



Participation and Engagement April 2019- Sept 2019

Thursday 5th March 2020



Participation and Engagement Groups

Together for children support the following participation and engagement groups:

- Sunderland Youth Council
- Change Council 10- 15 years
- Change Council 16+
- Sunderland Young Commissioners
- SEND Voice
- LGBT+ Group (now known as Rainbow Spektrum)



Participation Performance

Between April 2019 and September 2019, **324 unique** children and young people aged 10-25 have been involved in participation activity.

504 overall children and young people have been involved in a participation activity

247 children and young people engaged in a celebration or consultation event.





Overview of Activities April – Sept 2019

- Creation of Care Leavers Necessities Packs for all children and young people moving into semi-independent or independent living.
- Review the implementation of commitments to children looked after and leaving care
- The voice of SEND children and young people have been heard in the creation of the new SEND strategy
- Activities have been planned and booked for the CLA and CL celebration event
- Over 100 young people have been recognised formally for their achievements through Sunderland Young Achievers
- City wide consultation regarding Short breaks for SEND Children and Young people
- Implementation of the Young Commissioners
- Focussed work with Balance
- Embed involvement of children and young people in recruitment and selection
- Engagement with national campaigns and visits e.g. Care Leavers Week, Make your Mark, International visit to Essen
- Develop Care Leavers Cook Book
- Embed the use of Family Time
- Enhance the mental health offer for children and young people
- A safe space for children and young people
- Spend more time getting to know the senior management teams
- Engagement to support environmental issues
- Engagement with children and young people around health pathways

Summary of Activities

- The following slides are an overview of some the outcomes and activity between April 2019 and September 2019.
- For a full overview of participation and engagement activity and outcomes for the last six months (April 2019- September 2019) please see handout.



Care Leavers Lunch

Young people told us that cooking was expensive, especially if you are leaving care. Change Council worked with partners to host and deliver a care leavers lunch in July 2019 to decision makers across the city. Professionals attended from Sunderland City Council, Gentoo, Together for Children, Sunderland College, Clinical Commissioning Group and Hope Springs. Young people planned, prepared and cooked the meals on a budget and then served to professionals. Young people learned important cooking skills including batch cooking, use of essential ingredients and keeping safe whilst cooking. The lunch reflected the reality of budgeting for our care leavers and highlighted the need to offer more support and assistance. Sunderland CCG's have kindly donated funds to provide necessity packs to Care Leavers moving into semi-independent or independent accommodation. From July 2019 every care leave who has moved into independence has received a necessity pack which include all the basic ingredients. All recipes will be added to a Care Leavers Cook Book, that will be launched in Jan 2020.





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Recruitment and Selection

Involving Children and Young People in recruitment and selection. Young people in Change Council have been trained in interview techniques and have taken part in 8 interviews between April 2019 and September 2019 within children's social care. Young people have either held their own panel or take part as part of the adult panel. Young people and adults involved in the recruitment process jointly discuss their views and are part of the decision making. Young people bring a unique perspective and have a significant impact on the discussions about the choices of the candidates.



Speed Networking Event

In September, both our Children in Care Councils invited Children's Service Managers, Heads of Service and Directors to a Speed Networking Event as the team has recently been discussing the changes in management and that they would like to know 'who was who'? The speed networking event involved young people asking senior management whatever questions they wanted. 11 young people attended. Young people now feel as though they know who the professionals are looking after them and enjoyed having some fun getting to know each other.

BALANCE

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Balance is an organisation launched in 2009 to reduce the impact that alcohol is having on the North East region, following commitments made in the regional health and well-being strategy. Balance asked Together for Children if this was something the Young Commissioners group could help with. Young people attended a workshop focussing on the 'alcohol free childhood campaign'. Young people supported the creation of a film, sharing their own views and experiences. The film is now being showing across Sunderland the North East to communicate the message wider. Balance have also requested that Sunderland Young Commissioners are involved in the mystery shopping programme to support the prevention of alcohol being sold to those who are underage.



SEND Voice

The participation and engagement team conducted a series of consultation events with children and young people who have either a SEND diagnosis and/or and Education Health Care Plan with the purpose of involving them in the planning of services that directly affect their lives. Five special schools, Sunderland College, Grace House and three youth projects across Sunderland were visited.





The Bramble Centre

Following the renaming of the Contact Centre to the Family Time Centre, young people were asked to visit the Family Time centre to find out from their perspective what they thought and how it could be improved. Young people suggested themed rooms, proposed more pictures on the walls and furniture and suggested that it be named 'The Bramble Centre' with individually named the rooms in line with Bramble theme. Young people also asked if the Change Council Logo could be included in the building. All of the young people's proposals have been added to a financial plan to re-develop the family time centre.





Communicating with CWD

- CWD use of Mind of My Own Express for the more able children and young people. However usage is limited given our criteria is a severe learning disability (amongst other factors).
- CWD work closely with our SEND schools and make use of the tools they have available to communicate with children – talking mats is a good example.
- CWD secured a two day training course for all staff CWD trained in Makaton. It is an effective tool to communicate with our children and young people as it is in the preferred means of communication in our SEND schools, for those children who have limited verbal communication.
- In addition to that, one C&F worker in the CWD team is trained in BSL. This has proved very useful of late as we are working with a deaf family. This C&F worker has been able to co-work the case with the allocated SW to interpret.



Events and Consultations

Sunderland Young Achievers

- Sunderland Young Achievers is an annual event, which took place in July 2019. Over 150 nominations were received. Nominations were independently judged by Sponsors from across the City and continued to be of an extremely high standard.
- Over 500 children, young people, their families and professionals attended the Stadium of Light to celebrate the achievements of over 100 children and young people either individually or part of a group who received awards.

Children Looked After Event and Care Leavers Celebration

- Our Children Looked After and Care Leavers Celebration takes place in December, this will be the 4th year Sunderland have hosted this event. The event is planned by Sunderland's Change Council including additional consultations from Sunderland Children's Homes and the fostering VOKOL group.

Make your Mark Consultation

- The UK largest Youth Consultation was launched in August 2019. Young people from Sunderland Youth Council co-ordinated the voting of the Make your Mark consultation (the UK's largest Youth Consultation). Young people made themselves visible by attending schools, youth projects and events such as the NCS to get as many young people in Sunderland to vote as possible. Voting closes October 2019.



Any Questions?

'Loved meeting the management team
@tfcsunderland and it's nice now
knowing who to speak to regarding
different ages'

Young person Age 17