

# Very Super Kids

## Spring Edition

Newsletter for Kent Children in Care: Issue 16



### Welcome to the Spring Edition of our VSK newsletter...

In this spectacular Spring issue the VSK Participation Team have some great things to tell you about.

We had fabulous activity days learning African Dance and Chinese Dance, battled each other to become Times Tables legends and had a fantastic Super Council Meeting. Look inside for more info!

At VSK, we work hard to make sure that young people are listened to and that you get your chance to tell people how you feel about home and school.

We also love to hear about and help you celebrate all the great things you do. Send us your pictures, writing or anything else you want to say about your experiences of being in care. You could be in our next issue or your work displayed on Kent Cares Town.

Best Wishes

Tony Doran: Virtual School Kent Headteacher

### Included in this Issue:

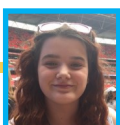
- Getting help from an advocate
- Mind of My Own and the Kent Pledge
- Super Council Update
- VSK Activity Days
- Online Safety
- Games
- Business Card Competition

**Get in touch with us or send pictures, writing or anything else to:**

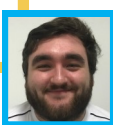
VSK\_Participation@kent.gov.uk

Virtual School Kent, Kent County Council,  
Worrall House, 30 Kings Hill Avenue, West  
Malling, ME19 4AE

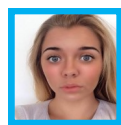
### VSK PARTICIPATION TEAM



Tia



Tom



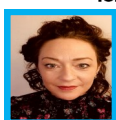
Chelsea



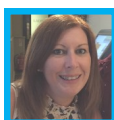
Reece



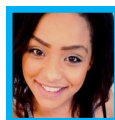
Rob



Andrea



Jo



Sophia



Sarah



Don't forget to check out the Primary Portal on the Kent Cares Town website at [kentcares town.lea.kent.sch.uk/primary/](http://kentcares town.lea.kent.sch.uk/primary/)

Here you'll find lots of information about being in care, your school, health and lots more! There's also information about the Super Council and an easy way to contact the Participation Team.

You'll also be able to read the latest news or blogs, watch videos made by the Participation Team Apprentices and find out more about your Corporate Parents.



# Kent Cares Town



If you are part of the Super Council, you also get free membership to Kent Children's University.

Kent Children's University offers lots of fun and exciting learning opportunities for you to take part in when you aren't at school.

There are lots of different places you can visit where you can get 'credits' added to a very special Children's University Passport you are given.

You also get 'Credits' for attending any Super Council meetings and VSK Activity Days, plus lots of other activities and competitions.

For more information visit:

<http://www.kentchildrensuniversity.co.uk/cukent/home/>



## FOR FOSTER CARERS

We need your help to encourage children to join the Super Council.

We want them to help shape the services they receive and also help other Children in Care who may be feeling like 'they are the only ones out there.'

## WANT TO GET INVOLVED?



Contact: Tom or Tia

Email: [Thomas.Byrne@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Thomas.Byrne@kent.gov.uk) or  
[Tia.Pires-Higgins@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Tia.Pires-Higgins@kent.gov.uk)

Telephone: 03000 415994 or 03000 412922



# Are you in care or a care leaver?



Is it hard to get people to listen to you or understand you?



Would you like help at meetings? Or is the help you are getting not very good? Do you want to complain?

Do you know about all the things you are supposed to get as a young person in care? Would you like to know more?



Young Lives Foundation advocates can help you tell your workers how you are feeling and what you think about important decisions. The advocates can help you understand your rights and entitlements and can help you to bring up any problems you have about the care you receive.

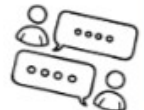
The advocacy service is confidential and independent.



If you would like to find out more or receive advocacy support

Call us on our freephone number : 0808 1640 096

[www.ylf.org.uk](http://www.ylf.org.uk)



## JARGON BUSTER

**ADVOCATE** A person who can support you so you have more confidence to speak for yourself. They can help you write letters, come to your meetings with you and help you solve your problems.

**CONFIDENTIAL** This means that what you talk to the advocate about will be kept secret and not passed on to other people unless you say it's ok (unless they are worried about your or someone else's safety).

