

# Consultation Day for Looked After Children

## Beamish Open Air Museum

June 1st 04



Young People's Engagement Team in  
association with South Tyneside  
Multi Agency Looked After Partner-  
ship

## Summary of event and Results

This event was organised to ensure that Looked After children in South Tyneside have the opportunity to share their expertise with us on how to meet the needs identified in the National Healthy Care Standard. The event took place in the June Half term holiday at Beamish Open Air museum. The children were aged between 6 and 12 years old and were all Looked After within the borough of South Tyneside.

The children had the chance to explore Beamish in small groups, experience life in a Victorian classroom and complete the consultation workshops.

### What did they tell us?

The most important elements of their care are:

- Helping them to make friends
- Feeling loved
- Getting hugs and attention
- Remembering their birthday

They think adults do not listen to them when:

- When they (adults) are sick of you
- When we (children) are being naughty
- When they (adults) are watching TV
- When they (adults) are busy
- When we (children) are angry

When people do not listen to them, it makes them feel:

- Angry
- Upset
- Sad

Most of the young people thought that:

- Their doctor is friendly

- Their carer always explains why they have to go to the doctors
- They were healthy
- Sweets make you healthy

Some of them thought that:

- Visiting the doctor could be improved if the doctor explains things to them rather than carer
- Visiting the dentist would be better if the room was not so smelly
- Hospital would be better if there were more things to play with
- Visits to the opticians would be better if they could see what kind of glasses there were before they go (so they knew they wouldn't be embarrassed if they need them)
- Health checks would be better if you get stickers for going

The activities or hobbies that they most like doing are:

- Reading
- Swimming
- Going to cinema

The activities they would like to do most in future are:

- Learning the guitar
- Football coaching, badminton
- Book swapping

The children also completed an evaluation of the day which found that while everybody had enjoyed themselves, the weather, which was poor, had not been enjoyable!

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## Background:

South Tyneside Children's services are part of a national pilot to develop an action plan for the National Healthy Care Standards; these standards set certain priorities to ensure that every looked after child has a positive, healthy experience.

The South Tyneside Multi Agency Looked After Partnership (MALAP) has developed a short-term action plan to meet the needs set out in the standard. One of the main concerns was to consult our looked after young people to find out what their priorities for "healthy" care are.

There are 6 areas that need addressing covering all aspects of being looked after. We asked the younger Looked After children about five of these priorities.

The sixth priority was in relation to leaving care and the older Looked After young people were asked for their opinions on this area.

The areas identified for this consultation project were:

1. FEEL SAFE, PROTECTED AND VALUED IN A STRONG, SUSTAINED AND COMMITTED RELATIONSHIPS WITH AT LEAST ONE CARER
2. LIVE IN A HEALTHY CARING ENVIRONMENT
3. FEEL RESPECTED AND SUPPORTED IN HIS / HER PERSONAL IDENTITY AND CULTURAL BELIEFS.
4. HAVE ACCESS TO EXCELLENT EFFECTIVE HEALTHCARE TREATMENT AND SERVICES.
5. HAVE OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP, PERSONAL AND SOCIAL SKILLS, TALENTS AND ABILITIES AND SPEND TIME IN FREELY CHOSEN PLAY, CULTURE AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES.

The MALAP group had varying levels of expertise in each of these areas and were able to develop strategies to meet these priorities but ultimately it is the young people who are looked after that will have the best insight into how they can be achieved.

Although it is becoming more common to talk about including children's perspectives in planning new approaches to delivering services, the rhetoric outpaces practice. This is particularly the case for younger children.

The MALAP group therefore planned to organise a consultation event to begin the process of seeking the views of young people looked after who are under the age of 12.

It is this group that are normally under represented when it comes to seeking views. And while the priorities apply to all Looked After children they particularly apply to the younger age group.

### **Aim of the Consultation:**

Find out what Looked After Children think about the 5 priorities already identified and help them to think about ways that we can deliver on them.

### **The day itself:**

We organised a consultation event at Beamish Open Air museum on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 04.

We planned to take Looked After Children and Young People, aged between 6yrs and 12 yrs, to Beamish. There was 1 and a half hours of consultation and the rest of the time the young people were able to explore Beamish with group leaders. The itinery can be

found below.

The children also had the chance to experience life in a Victorian classroom for approximately 1 hour and find out what life was like in the 1890's.

## Beamish Consultation Day Itinerary

- 9:30 - Leave from the PLACE
- 10:00 - Arrive and make way down to the Schoolroom
- 10:15 - Welcome, intro, in the schoolroom
- 10:30 - Victorian Classroom exercise
- 11:30 - Colliery and pit house visit, trip to town on Tram
- 12:30 - Lunch in the Cookson Room
- 1:00 - Consultation in the Cookson Room
- 2:45 - Look at town,
- 3:15 - make way back to entrance via bus or Tram
- 3:30 - Groups come back together and leave on Coach
- 4:00 - Arrive Back at the PLACE

## The consultation

The consultation took place in the Cookson room and is situated above the Co-Op in the town centre area. The room is a function room that can be hired for various purposes while visiting Beamish.

