

Report to Neighbourhoods & Communities Select Committee

Date of meeting: January 2016

Subject: Community Services - Reality Roadshow 2015

Officer contact for further information: J Warwick (01992 564350)

Committee Secretary: A. Hendry (01992 564246)



Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the Committee notes the success of the Reality Roadshow initiative and the positive impact it has upon young people in the Epping Forest District.

Report:

Background

Building on the long - standing success of Crucial Crew, the Reality Roadshow initiative is a personal safety and health & well-being event that brings together a host of statutory and voluntary agencies, to deliver a day of educational workshops to Year 9 (14 year old) pupils at school in the district. It is specifically tailored to address young people's issues that have been identified as a priority concern locally.

Co-ordinated by the Council's Community Health and Wellbeing Team, each year Reality Roadshow provides over 1100 pupils in the District with expert advice and guidance on making the right choices in life for good health and wellbeing.

The day starts with an interactive drama production delivered by the Arc Theatre Company which tackles the high level priority of child sexual exploitation (CSE) and the law around producing and distributing indecent images of people under the age of consent. This bespoke production has been developed specifically for Epping Forest Reality Roadshow in line with emerging concerns and trends reported by schools in the area. The production explores issues relating to teenage relationships and online safety. Pupils then rotate through five, classroom based workshops which are approximately 40 minutes in duration. The event culminates in a presentation to the whole school, by an ex-offender with real life experiences of the issues explored during the day.

1. Theatre Performance

The theatre production by the Arc Theatre Company is a 30 minute interactive piece performed in an assembly style setting to all Year 9 pupils. The performance focuses on the issues of staying safe whilst using social media (Snap Chat/Twitter/Facebook) as well as the grooming of young people, in particular girls. The performance is an optional element to the day and, if selected by a school, the school is charged a fee of £450.

2. Workshop Themes

Pupils participate in either 5 or 6 workshops depending on individual school timetables and each session is specifically designed to address current issues facing local young people. The workshops delivered in 2015/16 are as follows:

- The Consequences of Crime – delivered by Essex Magistrates
- Online Internet Safety – EFDC's Community Health and Well-being Team
- Sexual Health - NHS Sexual Health Services
- Legal Highs and Substance Misuse - Alcohol & Drugs Advisory Service (ADAS)
- Alcohol Awareness - AlcoHELP
- Healthy Relationships and Domestic Abuse - Safer Places

3. Offender Insight – Tell it Like it is

Additionally, subject to timetable capacity, schools can also request a final talk to finish the day. This candid, hard hitting presentation is delivered by an ex-offender with real life experiences of the issues covered during the day.

4. Outcomes for Pupils

The impact of the Reality Roadshow programme on participants is generally very significant, as the messages given are very clear and designed to show the worse case scenarios of being involved in negative behaviours. The programme also promotes the opportunity for young people to make changes in their lives and to receive support and advice from the various agencies available locally.

- Pupils are equipped with current and appropriate information and able to make informed choices
- Pupils have the opportunity to hear and learn from the real life stories of recovering addicts and ex-offenders
- Pupils are able to ask for help and support about issues they may encounter
- Pupils are signposted to agencies that can offer further support, and how to access this
- The web links provided are uploaded onto the pupil pages of the school's website, thereby enabling anonymous access to information covering the support services available

In addition to benefiting the pupils directly, Reality Roadshow also indirectly benefits parents and carers, through empowering the young people to be able to make the right choices in life regarding relationships, alcohol, substances and so on; their home life is therefore likely to improve, as well as their educational attainment and life chances.

5. Outcomes for school and teaching staff

With the reduction of curriculum time for personal, social and health education, Reality Roadshow helps to cover some of the key areas of 'general' education that many young people miss out on. The programme is also tailored specifically for individual schools where needed and aims to accommodate work programmes and provide minimum disruption to the school timetable.

- Schools can select a date that is convenient for them
- The event can be adapted to meet financial considerations
- The information provided informs, supports and bolsters PSHE
- Teachers are provided with up to date information and therefore better able to support pupils and access further help.
- Links are established between the school and specialist agencies, who can offer

- further support if necessary
- Schools are provided with evaluation feedback from pupils and teaching staff from the event and this can be useful evidence to support Ofsted Inspections.

6. Reality Roadshow 2015-16

To date, Reality Roadshow has been delivered to the following schools in the current academic year 2015/16:

- Davenant Foundation School
- King Harold Business and Enterprise Academy
- West Hatch High School
- Debden Park High School*

**Reality Roadshow was delivered to both Year 9 and Year 10 in this School due to the school not taking part the previous year.*

Epping St Johns School and King Harold Business and Enterprise Academy are booked in to take part in Reality Roadshow in July 2016. A date for Roding Valley High School is still in the process of being arranged. Longer term, Ongar Academy will be incorporated into the Reality Roadshow annual programme once there is a Year 9 cohort in place.

7. Pupil Evaluation

In order to ensure that Reality Roadshow continues to be a successful and informative event, we ask each Year 9 pupil that attends to complete a feedback questionnaire which is anonymous. The questionnaire seeks to ascertain whether the young people have a better knowledge post roadshow, of the situations that may lead them into harm. The questionnaire also asks if the pupils now have a better understanding of the support agencies that are there to help them, should they be faced with any of the issues addressed during the day. Finally, the questionnaire also asks pupils to inform the Council of any issues that are facing them that they may want more information on, so that we are able to keep the roadshow relevant in terms of new and emerging topics.

The Feedback from pupils that have taken part in Reality Roadshow so far this year identifies that 76% of pupils rate Reality Roadshow as excellent or very good. It has also shown that anti-social behaviour, drug misuse and domestic abuse are the areas of most concern amongst the pupils that have participated.

The following quotes about Reality Roadshow were received from pupils this year:

- "I learned the importance of making the right choices"
- "Very interesting and interactive"
- "It was both very fun and educational"
- "It was great fun and I learned a lot in all the workshops"
- "Great workshops and good interactivity"

8. Teacher Evaluation

To monitor the expected outcomes for teachers, every teacher involved in the Roadshow throughout the day is asked to feedback on the scenario they have attended. They are asked what they feel worked and what did not work, as well as any areas of concern they may have, and what they believe could be improved for each scenario and for the whole day. Usually this feedback is very positive and teaching staff are delighted with the additional support and information that they gain from the day.

Reason for decision:

This report serves as an information item for the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Select Committee.

Options considered and rejected:

N/A

Consultation undertaken:

Evaluation form is completed by teachers and pupils. Informal feedback is also obtained from workshop providers.

Resource implications:

Personnel:

Staff from the Council's Community Health and Wellbeing Team organise, manage and deliver Reality Roadshow, along with partner agencies that deliver workshops.

Land:N/A

Community Plan/BVPP reference:

Corporate Plan Medium Term Aim 3 and 5

Relevant statutory powers:N/A

Background papers: N/A

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications:N/A

Key Decision reference: (if required)

N/A