

Rotherham Looked After Children's Council & Lil' LAC CLUB

Update Report for April 2019 - Corporate Parenting Panel

Summary

The LAC Council and Lil' LAC Club have been busy having fun, socialising and working together achieving fabulous results by continuing to help shape Rotherham Services through working on 2 new LAC Voice campaigns, A) 'Caring Language' Campaign to challenge and change Care System Jargon and B) 'Free Leisure Pass' Campaign, to acquire leisure passes for looked After and leaving care young people 13+. The LACC have engaged in a co-production workshop to inform Child Friendly Rotherham and are preparing to deliver 'Total Respect' Training for Corporate Parents. The group has also shared their good practice in changing policy and practice in Rotherham through their 'Precious Things' DVD being shown at Sheffield Film Festival, and continue to search for funding to support the LAC Council weekly sessions. The LIL LAC CLUB have welcomed Sharon Kemp (CEX) & Tina Hohn (Virtual School) to their fun packed sessions, making puppets, game playing, music and dancing. The numerous experiences and opportunities offered to young people at the LAC Council and Lil' LACC are specifically designed to increase social capital, self-awareness and self-esteem, to foster resilience and support better outcomes for our vulnerable young people. Here are some of the things that we have been doing to achieve these outcomes that we would like to share with you;

LAC Council Voices Shaping Services

Caring Language Campaign - Challenging Care System Jargon

The Rotherham LAC Council engaged in an exciting piece of research around the language that is used within social care alongside 13 other local authorities. The young people were asked what words they didn't like and which they were okay with. This research informed a glossary called '*language that cares*' produced by the Adolescent and Children's Trust (TACT). The research by TACT includes the Rotherham LAC Council quotes and was also published in Children & Young People Now magazine. Here are some points around the word PEP (personal education plan) that Rotherham Looked After Children's Council shared with TACT:-

"It's not just about the word PEP itself, it is how it is used in school. Some teachers openly announce in class that the LAC Student has a PEP meeting and this will arouse the interest from the rest of the students, leaving the looked after student to explain what it is and why they have it" Adorabella Rotherham LAC Council

"I don't want everyone to know I'm in care..... it makes me feel different to everyone else in school so when the teacher says I have a PEP she is telling them I am different and I am looked after. It's embarrassing having to explain when I didn't want them to know in the first place" Rotherham LAC Council

The language that cares research has highlighted not only words that young people don't like in Rotherham but also generated discussions into how these words are used by social workers, foster carers and teachers. LAC Council are presenting the main points of their '*Caring Language*' Campaign to change Social Care Language to Ian Walker (Head of Service) and Cllr Gordon Watson (LAC Champion) at the Corporate Parenting Panel. The '*Caring Language*' Campaign aims:

- 1) To raise awareness of Rotherham LAC Council's recommendations for changes in 'Care Language'
- 2) To change the current use of Care Language by professionals in Rotherham
- 3) To stop teachers and other professionals from exposing students' care status to peers or other parents.

Some of these changes will include:

My Plan instead of 'Care Plan'
Family Activity Base instead of 'Contact Centre'
Family Time instead of 'Contact'
(My Name) Review Meeting instead of 'LAC Review'
My Name instead of 'LAC or Foster Child'

LAC 'Free Leisure Pass' Campaign

Rotherham LAC Council have renewed their call for a 'Free Leisure Pass' for Rotherham Looked After Young People. The PASS would give Looked After Children and Care leavers aged 13 to 21/24 years the opportunity to engage in free leisure activities across the borough. The group discussions have asserted that a free PASS would benefit young people by supporting a healthy lifestyle both physically and emotionally by promoting positive mental health through exercise and social interaction. Plus, a free PASS would foster greater personal independence where young people could afford to engage in Leisure activities with friends making their way to venues on public transport, independent from Foster Carers. Increasing friendships would increase social capital and help protect our young people from poor outcomes.

The group have been discussing the campaign name ahead of the campaign launch.

Child Friendly Rotherham Workshop –

On Wednesday 20th March the LAC Council hosted the Child Friendly Rotherham workshop for young people & delivered by Co-create. Young people formed the interview panel for 4 practitioners who delivered an 'elevator pitch' about the area they are responsible for:

1. All children and young people have a voice and are listened to (Tereasa Brocklehurst)
2. A vibrant borough with age-appropriate, fun things to do (Polly Hamilton)
3. All places in Rotherham to be safe, clean and welcoming (Tom Smith)
4. Bring together and celebrate Rotherham's diverse communities (Ian Stubbs)

The young people then prepared questions for each practitioner and scored how these themes are going 1 = not going anywhere and 5 = made lots of progress. The workshop was also recorded through an illustrator who created young person friendly slides to tell their story.

All information from this workshop will now be analysed and inform an action plan for Child Friendly Rotherham.

Coram Voices – writing competition

4 of our LAC Council members wrote about their personal experiences of 'growing up' in the care system in Rotherham and submitted them to Coram Voices, a writing competition for Looked After and Leaving Care young people. Although none of our young people were shortlisted this year they all proudly received a certificate that they are putting in their memory boxes. Their poetry will be used in the Total Respect training in April.

