



# **Community Action – Blackburn Changing Attitudes to Alcohol**

## **Primary 7 Conference 26 February 2009**

**Report prepared by:**

**Alison Kerr, Chairperson, Community Action - Blackburn**

**Index**

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Conference Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Appendix 1 Primary 7 Class Survey Results</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Appendix 2 Summary of the Similarities from Survey Results in each School</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Appendix 3 Pupil’s Evaluation Results</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Appendix 4 Adult’s Evaluation Results</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>24</b>

## Primary 7 Conference - Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2009

### **Introduction**

This event was hosted by Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School and was attended by 55 Primary 7 pupils and 30 invited adult guests.

Katie Allan and Tammy Keenan from Our Lady's Primary, Rachel Dodds and Adam McLean from Blackburn Primary and Kiera McIndoe and Jamie McBeth from Murrayfield Primary were the Class Representatives who worked with myself, Alison Kerr, organising the conference.

Guests attending represented various services, from West Lothian Council, Jim Dickson Deputy Provost, Liz White Housing Manager for Blackburn, Jim Porter and John Wardrop Environmental Enforcement Wardens, Tony Fleming from the Neighbourhood Environmental Team, John Easson from the Neighbourhood Response Team and Councillors Gordon Beurskens and Andrew Miller.

Mary Dickson, in her capacity as Constituency Office Manager for Fiona Hyslop, Robert Anderson, Minister of Blackburn and Seafield Parish Church, PC Stuart Howie and Community Sergeant Steven Stewart from Lothian and Borders Police attended along with representatives from Community Action Blackburn, Girl's Brigade, Gala Day Committee, Community Centre / Youth Worker, Community Council, all 3 primary school's Parent Councils. All Head Teachers and a deputy Head Teacher joined us at the conference along with the School Crossing Patrol man.

The focus of the day was on the children of our community who were given an opportunity to voice their opinions about what they thought it was like to live in Blackburn, what they liked, what they didn't like and what we could all do to make our village a better place to live.

### **Conference Summary**

The primary 7 classes from all 3 schools carried out a survey, the results of which they presented on the day to the assembled guests, who the children will be depending on to resolve the issues and concerns raised. Questions were asked of and answered by the adults, some of whom had been involved in Ice Breaker groups along with the children. Class survey results and a summary of similarities as presented at the conference are set out in Appendices 1 and 2.

P C Stuart Howie was invited to give the children a presentation on how they can be safe in their community. John Wardrop and Jim Porter, the Community Wardens, gave an over view of their role and Tony Fleming gave an over view on the role of the Neighbourhood Environmental Teams. A more detailed account is available on the DVD of the conference.

After the break the children rejoined their groups and elected a pupil to ask questions on their behalf. The comments, concerns and issues written on the sheets from these groups have been collated and the information gathered is as follows;

The majority of the feedback from these groups had already been voiced, however the following additional points were raised for consideration:

- more than the 2 hours given in schools to PE;
- more organised litter picking;
- more advertising of local facilities;
- more sports clubs and Dance Classes.

Responses gathered from the questions that the children answered in their groups are very similar with **their favourite places** being the Community Centre, Football Pitches, Ash Park, Swimming Club at St Kentigerns, Mill Centre and the parks.

Suggestions for our (Primary 7 pupils and adults in the community) **first small step were,**

- carry out a community clean up;
- arrange for more bins and educate people on using them;
- signs warning of the costs to remove chewing gum;
- create a community garden;
- clean up the play areas.

All group's responses said that they would be very happy to take part in a joint school project with one comment being "Yes, because you would meet new people and so schools would be closer and bond" This to me is one of the main reasons for the introduction of the P 7 School Conference.

When asked for suggestions for a **joint school fundraising event** replies were

- sponsored walk, choir singing, swim, football tournament, basketball, dance, litter pick, spelling and maths bee;
- cake and candy stall in the Mill Centre;
- bring and buy stall in the Mill Centre;
- sports day;
- crazy hair day;
- school disco;
- organising a school's " Blackburn's Got Talent Show".