We used the same room for lunch, games and also the actual consultation workshops. We spent the first few minutes explaining the purpose of the consultation and what we were going to do.

We then played some ice breaker games to help the young people focus on what they were going to be doing.



## The Activities

We developed five activities that were designed to help the children think about the five priorities mentioned earlier. We sought to design activities that were:

- Multi-method, that is they recognised the different "voices" or languages of children.
- Participatory, to ensure that we treat them as experts in their own lives.

We used a variety of methods within the activities for a number of reasons. Firstly it is good practice to keep the young people interested and engaged in all five activities; we wanted to maximise their involvement and so providing different things for them to do is an effective way to do this. But it is also important to understand that listening is a process that is not limited to the spoken word.

As Clark and Moss state in "listening to young children" (2001),  
" The phrase *voice of the child* may suggest the transmission of ideas only through words, but listening to children needs to be a process which is open to the many creative ways children use to express their views and experiences."

Some of the activities involved drawing, using stickers, holding cards, voting, listening to stories etc and served as a springboard for more talking, listening and reflecting. Some of the young people invited were also selectively mute and so it was important for them to be able to participate without the need for speech. The activities were developed with the help of the Particip8 project so thanks must go to them for helping us come up with such interactive activities!

Children's Services recognise that for participation to be meaningful it must begin from the starting point of "children as experts in their own lives." The activities therefore sought to emphasise this

and underline the importance of their involvement and the high regard that their views would be held in.

Each activity was facilitated by a group leader (the same people that the children had been with in the morning). The young people had already been separated into groups in order to travel around Beamish and so it was in these same groups that they completed the activities.



Each group had 15 minutes to complete the workshop and then had to move to the next one. In this way the children were kept busy as they had something new to do every 15 minutes. It also meant that each facilitator had only to work on one activity and so they were not overloaded with things to remember.

The facilitators volunteered to help and were made up of:

- Young People's Engagement Workers
- Teachers and Mentors from The PLACE
- Looked After Children's Nurse
- Matrix worker for Looked After Children
- Particip8 Workers (NCH South Tyneside Participation Project)
- Monitoring Officer for Children's Services



**NEED 1** - Feel safe, protected and valued in a strong, sustained and committed relationship with at least one carer.

**Activity 1: What does being "cared for" mean?**

The children were asked this question and then shown cards with words and pictures on describing different elements of being cared for the children were encouraged to discuss these elements - and they could then put up their hands if they agreed that it constituted being cared for.

So what did they say?

Description	Number of votes/16
Having enough food	14
Getting hugs and attention	15
Getting enough sleep	12
Having fun	10
Going to the dentist when you need to	13
Learning and going to school	14
Feeling loved	15
Helping you with your homework	12
Helping you to make friends	15
Remembering your birthday	15
Talking to you	14
Helping you to find out about your past	11
Listening to what you have to say	12
Going to the doctors when you need to	16
All of these things	16

Young people were then asked for their own ideas of what being cared for means; this is what they came up with -

- ➔ People being nice to you
- ➔ Just caring
- ➔ Being good to you
- ➔ Buying you things/making you feel special
- ➔ Having a girlfriend/boyfriend



- Cuddling you
- Showing that they like you by Celebrating things
- Being looked after and no drinking
- Keeping you healthy
- Having fun
- Looking out for you
- Helping you go to clubs (i.e. karate not bars!)
- Being prevented from committing suicide
- Being happy
- Helping you with things
- Cared for - wearing clothes
- When you feel safe and when you are looked after properly and go to school
- When carers show their feelings and look after you when you are hurt
- Having nice things said about you
- Getting treats and days out but not too many
- Telling you when to come in - 9'o'clock so that you are not hurt or raped.

### How can we help you?

The children were then asked to think if there is anything that their **carers** do to care for them now and whether there are things they could do to help them more? The children or the facilitator wrote the answers onto pictures of carers.

### What Do They Do Now?

Provide food	Kisses and cuddles	Going out to nice places
Birthday presents	Give you a hug when upset	Let you cook meals
Trust you	Roof over your head	Good times to come in at night
Take you on holidays	Give you money	Take you swimming

## What Could Carers Do More Of?

More trips e.g. McDonalds	Let you sleep out at friends house	Shout at you less
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The Children were then asked to think if there is anything that their Social Worker does which helps them.

