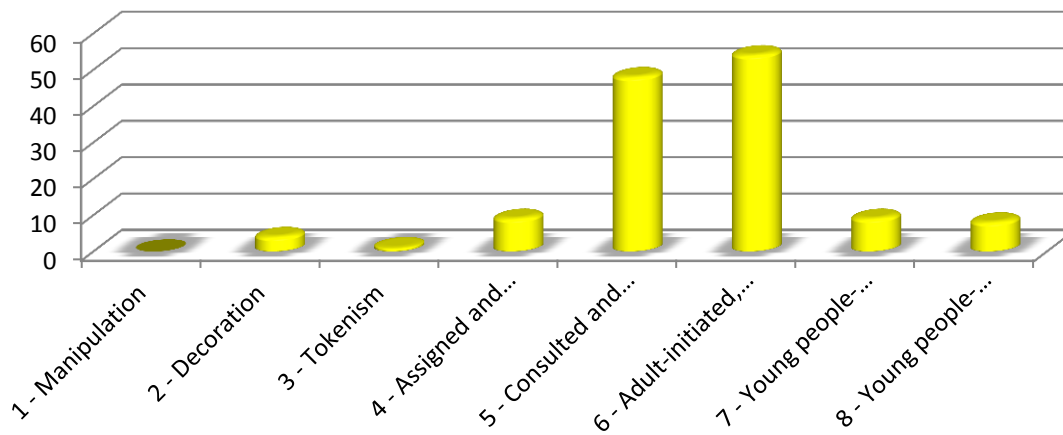
**Co-production-** If a resource, plan or event is created with young people directly from the start.

**Engagement** – When children, young people and their families take part in activities and meetings and work alongside others.

**Introductions-** When the team are introducing themselves to new people.

**Participation-** When young people actively work alongside others and take part in decision making, contribute to plans and developments. Young people rate their involvement using Roger Harts ladder of Participation, if they feel that their involvement wasn't meaningful, they will feed this back to chairs of meetings and suggest what could be better.

The graph below shows how the Young People's Champions (YPC) have rated their involvement in the meetings that they have attended between April 2017 and March 2018. YPC's felt that they were consulted and informed and shared decisions with adults during the majority of meetings that they attended.



1 - Manipulation	0
2 - Decoration	4
3 - Tokenism	1
4 - Assigned and informed	9
5 - Consulted and informed	48
6 - Adult-initiated, shared decisions with young people	54
7 - Young people-initiated and directed	9
8 - Young people-initiated, shared decisions with adults	8

During this report you will see the number of occasions that the team have been involved in these various activities each month shown in the boxes below:

Meeting logbook	
Participation	
Co-production	
Engagement	
Introductions	

During the year, the team attend a variety of meetings to share the views of children and young people with SEND. These regular meetings include:

- **SEND Intervention Group and priority meetings**- contributing to strategic decisions.
- **The Local Offer Steering Group**- shaping the Local Offer in Somerset.
- **The Participation Network**- regular meetings with participation leads across Somerset to share best practice and link to a broader network of participation.
- **SEND Information and Advice Network**- ensure that information is user friendly.
- **Autism Strategy Board and Children and Young People's Sub Group**- representing children and young people.
- **Somerset Parent Carer Forum Steering Group**- partnership working.

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## April 2017

### Activities

In April, the team worked in partnership with Somerset Parent Care Forum (SPCF) to deliver a participation workshop to 12 Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCO's) from the Mendip area.

The team took part in an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) Moderation meeting to review some plans to determine whether the child/young person's voice was reflected in the plan.

The team visited interns at Project SEARCH in Musgrove Park Hospital to promote the upcoming YPC opportunities.

The team worked in Partnership with Somerset's Leaving Care Council to take part in an Early Help consultation run by Somerset Safeguarding Childrens Board to talk about what good, effective early help should look like.

