



**Report of findings and recommendations of
The Curve**

Report Date: MAY 2017

Prepared By: Zahid Amin

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The Background:

Our Youth Voice programme contributes directly to Outcome 1 and Outcome 3 in the Five year Plan and has already gained national recognition with Slough Youth Parliament (SYP) reaching the finals of 2016's Children and Young People Now Awards. In addition to this, Slough Borough Council (SBC) achieved the second largest percentage turnout across the UK for the Make your Mark Campaign which recently resulted in an award from Rob Wilson MP, the Minister responsible for youth policy and volunteering.

To build upon this success, our Young Inspectors Programme went live from March 2017; based on good practice from Rotherham Council, national good practice and previous experience from within our Young People's Services.

Alongside the work of SYP, our new Young Inspectors Programme will contribute to:

“Providing young people with opportunities to have their voice heard and to shape service planning and delivery” – Key Action for SBC from Outcome 1.

Young Inspectors aims to empower our young people locally and giving them the opportunity to be part of the decision making process for services that directly effect them.

This contributes to improving the direct engagement of children and young people; to ensure that the voices and experiences of the most vulnerable are heard, and they inform strategic planning and commissioning.

What is a Young Inspector?

A Young Inspector is a volunteer aged between 13-19 and up to 25+ with SEN who will inspect services that impact children, young people and their families within Slough.

Objectives for Young Inspectors:

- Place young people aged between 13 – 19 and up to 25+ with SEN at the heart of inspecting services delivered to children, young people and their families to ensure compliance against standards and inform service improvements.
- Ensure the views and experiences of the Young Inspectors and children, young people and families are actively listened to, and acted upon to make a difference.
- Provide young people from across Slough with opportunities to develop their skills, raise their confidence and self-esteem; all of which can lead to improved life chances.
- Increase uptake and participation in services by those children and young people who have previously not engaged with Young People's Services and increase their participation in volunteering and social action.

The 3 Key Standards for Young Inspectors:

The Young Inspectors are aware of the 3 Key standards when carrying out an inspection and this forms part of the inspection training prior to any inspection.

1. Confidentiality.

Young Inspectors understand the importance of confidentiality that even if information is not legally classified as confidential, if not handled tactfully can cause problems. Young Inspectors understand the importance of confidentiality and how to manage conflict of interests.

2. Health and Safety (Safeguarding).

Young Inspectors are told the importance of pairing up when doing an inspection and health and safety tips when carrying out an inspection.

3. Professionalism.

Young inspectors follow the following Key Principles in relation to professionalism.

- a. Young Inspectors are in a privileged position.
- b. Report findings accurately and truthfully.
- c. If Young Inspectors see something bad or negative they must be professional and allow a process to run and give the inspected service an opportunity to fix it.
- d. Consider the consequences of their work or its misuse for those they inspect and their users and that their methods or conduct will not adversely affect those they inspect

Introduction:

Dynamics of Young Inspectors: 12 in total.

Male:	4
Female:	7
Average Age:	14

Scope – The Curve Brief

Young Inspectors were instructed not to inspect the following areas:

- The café.
- The Museum pods.

General agreed areas that can be inspected at the Curve

- Registering at the Curve. Is this an easy process? Do Curve staff inform people at registration about the various activities on offer at the Curve?
- The Wi – Fi and electrical points. Are they in working order? Is it easy to use?
- The Curve website. Is this user friendly? Social Media presence? How can the Curve improve this? What is the best way to get information out to young people?
- Public computers. Do they work? Easy access?

In addition, The Curve welcomed more general feedback from each Young Inspector about what they knew about The Curve prior to the inspection and asked Young Inspectors to consider the following:

- Thought it was 'just a library'? Aware there was a venue and gallery? Aware of other services in The Curve?
- How easy it is to find in the town centre – signage etc.
- What media presence it has etc.

Inspection Techniques:

The Young Inspectors agreed on 3 inspection techniques from their training and development workshops which considered the scope and brief given by The Curve.

These are and included the following:

1. Mystery Shopping. 3 Young Inspectors Appendix 1

Registering as a new user at the library and using the public computers.

2. Questionnaire. 3 Young Inspectors Appendix 2

Set of 10 questions asked to a range of people on all levels of The Curve.

3. Observation on the Curve. 4 Young Inspectors Appendix 3

Overview of items about the physical space and building.

4. The Curve website 2 Young Inspectors Appendix 4

Set of 5 Key Areas about the accessibility of The Curve website.

How was the inspection carried out?

