

West Sussex Children in Care Council

Constitution

Purpose of the group

- To give young people in care, and care leavers in West Sussex a voice to be heard directly by the Director of Children's Services, senior social work staff and the Corporate Parenting Panel.
- To play our part in making West Sussex care system the best it can be
- To operate as a consultation group for managers, policy makers and councillors, and to be consulted with on policy that affects children in care in line with the UN Conventions of the rights of a child.
- To consult with other young people in care on issues that may interest them
- To link with other children in care councils regionally and nationally, to share good practice
- To encourage other young people in care to become actively involved in having their voice heard through various voice mechanisms, such as the youth parliament and youth cabinet.
- To encourage a positive image of children and young people in care to others in West Sussex
- To act as a lobbying group for the promotion of rights of children in care in West Sussex
- Members of the CiCC will be expected to provide feedback to inspectors taking part in service inspections

Composition

- Up to 15 young people in care will become CiCC members, from as wide a range of backgrounds as possible.
- Age range will be 11 to 25 years of age
- Members will be self-referred as opposed to elected, and must make a commitment to attend regularly

Meetings

- The CiCC will hold meetings fortnightly.
- A meeting will be held once every term during school holidays as a means of consultation and offer an opportunity to learn skills/take part in a social event
- The director of children's services, senior social work staff and the lead member for Children and Young People will be invited along to a CiCC meeting at least twice a year to keep in touch with issues for children in care.
- CiCC will invite other people to come to their meeting if they think it is beneficial to children in care or the CiCC

- The views of LAC not involved in the CICC will be invited once a year, through questionnaire, focus group or other study, which will determine the priorities for the CICC for that coming year.

Communication

- A email address will be set up for communication for CICC business
- The email address will be managed and monitored by the CICC staff co-ordinator
- CICC coordinator will pass on individual issues of members to social work staff or IRO's with permission from the young person. Issues of safeguarding will be dealt with according to WSCC safeguarding procedure.
- The CICC coordinator will have a lead role in acting as the liaison person between CICC and WSCC staff/councillors
- CICC will produce reports for use at CPP meetings.
- The CICC will have a page on Yourspace.
- A newsletter will be produced at least three times a year to inform other LAC what the CICC have been doing on their behalf

Protocols

- An important element of the children and young people's involvement in the CICC is that they participate in projects, consultations and events on a voluntary basis supported by staff to fully embrace their involvement in projects and consultations in a positive manner.
- The young people on the CICC will receive training and development in order that they are able to lobby and represent the views and ideas of children in care. In addition, members will be trained to take part in decision making processes such as interviewing staff, consultation events, inspecting services for children and young people, monitoring and evaluation policy and strategies such as the Children and Young People's plan.
- In order to engage with the Children in Care Councils, the CICC co-ordinator will need to be contacted in the first instance.