Appendix A

Shier's (2001) model of levels of children's participation
### Shier’s (2001) model of levels of children’s participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of participation</th>
<th>Openings</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Obligations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Children share power and responsibility for decision making.</td>
<td>Are you ready to share some of your adult power with children?</td>
<td>Is there a procedure that enables children and adults to share power and responsibility for decisions?</td>
<td>Is it a policy requirement that children and adults share power and responsibility for decisions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Children are involved in decision-making processes.</td>
<td>Are you ready to let children join in your decision-making processes?</td>
<td>Is there a procedure that enables children to join in decision-making processes?</td>
<td>Is it a policy requirement that children must be involved in decision-making processes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Children’s views are taken into account.</td>
<td>Are you ready to take children’s views into account?</td>
<td>Does your decision-making process enable you to take children’s views into account?</td>
<td>Is it a policy requirement that children’s views must be given due weight in decision-making?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Children are supported in expressing their views.</td>
<td>Are you ready to support children in expressing their views?</td>
<td>Do you have a range of ideas and activities to help children express their views?</td>
<td>Is it a policy requirement that children must be supported in expressing their views?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Children are listened to.</td>
<td>Are you ready to listen to children?</td>
<td>Do you work in a way that enables you to listen to children?</td>
<td>Is it a policy requirement that children must be listened to?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


This can be used by practitioners to identify where they currently are in their own practice and also what the next steps are to increase the level of children’s participation.
Appendix B

Participant information sheet
Participant information sheet

Exploring the views and experiences of early years practitioners with regard to consultation with children under five

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

What is the purpose of the study?
The Green Paper ‘Every Child Matters’ (2003) describes the Government’s commitment to enabling children and young people to become involved in the planning, delivery and evaluation of policies and services that they use or that affect them. Involving children and young people in this way has the aim of producing better services, leading to better outcomes for children and young people. While consultation with older children has become more usual in children’s services, this is not yet the case for younger children.

This research aims to explore current practice and the experiences, perceptions and views of a sample of professionals who work with children aged under five, with regard to consultation with young children. It is anticipated that the research will highlight facilitating factors in consulting with young children, as well as potential barriers and what may be necessary to overcome them. Thus, the policy initiative to consult young children, as users of children’s services, can be compared with current practice, and the issues raised regarding its implementation can be explored. The study will form the researcher’s dissertation for an MSc in Research Methods.

Why have I been chosen?
You have been chosen because you are a practitioner working with children under five years old.

Do I have to take part?
No, participation in this study is entirely voluntary. If you do decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

What will happen to me if I take part?
If you decide to take part you will be asked to complete and return the reply slip at the end of this information sheet. This will give your consent for the researcher to contact you to invite you to take part in an interview. Please keep the information sheet for your reference. The interview will be held at a time and place convenient to you. During the interview, the researcher and you will have a discussion about your professional experiences and views in relation to consulting with children under the age of five years old. It is important to note there are no right or wrong answers and you do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to. If you agree the conversation will be taped in order to facilitate the research process. The interview will take approximately one hour.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?
There are no disadvantages or risks foreseen in taking part in the study.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?
It is possible that you may enjoy the opportunity to reflect on and discuss your professional views and experiences.
What if something goes wrong?
If you wish to complain or have any concerns about any aspect of the way you have been approached or treated during the course of the study, please contact the researcher's dissertation supervisor: Kepa Arteraz on Tel. 01244 512082.

If you are harmed by taking part in this research project, there are no special compensation arrangements. If you are harmed due to someone's negligence (but not otherwise), then you may have grounds for legal action but you may have to pay for this.

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?
All information which is collected about you during the course of the study will be kept strictly confidential so that only the researcher carrying out the research will have access to such information. The dissertation supervisor and the transcriber will have access to transcript data but not any personal details about participants. When the study has been completed, the researcher will wipe all the interview tapes.

What will happen to the results of the research study?
The results will be written up into an MSc dissertation and submitted to the University of Chester. Individuals who participate will not be identified in the dissertation or any subsequent publication. A summary of the research findings will be provided to participants on completion of the study.

Who is organising and funding the research?
The research is being conducted as the dissertation for an MSc in Research Methods at the University of Chester.

Who may I contact for further information?
If you would like more information about the research before you decide whether or not you would be willing to take part, please contact the researcher, Sarah Davies, on telephone number 01244 512023.

Thank you for your interest in this research.

---X---

Reply slip
Exploring the views and experiences of early years practitioners with regard to consultation with children under five.
If you decide you would like to take part in the research study described above, please complete and return this reply slip to: Sarah Davies, Centre for Public Health Research, University of Chester, Parkgate Road, Chester, CH1 4BJ.