The inspections were all carried out on the same day with a diverse range of Young Inspectors.

The mechanism of how to carry out each inspection was agreed on the training and development day, with the Young Inspectors prior to the inspection. Each Young Inspector was given the brief from The Curve to consider for each type of inspection and this was handed out to them on the day in the form of a guidance document.

As The Curve website was only inspected on the day by 2 Young Inspectors. An inspection guidance document was emailed out to all Young Inspectors to report their key findings and recommendations on The Curve website and to email these in at a later stage

The inspection lasted for 2 hours and each type of inspection was carried out independently from each other. The Young Inspectors then met up to discuss the key findings and to draft a report and presentation to list the recommendations.

For this purpose of this report we have split the Key Findings into the 3 types of inspections that were carried out and then listed the overall recommendations at the end of this section, with specific recommendations for The Curve website. We have also listed what we have named 'Overall Positive Feedback' which highlights good practice by The Curve.

What did the Young Inspectors know prior to the inspection?

The Young Inspectors were aware of the services on offer at The Curve and had some communication through their respective schools. Young Inspectors were also aware of the venue and gallery space and universally agreed that the signage was good in Slough High Street with directions to The Curve.

However Young Inspectors were not aware of the adult education services that take place in The Curve.

Key Findings:

Mystery Shopping

- The staff at The Curve are warm and friendly.
- Registering for a library card was an easy process which only took a few minutes. The library cards were appealing and there was also staff that helped in how to use the library card.
- Information was given about the range of activities that The Curve offer.
- Public computers easy to access and use.

Questionnaire

- Over 50% of users are aware of the rules of The Curve.
- Users like the design and structure of the building
- Wi-Fi is regarded as excellent
- There needs to be more quiet study areas and can be difficult to revise at most times.
- Can get noisy due to a lot of activity happening at The Curve. Children crying in the building due to registration of births.
- Most people visit The Curve to study.
- Generally people found out about The Curve through Slough library, local newspapers, word of mouth and the internet

Observation on the Curve.

- Lack of revision space on the 2nd floor.
- Up to 3 people using desks at once due to lack of space.
- Library Rules not as visible around the building.
- Need more selection of books.
- Recycling of rubbish should be more visible.

Website:

- User friendly. It is very easy to use, and the tabs are clear.
- Easy to log on.
- Good opening page as it has the events displayed on the home screen which straight away captures user's attention.
- It is very easy to use, and the tabs are clear.
- Twitter social media presence is very good and clear, and the feed looks very vibrant with lots of pictures.
- It has a Facebook page.
- The sign in button is quite disguised on the background

Overall Positive Feedback

- The space is welcoming and inviting.
- Users have described the building as, 'bright and spacious'.
- Location is easily accessible by foot.
- Children's space is really good, parent's feel that they are in a safe environment.
- Lot of natural light in the building.
- People are aware of the food rules in The Curve.
- Wi-Fi is excellent.
- Tidy and clean.
- Website is very easy to use.

Overall Recommendations for The Curve

- The Curve to offer more activities for teenagers.
- Young Inspectors were directed to the Slough Borough Council website when asked about Information in regards to volunteering opportunities at The Curve. Volunteering opportunities at The Curve should also be listed on The Curve website.
- Instructions on how to use public computers should be available.
- Locating library books must be easier, without the guidance of staff.
- More quiet study signs around the building.
- Printing costs per sheet is should be lower. It is currently too expensive - £1 for an A4 Colour Sheet.
- Reading lists for people to access online and in the library. This should also be on The Curve website.
- More restrictions on certain websites for different age groups.
- Some issues when booking a public computer if a user has not been logged off. Users should be given a sign or notification that alerts them to log off. There should be an automatic time out session due to inactivity.
- Staff should recommend educational websites that children may be able to use to help with studying.
- More parking spaces needed at The Curve.
- Allow the classrooms that are used for adult learning to be opened up for quiet study space.
- The rules of The Curve should be on posters that are bright and colourful.
- Staff should be visible and available on all levels of The Curve.
- More revision guides.
- Lack of study space and computer space as it is consistently used by nearby schools.
- Cameras needed outside on the bike rack.
- Make more use of the space for study areas.
- A map of the Curve similar to theme parks for young people.
- Signs at both entrances about what is on offer on each floor.

