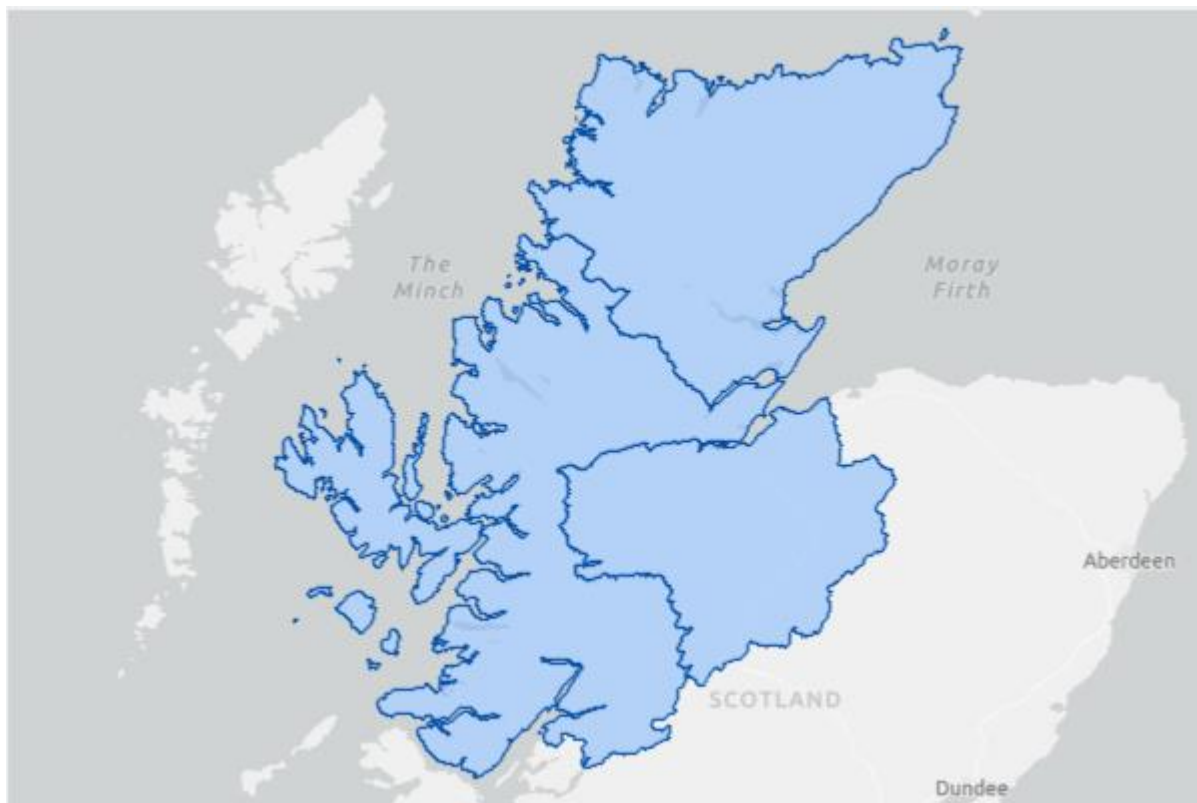


# The participation of young people in decision-making at meetings

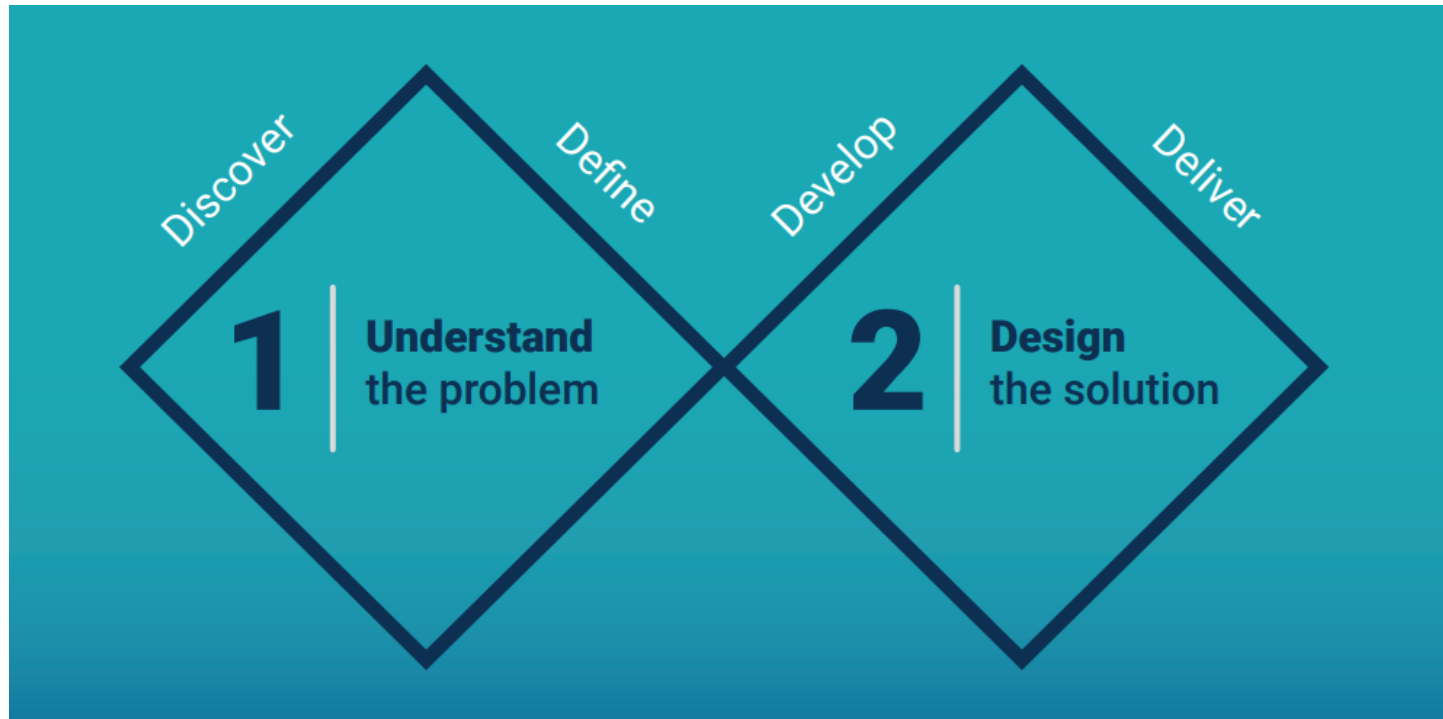
Dr Jenny Fraser-Smith (Area Principal Educational Psychologist)



# Highland



# Scottish Approach to Service Design



# Definitions

## **Meetings:**

prearranged gatherings of two or more individuals for the purpose of work-related interactions.

## **Participation at meeting:**

speaking up and sharing their ideas, opinions, and thoughts that are relevant to the meeting

## **Decision-making:**

a process involving analysing potential outcomes, benefits and risks associated with each option and reaching a conclusion

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# Literature: Participation in decision-making

## Barriers

- Adult's presentation of child's view as biased or untrustworthy
- Conflict between child's wishes and adults view of their best interest
- Power imbalance
- Age – maturity and vulnerability
- The level of perceived risk in the decision
- Lack of information to inform decision-making or late involvement
- Limited options available

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# Literature: Participation in decision-making

## Facilitating factors

- Culture of listening
- Developing relationship over time
- Adults creating opportunity for young people
- Experience impact of their involvement
- Readiness for change
- Preparation and information available
- Time to think and ask questions

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# Literature: Participation in decision-making

## Benefits

- Increased self-esteem, sense of mastery & control
- Support ability to cope with stress associated with uncertainty
- Knowledge informs planning
- Increased likelihood of successful implementation

