

# Care Experienced Youth Voice

December 2023 - February 2024

**Middlesbrough's Participation Team facilitates open, safe, and inclusive spaces for care experienced young people to tell us what is important to them. We capture this information and support them to tell you so you can improve the support they and others receive.**

**We support our care experienced young people/adults to be engaged in a variety of different ways.**

## **'We Matter' (Middlesbrough's Children in Care Council)**

- Care experienced young people aged 11 - 16 years meet fortnightly at Easterside Hub 17:00 - 18:30pm.
- Members include five young people in foster care, one young person in residential care and our five Care Ambassadors.
- They have fun, have a voice and create events to hear from their care experienced peers
- They share their views with key decision makers who act on what they say and positively change services to meet their needs
- They will support teams to act on what they say and help monitor the 'You Said, We Will, We Did' reporting tool

## **Older Care Experienced Young People**

- We have five older care experienced young adults who have volunteer roles as Care Ambassadors. Three attend the 'You Matter to Us' - Corporate Parenting Board
- They have established a Care Ambassador Forum and will invite older care experienced people to join them, to have a voice and create events for their peers
- The Care Ambassadors support the work of 'We Matter' and the many other engagement activities that take place with young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and the fortnightly Youth Council

### **The groups are supported by**

- **Kathy Peacock - Voice and Influence Manager**
- **Laurie Hunter - Communications and Engagement Officer**
- **Susie Blood - Democratic Services Officer**
- **Kelly Cowie - Independent Reviewing Officer (CiCC) and Youth Voice Practice Lead**
- **Adam Hart - CAMHS Head Start Apprentice and Care Ambassador**
- **Holly Sharp - Care Ambassador**
- **Caitlin O'Connor - Care Ambassador**
- **Jacob Green - Care Ambassador**
- **Alisha James - Care Ambassador**

# 'We Matter'

**December 2023**

We went bowling to say thank you for all their hard work



They held their Christmas party at the Riverside Stadium



**January 2024**

**9th Jan** - We welcomed them back after the Christmas break. They told us they really liked the Christmas party as it was fun, they saw old friends and their respite foster carers. They came up with ideas of what they would like to do as a group in 2024 - Cooking, budgeting, create an independence checklist and go to the theatre.

**23rd Jan** - Rachel Harston (Middlesbrough accounting officer) came to talk with them about personal finances - how to budget and asking them if they know how much things cost - TV Licence, rent etc

**February 2024**

**6th Feb** - Kelly Cowie and her colleague Helen Carling ran a session with the group looking at how they get involved in their Child Looked After review meeting and get their ideas on how to make the meetings better A guide for young people will be created as a result of what they told us.



# Older Care Experienced Young People/Adults

## December 2023

- Attended the 'We Matter' groups
- The Care Ambassadors supported the Participation Team with the engagement sessions at the special schools in Middlesbrough
- Helped set up the room for the 'We Matter' Christmas party and made sure all the young people had a great time
- Joined the Youth Council for their Christmas meal

## January 2024

- Attended the 'We Matter' groups
- The Care Ambassadors supported the Participation Team with their engagement sessions at the special schools in Middlesbrough

24th Jan - Interviewed candidates for the Director of Children's Care post

24th Jan - Five older care experienced young adults met with the Care Ambassadors to hear all about the wonderful work they do. The group decided they wanted to create another Forum so they and others can have a voice. The first meeting will be held on the 13th February



30th Jan - The Care Ambassadors, the five young adults who are going to attend the new Forum and two older members of 'We Matter' met with their Corporate Parents to talk more about the Pledges that have been made. An action plan has been created to make sure decision makers act on what they have said.



31st Jan - Helped deliver a slot during the Mandatory Children's Services Induction session, where they explained their roles as a Care Ambassadors

# Care Experienced Youth Voice

## Over the next few months we plan to ...

- Continue meeting with Corporate Parents and monitor progress with the Pledges
- Continue to work with the 'We Matter' and put on events to engage with more Children Looked After
- Engage with more older care experienced young people through the Forum and encourage them to become Care Ambassadors
- Have all our care experienced young people/adults set up as volunteers
- Create ASDAN awards to provide accreditation for their work and the young people they work with
- Work with the Commissioning team to create 'Young Commissioners'
- Meet more care experienced young people who live in residential care
- Involve 'We Matter' and the Care Ambassadors to take part in the Regional Children in Care Council work, attend the conference on the 3rd April and go on the residential 12-14th April



For more information:  
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