## What Do They Do Now?

Take care of you when you meet your mam	Tell you about your mam	Takes me to important meetings
Listens to me	Asks how you are doing	Take you to McDonalds
Takes you to pictures	Try to get us out of care	Sometimes sorts money out for trips
Help you to have contact with family	Don't let you run away	Find out things about your parents if you don't know
Ask me if I'm happy where I'm living	Help to settle arguments so that my home is nice	

## What Could Social Workers Do More Of?

More pocket money	Organise sleep overs	Show that they care
More treats	See them more often	Ask your mam more questions
Turn up to important meetings	Don't take days off when you have important meetings	Money to go on holiday
Don't forget important stuff	Don't change Social workers all the time	Wanted a man social worker not a women
Don't be liars and cheaters	Don't be lazy	Don't lie about how many times they've seen me and what I said
Come more often	Treat you like a parent would not shaking your hands	



**NEED 2 - Live in a healthy caring environment where she/he can develop and achieve his/her physical, emotional and spiritual potential**

**Activity two: The "Boggart" Box:**

*The Boggart box contains all the worries in the world.*

A Boggart is a creature from Harry Potter that takes on the shape of the thing that you are most scared of but the Boggart box is slightly different in that it fills itself with all the things that we are *worried* about.

The facilitator explains what the box contains for them .e.g. worried that people will think they are silly because they like wearing hats! Or worried what people will think if they tell them they are a teacher!!

The young people had to think about what the box would contain for them and wrote down their answers on the cards that were put into the box. The children did not have to tell everyone what they were worried about but they could if they wanted to. The facilitator then explained that the Boggart Box is only scary when it's closed - once it is opened the worries inside can be seen and you can get help to deal with them. The children compiled a list of the ways that people can deal with the worries and the people who might be able to help.

Worry:	Advice:
Lonely	talk to friends talk to family talk to teachers make new friends tell your social worker
Death	try not to think of it too much Get over it think positive talk to grown ups look at statistics (not likely to happen)

What will happen tomorrow	chill out be careful look at statistics
Spiders	kill them stamp on them scream for help stand on it get help from someone who isn't scared remember that the spider is more scared than you get a glass, put it on spider than carry it away
Bullying	tell family/adult/teacher stay away from bully tell an adult stand up for yourself confront bully try to sort things out with bully
Getting beaten up	Give them a good punching tell teacher or grown up stay away from them
Not fitting in new school	be nice and helpful make new friends keep your head down at first give everyone sweets talk to teacher
Not getting on with family	stay out of the way talk to them ignore them talk to your family/carer
Boyfriends / Girlfriends	don't flirt too much don't give wrong impression be yourself don't do anything you don't want to act natural
How you will turn out	be yourself act normal
Getting wrong off teachers	stay out of trouble forget about it think of something nice
Fun fair ride / Terroriser	talk to people who have been on it try it out take a friend with you don't go on it



**NEED 3 - Feel respected and supported in his/her personal identity and cultural beliefs.**

**Activity 3: "Not Now Bernard!"**

To begin with the facilitator reads the story of "Not Now Bernard". This is a children's book that describes how Bernard (a child) discovers a monster and tries to tell his family about it. No body has time to listen to Bernard and unfortunately he ends up being eaten by the monster. The monster then goes and eats Bernard's tea while his mother does not notice the difference.

The young people are asked questions about how Bernard feels when nobody listens to him? What is making him feel like that? How could Bernard's mum and dad make him feel better?

Then further questions were asked about their own situation.

**When do adults listen to you?**

When I was being bullied	A lot	Often
When it's time for school	When I am hurt x4	When I'm in trouble
When my best friend is on the TV	When you need them	When I am hungry
When you are upset	At schoolx2	All the time
When you have a problem	When I have a BIG problem	When you're getting bullied
When you are hurt inside	When I am unhappy	Never, they like the sounds of their voice so they never shut up



## When do adults not listen to you?

When you're being naughty x7	When you shout out x2	When you get punished
In Not NOW Bernard	When I've been hitting people	When they are sick of you
When you're bored	When you annoy them	When you are in a bad mood
When they are watching TV	When they are busy	When it's important
When you are angry	When you torment them	When you are lonely
They always listen 2 me	When it is an awkward question	When they are watching coronation street
They never do	When you have nothing to say	

## How can we listen to you better?

Have an ear check	By sitting down together and talking	Stop what they are doing
Talk to kids nicely	Turn off the TV	Give us a microphone with loud speakers
Don't be too busy at work	Don't lose temper	They will never listen
They never will	To us never	By telling us when it is a good time to talk
Being alone and talking to your mam and dad		

## How can your carer make you feel happy? Etc

Paying attention to what we have to say	By giving me sweets!	By asking us what we want to do
By asking us where we want to on holiday	Take you to nice places	Ask what presents I want
She cant no-one can	New computer	Talking to you
Let you go somewhere that you really want to go	Keeping you safe	

## Who listens to you?

The Place	Mam	Sisters
Gran	Nana x3	Granddad x3
Friends	Brother x3	Dad
Brother	Cousin	Uncle
Some workers	Friends x4	No one x4

The children then completed a worksheet:

## How do you feel when people don't listen to you?

Emotion	No of children.
Surprised	2
Helpless	6
Sad	8
Embarrassed	6
Angry	14
Frustrated	7
Don't care	1
Happy	1
Puzzled	5
Upset	8
Worried	5
confused	5



Other comments:

Social workers are the worst for not listening

All the social workers I know expect you to listen to them

My social worker probably wouldn't notice if the monster ate me and then went out with it to McDonalds!

