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| **Dundee’s**  **Engagement and Participation Framework for Care Experienced Young People and Care Leavers** |

**Introduction**

In Dundee, we are fully committed to The Promise and improving outcomes for Care Experienced Young People and Care Leavers. We believe a key part of this should involve improving relationships with our children, young people and young adults, we have collectively developed a framework which actively promotes engagement and participation.

Over the years, a number of models of engagement and participation have been developed and many place approaches on a continuum which involve methods which range from manipulation and tokenism through to genuine collaboration and devolved decision making (for instance Arnstein, S. 1969; and Hart, R. 1992).

In developing this framework, we have been conscious that Care Experienced Young People and Care Leavers are a diverse group. Some are aged 0-5 years whilst others are attending primary or secondary schools and others are venturing into early adulthood. They live in different settings and have a wide variety of interests and needs.

The framework has therefore been informed by a belief that we need avoid a mere appearance of engagement and participation but suitably match engagement and participation methods and purposes depending on individual circumstances and the issues being considered. In particular, we have adopted the following approaches:

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| **Devolving** | Placing decision-making in the hands of children, young people and young adults |
| **Collaborating** | Working in partnership in order to reach shared decisions |
| **Involving** | Working to ensure that concerns are fully understood and addressed |
| **Consulting** | Obtaining feedback on proposals and different alternatives |
| **Informing** | Providing balanced and objective information to assist |

Ultimately, the framework aims to ensure that we engage appropriately with all Care Experienced Young People and Care Leavers by empowering them, providing them with opportunities to have their voices heard and enabling them to lead safe, fulfilling and productive lives. It is informed by some fundamental principles:

* **Achievement** – recognising the challenges and working openly with Care Experienced Young People and Care Leavers to transform the barriers to engagement
* **Change** – being open to different ways of working and accepting that this may be necessary but challenging for us as professionals
* **Choice** – ensuring the right of Care Experienced Young People and Care Leavers to decide where and how they get involved
* **Commitment** – welcoming and including voices in all aspects of our work with Care Experienced Young People and Care Leavers
* **Integrity** – firmly believing in the value of Care Experienced Young People and Care Leavers contributions and the difference this should make to our approaches
* **Valuing difference** – respecting the individual uniqueness of people and challenging labels, stereotypes and attitudes
* **Transparency –** showing a willingness to change the balance of power towards Care Experienced Young People and Care Leavers through approaches which promote engagement
* **Safety** – ensuring Care Experienced Young People and Care Leavers are always protected from harm

**Our Framework**

The framework has been developed in accordance with these models and principles and involves a variety of methods which are designed to be suitable to different people at different times. It includes all 5 of the above approaches and places an emphasis on improving both relationships with and outcomes for Care Experienced Young People and Care Leavers.

The diagram below illustrates our Champions Board sitting at the centre within a broad range of engagement and participation activity routinely coordinated by lead professionals and young people collectively known as Your Voice Our Promise Engagement Team. The outcomes of this activity from YVOP Engagement Team are fed into the board, which will focus on particular themes identified by Care Experienced Young People and Care Leavers:

The board will literally operate as the champion for Care Experienced Young People and Care Leavers, celebrating their successes and addressing institutional, organisational and individual barriers to them improving their lives. The full terms of reference for the board and its members are outlined below:

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| **Champions Board**  **Terms of Reference**  **The Champions Board will be Chaired by the Chief Executive of Dundee City Council on behalf of all Responsible Senior Service Leads across the city**  **The Champions Board will be attended on a consistent basis by the same designated senior representatives and partnership organisations**  **The Champions Board will also be attended by Care Experienced Children and Young People and Care Leavers and it will be their meeting supported by Council Service Leads**  **The Champions Board will meet 3 times a year and meetings will be minutes with updates on agreed actions presented at subsequent meetings**  **The Champions Board will ensure that the views of Care Experienced Children and Young People and Care leavers are obtained from as wide a variety as possible**  **The Champions Board will celebrate the strengths, assets and achievements of Care Experienced Children and Young People and Care Leavers**  **The Champions Board will listen, respond to and address key priority themes or issues identified by Care Experienced Children and Young People and Care Leavers**  **This will include issues relating, for instance, to placements; education, training and employment; housing; health and wellbeing; and relationships.**  **The Champions Board will ensure that commitments outlined in our Promise to Care Experienced Young People and Care Leavers are upheld**  **The Champions Board will progress actions within their own organisations and where necessary will remit them to the Promise Partnership** |

**Going Forward**

This framework represents a key part of our shared commitment to Care Experienced Young People and Care Leavers. It is complimented by a range of actions outlined in Dundee’s Promise to Care Experienced Young People and Care Leavers, it is governed through our Promise Partnership. It will all continually be informed by our fundamental principles as responsible professionals.