### The Unstoppables

8 young people attended to start planning for the Short breaks fun day on July. Each member took a lead on a different activity to engage with children, young people and their families at the event. Kiah and Harry- 2016-2017 YPC's- talked about the Young People's Champion roles and the upcoming opportunities within the team. The forum also agreed their priorities for the year 2017-2018.

### Mendip Group

The Mendip group did not run in April.

Meeting logbook April 2017

Participation	3
Co-production	5
Engagement	6
Introductions	2

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## May 2017

### Activities

In May, Harry delivered his experience of participation to 30 SENCO's at a training session.

Gloucester County Council visited Somerset County Council (SCC) to undertake a peer review in readiness for the local area inspection. The team took part in peer review meetings to talk about their involvement in participation and transitions.

The Participation Network met to update on different areas of work and discuss plans for developing shared resources.

The team worked with Somerset Parent Carer Forum (SPCF) and Public Health to film videos for an online resource for a parent toolkit.

### The Unstoppables

3 of the forum members worked with two young people who have signed up to take part in a volunteer buddy project to support young people with SEND to access their local communities. The young people worked together to talk about what a buddy matching profile should look like and design a working agreement.

### Mendip Group

4 young people and 3 parent carers met at Vallis Youth Centre in Frome and took part in a variety of activities including a food budgeting activity to develop their independence skills and an aspiration activity where young people were tasked with creating their "dreams for the future" using arts and crafts and presenting to the rest of the group.

Meeting Logbook May 2017	
Participation	4
Co-production	2
Engagement	7
Introductions	2

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## June 2017

### Activities

9 young people who applied for the YPC roles came in to County Hall for taster sessions to find out about the role and meet the team.

Harry and Jemma attended the “Finding your Way” parent carer support group in Bridgwater to promote the work of the team and the POET surveys for families to have their say on the EHCp process.

The team attended parent carer roadshows across the county to promote the forum and ask families how involved they felt in individual decision making.

### The Unstoppables

8 young people were filmed talking about their experiences of work and the benefits and barriers to employment. The group also gave their views on work experience opportunities which will contribute to the Council for Disabled Children’s “Hot Topics” project.

You can watch the film here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aDCVTSYkTLY&feature=youtu.be>

### Mendip Group

8 young people and 4 parent carers met at Hullabaloo soft play centre in Shepton Mallet. The young people took part in arts and craft activity with the topic “what I like about me” to improve self-esteem and confidence. The group played a variety of team games in the soft play area.

Meeting Logbook June 2017	
Participation	5
Co-production	3
Engagement	7
Introductions	1

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## July 2017

### Activities

In July, the team attended an employment workshop, where Kiah spoke about her experiences of employment, some of the barriers, and the benefits that work has had.

The team attended a regional conference on “Strengthening Partnerships across Health and Local Authorities” in Bristol. Harry spoke about the participation initiatives within Somerset and how the team represent children and young people at strategic meetings.

Harry and Kiah delivered a presentation on co-production to SCC departments on the activities that young people have been involved in which are guiding the SEND agenda.

### The Unstoppables

6 young people attended the Short Breaks fun day at Brookside school in Street to promote the forum and engage young people in a variety of activities.

### Mendip Group

The Mendip Young People’s Group did not run in July.

#### Meeting logbook July 2017

Participation	3
Co-production	2
Engagement	10
Introductions	1



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## August 2017

### Activities

The team attend 3 of the 9 SEND Priority meetings; these include **Transitions, Participation** and the **Ofsted Inspection Readiness** group. The team also attend the Intervention Board where each of the 9 priority groups report back so that they have an over view of what the groups are working on.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> August the team facilitated a Participation Network day, where groups of young people and practitioners came together from UK Youth Parliament, Children Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Somerset's in Care and Leaving Care Councils to develop a toolkit of resources for practitioners across Somerset to be better able to get the views of children and young people.

### Unstoppables

8 young people attended and discussed the buddy project in more detail and used role play to make sure that young people would be able to fill in the paperwork that the group created in May. The group had a Greek themed lunch where they made tzatziki from scratch!

