



Introduction

Youth Ascends is the SEND (Special Education Needs and Disability) Youth Forum for Plymouth. It is hosted and supported by Plymouth Information, Advice and Support for SEND service (PIAS).

PIAS fulfils the statutory function for the Local Authority in providing Impartial Information, Advice, and Support on SEND issues for children, young people with SEND.

The group meets fortnightly during term time and has been running for over 4 years. The current age range of the group is between 11 years of age to 23 years of age. They attend mainstream primary and secondary, specialist schools, Plymouth City College, Plymouth University, are Electively Home educated, on a gap year and in volunteering.

We also meet children and young people in schools and settings in Plymouth to widen the opportunity of children and young people to contribute.

Methodology

We use the Lundy model of participation as a framework for participation. ([Enabling the meaningful participation of children and young people globally: The Lundy Model \(qub.ac.uk\)](#))

We give children and young people's SPACE: the opportunity to express a view, VOICE: We offer facilitation to enable children/young people to express their views. AUDIENCE: Create opportunities for their voice to be listened too and INFLUNCE: Create opportunities for the views to be acted upon.

During the Joint Area SEND Inspection Youth Ascends met the Inspectors and shared their experience and views of the SEND system in Plymouth.

In November and December, the group co-produced the accessible version of the Joint Area development plan and the Commitments document. ([Commitments from the SEND Improvement Board - Plymouth Information Advice and Support for SEND. \(plymouthias.org.uk\)](#))

Youth Ascends have looked again at the Commitments and have several questions which they would like to ask.

Children and Young People sharing their experience and views.

The member of Youth Ascends are passionate about making a difference for children and young people with SEND. They all have very different lived experience of being children and young people with SEND in Plymouth. Not all these experiences have been positive. For some these experiences have been traumatic. In the group sessions they are often asked for their opinions on issues, they will often share their lived experience to describe their opinions. To ensure that the group feel safe and have a positive experience we would request that for this session you answer the questions the young people have considered. If you would like more in depth conversations with the group, we would be happy to invite you along to a Youth Ascends meeting.