Finally the children were asked **what they had learned from the day** and their comments were they had learned

- interesting facts about other school's class projects;

- other people's names;
- what roles people in the community take on;
- what others think about living in Blackburn and how their ideas and thoughts were similar to their own;
- how much it cost to clean up the mess that some of them made;
- the police, especially P C Howie, can help you with your troubles and problems;
- we should respect people for who they are and what they do;
- we could work with other schools in Blackburn;
- there is more than just the Council working in Blackburn;
- about people that we didn't know about who can help us;
- discovered that we can all work really well as a group and that all schools work just as hard as each other;
- we all want to make Blackburn a better place;
- we are all the same even though we are individuals and go to different schools.

I am sure that you will agree that that this feedback from the P 7 Conference Delegates is a valuable resource when we work in partnership to resolve the responses being highlighted by the young members of our community. The suggestions made regarding joint school fundraising events should be quite easily arranged with the monies being raised divided equally between the 3 schools.

The comments made about what they had learned on the day were very positive, they would encourage and support this becoming an annual event as it more than achieved our expectations of the conference. This was echoed by a question asked on the day to myself and the schools from several pupils "Can we have another P 7 Conference and can we have them more often?"

Primary 7 classes gave presentations on their last class project, the contents of which were very informative and very well presented. Chloe Walker and Caitlin Gallagher presented World War Two on behalf of Murrayfield Primary, Nicole Flannigan and Marc Neil presented America on behalf of Our Lady's Primary and Blackburn Primary's presentation of the Olympic Games was given by Callum Graham, Shannon Geddes and Kelsey Dickson.

Guests completed evaluation sheets on the day and a copy was sent to the schools for the pupils to complete. The majority of pupils agreed that the event had help raise their community awareness albeit it was too early to see any changes as a result of the issues raised. There were a number of interesting similarities from the responses provided by the pupils with the main ones being that the conference provided the opportunity for

- the children to take ownership of the problems;

- the children to ask the adults questions;
- interacting with others through the ice breaker sessions and during the play time;
- group discussion; and
- confidence building.

See Appendices 3 and 4 for the results from the pupils and adults evaluation sheets.

The conference was closed with everyone who attended being thanked for doing so, the schools were thanked for encouraging and supporting their Class Representatives, and finally all of those pupils who took part in the class survey and who made suggestions that will make Blackburn a better place were thanked for taking the time to do this as the day would not have been possible without their valuable input.

This event was the first Primary 7 Conference to be held in Blackburn and it was a tremendous success. It achieved its aims by highlighting the concerns and aspirations of our children and promoted inter school working by bringing together the young people in our community and giving them an opportunity to have a voice.

I have given a firm commitment to continue to work with the schools to assist the children in taking forward the suggestions and I will also help to make sure that this does become an annual event.

In conclusion I would like to say a special thank you to Jamie, Kiera, Adam, Rachel, Katie and Tammy.

**Alison Kerr**

**Chairperson,**

**Community Action – Blackburn (Changing Attitudes to Alcohol)**

# **Appendix 1**

## **Primary 7 Class Survey Results**

## Primary 7 Class Survey Results

### Question 1. What do you like about Blackburn?

- |  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| ➤ Community Centre   | ➤ Gala Day                 |
| ➤ Junior Park  | ➤ Blackburn United         |
| ➤ Mill Centre  | ➤ Karate Club              |
| ➤ pool table in the Centre Library                             | ➤ Old Folks Home           |
| ➤ speed bumps for safety                                       | ➤ Tae-kwon-do              |
| ➤ football parks   | ➤ 'Chippy'                 |
| ➤ Butcher's (good quality meat)                                | ➤ Ice cream van            |
| ➤ Mill Centre Café   | ➤ Health Centre            |
| ➤ big houses   | ➤ very good schools        |
| ➤ swimming pool  | ➤ nice people              |
| ➤ grass areas/parks  | ➤ parks but they are dirty |
| ➤ Youth Club   | ➤ Rugby Festival/ P6 + P7  |
| ➤ shopping facilities  | ➤ Great Community Spirit   |
| ➤ Football facilities and astro turf at St Kentigern's Academy |                            |

