



One minute guide



Recognition and reward for participation activities: good practice guide

Date: June 2025 Version: 1

What is the guide?

The Guide, developed by the Children and Families Participation Network, helps you decide how to best recognise contributions from children, young people, parents and carers involved in your participation activity. It provides a flexible approach tailored to individual needs and circumstances, ensuring consistency across participation activities. [Read the Recognition and reward for participation activities: good practice guide](#) for further information.

What Do We Mean by 'Reward and Recognition'?

- **Reward:** Given to recognise service, effort, or achievement (e.g. vouchers, payments, celebration activity).
- **Recognition:** Shows appreciation for participation (e.g. thank you letters, formal accreditation).
- **Incentive:** Motivates or encourages participation (e.g. entry to prize draw, work experience).

Overcoming Barriers

Barriers may include disability, stigma, and social, digital or financial exclusion. Costs might include travel, parking, specialist support (e.g., interpreters), childcare, care workers, refreshments, or data resources (e.g., broadband, printing). You will need to plan to cover costs to enable inclusive participation.

Principles

Your approach to reward and recognition should be based on the following principles:

- **Inclusive and safe:** Consider individual circumstances to determine the most appropriate reward or recognition; offer a range of options and additional support to those who need it.
- **Transparent:** At the planning stage, discuss and clarify available rewards, what the payment covers, and if relevant, flag potential impacts on benefits or tax and signpost them to specialist advice.
- **Informative:** Clearly communicate activity details and reward options, allowing participants to accept, refuse or request alternatives.
- **Accountable:** Plan to provide feedback on the impact of the activity to participants.
- **Respectful:** Treat rewards, recognition, and incentives as a "thank you" gift and provide them promptly.
- **Affordable:** Ensure the activity budget covers all costs, including travel and refreshments.



**Nottinghamshire
County Council**

What participation activities can we reward and recognise?

Use the following criteria to decide whether to offer reward and recognition to those taking part:

- The activity occurs outside of regular meetings with the individual/group.
- The activity requires extra support or training for participants to meaningfully engage.
- The activity requires specific skills or experience, such as a person sharing their lived experience.
- The activity is requested by an external organisation.
- Attending training for specialist activities.

Examples of activities:

- Supporting on an interview panel.
- Co-producing materials like training packages, tender specifications or films.
- Delivering training, speaking at or running workshops at events.
- Conducting service evaluations/inspections.
- Representing groups at strategic board meetings.
- Completing targeted surveys or questionnaires.

What rewards and recognition can we offer?

Options for individuals and groups include:

- Vouchers/gift cards: For various retailers, with a recommended value of £5 to £50.
- Thank you letters: From senior decision-makers.
- Impact updates: Communicating the impact of participation.
- Celebration events: Recognising achievements.
- Small gifts: For younger children or those who prefer non-monetary rewards.
- Certificates and records of achievement: Formal recognition of contributions.
- Training, experience, and accreditation: Long-term recognition through skill development.
- Work placements and experience: Professional experience opportunities.

Remember to tailor rewards to the age and circumstances of participants.

How much to give when using vouchers

Use your professional judgment, knowledge of participants and your activity to determine appropriate voucher values. Balance this with the needs and expectations of the young people, parents or carers taking part.

- Young people (up to 17 years): Half-day attendance/preparation: £25, full-day: £50
- Young adults, parents, and carers (18+, 16-17 living independently): Half-day attendance/preparation: £40, full-day: £80
- All Participants: Short meetings (up to 2 hours): £10 group consultation/focus group, £10 per participant

Contact the Strengths-based Practice Team for support with the cost of reward and recognition.

Key contacts

Name: Strengths-based Practice Team

Email: cfsstrengthsbasedpractice@nottsc.gov.uk