### Mendip Group

The Mendip group met independently from the team during August. Parent's networked and young people were able to use the soft play equipment at the Hullabaloo.

Meeting logbook August 2017	
Participation	3
Co-production	2
Engagement	2
Introductions	2

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## September 2017

### Activities

During September, the team visited Fairmead Special School in Yeovil and Sky College in Taunton to talk about how the schools capture the voice of their students to help build a toolkit of resources to be shared amongst practitioners in Somerset.

Luke and Nicole attended a Sharing Stories Workshop and spoke with 30 Adult Social Care Practitioners to support SCC's approach to promoting independence for our customers. Nicole and Luke talked about their experience of health and employment and offered insight of their own unique stories.

**During September, the Unstoppables and Mendip Young People's Group took a break from meeting.**

### Meeting logbook September 2017

Participation	0
Co-production	4
Engagement	1
Introductions	3



## October 2017

### Activities

In September, the team supported multi-agency SEND conferences across the county. There were presentations about the work of the team and how they participate at a strategic level as well as information on the Unstoppables young people's forum. The team also hosted a display stand with information which was available throughout the events.

The team attended the county wide careers fair at Junction 24 in Bridgwater and hosted a stand where young people who attended the event could get information about the Unstoppables forum. During the morning and afternoon session, Nicole and Luke presented the importance of working for young people with SEND to 30 employers to try and improve employment opportunities for young people within Somerset.

### Unstoppables Meeting

In October, the Unstoppables joined forces with representatives from Somerset Parent Carer Forum to start co-producing a transitions guide for young people and their families. The day was a great success with young people and parent carers using their own experiences to say what they think is important to include in the guide.

### Mendip Group

During the meeting, young people took part in an activity to identify ways of finding help when they need it, this information will support the early help and family support service consultation.



### Meeting logbook October 2017

Participation	1
Co-production	2
Engagement	6
Introductions	1

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## November 2017

### Activities

The team had a busy month attending special school council meetings, the South Somerset Choices for Life event as well as sitting on the interview panel for the Children's Commissioning Officer roles.

The team attended the South West regional "Making Participation work" conference in Bristol, where they were able to learn and share good practice for involving children and young people with SEND in decision making. Other areas were impressed with Somerset's approach and have asked if we could visit in the new year.

The team also attended the British Youth Council awards ceremony in London where they were shortlisted for an award in the "Celebrating Diversity" category for their work with Short Breaks on the buddy project. The team didn't win but were privileged to have been shortlisted from 70 nominations.

### Unstoppables

The Unstoppables were joined by young people from UK Youth Parliament Advisory Group (UKYPAG) and both groups were able to talk about what they do and how their campaigns and work feeds into each other. The Unstoppables told UKYPAG all about the developments of their "access to the community" campaign.

### Mendip Group

7 young people and 6 parent carers met at Hullabaloo in Shepton Mallet and took part in creating a poster for transitions- "What help and support do you need for your future".

### Meeting logbook November 2017

Participation	3
Co-production	1
Engagement	6
Introductions	4



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## December 2017

### Activities

In December, the team attended a Short Breaks workshop with Somerset Parent Carer Forum to consult on the current offer and opportunities for the future.

Jemma spoke to 85 tutors at Bridgwater and Taunton college about the buddy project to promote the scheme so that tutors can encourage their students to become a buddy.

Nicole and Luke presented their experience of employment to job centre staff in Wells to promote the importance of work opportunities for people with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

### Unstoppables Forum

In December, the Unstoppables met at the Harvester in Taunton for their Christmas celebration. The members came up with a variety of Christmas games and discussed their proudest achievements of 2017, which included new jobs, completing apprenticeships and live performances.

### Mendip Group

Young people and their families met for a final Christmas celebration at Hullaballo in Shepton Mallet. The group enjoyed party games, Christmas related arts and crafts and some delicious party food.



### Meeting logbook December 2017

Participation	1
Co-production	1
Engagement	6
Introductions	1

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## January 2018

### Activities

January was a busy month for the team. The Young People's Champions took part in interviews for new Assistant Director roles within Somerset County Council.

