

BISHOP'S
CHILDREN & YOUTH
COUNCIL

Diocese of
Leicester
Shaped by God

FACILITATOR GUIDEBOOK
AUTUMN 2025

leicester.anglican.org/bcyc





BISHOPS' **Statement**

"We have tried to revolutionise the way we listen to children and young people in the Diocese. We have many different groups who meet across the Diocese in schools and in churches, where they feedback to us on particular themes and topics..."

...It's been a good learning exercise for me, going beyond just listening out-of-interest, but listening to the point of saying, how is this going to directly affect what I'm doing"

Bishop Martyn Snow

Bishop of Leicester

Table of **Contents**



- 1** Safeguarding Young Voices
- 2** Welcome
- 3** This Terms Theme
- 4** Suggested Session Plan
- 5** Round 1: What do you think about?
- 6** Round 2: What do you want to talk about?
- 7** Round 3: Do you feel listened to?
- 8** Reflection
- 9** Feedback



Safeguarding **Young Voices**

Listening and responding to the voice of the children and young people is essential for effective safeguarding practice. Listening and responding fosters a culture of trust, promotes wellbeing and honours children and young people's right to be heard and taken seriously in matters which affect them.

Inclusive

Children and young people communicate in different ways. We have tried to adapt our listening practice to hear their voice of those who may often be excluded due to disability, age, development and language. Listening resources are dual-coded, with facilitator prompts and alternative delivery options.

Safeguarding

We trust that those facilitating listening (*teachers, school staff, children and youth workers*) in school and church contexts have been safely recruited and will adhere to safeguarding policy and practice in their context.

We ask facilitators to record anonymous and unfiltered feedback and only send photos of children and young people with consent. Children and young people need to understand they do not have to participate in any or all activities and agree for their insights to be used in reporting.



Hello! **Welcome**

Thanks SO MUCH for downloading this listening resource and for facilitating a listening exercise with children and/or young people in your context.

What's the purpose?

Each term the Diocese of Leicester facilitates a listening exercise in partnership with schools and church groups. The listening exercise allows children and young people (CYP) to choose and explore an important issue for them and share key findings with Bishop Martyn & Bishop Saju.

What's the process?

Listening exercises are facilitated in schools and church groups, across a range of contexts. Children and young people are asked to share their thoughts, ideas, and stories, in response to a series of conversation prompts and interactive activities.

These responses are collated and presented to a group of young people in a local context for their analysis and reflection. These young people identify key stats, questions and comments they would like to highlight. These form the basis of a report that is sent to our Bishops.

Bishop Martyn responds to the report via video. The report and video are published on Diocese of Leicester website and shared with participants.

Who can participate?

Any child or young person (under 18 years) in the Diocese of Leicester!
We encourage diversity and representation.



Listening **Theme**

In our pilot listening exercise (Spring Term '23) we asked children and young people what themes they would you like to talk about... we listened!

Since then, we have facilitated listening groups on the themes of climate change, leaders, poverty, prayer, faith and safeguarding.

This term (Autumn 2025), we will repeat this question.

The responses from this terms listening exercise will set the agenda for future listening exercises through 2026-2027.

Deadline for responses > **Friday 30th January 2026.**

Previous Listening Exercises

As of Autumn 2025, we have heard from more than 1300 young voices across 18 primary, 4 secondary schools and 17 church groups via 7 listening exercises.

Find all resources, reports and responses at leicester.anglican.org/bcyc

Suggested Session Plan

Full permission to use this resource creatively in your setting. You know your children, young people and context best. You may like to add drinks or snacks? Change the timings? Adapt the rounds to suit your group's needs.

[1 min] Welcome:

Welcome everybody. Explain to participants that by taking part in this listening exercise, they are becoming part of Bishop's Children & Youth Council, alongside children and young people from schools and church groups across the whole of Leicestershire.

[3 min] Intro:

Introduce the listening theme and set some basic ground rules with your group - *be honest, respect others views, use 'I' statements, share only as much as you feel comfortable...*

[1 min] Pray (if appropriate in your context):

Use the suggested prayer or do your own thing.

[15-20 min] Rounds:

Invite each participant to share a response in each round. Encourage participants to be BRUTALLY HONEST!

