

# DERRY & STRABANE

## LOCAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PLAN

### 2026 - 2029

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## Introduction & Background

The Education Authority (EA) Local Youth Development Action Plan for 2026-2029 for Derry and Strabane outlines the key targets to be achieved by the EA Youth Service, based on the Local Assessment of Need for 2026. This is delivered in accordance with the Department of Education (DE) Policy, 'Priorities for Youth.'

The plan will be reviewed regularlyand progress will be reported in line with the Regional Youth Development Plan 2026-29 and the framework of the EA's Strategic Plan (2017-2027) and Corporate Business Plan. The resources provided to the Education Authority Youth Service by the Department of Education are deployed in accordance with the local plan to achieve specific, policy led objectives, outputsand outcomes. Key actions within this Local Area Youth Development Plan are informed by the Local Assessment of Need, Local Statistical Profiles, Regional Assessment of Need and the Regional Youth Development Plan.

The legislative and policy context for the Local Youth Development Plan is referenced within the Regional Youth Development Plan which can be found here.

The Local Youth Development Plan 2026 – 2029 for Derry & Strabane will shape the delivery of youth services and promote the voice of young people in the development of programmes that will prepare them for adulthood. Each young person living in the City and district deserves the opportunity to experience a youth service that is a trauma informed service and promotes resilience and wellbeing.

In September 2025 the City of Derry and Strabane was awardeded the prestigious UNICEF Child Friendly status which has re-focused the mind of organisations to promote the voices of children and young people. It is therefore the responsibility of the Education Authority Youth Service to ensure that they are supported in making sure they are heard as we deliver effective youth services.

Our vision is to empower children and young people across Derry and Strabane to advocate for themselves and their peers. In response the youth service will develop a dynamic, inclusive and collaborative youth service with them as the key stakeholders.

In addition, the Education Authority Youth Service is committed to working in partnership with the wider youth sector to deliver high-quality, responsive youth work that meets the evolving needs of young people. Through shared training, joint planning and the strategic use of resources, we aim to build a unified workforce that is skilled, informed and equipped to create meaningful opportunities for growth, learning and wellbeing. Together, we strive to achieve positive outcomes that enable every child and young person to thrive, participate fully in their communities and realise their potential.

## Voice of children and young people and other key stakeholders in Derry and Strabane

Children and young people in Derry City and Strabane are facing a wide range of complex and interconnected challenges that affect their emotional, physical and social wellbeing. Emotional health is a growing concern, with many reporting experiences of anxiety, depression, self-harm and difficulties in accessing appropriate support. Rising suicide rates, obesity and the impact of alcohol and drug misuse further compound these issues. Bullying, both online and in person and excessive screen time also contribute to poor mental health and low self-esteem.

There is clearly a need for more accessible opportunities for physical activity and education that promotes resilience and wellbeing. Expanding youth-friendly spaces whilst offering structured, engaging activities can help young people build confidence, develop coping strategies and form positive peer relationships. Play and leisure are essential for their healthy development, yet many young people feel there are limited opportunities available to them. They value outdoor activities, creative outlets and social connections and have expressed a desire for more creative programmes delivered through the youth work curriculum . The provision of welcoming and supervised environments are particularly important, especially for older teenagers and young adults with additional needs.

Youth services can play a vital role to support our children and young people by offering a wider range of accessible activities to encourage the development of the skills they require to build strong peer relationships whilst also improving their mental health.

In the field of education, young people face a number of barriers that hinder their ability to thrive. These include anxiety, learning difficulties, mental health struggles and limited subject choices, particularly in Irish-medium schools. There is a strong need for greater career exploration, mentorship and support during key transitions. Exam stress and low confidence are common and many young people would benefit from additional support such as homework clubs, exam preparation sessions and life skills training focused on mental health and self-esteem. There is a need for inclusive and adaptable educational and leadership pathways that cater to a variety of learning styles and offer early support to prevent young people from falling behind. Equally vital are opportunities that allow them to broaden their horizons, acquire new skills and build confidence through creative, vocational and hands-on learning experiences.

Safety and stability are also key concerns. Young people have raised issues around peer pressure, violence within their local community risks and the lack of safe spaces where they can feel secure and supported. Family support and strong friendships are protective factors, but not always present. Vulnerable groups, including those with special educational needs, require tailored initiatives and better transport options to access services and opportunities. Considering the increasing reports of domestic violence and violence particularly against women and girls, there children and young people would benefit from peer support and inclusive programmes that promote empowerment and safety.

