

House of Commons

Over 1.1 million young people in the UK took part in the 2018 Make your Mark ballot, which makes it the largest youth consultation of its kind in the UK, a fantastic achievement! Of these, 24,708 young people were from Leeds.

Members of Youth Parliament attended the House of Commons in November, to debate the top five issues from the Make Your Mark ballot and chose the national issue for young people in the UK. Tackling knife crime was chosen as the top issue, and is the campaign that we are working on and we hope to do everything we can to make a positive change with our work.

The standard of debate was exceptionally high at the House of Commons and Sylvia was fortunate enough to give a speech to commemorate 100 years of female suffrage. To speak at the dispatch box age 17 was an opportunity she will never forget.

Curriculum for Life

The curriculum for life campaign has made exceptional progress within the last 6 months. Although, for a time, there was some consternation that we would have to abandon the project as we fast approached the Make Your Mark house of commons event (where we would erect our new campaigns) we realised that simply adopting a new campaign didn't mean we would need to quit, particularly when progress could still be made for the young people of Leeds.

It wasn't until after the new year that we secured our next opportunity to champion a curriculum for life. A meeting with Steve Walker, Director of Children's Services, was immensely useful in coming to realise the benefit of a curriculum for life online resources. Serious steps are now being taken to investigate the potential of such ideas.

Overall, in the last 6 months the members of youth parliament for Leeds have been successful in pushing the campaign further than even we had anticipated would be possible.



**Arqam, Sylvia, Samuel & Harry
Members of Youth Parliament for Leeds**

The UK Youth Parliament represents the voices of young people from across the UK at a national level and enables young people to use their energy and passion to change the world for the better.

Takeover of the Children & Families Trust Board

On Monday 21st January, Members of Youth Parliament and the Leeds Youth Council took over the Children and Families Trust Board as part of National Takeover Challenge. We discussed the important issues of knife crime and mental health, with a focus on how these issues affect young people. Both members of the board and the youth organisations found the meeting informative, interesting and engaging. We all gained an insight into how the issues are perceived and what is being done to make progress. The meeting facilitated a direct channel of communication between young people and the local authority, allowing young people to express their feelings and opinions about the issues.

Tackling Knife Crime

We have made some great initial steps towards the national and local campaign to tackle knife crimes.

We started off our campaign by meeting with West Yorkshire Police and other key organisations to find out what is already happening to tackle the knife crime epidemic in the UK. On the 27th February we attended the West Yorkshire Police's knife crime awareness day at their Carr Gate Training Centre, the event provided over 100 students from across Leeds the opportunity to take part in different workshops and hear real life experiences of knife crime. This has really opened our eyes to the potential reasons why young people feel the need to carry and use knives.

We acknowledge that knife crime is an issue which needs to be tackled by raising as much awareness amongst young people as we can. We are planning a youth voice summit at Leeds Civic Hall to raise the awareness of knife violence. The event will take place in July 2019, and we will be giving many young people from different schools, especially the ones who took part in the Make Your Mark ballot. We hope to put together an exciting and fun day, full of knowledge for the young people of Leeds.