Total Respect Training

All professional places for the 'Total Respect' training due to be delivered by our LAC Council have now been filled for April. The training will be delivered to a broad mix of Corporate Parents including Social Workers, RMBC Councillors and PA's. The young people continue to develop the content and their delivery and are looking forward to their first training day. Other Total Respect Training days will be released shortly for July.

Sharing our Good Practice

Experts by Experience

The Rotherham LAC Council were proud to share their 'Precious Things' DVD which was co-produced with Rotherham College of Arts & Technology media students and the LAC Council & Lil LAC Club, which was shown at the Sheffield Film Festival in February. The LACC film was shown at Sheffield Hallam University alongside other films under the theme '*experts by experience*' highlighting the voices of vulnerable children in sharing their lived experiences. This was an exciting experience for the young people who were praised by audience members and event staff for their moving film. The group felt very proud to have their work chosen and are looking into the potential to create another DVD to be included in next year's film festival. In addition, the group enjoyed spending the day in Sheffield peace gardens and visiting the Millennium Gallery & Museum. The group felt a sense of independence and empowerment walking around Sheffield city centre and mixing with people from diverse backgrounds.



Fundraising

The LAC Council have received additional funding from CIDON Construction who has agreed to pay for 20 weeks venue hire at Myplace to hold their weekly LAC Council meetings. This welcome funding has come as the LAC Council have grown to 18 young people and the free venues on offer to us are now too small to hold the entire group and staff comfortably.

In addition, the LACC letter to Tesco Rotherham sent last year has finally attracted some attention and Tesco has given the LAC Council £35.00 to purchase refreshment items such as dilute pop and crisps for the group.

Lil' LAC Club -Activities

Our Lil' LAC Club (Lil' LACC) are going from strength to strength, meeting up at the group and building friendships with other LA Children. We continue to actively recruit new members to the LIL LAC Club to give as many children the opportunity to have fun, meet and make new friends and play games together in a safe welcoming environment.

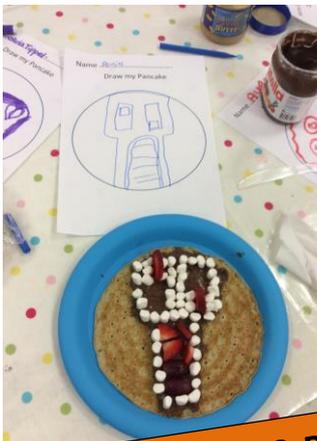


The children have been visited by Tina Hohn (Virtual School) who said she really enjoyed seeing the children play communication games and was pleasantly surprised with how well the children behaved and engaged with each other in this environment.

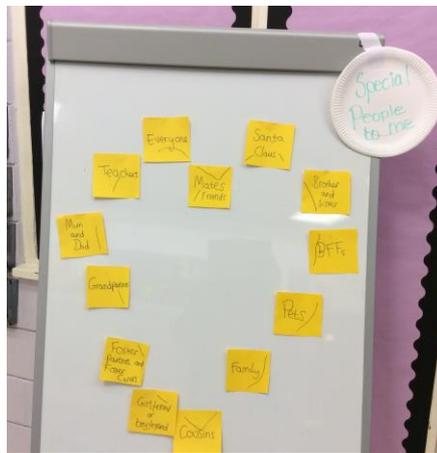
The Lil LAC Club was also visited by Sharon Kemp CEX. On the evening Sharon met the children and characteristically joined in with 'Sun Shines on' Game, musical statues and got stuck in making the children's sandwiches at break time. The children enjoyed playing a host of music based games, hoola hoop games, and being creative making their own puppets to take home.



The children really enjoy the arts and crafts activities and these are not only FUN but have an educational element. For example, the children were asked who were 'special people to me' and worked as a group to remember all these people. Once their list was exhausted the children created a card for that person saying why they are so special. They also made a 'little bag of happiness' for someone special to them. On pancake day the children drew their own pancake designs first then copied them creating their own sticky chocolatey pancakes.



Pancakes by Daniel & Ruby



Special People to me!



Puppet Making



LACC Guests - Young people from the LAC Council and Lil LAC Club would like to thank all of our guests, friends, volunteers and supporters who have visited us. These include:-

Sharon Kemp – Chief Executive RMBC

Tina Hohn – Virtual School

Teresa Brocklehurst, Strategic Co-ordinator, Children, Young People and Families Consortium

Polly Hamilton, Assistant Director Culture, Sport and Tourism

Tom Smith, Assistant Director Community Safety and Street Scene

Ian Stubbs, Community Engagement Coordinator

Cllr Alan Atkin & Chair of Child Friendly Rotherham Board

Claire France Project Officer with South Yorkshire Police

Jane Galloway -Procurement Manager CIDON Construction

Steve Simpson – Director CIDON Construction

LAC Voice, Influence & Participation Volunteers

Thank You All 😊

Contact Name:

Lisa Du-Valle

**LAC Voice, Influence & Participation Lead
Children in Care**

Tel: 01709 822130 or Mob: 07748143388

Email: lisa.duvalle@rotherham.gov.uk



@LACCRotherham



LACC Rotherham