Rotherham Youth Cabinet’s Aim:

Rotherham Youth Cabinet is an active voice representing all young people equally, in order to have a positive effect throughout our communities.

Objectives

The Youth Cabinet’s Objectives

- To ensure young people’s voices influence decisions made within Rotherham.
- Make opportunities for young people’s views to be canvassed and listened to within schools, colleges, communities and across Rotherham Integrated Youth Support Services, to get their opinions.
- To publicise and promote Youth Cabinet to ensure people are aware of the opportunities it presents.
- To target wider groups, for example Looked After young people, young people with disabilities and those from our diverse communities, so that all views are represented.
- Undertake research in order to improve public facilities and services for young people and the community.
- To develop further links with Elected Members, local Councillors, Members of Parliament, RMBC Officers and other organisations.
- To meet with other Regional Youth Voice groups to strengthen our voice.
- To convert words into action.
Rotherham Youth Cabinet
Key Aims 2015-2016

To raise awareness and interest in local and national Politics with young people and encourage participation, where applicable, in the democratic process.

To organise a borough wide young people’s conference around Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health.

In conjunction with Rotherham Looked After Children’s Council, to work with other young people across the borough to create a proud and positive image of Rotherham.

To work with South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive and local bus companies around issues regarding public transport for young people with a particular focus on bus passes for 16 to 18 year olds.

To help young people in Rotherham to have an understanding of the lives and needs of all people from within our diverse communities through curriculum based work and community cohesion activities of Youth Cabinet members.
1. To educate and encourage young people to be more aware of Politics and to vote for what they believe in.

- We consulted with 135 young people at Rotherham Show to establish their attitudes towards voting and Politics, along with gaining their thoughts of how to encourage young people who would not vote, to become engaged in Politics. The majority of young people surveyed said they would vote if they were old enough. Reasons provided for not voting included; too much jargon; don’t know how to vote; lack of education around Politics in school and that they felt it wouldn’t make any difference.

- We worked with Electoral Services to design poster and leaflet advertisements to encourage young people to ‘register to vote’ for the General Elections. This was created to enable it to be simple and jargon free and it was put on Youthi Website and into all schools, colleges and young people’s centres.

- Youth Cabinet Members took part in Mock Elections in Schools and also during a Youth Voice Training Day.

- A video has been created by young people with the aim to promote Politics to other young people.

- Young people delivered an ‘Introduction to Politics’ workshop at the Youth Conference.

- Youth Cabinet Members researched Youth Proofed Political Party Manifestos to enable young people to understand each Party’s aims and links to these were put in the IYSS Newsletter and on the Youthi website and Youthi TV.
Two members of Youth Cabinet were interviewed in Rotherham Town Centre by Sky TV as part of the General Election campaign in trying to encourage eligible voters.

2. **To Work with young people from other Rotherham IYSS groups to organise a borough wide IYSS Youth Conference**

   A conference for young people was held during the Easter holidays. This was organised by Youth Cabinet members along with members of UK Youth Parliament, LACC and young people from Rush House. Over 80 Young people attended. Workshops were chosen by young people and most were also delivered by young people. Workshops included Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing, Awareness of Abuse, Health and Fitness, Problem Solving, Drama and Song Writing.

   Input from young people from the conference was used in the ‘Taking Back Our Town Event’ in May.

   The theme of the conference was Voice and Influence and young people had the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings about Rotherham as a town to live, learn and work within the Youth Voice Diary Room. The Diary Room activity will hopefully be replicated across Rotherham later in the year during Youth Work Week.

   Feedback from young people and staff about the conference was very positive.

3. **To investigate existing support networks for young people around emotional wellbeing and establish ways to promote positive mental health.**

   Young people participated in a training session to ensure they all fully understood what Mental Health is to equip them for this work.
Members have linked with their local MPs around exam stress and have written to the Minister for Education sharing their concerns.

Youth Cabinet members have worked with the Commissioning Team around the Mental Health Strategy.

Links with Healthwatch have been developed and Healthwatch staff regularly attend Youth Cabinet meetings to share support and advice on mental health issues.

A group of young people from Youth Cabinet were invited to meet with Managers and the full staff team at CAMHs to share their issues and concerns around Mental Health Services for young people in Rotherham.

A member of Youth Cabinet was elected as a Governor for RDaSH/CAMHS.

The CAMHS Project Manager visited Youth Cabinet to share how CAMHS had incorporated Youth Cabinet’s recommendations from their work around Self Harm within their Plan. There have also been feedback sessions from other professionals around how they were meeting the recommendations of Youth Cabinet around self harm.

Members of Youth Cabinet were invited by the CCG to attend RDaSH/CAMHS Strategy and Partnership Panel; a Youth Cabinet representative has attended these where possible.

A member of Youth Cabinet/UKYP wrote a report on the national picture of Mental Health Services, with a focus on Rotherham. This has been shared with Rotherham Public Health Officer and has been fed into a national campaign run by the British Youth Council to improve Mental Health Services for young people nationally.

A number of consultation meetings have been undertake with the Commissioning Team around the development of a website offering support and advice for young people in regard to mental health issues - My Mind Matters. One young person spoke about mental health issues at the My Mind Matters Website launch event.
Youth Cabinet members have supported a Mental Health Scrutiny Review and fed in their findings to the Scrutiny Review Panel.

A Youth Cabinet member has become the first Rotherham Healthwatch Ambassador and is using this position to further develop links and improvements around mental health services for young people.

Members supported the development of a Mental Health/S Word Booklet and worked with the CCG to inform its design and content.

A Youth Cabinet member has helped to produce a number of videos for Healthwatch to show how people can make complaints about services if there is cause, with a focus on CAMHS.

