

Care Experienced Youth Voice

February - March 2025

Middlesbrough Council facilitates open, safe, inclusive spaces and opportunities for people to tell us what is important to them. We capture this information and support them to tell key decision makers, so improvements are made to the support they and others receive.

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

Care Ambassadors

- Two care experienced young adults who are co opted onto the 'You Matter to Us' Corporate Parenting Board. These roles and roles for general volunteering, can involve our care experienced young people to have an opportunity to support all the engagement activities with cared for and care experienced young people. They also have opportunities to support the wider engagement work - Working with students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, the Youth Council and Parent/Carer engagement as part of the Family Hubs. We currently have two Care Ambassador vacancies and three Volunteers.

'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 six young people.
- 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.

'Voice, Influence and Change'

- Older care experienced young adults 16-25 years meet monthly at the Live Well centre 17:00-18:30pm.
- Members includes three care experienced adults.

The groups are supported by:-

Kathy Peacock - Voice and Influence Manager

Adam Hart - Care experienced volunteer

Caitlin O'Connor - Care experienced volunteer

Abiola Dodo- Non care experienced adult volunteer for We Matter

Care Ambassadors and Volunteers

- The two care experienced young adults who have been Care Ambassadors for nearly two years have ended their involvement, to allow two more care experienced young adults to have this opportunity. The roles are currently being advertised and if interested they have been asked to write why they want the role and what they think they could offer. The deadline for returns is the 4th April.
- Adam one of the volunteers will give the Corporate Parents a statistical update of our achievements over the past year.
- Caitlin who continues to volunteer for us, will support the new care ambassadors to find their feet in their new role.

'We Matter'

- The group has worked on creating a fun Easter activity event for cared for young people and a separate event for children who foster. These events are being supported by the fostering and the Independent Reviewing service.
- During the group in March they were asked their views on the best way we can communicate with them - They said, to have consistent social workers, talk to care ambassadors and to be sent a comic style newsletter telling them about opportunities.

'Voice, Influence and Change'

- We have arranged a fun event on the 9th April where we are going to Level X and going for food afterwards. We can chat with the young adults and tell them more about the Voice, Influence and Change group.

Current Plans for 2025

Themes for the year · Safe and stable homes, Opportunities to succeed, Support to be healthy and happy, A strong sense of identity and connection, Direct input into their plans and the Development of services for them.

1.

Voice, Influence and Change (V.I.C) group - Monthly, first Wednesday of every month.

- V.I.C Social events - Once every two months. First one on the 9th April
- Care Leavers Week - 27th - 31st October 2025 - To include Scream Factory and a celebration activity.
- More activities to be decided as more young adults join the group

2.

We Matter:

- Easter activity events - 16th April
- Regional CiCC residential -25th-27th April
- May activity event - 27th May
- Football event -25th July (to include with older care experienced young people)
- Picnic in the Park - 5th August
- Halloween party - 30th October
- Christmas Party - 10th December