Adults only listen if you are being nice - when we have to listen no matter what they do or say

My social worker just writes things down - it doesn't seem like they are listening

It makes me mad when people don't listen

**NEED 4 - Have access to excellent effective healthcare treatment and services.**

**Activity 4: Access to Health:**

The children were shown different cards depicting health services that they might receive. The group were encouraged to discuss when they might go to see each professional.

A True or false card was then given to each child. The facilitator explained what true and false means i.e. in this context true = agree, false = disagree.

The group was asked a series of questions about healthcare and had to show whichever side of the card that they think is right.

The facilitator helped to explain each question and make sure that the young people knew why they were answering true or false.

Question	No. of true	No. of false
I like going to the doctors	10	6
I like going to the dentist	4	8
I know why I have to have a health check every year	9	7
My doctor is friendly	12	4
I think my health is important	9	7
My carer always explains why I have to go to the doctors	11	5
I have been to hospital before	10	6
I know that I am healthy	11	5
I learn about health at school	11	5
I think vegetables are unhealthy	0	16
I think sweets make you healthy	9	7

## How can we make going to see them better/ more fun / easier?

Group suggested how to make visiting each of the services a better experience.

Answers were recorded on the flip chart.

<b>Doctors</b>	<p>Having an outside play area for waiting</p> <p>If the doctor explains things to me rather than carer</p> <p>Doctor tells you that you are healthy</p> <p>Doctor's weren't so annoying</p> <p>Do not put jelly in your mouth</p>
<b>Dentists</b>	<p>Not so smelly (room not dentist!)</p> <p>Be faster</p>
<b>Hospital</b>	<p>More things to play with</p> <p>Less smelly</p> <p>Too crowded</p> <p>Hospitals are similar to doctors</p>
<b>Opticians</b>	<p>More fun</p> <p>Have daft glasses to try on</p> <p>See what kind of glasses before you go (so you know you won't be embarrassed if you need them)</p> <p>Samples of glasses</p>
<b>Health checks</b>	<p>They should tell the truth</p> <p>Get stickers for going</p>
<b>Learning about health</b>	<p>Have a mentor</p> <p>Do experiments not just reading</p> <p>Learn about healthy meals</p> <p>Like to taste things not just work</p>



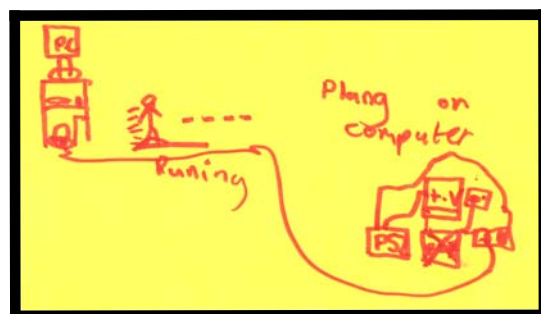
**NEED 5 - Have opportunities to develop, personal and social skills, talents and abilities and spend time in freely chosen play, culture and leisure activities.**

**Activity five: Hobbies and Pastimes:**

The young people were asked to draw pictures of their favourite activities or pastimes.

**The pictures included:**

Doing Karate	Playing out	Having parties
Playing on Nintendo game cube	Playing on game boy	Playing Harry potter (PS2)
Skipping and other outdoor games	Watching TV	Going to the fair
Going to the beach	Playing Football	Watching football (Sunderland fc)
Swings at park	Watching Lord of the rings	Having a bath with nice bubble bath
Having tea at friends house	Tormenting my sister	Riding bikes
Going on trips and visits	Doing jig saws	Playing guitar
Going for a run		





**The kinds of things that I like doing in my spare time are...**

The children were shown a series of cards depicting various activities and hobbies. They were asked to put their stickers on any activities that they liked to do now. Facilitator asked why they like doing these things or where they do them etc.

Activity	No of young people	Activity	No. of young people
Listening to music	15	Organised Sport	15
Cooking	12	Reading	16
Watching TV	15	Going to cinema	16
Playing computer games/playstation	15	Learning/playing musical instrument	8
Playing board games	16	Skateboarding	9
Drawing/art	14	Swimming	16
Cycling/riding bike	15		

**Hobbies I would like to take up:**

Each young person wrote on the pad one activity that they would like to do in future:

Activity	Details
Learning/playing musical instrument	Learning the guitar x6 Rap turn tables
Playing board games	Monopoly
Skateboarding	Organised trips, competitions
Organised Sport	Football coaching, badminton, tennis, volleyball, cricket.
Reading	Book swapping



## General themes from the results

### Activity One:

The most popular elements of being cared for were:

- Getting hugs and attention
- Feeling loved
- Helping you to make friends
- Remembering your birthday
- Going to the doctors when you need to
- All of these things

These elements were emphasised in the list that the young people came up with as well:

- People being nice to you
- Buying you things/making you feel special
- Cuddling you
- Showing that they like you by Celebrating things e.g. birthdays, Christmas, Easter etc.
- Having nice things said about you

Generally the children thought that carers should treat them like parents would treat any other child e.g. celebrating birthdays, helping with meals, being hugged when they are upset and that these things would help them feel more secure and "looked after" properly.

