

Corporate Parenting Board – 20 September 2022

TITLE OF REPORT: Work of Young Ambassadors

REPORT OF: Helen Fergusson, Strategic Director, Children's Social Care and Lifelong Learning

Summary

This report provides a summary of the work of Gateshead's Young Ambassadors since commencing employment in January 2022.

Background

Agreement was given by Children, Adults and Families GMT in 2021 to create three 6-hour per week posts, ringfenced for care experienced children and young people, aged 16-25 years.

Aisha Imran, Jake Curbison and Mariceu Neto were appointed into these posts and started working for the Council in January 2022.

The Young Ambassadors were allocated two Corporate Parenting themes each.

- **Aisha Imran**
 - Participation
 - Accommodation and Placements
- **Jake Curbison**
 - Health
 - Education, Training and Employment
- **Mariceu Neto**
 - Leaving Care
 - Arts, Leisure and Activities



These themes guide their daily work, however additional work outside of these broad themes has also been undertaken.

The key roles of these posts include:

- Supporting the Children in Care Council to run its campaigns.
- Working with children and young people to promote involvement.
- Using social media to promote the children and young people's campaign.
- Be an ambassador for children in care and care leavers in various meetings and forums.
- Be a key contact for the North East Regional Children in Care Council.
- Contribute to meetings of the Corporate Parenting Partnership and subgroups.
- Represent Gateshead on the Regional NE Children in Care Council.
- Assist in the running of the annual Celebration Event.
- Such other responsibilities allocated which are appropriate to the grade of the post.

What have the Young Ambassadors been doing?

Mariceu Neto

During my time as being a Young Ambassador, I feel as though I have learnt so much so far. I have gained experience and helpful knowledge.

We visited Parliament for “It’s Our Care – Day of Action” to discuss and share our views on how children and young people really feel about being looked after. This gave us the opportunity to meet with MP’s to discuss the Care Review written by Josh Macalister. We met MP’s from the North East including Liz Twist.

I have helped organise activities for care leavers during the summer holidays. This has included running some of the activities like our TikTok project (Videos coming soon).

I was also able to be a part of a training session for agency carers, who were looking after one of our young people.

Going forward I want to:

- Help with the Celebrating Achievements Awards.
- Visit One Voice and other groups.
- Help organise a Christmas day/party event.
- Help with more training sessions.
- Organise an ongoing group for Care Leavers.

Aisha Imran

During my time as a Young Ambassador, I have achieved a few things. I started off with familiarising myself with the many professionals in Gateshead Council who have an input in children’s and young people’s lives.

I worked with Jake to deliver Corporate Parenting Training to Elected Members.

I have completed consultations with young people by visiting the Children’s Homes and attending the Big Red Bus holiday activity programme. Following on from the consultations, I have shared the information with the relevant professionals, resulting in young people’s voices being heard.

I have been spending time with the young people and building a rapport with them; this has been positive in allowing them to have another person to share their views and thoughts with. I have been feeding their views into the Reg 44 visits, I have even completed some visits with Kim Leighton.

In October half term, I am due to deliver some healthy relationships/online safety workshops at our Children’s Homes over 2 days. This is in collaboration with Laura Moat from the Domestic Abuse team.

I have been part of the Mockingbird steering group and going forward, I will be helping deliver the mockingbird initiative to the young people involved. I will be explaining to them what Mockingbird means for them. Lastly, I will be helping Chris, organise the Celebrating awards night.

I look forward to continuing make positive changes for the children and young people we work with.

Jake Curbison

During my time with Gateshead council, as a young ambassador, I have had the pleasure of meeting and working alongside a range of people.

Through being a young ambassador I have had the opportunity to work with young people and hear about all their interesting stories and lives.

I have assisted with delivering Corporate Parenting Training to Elected Members.

I have been attending the LAC be Healthy Group representing the views of children and young people.

I lobbied MP's in Parliament, when Mariceu and I attended It's Our Care – Day of Action. We got to listen to Josh MacAlister, who lead the independent review of Children's Social Care.

I also now assist the children's society with their projects involving young people, in relation to the Rise programme. I also work alongside Northumbria police on their IYAG which aims to bring the police closer to young people.

I am looking forward to helping plan the Celebrating Achievement Awards.

Work Requests

If you want to request the Young Ambassadors assistance with any work, this can be made via this link - [Work Request Form](#) or by emailing chrishulme@gateshead.gov.uk.

Contacting the Young Ambassadors

The Young Ambassadors can be contacted via email or Teams.

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