[3 min] Reflection:

Take a moment to pause and reflect.

Listening Prayer

God, we thank you that you are here with us.
We thank you for listening to and responding to our prayers.

God, in this listening group, we ask you to give us -
Grace to listen deeply,
Wisdom to speak thoughtfully,
Courage to share honestly.
Amen.

Round One

What do you think about?

1

Description: name the things you think about most, quite a lot and a little...

You will need:

- Printed worksheet - page10 (A3 if possible)
- Pens or pencils
- (optional) post-it notes
- Phone or camera to record feedback

How to: show the worksheet to your group and explain the task.

Invite participants to respond to the questions by writing **one-word** answers in the correct section of the pie chart.

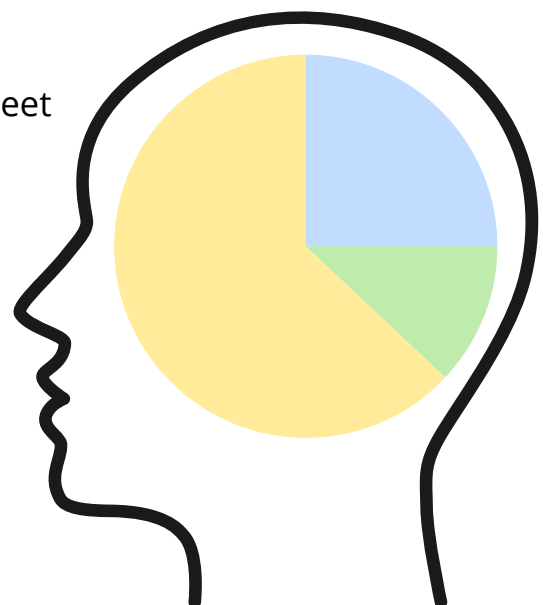
Big section - *what do you think about the most?*

Medium section - *what do you think about quite a lot?*

Small section - *what do you only think about a little?*

Options: participants could write their answers on a post-it note or directly on the worksheet.

Recording: photograph the complete worksheet



Facilitator Prompts



ROUND ONE

If any of your group are struggling to complete the activity, try...

'...when you have some spare time, what do you think about?'

'...what is the last thing you think about at night, before going to sleep?'

'...what do you think about on your way to school in the morning?'

Remind participants they are no 'right or wrong' answers, simply their honest opinion.



WRITING

If writing is a barrier, encourage participants to act or share their response with a friend or facilitator to scribe.

Give permission to participants to draw their response.



Yellow: What do you think about the most?

Blue: What do you think about quite a lot?

Green: What do you only think about a little?

Round Two

What do you want to talk about?



2

Description: pick your top five topics from the list

You will need:

- Printed & cut topic cards
- Phone or camera to record feedback

How to: print and cut up a set(s) of topic cards. Introduce each topic card to your group, ensuring each participant understands each topic. Invite participants to work as a group to discuss and pick the top five topics they would like to talk about more.

Blank Card! There are blank topic cards for participants to suggest topics!

Options: invite participants to work in pairs or small groups instead of a whole group, if you think this would work better for your group. Give each group a set of topic cards.

Voting: you could facilitate a simple vote (inviting participants to raise their hand) to help your group pick their top five topics.

Recording: photograph each 'top five' set of topic cards.



Facilitator Prompts



ROUND TWO

Topic prompts / explanations...

