



### **Interview Schedule for Young People**

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# Interview Questions for Young People

1. This is one of the first interviews so we aren't 100% sure of how long the interviews will take. Is there a specific time you need to go/would like to be finished by? I will make sure I keep my eye on the time.
2. Apologies if this sounds like I am just reading off my notepad, there are just some things I need to remember to say before we properly start.

Once again, thank you so much for being involved in this research. As you will have read in the information letter, we are doing some research on the impact of the changes in post-16 education for autistic young people in England since the introduction of the Children and Families Act 2014.

During these interviews, we want to hear about **your** experience of the reforms and post-16 education. We are going to discuss your experience of receiving support, getting a say in your education and being able to achieve better outcomes. By understanding this, we hope we can get a bigger picture about the impact the Children and Families Act has made on young, autistic individuals.

The interview is split into 3 main themes of help and support, having a say and getting better outcomes. There will be time at the end to discuss anything you feel we haven't covered or share anything that you wanted to say.

Just before we start, I was wondering whether it would be OK to record the discussion? This is just so I have an accurate record of what you say, as I find it really hard to write everything down quickly! The recording will only be listened to by myself and other members of our research team. After the interview, it will be transcribed – we'll take out any information that could identify you – and then we'll delete it.

Also, if you want to stop the interview at any point, you can do that without giving me a reason. And if there are any questions that you'd rather not answer, that's fine too.

Do you have any questions before we start?

OK, let's start.

## ABOUT YOU

1. **OK, just to start, would you mind telling me a little bit about what you're up to at the moment? Are you in any kind of education or training?**
2. **And how are you finding it?**
3. **And could you just give me a quick overview of your educational journey so far? (e.g. what did you do between the ages of 16 & 18, what did you do for post-19 education, are they different, have you had to move? Etc.)**

## TOPIC ONE: HELP AND SUPPORT

I'm going to start by asking you a few questions about your experience of post-16 education. By this, I just mean the compulsory education you were in from the age of 16 to 18 (this can include things like a sixth form attached to a school, a college, an apprenticeship and vocational courses)/ the education you have taken part in after secondary school.

1. **Tell me a bit about the support you got in deciding what to do once you finished your secondary education...**
  - What kind of support did you get?
  - Are you happy with the amount of support you received? What was good/not-so-good about it?
  - Was there any way this support could have been improved? If so, how?
  - If you changed school/type of education, did you get support in this transition? How did you find it? How could this transition have been improved?
  
2. **What about the support to you during your post-16 education?**
  - Did/do you know where or how to access it? (*E.g. teachers, pastoral support etc.*) If not, how could this be made clearer?
  - Was it easy to access this support? What made it easy/hard?
  - Have you received any particularly useful support during post-16 education? This could include things like careers guidance, learning support, vocational training, and life skills training. Why was it useful?
  - Was there any way this support could have been improved? Or anything else you would have liked to have had?

In 2014, an important legal act called the Children and Families Act came into place. This gave young people with special educational needs or disabilities more rights in terms of the support that they get access to during their education and transition into adulthood. We want to know whether you understand what these rights mean for you and whether you get access to what is promised.

The act says that every young person and their parents should be provided with a list of all of the support that is on offer in their local area. This is called their "Local Offer".

3. **Do you know what is in your Local Offer?**
  - Are you happy with what is in your Local Offer? If so, why? If not, why?
  - Have you received any of the additional support that is offered to you, through your Local Offer?
  - Is there anything that is particularly helpful, in your Local Offer? Why is it helpful?
  - Is there any way you think your Local Offer can be improved?

**\*\*ONLY ASK THESE QUESTIONS TO PARTICIPANTS AGED BETWEEN 19 AND 25\*\***

Now I'm going to ask you some questions about your experience of post-19 education. By this, I mean the voluntary education and training that you have access to, after you finished your post-16 education. Again, this can include things like colleges, traineeships, vocational courses and supported internships.

- 1. Tell me about the support you got during the transition from post-16 education to post-19 education? Did you have to move? How did you find this?**
  - What was good about this support? What was not-so-good?
  - Do you think you needed support? Would this have been helpful?
  - How could this have been improved?
  
- 2. Did/do you know what support is/was available to you during your post-19 education?**
  - Did/do you know where to access it? (E.g. teachers, pastoral support etc.) If not, how could this have been made clearer?
  - Was it easy to access this support? What made it easy/hard?
  - Have you received any particularly useful support during post-16 education? This could include things like careers guidance, learning support, vocational training, and life skills training. Why was it useful?
  - Is there any way this support could have been improved? Or anything else you would have liked to have had?

## TOPIC TWO: HAVING A SAY

The Children and Families Act (2014) sets out a list of rights that young people with special educational needs should have access to. For example, your wishes and feelings must be taken into account before making decisions, all problems should be taken seriously and fixed and all young people and their families should get a say in the support that they are offered.

### 1. What is your experience with this?

- Do you know your rights? How could this be made clearer?
- Do you feel listened to? Why not?
- If you bring up problems, are they taken seriously and fixed? Why not? How could this be improved?
- Do you feel you get some choice in the support that is offered to you? Why not? How could this be improved?
- Could this process be improved? If so, how?

As part of the Children and Families Act, Education, Health and Care Plans were introduced. I just wondered, do you have one?

If no:

### 1. Do you know what an EHCP entails?

*[It is a plan for people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through mainstream special educational needs support. They identify different educational, health and social needs and set out the additional support that is needed to meet those needs.]*

### 2. Do you think it may have been useful to have had one?

- Why/why not?

If yes:

### 1. Would you be able to tell me a little bit about your experience with the Education, Health and Care Plans?

- Do you know what is in it?
- Did you get a say in what went in it? How was this process? Could it have been improved?
- Has it been updated? [should be updated annually]
- Has the process of updating been helpful?
- If it hasn't been updated, do you think it needs to be? Why hasn't it been updated?
- Is there anything that has been particularly good about it?
- Is there anything that hasn't been so good about it? How could this be improved?

### **TOPIC THREE: GETTING BETTER OUTCOMES**

Finally, I just want to know how satisfied you are overall with your education after finishing secondary education, and what you're up to now.

- 1. Overall, are you happy with your education since you were 16?**
  - Was there anything that was particularly good?
  - Was there anything not so good?
  - How could it have been improved?
  
- 2. Are you happy with what you are doing now?**
  - Were you given enough support to get to where you want to be? Is there anything else you'd like?

## **QUESTION TIME AND THANK YOU**

This is the end of the interview! Thank you very much for sharing your thoughts with me. Before you go, do you have any questions for me or anything you want to add?

Once we have finished interviewing everyone, we will try to put everything together and write a report and if you like, I can send this to you.

In the meantime, if you have any further questions or would like to contact me for anything else, feel free to send me an email. I know that some of what we have discussed is quite personal and might have been quite difficult for you to talk about, if you feel you need to speak to somebody about anything we have discussed today, you can contact the National Autistic, or the Samaritans for additional support. The contact details for these are in the information sheet I sent to you before the interview and I can resend them to you as well.

Thanks again.