

## **CITIZENSHIP WEEK**

### **1. Purpose of the Report**

To set out

- What children and young people told us during Citizenship Week

and

- The structure and outcome of children and young people's involvement in Citizenship week

### **2. Introduction/Background**

The Children's Trust have a responsibility to listen to children, young people and their families and to use their views to shape what the Trust do to improve outcomes. To provide opportunities for children and young people to actively participate it was proposed that 20-24 October 2008 would be Citizenship Week. The theme for the week was "**Sunderland – The Child and Young Person Friendly City: 2025**". The aim was for children and young people to explore and discuss local issues and offer possible solutions. Schools, colleges, Early Year's settings, Nurseries, Children's Centres and colleges were invited to engage with children and young people to enable them to identify their issues and make Sunderland a Child and Young People Friendly City and inform the 2025 plan.

### **3. What children and young people told us during Citizenship Week**

#### **Key themes identified by Children**

- The importance of family
- Being safe
- Leisure activities
- Looking after others including the homeless, refugees and the elderly
- Improving the environment

#### **As a Sunderland citizen children identified the following things they like:**

- Play parks and inside fun areas
- The aquatic centre
- Sport
- Swimming
- The Empire Theatre and The Bridges
- A clean city with no graffiti
- Going to the beach
- Shopping and going to school
- Going for a walk
- Playing outside on scooters and bikes
- Going to the library
- The beautiful views of Sunderland

- Being with family as family makes them safe and happy
- All the education children get in primary school
- My really, really lovely school

**All ages of children stated Sunderland would be better if:**

**Sunderland is a safe city**

- There was no stealing
- There wasn't anyone hanging about places
- Welcomed other people from a different country
- More policemen on the streets
- Police should watch the car parks
- More CCTV- a lot of people are getting away with smashing car windows and things like that. So if we have more cameras no-one will get away with anything
- No bullying
- More zebra crossings
- More traffic lights
- No more selling of matches
- Get more lolly pop ladies on the job
- Don't break glass on cars
- More street lamps
- Keep violent dogs on the lead, make it a law

**There are lots of leisure activities to choose from, which are easily accessible**

- More playgrounds outside (in estates) and lots more to do
- Make more safe outdoor areas for children to explore and take in fresh air
- It had a circus because everyone will be laughing, it would be great
- There were more tennis courts
- More swimming pools with better slides
- Baby swimming sessions and a bigger learning pool at the aquatic centre
- There should be an ice rink because lots of people want it back
- If we made Sports Olympics
- A gymnastic academy
- More football pitches
- More youth groups/clubs
- Have a sea world
- We had a fairground because we don't have enough in Sunderland
- More places for children to go
- More pubs where children can go and have a drink of pop
- Transport with escorts so students can go to clubs or activities and parents know they are safe
- More swimming pools on the south side of the river

- Discos for under 18s with no alcohol involved
- Ice skating rink.
- Children and families want more free or cheap leisure activities

### **People are looked after**

- I think the city council should make an estate for only elderly people and then have a medicine nurse or doctor in a different room but still in the same house
- Give money to people who are on the streets
- Less Poverty
- Build log houses for the homeless and give them money instead of building real house that ruins the environment.
- Make more houses for homeless people to live in
- Look after new people who come in the country

### **The environment is improved**

- There were no spray painters
- It had less graffiti and nasty things
- People recycled and stopped graffiti
- There should be spray paint walls where you can graffiti if you want to
- People stopped polluting the air
- There would be less smoking and litter and no selling of drugs
- They knocked the empty shops down and made new ones
- We had more green land and more nature
- Everyone would stop littering
- Not to harm any animals and birds
- Plant more flowers
- Have more farms to look after all the tremendous animals
- More dog waste bins

### **Sunderland is a healthy city**

- Don't start drugs
- Ban smoking altogether

## **4. The structure and outcome of children and young people's involvement in Citizenship Week**

### **4.1 Link Person**

A link person was identified for Early Years and Primary Schools, Secondary Schools and Colleges.

The link person distributed a letter from the Director to engage potential participants and explain the event.

An information pack with session support and suggested guidance and an evaluation sheet was distributed to all settings through the link person.

## **4.2 Primary Schools, Children's Centres and Early Years Settings**

In total, over 400 children engaged in a wide range of child friendly activities.

The week of activities demonstrated how young children could actively participate with the support of skilled trained workers.

Those that took part include:

Lambton Primary, New Penshaw Primary, George Washington Primary, Benedict Biscop CE Primary, Plains Farm Primary, Ryhope Infant School (which unfortunately withdrew as the teacher responsible was unable to take part) Portland School, Usworth Colliery Nursery, Washington Rainbow Centre, Bunny Hill Children's Center, Highfield Children's Center and St Peters Day Nursery participated.

## **4.3 Approaches/methods used to involve children and young people**

- Whole school assembly to launch week. All classes included using age and skill level appropriate activities eg pictures, 3d model, wish list.
- The School Council collected ideas from their class mates and then including their own ideas they put them down on paper. They discussed what they liked about the City and they drew pictures to illustrate their preferences. The ideas were then scribed onto the picture.
- Discussed issues with School Council.  
N.B. – the week coincided with our Annual Health Week , which had a variety of pre – planned lessons. Therefore we tried to link the two themes; the work we submitted was linked to issues such as personal hygiene ,bonfire safety and tackling racism.
- We read a story called the smartest giant in town which relates to kindness and being helpful. After the story we discussed what is important to make us happy. The children drew a picture of this.
- Discussed with children what makes them happy and what makes them safe. Involved parents talking with children
- Invited all parents into nursery to hear the children singing some songs linked to ideas about the community and friendship.

## **4.4 Secondary Schools and Colleges**

No schools or colleges participated. The link person has been contacted to explore disappointing take up but at present no response has been received.

## **4.5 Rewards and Incentives for Participating**

- Children's views have informed the Children's Trust Conference.
- The views of the children will be included in future plans
- Early Years Providers and Primary Schools will receive certificate signed by the director.
- The children who participated all received *My ideas, My future* note pads.

- Early years settings and Primary schools will receive vouchers to purchase disposable cameras to give to children to support a photographic project named 'Keep Clicking' for children to photograph the key themes important to them.
- Children will receive a copy of the R&B presentation
- Childrens work will be displayed in public places.

#### **4.6 Feedback to children and Young People**

The key themes identified will be responded to the appropriate senior officers

#### **5.0 Recommendations**

- Establish an inclusive, annual Citizenship week.
- Widely promote the importance of the engagement
- For Early Years work in the Children's Centre Cluster Areas and form steering groups to ensure the continued involvement of children
- Establish stronger links with Secondary Schools and Colleges