



# Students' understanding of voice WORKSHOP

Title of workshop	Having a voice in school decision making and why it matters
<b>Aim</b>	This student workshop is designed to build young people’s understanding of why it is important to have a voice about decisions that affect them in school and how it can happen.
<b>Context</b>	This workshop is part of a larger initiative involving teachers and school management to build young people’s participation in the decision making in the school. At the conclusion of the workshop your ideas and suggestions will be used to inform this work. There will be an opportunity to present the key outcomes of the workshop to the school management.
<b>Participants</b>	Students may be drawn from a single class, group of classes, year group, or group of year groups. This workshop might be used for a group involved in a specific activity.
<b>Room layout</b>	An open space with tables and chairs for group work
<b>Facilitator</b>	Class teacher or lead teacher for a specific initiative
<b>Time</b>	Two hours will be required
<b>Resources</b>	<p>Flipchart paper and markers</p> <p>A slide/worksheet with the questions on it to be used to frame the conversation.</p> <p>Slide with Lundy model (attached)</p> <p>A map with an outline of the main areas of the school can be used to support the conversation. (attached)</p>
<b>Step 1 Icebreaker</b>	Invite the group members to organise themselves in alphabetical order and to talk to the person beside them about what they are hoping this workshop/ conversation will be about today.
<b>Step 2 Word association</b>	<p>5 Min.</p> <p>What are the decisions made in school that affect you?</p> <p>When you hear about young people having a voice in school decision-making, what comes to mind?</p> <p>Record responses on a flipchart.</p>

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**Step 3**  
**Pair and share**

20 Min

With a partner, discuss *Why is it important for young people to have a voice in decision making?*

Pair with another couple and agree the three most important reasons.

Record them on three separate A4 pages and place them on the floor.

Walk around and view the different responses. Which ones strike you as most interesting?

If time allows, have a conversation with other students and your teacher about the emerging ideas.

**Step 4**  
**Young people have a right to have their voices heard in matters that affect them**

30 Min.

Each student is given a school map template. Individually, students respond to the following questions on the school map template.

- Where do you have a voice in this school? (Shade or circle areas where this is happening).
- Do all students have an equal voice in this space? All/some/a few
- Who is listening and how do you know? (Use an arrow and a bubble to make a note)
- How does having a voice make a difference for you in the different spaces? (10 min)

In groups of four discuss responses. Each young person has 2 minutes to feedback to the group. The other young people can only ask for points of clarification. (10 min)

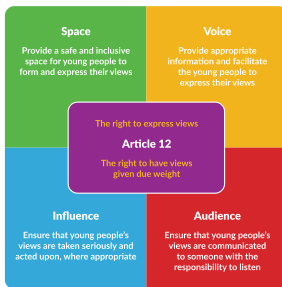
Ask students to agree whose voice is most likely to be heard in the school, who is likely to be listening and what are the positive outcomes that can result.

Facilitate a discussion around the responses. (10 min)

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Step 5  
Slide of the lundy model (attached)



The Lundy model describes important elements of listening and responding to the voice. Use the image of the model as a slide.

- a. You have identified the **spaces** where it happens in this school – include some of these spaces.
- b. You talked about the **voice** – whose voice is heard and how this happens
- c. You talked about the **audience** – who was listening and how you know
- d. You talked about the **influence** – what positive difference it made to you and other students

Divide the group in four:

Each group completes the following statement

*A school that engages students and ensures all voices are heard would...*

Some prompts could include the following:

- Which are the most important **spaces**?
- **Voice:** Are there different voices? How can we ensure they are all heard?
- **Audience:** Who should be listening?
- **Influence:** How would you know that your voice has been heard?

Each group records their ideas on a graffiti wall.

Having reviewed all the contributions on the wall, each group highlights the idea it feels to be most important.

Conclusion

Agree with the students

- the big messages that are emerging from the workshop
- which students will present the outcomes to the school management

## Space

Provide a safe and inclusive space for young people to form and express their views

## Voice

Provide appropriate information and facilitate the young people to express their views

The right to express views

## Article 12

The right to have views given due weight

## Influence

Ensure that young people's views are taken seriously and acted upon, where appropriate

## Audience

Ensure that young people's views are communicated to someone with the responsibility to listen