They also said that the main caring role for social workers were around maintaining stability e.g. by sorting out arguments in the home, helping them have contact with their families, asking them how they are doing, finding out things that they don't know about their parents.

They said that Social Workers would be more caring if they were more consistent e.g. turning up to important meetings, seeing them more often, not changing staff all the time, not taking days off when the children have important meetings.

## **Activity Two**

The worries that the children had were all quite varied although the majority did seem to be about things that "might" happen in the future rather than day to day issues. For example they mentioned things like how they might turn out, what could happen tomorrow, not fitting in to a new school.

One important thing to come out of the consultation seemed to be a lack of awareness about where they could go to get help with any of their worries. So one idea might be to publicise the way that Looked After Children can get help or people that they can talk to about their worries.

## **Activity Three**

The answers for "when do adults listen" are very interesting - they nearly all indicate that there has to be something wrong first, for example:

- When I was being bullied
- When I'm in trouble
- When you are upset
- When you are hurt inside
- When I am hurt

This is reinforced by the answers to "when do adults not listen?":

- When they are watching TV
- When they are busy
- When they are sick of you
- When you annoy them

The responses on the worksheets are clear - how do they feel when adults do not listen to them? - Angry. This was by far the most popular answer. If we are trying to afford them respect and also support their individuality the first thing we must do is listen.

## **Activity Four**

The responses in this activity were varied - there were only a couple of statements where the opinions were not split 50/50. These were:

- My Doctor is friendly
- I like going to the doctors
- My carer always explains why I have to go to the doctors
- I think vegetables are unhealthy

Surprisingly there were more children who thought sweets were healthy than who thought they weren't.

There were two ideas for improving the services which I thought stood out from all the others:

- If the doctor explains things to me rather than carer
- See what kind of glasses before you go (so you know you won't be embarrassed if you need them)

The first suggestion deals with the issue of participation and power and the second deals with fear. Two vital areas that we need to get right if we are going to improve health services for Looked After children.

## **Activity Five**

The main responses worthy of note are around the activities which the children would like to take up in the future. There were lots of children who wanted to learn a musical instrument (and none who said that they already played one). The guitar was the most popular instrument although a few wanted to learn how to use mixing decks. Formal sports coaching was also popular (as opposed to just playing football or basket ball with friends). Football, badminton and tennis were the most popular sports mentioned. Book swapping was also mentioned by a few children as something that they would enjoy doing. (I.e. trading books with other children instead of buying new ones).

## Evaluation Activities:

To complete the consultation the young people had to make some comments on the overall consultation process.

They had to put a sticky star on their favourite activity on the pad; each option was depicted by a symbol that corresponded with a part of that activity. This ensured there could be no confusion about where they were putting their stars:

Activity	Number of young people
Being cared for means	2
Boggart Box	6
Not Now Bernard!	4
My Health	
Hobbies and Pastimes	4

### Targets:

The young people had to put a sticker on the targets depending upon their opinion of the statement - the closer to the bulls-eye they place the sticker the more they agree with the statement (and the higher the overall score).

#### "The activities were fun"

Score = 58/64

11=4's

4=3's

1=2

1=0

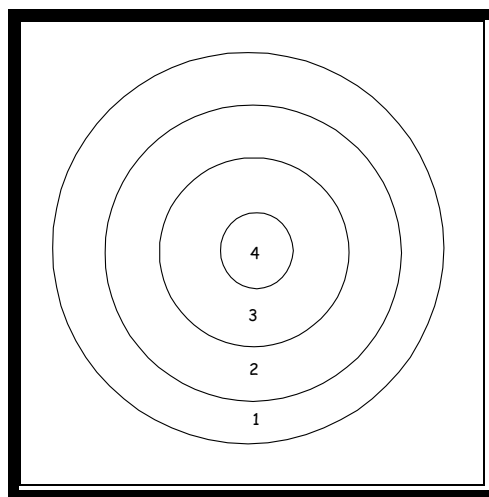
#### "I would do these activities again sometime"

Score = 58/64

11=4's

4=4's

2=1's



**"I feel listened to:"**

Score = 54

12=4's

1=3

3=1's

**Roving Reporter:**

Verbal responses were collected by one of the children who acted as a "reporter" throughout the afternoon (as well as joining in all the activities). The reporter had some preparation prior to the event with a member of staff and during the event spent some time collecting views from a few of the other children. He asked the same questions to each child and asked for an overall mark out of ten for the day.