**INDEPENDENT** This means that the advocate doesn't work for Social Services, your school or anyone else - they work for you! They are separate from your other workers.

**RIGHTS AND ENTITLEMENTS** These are the things the law says you must receive and how you should be treated as a Child in Care.

# Mind Of My Own

Have you tried the Mind of My Own App? If you are 8 or over, you can sign up for your own account.

Mind of My Own lets you send your thoughts and feelings about different topics, like Share Good News, Change Something or My Worker is Visiting, to your Social Worker or IRO when you want, where you want!

Why not sign up and have a look? Ask your Carer or Social Worker to help!

How's it going?

Use the slider to show how happy you are.



Slide me!

[www.mindofmyown.org.uk](http://www.mindofmyown.org.uk)



Angru



Enthusiastic



Unsafe



Hopeful

## KENT PLEDGE

Have you received your copy of the Kent Pledge cards?



The Kent Pledge is 6 promises that Kent County Council make to you as a child in the care of Kent. They are:

- To give you a sense of belonging
- Make sure you have an adult who is always there for you
- Make sure you have a good education
- Help you make good memories for the future
- Help you get ready for being an adult
- To support your interests and needs

We have made the 6 promises into a set of cards that are given to you by your Social Worker. They have been designed with the help of young people in care and are clear and easy to understand.

If you don't have a pack, just ask your Social Worker.



# THE SUPER COUNCIL

The Super Council is for Children in Care aged 7 to 11. We meet every school holiday to have FUN and to meet other children in care. Members of the Super Council get to share their good experiences of being a Kent Child in Care and suggest ways to make things better.

**We had a great meeting in the February school holidays, and have some fab members.**

**We would love it if more of you came along to meetings too. Contact Tia:**

**Tia.Pires-Higgins@kent.gov.uk**

**to find out more!**



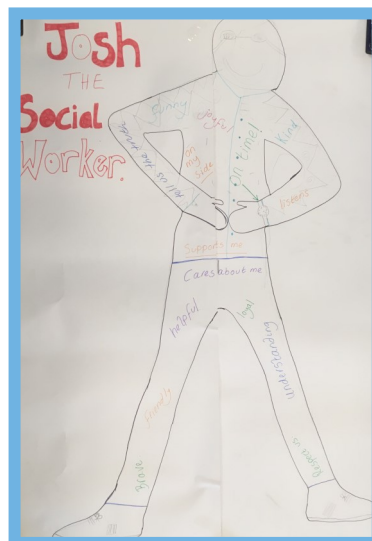
## What happened at our February meeting?

At the start of the meeting, everyone introduced themselves with a few fun facts. Chelsea, one of the Participation Team's Apprentices, then explained that in the meeting we were going to focus on the qualities that Social Workers should have.

The Council members split into two groups and drew around one member in each group. They then designed what their dream Social Worker would look like and gave them a name!

Once they had drawn their Social Workers they wrote inside their bodies qualities that they wanted their Social Workers to have. This included things like:

Helpful      Listens      Understanding  
On time      Kind      Cares about us



They also thought about their best Social Worker Moments. Some of the things they spoke about included going on trips or for meals out, their Social Worker helping them get things they needed or arranging for them to see their family or simply being there for them when things were tough. Their ideas and illustrated work may soon be seen in an E-Book celebrating Social Work Day! If you've got some ideas about what makes a good Social Worker or wanted to create your own picture, why not send it in so we can display it on Kent Cares Town? Email VSK\_Participation@kent.gov.uk.

At the end of the meeting, it was time to have some fun - each member was given some yummy cakes to decorate however they wanted and there was a chance to chat and have some food!

# Around the World in a Day

Over the February half term, there were two activity days held in Kings Hill and Canterbury. Young People could come along and take part in different workshops - African Drumming, Chinese Dance and Asian Shadow Puppets - to learn about some arts from different cultures.



The African drum we played was called a "Djembe". It is found in West Africa and normally made from goat skin!

We practised the different sounds we could make and then put them together to make patterns. At first, it was difficult to remember what to do but with practice and a bit of help it became a lot easier to remember and we were soon jamming along!



