



## Introduction

Welcome to the first quarterly bulletin of the new Youth Voice and Creative Engagement Service. The report provides a summary of the many different aspects of participation work our service undertakes with North Yorkshire's children and young people. It is hoped our quarterly bulletins, which will in turn feed into an annual service report, will be informative for our leaders and staff; both within CYPS and more widely across the authority.

Since our new team's beginning in November 2019, we have been very busy working to shape the new service, making sure we are reaching more young people than ever before, and ensuring they have a real say in the decisions and issues which are important to them. The following pages are a short update of our work and achievements between April and June 2020.

## Quarter 1 Service Headlines:

- ✓ We have seen continued progress and success working on **virtual platforms** with all groups of young people under Covid19 restrictions.
- ✓ Our Children in Care Council has grown rapidly under our new approach, from 4 members in January to a total of **23 members** at the end of June.
- ✓ Inclusion Work is progressing well to embed the voice of young people with **SEND** into the new Locality Hub model and Strategic Decision Making.
- ✓ **Five new local youth councils** have been formed across North Yorkshire, with 29 young people engaged by the service on local issues.
- ✓ Several pieces of in-depth **Virtual Working Review** work have been undertaken, with more work ongoing in Quarter 2.
- ✓ A review of the **Your Voice** young person feedback survey has been completed, and alternatives to replace it are now being actively considered.
- ✓ Numerous workshops delivered on the therapeutic use of **Hip Hop** have produced some incredible raps written by young people from across CYPS.
- ✓ Our new **Young Inspectors** group have almost completed their inaugural inspection, of North Yorkshire's Young Carer's providers.
- ✓ New Social Media accounts have been launched, with a total of **226 posts and 331 followers** to date.
- ✓ A new **Mental Health** Youth Voice Platform is being launched in partnership with colleagues in NYCC, Health, and Third Sector Organisations.
- ✓ An online **Journalism Course** has been delivered to a group of young people by service staff through a series of virtual workshops.
- ✓ Our young people have created a **new service logo** (top left of page 😊), and chosen '**NY Voice**' as the new shorthand name for the service.



## Youth Voice & Creative Engagement Service – Quarter 1 Bulletin 20/21

**Children & Families** participation activity has kept us very busy this quarter, and our portfolio lead Chris Layfield has led on a number of extensive reviews into the new virtual working practices across CYPS as a result of the Covid19 situation. So far 3 detailed reports have been completed, based on interviews with more than 70 young people, parents, and carers; and many more members of CYPS staff. A wealth of positive feedback was received which confirmed how well our staff have adapted to this unprecedented situation, and shown notable levels of passion, commitment, and creativity in supporting our young people. There have also been some areas of development identified, on which we will support our leaders and staff colleagues to achieve the necessary improvements. Further review work is ongoing and will be updated in the Quarter 2 bulletin.

Our new locality Children in Care Council model is also progressing very well. There are now 23 members engaged across North Yorkshire who have met 11 times this quarter both as a county-wide group, and in local sub groups (East / West / Central) – where they are each working on their own project in partnership with CYPS leaders, to improve outcomes for our care-experienced young people. As well as supporting the virtual working reviews noted above, the group have completed a consultation for the National IRO Management Partnership, and begun planning a virtual celebration day for all care experienced young people in July. The group have chosen a new name for themselves, *NY Care Champions*, and are full of enthusiasm and drive to really make a difference.

Developing our **Inclusion** and **SEND** voice work is a key theme for us as we move into the next quarter, after ambitious partnership work planned with our special schools and alternative education providers was unfortunately halted due to school closures, and the priority of safeguarding in educational settings as a result of Covid19. Firm foundations have been laid through attendance at the SEND Strategic Group and Inclusion Extended Management Team Meetings; and we are excited to progress our plans to embed the voices of young people with SEND into the decision making which impacts upon them, through integration with the new locality hub model. Work has also commenced on young people's role in Joint Commissioning arrangements, with portfolio lead James Koppert working with partners to begin the design of an engagement framework to translate young people's voices into influence and action on the issues which matter the most.

Our Flying High SEND Voice Group has met 8 times this quarter, although the challenge of virtual engagement for some members has meant group attendances have been reduced to around 6-8 young people during this period. The group continues to focus on employability, but has also completed consultation work with Sport England, the PFCC Youth Commission, and SENDIASS. Finally, an exciting new Mental Health voice platform has also just launched, following planning and design with Inclusion leaders as well as our North Yorkshire Health / CCG, and third sector partners. Group lead Chloe Thwaites is currently recruiting to the group, and will be working directly with the SEMH Strategic Group to ensure young people's voices are represented at all levels of service planning and delivery.

