

Youth MP Neil Adams goes inside Number 10 on a Speaking Up mission!

Neil Adams, an MP on the Cambridgeshire Youth Parliament and a trainer for the Promote The Vote project (both run by Speaking Up) spent the day at the Cabinet Office Press Office shadowing the work of Senior Press Officer, Stephen Coomber.

Neil (who comes from Earith) helped to write a press release, got sign off on the press release from Liam Byrne MP (who was making an announcement about funding for campaigning charities), emailed the press release to a range of journalists and talked to them on the phone about it afterwards.

Following that, he had the opportunity to go with Stephen to Number 10 Downing Street, where he saw the Prime Minister and left some leaflets about the projects he is involved with at Speaking Up! The Youth Parliament is a group of young people with learning difficulties who represent the views of their peers to decision makers, and campaign for change in the way services are run.

Promote The Vote is a project that delivers free workshops to people with learning difficulties on how to register to vote and how the voting process works. In the afternoon, Neil spoke to staff from the Social Exclusion Workforce on the importance of employment opportunities for people with learning difficulties.

Neil said “Everything about the day was fantastic – I enjoyed every single second of it. I would like to be a journalist one day.”

Neil is now working on an article about the day that will go into Speaking Up’s newsletter ‘Listen Up’.

To read the press release Neil co-wrote with Stephen, go to:

http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/news/news_releases/090408_charities.aspx

ENDS

Notes to editors

More photos and film footage are available of the day.

Speaking Up provides advocacy services and self advocacy based projects for people with learning difficulties, mental health issues and those who are hard to reach, across the country. Speaking Up’s mission is:

VOICE : We enable people who experience learning difficulties, mental health issues or other disabilities to find their voices and shape their own lives.

ACTION : We create positive choices for disabled people, by helping organisations to understand their needs and representing their views or supporting them to speak up for themselves.

CHANGE : We lead society towards recognising disabled people as equal and valued citizens with the same choices and opportunities as everyone else.

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