We also had a Chinese ribbon dance workshop. You use the ribbon to create patterns and designs in the air. At first, everyone felt a bit silly and shy to take part but once we went through the moves and had a giggle about how we all looked together, everyone enjoyed themselves. It was actually a lot harder than it looked not to get the ribbons tangled or knotted!



Finally, we had an Asian Shadow Puppets workshop. We learnt that shadow puppets are a part of an ancient Indian culture and that they deliver a good message within a story. The shadow puppetry is performed behind a white sheet with a light beaming through so the figures of the shadow puppets are easier to see. We made our own shadow puppets of animals, kings and other characters to take part in a story.

All in all it was a fantastic day!



During the February Half Term, the Participation Team were invited to join in the fun at the Times Tables Rock Stars, Battle of the Bands event in North Kent.

TT Rock Stars is a fantastic website and app where children can have fun learning their times tables. You can create your very own rock star, battle your friends to reach the top of the leader board and become a rock legend!



The VSK Team getting ready to rock (their times tables!)

The Battle of the Bands was a great event where lots of young people competed in times table challenges throughout the day.

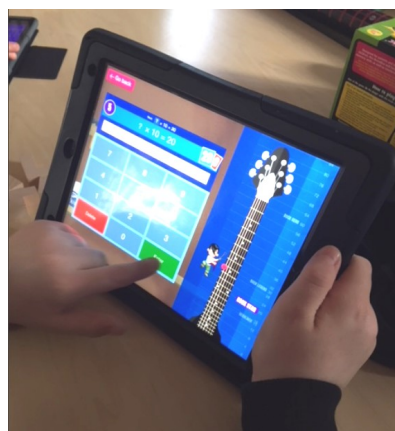
The VSK Apprentices were there too, ready to challenge anyone who wanted to try and beat them, and they didn't give in easily!

The day ended with a final battle on stage to find the Ultimate Rock Legend for all Eternity!

There were also lots of medals and certificates given to the top scorers in each round and in different areas.

If you would like more information about TT Rock Stars, please contact us at:

[VSK\\_Participation@kent.gov.uk](mailto:VSK_Participation@kent.gov.uk)



Don't forget if you're already signed up for TT Rockstars, you can challenge the VSK Apprentices and staff to a times tables battle!



# STAYING SAFE ONLINE

We know that most of you love spending time on the internet playing games, watching videos or even doing your homework! Below are a few tips for keeping yourself safe whilst using the internet:



Don't post any personal information online – like your address, the school you go to, your birthday, email address or mobile number.



Think carefully before posting pictures or videos of yourself. Once you've put a picture of yourself online other people may be able to see it and may be able to download it, it's not just yours anymore.



Keep your privacy settings as high as possible, if you are not sure settings, ask a responsible adult to help you.



Never give out your passwords online or over the phone.



Don't befriend people you don't know.



Don't meet up with people you've met online. Speak to your carer about people suggesting you do.



Remember that not everyone online is who they say they are.



Think carefully about what you say before you post something online.



Respect other people's views, even if you don't agree with someone else's views, it doesn't mean you need to be rude.



If you see something online that makes you feel uncomfortable, or worried tell a trusted adult immediately.

If you want to find out more about online safety, check out [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)







# GAMES



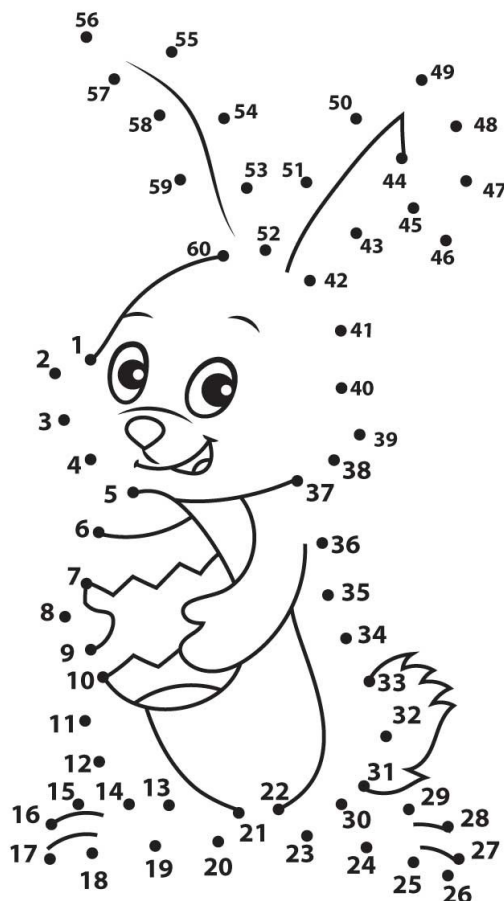
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N T G I N G R W O I A  
C E S M G S F E H N T  
B R E E Z Y U R E G E  
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## Word List

