

THRIVING LIVES TOOLKIT FOR EARLY YEARS

PRINCIPLE 5 GUIDANCE

developed by CREC on behalf of the SCiP Alliance





Ministry
of Defence



UNIVERSITY OF
WINCHESTER

The SCiP Alliance is led by the University of Winchester in partnership with the Ministry of Defence

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PRINCIPLE 5: CHILDREN PARTICIPATE IN DECISIONS AND ARE HEARD

Evidence Suggests that...	What Might This Look Like	Emerging, Developing and Embedding Practice
<p>...it is vital that Service children are heard and their rights and voices are responded to actively from their earliest days.</p> <p>...Service children benefit from being actively involved in decisions that affect them.</p> <p>...failure to listen or respond to a child can result in a sense of isolation and powerlessness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are trained in Rights Respecting Practice and in listening and responding actively to children's voices from their earliest days, particularly those with SEND and neurodiversity. • Staff prepare spaces and places for the child to express their wishes and realise their rights. • Service children are encouraged to participate actively in decision-making about their lives. • Armed Forces young children have advocates for them in setting and community forums and groups. • Service children have opportunities to share their experiences through arts and cultural expression such as drama, music, picture books, storytelling and posters. • Service children's views are documented and visible in all setting documents. 	<p>Emerging: Early Years providers will be exploring how to capture and include the voice of young children from Armed Forces families in decision making. There is limited recognition of their unique experiences and specific resources and/or approaches to support children's participation and agency have not yet been identified and used.</p> <p>Developing: Early Years providers will recognise how to capture and include the voice of young children from Armed Forces families in decision making and to capture and celebrate their unique experiences. Some staff awareness may exist, but further CPD and support is required.</p> <p>Embedding: Early Years providers effectively and consistently capture and use the voice of children from Armed Forces families in decision making and to celebrate their unique experiences. Staff are well trained and actively utilise approaches and resources which encourage participation and agency within daily practice.</p>



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Practical Illustrations of Good Practice

To support this process, a number of practical examples are set out (in the form of practitioner quotes) at the end of this document. These examples can be used to inspire new ways of working, provoke reflective dialogue, and to demonstrate what things are possible across the range of different early years provider types that exist.

Examples from Practice: Principle 5

She was allowed her comforter when she needed to support her emotions. (Online survey)

The children are with us at the heart of everything we do. We adapt to meet their individual needs but most of all we make them feel welcomed and part of our community. (Online survey)

As a childcare giver I try and include all children into every aspect of everyday life and helping Forces children to not feel left out and discouraged from joining in. It helps them to get the support and development they need to thrive. We take time to check in with them, encourage them to talk and support making cards, pictures etc. (Online survey)

We provide ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) which allows them to discuss how they are feeling and learn strategies to cope in that situation. (Online survey)

Children are sensitive to such things (parent separation) and we have to be aware because the first thing that is affected in a child is their behaviour but it can be quite subtle. It's important to take time to get to know the child. (Online survey)

