

7th February 2022



Norwich
Opportunity Area

Join the Norwich Youth Board!

Dear student,

After a forced break due to the pandemic, the Norwich Opportunity Area (NOA) Youth Board is back and looking to recruit young people to share your lived experiences about education and your views about making Norwich the best place it can be. There will be a range of new projects and opportunities to be involved in. We are looking for young people who want to make a difference in their school or local community.

We want to ensure the voices of young people in Norwich are heard, and inform decisions made by the Norwich Opportunity Area programme. Being fully inclusive is essential for us, so we encourage young people from all backgrounds to be involved. Any students who currently attend a secondary school, college, or education provider in Norwich, or who live in Norwich and are in Years 7-13 are welcome to attend.

Youth Board members will:

- Attend meetings after school on a regular basis with young people from different schools across Norwich – these may be weekly or fortnightly. Meetings will run until July 2022 and will be held in Norwich City Centre. Food will be provided!
- Travel independently to meetings at a venue in Norwich city centre - we can provide **free** First Bus one day bus passes for students who need them, or contact us to discuss travel if needed.
- Work with the NOA team and other young people to improve your confidence, speaking skills and express your views. You will be invited to share your views and speak in front of others (you can choose whether you want to do this or not).
- Work together to design, plan and deliver a project that aims to improve your local community, your school or to support your peers. We are looking for ideas from young people that could be turned into fully funded projects.

Youth Board members will develop their skills in communication, leadership and teamwork and you will be able to add this project to your CV and any future job or college/university applications.

Dates for upcoming sessions are below and more information is on our website – please sign up in advance - <https://norwichopportunityarea.co.uk/youth-board-2/>

- February 11th – Planning for NOA conference
- February 25th – Planning and practicing for NOA conference
- March 11th – Practicing for NOA conference
- March 25th – Meeting and Gravity social

We look forward to hearing from you,

Katie White, Programme Manager & Jan Shelley, Youth Board Administrator

You can contact the NOA Youth Board team through your school or send us an email:

katie.white2@norfolk.gov.uk | jan.shelley@norfolk.gov.uk

Information for parents/guardians

The Norwich Opportunity Area is a 5-year Department for Education funded and coordinated project to improve social mobility, following the City's status as 323rd of 324 areas in England for social mobility in the 2016 "State of the Nation" report.

A key part of the project is to make sure that young people have a voice in shaping the improvements that will affect their education and future opportunities. In previous years we have had some excellent contributions from young people in the city who are clearly already articulate and informed young leaders. We welcome young people who may not traditionally put themselves forward for student leadership opportunities, so that we can be sure that all young people get a say, and that we benefit from the perspectives of their lived experience.

Key info - First point of contact for the Youth Board is Jan Shelley, Youth Board Administrator, supported by Katie White, NOA Programme Manager. Other members of the team may be involved in youth board activities too. For all activities, a member of the programme team will be present and can be contacted at any time if you have any concerns.

Getting to meetings - Meetings tend to be held in Norwich city centre. Generally, students will make their own way to and from sessions. We will refund the cost of bus or train travel for young people to attend meetings or give them a free bus pass to use for the day. If students are involved in meetings late at night or in awkward locations, taxis can be arranged by the programme team. In these cases, we use Enterprise Taxi's in Norwich who are accredited to transport children. If for any reason we need to use a different company, we will inform parents. If taxis are needed, please contact the programme team in advance.

Staffing & Policies - All staff involved in the Opportunity Area project have a DBS check and have completed safeguarding training and a copy of our current safeguarding policies can be found on our website: <https://norwichopportunityarea.co.uk/youth-board-2/>

Photos - The programme team often take photographs of youth board meetings and activities for use in external communications materials for the Opportunity Area project. These pictures may be used for local press, websites, and social media on behalf of Norwich Opportunity Area or your school. If you have any questions about how photographs are used or don't give your consent for photographs to be taken, please do contact us.

Sharing contact details - The young people involved will share their personal mobile numbers to chat via a WhatsApp group to keep each other updated about future meetings and to share ideas. If you have any concerns about the use of WhatsApp please don't hesitate to contact the programme team. A member of the team has oversight of these conversations.

Essential info and forms to complete - We will ask all Youth Board members to make sure their parents have completed the essential information and consent form. This information will be held by the NOA programme team and will be stored securely until August 2022. For any trips or activities off site, we will have adequate first aid trained staff with us. Please let us know if circumstances change after you have completed the medical information form.

Key contacts and info - The Norwich Opportunity Area Youth Board team are based at Norfolk County Council and can be contacted as follows:

Katie White, Programme Manager, katie.white2@norfolk.gov.uk - 07384 117147

Jan Shelley, Youth Board Administrator, jan.shelley@norfolk.gov.uk

If you would like to know more about the Opportunity Area, this can be found at: <https://norwichopportunityarea.co.uk/>