Social Media: *sharing photos, videos and messages online*

Neurodiversity: *we all have different brains that work differently*

Artificial Intelligence: *computers learning to do things like humans*

Justice / Equality: *everyone getting a fair chance & being treated well*

In the News: *what's happening around the world?*

Politics / Government: *how people make decisions*

Race / Racism: *treating people differently because of skin colour*

The Future: *hopes and dreams - what will it be like?*

Mental Health: *how your mind feels and works*

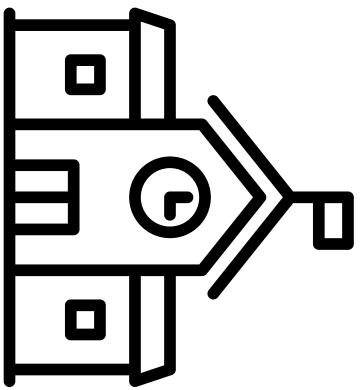


GROUP DISCUSSION

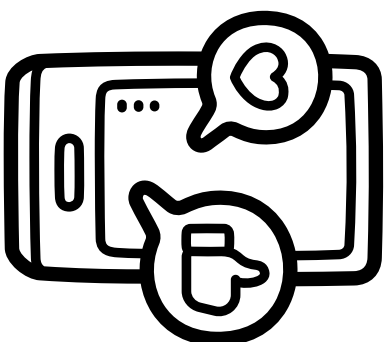
If group discussion is a barrier, encourage participants to work in pairs or smaller groups with their own set of topic cards.

Give permission for participants to whisper or share their answers with the facilitator or a friend if they don't want to share with the whole group.

