

# → WELCOME

## E.M.P.I.R.E MEMBERSHIP PACK

"Every child deserves to know they are loved".

E.M.P.I.R.E ETHOS



About us

E.M.P.I.R.E



*Croydon Council re-established E.M.P.I.R.E (children in Care council) in 2017 to directly promote and enable youth voice of young people in care and for them to work with decision makers in Croydon.*



**E.M.P.I.R.E (Croydon's Children in Care Council & Care Leavers Forum) is a collective of young people who are all cared for by Croydon.**

**The purpose of E.M.P.I.R.E is to empower children looked after and care leavers with the confidence and power to influence policy change, shape the service and have their voice heard.**

E.M.P.I.R.E provides young people the chance to identify common issues with the care they receive and make proposals for improvements.

All of which are presented to the Corporate Parenting Panel at Croydon Council, Chaired by the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Education.

Every week we run a range of activities and workshops where you can get creative, make friends and make change.

- E.M.P.I.R.E MINIZ: 4-10yr olds – There will be a variety of events across the year for younger children so their views can be captured in a creative and child friendly way.
- E.M.P.I.R.E JUNIORS: 11-16yr olds – Fortnightly sessions including training, trips, consultations etc. – young people aged 16-18 are still able to attend these sessions along with the monthly senior sessions to help bridge the gap in their transition to leaving care.
- E.M.P.I.R.E SENIORS: 17-25yr olds – This care leavers forums meetings on a monthly basis and they have access to a dynamic programme to support them leaving care and living independently.

# OUR OFFER

"We are a family"

**OUR OFFER IS THAT ALL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WILL AUTOMATICALLY BECOME A MEMBER FROM THE DAY THEY BECOME LOOKED AFTER BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY.**

- Weekly Youth Hub Sessions – Every Tuesday we offer a Youth Hub Session which is a safe space for young people to meet new people, take part in tailored workshops and more. – These sessions run fortnightly during winter.
- Online sessions - We are offering online workshops via Zoom, weekly mental wellbeing check ins and individual wellbeing walks\*
- Wellbeing Calls/Messages – All E.M.P.I.R.E members will receive regular contact from us on a weekly basis and reminder messages for upcoming sessions and opportunities.
- Free Day Trips – E.M.P.I.R.E members will benefit from free day trips throughout the year including: Cinema, Theme Parks, Go-Karting, Restaurants and many more.
- Session themes - Life skills, First-Aid, Healthy Relationship, Sexual Health, Money Management, Cookery, Confidence Building and many more.
- Legacy Youth Zone – We will pay for all children looked after and care leavers Legacy Membership for young aged 8- 19, and up to 25 for those with disabilities. <https://www.legacyyouthzone.org/>
- Refreshments/Hot Meal – Young people are given the opportunity to cook a hot meal at all of our sessions and light refreshments are also provided.
- Travel – If you are concerned about travel please do contact us so we can work with your Social Worker/PA/Foster Carer to arrange a plan to ensure you can attend sessions.

- Influencing local decision makers
- Running projects and campaigns, and lobbying for change
- Having their voice heard and encouraging other young people to speak in public
- Participating in Corporate Parenting Panel and other relevant meetings



# OUR OFFER



## CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

A representative from both E.M.P.I.R.E Juniors & Seniors are expected to attend the Corporate Parenting Panel, which happens every two months. Prior to the CPP, the Head of Service for Social Work with Children Looked After and Care Leavers will meet with the E.M.P.I.R.E representative in order to go through the agenda points for the upcoming CPP meeting and prepare any questions they might have for the CPP.

Similarly, after each meeting of E.M.P.I.R.E (both senior and junior) members will have an opportunity to put forward questions for the heads of service, which will be forwarded to the Head of Service for Social Work with Children Looked After and Care Leavers in order to provide answers before the next sessions of E.M.P.I.R.E.

## EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

E.M.P.I.R.E welcomes all young people regardless of their race, gender, religion or sexual orientations and we work closely to ensure this is embraced and celebrated.

We ensure that SOCIAL GRRRAACCEESS is addressed throughout our delivery and relationship building with young people.

## TEAM STRUCTURE

E.M.P.I.R.E Team sits in the Virtual Schools within the Education Directorate.

