

# Listening to Children and Young People in Sunderland



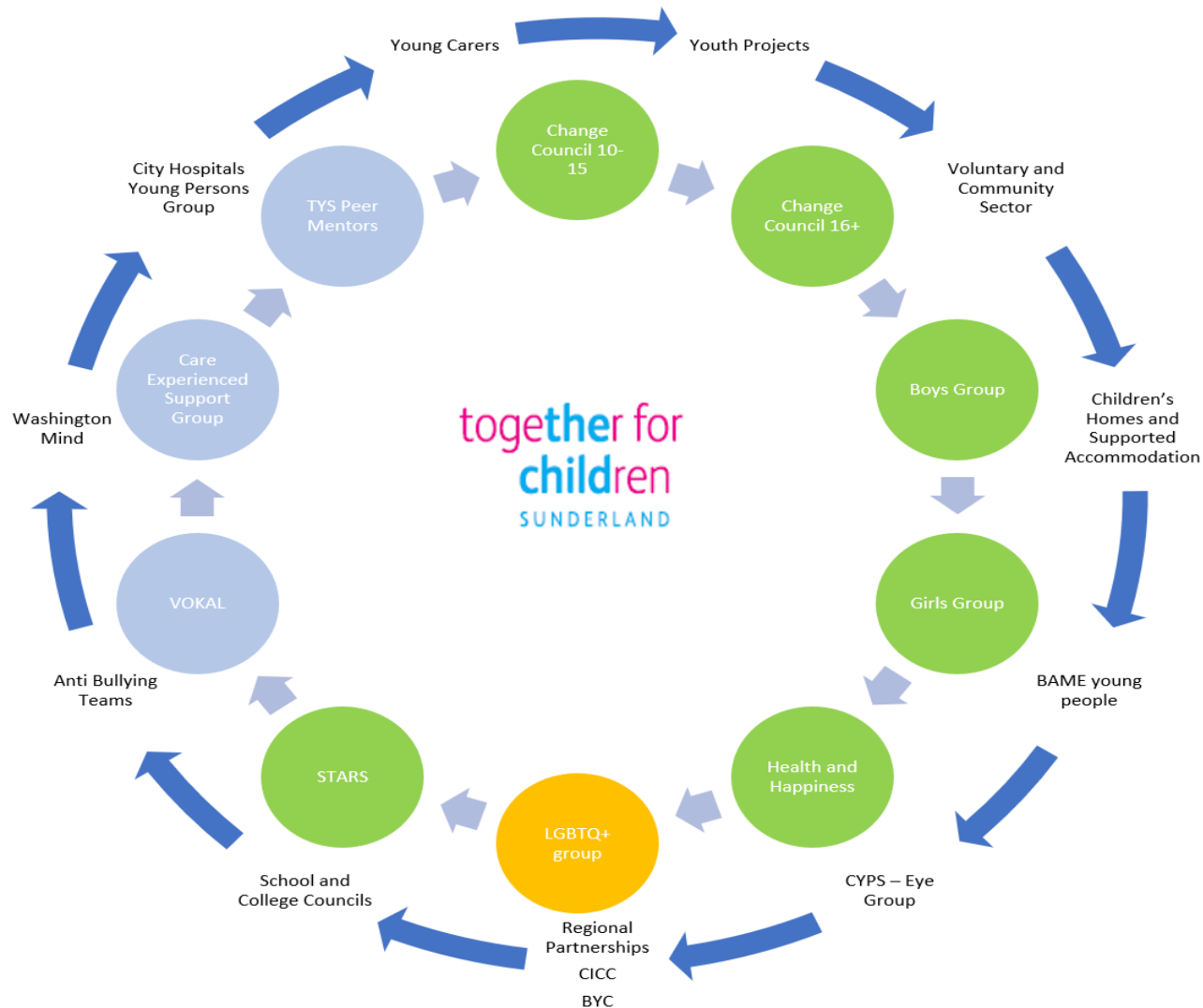
# Participation and Engagement

Together for Children's vision of participation and engagement is that all children, young people and their families have the opportunity to actively participate in the decisions that affect their lives, in the delivery of the services they receive, and in the development of the policies that impact on them.

