

Very Super Kids

Newsletter for Kent Children in Care: Issue 14



Welcome to our
Summer edition
of our
newsletter...

In this Super Summer issue we have
some great things to tell you about.

We have lots of FUN activity days for you
to enjoy throughout the Summer, so look
inside for more info!

We also want to hear about you and
what you are up to! So get in touch and
tell us your news. Send in your stories
and artwork.

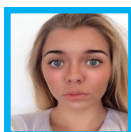
Email us:

VSK_Participation@kent.gov.uk

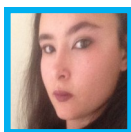
*Enjoy the Summer holidays and try not to
eat too much ice cream!*



VSK PARTICIPATION TEAM



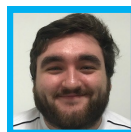
Chelsea



CHLOE



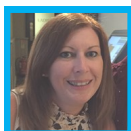
Reece



Tom



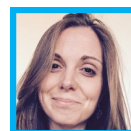
Andrea



Jo



SOPHIA



Sarah

Included in this Issue:

- **Super Council Meetings**
- **Kent Pledge and MOMO**
- **VSK Talent Showcase**
- **Lifelong Links**
- **VSK Activity Days**
Easter and May Updates
Upcoming Summer Events
- **Writers Section**
Express yourself
- **Summer Games**



Well done to England!

You still did us proud!



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 already have some fab members and would love it if more of you came along.



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/>

We would also like to say a massive well done to Ruby for all the work she has put into the Kent Children's University and for her graduation!



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 Chloe

Email: Thomas.Byrne@kent.gov.uk or Chloe-Elizabeth.Mutton@kent.gov.uk

Telephone: 03000 415994 or 03000 414807

GOOD WORK OF THE SUPER COUNCIL

In our recent Super Council meetings, we had a few important things to do. Our Apprentice Reece presented a new app called 'MOMO' (Mind of My Own) and showed the members how it works. MOMO gives young people in care another way to communicate with their workers.

The reaction to MOMO was really good. The Super Council thought that in times when children are worried about something or if there is something they are finding it difficult to talk about, MOMO could be used to share how they are feeling. They also liked the way it could be used to quickly share good news. See more about MOMO in the next few pages.

We also enjoyed some juice, snacks and pizza! It wouldn't be a good day if we weren't getting our hands mucky with glue and glitter for our Kent's Children in Care Council Scrapbook! We asked the Council members to decorate a page each with a biography and an aim for the Super Council in 2018. We have some future artists in the council as the pages ended up

beautifully decorated. The Scrap Book will be used as a way to show and tell other Children in Care about Children in Care Councils.

Did you know?

Super Council members are busy designing the artwork that will be used in the new Kent Cares Town Website!



They also came up with some great aims, which are:

- To help promote MOMO to other Children in Care
- To get more members for the Super Council
- To have a trip out just for Super Council
- To make a Super Council year book



During the Easter half term, we took the West Kent and East Kent Super Council and OCYPC bowling as a treat for all their hard work. They started off with a tasty mixed platter lunch which included popcorn chicken, wings, drum sticks, some amazing mozzarella sticks and nachos.



After filling up with food, we managed to waddle over to the lanes for a few rounds of bowling, so the wave of spares and strikes could roll in, which they did! Everyone must have had their competitive heads screwed on because the games were really close and no one stayed in the lead for long. Overall, it was a great afternoon and going by all the laughs and smiles, everyone had a lot fun!

MOMO: A Mind of my Own

You said that you wanted a more up to date way to contact people like your Social Worker, and also a way to tell us about things that are happening in your life.

We think we have found a way you can do this. The MOMO App will help you say what you want, when you want to say it. Your carer and Social Worker can help you use it if you want them to. There are 2 versions of MOMO, one is for younger users or those who may need more help and is called MOMO Express. The other is to be used independently by you young people and is called MOMO One.

On the next few pages we have some information on how you can sign up and use!

www.mindofmyown.org.uk



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.

VSK TALENT SHOW



On Friday 1st June 2018, we held our very first Virtual School Kent Talent Showcase at the Lecture Theatre in Sessions House in Maidstone. The aim of the Talent Showcase was to address the stigma around children and young people in care, as the way it's shown in the media isn't always that nice and is often just wrong! To prove these things to be the myths that they are we had some of you guys show off some of your amazing talents.

Of course, not all of these could be shown off inside the lecture hall, so we had some VSK Apprentices and staff criss-cross the county to film some of the things you all do. We ended up getting everything from gymnastics and trampolining to going to a skate park and filming some scootering!