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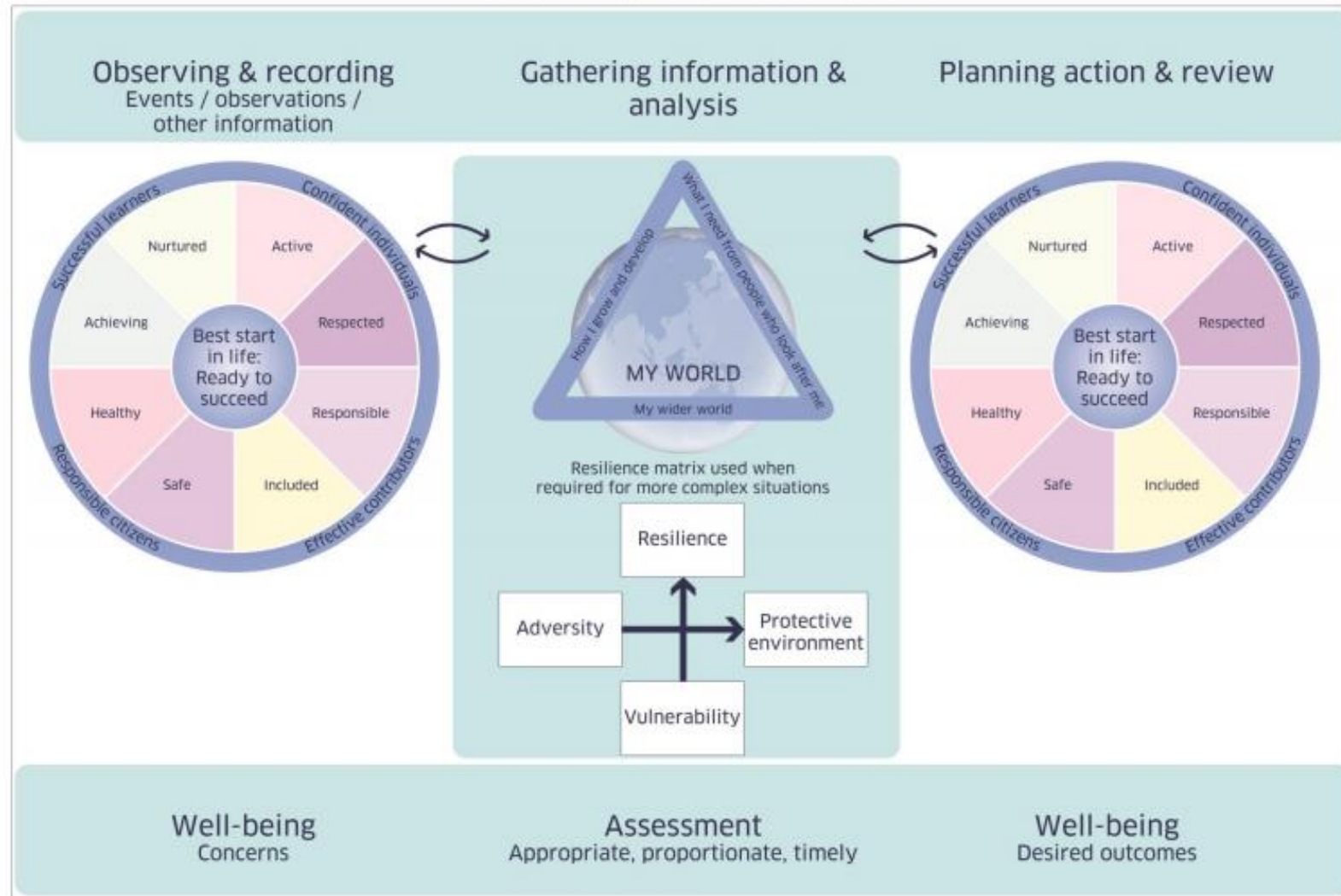
# Research Question

How do young people's participation at a **Child's Plan meeting** impact decision-making?





# National practice model



# Method

## Recruitment:

- Email contact with secondary school Head Teacher (n=29) and cc'd to Senior Leadership Team

## Participants:

- 2 young people, Jasmine and Simon (pseudonyms), aged 14

## Materials:

- One page information sheet before receiving more details
- Chromebook and Google for Education
- Interview schedule and meeting action plan