Please tick
I agree to take part in the above study ☐
I give my consent for the researcher to contact me to arrange an interview ☐

NAME:.................................................................
PROFESSIONAL ROLE:...........................................
PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT:...........................................
CONTACT DETAILS:..................................................

If you prefer, you can contact the researcher with the above information either by telephone on 01244 512023, or by e-mail at sarah.davies@chester.ac.uk. The researcher will then contact you to arrange an appointment.
Appendix C

Consent form
CONSENT FORM

Title of Project: Exploring the views and experiences of early years practitioners with regard to consultation with children under five

Name of Researcher: Sarah Davies

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions. □

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason. □

3. I agree to take part in the above study. □

4. I agree to the interview being tape recorded. □

_________________________  ____________  __________________________
Name of Participant       Date                     Signature

_________________________  ____________  __________________________
Name of Person taking consent (if different from researcher) Date                     Signature

_________________________  ____________  __________________________
Researcher                 Date                     Signature

1 copy for participant; 1 for researcher
Appendix D

Interview schedule
Interview schedule

Exploring the views and experiences of early years practitioners with regard to consultation with children under five.

Participants' experiences of consulting with children under five.

- Could I start off by asking you to tell me a little bit about your professional role and responsibilities?

- Could you please tell me briefly about how you came to be in this post … a summary of your professional background and previous employment history?

- Would you please tell me something about the setting in which you now work and a little about the local area?

- I am interested in hearing about your views and experiences in relation to consulting with children under five. Is this something you have practised or encountered in your professional role? (understanding of 'consultation')

IF YES:

- If so could you tell me about your experiences? (Is it an ongoing process or a one-off event?)

- What approaches/methods did you use?

- How did it work in practice? (Was it considered successful? Were any difficulties encountered?)

- Did anything happen as a result? (e.g. within child/ external factors)

- Would you do it again? (Would they do anything differently?)

IF NO:

- Is there a reason why this is not something you have done? (eg factors relating to understanding of consultation/ value of consultation/ child-related factors/ practical issues?)

- Is consulting with young children something that you would consider in the future?

- Under what circumstances or on what kind of issues?

- What might encourage or dissuade you?

- What approaches/methods might you use?
Participants’ understanding and perceptions of consultation with children under five within early years settings.

- I would now like to ask a little more about your general views about consultation with children under five within early years settings. Has consultation with young children ever been encouraged within this setting? (In what respect? By whom? Filtering through of Government policy?)

- In your professional experience, have practice and/or attitudes towards consultation changed during the time you have been working with children?

- What do you see as possible benefits of consulting with young children?

- Are there particular issues that you consider it is possible to consult with young children about in this setting? (e.g. service planning, delivery, evaluation, one-off events?)

Possible barriers to consultation with children under five within early years settings.

- Are there circumstances or issues that you would not consider it possible to consult with young children?

- Are some children more or less able than others to be consulted?

- What kind of things might deter or prevent early years practitioners from consulting with young children? (e.g. equipment/time restraints/practitioners’ knowledge, skills or confidence/children’s ability)

Facilitating factors in consultation with children under five within early years settings.

- What kind of things might encourage or help support early years practitioners in consulting with young children? (e.g. training/resources – time or equipment)

Notes:

- Request examples.
- No agreed commonly accepted definition of consultation. Understanding of consultation ranges from eliciting service users’ views to service users as active participants influencing the planning, delivery and evaluation of services.
Appendix E

Framework of analytic themes and categories
Descriptive themes and categories from data analysis

Current practice among the early years practitioners regarding consultation with young children (Theme)

Definitions and understanding of consultation with young children (sub-theme)
- Offering children choices (category)
- Seeking children’s opinions (category)
- Involving children/sharing control (category)
- Child-led approach to practice (category)

Use of consultation (sub-theme)
- Part of everyday practice (category)
- One-off events (category)
- Low-level consultation – influences service delivery (category)
- High-level consultation – influences service planning and evaluation (category)

Methods of consultation (sub-theme)
- Talking with children (category)
- Non-verbal means of communication (category)
  - Pointing (sub-category)
  - Makaton (sign language) (sub-category)
  - Visual representation (sub-category)
- Use of observation (category)
- Use of an advocate (category)
  - Key worker (sub-category)
  - Parent/carer (sub-category)
- Multi-sensory approaches (category)
  - Photography (sub-category)
  - Discussion (sub-category)
  - Drawing (sub-category)
  - Painting (sub-category)

Factors influencing whether or not practitioners consult with young children (Theme)

Perceptions of children’s competence and understanding of child development (sub-theme)
- Ability of children to have views (category)
- Ability of children to express their views (category)
- Importance of children’s age (category)

Views of childhood (sub-theme)
- Adult as teacher (category)
- Children’s lack of autonomy (category)
- Children’s status in society (category)

