We currently have 17 members of the Flying High Group and they work as volunteers for Barnardo's. They are funded through North Yorkshire County Council to support the participation of young people with disabilities and extra support needs.
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Members Introductions

My name is Callum. I am from Norton, Malton. I started at Flying High in late 2014. I also study at Scarborough Yorkshire Coast College and I study a Routes Level 1 which is Foundation Learning. In the past I went to Welburn Hall from September 2009 to July 2011 and did the IEV course there and before that I went to Woodlands School in Scarborough from 1997 to 2009 and did a lot of lessons there. I also go to a group called Ryedale Special Families and Action for Children.

Leaving Members

My name is Jillian Grant
I have been with Flying High for three years. I have enjoyed meeting many friends and I have enjoyed travelling to Harrogate in the taxi.
I did help to try and get a social group at The Street and I helped to try to get funds to help them but sadly the funding was stopped.
I really enjoyed going into schools talking to students.
I really enjoyed coming to the Children’s Centre in Harrogate for the Flying High meetings.
I have two jobs. I work at Betton Farm near Ayton and the Scope charity shop in Scarborough.
I am really sad about leaving, but I have a bright future.
News from the Office

There have recently been some big changes at the offices of Flying High as we have had to say a sad farewell to some of our colleagues, including Ann Gray who was also Flying High’s service manager. Ann has been manager of Flying High since the group has been supported by Barnardo’s. She worked for Barnardo’s for many years on a wide variety of projects. **We wish her well for the future.**

Goodbye to Abi!

Abi worked for Barnardo’s as part of her University placement last year, including helping the Flying High Group. We would like to thank Abi for all her hard work and wish her well in her new job as a Direct Payments Advisor for North Yorkshire County Council.

My final placement to qualify as a Social Worker involved working with the Flying High Group. I attended lots of events and meetings with them, including presentations at conferences, helping to film pieces about their experiences and setting up the “Now or Never” mini Flying High group. I also helped several members start working towards the “Youth Voice Award”.

By Abi Bubb

Abi also goes sailing with the Jubilee Sailing Trust in her spare time! Find out more about this on the back page of this newsletter!
Hello to Rita!

My name is Rita Millhouse and I am a manager at Barnardo’s and have the genuine great pleasure of now managing the Flying High Service. This has to be the best service I have managed (but don’t tell the other services) as I actually get chance to meet young people which is something that rarely happens these days.

I have worked with disabled children & young people for about 30 years – so now you know that I am also a ‘lady of mature years’ or some may say ‘old’ The disability services I currently managed cover a large area in NE Lincolnshire, Leeds, Hull, East Riding & now Knaresborough. This keeps me busy and usually out of trouble! I have already met a few of you in the last steering group and I was thrilled when you said I could come back again. It’s quite funny but I’m more nervous when I meet young people than when I meet the people in authority who pay Barnardo’s to run these services! I think it’s because usually young people say exactly what they think and are very honest and passionate about what they believe in.

I’m looking forward to meeting the rest of you in the near future. If ever anybody wants to talk to me then ask Jane or Sue and I will call you!

Thank you all for making me so welcome and happy!
NYCC Proposed Changes to Social Care

Earlier this year the Flying High group were asked by North Yorkshire County Council to consult with other young people about the proposed changes to Disabled Children’s Services in North Yorkshire. North Yorkshire County Council are having to save a lot of money in the next few years and so they will have to make some changes to services. Michelle Allison from NYCC came to a Flying High Steering meeting to discuss the possible changes with some members. They were encouraged to give their own views, as well as feedback the comments they had been given from other young people across the county.

What were the proposals?

The three main areas where the council were looking to make changes were:

- **Short Breaks Services and Children’s Resource Centres**—One of the Children’s Resource Centres may have to close and children, young people and their families would get more support from family based Short Breaks services instead.
- **Outdoor Activity Centres (Such as East Barnby and Bewerley Park)** – There may be changes to the way outdoor activities for disabled children are funded.
- **Social Care**—There may be changes to the way social workers work with families.

The council value the work that participation groups like Flying High and NYPACT are doing and would like to continue funding our work and improving transitions experiences for young people.
Members of the Flying High group went to speak to groups of young people across North Yorkshire to ask them what they thought about the proposed changes.