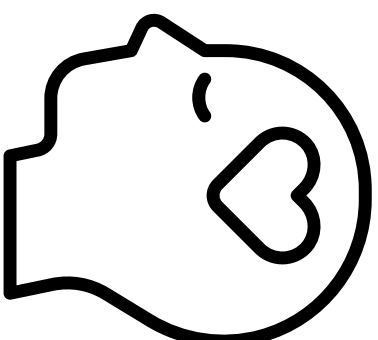




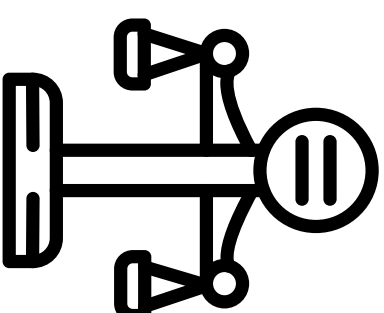
SCHOOL



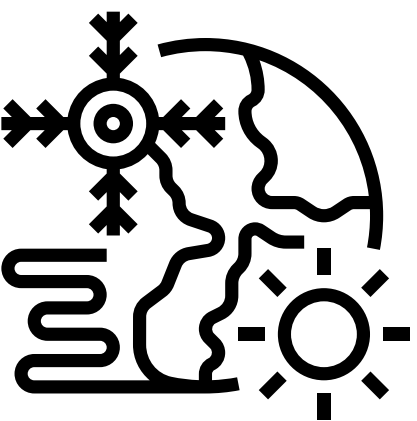
SOCIAL MEDIA



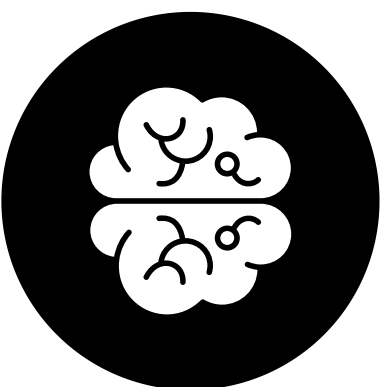
MENTAL HEALTH



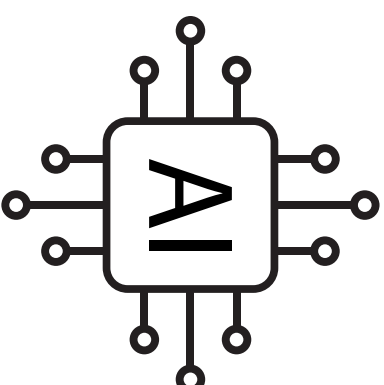
JUSTICE / EQUALITY



CLIMATE



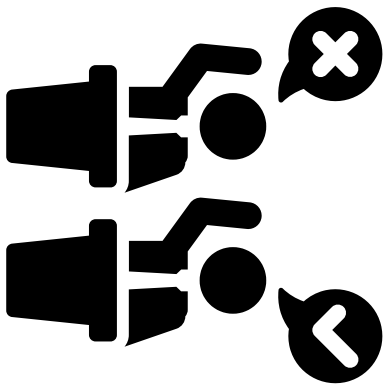
NEURODIVERSITY



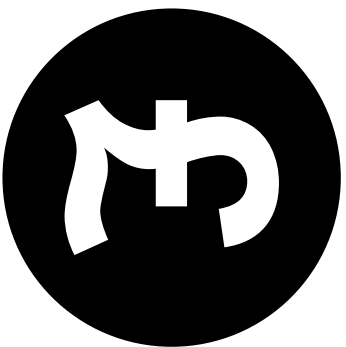
ARTIFICIAL
INTELLIGENCE



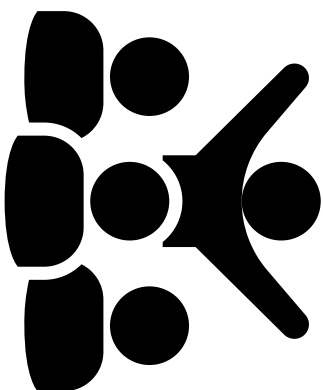
IN THE NEWS



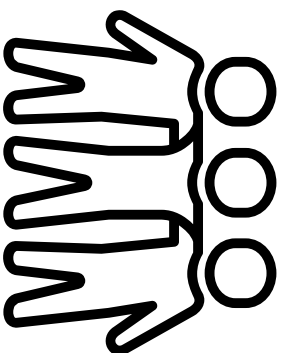
POLITICS / GOVERNMENT



MONEY



LEADERS



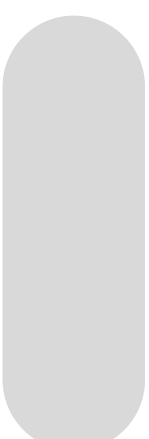
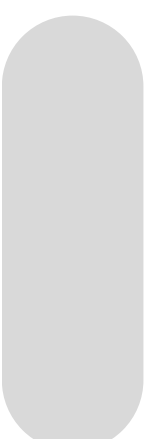
FRIENDSHIPS



RACE & RACISM



THE FUTURE



Round Three

Do you feel listened to by the Bishop?



3

Description: place yourself on the listening ladder

You will need:

- Printed listening ladder (A3 if poss)
- Tokens, coins, Lego mini-figures or buttons
- Phone or camera to record feedback

How to: print out the listening ladder (page 16) on A3 if possible. Explain each rung of the ladder to your group. Ask participants,

'Based on your experience of doing this listening exercise for the Bishop and/or previous listening exercises, do you feel listened to?'

Invite participants to decide where they feel they are on the ladder and place a token / mini-figure.

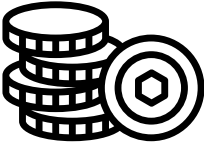
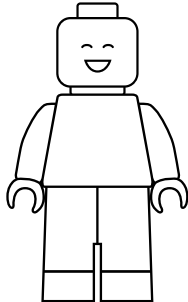
Options: Invite participants to explain why they choose the place they did.

Recording: please indicate whether your group has taken part in previous listening exercises by selecting 'yes or no' on listening ladder print out.

Photograph the completed listening ladder.



Listening Ladder - *based on your experience of doing this listening exercise for the Bishop, do you feel listened to?*

	I feel involved in decision making with the Bishop. My views matter!	
	I feel listened to by the Bishop and my views do make a difference.	
	I feel like the Bishop wants to hear my views before making decisions.	
	I feel listened to by the Bishop and look forward to hearing his response.	
	I feel listened to by the Bishop, but not sure how my views will make a difference.	
	I feel like the Bishop only listens to my views because he 'has to'.	
	I do not feel listened to by the Bishop.	
 Have your group participated in previous Diocesan listening exercises? YES ☐ NO ☐		