The questions were:

Did you like Beamish?  
Have you been before? If yes how many times?  
Would you go back again?  
What was your favourite part?  
Overall marks out of ten.

**This is his report:**

We went to Beamish Open air museum on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> June; it was a bad day for the weather but a great museum. Here are some of the views of the others.

Question	Child 1	Child 2	Child 3	Child 4
Did you like Beamish?	yes	yes	yes	yes
Have you been before?	yes	yes	no	no
If yes, how many times?	2	1		
Would you go back again?	yes	yes	yes	no
What was your favourite part?	Her favourite part was when we were in the class and Michael from the PLACE had to put his nose on the black board for being naughty!	His favourite part was when his group went on the tram ride because it was really, really bumpy!	He liked going down the mine because it was so dark, but he wouldn't want to work there like they had to do in the past	He really enjoyed it all but it would have been better if the weather was nicer
Marks out of ten.	10/10	10/10	9/10	4/10 but only because of the weather

My opinion of beamish is that it is a great museum but getting wet spoil it, the sweet shop was great and smelt lovely.

## Conclusion

It is clear from the comments of the children and young people that they enjoyed the day, it is also clear from the results of the workshops that a great deal of valuable information was collected. So it is safe to say that the event was a success. However we realised that there were still important lessons to be learnt and so we engaged in a process of critical reflection to ensure that practice would be improved in future.

In order to help us do this we organised an evaluation meeting for the facilitators and also sent out evaluation forms to those who could not attend this day.

**Some of the results of this day can be found below.**

The facilitators were provided with post it notes and asked to complete the following sentence:

"I thought the project was....."

The results were:

Good for kids to spend time with each other	Fun	Exciting and a bit scary
Worthwhile	Busy and noisy	Fun
Informative	Wet	useful
Hectic	Educational	Enjoyed by most young people involved
A fun day out	Quite surprising	An opportunity for kids to say what they think

## Preparation and Training -

People felt that overall we were prepared for the day. However if *more* young people had attended then the consultation activities may not have ran so smoothly.

People realised that there was a short timescale for organising the day and this was reflected in some of the preparation. Some of the facilitators felt that the young people should have been grouped together differently and that the groups should have been decided at one of the planning meetings where more people were present. This might have reduced friction in the groups and clashes of personality.

**One of the main points raised was that it would have been good to involve the young people in the organisation of the day but this just wasn't possible due to the time constraints.**

We also noted that we should have completed more preparation with carers to encourage a greater attendance. The overall number of children attending was low, only 17 in total from an expected 60, (out of 98 who were actually invited). We thought we had made the event as accessible as possible. Prior to the day we:

- Posted out advance information that the day was going to be happening (nearly six weeks before hand) the details were sparse as it had not all been finalised but we included the day and venue.
- Sent out a detailed invitation flyer and letter to carers three weeks before the event. This explained the purpose of the day, the times and arrangements. We also included permission slips and contact numbers.
- Ensured that the day was free to all who attended.

- Explained the pick up and drop off points and times.
- Explained that carers could attend if necessary but did not have to.
- Provided lunch for all young people.

We thought it might have been better if we could have picked up the young people from their homes instead of expecting them to meet at a single congregation point.

### **Consultation Activities:**

Overall the facilitators thought that the activities were good; they felt they were inclusive, varied, about subjects the young people were interested in, reflected the NHCS needs, and were printed professionally.

However they also thought that the Cookson room was too small for all the activities, not just physically in size but also due to the noise! Considering we were supposed to be listening to children it was hard to hear what they were saying.

The children were also in this room for too long. They ate lunch, played the games and completed the consultation in the room over a period of 2 and a half hours - this was too long to be "cooped up" even if we were providing fun activities for them to do.

It was suggested that lunch should have been eaten in a different room and that there was an outdoor break before beginning the consultation - this was due to happen but was restricted by the inclement weather.

However once the activities began the children got really involved and answered enthusiastically. The results obviously speak for themselves.

## Beamish itself:

The group completed an ideas shower exercise to complete the following sentence:

" Beamish was....."

Lovely	Varied	Interesting
Very good—staff were great	Expensive—eg. The funfair.	Interesting—learnt about history

We noted that part of our risk assessment and strategy for problem solving involved the use of mobile phones to allow the group leaders to keep in touch with everyone - however as Beamish is situated in a topological basin the mobiles had limited reception and so it was impossible to contact some people by mobile.

Other venues for the future:

The group made some suggestions about other suitable venues for consultation days:

Centre for Life	Discovery Museum
Hancock Museum	Bedes World
Light water valley	Rheghead Mountain Centre
Forbidden Garden	Souter Lighthouse
Farm Visit	Weekend away
Special events	

### **Our Biggest Challenge?:**

Ensure that we respond to the young people's views with respect and professionalism by incorporating them into the NHCS and ultimately by acting on them.

