



Consortiwm Comisiynu  
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Childrens' Commissioning  
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## Guidance for \_ supporting children to complete 'This is Me!'

*This Guidance was produced with the Young Commissioners feedback & input. It aims to help you consider their thoughts on how they, and others, would like to complete the document, how important they feel it is for their voice to be heard in placement referrals when they need a new 'home' and what support they need.*

*Critically our Young Commissioners have always been vocal about the use of the word 'home' not 'placement' and they ask that this language is used when discussing moves with children and young people rather than professionals.*

### Why should we complete 'This is Me'?

'This is Me' has been developed by the 4Cs' Young Commissioners, they want to ensure that children who are looked after are able to have their voice heard when they have to move home.

Both providers and carers have told us that when they receive a referral that is accompanied by a piece of direct work it can really give a feel for the individuality of the child and positively contributes to the matching process.

Our Young Commissioners have told us that they think it is really important that 'This is Me' is completed because:

*"I want staff and carers to have an understanding of what I say and what I feel"*

*"They need to know something about me before I arrive, just like I want to know something about them before I go"*

*"So carers can make you feel at ease by talking about comforts and stuff they like and things that are important to them"*

*"Carers will know how to care for me"*

*"Carers will know what activities you like or dislike"*

*"It's important to know what food I like so carers don't cook what I don't like"*

*"It makes it easier to relax when I get there if they know important things about me"*

*"If you are nervous or upset about leaving home and going somewhere new then you don't usually want to talk much. You might just be shy or you might be scared. If the carers know what you think about these bits then it's a good start and makes moving home easier."*



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## Tips for engaging us in 'This is Me'

There is the option of three templates, one is designed for younger children and two for young people but we don't want this to be limited by age group - please select the version that the child prefers. Our Young Commissioners range in age from 7 to 17 years old but they each thought different children would like different layouts based on individual ways to express themselves; some like drawing, some like writing!

The children can complete just some elements of the template if they don't want to complete every section. If they don't like any of the templates but like bits of each, let them write or draw their own version!

The children can use photographs, stickers or draw pictures if they prefer not to write. Our Young Commissioners had a range of different ways they would have filled them in and it's whatever the individual child prefers.

The template should be completed by the child with someone that the child knows well and in a place they feel comfortable with. This is not always the social worker; it may be a support worker; current carer or someone from school. Our Young Commissioners said that if someone they weren't comfortable with or someone they didn't know well asked them to complete it they would probably say 'No!'

The Young Commissioners said they would want to think about it and not be rushed. Please allow them to work at their own pace.

They were worried that people might judge what they write down and that some people might be upset if they saw it. So make confidentiality clear and explain who the information will be shared with.

**Our Young Commissioners have told us that they do not want the template to be completed by an adult, on their behalf, without their involvement...**

*"This is Me – not you pretending to be me!"*

## Young Commissioners views on the sections

- **'This is Me'**

Our Young Commissioners asked that children had the option to express themselves using photographs, stickers or by drawing pictures when they were completing the template as some of them did not like to write.

- **What I like to be called and my age**

They felt it was very important that carers knew what they preferred to be called. Some children do not like to be called by a name that is different to their given name, some don't like it to be shortened, like 'Tom' for 'Thomas'. These are really important little things when you arrive to help you feel comfortable, otherwise it can be upsetting and awkward. Everyone preferred age, or birthday, to date of birth.



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- **Words and pictures to describe me**

The child could describe themselves how they see themselves. They can describe what they look like, what they feel like, what they enjoy, who their friends are. Our Young Commissioners tested out the sections in a workshop and in here we had some who drew themselves, some drew the things that were most important, most used a few key words to describe themselves rather than sentences.

- **People in my life who are important to me**

This is a chance for the children to let carers know about those who they consider to be their family or people who are important to them in addition to, or instead of their families. This could include extended family, friends, schoolmates, or professionals that support them.

Young Commissioners felt that it was important not just to refer to families. They were concerned that some children would not have good relationships with family members and so would be put off if they had to list their families, but they would have other people around them who they would like to tell new carers about.

- **The most important things to me**

This could include being able to keep in touch with important people in their lives, staying in the same school or a favourite toy. Pictures or things that are important because of memories are really good to include here. Things that comfort children when they are sad or upset are good to know.

The Young Commissioners felt that it was essential that these things are remembered when a child moves home and move at the same time as them, not be told they will be packed and sent on afterwards.

- **I find it hard to**

This section could describe what the child feels anxious or worried about. They also thought it could be day to day things that they need help with, like tying their shoe laces. One Young Commissioner wrote in this section "fill in this form!" and all were clear that some sections were harder to complete than others depending on how they were feeling. This is where taking time was important and also being allowed to skip some sections if they didn't feel happy completing them.

- **I don't like**

Here the child could let a new carer know what they don't like and why, and this could be anything from what they don't like to eat to an activity or going to certain places. The Young Commissioners thought this was very helpful to avoid arguments or disappointing carers who thought something might be fun or a treat but they actually don't like at all. By writing this down it can help to settle into a new home without lots of questions.

- **I like**

Here the child can describe what they like, it could be what they like to eat, fashion, sport, art, tv, films or playing games. When a child has completed the form there are often drawings in here and lots of day to day 'little' things which are really important to life at home, when we see professionals complete this on behalf of a child there is often much less detail or 'big' things are listed which isn't helpful.



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- **What I need from carers who look after me**

Here the child can express what they want from their carers and home. They want to give their views and be listened to. Our Young Commissioners told us that they are asked lots of things about themselves but are not given the chance to tell the carer what they would like from them and their new home.

- **I would like to be**

This is about the future, the kind of job they may like, where they may like to live etc. Some younger children thought this could be a fun thing – they may want to be a superhero!

- **I feel... / I'm sad when... / I'm happy when...**

Our Young Commissioners thought these might be hard for some children to fill in, especially if they feel angry or sad or upset. They thought as long as they were helped to describe feelings and knew that this information would really help carers look after them well, that it could be a good section. This is somewhere that they might want to draw feelings not describe them in words which can be hard. This is a section where children may want to take time to think hard about what they say.

- **I wish**

This is about the future where things can be how they want them to be, not the past which may be difficult to talk about. Some of our Young Commissioners found this hard similar to 'I feel' but some talked about day to day things that they wanted to change or stay the same.

- **The quick list**

I'm called  
My birthday is  
I'm this tall  
My favourite colour is  
My favourite food is  
My favourite drink is  
My favourite thing is  
My favourite smell is  
My favourite noise is

In one template there is a quick list of things that should be easy to answer.

Our Young Commissioners thought that this might be good to use where children are finding it difficult to start filling in the sections and may be put off by some of the harder sections like I feel, I wish, or people who are important to me.

It may be the best place to start and encourage children to fill in other bits of the form even if they don't want to fill it all in.

Thanks for listening to the Young Commissioners, we hope this helps you support children to fill in this important form. Please remember, this is not what you think it's about us...

**“This is Me!”**