



YOUTH STANDARDS REVIEW

2021 - 2022
ONE YEAR ON

**St
Basils**
Works with young people

50
years

THE 12 YOUTH STANDARDS

Taking a forward-thinking approach to user engagement, Youth Voice, the youth engagement team at St Basils co-designed with young people a set of 12 standards for staff and services, based on their experiences.

These were the 'gold standard' of expectations that young people could expect from St Basils services and staff.

This continued commitment to understand how the organisation could strive to do better by young people was further endorsed as the standards were adopted by the St Basils board in 2021.

ONE YEAR ON

Standards are only useful if they are embedded in the organisation and staff are working towards working within them. Youth Standard 12 ('Actively encourage and embrace feedback to continually improve service delivery') is about the importance of seeking young people's views to improve service delivery, so naturally it made sense to embrace feedback on the standards themselves.

To ensure that the standards were being met and remain relevant a year on, Youth Voice hosted 'time to talk' sessions where over 160 young people discussed with Youth Services Managers the standards together. The sessions looked at how St Basils was doing against them and what improvements could be made both by individual commitments by Youth Service Managers, but also how the organisation as a whole can work better to achieve the standards. Young people were asked to decide whether they felt St Basils were meeting these standards based on a traffic-light system on whether the organisation was 'doing great', working towards or needs to do more to meet the standards set.

In this document we aim to keep young people informed on the outcomes of this valuable feedback.



ST BASILS YOUTH STANDARDS

St Basils
MIND FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

YOU!
THE VOICE

PIE

St Basils
Psychologically
Informed
Environments

1

Communicate expectations, rights, responsibilities and co-develop house rules with Young People.

2

Be caring and build trusting relationships: Keep Young people's best interests at heart be honest and genuine.

3

Ensure environments are calm, safe, welcoming, fit for purpose and homely through-out.

4

Embrace digital engagement and connectivity, ensuring equal opportunities and inclusivity for all.

5

Offer choice for support timings and format. Work in partnership. Listen and adapt.

6

Be friendly, approachable, and fun but keep boundaries clear and consistent.

7

All staff to have a strong understanding of mental health and wellbeing, to help build emotional support and resilience.

8

Help Young People succeed long term: Build confidence and self-esteem first.

9

Help Young People achieve their dreams. Establish skills, set goals and lay out steps for the future so progression can be seen.

10

Offer activities and inter-connection with other Young People between schemes to improve wellbeing.

11

Offer real opportunities for Young People to be heard at all levels and represented on St Basils board.

12

Actively encourage and embrace feedback to continually improve service delivery.

YOUTH STANDARD 1

54% of young people felt St Basils was doing great on its commitment to “communicate expectations, rights, responsibilities and co-develop house rules with Young People.” Many felt that they were well informed of the rules when they first moved in and are reminded of the rules during residents’ meetings, although they also felt there was room to improve this further by looking at whether the rules suit the current needs of young people. When it is time for the house rules to be refreshed, young people should be part of a co-designing process to do so.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Regularly review and update house rules, with young people involved in the process. Continue to ensure young people are aware of the rules, but regularly ensure young people are aware of their rights and responsibilities throughout their time at St Basils.

ST BASILS YOUTH STANDARDS

1

Communicate expectations,
rights, responsibilities and
co-develop house rules with
Young People.

YOUTH STANDARD 2

Most young people felt that St Basils was honouring its commitment to 'Being caring and building trusting relationships: Keep young people's best interests at heart. Be honest and genuine.' 77% of young people choose green for 'doing great' and felt they had positive relationships with staff and felt valued. In projects where there was a reliance on agency staff or lack of consistent staff team, young people felt this made it more difficult for them, but felt staff were trying their best. Young people also recognised they need to take up the services on offer more as engagement creates the best outcome.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Youth panels should be in place for recruitment of all frontline workers. PIE principles to be given to all staff, and constant reminders across all frontline services of the values expected of them. Regular 'Time to Talk' sessions to take place in accommodation projects to give young people and staff time to build relationships and trust.

ST BASILS YOUTH STANDARDS



2

Be caring and build trusting relationships: Keep Young people's best interests at heart be honest and genuine.

YOUTH STANDARD 3

Most young people felt St Basils was doing well (54%) or working towards (43%) youth standard three; 'Ensure environments are calm, safe, welcoming, fit for purpose and homely throughout.' Staff try to maintain an environment for young people that is calm but can be problematic if there are residents having issues. A lot of young people though, felt like the accommodation felt 'like home' and were happy with the accommodation, and staff did regular wellbeing checks. Redecoration of spaces was something that young people recognised improved how they felt about their accommodation, particularly communal spaces, but also recognised that it can be difficult to share this space.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Young people should be consulted on any new building projects, with cyclical redecoration of rooms and in particular communal spaces. To enable young people to feel safe in all accommodation, ensure appropriate security equipment, including signage, gates and fences are in place and well maintained. Where buildings are not fit for purpose, look for alternatives, where possible.

