

Title of paper:	Youth Cabinet report on the 2014 NEEC Youth Conference	
Report to:	Children's Partnership Board	
Date:	19.3.14	
Relevant Director:	Candida Brudenell	Wards affected: All
Contact Officer(s) and contact details:	Jon Rea, Engagement and Participation Lead, 0115 8764817	
Other officers who have provided input:		
Relevant Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) objectives(s):		
Stronger safeguarding – With a key focus on ensuring that there are high standards of safeguarding across all agencies and that the Partnership takes a pro-active approach to the elimination of domestic violence.		
Healthy living – With a key focus on increasing the proportion of children and young people who have a healthy weight.		
Reducing substance misuse – Partnership work to lessen the impact on children of parental drug and alcohol misuse and to reduce drug and alcohol misuse amongst children and young people.		
Raising attainment – Raising the attainment levels and increasing engagement in employment, education and training.		x
Improving attendance – Improving rates of attendance at both Primary and Secondary as a key foundation of improving outcomes.		
Summary of issues (including benefits to customers/service users):		
<p>The Youth Cabinet planned and helped deliver the 2014 NEEC Youth Conference, 17th January 2014. The conference was on the theme of 'Skills for the 21st Century Workforce' and explored the challenges we face and the actions we need to take to encourage more children and young people to pursue a STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) career.</p> <p>A number of recommendations came out of the conference. The Youth Cabinet puts these recommendations forward for endorsement by the Children's Partnership Board, prior to their distribution and dissemination to local, regional and national partners.</p>		
Recommendations:		
1	The Board endorses the recommendations of the NEEC Youth Conference and approves the findings report for distribution and dissemination amongst partners.	
2	The Board recommends that the findings are incorporated into the STEWORKS local action plan for science communication currently being developed for launch in June 2104, and are used to inform the work of the Nottingham City Growth Board and the Science and Technology Advisory Council.	
3	The Board recognises the work done by children and young people in developing our understanding of their STEM education, training and employment needs and aspirations; and furthermore supports the ongoing work to put the voice of young citizens and their families at the heart of our education, training and employment partnerships, policies and plans.	

1. BACKGROUND AND PROPOSALS
(Explanatory detail and background to the recommendations)

See attached report on the 2014 NEEC Youth Conference

A presentation of recommendations by members of the Youth Cabinet will be given at the board meeting.

2. RISKS

None identified

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None identified

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None identified.

5. CLIENT GROUP

All children and young people

6. IMPACT ON EQUALITIES ISSUES

None identified

7. OUTCOMES AND PRIORITIES AFFECTED

CYPP cross-cutting theme number 4: To engage with and listen to service users and stakeholders in developing our services.

8. CONTACT DETAILS

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Report on the findings of the NEEC Youth Conference 2014

Compiled by Rachel To, Nottingham Youth Cabinet

Overview

A dedicated youth conference on ‘*Skills for the 21st Century Workforce*’ took place on 17th January 2014 as part of the North of England Education Conference. The primary focus of the conference was to discuss ways in which we can increase opportunities for children and young people to develop careers in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM).

Delegates attending the conference included young people from youth councils, schools and youth groups in Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, Derby, Derbyshire and Newcastle, along with delegates from the main NEEC conference, students from Nottingham Trent University, and STEM champions and organisations including Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Futures, STEMNET, Ignite!, NUASt and Working for Youth.

The conference was planned and delivered by members of the Youth Cabinet, supported by officers from the Council’s Quality and Commissioning team.

It is intended that the recommendations emerging from the conference are:

- a) used to inform ‘STEMWORKS’, Nottingham City’s local action plan for science communication
- b) used to inform and stimulate activity amongst other local authorities, schools, colleges and all relevant STEM institutions and organisations
- c) shared widely with local, regional and national partners to help affect the maximum amount of change

For more information on the NEEC Youth Conference and its findings please contact Jon Rea at jon.rea@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Methodology

Following an introduction and overview of the conference objectives delegates broke off into discussion workshop groups to explore in more detail the different conference themes.

The workshop programme themes were:

1. Engaging communities in STEM learning
2. Getting industry in the classroom
3. Removing barriers to STEM careers and raising aspirations

At the end of the conference the workshop groups came together to share their findings in a debate moderated by Cllr David Mellen, Nottingham City Council portfolio holder for Children and Families and attended by Cllr Nick MacDonald, portfolio holder for Employment and Skills. Conference delegates then approved the main recommendations contained in this report.

Workshops

Each group started by establishing an evidence base for their workshop theme, incorporating the findings of work done in advance by different delegate groups with information provided by experts in the group. The main issues identified were then explored, with young people's ideas tested against the evidence base. Solutions to problems were then investigated, ideas for action generated and a short list of priority recommendations made.

