



Re-evaluation for Investing in Children membership

Chester le Street Youth Centre

Chester le Street Youth Centre still offers four nights a week youth provision on a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday as well as offering an all inclusive club for young people with disabilities on a Sunday T-time. I visited the club during a Tuesday evening session which is a project night. All the young people I met with were extremely keen to tell me all about the club.

The staff members continue to be committed to encouraging young people to take a lead role on the development of the centre and their future. There are several opportunities for young people who use the centre to decide on what they want to do at the centre and provisions are based around this process.

This report for Investing in Children Membership will highlight the opportunities young people have, through dialogue at the centre, and changes that occurred because of this dialogue, and also includes some quotes from young people.

Opportunities for Dialogue and Change

Young People Accreditation Activities and Projects

The centre offers young people the opportunity to take part in projects and gain accreditation for the work on a weekly basis.

‘On a Tuesday night most of the young people that come to the centre are working on a project’ Youth Worker

The club offers awards such as youth achievement and gives young people the opportunities to also access funding such as Key Fund and Youth Opportunities Fund.

I spoke with Chelsea, Gemma, Heather, Abbie, Laura, Steph, and Rachael who all attend the Tuesday evening session and told me the following:

‘We have been doing a babysitting course. You answer questions in a group like if the baby started crying or was ill what would you do!! It gives you the options then you decide what to do’

‘We chose to do a babysitting course, it’s really good and we get an award at the end of it’

‘You get to suggest things that you want to do’

‘We have been doing a nail and beauty course as well’

'We asked about doing a sleep over so we are doing a Key Fund application. We had to write letters'

I then spoke with Jordon and Danielle who told me;

'I have sorted out and planned lots of residential. I suggested them and organised them including Edinburgh. We had to find funding and fill out funding forms and ring the train company. We discussed and decided as a group what activities we wanted to do when there. We wanted to check out the 'city of the dead' tour as we have been to Edinburgh before and walked past this tour and thought it looked good so wanted to go on it. I'm working towards my Silver Award' Danielle

'I'm working towards my Bronze Youth Achievement Award. I did a t-shirt designing project with one of the workers. I also make quizzes for the club on the computer. You keep a record of your work and take photos and keep them on file' Jordon

General Youth Club Activities and Projects

The young people told me how they are involved in making decisions about what activities they want to do during youth club sessions.

'I suggested cookery!! So far we have made rock buns and potato wedges with dips'

'We get to go on the decks, play pool and get munch'

'We get to go on trips with the Eddy project'

'We suggested going go karting and we went last week'

'We are also going quad biking soon'

Recommendations for Improvement

As well as the young people telling me about what they have been doing at the centre they were also keen to tell me about any improvements they would like to see happening over the year. These are:

'The centre should be free for us or you could pay to become a member say £2 then you get in free'

'We think the centre should be open on a Friday and Saturday as this is the time when we have nothing to do'

'There is a lot of bullying that goes on here. Lynn is very helpful but there needs to be stricter rules to stop bullying i.e. you get excluded from the centre for a couple of weeks'

'There should be better advertising of the club so more people know about it'

'There are loads of people smoking outside the building now. It's got worse since we started coming. I think there should be more smoking awareness to try to help people quit'

Conclusion

Chester le Street Youth Centre continues to develop and increase the opportunities for young people to have active dialogue and be listened to, and to create activities based on what the young people want.

The young people I met with all felt they are listened to at the centre and were extremely positive about their involvement, and the type of activities the centre provides.

'The workers are easy to talk to'

For these reasons I would like to recommend that Chester le Street Youth Centre continues to be an Investing in Children Member and look forward to hearing about further developments made by the young people at the centre when coming to re-evaluate the project for membership next year.

This report has been endorsed by young people at the centre.

Eleanor Seed
Investing in Children
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