

Review of the National Participation Standards Charter and Kitemark for Children and Young People

Children and young people's summary (March 2026)



What was the research about?



The **National Participation Standards** (NPS) help organisations, like councils and other services, to work well with children and young people and involve them in decisions. The Charter and Kitemark are awards for organisations that show they use the Standards.

The Welsh Government asked a research company called **Ecorys** to find out how well the Charter and Kitemark have been working and suggest ways they could be improved.

Who took part?

The researchers talked to organisations that work to protect children and young people's rights across Wales. They also spoke with people working in **local councils** and other public services like health and police. They also looked at examples of what has been done in **other countries**.



What were the findings?



Strengths

- The National Participation Standards are **well known and liked**, especially in Youth Services and Children's Services.
- The Kitemark and Charter have helped organisations to **take participation seriously, and to share when they do something well**.
- In the best examples, they helped organisations to improve how they **plan and support participation**, and to listen to what young people want and need.



Areas for improvement

- **Most public bodies have not used the Charter and Kitemark.** Some have used other participation schemes that work well for them; others have done less.
- It has been **hard to get professionals outside Youth Services and Children's Services to take part in the scheme**.
- The **results of participation are not always collected and shared**. This makes it harder to show how useful the Charter and Kitemark are and to check how well organisations are doing.

What did the researchers suggest?

Overall, the researchers found that the Charter and Kitemark have helped some organisations to show they meet the National Participation Standards.

If the Welsh Government wanted to continue with the Charter and Kitemark, the researchers suggested how the scheme could be improved. This could include using **Gold, Silver and Bronze awards** to show how well organisations are doing. There could also be an **annual award ceremony** to celebrate successes and share good ideas.



The researchers said that children and young people should help update the Charter and Kitemark if it is relaunched. They suggested that **local children and youth groups** should help check progress in their area. These groups could work with national Youth Inspectors to make sure organisations are doing what they said they would.