### Question 2. What do you not like about Blackburn?

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| ➤ litter          | ➤ violence  |
| ➤ graffiti        | ➤ drinking on the streets                           |
| ➤ crime           | ➤ youngsters drinking                               |
| ➤ nothing to do   | ➤ gangs in Mill Centre                              |
| ➤ vandalism       | ➤ being bullied by older kids                       |
| ➤ drug dealers    | ➤ kids smoking                                      |
| ➤ 'junkies'       | ➤ shops selling alcohol to under aged youths        |
| ➤ too many pubs   | ➤ 18 year olds rule the parks                       |
| ➤ swearing        | ➤ pool in High School                               |
| ➤ people in gangs | ➤ there is no place for young people to hang about. |

**Question 3. What could we do to improve things?**

- graffiti wall
- sport's shop
- restaurant
- dance studio
- rugby pitches
- gymnastics hall
- smoothie bar
- bakers
- another swimming pool
- more shops
- better parks
- dog walking area
- more doggie bins
- a bottle bank to try to deal with the broken glass that can be seen everywhere more groups in the Community Centre for young people
- Community Notice board in the Mill Centre to advertise local events
- more inter school working like this as it will be interesting to see what other children think
- new High School in Blackburn to save children travelling out of their local area
- paint murals on the walls of the flats to brighten the place up and make it look nicer
- update the play parks and put in modern equipment that will make us want to use them more
- get rid of the 'junkies' to make us feel safer when we are out playing
- entertainment arranged on a Saturday night for kids and adults
- more litter bins
- recycling bins
- swimming lessons
- food kitchen for homeless people
- start work campaign
- more clubs
- drug and alcohol service
- CCTV Cameras
- community clean up
- regeneration of the Centre
- bicycle areas
- more police patrols

## **Appendix 2**

# **Summary of the Similarities From Survey Results in each School**

## Summary of the Similarities from Survey Results in each School

The comparison of the results from each of the schools highlighted very similar concerns as responses showed that our children liked some of the same things in Blackburn, these being the football pitches, Community Centre, Library and the Mill Centre despite the vandalism and the gangs that hang about their as this makes them feel frightened. Most of them said that they thought that Blackburn has very good schools, nice people and a great community spirit.

They almost all didn't like the same things with responses given for what they do not like about Blackburn being vandalism, graffiti, litter, lack of bins, no place for young people to hang about, not enough for them to do at night, people drinking alcohol in the streets, people hanging about in gangs as it scares them and shops selling alcohol to under aged children. (The children named a shop that they consider to be responsible for this)

More alarmingly similar responses were that our young children don't like drug dealers, addicts and 'junkies'. In one particular school 48% of those surveyed said that they thought that crime was the main problem in the village and when asked what we could do to make things better a large number replied that it would be beneficial to see more police patrolling our streets as this would help to "get rid of the 'junkies'"

When asked what they liked about Blackburn some replied "the Old Folks Home and the Homeless flats to protect people" and what could be done to improve things in Blackburn some replied "a food kitchen for the Homeless people" "provide drug and alcohol services and a campaign to help people start work".

These responses were given at a time when the pupils were being asked what could be done for them to make Blackburn a better place, they clearly show the type of caring, thoughtful and unselfish young people that we are fortunate to have here living in our community.

One comment received in the survey on how we could improve things was to encourage inter school working; the success of this event was an excellent example of this.