Thank you to Brooklands School, pupils on the Personalised Learning Programme in Scarborough, King James’ SEN School Council and pupils from Welburn Hall

What did young people say?

- Overall, the limited number of young people that we spoke to, who had experience of CRC’s and family short breaks, preferred the family short break.
- Young people place a high value on leisure activities. Those who have taken part in adventurous activities are enthusiastic and excited about them. They also value highly the opportunities offered by activities such as Fuse Theatre. All young people said that leisure activities are important for making friends, building confidence and making them feel good about themselves.
- Social workers and family support workers are valued by the young people we spoke to. They are anxious about any possible reductions to services.
- Continuing to develop transitions is of high importance to young people.
- Further development of the ‘Local Offer’ website needs to include making sure that young people know about it.
- Being involved in this consultation has made them aware of the difficulties involved in making decisions about services. They thought very carefully of where to spend their money, and some young people found the whole process ‘just too difficult’

How would you spend the money?
Have you changed from Statement to an Education, Health and Care Plan? How did it go? Flying High would like to hear from you!!

- Do you know what an Education, Health and Care Plan is?
- Do you have one?
- Are you happy with your Plan?

One of our Flying High members, Becky Morris, has been delivering training, together with other trainers from the Council for Disabled Children, to groups of young people across the country. They have been helping young people to find out more about Education, Health and Care Plans.

My Plan
1
2
3
It was a privilege to be invited to attend NYPACT's 'Let's communicate together' conference on the 22nd April at Ripon Race course. Two amazing young people captivated the audience as they spoke alongside there parents about their communication challenges and how they have overcome them.

I signed up to attend workshops in Makaton, Augmentative Communication (AAC) and assistive technology. It was a hard decision because all the workshops sounded so interesting. I spent the entire day constantly making notes about everything I was learning and how I could use it to implement and improve the focus groups and training I deliver to young people with disabilities. There was so much I learnt from the conference. Making sure activities and focus groups are fully accessible to all children and young people is very important to me, especially to those who may struggle with communication. The whole day was very well organised and I really hope to attend another in the future.

By Becky
North Yorkshire County Council employed a group of consultants to review how they are progressing with the SEND changes. Flying High members met the consultants and gave them some feedback from young people we have spoken to.

“I enjoyed taking part. They listened to our views and they will take them forward to North Yorkshire County Council”.

By Chloe

Visit to Wavell Primary School

In May Tom and Rob from the Flying High group went to visit Wavell Primary school in Catterick to share their experiences of secondary school and college with a group of children aged between 7 and 11 years old. This was the first time the Flying High group had visited a primary school.
Interviewing for jobs at NYCC

Flying High, along with NYPACT, were invited to be on the interview panel for the position of 'The Head of Inclusive Education at North Yorkshire County Council. Along with Jane, I was the Flying High group representative. Before the interview the group decided that they would ask the applicants about how they would tackle the problem of bullying. The interview itself was quite difficult, although not as difficult as it was for the interviewees, as we had to rank everyone’s answers on whether they had made the points we were looking for. It was a difficult decision to make, but in the end the person we gave the highest score from our panel was the one who got the job.

By Rachel Moody

As a result of the interviews, Amber Burton has now been appointed The Head of Inclusive Education for NYCC. Flying High are hoping to work with Amber in the future on the behaviour policy.
Report from the ‘Now or Never’ Group at The Hub in Scarborough

There are 3 members of the Now or Never group in Scarborough and they are all based at The Street in Scarborough on personalised learning pathways. We have been meeting with Flying High since last November and have enjoyed being able to give our opinions to them. The project we wanted to work on was to try and get the café in The Street re-opened. Various young people on the personalised learning pathway have been to speak to the management of The Street and have now had the good news that the café is planned to open at the end of April with a new owner. Although there have been lots of people asking for this change from the various organisations using the building we were glad to add our voice to the request to re-open the café.