Perceived benefits of consultation with young children (sub-theme)
- Improved relationships with children (category)
- Knowing children better (category)
Educational/learning outcomes for children (category)
Children's development (category)
  Self-esteem (sub-category)
  Self-confidence (sub-category)
  Language skills (sub-category)
  Problem solving skills (sub-category)
Empowerment of children (category)
Improved practice (category)

The need to act upon the results of consultation (sub-theme)
Prevent children becoming disillusioned (category)
Not always possible (Negative or positive implications) (category)

Potential changes to working practice (sub-theme)
  Flexible approach (category)
  Fear of losing control (category)
  Skills and confidence of practitioner (category)

Time implications (sub-theme)
  Plan consultation (category)
  Do the consultation (category)
  Familiarising children with process and routines (category)
  Building trust (category)

Children's varied developmental stages (sub-theme)
  Differences related to age, gender, language skills, cognitive skills, confidence (category)
  Different approaches and methods of consultation necessary (category)
  Need for practitioners to understand individual children's developmental level (category)

Issues specific to the particular service and setting (sub-theme)
  Aims and focus of individual services (category)
  Ethos of the setting (category)

Influence of Government policy and initiatives (sub-theme)
  Sure Start (category)
  Every Child Matters & Children Act (category)
  Ofsted (category)
  Birth to Three Matters and curriculum developments (category)

Training for early years practitioners (sub-theme)
  Initial training of early years practitioners (category)
  Raising awareness of value and benefits of consultation (category)
  Providing ideas and practical strategies for consulting with young children (category)
  Support with consultation in practice (category)
Appendix F

Letters from the ethics committees
19 February 2006

Ms Sarah Davies
Researcher
Centre for Public Health Research
University of Chester
Parkgate Road
Chester CH1 4BJ

Dear Ms Davies

Full title of project: Dissertation - Interviews with professionals who work in local Sure Start programmes

REC reference: 05/32/06

Thank you for seeking the Committee’s advice about the above project. You provided the following documents for consideration:

- Outline of proposed study

These documents have been considered by the Chairman who has advised that the project is not one that is required to be ethically reviewed under the terms of the Governance Arrangements for Research Ethics Committees in the UK.

Although review by a Research Ethics Committee is not required, you should check with the relevant R&D Department, if applicable, whether management approval is required before the project starts.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Committee Coordinator

An advisory committee to Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority
4th April 2006.

Dear Sarah,

Study title: Exploring the views and experiences of early years practitioners with regard to consultation with children under 5
SREC reference: 020/06/SD/CPHR
Version number: 1

Thank you for your letter of 30th March 2006, responding to the School of Health and Applied Sciences Research Ethics Committee’s request for further information on the above research and submitting revised documents.

On behalf of the Committee, I am pleased to confirm a favourable ethical opinion for the above research on the basis described in the application form and supporting documentation as revised.

The favourable opinion is given provided that you comply with the conditions set out in the attached document. You are advised to study the conditions carefully.

The final list of documents reviewed and approved by the Committee is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application Form</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.02.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant Information sheet for professionals</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>03.04.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consent Form for professionals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.02.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview Schedule (parents)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.02.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
With the Committee's best wishes for the success of this project.

Yours sincerely,

Miranda Thurston
Chair
School Research Ethics Committee

Enclosures  Standard conditions of approval.

cc:  Supervisor
     SREC Representative
Appendix G

Project management schedule
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scope research project</th>
<th>Oct-05</th>
<th>Nov-05</th>
<th>Dec-05</th>
<th>Jan-06</th>
<th>Feb-06</th>
<th>Mar-06</th>
<th>Apr-06</th>
<th>May-06</th>
<th>Jun-06</th>
<th>Jul-06</th>
<th>Aug-06</th>
<th>Sep-06</th>
<th>Oct-06</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Write proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop participant information sheets and consent forms</td>
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<td>Write and submit ethics application</td>
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| Liaison and communication             |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Meetings with dissertation supervisor |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |

| Literature review                     |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Prepare and conduct literature search |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Examine and analyse literature        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Document literature review            |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |

| Data collection and analysis          |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Develop data collection tools         |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| (interview schedules)                 |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Sampling and recruitment of           |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| interviewees                          |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Arrange and conduct                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| interviews with professionals         |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Transcribe interview tapes            |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Analyse interview transcripts         |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |

| Write up dissertation                 |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Write introduction and                |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| methodology chapters                  |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Write findings chapter                |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Write discussion and                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| conclusion chapter                    |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |

| Prepare and submit final copy         |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Proof reading and revisions           |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Print and bind report                 |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Submit dissertation                   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |

**Key:** Tasks completed as necessary during the project.