

Participation Report 2018/2019

Participation With Young People With Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in The Royal Borough of Greenwich

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ANNUAL REPORT: PARTICIPATION WITH YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES IN THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF GREENWICH



CONTEXT

1. GENERAL PARTICIPATION IN ROYAL GREENWICH

Royal Greenwich Children's Services is committed to ensuring the views of children and young people across the borough consistently inform service development and improvement and children and young people are able to have their voice heard.

There are a number of forums for children and young people's participation in Greenwich including the Greenwich Children and Young Peoples Council, Children in Care Council, Care Leavers forum and the ACE groups (for young people with special educational needs and disabilities).

2. ACE

The structure of ACE ensures that we continue to represent a diverse range of young people with SEND in Royal Greenwich.

The groups have continued to meet monthly to look at issues from RBG, along with issues they have identified themselves as being important to children and young people in Greenwich with SEND.

OUR APPROACH

ACE groups are held in seven different schools and DSP's within Royal Greenwich – consulting with a total of 35 young people on average each month. All the different schools have supported RBG in this venture with identifying students, accommodation and support staff who are involved directly in sessions.

The Participation team agreed with school to deliver 4 initial sessions to support the groups starting, the groups will then be taken over by an identified member of staff from the specific school whilst maintaining communication with the participation team to ensure a two way flow of information for consultations.

This enables the growth of different ACE groups ensuring that we continue to have a wide representation of children and young people with SEND within the borough.

Each School has;

- Had an individual meeting with the participation team, to discuss this happening
- Half day training on Participation and capturing the voice of the child

- Identified staffing to support this taking place
- Expressed an interest in supporting a group within their setting to be part of the ACE network of participation groups

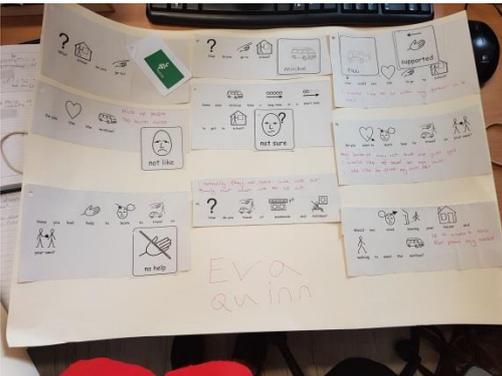
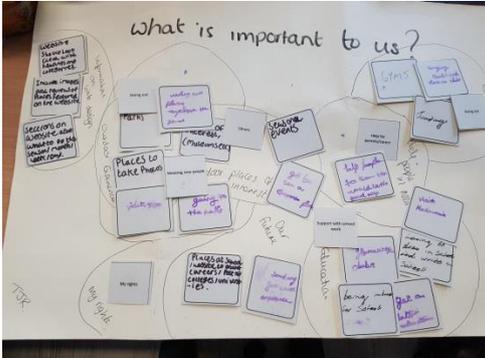
Sessions are flexible and interactive for the young people, so that all young people can contribute in a creative and open way that meet their individual communication and learning needs.

ACE has been involved in various consultations this year:

- Short Breaks re-commissioning
- The Local Offer
- The design and build of the new Royal Greenwich community directory
- Home to School travel
- Good Mental Health
- Designing publicity for Short Breaks Brochure

Sessions are designed to break down these topics into a series of tangible activities that the children and young people can understand.

Examples of this can be seen in the following table:

