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# Gathering Children's Views of their needs in school

The voice of an adopted or care experienced child and their views are invaluable in understanding what they need. This ensures that children and young people are provided with opportunities to help shape and influence the type of support that they need in school and the things that do not help them.

Some children may not feel comfortable talking directly about how they think and feel and Teachers/Educators and those supporting adopted, and care need to think creatively about how best to support children to be able to contribute to any plans about their support needs. You can use props like stories, characters, puppets, or you can ask them to write a note or message. You could also use the "Me and My World" resource (in this resources library) to gather the child's views.



It is important for the member of staff gathering the child's views to act within their remit and to take care not to try and be the child's therapist.

The best questions are non-pressurising and open ended. It can be helpful to illustrate that there are no right answers, for example by saying,

"Some children really love playtime, some children find it really tricky and some children are in the middle. How do you find playtime?"

Try not to ask the child why they feel a particular way as they might not know this and might try to give you an answer to oblige your question. It is just important to know if they can share this with you what aspects they find helpful and what they find tricky so that this important information can be known by the adults supporting them in school.

Many children who had adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) care deeply about "fitting in" or "being normal" and "being the same as everyone else". It is crucial that we take their concerns seriously and think of how discreetly and sensitively we can meet their needs.