Specific Recommendations for The Curve website:

- The Curve website should have events grouped into sections such as people//adults//children.
- The Curve website should have a bit more information about The Curve on the front page, as it is quite confusing as there is no obvious explanation as to what it is.
- Improvement on social media for young people would be to have another account for young people's events
- The curve Facebook page is good, but in terms of attracting young people Instagram would be better, as fewer young people use Facebook
- More publicity for the social media sites could be achieved through posters in schools and in the library
- Making the key features of the website stand out more, and be accessible from the first page. Possibly trying to get The Curve website higher on the search list on google.
- The best way to get information to young people would be through schools and social media, schools to inform people about social media and opportunities available (this could be posters) and social media for up to date news.
- Have a news section on the website
- Regularly monitor the website to see that all the links and URLs are working properly.

End of Report

The Young Inspectors would like to express our gratitude to The Curve for allowing us to inspect their services. The experience of has been excellent and we are grateful that we have had an opportunity to take part in the process of wider change in Slough.

We hope that you have found this report informative and are looking forward to our presentation soon.



**Slough Young People's Service
Youth Voice – Young Inspectors**

Tel: 01753 875510

- www.sloughforyouth.com
- sloughforyouth@slough.gov.uk

Aqsa Chaudhry
Hamael Malik
Rachel Adegbola
Antonio Shekiluwa
Ammara Ashfaq
Che Cardoso
Sofia Cardoso
Telemi Emmanuel-Aina
Prince Lamba
Aniruddha Ghosh
Ilesha Allen
Eman Arshad

End of Report

Appendix 1

The Mystery Shop



Team Name:

Young Inspectors:

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The Curve Brief

- Registering at the Curve. Is this an easy process? Do Curve staff inform people at registration about the various activities on offer at the Curve?
- Public computers. Do they work? Easy access?

The Key Standards

Confidentiality

What happens during the inspection process must not be discussed outside of the Young Inspectors team. Everything you see and hear must feedback only to this team for the report.

Remember we are the 'critical friend' and are inspecting to improve a service not to discredit the service. Our report will highlight areas for improvement.

Health and Safety - (Safeguarding)

5 Key Points to Keeping you SAFE

1. Everyone will be in pairs at all times.
2. Keep an eye on your personal belongings.
3. If using your mobile phone you are not to take pictures of people. Do not hand out personal information like your number.
4. Look confident and avoid confrontation.

5. If you come across a serious health and safety matter or you are made to feel uncomfortable, please speak to a member of staff immediately.

Professionalism

1. Use simple language and simple words and avoid jargon.
2. Be welcoming and approachable.
3. Always say Please and Thank You.
4. Remember you are in a privileged position

1. Registering for library card.

You should try and register at the Curve as a library user and will need to remember the key standards when carrying out your inspection.

Please pay attention to the following areas:

Was registering an an easy process?

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Was you told about the various activities on offer at the Curve?

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How were your queries dealt with?

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How did you rate your overall experience?

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Recommendations

From the training a number of recommendations were suggested. Now you have carried out your inspection, do you have any more that you want to add?

Please remember to add the things which you think the Curve is doing well. Highlight this good practice.

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2. Using the Public Computers.

You should try and ask to use the public computer as a member of the public. Remember the key standards when carrying out your inspection.

Please pay attention to the following areas:

Was getting onto a public computer an easy process?

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Do they work?

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How much time do you get on them – is this enough?

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How did you rate your overall experience?

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Appendix 2

Young Inspectors – The Curve Inspection



Team Name:

Young Inspectors:

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The Curve Brief:

- Thought it was 'just a library'? Aware there was a venue and gallery? Aware of other services in The Curve?
- How easy it is to find in the town centre – signage etc.
- What media presence it has etc.
- Do we need to change/expand the teen fiction books/is it in the correct physical space?
- Do young people know about the Curve? How did they find out about the Curve? What did they find out about the Curve from the school?
- Is there enough revision guides and books – a pre-visit inspection highlighted the need for these. What do young people think now that these have been bought into the library?

Important Point:

Please remember that if you wish to approach any members of the public on the 2nd floor, this is the quiet study area and therefore conversations in this area should be taken down on the first floor – many thanks.

The Key Standards

Confidentiality

What happens during the inspection process must not be discussed outside of the Young Inspectors team. Everything you see and hear must feedback only to this team for the report.

Remember we are the 'critical friend' and are inspecting to improve a service not to disapprove of it.

Health and Safety - (Safeguarding)

5 Key Points to Keeping you SAFE

6. Everyone will be in pairs at all times.
7. Keep an eye on your personal belongings.
8. If using your mobile phone you are not to take pictures of people. Do not hand out personal information like your number.
9. Look confident and avoid confrontation.
10. If you come across a serious health and safety matter or you are made to feel uncomfortable, please speak to a member of staff immediately.