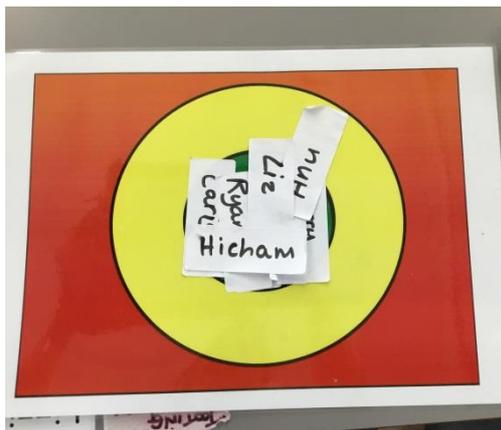
| Picture | Activity description |
|---|--|
|  <p>The image shows several hand-drawn cards on a white sheet of paper. The cards feature simple line drawings of a house, a school, a bus, and a person. Some cards have text such as 'not like', 'not sure', and 'to help'. The name 'Eva Quinn' is written in pink at the bottom of the sheet.</p> | <p>Activity to enable individual young people to discuss their current method of home to school transport and what their aspirations are for the future.</p> |
|  <p>The image shows a hand-drawn mind map on a white sheet of paper. The central title is 'what is important to us?'. The mind map branches out into several categories, each with a sticky note: 'Places to take them', 'Places to go', 'Education', 'Help people', 'SMS', 'Museum', 'Places to take them', 'Places to go', 'Education', 'Help people', 'SMS', 'Museum'. The sticky notes contain various ideas and feedback related to these categories.</p> | <p>Feedback given to the Design team managing the new look of the All Services Community website (which will include the Local Offer).</p> |



A talking mat based activity to enable young people to show what they believe is important and not important to them to be included on the Local Offer website



The new look Short Breaks Brochure – artwork done by members of the CPA ACE group.



An evaluation tool for Young People to communicate what they thought about the session, and how it worked for them.

3. WHO HAS TAKEN PART?

The ACE group currently has 40 young people as members. Membership to the ACE groups has grown due to another school signing up to take part. The participation team actively approach different settings to increase the range of diversity amongst ACE group members.

All young people live in Greenwich and are aged 12-25 with varying levels of SEND.

Group members of ACE have varying levels of communication and learning needs. All sessions are adapted to the needs of each group. Consultations are adjusted based on the needs of the groups.

For example when consulting on the Buddy Scheme the team looked at which groups would have young people that are eligible under social care to receive a personal assistant and focused on consulting with these young people around what they thought would qualities they felt would make a good personal assistant. For the remaining groups we looked at what they qualities they thought made a good teaching assistant. This ensured that for each group the consultation was meaningful for them.

When consulting on the buddy scheme we adapted the way in which we engaged with young people to ensure that we could work with their communication needs. With Charlton Park Academy we used talking mats (see image above) and a large cut out of a body to illustrate a person. When consulting with Shooters Hill learning support students we were able to have a table discussion with young people writing down on a person shaped cut out what qualities were important to them in a TA. The groups were also able to rank what qualities they felt were more important than others.

As of September of 2018 ACE groups are in the below Secondary settings;

- Charlton Park Academy
- Shooters Hill – Entry (students in mainstream setting with specialist provision)
- Shooters Hill- Additional learning support (students in mainstream setting with added learning support)
- Willow Dene
- The John Roan DSP
- Hallie Academy ASD DSP
- Kings Park (specialist

4. HOW WE RECORDED OUR INFORMATION

We record information from our consultations in a number of ways.

| Method | Picture Description |
|--------------------------|--|
| <p>“The Book”</p> |  <p>In the past we have recorded the purpose and outcome of each session in a large book for the group of young people to review. This helps the young people recall what we have previously covered in sessions and is an accessible record of the meetings for them.</p> <p>The Book includes photographs, symbols, and pieces of “work” from the sessions.</p> <p>We now record information in a smaller version of the book that we are able to transport easily to groups, whilst ensuring that all information is still accessible to all young people.</p> <p>Recording sessions in a smaller size also enables us to show professionals both within and external to Royal Greenwich the great work that ACE groups have done and the different ways in which young people’s voices are gained.</p> |
| <p>Session write-ups</p> | <p>During the session facilitating staff take notes and photographs of what the young people say or create, and formally record this as a session report following the date of the meeting. IPADS are now being used within the session for feedback and to get pictures and records of the activity.</p> |
| <p>Wiki</p> | <p>Our Wiki has been created with the ACE groups and is now available to view on the Greenwich Local Offer Website. The Wiki allows us to record the great work the ACE groups have done in a creative and accessible way.</p> |

The Consults were we gained the with highest views were;

- All Services Hub (34 views over 2 consults)
- Futureversity (Supporting how they can engage with more CYP with a special educational need and/ or disability) (25 views)

Below is a list of the consultations that took place and the number of views that was obtained;