Economic and environmental factors further impact young people’s lives. Many face financial strain,

poor academic performance and uncertainty about their future. The rising cost of living, housing insecurity and lack of resources limit their ability to participate fully in education and social life. For young people with disabilities, the lack of social and employment opportunities increases isolation and anxiety. At the same time, there is a growing awareness of climate change, with many young people eager to engage in environmental action but unsure how to get involved. The youth service will plan programmes with young people to meet this particular need.

Many young people feel excluded from decision-making, particularly in schools where academic performance often takes precedence over student voice. However, youth services are seen as spaces where they are listened to and involved in planning and leadership roles. This builds confidence and resilience. There is a strong desire for greater recognition of young people's rights, especially among Irish-language speakers and for more collaboration between communities to foster mutual understanding. Providing platforms for young people to contribute, educating them about their rightsand involving them in shaping services and policies can help them feel valued and empowered. Young people in Derry and Strabane are eager to contribute positively to their communities. They want to be respected, trusted and given the opportunity to take initiative. They seek environments where they can express their feelings and opinions without fear of judgment and where their voices are genuinely valued in shaping decisions that affect their lives. The Youth Service can provide the opportunity for young people to use their voice to shape decision making within their local communities and build upon the work that has been ongoing to recognise Derry and Strabane as a child friendly city and district.

The views of young people regarding Equality and Inclusion clearly articulate that with some young people feel excluded from certain services due to their gender, religion, race or disability as they feel that they are discriminated against subconciously . They have identified a need to develop inclusive youth work programmes that look to promote a sense of belonging and foster acceptance and understanding of others developing safe spaces where they can be themselves segregation . The rights of all young people need to be upheld and they have highlighted that discrimination and exclusion negatively affects their mental health. The development of inclusive practices will ensure that every young person knows their true worth and feels a valued member of both in their local community and the city and district. This will take a partnership approach to ensure that this happens, so the development of strong alliances between statutory and community services as well as schools will make it an easier task to achieve.

The Voices of Children and Young people across Derry & Strabane have highlighted in the first instance the following key priorities for Universal Youth Provision:

### *1. Economic and Environmental Sustainability*

Young people in Derry and Strabane report growing uncertainty about their future due to financial pressures, limited job prospects and rural isolation. They are increasingly concerned about climate change and want to be part of the solution. Life skills, career pathways and environmental education are needed to prepare them for adulthood and empower them to shape their futures.

### *2. Living in Safety and Stability*

Bullying, sectarianism, racism and community violence continue to impact young people's sense of safety. LGBTQIA+ youth and young women face heightened risks, including gender-based violence and

harassment. Safe, inclusive environments are essential for fostering stability and positive relationships.

### *3. Access to Play and Leisure*

Social isolation and lack of inclusive, affordable activities affect many young people, particularly outside urban centres. There is a clear need for more inclusive, affordable, non-competitive leisure options that promote social connection and emotional wellbeing.

### *4. Emotional Health and Wellbeing*

Anxiety, stress, bullying and poor body image are common concerns for young people across the area. These are worsened by limited access to mental health support, especially in rural areas. Young people need safe, supportive spaces to talk openly and build emotional resilience.

### *5. Respect for young people's rights*

Many young people feel their rights around identity, inclusionand equality are not fully recognised. There is a need to raise awareness of children's rights and embed a rights-based approach across all services, ensuring every young person feels valued and heard.

### *6. Good Relations and Equality*

Young people value inclusion and want to live in communities that respect diversity. Those from minority ethnic backgrounds, with disabilities, or who identify as LGBTQIA+ need safe spaces to express themselves and connect. Promoting mutual respect and cultural understanding is key to building a cohesive society.

### *7. Learning and Achieving*

Barriers such as poverty, isolationand lack of support contribute to disengagement from education. Marginalised groups including young carers, newcomers and those with additional needs require tailored guidance and support to navigate transitions and succeed in learning and employment.

### *8. Making a positive contribution to society*

Despite challenges, young people are eager to contribute positively to society. However, limited access to volunteering, leadership and civic opportunities can hold them back. Supporting youth participation will build confidence, skills and a stronger sense of belonging.