ST BASILS YOUTH STANDARDS

3

Ensure environments are
calm, safe, welcoming, fit for
purpose and homely
through-out.

YOUTH STANDARD 4

Since the beginning of the Covid pandemic, digital connectivity has become even more important, and Youth Standard 4 committed to embracing this to ensure equal opportunities and inclusivity for all. 58% of young people felt St Basils were doing great at this, 8% felt it needing improving and the rest felt efforts were being made towards achieving this standard. The increased use of social media to maintain contact was viewed positively by young people; it was seen to have broken down barriers and encouraged regular engagement by having a variety of options to connect. But it was also mentioned that not all young people use or prefer digital options and it was important to maintain other methods too. Whilst it was appreciated that platforms that could be used over Wi-Fi to avoid costing young people money, it was also noted that the internet connection was not of the same quality across the different projects.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Invest in Wi-Fi so that it is consistent across St Basils and equal access is available, whilst also considering how digital poverty may be a problem for some young people. Ensure contact with young people is done in their preferred way, recognising the usefulness of digital tools but that it is not always the preference for all.

ST BASILS YOUTH STANDARDS

4

Embrace digital engagement
and connectivity, ensuring
equal opportunities and
inclusivity for all.

YOUTH STANDARD 5

Working in partnership with young people by offering a choice of support, listening and adapting is the focus of Youth Standard Five. Young people overwhelmingly felt St Basils was doing great at this, with 83% scoring green and 8% for red and amber.

Young people expressed the service was flexible and adjusted to their needs, with a good mixture of planned sessions, but also the freedom to access support by going to staff unplanned, where their needs were prioritised.

Young people felt genuinely listened to and were able to give examples of when their suggestions had been acted upon.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Recognise how vital the protected time with a progression coach is and ensure regular appointments are flexible to the needs of young people can take place. Ensure staffing teams meet the needs of young people; recognise the value of skilled St Basils staff but also have specialist partnership working in place to support young people where needed.

ST BASILS YOUTH STANDARDS

5

Offer choice for support timings and format. Work in partnership. Listen and adapt.

YOUTH STANDARD 6

Youth Standard Six looks at the balance for St Basils staff of being friendly and approachable but ensuring boundaries are in place and that they are clear to young people - and consistent. Almost all young people felt that St Basils did this well, with 96% scoring green. Managers felt that they gained valuable feedback from discussions around this, where young people felt they could 'have a laugh' with staff but that the staff remained professional with boundaries in place. Many young people felt that staff went above and beyond, and they felt valued, but that boundaries were observed. Young people felt that activities organised within the projects really helped with this and progression coaches were often the right balance of supportive and encouraging.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Regularly ensure staff are aware of this standard so that it is consistent across the board, particularly for new staff members. Have a resident rep or Youth Advisory Board member trained and part of all recruitment. Young people to co-design training to be delivered at the induction for these new members of staff.

ST BASILS YOUTH STANDARDS

6

Be friendly, approachable, and fun but keep boundaries clear and consistent.

YOUTH STANDARD 7

Having a strong understanding of mental health and wellbeing to help young people build resilience and find good emotional support is the focus of Youth Standard Seven. Young people felt this was something more staff needed to do better on, with 63% scoring green, 17% scoring amber and 21% scoring red. Young people reported that staff show interest and concern of their mental health and wellbeing but that whilst there was a good basic understanding, staff were limited in how they could support or help manage issues effectively. However young people also recognised that lack of support and provision for mental health problems was a bigger problem and that support services outside of St Basils, within the wider community, were limited. However, this was not always consistent, and some young people did not feel they were as well supported as others.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Access and quality of services does not meet the needs of young people, so it is vital St Basils staff are skilled and knowledgeable. Psychologically informed Environment and Mental Health First-Aid training should be available for all and with regular refreshers, and young people should be involved in co-designing a PIE Youth program. Wellbeing sessions should be available across all of the St Basils services and on a range of topics, including sport, health eating, access to nature etc.

ST BASILS YOUTH STANDARDS

7

All staff to have a strong understanding of mental health and wellbeing, to help build emotional support and resilience.

YOUTH STANDARD 8

Following on from looking at the importance of mental health, Youth Standard 8 looks at helping young people to succeed in the long term by building confidence and self-esteem first. Three quarters of young people felt St Basils did this well, with the remaining quarter scoring amber. Young people reported that staff supported them in building their confidence and self-esteem, recognising this is a gradual process and for some people this took time, particularly those recovering from past trauma. However, as with some of the other standards, young people did not always feel this was consistent across all the staff. Many young people spoke about the positive impact of the life skills and employability programmes in helping their confidence, moving them from being isolated to a place where they were able to apply for, gain and maintain employment.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The life skills modules should include sections on confidence building and self-esteem. More wellbeing programmes and group activities organised through Youth Voice or the Employability team. Young people involved in recruiting the right staff and acting as mystery shoppers to ensure a consistent approach.

