



Re-evaluation for Investing in Children membership

Parkside Community Centre

I visited Parkside Community Centre during a Thursday youth night session and met with the workers and several young people.

The centre offers young people access to youth activities three nights a week.

On a Tuesday evening young people can work towards accreditation including the youth achievement award. On a Wednesday and Thursday night it is general youth club nights where various activities take place.

The centre also has a management committee in which young people have seats on and where they have the same voting rights as adults.

For the purpose of this report I met with the following young people:

Sam (13), Kayly (16), Vicky (15), Diane (13), Lauren (13), Victoria (13), Callum (13), John (14), David (14) and Jordan (12).

We spoke about the centre, how they are involved in it and the type of projects/activities that usually take place:-

Opportunities for Dialogue and Change/Young People's Comments

Comments Book

The comments book still continues to offer young people the opportunity to have their say about what they really think about the centre.

'This still happens we tell them what we want and they go away and put this into a programme for us' Sam, Kayly, Vicky and Diane

'We write in it every night as we go out' John, David and Jordan

'The workers read it' John, David and Jordan

DJ Workshops

These workshops were introduced on request of young people asking for them.

'They were on during the six weeks holidays' Vicky

Residential

The young people told me about a few residentials that had taken place over the past year.

One of the residentials that took place was part of the virtual babies project that some of the girls have been involved in.

'We had a residential with the virtual babies. We wanted to do more stuff so we asked to do this project' Diane

'It was really hard as you had to feed the babies all the time and they cried lots especially the drug addicts' Kayley

The other residential that took place was with the management committee.

'We had to put together a yearly plan' Diane

'We had to say what we wanted to do, what we wanted to change etc..' Sam

'The 1st week I went to the club I asked if I could go away on the residential because it was in a few weeks time and they let me go and I was really surprised. We went to Scotland and we did lots of activities' Lauren

Homework Club

A homework club runs from the IT suite at the centre. Young people have access to this after school.

Management Committee

Young People have places on the management committee.

'We have the same voting rights as everyone else'

'We talk about how the groups are going, the police usually come too!'

'It's really good because we get to have a say we have a meeting the first Tuesday of every month' Diane and Hayley

The baby Think it over project

The ten week project was organised for the young people upon request.

'We asked for this project'

'We got to an OCN level one for taking part and some of us are working towards bronze and silver youth achievement awards'

'We got to go on a residential as part of the project'

'We asked to go to PANDA after the baby project and have been'

Session Planning

'Before we asked how sessions should be delivered because we weren't happy'

'We got fed up of the ways in which things were run so we talked about it etc and now if they do things like quiz's they are done different and more fun'

'Before we had a debate and the police came in'

'They take us in groups and we talk about it and come up with ideas' Lauren, Victoria and Callum

'We sit around a table and we say what we want to do' John, David and Jordan

Go Karting

This project is just about to start and came about when a young girl accessing the project asked if something could take place. The project is a six weeks programme where the young people get to make their own kart and learn to drive them etc..

'We asked to do this project '

'We were going to Whordon Law and you get to make your own cart'

Other Activities

'We get to do football on Thursday nights in the courts' John, David and John

'We get to do drama and forum theatre etc..' Sam, Kayly, Vicky and Diane

'You get to do quick cricket, badmington, table tennis, air hockey etc..' John, David and John

'You do different stuff its better than sitting in the house' Kayly

'We sometimes do dance on a Thursday'

'It's a place to go when you're bored and it helps you stay out of trouble'

'Sometimes we go on the computers'

'I've asked for someone to come in after Christmas to teach us about drugs etc..'

'We got a group and we have a project to work on. The last one was about Seaham. We had to research and find out different leisure facilities for children etc.'

Other Comments

'If you say something they will do something about it' Victoria, Lauren and Callum

'We all think that we are listened too' Sam, Kayly, Vicky and Diane

'They all listen to you; we definitely get to have our say' John, David and Jordan

I was extremely impressed with my visit to the youth club. The children and young people all seemed at home in the centre and there seemed to be a lot of excellent work going on. It was certainly evident that there was dialogue and change happening and that all the children enjoyed and benefited from the sessions.

I have no hesitation but to recommend renewal of its Investing in Children Membership. This report has been endorsed by young people accessing the club.

Eleanor Seed
Investing in Children
November 2007