

Southampton Speak Up!

Southampton City Council – Children and Young People’s Participation Strategy 2016-2020

> A VOICE AND A CHOICE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

We want you, the children, young people and families of Southampton to have the opportunity to express your views, feel heard and be actively involved in decisions that affect you.

We want your views about anything the council are involved in, for example; schools, parks, transport, housing and social care to name but a few.

We also want you to have your say on the council services you use directly. This strategy is our plan for how we will achieve this.

Within our plan we will help you to understand how you can get involved to help make Southampton a better place for you, your friends and family to live.

> PARTICIPATION EXPLAINED

Participation is having the opportunity to be involved in decision making	It means having a say in anything that affects you	It means being listened to and knowing that what you say will be taken seriously	It means knowing what difference your views and ideas have made

> KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!

You have the right to be involved and have your say in any decisions that will have an impact on your life. This is confirmed by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

The convention (otherwise known as an agreement) contains 54 principles called ‘articles’, of which the following are most important in relation to participation:

> Article 2

All children have these rights, no matter who they are, where they live, what their parents do, what language they speak, what their religion is, whether they are a boy or girl, what their culture is, whether they have a disability, or whether they are rich or poor.

> Article 12

You have the right to give your opinion, and for adults to listen and take it seriously.

> Article 13

You have the right to find out things and share what you think with others, by talking, drawing, writing or in any other way unless it harms or offends other people.

> Article 23

You have the right to special education and care if you have a disability, as well as all the rights in this convention, so that you can live a full life.

? > DID YOU KNOW?

93,500 children and young people live in Southampton

14,204

children under 5 use our city’s children’s centres

75 publicly funded schools in the city and 3 colleges

369 children and young people are educated at home

200+ young carers are supported through Southampton’s Young Carers Project each year

We are ‘Corporate Parents’ – we have a responsibility to make sure looked after children, young people and care leavers are supported in the best way possible

150 different languages are spoken in our schools

6,118+ school aged children in Southampton are registered as having special education needs or disabilities (SEND)

> GETTING INVOLVED CAN...

- Provide opportunities to influence services that affect your life and those of your family.
- Give you a better understanding of how the council works.
- Help you develop new skills and experiences.
- Improve self-confidence and self-esteem by feeling valued and appreciated.
- Provide fun opportunities to meet new people with similar interests.
- Help you to build your CV.

> WHY GET INVOLVED?

“It is fun and you know you’ve changed something in the world and you’ve done something to make someone else’s day.”

SUMMER Junior Neighbourhood Wardens

“Being involved with the Youth Forum really gives you direct involvement with what happens for young people in Southampton! It gives you so many opportunities and experiences, and nice friendships as well!”

ELIZABETH Youth Forum Southampton

“It’s nice coming along to the Children in Care Council as I get to meet people that are going through similar situations to me”

YOUNG PERSON Children in Care Council

> GETTING INVOLVED MEANS...

- We learn what you think and need without making assumptions on your behalf.
- We get to hear new ideas from your point of view.
- We can use your views to help us improve our services.



› OUR GOALS! To make sure that you have every opportunity to get involved, we will make sure participation is...



› HOW WILL WE MEET OUR GOALS?



INCLUSIVE

- We will never judge – we welcome views from all.
- We will promote equal opportunities regardless of your background, circumstance, gender, race, religion, language, sexual orientation or disability.
- We will always make sure you can get involved in a range of ways.
- We want to make it as easy as possible for you to take part. We will hold meetings in central locations that are close to public transport and at times that are best suited for you.
- We will communicate with you in a way you understand.



RESPECTFUL

- We will listen to you and take your views seriously by allowing you enough time to prepare and think through your ideas.
- We will treat your views equally and with respect.
- We will maintain confidentiality when working with you on sensitive issues.



REWARDING

- We will make sure our activities help build your confidence and skills.
- We will celebrate your achievements.
- We will help you to get involved, and make sure you have a positive experience.



ENJOYABLE

- We won't ask you to come to lots of boring meetings or make you fill out endless questionnaires. We want you to have fun!
- We will use a variety of interesting ways to listen and involve you.
- We will be friendly, welcoming and approachable when you work with us.
- We want you have a role and responsibility, this could include designing workshop activities at Youth Forum events.



MEANINGFUL

- We will be honest about what is possible and what is not.
- We will listen to you and make sure you see what we have done with your feedback.
- We will provide the information and knowledge you need to make choices and decisions.
- We will look for opportunities to work with you to design and deliver services.

› CURRENT OPPORTUNITIES

There are a number of ways that you can have your say, both face to face and online. Some of our current opportunities include:

Youth Forum Southampton

The Youth Forum Southampton gives you the chance to have honest, enjoyable and interactive discussions around a variety of topics that are important to you. You can get involved in person or online.

Having joined the British Youth Council, you are now able to make a difference and be heard both locally and nationally.

Junior Neighbourhood Wardens

Take part in activities to help the local community have a neighbourhood they can feel proud of. Some activities include painting, planting and fun days out.

SEND Short Breaks

Short Breaks provide children and young people with disabilities or additional needs an opportunity to spend time away from their parents, engage in fun activities and enjoy time with their friends.

Access Southampton

Access Southampton provides you with information to help you make important decisions about your future. The site offers support to all young people, parents and carers. Find out more: www.access-southampton.co.uk

Children in Care Council (CiCC)

Southampton's Children in Care Council (CiCC) is a group of children and young people with experience of being in care. We have three groups who meet monthly; Junior CiCC for 7-11 year olds, Teen CiCC for 12-18 year olds and our Care Leavers Forum who meet once every three months.

Southampton's CiCC is always looking for enthusiastic, new and brilliant people to get involved!

Youth Voice Representatives

By becoming a Youth Voice Representative, you will represent the views of children and young people in the city. Meetings are held once a month for young people aged 11-25 years.

Young Carers in Southampton

Young Carers in Southampton is a project with Southampton Mencap for children and young people aged 8-18 years old whose lives are affected by caring for an unwell or disabled family member.

There are also some opportunities for children and young people which are referral only.

› DEVELOPING OPPORTUNITIES

We are always looking at new ways for you to have your say. You've given us some ideas and now it's your chance to get involved and make them happen...

Young Inspectors

A group of young people would be trained to inspect facilities, services and venues to assess how fun, inclusive and user-friendly they are.

Creative Methods

This could include the production of films, podcasts, art work, story writing and telling, games, sport or photography.

Website and Social Media

(E.g. Facebook, Instagram, YouTube)
We are keen to hear your ideas on how we can make information easier for you to find online.

This Girl Can Southampton

A chance for girls and women to find out what female only sports and exercise classes are available in Southampton.

If you have any ideas or suggestions on ways you would like to get involved, please get in touch!

› CONTACT US!

If you want to get involved in any of our opportunities or would like more information, then we want to hear from you!

Email us youthforum@southampton.gov.uk
cicc@southampton.gov.uk

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