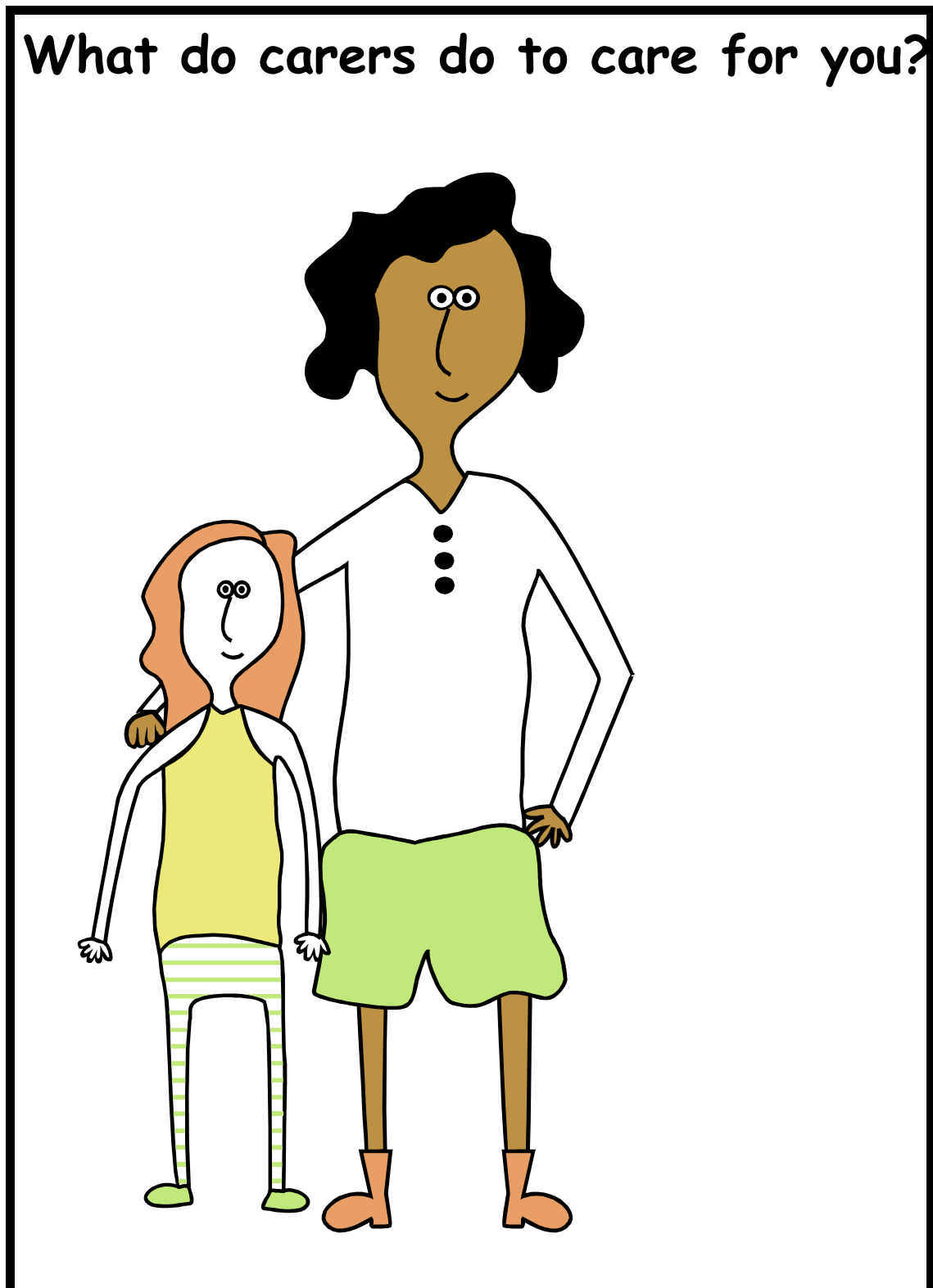
# Appendix 1

An example of the cards used in activity one—what does being cared for mean?