## **Appendix 3**

# **Pupil Evaluation Results**

## Pupil's Evaluation Results

### Question 1. What did you think of the P 7 Conference?

- I thought that it was really good because there were people that I didn't talk to before and then I was talking to them.
- I thought the P7 Conference was good because we got to listen to other people's opinions. We also got to meet new people from other schools.
- I think that it was good in all different ways and you got to meet new people and make new friends.
- I thought that the P7 Conference was good because it raised more awareness of what is happening in Blackburn.
- I thought that it was good because of all the different schools coming and talking to us about our community.
- I thought it was good because it might change a big bit of Blackburn.
- I think that it was a very good idea for the local Blackburn workers and the primary schools to get together and talk about Blackburn's issues.
- I thought that it was a good idea and a great experience.
- I thought the conference was a good idea to get all the P7s together to speak about our community.
- It was okay but not fair that it was only the 6 people from the schools doing it and not everybody took part in it.
- I thought it was fantastic because you got to bond with other schools.
- I think that the conference was very well planned and I wish that I could be in P7 next year so that I could do it again.
- It was very good and it was interesting because you got to know more people and you got to know things.
- I thought that it explained a lot of things, we know much more about what other schools have been doing.
- I thought that it was great because we discussed what we could change about Blackburn.
- I thought that it was really good because we all learned more about the community.
- The P7 Conference was a great way to introduce us to the services available in Blackburn.
- It was fun because of all the people we know who came to our school and we could play with them and talk to them.
- It was good because it helped the 3 schools get together and have fun.
- I thought that it was a little bit boring because we didn't do much all we did was sit on a seat.
- I liked it because it was good inter school working.
- I thought that it was good from the start as it was the pupils that ran it and it gave us more responsibility.
- I thought the conference was good because the P7s were running it.

- It was great because it gave everyone a chance to share their opinions, adults and children alike.
- It was great because the children took over and we got to ask the adults questions.
- I thought that it was so amazing that the kids were running it and not the adults.
- It was good because the children owned it instead of the adults.
- It was good because no adults ran the conference; it was only the P7 children that ran it.
- I thought it was great because the P7 got a great chance to take the meeting instead of the adults.
- It was good because the children took the lead and not the adults.
- I think that the conference went really well and I liked it because it gave us all a chance to meet up say what we didn't like about our community.
- I thought that it was good because the children took over.
- It was great.
- I enjoyed taking part in the first ever P7 Conference and I think that it was well organised.
- It was good hearing what other people thought.
- I think it was good fun and very interesting.
- It was fun and I thought that it was very interesting finding out things.
- It was good because we got to meet other schools.
- I thought that it was really good because you got to meet more friends.
- I thought that it was really interesting to find out what other schools were learning about.
- It was long and you didn't do much.
- It was good interacting with other schools and listening to their topics.
- I thought that it was good because we learned more about the environment.
- I thought that it was good because we got to discuss the community with new people.
- I thought it was important to discuss what we will try to do to help our community.
- I thought it was good because we got to meet other people.
- I think that it was very good because it boosted my confidence.
- I thought it was very good because we heard what other schools liked and disliked about Blackburn.
- It was well organised and help make schools bond.
- I liked it because we all had a say in everything and we also met other people.
- It was good to see how many children there are in P7.
- It was good because I got to meet other P7s.
- It was a lot of fun especially the Ice Breaker where we asked a lot of questions and found out a lot.
- I really enjoyed working with others.

**Question 2. What part did you enjoy the most?**

- Talking to different people and listening to other school's projects.
- I enjoyed when each school done a presentation on their previous class topic because it was interesting to see what the other schools had learned.
- I enjoyed seeing the slide show.
- I really like playtime.
- I enjoyed the Ice Breaker groups best.
- I enjoyed interacting with other schools.
- I liked the part when other schools had to talk about something that they had been learning about.
- Seeing the other schools and hearing their opinions about Blackburn.
- I liked when we got into our groups and the fruit kebabs.
- I really enjoyed playtime and playing at tig with the other 2 schools.
- I liked playtime and the others showing me things in their school.
- I enjoyed getting to know other people.
- Watching everyone's presentations and learning about what other schools thought.
- Listening to what other schools had done in their class projects.
- I enjoyed discussing ideas with others.
- I liked when we went into our groups.
- Going into groups and sharing our ideas.
- I liked the Ice Breaker groups.
- I liked it when we went outside to play with other P7s.
- I enjoyed meeting people, doing the activities and sharing our topics.
- I liked the Ice Breaker groups and when we wrote the questions for the adults.
- I liked working in our groups the best.
- I enjoyed going into the Ice Breakers, getting to meet new people and telling other pupils what we have been doing.
- I enjoyed the Ice Breaker groups because we got to meet people from the other schools.
- I enjoyed spending time with pupils from each P7 class.
- My favourite part was playing with all the other children from different schools as I know some of them.
- Getting to play with and getting to know the other P7s and getting into the Ice Breaker groups.
- I enjoyed playtime the most because I got to meet and play with new people.
- The best part was playing with all the other children.
- It was good getting to hang about with people from the other 2 schools.
- I enjoyed the Ice Breaker groups because we got to know each other.
- I liked playtime because I got to play with people that I didn't know.
- I really enjoyed going into the playground and being with other kids from other schools.