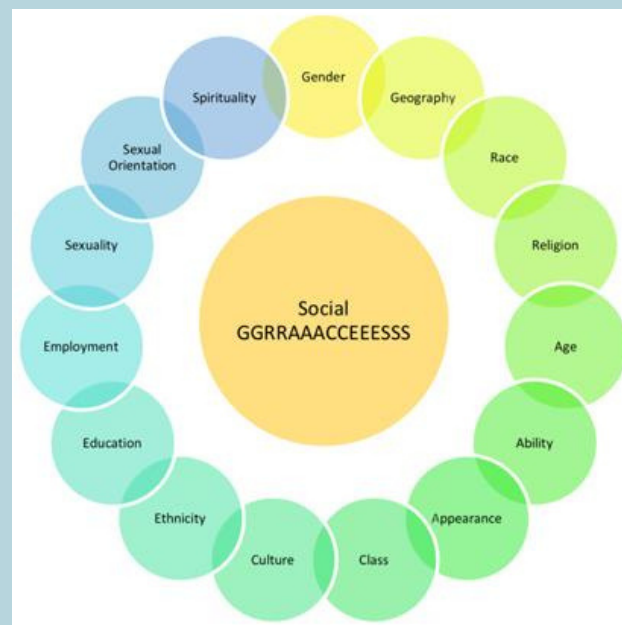
Our team is very diverse and we have care-experienced apprentices who lead & deliver sessions alongside our young people.

## PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKS

E.M.P.I.R.E is a member of the London Children in Care council, who organise monthly meetings for London Council officers who manage Children in Care councils.

It provides an opportunity to disseminate best practices as well as organise bilateral meetings between the children in care councils themselves.

E.M.P.I.R.E pride themselves by working closely with internal, external and community providers/organisations. We are always keen to work in partnership to best benefit our children and young people.





## LOCATION

Our venues vary to ensure we are covering the borough so we are accessible to as many young people as possible. However we offer regular sessions at Samuel Coleridge Taylor Centre, 194 Selhurst Road, South Norwood, SE25 6XX (Next door to South Norwood Library) as well weekly online sessions via Zoom.

Please ensure you contact us to join our mailing list as we will be offering more sessions across the borough in 2022!

## REWARDS

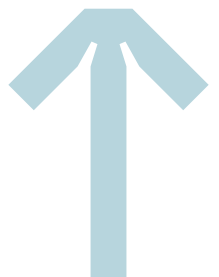
We feel that it is really important to reward those who regularly attend.

Croydon really needs young people to have a voice and if you commit to attending sessions we will offer you the chance to go on some exciting day trips and a summer residential.

- Attend 5 sessions in a row: free day trip with other young people in Croydon.
- Attend 10 sessions in a row between May-July: you will secure your place on our summer holidays provision.
- Attend 15 sessions between Jan-June and will you will secure a place on our residential

We are

FAMILY



Reasons why you should join today

# JOIN TODAY

## Please contact us

Registering is really easy and all we need is for you to text 'JOIN EMPIRE' to 07926084741 or email: [empire@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:empire@croydon.gov.uk) with your name & telephone number. When you do this, we will reply to you, complete the registration process and provide you with a membership pack. As we provide free refreshments let us know if you have any dietary requirements or accessibility needs.



### FRIENDSHIP

E.M.P.I.R.E provides young people with a safe & social space to come together and meet people with similar life experience. You will build meaningful, positive bonds with the E.M.P.I.R.E staffing team as well your Corporate Parents, Service Managers, Directors and Councilors to change the care the Local Authority provide and ensure young people's voices are being heard.



### HAVE YOUR VOICE HEARD

E.M.P.I.R.E take part in numerous consultations and focus groups where they are given an direct opportunity to ensure anything for or about young people will be approved by young people. We work closely with Pan London Children in Care Council and E.M.P.I.R.E members will have the chance to work with other Children in Care Council's across London throughout the year.



### NO PRESSURE, NO COMMITMENTS

We have a system which allows young people to find a level of involvement that suits them. This could mean attending weekly sessions, taking part in Corporate Parenting Panel or simply attending during half term.



### INCENTIVES & ACTIVITIES

We feel that it is really important to reward you for spending time with a group of other looked after young people and for those who regularly attend. Croydon really needs young people to have a voice and if you commit to attend every session we will offer you the chance to go on some exciting day trips and a summer residential.

Go-Karting, Ice-Skating, Laser Tag, Cinema, Music Production, Escape Rooms, Theatre, Football, Boxing and many more!!



### OPPORTUNITIES & TRAINING

We believe training is essential! So apart of our membership our young people can benefit from a range of training including: Money management, First Aid, Public Speaking, Confidence building etc.

If you would like to visit a session, view the venue or meet the staff before attending then please contact us to arrange this

**EMAIL: [EMPIRE@CROYDON.GOV.UK](mailto:EMPIRE@CROYDON.GOV.UK)**

**TEL: 07926084741**



# E.M.P.I.R.E

EMPOWERMENT, MEMORIES, POSITIVITY,  
INTERESTING, RESPECT & EDUCATIONAL