ST BASILS YOUTH STANDARDS

8

Help Young People succeed
long term: Build confidence
and self-esteem first.

YOUTH STANDARD 9

Seventy-nine per cent of young people felt St Basils was helping young people achieve their dreams, establish skills, set goals, and lay out steps for the future so progression could be seen. Staff were seen to work hard to support young people in goal setting and using different methods to help each young person on an individual basis. Whilst some young people liked some of the tracker methods to achieve goal setting objectives, others felt the language used on them could be problematic. High rents in supported accommodation, lack of employment opportunities and limited social housing were seen as barriers by young people to being able to set goals for themselves.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

A consistent Employability presence should be in all services, and how this is marketed should be reviewed so that all young people are aware of the opportunities available. Staff should work at the pace that is comfortable for young people, starting with their dreams and ambitions and working on from there, rather than following a set form. St Basils should invest in more Live and Work schemes or other innovations so that young people are able to work and earn whilst in supported housing.

ST BASILS YOUTH STANDARDS

9

Help Young People achieve their dreams. Establish skills, set goals and lay out steps for the future so progression can be seen.

YOUTH STANDARD 10

Youth Standard Ten looks at how young people living in different schemes can interact to promote wellbeing. Forty-two per cent of young people scored this green, whilst thirty-eight per cent scored amber and twenty-one per cent felt St Basils needed to improve this. Young people felt interacting with others had been made more difficult by Covid, but that when this is available it had mainly been within the accommodation they stayed at as joining up with other projects could be difficult due to distance. There were different views on the range of activities offered, with some young people feeling there were lots to do, others not so much and elsewhere activities were offered but were often cancelled due to lack of interest.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Young people should be encouraged to co-design activity programs in all services, with resident rep forums and a link with the Youth Advisory Board. A local activity budget to allow for external activities to take place and an annual interaction for all residents to allow for projects to connect with one another. Ensure that digital connections between schemes is offered and young people know how to access it.

ST BASILS YOUTH STANDARDS

10

Offer activities and
inter-connection with other
Young People between
schemes to improve wellbeing.

YOUTH STANDARD 11

Offering real opportunities for young people to be heard at all levels and represented on St Basils board was something that split young people on whether they thought St Basils was achieving this or had more work to do on it. Not all young people were aware of the opportunities available, with some knowing about local ones but not wider ones within the organisation. Many young people felt that they were asked for feedback by staff at their project and opportunities like residents' meetings and surveys were mentioned by numerous times.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Ensure communication methods for young people is consistent across all the services and that residents meetings happen regularly, with residents' reps being connected to the Youth Advisory Board. Advertise Youth Advisory Board and opportunities to join the St Basils board across the organisation and improve the communication between Youth Voice and Employability to help spread the word. Have Youth Voice lead workers in all areas of the organisation.

ST BASILS YOUTH STANDARDS

11

Offer real opportunities for
Young People to be heard at all
levels and represented on
St Basils board.

YOUTH STANDARD 12

Concluding the standards is one that unifies the standards: actively encourage and embrace feedback to continually improve service delivery. Sixty-five per cent of young people felt St Basils did this well, with the remaining thirty-five percent scoring this as working towards this standard. Many young people gave examples of times when they were asked for feedback, including at residents' meetings and both with staff and without staff present. However, some young people felt their suggestions and ideas were listened to, but the follow-through was not always there, or they were not told why their ideas could not be progressed.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Encourage more 'Time to Talk' sessions with young people, staff and managers. Provide more opportunities to feedback, both digitally and through suggestion boxes. Previous feedback to be reviewed and young people to be updated on progress of these suggestions with a 'You Said, We Did' service, and responses provided within a reasonable amount of time so young people know their suggestions are being acted upon.

ST BASILS YOUTH STANDARDS

12

Actively encourage and
embrace feedback to
continually improve
service delivery.

CONCLUSION

Taking the daring step to develop standards designed by young people and put them at the heart of the organisation has proven to be a successful move for St Basils.

Young people reported largely positive scores on the implementation of the Youth Standards a year after they were formalised by the organisation. There is some room to improve, but on the whole young people felt positive about being involved in the work St Basils does for and with them.

Engaging the young people who use the services provided not only empowers them but also provides a common and clear understanding between staff and the users of the services on what to expect from the organisation. By co-designing the standards with those who use the services, something which is key to how St Basils works, the success of the Youth Standards shows that this model works - and could be adopted by other organisations.

THANK YOU

We want to thank every single young person who has contributed to the Youth Standards either directly or indirectly, by taking part in surveys, discussions, group talks and who feed back to their Progression Coaches.

Your feedback is extremely valuable to us and we will do our best to live up to the standards you set for us.

If you have any questions or feedback, you can contact:

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St Basils
Psychologically
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Environments

**YOUTH
GIVE
VOICE**

SPEAK UP FOR CHANGE