Cole was asked to take part in some filming with the BBC as part of the Ofsted report that was published at the end of January. Cole spoke about her role as a Champion and the forum's involvement in decision making.

Luke took part in a Short Breaks funding panel where he worked with parent carers and practitioners from the Short Breaks service to make decisions on funding allocations for holiday activities for children and young people with SEND.

The team were asked by Devon County Council to go and talk about their experience of setting up the Unstoppables forum. Young people with SEND in Devon would like to set up their own forum and listened to a presentation delivered by the team about the process of setting up and delivering the forum including top tip and promotion.

### Unstoppables Forum

The forum didn't meet in January as it was so close to the New Year.



#### Meeting logbook January 2017

Participation	4
Co-production	5
Engagement	4
Introductions	1

## February 2018

### Activities

During February, the team worked with the directors of Somerset Parent Carer Forum to review the Engagement and Participation Strategy. The group worked to develop a strategy on a page so it is simple and clear for young people and their families to understand how they can be involved in decision making.

The team travelled to Birmingham to attend the first SEND young people's conference on Participation run by the Council for Disabled Children. Luke and Nicole attended workshops discussing some of the barriers to participation for young people and how to develop a campaign. The team came away with lots of ideas for their own participation and also shared some good practice with other teams across the country.

Somerset Children's Trust Participation Network came together with young people to work on a set of resources which promote and support emotional health and well-being for young people. The Public Health team in Somerset commissioned the group to review and update the Lifehacks resources along with a graphic designer.

Young people from a raft of different groups spent the day together looking at the resources to make sure they were young person friendly and engaging. The revised 'Lifehacks' resources will be shared amongst schools, colleges and young people's groups across Somerset.



### Unstoppables Forum

This month the forum looked at the Short breaks service and consulted on what they knew about the service, what they liked, what could be better and blue sky thinking. The group suggested more activities for those over the age of 18- including weekends away. The group also took part in problem solving activities and talked about Young Citizens Advice Service.

#### Meeting logbook February 2018

Participation	3
Co-production	4
Engagement	2
Introductions	2

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## March 2018

### Activities

In March the team attended a workshop alongside parent carers and colleagues across Education, Health and Social Care to review the information that is on the Local Offer website with regards to preparing for adulthood- **Choices for Life**. The group reviewed feedback from other young people to make sure that this section of the Local Offer is useful and relevant for young people and their families.

The team attended the “Grand Day Out” event which was hosted by the Department for Work and Pensions with the aim to encourage more employers to recruit people who have disabilities. The Young People’s Champions worked alongside another young person to develop activities that would raise awareness of the support that is available both for employers and employees. 186 people attended the event and worked in teams to take part in a variety of activities throughout the day. The 3 young people formed a judging panel and asked each team what they would do differently as a result of the day and awarded their top 3 pledges at the end of the event.



Jemma and Nicole attended Taunton and Bridgwater College’s volunteer event, where organisations came together to promote a variety of volunteering opportunities to the students at the college. Jemma and Nicole talked about the Unstoppables Forum and promoted the “Buddy Project”, where young people can support a young person with SEND to access their local communities.

### Unstoppables Forum

The forum meeting was cancelled in March due to the snow. The group will be meeting again in April to plan for the year ahead.

#### Meeting logbook March 2018

Participation	0
Co-production	5
Engagement	3
Introductions	0

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## More Information

If you would like any more information about the team and the work they have done then please contact:

[SENDParticipationTeam@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:SENDParticipationTeam@somerset.gov.uk)

<https://www.facebook.com/sendparticipationteam/>

If you would like more information about services in Somerset please visit:

<https://www.somersetchoices.org.uk/family/>

If you would like more information about Somerset Parent Carer Forum please visit:

<http://www.somersetpcf.org.uk/default.aspx>



If you would like this document in an alternative format, please contact the SEND Participation Team on [SENDParticipationTeam@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:SENDParticipationTeam@somerset.gov.uk)



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