

Pro Forma for Participation Works Network for England regional case studies

Region: London	
Submitted by: Michael Newman Date of submission: 1 April 2009	
Please indicate which sector this case study is an example of:	
Voluntary sector activity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Statutory sector activity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Corporate sector activity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (<i>please specify</i>)	
Please indicate which themes this case study can be used to support (<i>tick all that apply</i>):	
Arts & creativity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commissioning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Early Years	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faith	<input type="checkbox"/>
Funding	<input type="checkbox"/>
Governance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Standards	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hard to reach groups	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inclusive practice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Learning & research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Measuring change	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online tools	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rights/citizenship	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Safeguarding	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workforce development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Youth-led project	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (<i>please specify</i>)	
Name of project: Tower Hamlets Fair Play Wall	
Name of lead person on project: Michael Newman	
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Aims of the project: To promote the creation of school council constitutions and policies as a way for all children in a school to learn about children's rights and democratic participation by celebrating the value of constitutions through displaying them at the Town Hall and organising high status training events.	
Timeline for the project (expected start and finish date, if known): Peer training model of school council development through secondary school councillors leading training morning for all KS2 pupils for a primary school on children's rights, democracy and participation created in 2005.	

<p>Repeated twice involving two secondary schools and a further six primary schools in 2007 and 2008.</p> <p>Ongoing work with primary school councils at the Town Hall, interviewing the Mayor, electing their own Mayor for the day and then debating and voting on their own issues. Launched Fair Play Wall during Local Democracy Week 2009. Support materials posted on web for school council use. Ongoing organisation of teacher and student training every half term with renowned experts on rights, justice , decision making, democracy and children's voice.</p>
<p>Please name any other organisations involved if this was a project developed as a partnership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tower Hamlets Town Hall and Council • Summerhill School • Children's Rights Alliance for England
<p>Who funded this project? Humanities Education Centre</p>
<p>How many young people were involved? Five primary school councils so far, building on work done with 24 primary school councils, four secondary school councils and all the KS2 children from six primary schools.</p>
<p>How were children & young people involved in decision-making? They used different activities to research democracy, interviewing secondary school councillors, local politicians, the local MP; exploring models of children's decision-making including Summerhill School, St Georges in the East School and Janus Korczak's democratic Warsaw Ghetto orphanage; discussing and voting on such issues as the size of a school council, its range of power, and how it could work; looking at the effects of decisions made using multiple bottom line analysis; electing their own chairperson for the day and discussing and voting on their own local issues at the Town Hall; learning about children's rights as the foundation for participation using discussion, role play, games, peer training and whole school assembly.</p>
<p>What changes has children & young people's involvement led to? The project has expanded from involving one secondary school and a primary school to a project that is valued by the Borough, is part of the Young People's Plan and is being promoted to all schools. The children, as peer trainers, helped assess and adapt all the training activities.</p>
<p>What did children and young people involved in this work achieve from this experience? Awareness and understanding of local democracy; enthusiasm for involvement in school councils as councillors and voters; a growing awareness of children's rights as a reference point for decision making.</p>
<p>What next for the project? The schools involved will create their own constitutions through a whole school process that includes a relationship between the school and local government. This then leads to policy making by school councils, which</p>

provide a democratic voice for children in Tower Hamlets, replacing the need for adult lead, initiated and framed consultations.

What next for the participants?

Ongoing high status training events; development of support materials; schools network to support themselves and run their own events. School council constitutions seen by politicians, schools, adults and children to be necessary, vital and extremely valuable documents. Ensure the elevation of the status of constitutions through celebrations by eminent people.

The process of constitution making and reviewing, along with policy making, ensure all children learn about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and how democratic politics works.

Quotes from staff, management, children, parents/ carers:

“All our children wanted to stand for the school council” School council link teacher.

“Can we do this again?” School council peer trainer

“Every school should do this training” Unanimous vote of Osmani Primary School Council at end of morning at Town Hall.

Participation Works wants to share your good practice to a wider audience to enable others to learn from your experience and develop their own participation practice.