

# INSPECTOR NEWS



**ISSUE 1 - AUTUMN 2016**

**W**elcome to the very first edition of the Inspector News, the Young Inspectors newsletter. The Young Inspectors programme is now over a year old and we wanted to let you know what we have been up to, the benefits of becoming a Young Inspector, how you can become a Young Inspector and where you can find out more information. We hope you enjoy reading the newsletter and look out for the 2nd edition due out early 2017.

## Young Inspectors

**Set up in May 2015 the Young Inspectors Programme:**

- Places young people at the heart of inspecting services delivered to children, young people and their families to ensure compliance against standards and inform service improvements.
- Ensures the views and experiences of children, young people and their families are actively listened to and acted upon to make a difference.

During the first 12 months the Young Inspectors carried out an impressive 15 inspections and undertook a number of mini undercover inspections where they mystery shopped access to services, reality checked buildings and environments, carried out surveys with service users, asked staff on the spot questions, observed services in action and provided opportunities for children and young people to have

their voices and experiences heard as the 'experts by experience'.

Services have listened to and acted upon the Young Inspectors feedback and as a result:

- Improvements have been made to the council website to make it more young person friendly
- The quality of information and standards at reception areas have been improved
- Numerous decoration, cleaning, gardening and repairs works have been carried out
- New processes have been implemented such as staff inductions, increased choice for meals, new leaflets produced and distributed to customers through reviews and customer forums

From early help, to leaving care, short breaks, complaints, reach out services and reporting child abuse...no service is too big, no inspection is too small.

## How Does It Work?

Once an inspection has been agreed Young Inspectors choose which elements of a service they are going to inspect and how. Young Inspectors can take part in mystery shopping exercises, surveys, reality checks and observation activities. All inspections take place during school holidays and where

possible, inspections are unannounced to ensure the Young Inspectors gain a true reflection of that service

Once an inspection is complete all the data and evidence captured is pulled together into a report and an action plan is produced by the inspected service outlining how they are going to address the issues raised by the Young Inspectors.

The action plan is monitored to check progress against recommended improvements and a revisit takes place 6 months after the initial inspection.

Inspecting Council services in this way ensures that young people and their families are actively listened to and their views and opinions are acted upon to make improvements to their life and services.



“ We are all incredibly proud of Ashlea and the Young Inspectors. In such a short space of time they have made a significant contribution towards improving the quality of the services we deliver and provide. They are a great credit to Rotherham and fantastic to work with. ”

David McWilliams, Assistant Director for Early Help and Family Engagement at the Council

### Is it for me?

You have to be aged between 13 and 24. You will gain new skills and experiences, make new friends and have the opportunity to complete a volunteer accreditation.

You will be trained in inspection techniques and will receive ongoing support from the programme and from the young inspector co-ordinator Ashlea Harvey. The Young Inspectors programme is totally voluntary so you choose which inspections you get involved in and how.

You will also be directly involved in helping to improve services and make changes that benefit other young people, children and families in Rotherham.

## Fundraising Event

On the 2nd June the Young Inspectors took their inspection hats off to carry out a fun, team building activity and gain experience for their CV...all for a good cause. The volunteers organised a bake sale and tombola in order to fundraise for their chosen charity Safe@Last.

Safe@Last is a registered charity working with and on behalf of young people at risk through running away and relies heavily on voluntary income generated through fundraising. Safe@Last was established in response to an acute need for services for the 1 in 9 children under the age of 16 who are affected. The charity provides a 24 hour Helpline, a Missing Young People’s Service, a Preventative Education Programme and Family Support.

The grand total raised on the day was £351.40 and this will be used to help Safe@Last continue to provide one to one support for young people in Rotherham.



“ As a young inspector coordinator and also a young person I feel that being part of inspecting Children & Young Peoples services and helping them improve their service is a great way to identify the positives and improvements for the services. ”

Ashlea Harvey, Young Inspector Co-ordinator



“ We have to ensure the decisions we make and the services we put in place fit the expectations and needs of our young people. The Young Inspectors programme lets us view those decisions and services through a young person’s eyes and gives us a much better understanding of where improvements can be made. ”

Ian Thomas, Strategic Director for Children and Young People’s Services

### What our Young Inspectors enjoy the most:

“I get to meet new friends and work in a group”

“Much more Confidence, Much more Curious, More intelligent and I’m more creative”

“I enjoy having a choice because I feel my opinion matters.”

## Want To Find Out More?

Contact our Young Inspector Co-ordinator Ashlea Harvey

RotherhamYoungInspectors@rotherham.gov.uk Ashlea: 01709 823917 /Text Ashlea: 07798 581232

You can also find out more on our social media sites:

<https://www.facebook.com/Rotherham-Young-Inspectors>

<https://twitter.com/InspectorsYoung>

<http://www.rotherhamyounginspectors.co.uk/>

For more information on how you could get involved contact our Young Inspector Co-ordinator on:  
**01709 823917 / 07798581232**  
 email: [RotherhamYoungInspectors@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:RotherhamYoungInspectors@rotherham.gov.uk)