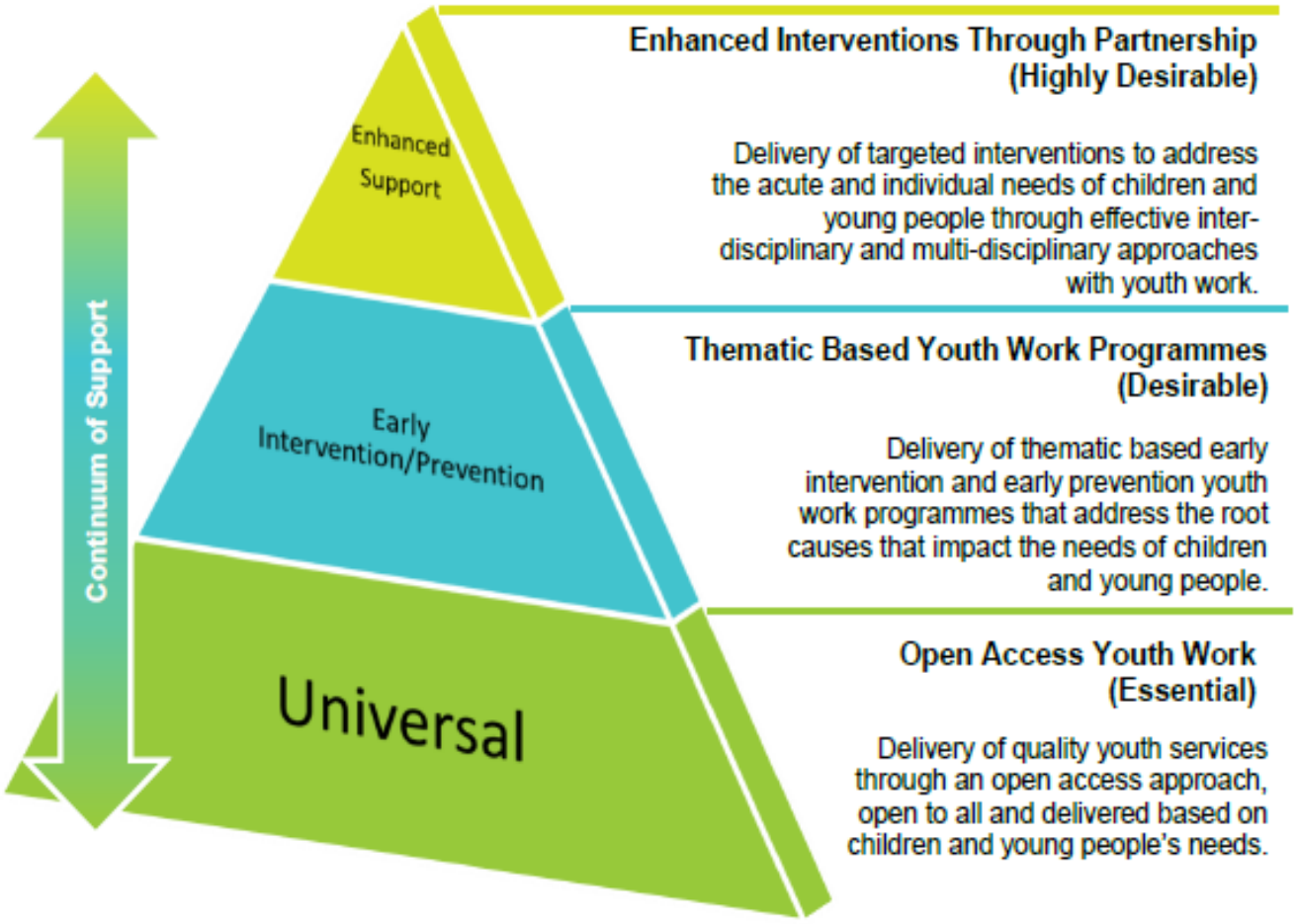
By addressing these strategic needs in a coordinated and sustained way, we can create a more inclusive, equitableand supportive environment, one that enables children and young people in Derry & Strabane to be healthy, safe, connected and empowered to shape their future.

## Youth Service Delivery Model

The Youth Service Delivery Model outlines how youth services will be developed through an adaptation of the Public Health approach that focuses on the provision of Universal, Early Intervention and Prevention and Enhanced Support services (Part 1a). The provision of universal services in the first instance will be prioritised and where resources can be enhanced through collaboration, partnerships or additional funding acquisition further provision can be delivered at the Early Intervention/Prevention and Enhanced Support levels based on the needs of children and young people. The delivery model recognises that there is overlap between the three tiers. Effective universal work will deliver youth work outcomes to children and young people that mitigate the need for specific or dedicated early intervention or prevention work. This model when accompanied with the stretch goal (Part 1b) provides how this overlap will be achieved.

Youth provision will ensure that young people are supported as they transition through the model. As a guide it is expected that Youth Services will take the lead at the Universal tier and act as key partners and actively support young people at the Early Intervention/Prevention and Enhanced Support tiers.