**Our Operational Action Plan**

A key purpose of the framework is to ensure that, as responsible professionals, we take the necessary actions to ensure we uphold all promises to our Care Experienced Young People and Care Leavers. This Action Plan has been developed jointly and outlines a range of commitments which we collectively believe are necessary to promote better relationships and improved outcomes.

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| **Foundation** | **Priority** | **Action**  **Consultation, Engagement and Participation Plan** | **Lead** | **Some Key Indicators** |
| **Your Voice Our Promise Operational Plan** | Meaningful, consultation engagement and participation  Voice -  Listening to care experienced children and young people and involving them in decision making  Ensure that ‘care’ is an experience in which children and young people are valued as individuals, and where support addresses their strengths as well as their needs  Our services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to young people’s needs. | **Consultation**   * Create a clear and comprehensive operational plan with outcomes as part of the promise. * Identify and highlight the forums that flow into the Champions board * Evidence of work undertaken in these identified forums using consistent recording process numbers consulted, participations * Yearly or biyearly consultation for all care experienced young people to act as a manifesto for Champions Board | Senior Officer  Senior Officer  YVOP Group  YVOP Group | Plan created  Flowchart of forums  Consultation results  Participation levels  Manifesto created |
| **Engagement**     * Revamp Champions Board ensuring the small group on the Champions Board are representative of all CEYP and those who attend identified forums * Champion Board Events run by young people for the wider CEYP group * Limit adults who attend Champions Board * Provide training for young people. * Consider themed meetings depending on areas for discussion * Once process established this board can be a changing group of CEYP to reflect themes * Identify and ensure all key workers and agencies are aware of their role and responsibility within this operational plan * Ensure all identified forums are staffed appropriately * Ensure Champions Board is staffed appropriately * Engagement tools including the use of social media | YVOP Group  Champions Board  YVOP Group  CLD?  Champions Board  Senior Officer /YVOP Group  YVOP  YVOP? | Diary of event  Training with accreditation  Manifesto  Plan put into action  Forums flow into Champions Board  Diary of Champions Board meetings  Social Media in use |
| **Participation**   * Explain to all agencies the need to prioritise resources to CEYP * Ensure all participation is being evidenced through recording processes * Identify what is currently happening within identified agencies including schools. * Consult with all care experience CEYP and children in cluster and secondary schools on a yearly or biyearly basis. Feedback consultation and actions * Establish who is the one point of contact for CEYP - what is their plan what is their contact ie weekly/ individual/group work * Establish Champions Board within schools if interested if not evidence why * Establish what is currently happening over the school holidays for both primary and secondary aged CEYP. * Identify if all children and young people are being represented at meetings ie buddys at meetings – be the voice of these CEYP/children   **Your Voice Our Promise**   * Various reps for agencies/ services that work with care experience young people or have responsibility for the promise. Previously these professionals would have gone to the board but will now this will be the main focus for professionals. Reps on this group would feed their CEYP views into process. * All information/ work feeds into this group/ Action Plan | Service Manager  Senior Officer/YVOP  Senior Review Officer  Senior Officer  Senior Officer  Education Officer  Senior Review Officer  Service Manager | Resources allocated to CEYP  Data available  Audit of activity  Yearly Manifesto  Key contact identified  Participation numbers  Audit of Activity  Key contact identified    Attendance at meeting |
| **Starting Point**   * Gain an understanding of who the CEYP are and numbers across the city * Establish where the CEYP are and who is the main contact for them. * Ensure current list of all CEYP and distributed to schools with plan of action * Audit of current activity and highlight examples of good practice * Audit of forums for participation flowchart * Consultative and engagement of all care experience yp/children who want to get involved record numbers using diverse methods to engage. * Record PSW (LAC) involvement with CEYP If not PSW(LAC) who is supported CEYP ie Health and Wellbeing * PSW(LAC) or SFDW to engage with all CEYP in primary school to get their views. * Establish groups within Primary schools if relevant. * Contact to be made with all YP * Recruit to champions board * Arrange event for all CEYP – open door engagement * Speak to CLD – resources * Establish a recording process for the consultation and engagement process * Social Media | Senior Officer / YVOP |  |