

Appendix 3

CASE STUDY - Children in Care Council – Encouraging Active Participation

It is important that children and young people have a chance to shape and influence the parenting they receive at every level – from expressing their wishes and feelings about the individual care they receive in their placements, through to helping to shape the overall strategy for children and young people in their area. This can be done via a Children in Care Council.

Derby City's Children in Care Council meet monthly to discuss issues that are important to them, but also to have fun and meet new friends.

It was recently highlighted that when coming in to care and being placed in a residential home, certain young people felt extremely anxious about what to expect. Although they are issued with a 'Living in a Children's Home' booklet, many advised that they had not bothered to read this as it did not address the issues that really mattered to them.

The members discussed what would have been more helpful and many agreed that a short film would have been more beneficial. With very little help from support staff, the young council members wrote the script and decided on what 'shots' and locations would be required. Luckily, a small amount of additional funding was made available and a film maker sought.

The young people were extremely motivated and engaged and worked well together splitting in to different groups to draw up an action plan. They agreed who would be the actors, who would provide technical support and who would direct.

We were very lucky to be able to film at Queensferry Gardens Children's Home and Markeaton Park on two glorious days in the Easter holidays. The young people worked effectively with the film maker and decided on the running order of the first day, taking in to account meal times, availability of staff and young people. The residents of the home were very friendly and welcoming. They were proud to be having the film 'shot' at their home, and were very keen for it to be shown in the best possible light. They added suggestions and engaged with all visitors. Subsequently, two residents have decided to become permanent members of the Council.

We filmed various activities on the second day at Markeaton Park showing all prospective residents that there are lots of opportunities for fun available. The young council members were very keen to show that life in a children's home can be positive.

At the next couple of council meetings, the young people worked hard to edit the film, taking parts out and adding clips in where necessary. The final outcome was really well received by all that had taken part. It is fair to say that all were very pleasantly surprised by the outcome.

The film will now be shown to all young people that are placed within one of the city's children's homes. The young people were very proud of the final film and were pleased to note that the film comes across in a positive way.

They all agreed that taking part in the film had been a fabulous experience and that they had all made new friends and had learnt new skills. They are very keen to build on the success and are actively suggesting new projects that they can be involved in.