



Education

The Viewpoint Organisation

The principal aim of the Viewpoint Organisation is to promote the participation of young people in planning and consultation processes thereby increasing their influence on decisions that affect their lives. The Viewpoint Organisation undertakes social research, develops communication methods, and works with organisations to develop participation strategies and systems.

The Viewpoint Organisation methodology involves the use of interactive electronic methods of data collection and recording, specifically developed by the Viewpoint Organisation for the engagement of young people. The Viewpoint Organisation first introduced this electronic approach in 1994 using it in a voluntary organisation and family centres in North London with young people and young carers. Since 1994 the Viewpoint Organisation tools have been extensively developed, including introducing tools to increase the accessibility for young people with disabilities.

Computer assisted interviewing with young people is an engaging approach that allows quite detailed questionnaires to be completed by young people with a range of abilities. The inclusion of a function for all text to be spoken out loud by characters is of particular benefit for young people with literacy difficulties.

The Viewpoint Organisation has been working with schools and Education Authorities for several years to develop questionnaires to inform a range of school issues. As a result a number of content packages have been developed which are summarised below.

Behaviour improvement

Questionnaires for both primary and secondary schools to audit pupils experiences in school, the nature of behaviour problems, and how they respond and handle them. Disruptive and bullying behaviours, racism and attendance patterns are identified with a view to developing school action plans to address significant issues.

Bullying behaviour surveys

Bullying occurs in every school and is usually a hidden activity. Adults can be the last to know the full story. This questionnaire makes it possible to gather a broad understanding of the experience of pupils, information that is other wise hidden from adults. Physical, psychological and racist bullying as well as general levels of aggression and hostility can be assessed, and used to form whole school responses

Teaching and learning

Consulting pupils provides an important perspective on what is going well and what needs to be improved. Such practice can provide important evidence for self evaluation for OFSTED inspections. This questionnaire provides feedback on the quality of teaching, and what makes it effective, and the extent to which pupils increase their understanding, and overcome difficulties.

Transition Year 6 and 7

A questionnaire for use at transition from primary to secondary education for use in either setting. Positive factors and worries about the move to secondary education are examined, together with an opportunity to identify lessons pupils do well in, and how they like to be rewarded. Information is available about who they talk to when they need help or support. The questionnaire can inform the transition process for the school and identify individuals who need additional support

Learning styles

A questionnaire to help staff and pupils consider and identify their preferred learning styles. Whilst young people use all senses there may be a preference towards one. Pupils may be visually, auditorily or kinesthetically oriented learners, preferring pictures and videos, lectures and audio tapes or hands on and creative activities. Other influences on learning include the type of environment, instructional activities, social grouping and motivating factors.

Health and lifestyle

A questionnaire linked to the National Healthy School Standard that provides individual and group feedback on topics such as emotional health and well being, physical activity, use of alcohol, tobacco and drugs, sex and relationships, safety and bullying. The questionnaire can be used for individual assessment and group discussion

Self esteem

Schools need to help pupils develop an objective yet positive self image and form constructive relationships with one another. A questionnaire to assess self esteem and influences on this for individuals. Relationships with family and friends are looked at, behaviours, attitudes to mistakes and criticism, personal worries and influences on concentration, participation in groups and social activities and support needs. The questionnaire can help individuals develop a sense of self and an awareness of their own feelings, strengths and weaknesses, and can be used for individual action planning

Emotional intelligence

Emotional literacy is described as the skills in handling emotions and getting along with other people. Emotional intelligence underpins learning in the classroom. A questionnaire to help recognise feelings and what triggers them, recognising and respecting differences between people, assessing empathy, comparing assertiveness and aggression, looking at cooperation, conflict resolution and negotiation. Responses can be used in individual planning and group discussion

Year 9 Transition

A questionnaire providing feedback on option choices and influences on these, and feedback on the school and relationships in school

Year 10/11 Transition

A questionnaire providing feedback from young people about the options they selected, and the influences and pressures in relation to these; and about their personal issues and difficulties, and information needs. The questionnaire looks at blocks to accessing help, awareness of Connexions Services and whom young people go to for help. The questionnaire provides information about where young people intend to go on to after Year 11

Work experience

A questionnaire (in development) to provide feedback from young people on work related learning, their interests and areas of skill, and expectations of a work experience programme.

Transition: young people with learning disabilities and difficulties

For use by young people with Learning Disabilities to enable them to contribute their views to the Year 9 and Year 11 assessment and planning processes.

Additional questionnaires are available to provide feedback on the Special Educational Needs Review process to assess for them to assess:

- Degree of participation in planning
- Influence on decision-making

Findings to be used to improve SEN assessment process

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