

Friends, brothers and sisters

Feedback from our workshop with the South East children in care Council

In April Coram Voice ran a workshop with 53 of you at the South East Regional Children Care Council day.

We talked about the importance of relationships with other young people including friends and brothers and sisters.

What you said was written up in a report shared by your participation workers with all the local authorities that came on the day (Bracknell Forest, East Sussex, Kent, Reading, Surrey, West Sussex, Windsor and Maidenhead and Wokingham).

Coram Voice also shared your views with a group of MPs that are looking at relationships for care experienced young people the moment (the All Party Parliamentary Group for children in care and care leavers) and sent it to the Department for Education. In April MPs passed new legislation that says that local authorities must support children in care to keep relationships with brothers and sisters, in the same way they should for parents. The DfE are looking at your messages to inform guidance about how local authorities should do this.

Your key messages

1. Ask us and listen to our views about seeing brothers and sisters – we often want to see them more, but sometimes choose not to.
2. Ask us about our friendships, but don't judge them.
3. Explain why decisions about who we can and cannot see are made and make sure we understand them.
4. Remove blanket rules that stop us from seeing friends and siblings – make sure that each situation is looked at individually to maximise opportunities for us to be together.
5. Give us a chance to manage our own relationships, but also help make arrangements that mean we can see siblings or friends when, where and how we want to – for example paying for travelling, arranging things with carers and providing opportunities to do fun activities together.

Workshop questions and answers

"Seeing siblings is important to me"

Most agree

Not sure

Disagree

"I have a say in when and how I see my brothers and sisters"

Agree

Not sure

Most Disagree

"Friends are really important in my life."

Most agree

Not sure

Disagree

"I have enough time to see my friends."

Agree

Not sure

Most Disagree

"I can speak to professionals about my friendships"

Agree

Not sure

Disagree

"Professionals understand how important friendships are."

Agree

Not sure

Most Disagree