# Method

## Procedure:

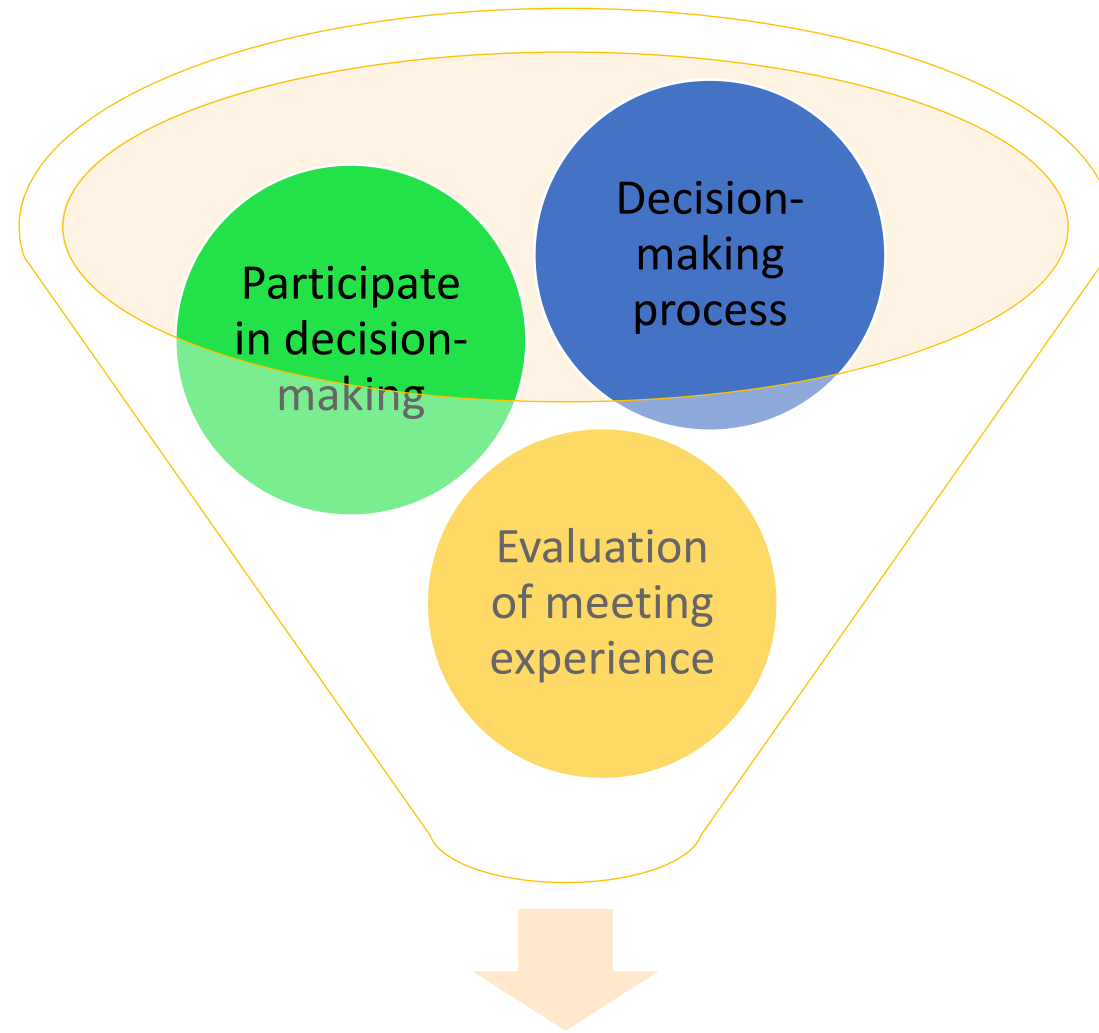
- Teacher prepares the young person for the meeting
- Meeting held and recorded
- Researcher and young person meet within 3 days

## Ethical considerations:

- University of Strathclyde ethical approval
- All attendees to the meeting were asked to consent to recording

## Analysis of findings:

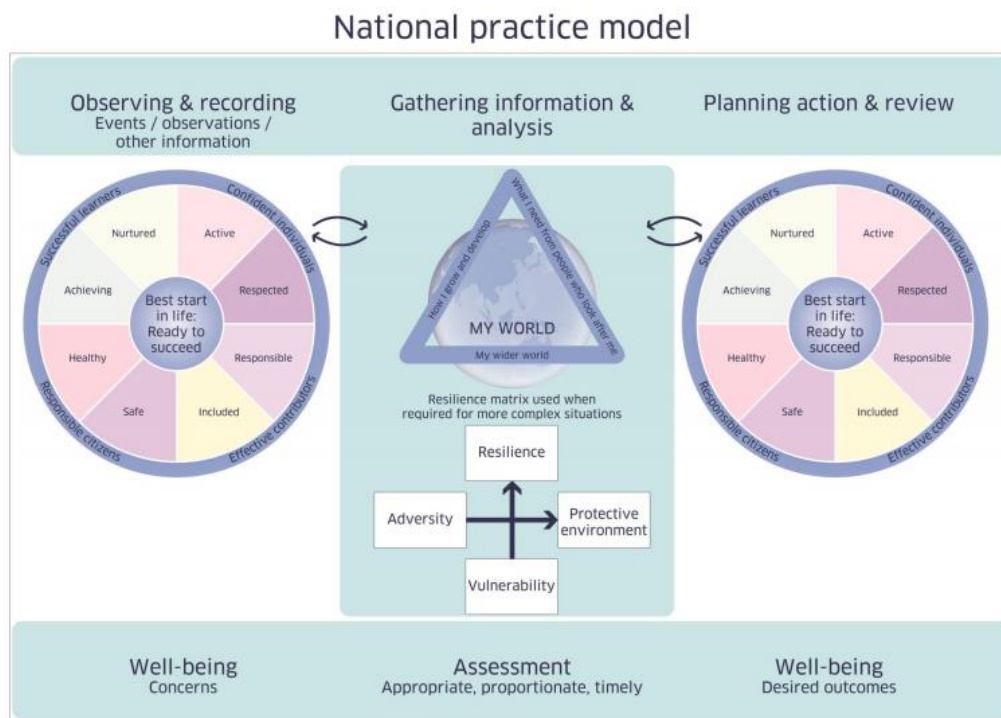
- Decision-making episodes analysed with Template Analysis (King, 2012)