- I enjoyed every part of it but the best part was when we learned about other school's topics because we may not have known about them.
- I liked the Ice Breaker groups because there were different staff and adults in these groups.
- I enjoyed the part when all the schools talked about their class projects because I learned a lot.
- I liked the topics the most because we got to learn about what the other schools were doing.
- I liked when we played a game called Ice Breaker.
- The part that I enjoyed the most was when the people who worked in Blackburn told us about their jobs and seeing our friends who went to different schools.
- I enjoyed when we all went out into the playground because we all got to know each other better.
- I liked being with other people from other schools.
- I enjoyed hanging about with my mates from other schools.
- I enjoyed playing with everyone from all of other schools.
- The part that I enjoyed the most was talking to people from other schools.
- I enjoyed going out at the break and talking with friends from other schools.
- I think that the topic bit was the best because you learned about things like the Olympics Games, America and the Holocaust.
- The part that I enjoyed the most was when we were in our groups because we were working together.
- I enjoyed the Ice Breaker the best because it got us to talk with the people in other schools.
- The part that I enjoyed the most was in the playground because it was real fun and we are not used to that.
- I enjoyed the playtime as it was fun with other people from other schools as well as from my own school.
- I liked mixing with other people from other schools that we might go to school camp with.
- I enjoyed the class projects the best.

**Question 3. Is there anything different that you would like to see included next year?**

- I would like to see more people taking part in everything and still enjoying themselves.
- I would like some chatting time to talk about different things in Blackburn and how we kids can help our community.
- Yes I think that there should be more activities, it was good but not enough staff involved.
- No, I think that the P7 Conference was so good that it shouldn't be changed but I think that when it is playtime there should be some games to play with.
- Next year I would like to see that the parks have been cleaned up a bit.
- Yes I would like to see the teachers join in more and there could be more activities.
- If everybody there got to help organise it and let more people do something instead of the people

from the schools doing it all.

- I would like to see more time at the Ice Breaker and more children talking.
- I would like to see more staff involved in the groups and for more schools to be involved.
- I think that the next time we could move about more.
- No I think that everything was great, you meet new friends and you talk about Blackburn and we played.
- No I think that this year was great because it let us have fun as well as work together.
- No I think that it covered everything this year and it doesn't need anything added.
- No because it was all fun.
- I would like to see some games.
- More schools because we don't know what other schools want to change.
- To get to choose who is in your group but you have to have people from other schools.
- When people talk they should make it more fun.
- No I think that the other pupils next year will like it just the way it was this year.
- More ideas coming from the children, perhaps talk about them in class before they come along.
- Fifteen responses were similar they didn't think that there needed to be anything different.
- Eight responses said that they think that the children should sit around big tables like they do at professional conferences.

**Question 4. Do you think that this event has helped raise community awareness with our young people?**

No, not really as not a lot has changed.

I don't really know if it has as yet.

Yes because there's lots of 'junkies' in Blackburn and lots of rubbish as well and there are people trying to help out in the community.

Yes because less children are vandalising the streets.

I hope so to make it better for all of us.

I hope it has to make Blackburn a better place, make it tidier, safer and a better place to live.

Only maybe a little because the only difference that I have seen is a new litter bin.

Yes because we all had good ideas on how to make Blackburn better.

I don't know.

Yes because we got to tell people what we want to see happening in the community.

Yes because we learned that our community is important.

Yes because we learned how much it costs to lift a bit of gum and that this is a big problem in Blackburn.

No because I can still see lots of litter in Blackburn.

No because people are still dropping litter but I think that the Clean Up will start people to think about

stopping to drop litter and glass.

No not at the moment, however I think that it will start after the Clean Up.

No because we still see people dropping litter and drinking.

I still see the same people drinking in the streets, we should do more.

No because young people are still drinking in the streets.

Yes because people really enjoyed themselves and they don't make as much mess now.

Yes I think that this has helped a lot it has made me realise how much things are wrong and how much things are right and that not everywhere is safe.

