

Participation Report

To: Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee

Meeting Date: 3rd August 2022

From: Participation Team, Safeguarding and Quality Assurance

Electoral division(s): All

Key decision: No

Forward Plan ref: Not applicable

Outcome: An update on the activity of the Participation Service in relation to Children in Care.

Recommendation: The Sub-Committee is recommended to:

- a) Note the contents of the report; and
- b) Raise any queries with the lead officers.

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1. Summary

- 1.1 The Participation Team continues to promote the voice of children and young people in care by offering a variety of opportunities for engagement and feedback, and ensuring action is taken as a result of that feedback.
- 1.2 The summer engagement activities programme for Children in Care (CiC) has been shared, alongside details of the annual art exhibition and CiC awards.
- 1.3 The CiCC enjoyed the opportunity to meet Corporate Parents at the face to face informal Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee in May, and the group is thinking of ways they can take more ownership of the meetings.
- 1.4 The Ideal Workers video has been launched, alongside the Ideal Carers video launched previously. A video explaining the CiCC's Coming into Care Packs has also been created and shared.
- 1.5 The Care Leaver Forum (CLF) is aiming to complete its current project, a Performance based project to give young people in care the opportunity to build confidence and skills in this area, by the end of the summer. Care Leavers are also designing and facilitating a workshop at the Virtual School Conference in late June.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee has requested an update on the work of the Participation Service in relation to Children in Care at each meeting.
- 2.2 This report sets out recent activities of the Participation Service and an update on the work of the Children in Care Council and Care Leaver Forum.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1 The Participation Team continues to promote opportunities for children and young people through regular newsletters, as well as creating event-specific publications to encourage engagement. Recent newsletters have advertised training and mentorship opportunities, encouraged young people to sign up to attend upcoming engagement events, and updated young people on the work of the Young Inspectors group.
- 3.2 The Children in Care Council (CiCC) has been discussing ideas on the annual CiC awards, which will take place in late July. The group has opted for a similar fun day style event to last year, and have decided what activities, entertainment and refreshments they want. Invitations have been sent to Children in Care and carers, and members of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee, and nomination forms have been shared with professionals.
- 3.3 The CiCC has also given their suggestions on the summer engagement events. Activities planned include a visit to a farm, a spy mission challenge, an outdoor adventure day with raft building, canoeing, crate stacking and archery and ice skating. A creative virtual session has also been planned for children and young people who prefer to join online.

- 3.4 The CiCC worked with their PCC counterparts to decide the themes of the annual art exhibition. In addition to the virtual art exhibition, the group has decided to ask children and young people to bring their art entries to the annual awards day, so the artwork can be seen by all attendees at the event.
- 3.5 The CiCC continue to meet in person on a monthly basis to work on their projects and consultation requests, meet professionals and give feedback on services. Recent consultations have included giving feedback on the new Fostering Service logo, and reviewing and adding to screening questions used for potential foster carers.
- 3.6 Members of the CiCC attended the informal Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee in May, and enjoyed the opportunity to meet face to face with Corporate Parents. The CiCC is looking forward to working with the Sub-Committee to make the meeting more child-friendly, and will be discussing and sharing their ideas of how to make sure young people are fully engaged throughout the meeting and are encouraged to take ownership of it. The CiCC would also like to get to know members of the Sub-Committee better and have requested that members complete a proforma, introducing themselves, and summarising their role and areas of focus.
- 3.7 The updated Promise to Children in Care was launched by the Participation Team and CiCC, with copies being shared with frontline practitioners, managers, carers and the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee. The CiCC would like to know how staff and corporate parents will ensure these promises are being met, and plan to seek feedback from frontline practitioners via the Young Inspectors group, and also from corporate parents via the proforma and through discussion at the Informal Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee meeting.
- 3.8 The CiCC have completed their work on the Coming into Care Packs and created a [video](#) to explain why they created the packs and what each contains. Packs are being made available to social work teams who work with children at the point they come into care.
- 3.9 The CiCC, Young Recruiters and Young Trainers completed their ideal worker video project, working with their PCC counterparts to launch a video entitled '[Our Ideal Workers](#)', which will supplement existing recruitment, training and development materials for staff.
- 3.10 Young Recruiters continue to be actively involved in recruitment and were involved in interviews of newly qualified social workers for the ASYE (Assessed and Supported Year in Employment) in June and have been asked to help conduct Open University social work course interviews in July.
- 3.11 The Young Inspectors published their report following their Supervised Contact Centre inspections across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire. A response has been received from the Supervised Contact service and the Young Inspectors will meet to discuss the feedback and agree dates to go back to the centres and review progress against their recommendations.
- 3.12 In May, Young Trainers delivered training to prospective Foster Carers within the Fostering Team's training programme. The young people were supported by the Participation Team to facilitate an activity looking at Foster Carer skills and attributes and went through scenarios with the group on how to help young people settle into new placements. The

Young Trainers were able to show their '[Ideal Foster Carers](#)' video at the training and were happy with the impact it made. The Young Trainers will be facilitating as part of the next course in July.

- 3.13 CLF members have been working closely with the Virtual School to create and deliver their workshop for the Virtual School Conference in late June. After the conference, the Care Leavers intend to create a Care Experience Roadshow, to increase awareness and provide education around the experience of children and young people in care, to help dispel myths and reduce any negative stigma and stereotypes around being in care.
- 3.14 A team of Care Leavers continue to develop their Performing to Change project. Recently they have been supporting young people in drama, song lyric writing and poetry writing workshops, to develop their skills. The team are now looking towards the final event of the project, where young people will get to showcase their skills in a series of short performances.

4. Alignment with corporate priorities

4.1 Environment and Sustainability

There are no significant implications for this priority.

4.2 Health and Care

There are no significant implications for this priority.

4.3 Places and Communities

There are no significant implications for this priority.

4.4 Children and Young People

See wording under Section 3 above.

4.5 Transport

There are no significant implications for this priority.

5. Source documents

5.1 None.