

Children in Care Council

Corporate Parenting Report January 2024

The Children in Care Council (CICC) was previously run by Open Door until October 2023. It is now run by the Participation and Engagement Officer, Carly Banks (Thurrock Children's Services). The first meeting was held on 29th November 2023 where we discussed the purpose of the group and how we think it should be run going forward.

We have 10 members who are part of the whatsapp group and of those, 6 are active members attending meetings.

We have decided to merge our group with the "Thurrock Young Voices " group who are open to all young people aged 11+ who have a Social Worker, Support Worker or Personal Advisor. Young voices had 14 members (some members crossed over both groups) The merge brings the total number of members to 19.



What are the benefits to merging the groups?



We can give more young people an opportunity to have their say, regardless of whether they are in care or living with their family which makes us more of an inclusive group.

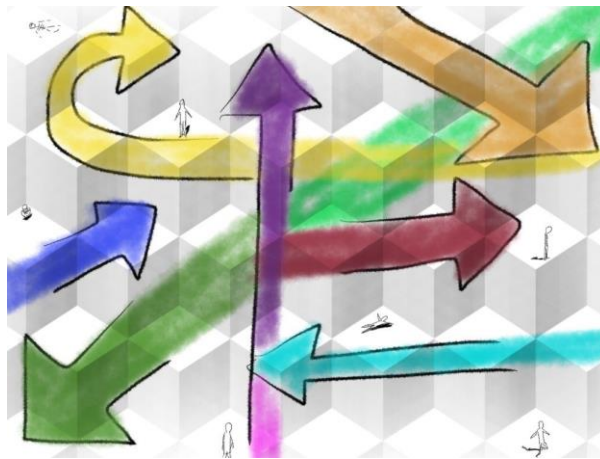
We can have a group free of labels given to us by the reason we have a Social Worker or Support Worker ie Child in Care, Care Leaver etc.

We can expand our group, meet new people and make new friends

We can achieve more together! We have worked on the same projects but in different groups. Some of our members have been part of both groups which makes things repetitive.

This group is for all young people, however, if we are in care, we will still be able to separately have our say on things that affect only children in care.

The journey so far...



- Both groups agreed on how the group should be run and that the CICC will adopt the group name 'Thurrock Young Voices'
- Co-Chairs have been agreed, (one from each of the original groups) with their individual roles identified. Meetings will be planned together, with an introduction of young people presentations.
- Both groups have come up with rules and expectations for members and the purpose of the group going forward, including goals for the year ahead
- All current members (active or not) have been invited to join the new whatsapp group.
- All future meetings to be held at the Tilbury Youth Hub, Brennan Road - this will improve the ability for young people to join virtually and also allow for some fun and games outside of the meeting time. Meeting time has also been extended.
- Member packs will be designed by the group which includes a t-shirt and hoodie with Young Voices Logo (in line with Youth Cabinet)

- Young Voices arranged a Christmas slumber party for members to meet and socialise.

Young Voices Christmas Slumber Party

Young Voices came up with the idea of planning and hosting an event for young people over the Christmas period. The vision was a slumber party / movie night with games and food, where all were invited to dress in Pyjamas or Christmas jumpers.

This was a great opportunity to introduce the members of CICC and Young Voices and also promote the group with other young people.

17 Young People attended on 22nd December and it was a really fun afternoon. Two of our IROs came and joined in some of the games too!

Members of both groups introduced themselves to everyone and explained what happens in the groups and how they can become members.

Here are some photos from the event (some identities have been protected).







Things we would like to work on in 2024...

To support the Corporate Parenting Committee meeting to be more young person friendly

- Young Voices to be first on the agenda
- Authors of reports to consider the language used in reports and meetings and whether a summary would be better for young people attending
- To consider the structure / formality of the meeting and if Young Voices need to be present for the entire meeting
- Suggestion for CPC Chair and another member to meet with Young Voices to discuss how this and other ideas could be achieved.

More of our goals for 2024-

- To bring Back the 'Power of Participation' Training for workers (Run by young people)
- More activities with workers involved - football/ sports suggested
- Two big events for Young People per year, like 'Young Voices at Grangewaters'
- Young Voices Member packs including t-shirt and hoodie to be created
- Create a Young Inspectors programme