

Greater Voice for Children & Young People in Care – The Launch Party

On the 17th October 2009 Children and Young People's Services hosted a Children in Care and Care Leavers Launch Party at Green Park, Aston Clinton.

The day was to celebrate the launch of the Pledge, which is what local authorities promise to do for the children and young people within their care.

The day was also the Inauguration of the Children in Care Council named by the young people the "We Do Care!" group. The WDC! membership is open to young people aged 14+ who are in the care of Buckinghamshire County Council, in foster placements, residential placements or in other approved placements.

The group meets to share each other's experiences and it gives them an opportunity to have their voices heard and their views taken into account by having a direct input into service development for Children in Care in Buckinghamshire.

The Launch Party was a huge success with over 100 young people, their carers and social workers attending. They all took part in the activities available, which included, a zip wire, rock climbing and abseiling for the older ones and nature trails and bouncy castles for the younger ones and sumo wrestling and gladiators for the young at heart.



In the afternoon the Pledge was officially signed by Councillor Richard Pushman, the Chairman of Buckinghamshire County Council, with a drumming accompaniment from young people to celebrate this important moment for all looked after children and young people.



The children, young people, foster carers, social workers and Councillor Lin Hazell gave great feedback, one foster carer saying "it was wonderful to see all the children working together as a team, the older one's helping the younger ones, there was real team building happening and friendships were formed today".

Another professional commented "this event has helped bring young people together who at times can be very isolated in the community and has given them the opportunity to meet and work with others like themselves with similar backgrounds".

One 17 year old female commented "Everything was brilliant"

A 16 year male old stated "it couldn't have been better, thanks for the time you gave to entertain us".

A 6 year old female said "the best thing was the balloons from the magician".

And a boy of 13 stated "I would like to come again".

Another Comment from a carer was "I hope that everyone who participated in the day..... will get regular opportunities to meet in the future and benefit from other enjoyable, positive and worthwhile experiences".

On the 30th January 2010 there will be a Celebration Event for all Children in Care and Care Leavers, celebrating and acknowledging their many achievements throughout the year.