- Royal Borough of Greenwich Local Offer website (20)
- Short breaks strategy/brochure (21)

- Futureversity (25)
- What is ACE (Introduction session) (20)
- You said, we did 2018 (26)
- ACE wiki (21)
- Home/school transport (22)
- All Services Hub (2 rounds of consults) (34)
- Mental Health staff training Power Point (4)
- Leisure centre online survey (22)
- Hopes and Dreams (22)

5. WHAT DID WE FIND OUT THIS YEAR?

| Topic | Key Findings |
|---|--|
| All Services Hub (new website encompassing Local offer and adults community directory) | What did they say? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people feedback on the colours and icons they wanted for the new website the design of the website • Members spoke about what key icons should be in the main page of the website. • Members' feedback that the signpost symbol for the local offer was confusing. • Group members discussed how accessible the website was and suggested ways to make it more inclusive such as what the colour scheme could be and how colours were used on icon images. |
| Short Breaks | What did they say? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people told commissioners what activities they would like to see on offer in Greenwich as part of Short Breaks • Young people said they would like to have more activities outside in the community. • ACE group members designed art work to be included in the new Short Breaks brochure • Young people feedback that there should be more choice over what they get to do while on a short break |
| Home to School Travel | What did they say? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was important that they felt safe on their way to school and home • Young people said that wanted to learn how to get on public transport • Young people spoke about what was important to them about their current method of getting to school. • Some young people feedback that the school bus was important to them as they felt safe. • Some members felt that they wanted to learn how to travel independently but didn't know who to ask for help. |
| Good Mental Health | What did they say? |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people from Kings Park produced a presentation for professionals around what support they felt they would need in order to promote their good mental health • The group members shared the importance of being able to trust the professional that they were talking to. • Young people shared what bad support looked like to them and offered suggestions on how professionals can support other young people with promoting good mental health. |
|--|--|

6. WHAT DID/WILL WE DO?

| Topic | What we did |
|------------------------------|---|
| All Services Hub | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All information was passed onto the design team and steering group and has been incorporated as part of the new look. • Icon image colours were changed to make it easier for young people. • Local offer symbol was changed on the main hub page • |
| Short Breaks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on what types of activities young people wanted to take part in on a short break was included into the service specification tender document sent to providers. • Participation and engagement with service users and their families was added as an outcome to the contract monitoring forms that all short break providers need to complete. |
| Home to School travel | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All work done by the ACE groups was passed on to staff that are working on the new Royal Borough of Greenwich Home to School Transport Policy. |
| Good Mental Health | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presented to existing teachers/SENCO's/TA's who feedback that – they found it really interesting. Agreed that the young people should be the experts in their own care. • The presentation has been uploaded to the Local Offer website Link can be found here |

7. ANALYSIS

What went well?

All of the ACE groups run well, and plans made last year have ensured that we now reach a wider cohort of Young People across the spectrum of SEND. This has been done by ensuring that the ACE groups have members with a range of SEND (assured by being based in a range of mainstream/ special units and special schools) Running sessions on site has meant that it is easy to access information about the Young People's communication and learning needs from their teachers thus enabling us to make sessions more accessible and appropriate for the members.

Young People's input was also recognised formally in the Borough's "Do the right thing awards" (for more detail see achievements section)

A member of the ACE groups was nominated and won the coveted Diana Award for the amazing contribution he has made with ACE. Hicham won the Diana award for his dedication to ACE and his promotion of the importance of capturing Youth Voice within Local Government. Hicham started as a member of ACE and in the last year became a co-facilitator of the group, using technology to keep up to date with consultation topics and ensuring that all young people had the opportunity to contribute in sessions.

Young people from ACE attended a national event on SEND participation hosted in London by the Council for Disabled Children this day brought together individuals and participation groups from around England to learn about why having a voice matters, discuss their experiences of participation, and inspire each other to get involved in decision-making.

ACE members spent the day talking to other young people and attending workshops hosted by the CDC. Young people feedback that they had a “Super” day and they enjoyed being with ACE outside of the classroom.

We now have a joint co-produced Participation Strategy with the commissioning team which outlines the different groups that work on children and young people participation in the borough as well as outlining what Greenwich is committed too for engagement and participation for children and young people.