SPRINGTIME HATCHING FLOWERS EASTER SUNNY  
COLOURFUL BLOOMING BREEZY GREEN BUNNY  
CHOCOLATE CHIRPING EASTER RAINY EGGS

## Spring Wordsearch

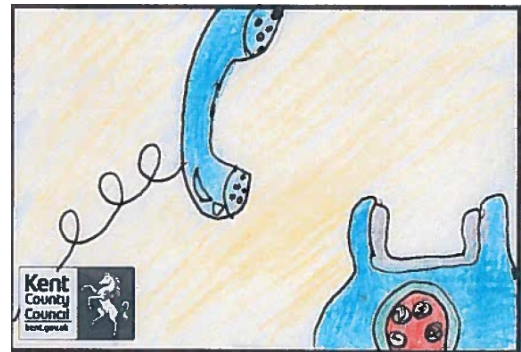
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# COMPETITION TIME

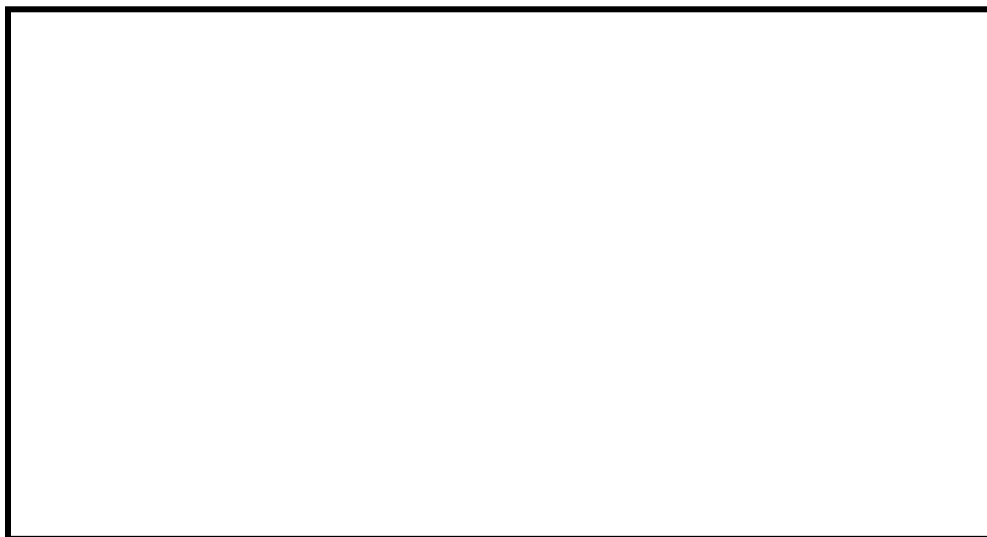
In 2015, young people told us that they wanted to be able to get in contact with their Social Workers more easily. So, we created Social Worker business cards that workers could give to their young people with all of their contact details.

We are now looking for new designs for business cards for Social Workers and other Kent County Council workers!  
This was our 2015 competition winning entry.



Below there is a space for your design or you can use your own plain paper.

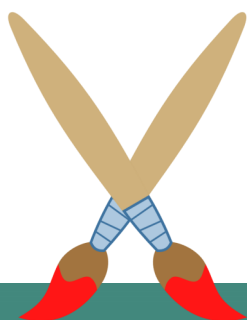
We cannot wait to see how creative you are!



Please send your design to: Reece Graves –

Virtual School Kent, Kent County Council, Worrall House, 30 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, ME19 4AE

or Email: [VSK\\_Participation@kent.gov.uk](mailto:VSK_Participation@kent.gov.uk)



**There are lots of prizes to be won!**  
**We can't wait to see your designs!**