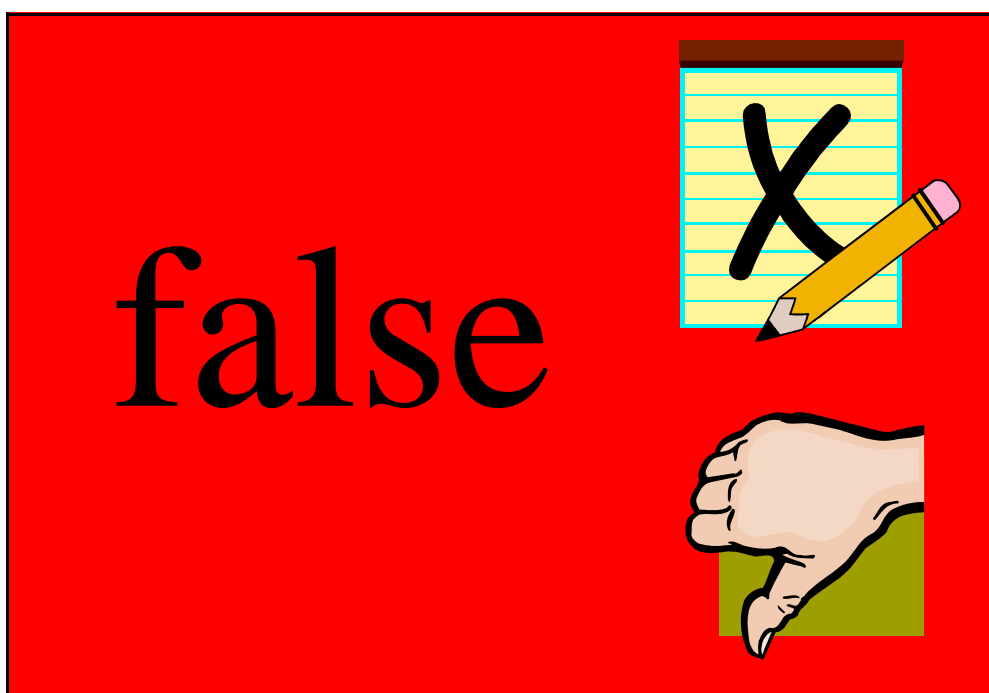
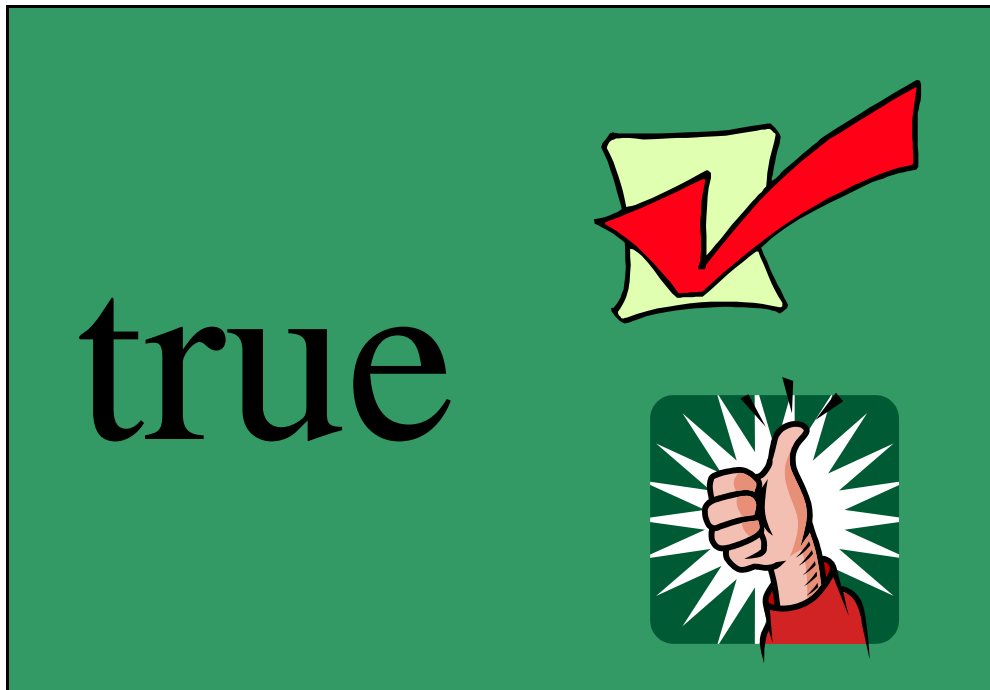
## Appendix 2

An example of the pictures of carers the children used to write/draw their ideas on



## Appendix 3

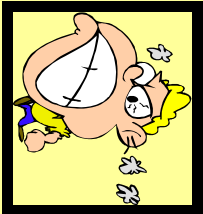



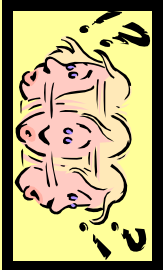

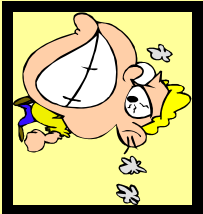
An example of the true and false cards the children used to agree or disagree with the Health statements in activity 2



# Appendix 4

Part of the worksheet the children completed for activity 3.

**HOW DO YOU FEEL WHEN PEOPLE DON'T LISTEN TO YOU?**

 <p><b>Happy?</b></p>	 <p><b>Embarrassed?</b></p>	 <p><b>Happy?</b></p>
 <p><b>Surprised?</b></p>	 <p><b>Confused?</b></p>	 <p><b>Upset?</b></p>
 <p><b>Angry?</b></p>		