Over the past academic year we have gained a total of 237 views which is an improvement of the previous year in which 211 views from young people were gained.

The ACE groups took part in 11 different consultation activities (2017/2018 – 10 consultations)

An area of improvement last year was in feeding back changes and decisions made to young people after discussion with RBG. This year we improved by feeding back information to 130 out of 237 young people which is an increase of 8% more young people approx.

What could we improve on?

There is some work to be done on improving the feedback mechanism to young people who have been involved in participation work to let them know what happened with what they told us. This is important to ensure that young people see the value of the consultation work and are encouraged to participate in the future.

To continue to do link work with the commissioned participation service in Greenwich, by ensuring that where possible young people can transition between youth voice groups. To develop a youth voice leadership group this will sit under the participation action group. Ensuring that young people from across all the youth voice groups are part of the decision making process and can set agendas for consultations at a more strategic level.

There continues to be challenges with RBG participation team being able to step out of schools as some schools due to staff shortages are unable to take over the ACE groups after the initial 4 sessions. Alternatives to monthly meetings should be looked at as a way in which to overcome this and will be part of developmental plans for the coming year.

The Big Book that was used to record information and outcomes on sessions has been replaced with smaller versions- this enables the participation team to bring to external events to demonstrate the work

of the ACE groups as well as provide a method to showcase the tools used to capture the voices of young people.

The Wiki will continually be updated and refreshed so to ensure that it is kept up to date with latest consultations and groups. This will be developed with young people from ACE groups on a regular basis.

8. ACHIEVEMENTS

- Completion of Wiki - an online accessible tool which enables the service to be able to record and capture work done by ACE groups. The wiki was co-developed with ACE group members. The ACE wiki can be found on the Greenwich local offer on the ACE page.



- Young people from ACE attended a National SEND celebration event held by the Council for Disabled Children and participated in developing a national strategy on Youth Voice
- The achievements of the ACE group were formally recognised, when group members were nominated for “Do the right thing” award, and were invited to the ceremony. One group member won disabled young person of the year and the other group member won for his resilience to barriers.
- Successfully ran an end of term party for all ACE group members to encourage young people to get to know one another from different groups.
- Young people from ACE asked to present the work that they have done to Council members in the Woolwich Town Hall. This led to a member of ACE being invited to spend a day shadowing the Leader of the Council so that he could learn more about how council mechanisms operate.
- A young person winning prestigious Diana award and attending the awards ceremony.



- ACE members taking part in the re-commissioning of the Participation service for RBG which resulted in a more diverse youth interview panel. Young people successfully fully took part in the process engaging with potential providers and giving their opinion as part of the evaluation to the commissioning team. The collective young people's choice won the contract.
- End of term summer party- young people were presented with certificates of Participation by the Senior Deputy of Inclusion, Learning and Achievement.



9. OTHER PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES

GYPC

ACE will be working with GYPC on the delivery of their annual event, the Greenwich Young People's Conference which tackles discrimination.

Re-commissioning of the Participation Service

This year members of ACE worked alongside young people from GYPC and CICC to interview and score providers bidding for the RBG participation service contract

Young Commissioners Project

This year we have continued to work closely with the Commissioning team in Children's Service in the development of the Young Commissioners Project.

This project has recruited 8 young people from across Greenwich to be involved in the whole commissioning process across children's services.

This is a great opportunity to ensure that children and young people with SEND inform commissioning across Greenwich.

NEXT STEPS

- Plan in partnership with the young people in ACE what their focus for the next year will be
- To work with the commissioned providers and the providers forum for other participation activities to ensure that they are confident in making services inclusive to young people with SEND including the main contract provider for Greenwich young peoples council (GYPC) and The Children in Care Council (CICC.)
- Continue to develop links with other participation forums for young people across Greenwich
- Review model of ACE – Currently no settings are self-managing ACE groups. Systems have been put in place for this to happen but due to resources this model has not yet taken shape. Further development needs to take place to review if systems are sufficient for settings and ensure they do not take too much time for school staff.
- Support two identified members who have left school to continue participation work as ACE leads with GYPC