On the day however, we had some truly fantastic singing, some fabulous dancing, poetry and some joyful songs played on a keyboard. We expected you guys to be good, but we just didn't know how good you'd all be! You blew everyone's minds!

You were all so amazing and so brave standing in front of everyone like that. You all performed your hearts out and despite all the work on our end organising it, it wouldn't have been possible without all you amazingly talented young people.

So, from everyone in the VSK team,
thank you!!!



Lifelong Links

“Building lasting relationships for Children in Care”

What is Lifelong Links?

Lifelong Links is a new and exciting project for children and young people in care, who are under 16 years of age.



Lifelong Links helps to find and bring together people who care about you. This can be people you know well, people you have not seen in a while (like an old neighbour or carer) and relatives who you may have not met yet or haven't seen in a while.

Together, you can meet and plan for how those who care about you can be involved in your life now and in the future.

This could be anything from meeting up and socialising to them sending a birthday card every year. This meeting is called a family group conference.

Who else is involved?

Your Social Worker and Carer can help you if you want them to. A Lifelong Links Coordinator will also meet with you to get to know you. They will find the people you are happy to have in your life and bring them together.

How can Lifelong Links help me?

- You can learn more about your family history.
- By finding family and friends who you care about and who care about you.
- By getting people together who you are happy to have in your life, who you can turn to and help you in different ways as you grow.



How do I take part?

Just talk to your Social Worker or Carer and ask them to contact Lifelong Links.

Do I have to take part?

No, it is your choice. Even if you say yes and then change your mind, that's fine. Just tell your Coordinator or Social Worker.

Feedback!

The feedback we have received from the young people who have taken part in this project so far is that it was a really good experience. They were glad they got the opportunity to take part in the Lifelong Links project. The young people also said the Lifelong Links coordinators were supportive and did the work at the young person's pace, so the young people felt in control of the situation.



Our Challenge to the Corporate Parents!

The Children in Care Councils agree that Lifelong Links is a good project, even if they wouldn't have done it for themselves. The Councils felt all Children and Young People in Care should be given the opportunity to take part.

So, on the behalf of our Children in Care Councils the apprentices presented a Challenge Card at the Lifelong Links Launch. The challenge was ...

“Having heard about the need for children and young people in care to feel as ‘connected’ to their support network as others do in their families. How will you, as their Corporate Parents, give this opportunity to all Children in Care going forward?”

Matt Dunkley, the Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education, accepted our challenge and will be back soon with a response...



Members of the VSK Team before our big presentation at the Life Long Links Launch Event

VSK ACTIVITY DAYS

Over the Easter Half term, we held two performing arts activity days in West Kent and East Kent locations.

We had the Kent School of Performing Arts come in and hold some dance, drama and singing workshops.



During their dance workshop, everyone had fun dancing like a pro despite there being so much to remember!

It came as no surprise that during the singing workshop, songs from The Greatest Showman came up. What was surprising was how well all of you remembered the lyrics to all the songs being taught! Of course there were some hiccups at first but eventually it felt like we were in the cinema listening to the film!

Our drama workshop started off with some basic warm ups to get our blood flowing, so we could move on to the really fun stuff, like improvisation. We even ended up having some really funny political imitations!



We also had Tom come in to teach us all some amazing circus skills. This included plate spinning, juggling and teaching young people how to use flower sticks. We just hope no one runs off to the circus!

VSK ACTIVITY DAYS

Over the May half term we held some really fun activities. We went to Arethusa Venture Centre and Revolutions Skatepark and Climbing Centre.

At Arethusa, we had lots of fun learning how to use a bow and arrow. We all ended up getting a little competitive when it was time to play the pizza game. (This is where each colour on the target is matched with a part of a pizza, yellow for cheese, red for tomato sauce, etc.) Whoever ended up making the most pizzas would win!



We also took to the climbing wall at both Revolutions and Arethusa to test our nerves. How high could we go? A few of the young people even got right to the top!



At Revolutions, the young people (and some of our Apprentices!) had a fantastic time on scooters in the skatepark!



Coming Soon! More VSK Activity Days!

We have lots of fun activities and days out coming up this Summer!



If you would like to come along and join in the fun, just ask your Carer or your Social Worker to get in touch with us.

Turn the page to get some ideas about what our plans for the summer are!



VSK ACTIVITY DAYS

Over the Summer Holidays we have some fun activities coming up!

They are:

Betteshanger Park where we will be doing den building, obstacle courses and fossil hunting!



Bewl Water where we will be doing some canoeing and mountain biking.

Howletts Zoo where we will be able to see an awesome array of beautiful animals from all over the world!



