

Developing a child friendly city centre

As part of the 5th birthday celebrations Child Friendly Leeds invited businesses, organisations and young people to take part in our **July Business Ambassador Event** at The Queens Hotel. The event formed part of a joint project between Children and Families and City Development to focus on making Leeds city centre more child and family friendly. Whilst there is currently an impressive offer for adults, we want to make it more welcoming for children and young people.

In advance of the event, we ran a competition for children and young people to tell us what they would like to see in the city centre. The competition had 5 categories which were linked to the 12 Child Friendly wishes and CYPP; Built Environment, Events and Activities, Safety, Travel and People. The response to the competition was amazing; we received over 350 entries – every entry put forward interesting, thought provoking and valuable. We also sent out a parent/ carer questionnaire (open to all parents and carers of children under 18 (under 25 with additional needs)) to understand what they liked about the city centre and what they thought could be improved. Forty four parents responded to this questionnaire and the key themes which came through were very similar to those developed in the children's competition entries.

The winning ideas and parent/ carer feedback were presented at the event and businesses and organisations had the opportunity to meet and talk to some of the winners and discuss their ideas with them. Ambassadors then went into discussion groups to look at how they could help make some of the ideas a reality and consider the specific offers they feel they can provide to support taking the projects forward.

Going forward, feedback from this event will be used as the basis to develop high impact Child Friendly projects for the city centre. Once the information is collated, collaborative project groups will be developed with Children and Families and City Development jointly coordinating delivery. Key themes from the entries will be collated into a brief report which will be made widely available as we hope this will influence what our CFL partners' and ambassadors' offer for children, young people and families in their local communities as well as in the city centre.