



Planning SURVEYS

Planning surveys

Want to change or improve something in your school? Keen to put a new initiative in place?

As part of your initiative, why not consider using a survey? Surveys work well when you want to hear the insights, opinions, needs and desires of a group of young people and/or other stakeholders. Surveys can also help others to learn about the initiative you are undertaking.

Surveys can be used

- at the beginning of an initiative, to gain a greater understanding of the main issues involved. These insights can be further unpacked with the students, teachers, school management, parents in focus groups.
- following a focus group conversation about the initiative. The insights from these conversations can be used to design the survey
- at the end of the initiative to support evaluation.

Once you decide to use a survey, it is important to discuss your ideas with school management and/or a co-operating teacher. With their support, you can agree when and how the survey can be carried out. You can also agree who the feedback from the survey will be shared with and how the feedback will influence the next steps in your initiative.

Designing a survey

Surveys are easy to design but they do take time. Using **Google forms** is one way of doing it. In **Appendix 1** there is a sample survey which was used in the design of this toolkit. A draft of the survey should be trialed to ensure the questions and survey format are clear and accessible. Trialling will also indicate if the questions are likely to get the information you require. Write questions that are simple and to the point using words with clear meanings.

When planning or reviewing a young people's voice initiative use *Participation prompts; planning and review* to check for consistency with Lundy's model of participation.

In introducing the survey, clearly state

- the purpose of the survey...what it is trying to find out and why this information is important?
- the audience(s) for the findings... who will be listening to the outcomes of the survey?
- how the findings will be used to influence the initiative been undertaken...where the survey findings will fit into the decision-making process.

Tips

- Keep the survey short and pilot the questions to ensure clarity and accessibility.
- Include opportunities for participants in the survey to bring up their own ideas and opinions
- Consider asking other stakeholders, e.g. teachers, parents, to complete the same survey
- Plan to provide timely feedback on findings to all those who complete the survey.

When planning or reviewing a young people's voice initiative use *Participation prompts; planning and review* to check for consistency with Lundy's model of participation.

Space

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

- Are the young people affected by this issue involved?
- Are steps taken to ensure that the process is inclusive?
- Do the young people feel safe to express themselves freely in the space?
- Are the young people who are interested in the issue involved?
- Are the young people involved from the start?

Voice

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

- Do the young people have the information they need to form a view?
- Are the young people be given a range of options on how to express themselves?
- Do the young people know to whom their views will be communicated?
- Does the process include opportunities for young people to identify issues that they want to discuss?
- Do the young people know they have a choice about their participation?

Participation Prompts; Planning and Review

Influence

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

- Are the young people clear about the scope of their influence, (opportunities and limitations)?
- Will young people be given feedback explaining the reasons for decisions taken?
- Will the young people be given an easily accessible summary of their views?
- Do the young people know who the key decision makers involved are?

Audience

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

- Are the right decision-makers involved, i.e. those responsible for decision making on this issue?
- Have these decision makers committed to taking the young people's feedback seriously?
- Is there a process in place to ensure that the young people's voices are given due weight and consideration?
- Are there plans to have the young people involved in presenting their views

Collating your findings ¹

- Once the survey has been completed, the feedback can be collated easily using the Goggle Survey Tool.
- Summarize the key points of feedback from participants.
- Consider comparing responses from different groups within the survey.
- Present findings in a form appropriate to your audience(s). Formats might include slide presentations, graphics, visuals, handouts, posters sessions for audiences such as...
 - student assemblies
 - class group(s)
 - staff meeting
 - Board of Management
 - Parents' Council.

Preparing and making the presentation of findings

Prepare a sharp, short focused presentation

- Who will make the presentation – student, teacher, combination?
- Keep the presentation short (5– 7 min).
- Highlight the most significant finding from your/your group's perspective.

Design the presentation to encourage dialogue by using prompts such as

- What surprised you?
- What pleased you?
- What unsettled you?
- What further opportunities does this feedback provide?
- Are there challenges arising from the feedback?
- What might be the next steps?

¹ Adapted from *PILOT – activating student voice – accelerating improvement*, Government of South Australia, Department of Education and Child Development (https://www.acleadersresource.sa.edu.au/features/pilot/DECD_TfEL%20PILOT_Student%20voice%20audit_web.pdf)

Appendix 1

Student Survey

Looking at Our School

*Required

1. Interactions among students and between students and teachers are respectful and positive, and conducive to wellbeing.*

Mark only one oval.

- Always
- Sometimes
- Never

2. Relationships and interactions in classrooms and learning areas support a co-operative and productive learning environment.*

Mark only one oval.

- Always
- Sometimes
- Never

3. I feel I am able to contribute my opinion and experiences to class discussion.*

Mark only one oval.

- Always
- Sometimes
- Never

4. I listen respectfully to the opinions and experiences of my classmates.*

Mark only one oval.

- Always
- Sometimes
- Never

5. I ask questions and suggest possible solutions confidently.

Mark only one oval.

Always

Sometimes

Never

6. I am willing to risk giving incorrect responses, and accept that making mistakes is part of the learning.

Mark only one oval.

Always

Sometimes

Never

7. I enjoy challenging learning activities.

Mark only one oval.

Always

Sometimes

Never

8. I persist in an activity when it appears very difficult.

Mark only one oval.

Always

Sometimes

Never