Our new team of **Young Inspectors** were just beginning their very first inspection, of our commissioned Young Carer's Providers, when the 'lockdown' hit in March; resulting in the overnight cancellation of the inspection sessions which had taken so much time and hard work to organise. Undeterred, our committed team of 12 young people were determined to complete the inspection under Covid19 conditions. They met 9 times during the quarter, working with group lead Chris Layfield and the Young Carer's providers to explore ways the planned inspection sessions could be undertaken using virtual platforms. A new virtual training pack is also being designed by the young people in the group with support from our service graduate Charlie Grubb.

As we ended Quarter 1, the inspection team have again commenced the inspection sessions using virtual platforms; speaking to young carers, parents, and provider staff to allow them to assess the services from a young person's perspective, as well as reviewing providers' websites and online information. This inaugural Young Inspectors Report into our Young Carer's Providers should be completed early in the next quarter, and will seek to highlight areas of good practice to our CYPS leaders, as well as identify those areas where there is opportunity for development. As we move forward in the year, there are plans for our Young Inspector's to not only inspect more of our services, but also play a key role in the new Quality Assurance Framework being led by Head of Effective Practice Samantha Clayton. With the waiting list for the next Young Inspectors training course already filling up, the coming year promises to be busy and productive time for the group!



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The North Yorkshire **Youth Cabinet** (formerly the Youth Voice Executive), like many of our groups, is undergoing a period of transformation at the moment. In future the group, supported by staff lead Charlie Land, will move away from an open access group towards a more representative and democratic model; attended by leading members of our local Youth Councils, NY Care Champions, Flying High, Young Inspectors, and our 3 fantastic Members of the UK Youth Parliament.

During Quarter 1 the cabinet have met 12 times, with a core group of around 10 young people remaining highly engaged during this challenging period. The group have been busy supporting NYCC and partners with gathering young people's voices on a variety of issues. The real focus has been on the planning of an exciting 'By young people, for young people' Youth Awards Ceremony, to be held in late 2021, to recognise the hard work and dedication of young people in participation work. The idea is being pitched to CYPS Director Stuart Carlton in July, and we are sure he will be as impressed as we are with what the group have put together.

In Quarter 1 we are delighted to have launched 5 entirely new **Youth Councils** where young people can come together to explore the issues that matter to them in their local communities; and work with our team to take the action needed to improve things. There are now youth councils up and running in Scarborough, Harrogate, Whitby, Craven, and Central Area – there are plans to split the Central Area group into North and South councils as recruitment progresses.

There are a total of 29 young people working on their new local youth councils so far, and they are busy designing the constitutions for their groups, as well as voting on positions such as Chair and Vice Chair in each area. Early project proposals include an affordable public transport campaign, work with older people, action on social integration, and environmental concerns. Our Whitby Youth Council has been working alongside key partners on ideas to be included in the *Whitby Town Deal Bid* – an exciting government funded scheme to bring major investment to the town.

In April we launched three new **Social Media** accounts on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. The accounts, managed by our service graduate Charlie Grubb, have a combined following of 331 followers which increases by the day. In Quarter 1 there have been more than 200 posts across our platforms, with a real focus on keeping our young people engaged, entertained, and occupied during the 'lockdown' period and beyond. Our accounts have included news, events, support information, competitions, challenges, and lots of information on how young people can join our youth groups and get involved in making a difference! Find us online at:

**Instagram** @nyccyouthvoice

**Facebook** @northyorkshireyouthvoice

**Twitter** @YouthYorkshire

**The 'Last Box' is our place to mention any other news, achievements, or plans our team and young people have been busy with . . .**

- *New starter Chloe Thwaites joined our service in March and is covering the Craven area. Chloe is settling in amazingly well and is a fantastic addition to the team.*
- *The inspirational Hip Hop Workshops and rap verses created by our young people with James Koppert have received some truly incredible feedback.*
- *The team have contributed to Children and Families Locality Events, updating staff with review feedback and showcasing impressive artistic and musical talents.*
- *Young people's articles, written following the Journalism Course we delivered, are due to be published on some national websites.*
- *A review of the 'Your Voice' Feedback Survey was completed and presented to our CYPS leaders, stay tuned for an update on next steps in Quarter 2.*
- *The team ran a snap-survey to inform a review of the 'Young and Yorkshire' Plan, completing a report on young people's hopes and priorities for the future.*
- *Our young people supported a CAMHS Access to Treatment Action Week - aimed at giving young people a voice in mental health service design and delivery.*

***Please keep your eyes on the Intranet, Website, and Social Media Pages for details of our online service re-launch in Quarter 2!***