*'Hearing the voice of the child is an exceptional strength in Sunderland'. OFSTED ILACS  
AUG 2021*

# Our Voice

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# Sunderland Youth Council

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Sunderland Youth Council is a group of young people aged 11 – 19 (up to 25) that aim to represent the voices of young people in Sunderland, working on specific issues voted for by young people.

SYC host the annual young peoples state of the city debate.

## Campaign 20-21: Homelessness



Listening to children is central to all the service improvements. Inspectors met children and young people from a number of groups who were contributing to the improvement in services. They all reported on how services were much better, how they were personally benefiting from their views being heard and how their contributions were improving the lives of other children. For instance, the Sunderland Youth Council is a highly impressive and committed group of young people who dedicate their time, energy and ideas to make Sunderland a better place for children and young people to live. They have instigated meaningful campaigns around mental health, developing mental health charter mark status for schools, providing kit bags for the homeless and in improving the environment through targeted litter campaigns in the city' . **ILACS OFSTED AUG 2021**

# STARS

Stars is a group of young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) aged 12-25 that represent the voices of young people with SEND.

Stars took the SYC homelessness campaign into their schools and colleges.

They have given their views on the new "Culture Hub"

They have spoken to Ofsted inspectors about their lived experiences of coping with additional needs.

Most recently they planned and delivered two highly successful Accessible HAF sessions reaching over 200 SEND children and their families.

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Founders of Stars @Bunny Hill.  
There are now three 'Stars' groups in the City.

# Change Council

Change Council are two groups of Cared for and Care Experienced young people aged 10-15 and 16+. Change Council represent the voice of children and young people who are cared for or care experienced.

Change Council plan an annual Cared for Christmas Party, are regular attendees on interview panels for new TfC staff and regularly meet with senior leaders to ensure their voice is heard.

Change Council are currently in the process of re-launching their Change the Language Campaign.

- *'The Change Council is a dedicated and influential group of young people who are having an extraordinarily positive impact on the delivery of 11 services for children in Sunderland. They described how their intervention had brought about changes for children including the change the language campaign, training elected members, changing the referral criteria for care experienced children who become parents, and regular meetings with housing providers. They quite rightly have a great sense of pride in the recognition they receive for their achievements, which are facilitated by an organisation that is willing to learn from their views' ILACS OFSTED Aug 2021*



# Early Help – Girls and Boys Group



Early Help Boys and Girls group promote wellbeing and positive relationships.

It is a co-produced 12 week programme by the young people in the groups.

Young people are supported throughout the process by dedicated Early Help workers.

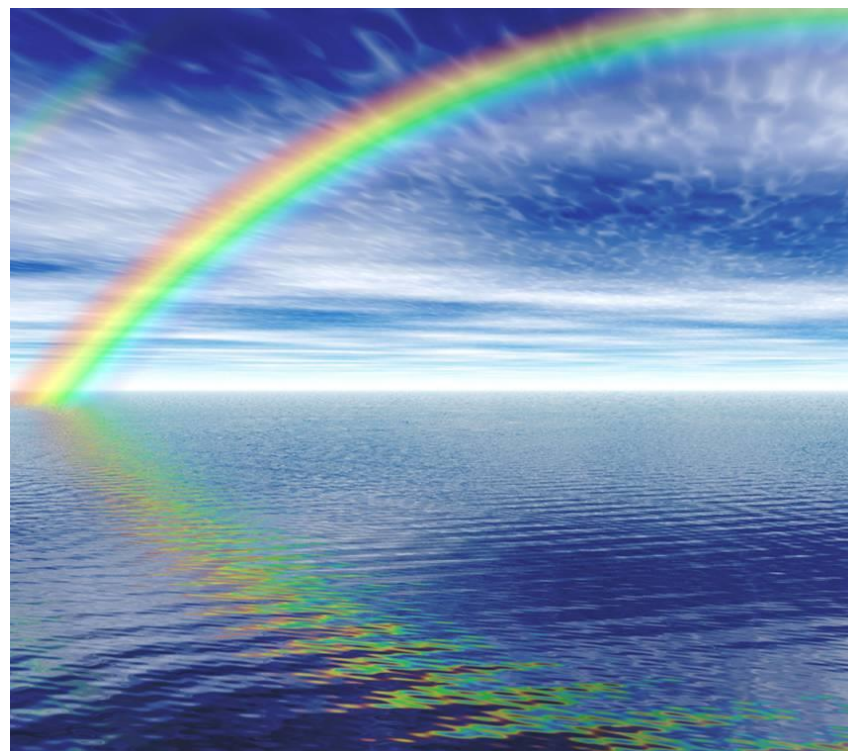
Young people have come back and acted as mentors for other young people.

