



5-12 Year Olds Children's Forum

'Let Our Voices Be Heard!'

30th June 2009
Evaluation Report



1) Introduction

The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham held its termly 5-12 Year Olds Children's Forum on 30th June 2009 at Castle Green. The forum's purpose is to engage with children aged 5-12 who either live or attend a school or youth club within the borough.

The agenda for this Children's Forum focused on Economic Well-Being. The aim of the session was to inform young people about life on Dagenham Docks and the types of jobs local people used to do in Barking and Dagenham. The second half of the session focussed on promoting careers and raising aspirations and ambition.

The forum was well supported by the borough's infant, junior and primary schools. In total, 22 schools were represented with 69 pupils attending. The schools in attendance were:

Infant

Cambell
Dorothy Barley
Furze
Rush Green
Thames View

Junior

Dorothy Barley
Grafton
Northbury
Thames View
William Bellamy

Primary

Godwin
John Perry
Leys
Monteagle
Parsloes
St Joesph's
St Margaret's
St Peter's
St Teresa's
Thomas Arnold
Trinity
St Margaret's

Each school was invited to send pupils from their school council so that there would be a direct feedback mechanism to the whole school.

The forum's objectives for the young people were for them to:

- 1) learn about Dagenham Docks
- 2) meet former dock works and interview them
- 3) learn about different career choices; and
- 4) talk about their aspirations and learn about how they are in control of their own destiny

The session began with a welcome and ice breaker led by Child Voice Coordinator Kevin Donovan.

Two young people were called to the stage to play body speller. The challenge was for each young person to spell their name with a part of their body apart from their index finger and for the audience to guess what their names were.



Picture 1: Body Speller Game

2) 'Dagenham Docks Before Before' – Will Atkinson, Eastside Community Heritage

This workshop focused on Dagenham's economy in the past and used a case study of a distribution company on the Dagenham Docks called Samuel Williams and Sons.

The company was formed by a Lighterman, Samuel Williams in 1855 and closed in 1985.

Two former workers from the company came and talked to the children; Chris Cole a retired dock estimator and Reg Pile a retired carpenter. Each table were given a different theme around working lives, these were: Building the Docks, Decline, Apprenticeships, Work, Pay and Hours, Daytrips, Jetties.

Each table had a worksheet for each theme with a relevant photograph and were asked to think of questions they would like to ask Chris and Reg. Chris and Reg spoke to the children on stage and the children listened very carefully then Chris and Reg went to each table and tried to answer the children's questions, but there were so many questions they couldn't answer them all on the day.

The questions were taken away by Will and he used them to interview Chris and Reg.



Picture 2: The Children interview former dock worker.

Reg Pile Interview:

Reg Pile worked at Samuel Williams between 1948-1985 as a carpenter.

What was the most difficult tool to use?

Once you're a qualified carpenter no tool should be difficult to use.

What was your favourite tool?

Plane, because however rough the wood, once you smooth it up with the plane it can become beautiful. The wood has a beautiful smell to it when you plain it, especially pine.



A plane

Do you still make things now?

I made a cabinet for the kitchen last year, but I used to build things for other people including my doctor. I fitted his kitchen and wardrobes.

How did you get the job?

My brother-in-law worked there at the time and spoke to the personnel officer.

What is an apprentice?

A boy taking a trade.

Chris Cole Interview

Chris Cole worked at SWS as a dock estimator this meant he would calculate how much cargo was coming in out of ships that came to Dagenham Docks through Samuel Williams and sons.

How long did you work for SWS?

14 years.

How did you get your job?

Found it in the local paper.

How many hours per week did you work?

Forty hours.

What machine did you use?

No machine but did go about all over the Dock area on foot where the cargoes were being shifted. I suppose you could say the phone and ancient photo copier. He didn't have computers or mobile phones.

How have the docks changed?