Yes I do but more conferences are needed not just one a year, I would say 3 a year so that all the schools can hold one.

Yes I do think that it has helped raise more awareness because if they don't do something now Blackburn will be boring.

Yes because we have done the P7Conference I feel it has raised community awareness within the young people in Blackburn.

Yes because the youths are keeping Blackburn a bit tidier.

Yes the young people now know that they have to take care of Blackburn and take a pride in where they live.

It let us know that there are people in Blackburn doing things to make it better.

Yes because I didn't know that it costs £1.00 to take off a piece of gum from the ground, everyone looked amazed at this.

I think that it has helped because we saw a power point about people whose jobs it was to clean our community.

Yes because we now know that the Council are always there to help with things.

Yes the place has changed a bit as there is not as much glass lying around.

Yes because I didn't know about most of the services that we were told about.

Yes I think it has because people are not mucking about as much in the Mill Centre.

Yes as it showed young people not to do all the bad things and it showed that this event has helped tell us about these things.

Fifteen replied the same; they thought that it had raised community awareness with our young people.

## **Appendix 4**

# **Adult Evaluation Results**

## Adult's Evaluation Results

### Question 1. What did you think of the P 7 Conference?

- Well organised, children very well behaved, survey results very interesting with the information on the village being well received.
- Very well run for the first time in organising a conference of this size it was well thought out and I hope that it will become an annual event.
- Very informative and well organised, it was most interesting to hear the children's perspectives on the concerns highlighted, all of them very valid and sensible issues. Hopefully all the adults will take on board these views and act accordingly.
- I thought that this was a good way to find out how we can help the kids in our community,
- As a teacher I found hearing the pupil's opinions on their local area very interesting. For all schools to highlight very similar issues suggests something needs to be done.
- Very interesting, the children all expressed very well their thoughts, ideas, hopes and fears regarding their village. I was surprised to hear that their concerns mirrored my own.
- This was an excellent and very worthwhile project.
- It was excellent, a lot of hard work and commitment from the children and Alison.
- Fantastic opportunity for the schools to mix, it was great to see the children taking ownership for their community.
- I thought that the children made very good points about Blackburn; it was well organised and very clear what the kids want in Blackburn.
- Speaking as an adult this is the best thing that I have been a part of for a very long time.
- It was excellent, well organised and presented; coaching that many primary children takes a lot of dedication.
- Excellent morning and all involved, adults and pupils worked hard to make it the success that it was; this event was great and very worthwhile.
- Really enjoyed the whole process, thought the children worked and co-operated well.
- The Primary 7 children were a credit to their schools.
- The event was well organised and run, and an inspirational event for the whole community. The wide ranging involvement from so many partners provided a showcase for all the good work going on in Blackburn at a community level.

**Question 2. What part did you enjoy the most?**

- The children talking about their village.
- Children's involvement and their discussions on their community highlighting litter, dog fouling and lack of facilities as issues.
- Hearing what the children found to be problematic and what they need to change their community for the better.
- I enjoyed the surveys the most and to see that they care so much about Blackburn.
- I really enjoyed hearing about different class topics and hearing what each school had learned.
- The children giving their feedback about likes and dislikes, the community organisations explaining what their job entails and how they can be contacted by the children if concerns arise.
- I enjoyed watching The P7 leadership contributions.
- The results of the P7 Surveys.
- I enjoyed listening to the children working together in their groups.
- Format was a good balance of adult and child participation.
- Really enjoyed the class project's presentations, the children were confident and knowledgeable. It was interesting to see what different topics the schools are covering.
- I can't say that any one part was better than another the group work was good as it gave each of the children a chance to speak and the presentations were amazing, I know adults who would have been a lot less confident.
- I enjoyed the pupil's presentations as they were very informative and I also enjoyed participating in the group work.
- The children working in their groups and sharing ideas was the best part.
- I enjoyed the presentations by the different schools.
- In no particular order, the presentations from the children from all of the schools, the question and answer sessions and the group discussions. All of the participating schools, pupils and staff alike can rightly feel proud of the research done and the preparation and presentations of all subject topics. The group sessions allowed the children to interact with various community partner representatives and it was fantastic to see the children's enthusiasm. The involvement of the partners, in particular PC Howie, in giving interactive presentations on how children can act to improve the community they live in was an improvement on a traditional approach of "teaching"

