***LAC Christmas Party***

The Participation Service worked hard to organise the annual Christmas party for looked after children in Coventry on the 20th December. This was the biggest event of the year for us and we had loads of activities and entertainment for the young people to enjoy as well as the chance to socialise with other young people in care. We invited just over 300 children between 0 – 12 years old and had a great turnout. All the young people had the opportunity to take part in activities such as; circus skills, face painting, balloon maker, bouncy castle, games and a visit to Santa’s grotto.

Each year presents are donated by businesses from around the city, Coventry City Council employees and Elected Members. Councillor Ruan worked extra hard this year to boost the amount of donations that we received and we had a great response with over 500 presents donated.

The annual event was held at the welcome centre where they provided a lovely Christmas themed venue and packed lunch bags for all of the young people and carers. They also created a lovely Santa’s grotto set where the young people were greeted by elves and received their gift from Santa.

All the elves and Santa kindly volunteered to make this day a success. As well as other volunteers that ran various activities including nail paining, arts and crafts, Disney princess characters and also the Christmas Pantomime characters kindly attended to surprise the young people.   
We also had a lovely Christmas Sweet Cart donated to us that provided all the children with pick’n’mix sweets to take home. There was also a donation of homemade cakes for the Lac Nurses within Coventry who came along to meet all the young people.

Other activities and entertainment included bouncy castles, circus skills, mask making, cake decorating, Face Paints, A Balloon Man, Lucky Dips and a DJ with a dance space and disco lights. Also provided for the adults was Head Massage and Henna.

We also provided the Carers with an adult raffle that included great prizes like family tickets to Cadburys World, Coombe Abbey Stay, Hockey Tickets and many more.

We received great feedback from the event. Here is an example,

*“We would like to say a very big thank you for a wonderful Christmas party on Saturday!*

*I am a Foster Carer, I took my 3 year old little boy who I look after and he had a fantastic time!!! He particularly enjoyed the bouncy castles, the disco - he asked for 'Taylor Swift' several times!! and Santa, his little face lit up when we went into the grotto.....I found it all a little emotional!*

*So a massive thank you to you all, you do a fabulous job and certainly helped to make our little boys Christmas special!*

*Thanks again and a 'Happy Christmas' to you all.”*

This event is very special for our looked after children, they all had an excellent time getting together and making new friends as well as getting their present from Santa.