

# Compass Participation Plan

## Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to describe how Compass young people's services will work with children and young people in order to inform the decisions that are made about the delivery and direction of their services in North Yorkshire.

## Summary

The document includes background information of how the plan was developed, the key ideas and concepts behind the plan and its anticipated benefits. The document also sets out the key aspirations which are:

1. To work with Harrogate Youth Council to produce two surveys, one for children aged 5 -10 years and one for young people aged 11+. Both surveys will be rolled out across the whole of North Yorkshire.
2. To consult with one of the local Youth Councils (Selby and/or Harrogate) on the branding of the school mental health and wellbeing project, specifically the naming of the project and the design of the new website.
3. To work with one of the local Youth Councils (Selby and/or Harrogate) to develop a children and young people friendly poster which clearly identifies the services available to young people dependant on level of need.
4. To set up a participation group whose main role is to develop resources to be used with children and young people in schools to promote positive emotional and mental health.

## Background

North Yorkshire's School Mental Health and Wellbeing Project, now called Compass BUZZ, provides a unique opportunity to ensure youth participation is at the forefront of service design and delivery from the outset, this plan guarantees the voice of children and young people is heard and their opinions influence service delivery at all levels.

The plan also seeks to reduce duplication and enhance our other children and young people's service in North Yorkshire, Compass REACH, by co-delivering the plan which will ensure meaningful participation across the board.

The whole ethos behind this plan is that children and young people are at the heart of what we do, therefore the ideas and concepts within this plan are not those of commissioners, management or other staff; rather they are the ideas of young people who have a passion

for improving services for their peers. As an organisation who delivers services to children and young people across North Yorkshire Compass recognises that it has a responsibility to champion these ideas and make them a reality.

The three key groups/forums that have been paramount to the development of this plan are the Harrogate Youth Council, the Selby Youth Council and a group of young people whom have themselves have experienced emotional and mental health issues.

Harrogate Youth Council is made up of a group of young people aged 11+ who are committed to improving services for young people in Harrogate, they have already shown great initiative and dedication. In January 2017, they completed a survey across all secondary schools in Harrogate to determine what issues affect young people the most, the survey reached out to thousands of young people, and was completed within three weeks. The group are now rolling out a mental health campaign in schools across Harrogate.

Commissioners in North Yorkshire were approached by a parent whose child and their friends have previously used self-harming as a coping mechanism. The group of young people are passionate about supporting other young people who are experiencing the same issues and as a result would like to develop a safe tool to reduce cutting behaviour and minimise harm, they would then like the tool to be distributed across all schools in North Yorkshire.

Needless to say working closely with these two groups of young people is the pure foundation of participation it would also create a flagship for other services within Compass and empower them to replicate similar plans across the directorate.

## **The Plan**

### **PARTICIPATION METHODS**

#### **Consultation**

In partnership with Harrogate Youth Council Compass hope to produce two surveys for children and young people one aimed at 5 – 11 year olds and one aimed at 11+ year olds. The surveys will seek to ascertain what issues impact on children and young people's emotional and mental health (i.e. exam stress, bullying, body image) and their preferred method of intervention (i.e. online forums, group work, self-help tools).

Harrogate Youth Council will use their established links to distribute the surveys to schools across Harrogate and collate their findings. Compass will utilise existing school contacts to target the rest of the county and encourage all schools to take part in the survey, whether that be the whole school or one class per school.

The data collected from the surveys will help assess need and target resources on a county wide level, district level and individual school level.

## **Project Design**

Compass will work with Selby Youth Council and/or Harrogate Youth Council to help create a brand for the project, specifically the project name and to get their thoughts on how the new website can be made accessible and appealing to children and young people.

The branding will be supported by WSA, an organisation who will develop the young people's ideas into a corporate logo for the project and the website design will be facilitated through a local company called Sane Designs.

## **Emotional Mental Health and Wellbeing Poster**

Part of the Youth Council's mental health campaign is to create a poster for children and young people which illustrates what support/services are available depending on the level of need. For example if a young person is worried about something and needs a chat with someone they trust they can talk to a school nurse, head of year or a member of the pastoral team but if they have been feeling low for a couple of months and chatting to a trusted adult is not helping they can self refer to Compass REACH for more structured support. We will support the youth council to develop this poster and in turn will roll it out across North Yorkshire with their permission.

## **Co-produced resources**

Through a participation group made up of young people who have experienced emotional and mental health Compass aim to co-design and develop resources for children and young people including a safe tool for those who self-harm.

The group will be ongoing and will meet routinely throughout the year.

## **LEADERSHIP**

The plan will be young people led but facilitated by one Wellbeing Worker from Compass BUZZ and one Young People's Nurse from Compass REACH.

## **BENEFIT**

### **Young People**

The plan will contribute to ensuring the needs of young people are met more effectively and that services provided by Compass are what young people want/need.

By letting the young people involved take a lead they will develop their skills and gain a sense of ownership over services that matter to them, it will also empower them to become active citizens.

### **Compass**

By facilitating this plan staff will enhance their skills and knowledge not only around Youth Participation but also around working with young people in a range of settings. Staff will share their knowledge and experience with the wider team.

The data collected from the two surveys will help to target resources and will contribute to improved outcomes.

The targeted group work will generate new and innovative ideas that can be rolled out across the organisation.

### **Commissioners**

Youth participation is big on the agenda for commissioners of children and young people's services; not only will this project ensure commissioners meet their targets it will also ensure services are relevant and needed.