



Bath: A Child Friendly City: Statement to B&NES Cabinet: 10 September 2014

Over the last year, the idea for creating a Child Friendly City (and area) has been initiated by a group of creative, cultural and educational organisations on behalf of many others that are regularly involved with children and young people in Bath and North East Somerset. I have been nominated to speak to you today on behalf of this group. These organisations endorse the aspiration to seek UNICEF accreditation for Bath as a Child-Friendly City: <http://childfriendlycities.org/building-a-cfc/building-blocks/>.

Bath has many vibrant groups that are clearly child-friendly and meet the UNICEF criteria. The Children's Literature Festival is a good example of a large-scale recurring child-friendly event; the egg theatre is an outstanding example of an entire project built from the ground up, with and for children and young people; the museums, heritage and library services all signpost child-friendly interactive engagement. 5x5x5=creativity is now in its 14th year and born out of this Council - it has inspired and supported child-informed teaching and learning across the UK. B&NES is a magnet for child-friendly initiatives with the capacity and will to sustain and extend them.

So why is this initiative is so important?

- For children and young people to truly believe that they are equal citizens in the social and cultural life and governance of B&NES, is not only democratically correct, but also inspires generations of powerful and connected young people that contribute to the overall make up of our city.
- Our hope is that we can then build a vision and strategy from the bottom up, alongside young people. Children would be engaged in the development of services and opportunities within their communities, in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Young people would have a deeper understanding of citizenship and sense of purpose, connection and well-being that could benefit the country as a whole.
- A child-friendly city has the power to unite many organisations, companies and schools in a clear and creative endeavour that will benefit the whole area.
- This is a unique opportunity for B&NES to take a far-sighted, long-term view about the development, perception and enjoyment of the city by all its citizens.

In the longer term, 'Child Friendly' status could become Bath's contemporary and international calling card and provide influential, world-leading approaches to participation and democracy.

In summary, this status could be a huge step forward for the future of Bath and North East Somerset. We aim to ensure all young people are active citizens engaged in the process of creating a truly child-friendly city where children are at the heart of the city.

Next steps would include:

- a strategy for delivery: raising funds for the scoping and application period
- appointing a Project Officer to support the process of working towards accreditation as a Child Friendly City
- encouraging the development of new child-friendly days and activities
- celebrating and promoting events that put children's curiosity and passions at the heart of their process, e.g. 'School without walls' and 'Forest of Imagination': <https://vimeo.com/schoolwithoutwalls/> <http://www.forestofimagination.com/>

The recent well-being report from the Children's Society shows the UK near the bottom of the league. Bath would be leading the sea change by celebrating the benefits of child-friendly approaches to transformation. <http://www.childrensociety.org.uk/well-being>

The Bath Child Friendly City Initiative Steering Group would be very keen to work with the Council to progress achieving the Child Friendly City Status Award.

The Cultural Forum is hosting an intergenerational conversation with young people on 1 October at the egg theatre to galvanise interest from cultural, civic and community organisations. We would like to invite you all to this event and urge Bath and North East Somerset to support this initiative.

Child Friendly City: Steering Group

Councillor Cherry Beath, Mayor of Bath and North East Somerset

Louise Betts, Learning and Participation Manager, Bath Festivals

Kate Cross, Director, the egg theatre

Sue East, Headteacher, St Andrew's Primary School Bath

Penny Hay, Director of Research, 5x5x5=creativity, Senior Lecturer in Arts Education, Bath Spa University

Greg Ingham, Chair, Creative Bath and Chair of Trustees, Theatre Royal Bath

Jamie Luck, Director, Mentoring Plus

Marian McNeir, Co-Chair, Bath Area Cultural Forum

Dr Janet Rose, Programme Leader, School of Education, Bath Spa University

Child Friendly City: Partners

5x5x5=creativity

Bath Area Cultural Forum

Bath Area Play Project

Bath Artists Studios

Bath City College

Bath City Farm

Bath Festivals

Bath Fringe

Bath Libraries

Bath Museums

Bath Spa University

Bath Spa Institute for Education

B&NES Children's Services

B&NES Schools and Colleges

Black Families Support Group

Creative Bath

egg theatre

Green Vision

Learning2Lead

Mentoring Plus

Off the Record

RUH Art at the Heart

Theatre Royal Bath

Young Carers

Youth Parliament

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