They slowed down to a standstill then closed after the selling off and asset stripping of all the dock machines and sacking of staff due to the failures of company directors to see that a take over was coming.

Why did you work on the docks?

Because I needed another job to earn a living and as it was near home plus it was a good company with lots to interest me. I was able to develop my trading skills with chemical and road and ship tanker traffic in the international field.

Free History Workshops for upper key stage 2

'Working Lives of the Thames Gateway' is an ambitious three-year community history project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. The project records and celebrates the stories of those who used to work in east and south east London. Creating opportunities for children to engage with the history of their area is a priority for the Working Lives project.

Eastside Community Heritage has devised a series of workshops, based on the history of Samuel Williams and Sons, a distribution company on the Dagenham Docks. The workshops are fun and participatory, involving activities such as oral history interviewing, object handling and a site visit.

Please contact Eastside Community Heritage if you are interested or visit their website:

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Registered Charity number 1071668
Company Limited by Guarantee number 3509623

3) Energiser Game

To break up the morning, the young people were given an energiser game to ensure that they were not sitting down for too long. The young people had to find the golden envelope which was hidden in the hall.



Picture 3: Treasure Hunt Winner

4) I want to be a . . . workshop

This session was facilitated by VT Group, Personal Finance Education Group (PFEG) and the Engagement Team.

The sessions were split by year groups. The older children worked with PFEG and the younger children worked with Connexions and the Engagement Team.

PFEG Workshop

Activities

- Children were asked to mind map where their money comes from in both regular (e.g. pocket money) and irregular (e.g. present) forms. Talked briefly about Child Trust Funds. They also completed a second map about where parents/carers money comes from (e.g. salaries, benefits, investments). The young people were quite clued up on where money comes from. Few (including the teachers) knew much about CTF.
- Played a game called Salary Bingo. This looks at salary levels for different types of jobs. It stimulated some interesting discussions. The pupils seemed to manage the big numbers involved relatively easily. The winners were awarded 'My Money Week' goodie bags.
- How much? was a card sorting activity. The young people had to rank jobs from highest to lowest paid and look at skills/attributes needed for each job. Interestingly every group put MPs at the top of the list (which was incorrect) probably based on current media coverage about expenses. Teacher helpers provided the focus for the discussion on attributes.
- The workshop finished with a quick round of Yes/No/Maybechildren physically move to reflect their attitudes to statements about earnings (e.g. Wayne Rooney deserves to earn more than a teacher)

The participating pupils were issued with goodie bags and spares were taken back to schools by the teachers present on the proviso that they taught a money themed lesson at some other point in the week. To help them to do this they were provided with a crib sheet of ideas and resource links.

VT Group Workshop

Objectives:

- The session was aimed at young people age 5 to 12
- To highlight the importance of having aspirations
- To understand the importance of making plans

Learning outcomes:

At the end of the group activity pupils would have

- Developed and understood the importance of having aspirations
- Developed an understood about making adjustments/changes to achieve aspirations
- Developed an understood about making plans to achieve aspirations
- Developed an understood about jobs and salaries and how these can impact on earning
- Developed an understood about how qualifications can impact on jobs achieved and therefore on earnings.

Introduction

The group got together and were told they would take part in an exercise which stems from the real game and is called the dream game. The dream game is about looking at your ideal world/dreams and exploring how these dreams can be achieved.

The Wish List/dream list

The group was spilt into smaller groups and were handed out paper and cards and were asked to imagine they were in an ideal world where they could get anything they would like.

The cards were cut out and stuck on the flip chart paper; whatever they wished to have as adults in the form of accommodation, Transport, holidays, pets, leisure activities were listed on the cards. The groups included on their wish list, the cost of each item so they should calculate the cost of everything. They shaped their lists in the shape of clouds. The group added up on their calculators how much their wish list cost them.