The café in The Street has now re-opened!
“We like being in Flying High. We like our school in Skipton in the newsletter. We meet people from outside school so we can make more friends and learn more about choices”
by George & Ben

“By asking someone we managed to be heard. We made team names. We never heard about the local offer. We help Flying High by making choices about how to spend money. We like exciting news about lots of colleges”
by Kirsty and Sean

“We talked to Leona Thorpe about PLP and said there were no photos of young people from Brooklands. As a result we later saw Sam in the new PLP leaflet. We would like to invite Leona to our careers event in April. It should go on forever the Brooklands Team. It is good.”
By Ellie and Tom
We were asked to write something about our Learning Support Student Council at King James’s School. What we did not realise before, is, that it is not usual for a mainstream secondary school to have a separate Learning Support Students Council group. It has become really important to us to have our own council meetings and to discuss the things that are important to us. Here are some of the questions, we discussed in an earlier meeting:

1. Why is the LS School Council a good idea?
What is important about having a separate Learning Support Council?
The LS Student Council gives us a voice in the main council. That way, we can raise issues that are important to us. We have specific needs that others don’t have and won’t consider. At the LS Student Council we can discuss and deal with problems that others won’t even notice. It is a fun way to spend our lunch time. It is good to share ideas with people that may have the same problems and much a much easier way to raise concerns, especially as the teachers that support us at the Learning Support Council always listen.
2. What made you join the LS Student Council? And why?
‘I heard others talking about it. I usually sat by myself at lunchtime. Now it gives me something else to do. Also, I like to get my opinion across.’

‘You don’t have to worry about being chosen – you can just come along.’

‘Lunch times were boring. This is a good activity.’

‘A friend told me about it and it sounded interesting.’

‘I wanted to follow my big brother’s footsteps and it is fun and interesting.’

‘I can meet new people and I can talk to the teachers here.’

3. What is important to you about the meetings? And Why?
We talk about the most important points and act on them – when we can. It is good to be part of a group where you can voice your opinion and where there are others that experience similar things.

4. How do some of the actions of others make you feel?
In short: Very angry and annoyed.
The main school council talks about improvements in the school. We talk about things that affect us personally. And we feel confident doing this in our Learning Support Council.

The Learning Support Student Council is important. We hope that in the future there will be more places, where people with special needs feel safe and heard.
The Youth Voice Award has been developed to recognise and accredit the hard work that young representatives, such as Flying High members do within their local communities, but also challenge them to try something new, exciting and innovative. Young people will be required to complete at least ten hours of varying activities in order to gain the ASDAN accredited award. An easy-to-use log book is completed with help from Flying High staff.

By taking part in this award they will be able to reflect on the different skills that they’ve learnt, develop new skills and maybe learn something new about themselves and the young people they represent.

5 members of Flying High are currently working towards completing their Youth Voice Award, 1 has recently been awarded his certificate and 2 other members have just sent their log books through for checking and moderation.

**Susan Balf, Flying High project worker**

“I am studying the Youth Voice Award. I have had 3 meetings out of 5 and I have to record the meetings of Flying High.”

**By ‘The Rock’**
“Tom, Jamie, Elliott and ‘The Rock’ have done the Youth Voice Award which requires you for being at 5 different meetings or consultations. Jane or Sue came over to write up the meeting then sent it off to the British Youth Council to mark your work. Then you get a certificate to show you have done it”.

By Tom Oates.
It’s a pirates life for me!!

Ever thought about what it would be like to steer a pirate ship, climb up the mast or spot whales and dolphin whilst sailing along? Let me tell you it’s amazing!

The Jubilee Sailing Trust (www.jst.org.uk) have two boats that are adapted for up to half the crew on board to have a disability, for example there are lifts between levels for wheelchair users and a talking compass for those with sight impairments. Anyone can go and I first sailed seven year ago, and I’ve been back every year!

You get to steer the ship, take turns at lookout duties, help with navigation, set sails and get fully involved in life on board. There is the most fantastic atmosphere and ethos on board, with everyone expected to take part to the best of their ability. I’ve seen so many people’s attitudes and assumptions changed for the better around disabled people and themselves. So, what are you waiting for....?

By Abi Bubb

Flying High wants to find out what is important to young people

If you have an issue that you would like to raise or you would like Flying High to come to your school, college or leisure venue, please contact:

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