Debate

Delegates presented their recommendations in the closing debate, giving justifications on the reasons that these had been chosen. The issues were discussed in order to ascertain the viability of each recommendation and the impact that they would have. Dialogue between members from different sectors of the community highlighted the needs of different shareholders; policy makers, young people, and those employed in education. From this debate the main recommendations were made, with 3 key recommendations from each of the workshop themes, and additional suggestions also recorded.

The recommendations for each workshop theme are as follows:

Community Engagement

- 1) A Nottingham science festival that takes place every year in the city centre so everyone can take part in science learning.
- 2) Key people who work with young people established into STEM champions. These could be teachers, youth and play workers, faith group or community group leaders who are equipped with contacts and knowledge about STEM pathways and who can broker relationships with education and training providers and guide young people on their career path. This cohort could additionally form a think tank to support science communicators and STEM policy decision makers.
- 3) Publicity and advertising to raise presence of STEM in the city - think a stop smoking campaign but for starting STEM. (Science World in Canada has a scheme like this).

Additional suggestions are listed as follows:

- Establish a dedicated community science hub that facilitates community STEM activity.
- Inter-generational learning, where grandparents and young people come together and share skills and knowledge (i.e. grandparents teaching woodwork, grandchildren teaching them to Skype). Create a parents club, a place where families are encouraged to learn together.
- Increasing accessibility so that schemes and bursaries for projects are not only for the high academic flyers, but also accessible to lateral thinkers who may not have the grades. Work with local industry to offer relevant and quality work experience for all young people to engage with regardless of academic ability.
- Creative spaces that encourage abstract learning around ideas and making connections. Encouraging development of critical and creative thinking as well as learning STEM.
- Technology App for younger people to engage with STEM.

Industry in the Classroom

- 1) More partnerships between leading STEM companies and schools and colleges, with industry members going into schools in a co-ordinated way to make STEM careers more prominent and attainable to pupils.
- 2) STEM careers advice at an earlier age (pre-options), which links subjects in schools to careers, complemented by increased teacher knowledge of STEM careers.
- 3) Increased apprenticeship opportunities in STEM careers, including more credibility given to apprenticeships.

Additional suggestions are listed as follows:

- Engineering made compulsory as part of the national curriculum.
- Register of volunteers for STEM education (e.g. via universities and industry). Alumni visits back to schools to give students inspiration and advice on entering STEM careers.
- Sixth forms offering their students the chance to become STEM ambassadors/ leaders working with younger pupils, peers and the community.
- Ready made, off the shelf programme for schools/ teachers to pick up and teach, with ready made materials provided for free that can be adapted by the individual school.
- Community engagement/ teaching modules available in STEM degrees for university credits, encouraging STEM students into classrooms.
- Teach the teachers - this involves SKYPE mentoring/ blogs/podcasts by STEM experts to schools, with a specified STEM lead in schools.

Removing Barriers and Raising Aspirations

- 1) Policy makers, school heads and school governors must demonstrate strong clear commitment towards supporting equality of access to STEM education and training; and demonstrate leadership in the organisation they serve.
- 2) Actively retain ambassadors from under-privileged backgrounds in STEM ambassador programmes to act as role models, alumni group leaders, school STEM champions etc.
- 3) Ensure there are open doors into work at the end of vocational training routes with companies giving equal value to vocational and academic qualifications.

Additional suggestions are listed as follows:

- School curricula should aim to provide a broader, less Eurocentric history of science and technology and provide young people of non European descent with inspiration and STEM role models.
- Schools need to provide more support to enable less academic students to pursue science training and education opportunities.
- Through programmes like Apprenticeship Hub and working for youth, companies need to provide more STEM training and apprenticeships into level 2 and level 3 STEM jobs, with opportunities to train and progress while in work.
- Media organisations and channels should seek to be more informed when presenting science and technology issues and guard against perpetuating stereotypes e.g. around gender behaviour, such as boys versus girls career routes

Recommendations from the 2014 NEEC Youth Conference

Presented by Nottingham City Youth Cabinet:

Uzair Hashmi, Rob Ghahremani and Charlotte Croft



Community Engagement

- 1) A city science festival every year
- 2) Key people who work with young people established into STEM champions
- 3) Publicity and advertising to raise presence of STEM in the city

Industry in the Classroom

- 1) More partnerships between STEM companies and schools and colleges
- 2) STEM careers advice at an earlier age (pre-options), and increased teacher knowledge of STEM careers
- 3) Increased apprenticeship opportunities in STEM careers

Removing Barriers and Raising Aspirations

- 1) Policy makers, school heads and school governors must demonstrate strong clear commitment towards STEM
- 2) More ambassadors and role models for STEM from under-privileged backgrounds
- 3) Open doors into work at the end of vocational training routes, with equal value given to vocational and academic qualifications