Task 1

The groups stuck their dream clouds up on the walls so others can go around and look at what they have chosen and see the amount of money it cost to achieve per month. Each group commented on the amount of money they needed to earn to achieve these things. The groups identified anything which had not been included. i.e. The cost of gas, electricity, water, council tax, insurance, food, clothing, bus fares. train fares, fuel, road tax etc. Discussions took place to highlight the fact that to maintain their wish lists they will also need to consider the other costs.

Task 2

Each group were given jobs with earnings. The children talked to each other in their groups about the jobs they have. They were asked to talk about the education they will need in order to get into these jobs. They were informed about the amount of hour's they work and the amount of holiday. The groups talked about what they have learnt form the exercise and were asked If they think they would have to make any adjustments to their dream cloud.

Session Feedback

Orange Table – 9 young people
Yellow Tables – 10 young people

Feedback comments were as follows;

Orange Table:

- I have learnt that if you want great things you have to work extra hard. But something's you want maybe you don't need it.

- I have learnt that you shouldn't have a lot of things because it could cost too much. It would be very hard you keep hold of thing and hard to look after your family at the same time
- Very interesting. Team work was good even we didn't know each other. I learnt a lot of interesting facts.
- I thought it was good because I learnt that you have to work hard to achieve your dream. Also we got to work with other people and we got along.
- I liked it because it made me realise that if I want a good life I have to work really hard.
- I thought it was good because we were able to work together and we learnt about different types of jobs.
- I thought I learnt how much the price was for stuff
- I liked it because we worked together and when we were sharing the pens and drawing
- I liked it because I learnt you have to achieve to get stuff.

Yellow Table:

- It was fun we work together in groups well
- I felt so happy because we worked together in a group we had fun
- The good thing was learning to work hard and you will get hat you want....
- It was interesting, fun and I learnt a lot.

Some children in this group also said they would have preferred to have written their own wish lists as opposed to creating a group wish list.

Teaching Staff

Teachers felt this piece of work was very beneficial and were keen to look at this or a similar delivery in their schools.



Picture 4: VT Group Workshop

5) Engagement Team Workshop

The Engagement Team worked with the infants and used role play and art to discuss with the children about the different jobs that existed. Some of the children got to dress up in different uniforms and were asked to identify what the profession was and the sorts of activities each profession carried out. The children were asked whether they intended to become any of the professions on show (Fire Fighter, Police officer, Vet, Surgeon, Hairdresser) and why they would like to do that job.

So as to not limit the children's thinking regarding professions; they were asked to draw a picture of what they would like to do when they grow up and what they need to do in order to have that career i.e go to school, college, learn their subjects, good behaviour.



Picture 5: Children dress-up as different professions

6) Feedback

The children were asked for their thoughts and to write their comments on how the forum went.

- I like the bit where we drew the pictures of what we want to be.
- I liked it when we could be more active.
- I liked it because it was really really fun.
- I think that it was ok because I did not like when we kept on sitting on the blue chairs just talking.
- Am happy because I am a school councillor. I met new friends and I met Castle Green.
- I thought it was fantastic.
- I super loved it because we got to colour and they said some interesting facts about the Dagenham docks.
- I liked thinking about what I will do when I grow up.
- I liked colouring.
- It was good.
- I liked it.
- I enjoyed myself.
- I did like it because it was good.
- I enjoyed coming.
- I liked it because we are going to have a dinner in five minutes.

- I was very good because we learnt about the older days. I think we could have more games.
- I loved it and this is my second time of coming and I loved it. I love the food. Next time we could have lunch earlier and maybe I will come another time.
- I enjoyed it because there were lots of fun things to do and it was interesting.

7) Next Steps

All of the workshop facilitators are can be contacted directly by schools, if schools would like some work to take place within the schools. Their contact details are listed below, feel free to contact them.

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Copies of this report will be sent to all infant, junior and primary schools in the borough. The report will be available for download from www.lbbd.gov.uk/youth4us as well as the images taken on the day.

For details, please contact:

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