‘Children who met inspectors also reported very positively that early help participation groups had helped them develop new friendships, confidence and strategies for managing their feelings’ ***ILACS Ofsted Aug 2021 EH Boys and Girls groups***

# LGBTQ+ Group

Our LGBTQ+ group is a newly established group.

Young people meet bi-weekly to socialise and campaign to make a difference for other LGBTQ+ young people.



# Health and Happiness

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The Health and Happiness project gives young people a platform to share their concerns with health professionals about the health and happiness of children and young people in the City.

The aim of the project is for young people to identify barriers to health and happiness and take a lead in developing solutions to prevent avoidable problems affecting health and happiness.

The Health and Happiness group meets once a fortnight and a big citywide Health and Happiness event will be held in autumn 2022.

Picture: Dylan, winner of the Health and Happiness logo competition

## What we think works well?

- Regeneration of the city
- Parks are well maintained
- Illuminations
- Seafront development

## What we think isn't working well?

- Transport links
- Youth Space in the city
- Seaburn Centre Replacement

## What we think works well?

- The people of Sunderland, they are caring
- Hospital facilities are good
- Sunderland Empire
- Culture Hub and the regeneration of workplaces.
- Accessible buses, metro and taxis
- Stack and the seafront

## What we think isn't working well?

- We lost people and jobs through Covid
- Traffic jams and road works
- Not enough accessible social, seasonal and cultural events
- Public toilets
- We would like an ice rink
- No beach wheelchairs yet

## What we think works well?

- There are good places to eat out
- Good shopping in city centre
- Winter Gardens/Library is nice
- Thompson Park is a nice park
- The beaches are nice
- The hospital facilities are good

## What we think isn't working well?

- There is a lot of litter
- Homelessness
- Lack of greenery
- Would like more soft play's and trampoline parks
- Transport - better bus services and extend metro service
- Would like more festivals for young people
- Drug and alcohol use
- Could do with more variety of shops.
- More youth provision needed

# Early Help Girls and Boys

## **What we think works well?**

Sunderland has a great history behind it which is remembered through the glass centre and museum.

The beach area is now a nice place to go

## **What we think isn't working well?**

Littering is a big problem

Limited access to clubs due to expense

Town centre does not have enough for teenagers

# Health and Happiness

## What we think works well?

- The new wild flowers in the City
- The art put up in the City centre

## What we think isn't working well?

- Public hygiene. Smoking in public spaces causing passive smoking. Dog dirt on the paths and grass. Not enough bins.
- Public health – problem of mental health problems – long waiting time to receive support.
- Anti-social behaviour. Impacts on older people's negative perceptions of all young people.

# LGBTQ+ Group

## What we think works well?

- Engagement LGBTQ+ group established
- Statutory education in schools
- More awareness around identity

## What we think isn't working well?

- Accessible Toilets
- Use of pronouns
- Teachers telling us about sex should be experienced workers
- Support for parents of LGBTQ+ young people

# Improvements

- City Centre Youth Club
- Ping Pong in the Bridges
- A social space for LGBTQ+ young people
- Replacement for the Seaburn Centre
- More litter bins and have them emptied often.
- Nice shops, parts of town centre look really bad.
- More accessible social spaces for teenagers like internet cafes
- Metro should be extended
- More quality street art
- Permanent Ice Rink
- More work experiences for young people
- Knowing where to go to get help

# Social Media



Twitter: [Sunderland Youth Voice \(@tfcyouthvoice\) / Twitter](#)

Facebook: [Sunderland Youth Voice | Facebook](#)

Instagram: [Sunderland Youth Voice \(@tfcyouthvoice\) • Instagram photos and videos](#)

**We are happy to take any  
questions?**

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