Huckleberry Woods where we will be pig fishing and going on a treasure hunt!

Shorne Woods where we will be den building and playing some team building games!



WRITER'S SECTION



This section is for you to send us anything you would like to share with us and other young people. This can include artwork, poems, achievements or anything you would like to ask the Participation Team!

If you have something you would like to share with us or would like to show your work in the newsletter please contact Tom.



Changes Poem

First I was living in bad conditions
then everything changed during July.

When it changed I didn't cry
because I finally got to see the light blue
shiny sky.

It made me very happy
because I got to go to school.

I made much more friends and
started to know it all.

It was a fun change, it was cool
I am more happy over all.

- by Kristina



Email us:

VSK_Participation@kent.gov.uk

or send your pictures, news and info to:
Thomas Byrne



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

New website design ideas from our Super Council Members and Focus Groups:





GAMES



Summer Word Scramble

HEBCA

KBCTEU

DSAPE

KAPR

NVCIAOTA

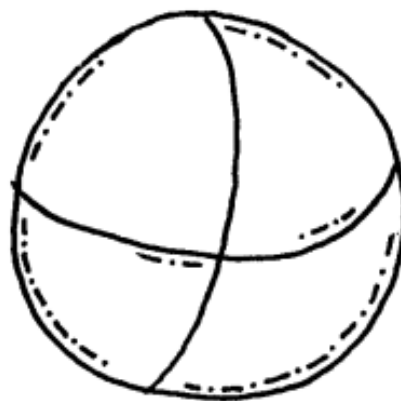
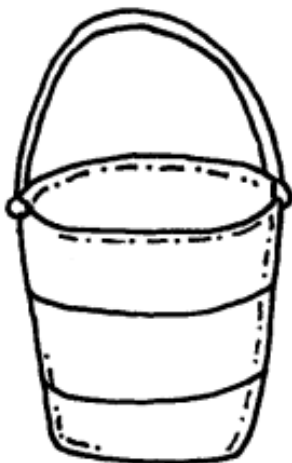
NIPCCI

KIBNII

PNICMAG

MUMERS

HSRTOS





Can you help these monkeys find their way to the beach?

WORDSEARCH



S	B	I	D	V	F	Z	L	S	O	D	F
U	S	W	C	U	V	Q	E	W	U	S	H
N	P	H	A	E	O	H	H	E	T	W	O
S	R	S	O	T	C	P	O	A	S	I	L
H	I	U	W	T	E	R	D	T	I	M	I
I	N	S	T	I	D	R	E	K	D	M	D
N	K	D	U	F	M	O	M	A	E	I	A
E	L	R	V	Z	D	S	G	E	M	N	Y
H	E	A	B	I	K	E	U	S	L	G	Y
A	R	Z	X	P	I	C	N	I	C	O	W
Z	I	C	E	L	O	L	L	Y	T	U	N
N	M	C	A	M	P	I	N	G	J	H	Q

BIKE
HOT
ICELOLLY
SPRINKLER
SWIMMING

CAMPING
HOTDOGS
OUTSIDE
SUNSHINE
SWIMSUIT

HOLIDAY
ICECREAM
PICNIC
SWEAT
WATERMELON



THE READING AGENCY AND LIBRARIES PRESENT

MISCHIEF MAKERS

SUMMER READING CHALLENGE 2018

Mischief Makers – the Summer Reading Challenge coming to Kent libraries

Children aged 4-11 are invited to join the Summer Reading Challenge in all Kent's libraries, from 14th July to 15th September.

The theme for 2018 is Mischief Makers; celebrating the 80th anniversary of the much loved comic, Beano.

Children taking part in the Challenge will follow clues to explore their colourful collector's map of Beanotown; meeting Dennis, Gnasher and friends along the way. As children read library books, they will collect special stickers to help them find the mysterious buried treasure.

To take part in the Challenge, all children need to do is sign up at their nearest library. When they have completed the Challenge by reading 6 books they will receive a medal and a certificate. It's all free!

There's a website to add to the fun too www.mischief-makers.org.uk

Mischief Makers will celebrate adventure, friendship, reading and fun.

Last year over 18,000 children took part in Animal Agents.

"This was great for both my daughters. My 8 year old discovered new authors as a result and my 5 year old has moved up 2 reading levels due to her summer reading". (Feedback from a parent in 2017)

Lauren Child, Waterstones Children's Laureate, says:

"The Summer Reading Challenge is about reading for the pleasure of reading."

The Summer Reading Challenge is produced by The Reading Agency and delivered by libraries.

Find out more at your local library or www.kent.gov.uk/libs



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