

Pro Forma for Participation Works Network for England regional case studies

Region: North East	
Submitted by: Jacqueline Robson Date of submission: 2 April 2009	
Please indicate which sector this case study is an example of:	
Voluntary sector activity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Statutory sector activity	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Commissioning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Early Years	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faith	<input type="checkbox"/>
Funding	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Governance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hard to reach groups	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Health	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inclusive practice	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning & research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Measuring change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Online tools	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rights/citizenship	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Safeguarding	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Standards	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workforce development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Youth-led project	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other (<i>please specify</i>)	
Name of project: Children and young people meet the common core	
Name of lead person on project: Jacqueline Robson and Sasha Blythe	
Contact information for further details thechildrenssay@actionforchildren.org.uk 0191 4901059 www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/common-core	
Aims of the project: To engage with a group of 6 children and young people aged 10-14yrs to give them an understanding of the common core, subsequently leading to the development of resources such as leaflets to distribute to the children's workforce and spread the word of the common core.	
Timeline for the project (expected start and finish date, if known): Started February 2008 original posters were completed and produced in May 2008 but further work has gone on so the project continues.	
Please name any other organisations involved if this was a project developed as a partnership: Action for children, The Children's Say took the lead, the work was funded by CWDC so a relationship was developed with them and to inform the work children and young	

people met with various professionals from Education Welfare, Local Voluntary Organisations, Heads of Services, Teaching Assistants, Learning Support Assistants and commissioned an artist to support the development of the work.

Who funded this project?

CWDC

How many young people were involved?

6

How were children & young people involved in decision-making?

2 young people met to decide if the project should initially apply for the funding to undertake the project. They then worked with staff in the project to complete the application for funding. On hearing that the application was successful a larger group of children and young people were invited to participate in the project. The children and young people employed an artist to work with them and support the project, they gave him guidance as to what they would like to achieve and how the sessions should run giving feedback along the way. The young people explored the common core and what it meant to them. They identified key people they thought should be aware of the Common Core and wrote to them, inviting them to an interview. The children and young people agreed a series of questions to ask the individuals and develop a format for recording. With the information they obtained they continued to work with the artist to creatively transfer their ideas into art work. The children and young people took part in workshops trying out different artistic techniques and finally created characters for each of the skills which form common core. The children and young people sent their draft artwork to the CWDC and attended a meeting with professionals from CWDC and a team of designers at CWDC headquarters to decide on the final art work. Children and young people made all the arrangements for their visit to Leeds and actively participated in the meeting.

The children and young people decided on a distribution list for the completed poster and developed their work further by presenting to Gateshead's Improve Wellbeing Board, assisting with the writing up of the final report, contributed to press releases and produced a desk calendar to distribute the work further.

What changes has children & young people's involvement led to?

The process of involving children and young people in this process was fully documented and the message of how to achieve true and meaningful participation was echoed throughout CWDC. The posters finally produced are highly valued in Gateshead, Action for Children and with the CWDC. More of the workforce is now aware of the Common Core. The model used by the project to produce this piece of work will be used again by The Children's Say due its success.

What did children and young people involved in this work achieve from this experience?

The children and young people were engaged in an exciting, innovative, fast moving project with a number of new experiences offered. Children and young people worked as part of a team, mentored one another, communicated and controlled their behaviour, built friendships and their self esteem improved. When the children and young people were asked about their views and benefits they responded with:
"Learnt to work together."
"Working with different people, new designers, we already had a relationship with our own designers up here, but this was a new set of people to work with."

What next for the project?

The project is continuing to spread the word about the Common Core and distributing

the poster and calendar. The model used to complete this work, such as the level of children and young people's involvement, mentoring peers, working weekends has all been recorded and reflected upon, it is now aiding the development for the projects approach for coming work.

What next for the participants?

Of the 6 children and young people involved 3 have been to a planning event run by the project to decide on priorities for the coming year. They will remain involved in work with the project. The other 3 are older and are given opportunities to mentor younger children and young people or link with other groups such as the Regional Youth Work Unit. There are also plans to accredit the 3 older young people through the Asdan life routes programme.

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

Deidre Quill, Director of Workforce Reform and the Regions said *"The Common Core Project has been a great success. The children and young people involved created some fantastic images and messages that bring the common core of skills and knowledge to life. This project proves that in order to communicate what it takes to work with them, we should look to children and young people themselves."*

Cllr Catherine Donovan cabinet member for children and young people at Gateshead Council said; *"This valuable project is really helping our staff who work with children better understand their needs. It also lets young people have a say on local issues that are a priority for them and feed that in to the key decision makers in local government."*

The group of six cyp came together to produce this quote *"Through being involved in this work we have learnt to work together, to speak up, and design and make fantastic artwork. We think that everyone should know about the Common Core and that every school should display our posters for all to see."*

Jacqueline Robson, Action for Children; *"This project worked really well as it brought together children from different backgrounds who didn't know each other beforehand to creatively work as a team and explore new ideas, skills and opportunities. The idea was to make sure the language used in the leaflets was "real" and easy for everyone to understand, which I think they did brilliantly."*

The common core project run by The Children's Say was nominated for and shortlisted for the CYP Now services award 2008 under the category of workforce development.

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.