

BRINGING VOICES TOGETHER

LISTEN TO MY 'VOICE' PROGRAMME UPDATE

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Strategic Engagement 2018/19

INCLUSION /INTEGRATED SPECIALIST SERVICES PROJECT—Overview

TO: Provide Strategic/policy and quality improvement advice to providers of services and programs to support children, young people and families where there are challenges due to SEND in Stoke on Trent.

Part of the role is to attend service and multi-agency groups as required to provide advice and guidance or feedback, or information from my work with service users and providers.:

Regular Groups

SEND Strategic Board

Preparation For Adulthood

In addition to the regular groups this year I have attended meetings with or provided updates to :

SENMAS Team; Children and Adult Safeguarding Board, Children With Disabilities Team, Commissioners, New Opportunities Fund, Special Schools, Mainstream Schools, colleges. Education Welfare, Careers, Early Years, Better Together, Children, Young People and Families Partnership Board, PEGIS, SENDIASS., Direct Payments Recruitment R

Additional Outputs

“If you don't ask me yourself, how do I know it is me you want to talk to? “

Develop an advisorygroup of young people for Inclusion and for Children with Disabilities Service

My direct and formal involvement with young people in the past two years with regard to this Programme has been with Watermill School Council, the Milton Youth Group, Seven Stars Primary Schools' Council and the Special Schools' Council. These groups have agreed to be engaged as advisory groups to the programme with regard to services for those with learning needs and/or disabilities. This means I do not need to meet with the same group more than a couple of times a year, and does not mean I conflict with other services, where sadly often, the same subject is brought into play and with little or no communication with the Programme initially. The strategic element is currently being advertised more widely to try to encourage services to celebrate their inclusion and engagement activities and allow us to reduce over consultation of this cohort of children and young people.

In addition I respond to requests to meet with schools, parent groups, pupil leadership groups, social groups, service advisory groups or colleges and speak to young people ad hoc where possible.

With regard to the Children With Disabilities group. I have been able to speak to a number of young people, it is very clear that some young people, and the services that support them, feel that they would not want to engage in that way. Some parents have said they would engage with their young people, but at this time have not come back to me after three months. Most involvement and information about their satisfaction with things around them is gained through informal conversation. However a small group at one of our special schools group is to meet as a one off with the commissioner as soon as I have been able to provide them with the questions they will be asked. In addition feedback and views have been passed to the commissioners of the Direct Payments support service recruitment.

Services maintain that they seek the views of the children and families through evaluation, but I am still seeking evidence of how that is used in practice to develop and change the service. (This does not mean it is not happening, but I have not had the information yet.)A questionnaire was circulated alongside the advertising for the Who Hears Us conference; to the CWD team and to schools and services to enable families to contact the programme direct. However, as expected this has provided limited results.

Touching Base - Communication and Engagement Review and Toolkit

I have met with a total of 270 children and young people over the last 18 months looking at the purpose of engagement, the importance and methodology. This includes looking at their schools/colleges and how they feel included; the role of student councils, role models and representatives;

I have spoken with over 60 parents and carers including the PEGIS and CWD advisory groups, together with parents at schools, governors and foster carers.

A mapping of all the groups to engage young people strategically has been completed, and linked to the empowerment of young people with significant challenges to engage.

A conference was held in September looking at the communication issues parents and services working together for children facing significant challenges, EHCP's / Disabilities/ SEN Support / Children in care and / or care leavers. Looking at what works well and what can be changed. Engagement from strategic managers, specialists and national organisations was clear. 35 people attended to hear and take part in the event. A report will be circulated shortly and will be on the Local Offer 'Listen to My Voice' page before Christmas.

A questionnaire is being developed and will be sent to the SEND Board, special schools, colleges and PFA partners to circulate with responses required by the end of December

The document is almost ready for circulation at draft point and this will take place before the February half term when the final results of the questionnaire are in.

This will, we hope, identify what tools and expertise we have in the city to better enable us to support children and young people and meet their needs for communication resources.

Some Children and Young Peoples' advice to services on communicating well

- ◆ "Listen to people."
- ◆ "Everyone needs to be treated fairly even if you don't like them."
- ◆ "Tell us and each other where things are not going to plan. Mum and dad get mad when they don't hear reasons."
- ◆ "Sometimes my mum/social worker or teacher is not the one who knows what I want."
- ◆ "You need to try to help everyone even if they are not your friend. "
- ◆ "Treat people how you want to be treated. "
- ◆ "Didn't we look at quality standards for this?" *(Yes—on LO Web Page)*
- ◆ "Work with us and for us not at us. "
- ◆ "Talk to me, to who I am, not to what you think I have got wrong with me."



