

Rutland Disabled Youth Forum

The voice of children and young people with SEND in Rutland

2022 review



Overview

During 2022 we felt we were a well respected group with our views and ideas being valued by all organisations who worked with us. Lots of people wanted to come and talk to us! There are currently 11 members of the group. The age of the current membership ranges from 13-25. Half of the members are on the autistic spectrum with the other members having varying physical and learning disabilities.

In the words of our members..

“I think that forum is really important and has helped me to find my voice and passion for getting SEND voices heard. I especially enjoyed the PGL weekend. It was good to do activities I don't usually do and make friends. Also getting involved with FLARE who work with the Department for Education has been great—and all due to RDYF. I have found my voice, it makes a difference“ - Emi

“I enjoy being part of Youth Forum. I enjoy communicating and interacting with other people during the meetings. As a group we get things changed for the better” - Nicolas

“The best part of Forum is seeing things change because of what we have said... and being with friends—going away in February was amazing’ - Amy

“I have really enjoyed the time I have spent here. Although I haven't been here long but it has been really fun and I can't wait for more” - Oli



PGL Weekend with RYC

In February, we joined The Rutland Youth Council on our first ever residential trip. 6 members from RDYF attended!

Activities included: shooting, archery, rock climbing, survival skills, campfire with marshmallows and ‘protect the egg’ drop.

As well as having fun, we also presented our #IncludeMe2 campaign to RYC so they had more awareness of how to involve us during the weekend and how to work with other people with SEND!





SEND Review Consultation

We took part in an online consultation on the SEND Review. We discussed our own experiences of education and shared ideas on how the government could make services more accessible for young people with SEND. We are all awaiting the changes!

myView App

We have been working with RCC's Participation Officer to develop an app for children and young people with SEND. The idea of the app is to have all the information we need in one place. There is also a messaging feature so we can directly message our keyworkers. We named this #IncludeMe2 after our campaign.

Currently members from the forum are user testing the app before it goes live!

Peer Review

We took part in the peer review of Rutland. We were asked what we do as and about some of our achievements.

We have been described as *"A force to be reckoned with!"*

Scope

We were contacted by Scope who wanted some advice on how they can best support young adults. We discussed their membership scheme and how they could make it more appealing.

Keep Safe Places in Oakham

In the summer, we did a mystery shop of the Keep Safe Places in Oakham. We visited each place listed and spoke to the workers and managers—we asked them what they already know about the scheme and what they would do if someone went in anxious.

Some places really impressed us but some didn't. We then shared our findings with Melody who has removed one Keep Safe Place and provided some training for others.



National involvement

Two members went down to London to a Participation Conference organised by Kids Charity and CDC where they discussed the barriers to good participation.

One of our members has been selected to join Flare which is a national group of young people who often work with the Department of Education to shape services for children and young people with SEND.



Socialising

Despite all our hard work, we still had time for MacDonaldis, Christmas party, and pizza!

2023, looking ahead

We are looking forward to learning more about how Parliament works when an education officer joins us in February. We are then hoping to meet with our local MP and making her aware of our views!