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Participation of foster carers in recruitment

Paul Stokes
Principal Manager
Fostering
Stoke on Trent City Council

What do you know about Stoke on Trent?

- Josiah Wedgwood
- Reginald Mitchell
- Sir Stanley Matthews
- Robbie Williams
- Edward Smith

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Where was Stoke in 2007?

- Very low enquiry / conversion rate
- Looking bleak – reflected in an inadequate Ofsted Inspection
- Council in 'Special Measures'
- More carers retired than recruited.

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What Ofsted said - October 2010

'Fostering Service Outstanding'

'Support for carers is outstanding, carers are extremely complimentary about the support they receive'.

'The Organisation promotes consultation strongly by setting a high standard of expectations regarding corporate parenting'.

'There is a strong sense of local identity and responsibility for local children, that is combined with a drive to be effective'.

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The Focus

- Identifying and utilising existing resources.
- Stoke carers for Stoke children
- Not consultation for consultations sake - it was developing a partnership - listening and acting-
- Foster Carers and their children are partners throughout the recruitment process

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Examples of Partnership

- Foster Care Association
- Young Person's Panel
- Train the Trainers
- Buddy Recruitment System
- Carers participation in marketing

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Progress.

- To date 22 new carers have been approved at panel since April 2010
- Another 12 are currently in assessment.
- Of those recruited, 8 are friends or relatives of current carers.

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And finally ……..

- We found the answer was closer to home that we thought ....

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- **F**ulfilling the needs of our children
- **A**chieving best possible outcomes
- **M**aking a difference
- **I**ncluding carers and their families
- **L**oyalty to Stoke on Trent
- **Y**oung People and Children at the centre.

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