LTMV First Voice Ambassadors are Sarah Bentley and Adele Eaton

First Strategic Voice Ambassadors are Jen Lomas, Ingrid Mather and Anthony Wild

Young Adults Matter and

Feeling Supported, Welcomed, Safe and Happy in Stoke-on-Trent.

Young Adults Matter has joined the other toolkits on the Listen To My Voice Local Offer page and has been used to inform service review, commissioning, Preparation for Adulthood planning and the way forward to work with services and employers to engage our young people and prevent them feeling vulnerable in the workplace.

This work is ongoing and I report to the PFA Steering Group on this element.

The leaflet is being finalised by young people who are providing art work and photographs.



Touching Base. Who 'Hears' Us? event.

Approval was given to use the pictures to report internally on the event, to use within the final toolkit and within the the conference review on the Local Offer Listen To My Voice web page.

Please do not circulate these further.

<p>22.11.18 Listen To My Voice Advisory Group</p>	<p>Friendships and Loneliness Having disabilities and learning difficulties</p> <p>Young Adults Matter – Leaflet Design</p> 		
<p>Introduction 14 young people from the Milton Youth Group to review action from their last meeting with me and discuss Friendships and Loneliness</p>	<p>16 young people engaged. Of those 12 were there the whole time and 4 came in late. The oldest was 25 and the youngest was 13.</p>	<p>Some of the members of the Milton Youth Group and the LTMV Advisory Group</p> <p>I was given permission to share this photo and others as part of the new leaflet for Young Adults Matter due for publication in January, and to celebrate that they are helping the Young Adults Matter Project for the service and are going to take on a short project design the art work for the Leaflet. Feeling Welcomed, Supported, Safe and Happy in Stoke-on-Trent and some poster designs for Friendship posters.</p> 	<p>The young people confirmed their engagement with the Inclusion services, and as Listen To My Voice Advisory group.</p> <p>All the young people who take part in my discussions regularly will receive Young Voice Ambassador or Voice Champion certification and a badge to show that they are happy to pass on the views of others on matters under discussion from time to time.</p>
<p>Do you have Best Friends ?</p>	<p>Does your very best friend live near you?</p>	<p>Why is your best friend special, and how do they make you feel? (12 took part)</p>	<p>How can we help people make good friends when they move around a lot? (12)</p>
<p>Yes - 14</p>	<p>7 – yes 5- no</p> <p>“I cant make friends” 1</p> <p>“No one likes me” -1</p>	<p>“Excited to be with them” “Safe” - all “I can trust them with anything” (11) “They don’t laugh at me when I fancy someone” (3) They tease me and I know they are not bullying me (all) “He helps me when I feel bad” They listen to me (all) “My best friend knows me best of all.” “I don’t have to like the same things as her, she loves me just the same. “ “He hugs me when I am sad and it is not mean.” “we laugh a lot” (all) “I love my friends – they are part of me” “My best friends can help explain things when I find them hard to understand.”</p>	<p>“Let your family know they are important to you” “Use a letter if you cant use a computer. Someone will help you write to your friends. Just ask.” “Show people what it is to be a great mate.” “Look after our friends” “Listen to people when they say they are lonely” “Explain to the people who look after you how your friends are important to you. Ask if they can come to your home/school and visit with you.”</p>
<p>No - 2</p>		<p>How would you feel without your best friends? (All took part)</p>	<p>When is a friend not really a friend</p>
<p>These are some of the comments made by the Milton young people on this particular evening. As part of the group or in conversation with me during the time I was there with them.</p> <p>I would like to thank every single one of you for taking part.</p> <p>I will see you before Christmas with your badges!</p>	<p>“Really lonely.” “Life would be no fun.” “I would not be brave.” “I could not go places because I wouldn’t feel safe.” “Other people would tease us.” “Suicidal.” “No one else understands how I feel the same as him.” “School would be Sxxx!” “It is hard to have a ‘best friend’ because they take time to grow.” “Xxxx could not make people understand him well without me.”</p>	<p>“When they hurt you.” “When they are bullies.” “When they pretend to be nice but really want to laugh at you.” “When they give you drugs.” “When they want you to do things that you should not do.” “When they steal from me.” “When they hurt other people.” “When they kick my dog.” “When they make me feel lonely.” “When they tell the girl I like that I fancy her.”</p>	

In addition, I am covering some additional days working with Ingrid and exploring the reasons why Stoke-on-Trent has so many care leavers not in education, employment or training.

And Finally, If you are planning or reviewing a service, and want to know if I have some input from young, please do let me know. Young people hate being asked the same thing time after time. In addition if you want me to meet with your group of young people or children, do let me know in plenty of time, but ask them first please.