

THE CHILDREN'S PARLIAMENT - DO THE RIGHT THING LOCAL PROJECT

VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

At the heart of the *Do the Right Thing* Local Projects are the following underpinning values and principles:

- Human rights belong to all of us, all of the time, equally.
- Through strong and mutually respectful relationships, children will flourish with adult guidance and encouragement. An awareness, understanding and commitment to children's human rights provide a foundation for such relationships.
- Children's human rights help us do these things: keep children safe, provide a framework for our approach to providing services and allow children to have their say.
- As human beings we need to care about each other, we must help others lead decent and dignified lives, we must challenge injustice.
- Human rights apply in all areas of children and young people's lives: at home, at school and in other service provision contexts, and in the community.
- A *rights perspective* views all citizens, including children and young people, not as passive or weak but as equal and active members of society who should be a part of decisions which are made about them or which affect them.
- It is important to consider what children and young people *need* – but we need to go further and recognise that some needs require the recognition and power which a *right* brings them (for example, children don't just need to be safe - they benefit from the *right* to protection from harm).
- If we think about children's human rights as *non-negotiable social entitlements* we begin to recognise the scale of the challenge which faces us as adults, professionals and as a society committed to their best interests.
- Public and voluntary sector agencies in receipt of public funding have an *obligation* to protect children's human rights and take action when there is a perceived abuse.

As UNICEF¹ reminds us:

"The true measure of a nation's standing is how well it attends to its children – their health and safety, their material security, their education and socialization, and their sense of being loved, valued, and included in the families and societies into which they are born."

¹ From UNICEF at http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/rc7_eng.pdf