

URBAN BEAT



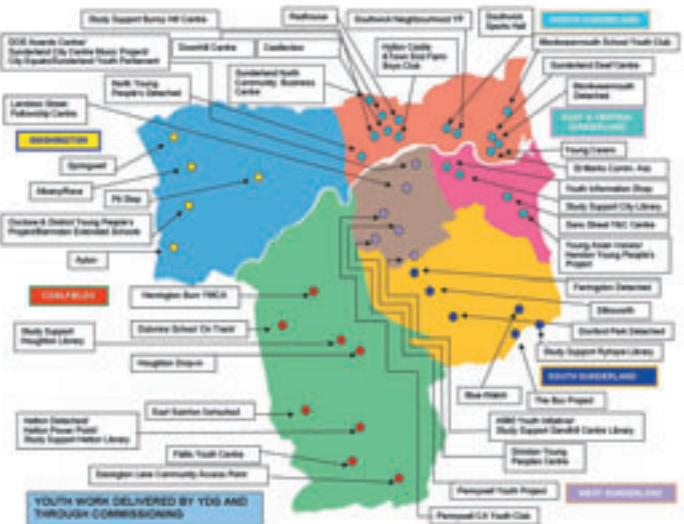
Sunderland Youth Parliament

the voice of Sunderland Youth Parliament ISSUE 10

YOUNG PEOPLE'S INSPECTION TEAM

Who we are

We are a group of young people from throughout the City of Sunderland who found out about the Young People's Inspection Team through the youth provision we go to and volunteered to become members.



What we do

We check the quality of youth projects in the commissioning areas of Sunderland so, if they need to, they can be improved to maintain good quality.

How do we do this?

First we attend two days of training covering lots of areas through activities and workshops to prepare us for our role. We also attend regular monthly meetings and additional training and carry out a timetable of inspections of youth provision every six months, all with the support of the Quality Assurance Team. We have our own inspection form to complete during a visit where we comment on the youth provision. We sometimes make recommendations for improvement and check that these are carried out. There is also a questionnaire for young people to fill in so we can get their views.

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INSPECTION PROCESS

Young People's Inspection Team observe practice within the session they are visiting, talking to both young people and workers.

An inspection form is completed, which has a number of questions relating to Quality Standards. A feedback sheet is also completed with recommendations to be noted and if appropriate is shared with the workers. The Quality Assurance Team and lead agency will then support the project in meeting any recommendations.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S QUESTIONNAIRE

We also devised a questionnaire for young people attending the youth provision being inspected.

This helped us to break the ice and communicate with young people and also enabled them to get their real views as the forms are anonymous. The information is collated and fed back to the youth workers.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Monthly meetings allow Young People to share practice, monitor their experiences and develop their own recommendations for the Young People's Inspection Team, identifying training needs and planning timetables of inspections and addressing any issues that may arise.



MONITOR AND REVIEW

We constantly monitor and review their work throughout the year and a yearly residential enables an in depth team effort to review both the process and documents of the YPIT, along with some fun team building activities.



GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

In the week beginning September 13th 2004, the Team was invited to carry out inspections alongside Ofsted. Nine individual inspections were carried out in 7 projects; the Team received positive feedback from the inspectors that accompanied them.

Each young person got a certificate from Ofsted, of which there are a few in the country to date. On Wednesday 24th January the Team were interviewed by a Joint Area Review inspector who recognised that 'The Young People's Inspection Team provides feedback on the quality of youth work that is used in the performance management of the service'.

OPPORTUNITIES

Often we get a chance to do different things and one was a project called URBACT Young Citizens' Project, which involved nine other European cities in producing a toolkit for youth participation.

Part of this was an exchange visit to Lithuania. Five young people came to visit us and six of the Team went to Lithuania on a return visit. **It was very cold, but a fab experience.**



OUTCOMES

Outcomes of our recommendations include moving sessions to new premises, additional workers at sessions, better displays of young people's work, more publicity to encourage numbers, more resources and improved health and safety. We have also found that young people are happy with their youth projects, do lots of different activities and get on well with youth workers.

What we think

"I like being a member of YPIT because it is rewarding and fun."

"I enjoy it because I find it fulfilling that I am helping improve youth provision in Sunderland."

"You can make sure youth workers are doing things for young people's advantage."

"It's good fun and we can make a difference."

So, do you fancy joining the Young Persons' Inspection Team? Are you friendly and talkative, want to develop your interpersonal skills and can commit to regular meetings and a timetable of inspections of youth clubs? Can you attend a training event on 23rd and 24th October 2007? **Then fill in this form (or send an email) to the address below:**

I am interested in being a member of the Young Person's Inspection Team

I can attend the training on 23rd & 24th October 2007: Yes? No?

Name: _____ Tel: _____ D.o.B. _____

Address: _____

Please return to or email: Karen Lightfoot, Youth Development Group, Sunderland Award Centre, 270a Hylton Road, Sunderland SR4 7XJ
T: 0191 5537423 E: Karen.lightfoot@sunderland.gov.uk

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Joint Area Review Inspection

In January 2007 Government inspectors visited Sunderland to inspect Children's Services in what is called the Joint Area Review. The inspection report was published in June 2007. Different areas of Children's Services were inspected and judged against scoring criteria of 1 to 4, with 1 being inadequate, 2 adequate, 3 good, and 4 outstanding.

How did we do?

Our grades in Sunderland are:

- Overall Children's Services 3
- Being Healthy 3
- Staying Safe 2
- Enjoying and Achieving 3
- Making a Positive Contribution 3
- Achieving Economic Wellbeing 3
- Service Management 3
- Capacity to Improve 3

What does this mean?

It means outcomes for children and young people in Sunderland are good but there is still room for improvement.

Things that we are good at in Sunderland include:

- The health of looked after children is very good (Being Healthy)
- Service for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disability are good (Staying Safe)
- Support and challenge to schools and settings is good and progress in raising standards has been particularly effective at ages 14 and 16 (Enjoy and Achieve)
- The involvement of children and young people in consultation, participation service delivery and engagement in decisions that affect their lives is outstanding (Making a Positive Contribution)
- The level of interventions of the Connexions service is high and it has a strong presence in schools (Achieving Economic Wellbeing)
- Children and young people are heavily involved in the design and evaluation of services (Service Management)

Plans to improve

An action plan has been written to tackle the areas where we need to improve services in Sunderland.

For immediate action - we need to ensure that:

- The assessment, child protection and children in need services in social care are working to the national guidance, working together to safeguard children
- The quality assurance of files and casework is effective
- Key performance indicator data in children's social care is accurate and fit for purpose
- Workload management systems are effective

For action over the next six months - we need to ensure that:

- Communication is improved in relation to contact with health agencies for minority ethnic communities
- There is improved value for money through joint commissioning of services
- Further opportunities for parents and carers of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities to contribute their views about services are sought

For action in the longer term - we need to ensure that:

- We take action to tackle racism so that young people from black and ethnic minorities can feel safer in the city

For more information about how we are doing in Sunderland to improve services for children and young people contact Norma Hardy, Head of Performance Improvement and Policy, Children's Services, on 0191 5531432 or email norma.hardy@sunderland.gov.uk

For further information about how to have your articles published in the next issue of Urban Beat, contact:

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