**Question 3. Is there anything that you would like to see included next year?**

- Children in the circle sitting nearer to each other, guests introduced so children know who they are and why they are interested in their community.
- Cost implications of funding various requirements within the village.
- It would be interesting to hear of any changes or benefits to the community that have occurred as a direct result of this conference.
- I would like to see that some of these issues raised have been addressed by next year.
- Presentations on how aspects of community life are funded by West Lothian Council and the Scottish Government could help everyone to understand costs, budget and expenditure.
- The format was perfect and any changes should be at the discretion of the children
- Organise an action for the children to take forward.
- Parent Councils should be more involved with this to see if there is anything that they can do to help.
- The adult's presentations could be targeted at a more local community level to include what youth work and facilities are available.
- Not really, I thought that the size of the event was just right and everyone was able to participate, any bigger and this might change.
- More local people telling the children about their jobs in the community in perhaps smaller groups so the children would ask more questions.
- Some of the children's questioned whether a similar event on a West Lothian wide basis could be done. I would suggest that this model be rolled out to other schools but kept to only their own community. To create an event on a much larger scale would detract attention from a particular community and would dilute the contributions being made by the children.

**Question 4. Do you think that this event helped to raise community awareness with our young people?**

- Very much so preparing and discussing topics of interest always raises awareness and this is passed on to their parents and their friends.
- One of the main highlights of the conference for me was that the children all showed community awareness as they are very aware of what is happening in their own community.
- Absolutely, I think that this could be the start of some great changes for Blackburn, it would be great to see some changes in the environment that the young people are concerned about. This is a unique starting point for some new community events and it will help unite the people of Blackburn.
- Yes it did and it also raised my awareness of how the kids see their community.
- I feel that the fact that the children were able to highlight what environmental issues there were for them suggests that they are already aware of most issues in their community.

- Yes and it was good to see the schools in Blackburn working together to raise points and concerns that affect all of our children. I feel that it was also good for the various community organisations to hear what the children of our community would like to see and maybe gear what they are already doing more towards what this event has highlighted.
- Yes it has.
- Absolutely.
- Yes and it was a good opportunity to see who works in the community and to encourage the children to make these changes.
- Yes especially with the children only being in P7.
- It will have hit the key target audience, the up and coming generation that are currently attending primary school. They are the key to change and it's important that they are aware of the issues within their community before they reach secondary school and the conference achieved this.
- Yes I was very impressed with the issues raised by the pupils.
- Definitely, feel all our work this year has helped the children become aware that although they all go to different schools they are part of the same community.
- Yes and it has also given them a voice - they had very valid points to make.
- I agree with this proposition emphatically the suggestion from the children and indeed their probing questions indicate that they have something very positive to contribute to improving the quality of life for everyone in their community. To engage with children and actively seek their involvement in community planning is something to be embraced for the future.

## **Acknowledgements**

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**Alison Kerr**, Chairperson, Community Action Blackburn

### **School Representatives**

Our Lady of Lourdes Primary	<b>Katie Allan</b>
	<b>Tammy Keenan</b>
Blackburn Primary	<b>Rachel Dodds</b>
	<b>Adam McLean</b>
Murrayfield Primary	<b>Kiera McIndoe</b>
	<b>Jamie McBeth</b>

### **Head Teachers**

**Tricia Paterson**, Our Lady of Lourdes Primary

**Fiona Hollands**, Blackburn Primary

**Margaret Brown**, Murrayfield Primary

**All primary 7 pupils and staff** at Our lady of Lourdes, Blackburn and Murrayfield Primary Schools.

**Stuart Howie**, Community Police Officer, Lothian & Borders Police

**Tony Fleming**, West Lothian Council Neighbourhood Environment Team

**John Wardrop**, West Lothian Council Environmental Enforcement Warden

**Jim Porter**, West Lothian Council Environmental Enforcement Warden

**Alan Campbell**, Alcohol Focus Scotland



**West Lothian  
Council**



West Lothian Drug Action Team



West Lothian Drug and Alcohol Service



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COMMUNITY  
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