4. To establish a range of strategies, networks and publicity to promote Rotherham Youth Cabinet.

Youth Cabinet members have created a video to show young people to promote their work and aim to encourage schools to show it on their websites.

Rotherham Youth Cabinet Facebook ‘Likes’ and Twitter ‘Followers’ have continued to grow and there are now 253 and 488 respectively.

Posters and leaflets have been designed by Youth Cabinet Members and distributed to all schools, colleges and young peoples’ centres across Rotherham, promoting the work of the group and encouraging new members to join.

Young people and Voice & Influence Staff have visited some schools in Rotherham to promote Youth Cabinet.

Links to Rotherham Youth Voice is now on the Youthi Website front page to enable young people to easily find information around voice and influence opportunities.
• Young people from Youth Cabinet became the ‘Face of Youthi’ after their photograph was used in publicity materials.

• Achievements and events relating to Youth Cabinet have featured in the Rotherham Advertiser and young people have participated in interviews on Captial FM and Radio Sheffield.

• Publicity materials were handed out at the Rotherham Show.

• Film footage from the VAR Community Achievements Awards has been played on TVs in Health Centres across Rotherham after Youth Cabinet member Rebecca Parkin was awarded Young Volunteer of the Year Award 2014. This promoted the work of Youth Cabinet and its benefits to young people.

• Young people delivered a training workshop at the British Youth Council Induction Weekend around Publicity and Media, to share their knowledge and good practice with other young people from across the Yorkshire and Humber Region.

5 To help ensure that young people in Rotherham have an understanding of the lives and needs of all young people from within our diverse communities through curriculum based work and community cohesion activities of Youth Cabinet members.

• Two members of Youth Cabinet participated on a visit to Poland to learn about the genocide and the Holocaust.

• Members participated in the Holocaust Memorial Day event through reading stories and poems.

• A representative from Youth Cabinet joined representatives from UK Youth Parliament and Looked After Children’s Council in laying a wreath on behalf of young people in Rotherham at the Remembrance Day Service.
- Members of Youth Cabinet were invited by the Mayor to join the Armed Forces Day parade to represent young people in Rotherham.

- A Youth Cabinet member attended the dedication service for the new World War 2 memorial in Clifton Park.

- A group from Youth Cabinet joined young people from other IYSS groups, including LGBT group, in a visit to the Imperial War Museum in London and Poppy Installation to learn about and commemorate WW2.

- Members have linked very closely with Looked After Children’s Council including joint training days and residential. They have also supported LACC with the development of their Facebook and Twitter profiles to enable them to share their work with Looked After young people who do not attend LACC.

- Members attended the LGBT History Month event at Myplace.

- Members from Youth Cabinet attended Rotherham Pride.

- Youth Cabinet Members supported the White Ribbon Campaign around abuse and domestic violence and one of our members at the time featured in the fund raising Calendar.

- We have developed links with the Young Carers Council. They joined us at the Rotherham Show to promote Youth Voice and we held a joint training session with Young Carers. We are hoping to further develop this link in the forthcoming year.

- Youth Cabinet continues to try to recruit new members to ensure they have a fully representative group.
Youth Cabinet members did First Aid Training and gained a First Aid Certificate.

A member attends the Public Transport User Group Meetings at Rotherham Interchange to ensure young people have a voice.

We helped Scrutiny with their Scrutiny Review around Public Transport and Rotherham Interchange.

Members have helped with the design of the CSE Strategy for young people.

We took part in a CSE event for CSE Awareness Day where we created designs on our hands and then uploaded them onto the CSE Awareness Day website.

Young people have undertaken Esafety Training with the new Esafety officer for Rotherham and are hoping to help make a video to use in schools and the community on Safer Internet Week 2016.

We changed the Youth Cabinet logo on Facebook and Twitter to the CSE Awareness Day logo to show our support and two members signed the CSE Pledge at an Event at the New York Stadium on behalf of the Youth Cabinet Group.

During Easter we worked with the Quality and Performance Team to help design a publication to help let young people know what Rotherham’s response to the Ofsted Report is.

We link closely with PYPPO PC Paul Gray who attends our Town Hall Meetings.
Members have been involved in interviews to recruit Senior Directors and Heads of Service within RMBC Children and Young People’s Services.

Members joined around 100 other young people from Youth Voice groups across Yorkshire and Humber Region at the British Youth Council’s Induction Weekend at Kingswood Dearne Valley, where we took part in a range of workshops to help us develop our youth voice skills and knowledge.

We went on a residential to Habershon House with LACC and took part in a range of team building activity, plus we began to write our new manifesto and reflect upon our achievements from last year.

Members have attended British Youth Council Conventions and also hosted a Convention in Rotherham during October which attracted over 100 young people from across the Yorkshire and Humber region.

We have taken part in a range of Youth Voice Training Days, some of these have been joint training sessions with LACC.

We helped to develop a Centre Behaviour Policy for use across IYSS.

We helped to design the comments and complaints procedure for Youthi Website.

Seven members of Youth Cabinet have signed up to become Young Inspectors as part of the new Young Inspectors programme. We have completed training and most of us have been involved in at least one inspection of services for young people and children in CYPS.

We have met with many decision makers including Elected Members, MPs, Director of Children’s Services, Director of Early Help and Families, Rotherham Commissioners, Chief of Staff to the Lead Commissioner etc.

Members have worked with a company to give them constructive feedback on the design of a game for young people around young people’s issues.
Youth Cabinet Member Rebecca Parkin was awarded Community Young Volunteer of the Year award in November 2014 by Voluntary Action Rotherham for her work within the community. She has now been shortlisted for the National Diversity Awards in the category of Positive Role Model and will be attending the Awards Event Finals in Liverpool.

Toni Paxford has been nominated for the Community Young Volunteer of the Year award for 2015 and has been shortlisted to the final three.

Get in touch!

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