Pause for **Reflection**

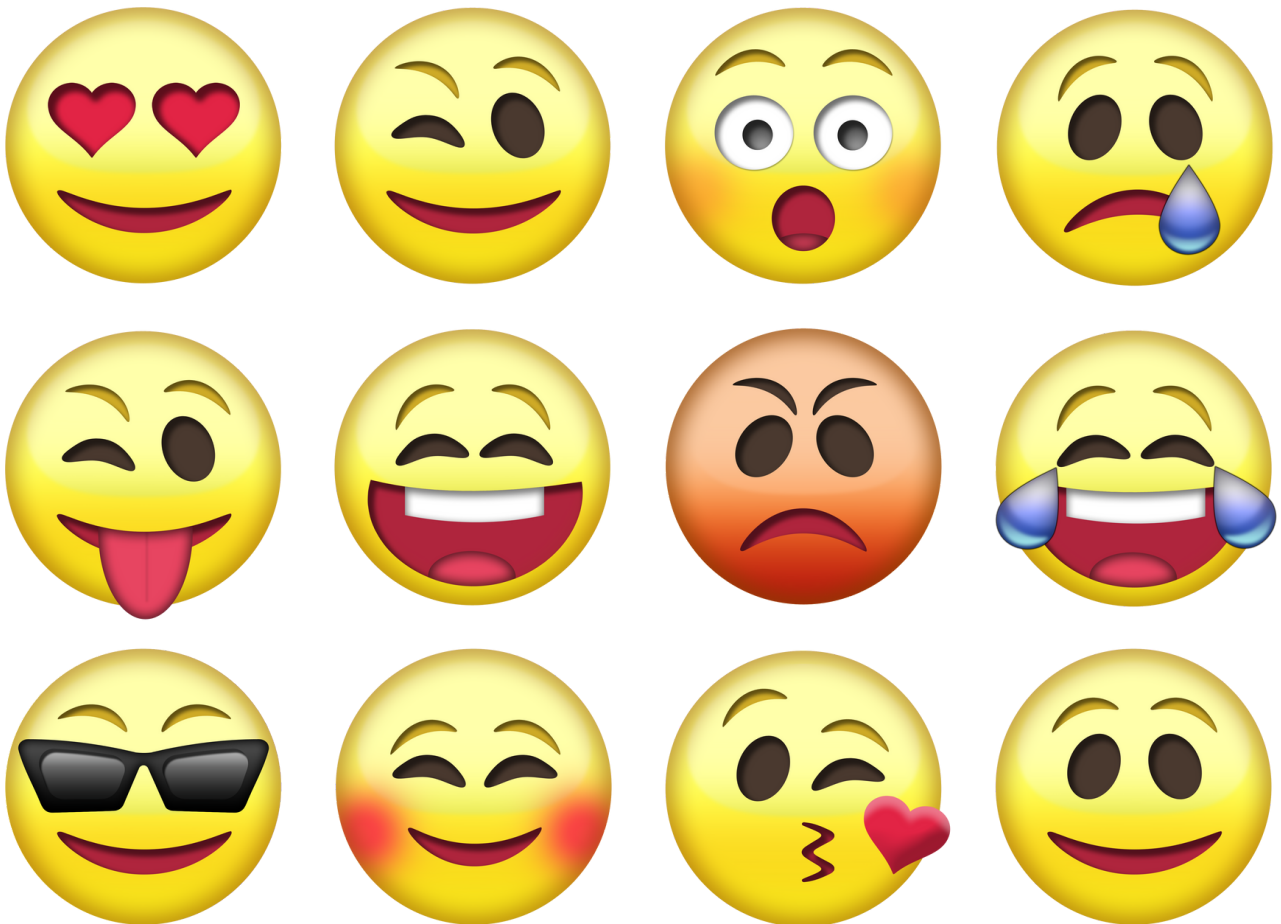
Pause:

Take a moment to reflect together at the end of your session.

Show your group the picture of the emoji's. Ask participants to think about how they are feeling. Invite participants to choose an emoji (or two) that describes their feelings.

Options:

You could complete this reflective activity in silence or invite participants to share the emoji they choose and why (if they are willing).



Facilitator Feedback

Alongside photos and responses from your listening group, please copy and paste the three questions below into an email and briefly answer.

Email feedback to Matt Long (Youth Engagement Officer) by **Friday 30th January 2026**.



matt.long@leicestercofe.org

Questions:

1. Where did you meet? (Name of church / school / group)
2. How many children / young people in your group?
3. Age range and makeup of group?
(Gender, ethnicity, Special Educational Needs & Disability).

~

Optional Feedback: we would love to hear your reflections on the listening exercise? What worked well? What didn't? What would you change? Ideas?

All (brutally honest) feedback is super useful as we learn together.

