

## **Report of the Secondary Parliament 2017**

The B&NES Secondary Parliament took place at Norton Hill School on Thursday February 2nd<sup>th</sup> 2017. The theme was Get Inspired Get Involved. Over 100 young people attended from 12 different secondary schools, one special school and from a range of settings including Mentoring Plus, the Youth Forum, Senior In Care Council and Off the Record. There were 20 accompanying staff and workshop facilitators and 15 guests, including the Chair of the Council, Cllr Alan Hale.

The event was organised by staff and students of Norton Hill School in collaboration with the Local Authority.

### **Introductory Speeches**

After short welcoming comments by Norton Hill students and the Headteacher, and a stunning musical performance by Georgia and Alfie, 2 Norton Hill students, there were keynote speeches by Victoria from Norton Hill and Bethany Taylor, a local elite cyclist who discussed the inspirational charity and sporting activities they are respectively involved in. The Member of Youth Parliament and Deputy Member of Youth Parliament, Jake and Jasmin, addressed the Parliament in the afternoon, talking about some of the initiatives they had been involved in and encouraging other young people to get involved.

### **Workshops**

There were 4 workshops, co-facilitated by Norton Hill students. Following workshop discussion and debate in the morning, students presented their recommendations and action points in the afternoon as follows:

#### **A. Creative (Dance / Music / Drama/ Visual Arts)**

‘Why do the Arts Matter?’

The young people were engaged in lots of valuable group work and discussion about the benefits of the arts and the barriers to engagement in the arts. All the students valued their experiences of creating, performing or writing and several of the comments reflected the importance of the feeling of wellbeing that the arts bring.

#### **Benefits included:**

Freely express yourself, with no boundaries  
I love it (art) because it is an excuse to be quiet  
Boosts confidence and self esteem  
A freedom that other lessons don't offer  
A break from stresses of everyday life

### **Barriers included:**

Arts subjects seen as weak/fluffy  
Lack of respect for art subjects  
People dismiss the effort that goes into the arts  
Careers in the arts are not valued

Several of the schools represented had an annual school 'production'. The students who had taken part clearly enjoyed this and recognised the opportunity given to a wide range of students to get involved and to build on their skills through ICT, production, sound, set making, marketing and performing. In the Action Planning encouraged in this group, students were asked to go back to their music, art, and drama teachers and have more discussion as to how the arts can continue to thrive in their schools.

Jake and Ellie will follow up with e:teams and invite all schools to be involved in co-producing a Creative Manifesto to share at the Forest of Imagination 29 June - 2 July 2017 [www.forestofimagination.com](http://www.forestofimagination.com) this year aligned with the Festival of Childhood [www.festivalofchildhood.com](http://www.festivalofchildhood.com)

## **B. Sports & Physical Activities**

### **Barriers**

- Cost
- Time
- Accessibility

### **Overcoming the barriers**

#### **Cost**

- Widely advertising special deals available from leisure providers e.g. the GLL leisure pass for teenagers - £10 per month to access unlimited swimming, gym, junior classes.
- Researching and advertising other opportunities that other leisure opportunities / sports clubs offer.
- Ask schools to add activities to the curriculum or have additional activities after school

#### **Time:**

- Drop it/swap it – drop something you are doing that isn't active (screen time/games/TV /seeing your granny) and swap it for something more active
- Ask schools to add activities onto the school day if there is a demand for them
- Ask schools to incorporate activity into lessons – why have to sit down for every lesson? Could some be delivered in a more active way?

### **Accessibility:**

- Make sure all leisure centres have a warm welcome to people of all abilities and disabilities
- Autism was mentioned as a barrier – some autistic people need more support but it may not be obvious what their condition is at first glance
- Accessibility for wheelchair users to get into school gyms/sports centres etc. but also accessibility to activities for disabled people.
- Satellite clubs – research if any thing is currently taking place in community centres/halls. Many fitness classes or sport club session are delivered in these settings as well as sport facilities.

### **Benefits**

- Physical – feel fitter and stronger
- Mental – makes you feel good to be out and exercising
- Social – great to mix with other people – of your own age and different ages and backgrounds too. Also good to do things with your family together.

### **C. Volunteering**

The young people identified a wide range of benefits to volunteering which included:

- Making new friends and developing social skills
- Having fun
- Getting work experience – looks good on CV
- Acquiring new knowledge, learning extra skills and getting awards e.g. Duke of Edinburgh
- Being an inspiration to others – feel proud of self
- Improvements to physical and mental well-being
- Increase confidence and self-esteem
- Opens up opportunities – in particular work
- Give something back, make a difference and help the community
- Decreases loneliness and fills time

The volunteering workshop identified not having the time to volunteer and not knowing where their interests lie as the main barriers to volunteering. To tackle time they wished for there to be one off days within each term, where the school organised a day of volunteering activities (either in school or out of school), and for the school to help them devise timetables to see where their free time was.

In terms of actions for not knowing what interested them: the young people wanted assemblies/ PSHE lessons where various speakers could come in and talk to them about volunteering/work experience opportunities, they also wished for there to be a resource booklet of volunteering/work experience in the area that could be viewed in PSHE lessons (or even developed by students in PSHE lessons).

They also wanted the school to organise schemes/relationships with volunteering organisations and work experience placements which would make it easier for them to try out different volunteer activities outside of school time

#### **D. Scouts / Guides / Explorers / Cadets**

##### **Activities**

swimming	mountain biking	surfing	archery
knife skills	distance hikes	fishing	kayaking
orienteering	hunting/tracking	gliding	first aid
shooting	craft	snowboarding	D of E
volunteering	rock climbing	singing	map-reading
map reading	fund-raising	survival training	sailing
snorkelling	charity work	foraging	fire-lighting
mountain hiking	navigation	self defence	rowing
scuba -diving	friendship	Ten Tors	skiing
cooking	bush craft	stars and the sky	gun up keep
white water rafting	flying	drill and parade	caving
camping	marching	cycling	sky-diving

##### **Barriers**

Predjudice	bullying	background	race
facilities	knowledge	confidence	mindset
training	cost/money	disability	friends not
colour	distance	parents	doing it
gender	equipment	anxiety	effort
sensibility	fitness	stereotypes	
Fear	Risk	religion	
Age limits	assessments	Peer pressure	

#### **Benefits: the young people in the workshop spoke of the ways they had benefited personally from being involved , including :-**

team spirit	self confidence	learning life	beating a fear
fitness	happiness	skills	determination
team building	leadership	organisation	

#### **Taking action points back to schools / settings**

Delegates were reminded to take the list of action points back to their schools and settings and to do their best to inspire other young people to get involved. These actions were written on a postcard which will be posted to schools in a month's time

#### **Questions to the Expert Panel of adults**

The final session was a question and answer session: delegates to the Parliament had decided on questions to ask the adult panel during their workshops. The panel consisted of Kate Murphy and Judy Allies (School Improvement), Cllr Alan Hale,

(Chair of B&NES Council), Mark Harrison (Community Sport Manager, GLL) and Mike Bowden (Strategic Director, People and Communities). Questions ranged from issues of funding for youth services, accessibility of sports facilities for disabled young people, volunteering and work experience opportunities and the benefits of the arts to young people.

### **Closing Words**

The Chair of the Council closed the Parliament and thanked all who had attended but especially Norton Hill for their excellent organisation and hospitality.

K. Murphy  
February 2017