

# Young Children's Voices

## Key Questions

It is useful to consider reflective questions before, during and after listening to babies' and young children's voices. Below is a list of such questions that can strengthen ethical consideration, the practice of voice work, and learning from babies' and young children's voice work. They are adapted from *The theory and practice of voice in early childhood: An international exploration* (Arnott & Wall, 2022) and [Voice of the infant: Best practice guidelines and infant pledge](#) (Scottish Government 2023).

**Questions to consider relating to the process and method of listening to young children:**

How have ethical considerations been addressed?



What types of participation are supported?



How will we evaluate what we have done?



What processes need to change?

**Questions to consider in relation to space:**

How can the setting be made baby- and child-friendly?

How can the setting be made inclusive?

How can we make the environment safe and free from distractions?

How can we ensure that the child is physically comfortable and avoid overstimulation?

How does the space/place shape voice?

How can we build in sufficient time and capacity for appropriate reflection on the child's communication?

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## Questions to consider in relation to voice:

Who is asking the questions?

What is the level of skills and understanding of how young children communicate amongst the adults present?

What does voice look like/sound like in our context

How do we tune into different types of voice(s)?

What is the balance between collective and individual voices?

Does everyone have an equal voice? Who is included and whose inclusion may be compromised?

How mindful are adults that a child's view may be different to their caregiver's?

How does voice change over time?

## Questions to consider in relation to Influence:

When making decisions about care and intervention, how do all adults involved ensure that the child's view is taken into account?

How do adults ensure that the experience of young children is reflected in service design and delivery?

How are the actions recorded that were taken based on what is learned about the child's views?

How is feedback given to the young child on how their views have been acted on?

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*Questions to consider in relation to audience:*

What efforts are made to capture observations and consider what is being communicated?

How do adults take note of the child's silence

How do we interpret and translate voice? How do we ensure this is authentic

How do adults acknowledge what they are seeing and hearing to the child and their caregiver

How do we ensure that adults respond directly to the young child?

How are the adults going to act on the child's feedback and views?