**Research Findings**

# General observation

Meeting structure reflected the document structure:



- Demographic information
- Strengths
- Pressures
- Action plan
- Child's view
- Parent/carer's view

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# Systematic process of decision-making

1. Envision multiple alternative courses of action to take
2. Actively seek accurate information about the decision and each alternative
3. Use this information to anticipate probable consequences of each alternative
4. Select one alternative rather than the others as being the most reasonable
5. Make the decision and implement it.

Wehmeyer and Sands (1998, p. 52)



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# Decision-making process at meetings

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Identify a catalyst for change

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Justify the need for change

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Information provided about the option(s)

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Using and weighing the information

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Communicate the decision

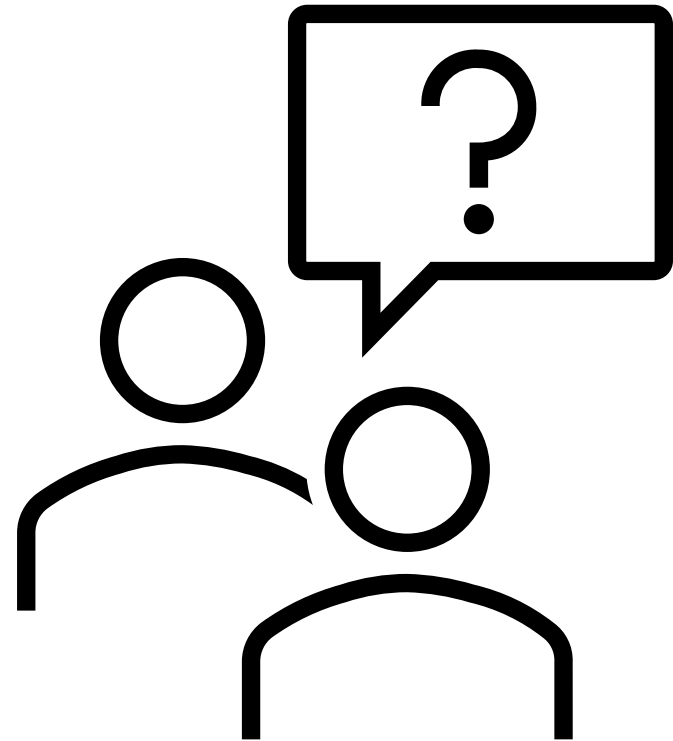
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Contingency planning

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Young people's  
participation  
in decision-making





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# Preceding Participation

- 40 contributions;
- 14 closed-ended questions
- 8 leading questions
- 9 open-ended questions
- 9 occasions where adults offered a statement

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# Meeting evaluation

Knowledge of attendees

Changes were planned

Asking for clarity

Coping with feelings

Shared my point-of-view

Follow-up after the meeting

Level of influence over decisions





# Tools for gathering the views of children and young people

# Decision-making continuum



Autonomous

Supported

Shared

Substitute

---

# Tools

## **Decision making profile**

- How I like to get information
- How to present choice to me
- How you can help me understand
- When is the best time for me to make decisions?
- When is a bad time to make decisions?
- Who is best to talk through decisions with?

# Thank you



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