Professionalism

5. Use simple language and simple words and avoid jargon.
6. Be welcoming and approachable.
7. If someone does not want to take part in the questionnaire/survey then do not force them!
8. Always say Please and Thank You.
9. Remember you are in a privileged position

Please circle below:

Male Female

Age:

Floor used at the Curve.

Please circle below:

- Ground
- First
- Second

1. How did you find out about the Curve?

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2. Why do you come to the Curve?

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3. Do you think there are enough quiet study places?

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4. What do you think about the selection of books?

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5. If there was one thing you could change about the Curve what would it be?

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6. How would you rate the WI-FI?

1 being the lowest. 5 being the highest

1 2 3 4 5

7. Are the public computers easy to use?

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8. Are there any rules that you are aware of about the Curve?

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9. What is the best thing about the curve?

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10. Any other comments/feedback

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Appendix 3

Building Observation



Team Name:

Young Inspectors:

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The Curve Brief:

- The WI – Fi and electrical points. Are they in working order? Is it easy to use?
- Do we need to change/expand the teen fiction books/is it in the correct physical space?
- Is there enough revision guides and books – a prevision inspection highlighted the need for these. What do young people think now that these have been bought into the library?

The Key Standards

Confidentiality

What happens during the inspection process must not be discussed outside of the Young Inspectors team. Everything you see and hear must feedback only to this team for the report.

Remember we are the ‘critical friend’ and are inspecting to improve a service not to discredit the service. Our report will highlight areas for improvement.

Health and Safety - (Safeguarding)

5 Key Points to Keeping you SAFE

1. Everyone will be in pairs at all times.
2. Keep an eye on your personal belongings.
3. If using your mobile phone you are not to take pictures of people. Do not hand out personal information like your number.
4. Look confident and avoid confrontation.
5. If you come across a serious health and safety matter or you are made to feel uncomfortable, please speak to a member of staff immediately.

Professionalism

1. Use simple language and simple words and avoid jargon.
2. Be welcoming and approachable.
3. Always say Please and Thank You.
4. Remember you are in a privileged position

Look at the building from different ages, point of views - child, teens, adult & elderly

Use of **physical space** - lay out, empty areas, crowed areas.

Comment:

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Use of **wall space** - to much stuff, tool little art work, posters, gallery.

Comment:

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Rubbish - enough bins, enough recycling, in correct places, over full, is there litter inside/outside.

Comment:

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Bike racks - enough space, safe, do they have locks in the library.

Comment:

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Multi use spaces - is it good that rooms such as gallery is more than one thing, does it limit access to see art or improve access to building by having more available

Comment:

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Areas to consider - gallery, event space, quiet/young peoples/children's/general library areas, outside spaces, meeting rooms, downstairs/seating areas.

Comment:

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Entrances (both back and front) - welcoming, security, help desk and info

Comment:

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Maps and floor plans and clear signage.

Comment:

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Access - ramps, lifts, large print books/signage, hearing loops, different languages. Look at it from different disabilities points of views.

Comment:

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Lighting - enough, lightbulbs working

Comment:

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Info - in a place where you will see it, tidy/messy, clear, out of date posters, enough info, events and courses publicised well.

Comment:

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Services - Is it clear what other services the library offers, do they offer activities & courses for young people

Comment:

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Health & safety - are spillages cleaned up, furniture in place, do you feel safe in there, supported by staff if there was someone making you feel uncomfortable.

Comment:

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Bookshelves - tidy, enough stuff & variety. Is there a diverse range of books? If they are not in? is there a long wait? Easy to understand where to find things/signs

Comment:

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Staff - friendly, easy to find, doing their job?

Comment:

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Wifi - does it work well in all areas of the building, easy to get on?

Comment:

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Temperature - good, cold, hot, draughty.

Comment:

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Toilets - clean, tidy, enough, good locations, one for disabilities.

Comment:

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Rules - are they clear what they are, are they enforced well

Comment:

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Quiet spaces - quiet enough, enough space to work

Comment:

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Hiring spaces - info is clear, cost, availability

Comment:

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Seating - clean, tidy comfortable, suitable for all, correct place, layout

Comment:

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Appendix 4

The Curve Website



The brief from the Curve:

The Curve website: <http://www.thecurveslough.com/>

Please pay attention to the following when accessing the website as part of the inspection.

Is this user friendly?

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How is the Social Media presence?

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How can the Curve improve this?

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What is the best way to get information out to young people?

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