## Part 1a – Youth Service Delivery Model



## Part 1b – Stretch Goal

| STRETCH GOAL | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Universal (Essential Goal)** | **Early Intervention & Prevention (Desirable Goal)** | **Enhanced Support (The Stretch Goal)** |
| **What is it?** | | |
| Providing **open access youth provision** that provides **safe and welcoming space** for all our children and young people in Derry and Strabane. | Providing ongoing **thematic based group work programmes and projects** to address the **root causes impacting the needs** of children and young people in Derry and Strabane | Providing **targeted interventions** to address the **acute needs** of children and young people **in partnership** with other agencies to meet the needs of children and young people in Derry and Strabane. |
| **How will we do it?** | | |
| • Providing adequate universal youth provision for children and young people in Derry & Strabane, ensuring that statutory and voluntary youth services are funded to prioritise the needs of children and young people who access them<br>• Services are provided at the right times, in the right places based on what children and young people need<br>• Services are informed with the participation of children and young people<br>• Supporting children and young people who need early intervention/prevention to access programmes<br>• Services are equipped with the resources to deliver a quality open access youth work programme of offer<br>• Capacity of Derry & Strabane staff is | • Providing resources (curriculum, training and funding) to facilitate youth work programmes prioritised against assessed need through formal and informal settings<br>• Supporting families, formal education and communities to support the needs of the young person<br>• Services are informed with the participation of children and young people<br>• Supporting children and young people in derry & Strabane who need enhanced support to access programmes or connect with universal support<br>• Services are equipped with the resources to deliver a quality early intervention and prevention programmes/projects<br>• Capacity of staff in Derry & Strabane is supported to meet the needs through the | • Providing resources (curriculum, training and funding) to facilitate enhanced professional development<br>• Working with partners and agencies to deliver bespoke support services at an individual and group level to counter issue of arranged fights throughout Derry & Strabane.<br>• Supporting young people to attend specialist support services<br>• Reintegrating young people into appropriate youth work opportunities<br>• Reconnecting young people within their family, formal education and community<br>• Supporting children and young people to progress through early intervention and prevention programmes or connect with universal support |

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| supported to meet the needs of children and young people presented through universal provision | delivery of early intervention and prevention programmes/projects | • Working with partners and agencies to deliver bespoke support services at an individual and group level on the issues faced by young people who are under threat of paramilitary violence or at risk of recruitment into criminal groups – ENGAGE<br>• Supporting young people who attend A&E offering emotional support and connecting them with services - CONNECT |
| **How will we resource it?** | | |
| Focused use of the Department of Education Allocated Funding for Youth Work to the Education Authority | Mixed funding model approach using the Department of Education Funding for Youth Work and other Earmarked Funding aligned to the theme | Focused use of other earmarked funding supporting the delivery of youth work |
| **The Benefits** | | |
| **Children and Young People will have:**<br>• Increased protective factors in their lives<br>• Increased sense of belonging<br>• Experience social and emotional skills development<br>• Increased agency to make informed decisions<br>• Improved social connectedness<br>• Increased sense of power to change the world around them | **Children and Young People will have:**<br>• Improved the resilience, skills and abilities to manage their own wellbeing<br>• Increased agency to make informed decisions<br>• Increased participation inand focus on, their learning<br>• Improved emotional health and wellbeing<br>• Development of their thinking skills, life skills and work skills | **Children and Young People will have:**<br>• Complex needs of individual children and young people are met<br>• Increased connection between statutory, community and public services<br>• Enhanced youth service capacity to meet the complex needs of children and young people<br>• Facilitated de-escalation support pathways |
| **Benefit Indicators - IMPACT** | | |
| **BU1** Number of open access youth work sessions provided<br>**BU2** Number of children and young people | **BEI1** Number of group work programmes delivered<br>**BEI2** Number of children and young people | **BES1** Number of children and young people engaged in enhanced support youth work programmes |

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| participating in open access youth provision<br>**BU3** Percentage of young people satisfied with the service<br>**BU4** Number of young people volunteering within the programme<br>**BU5** Number of young people gaining accreditation<br>**BU6** Status of children and young people's participation on the Engagement Framework<br>**BU7** Number of training programmes provided<br>**BU8** Number of staff participating in training | participating in youth work programmes<br>**BEI3** Percentage of young people satisfied with the programme<br>**BEI4** Number of young people gaining accreditation<br>**BEI5** Number of young people volunteering within the project<br>**BEI6** Number of referrals to external or enhanced support services or universal services<br>**BEI7** Number of training programmes provided<br>**BEI8** Number of staff participating in training<br>**BEI9** Number of children and young people progressing against one or more of the youth work outcomes | **BES2** The numbers of children and young people referred to external agencies<br>**BES3** Number of referrals to early intervention or universal services<br>**BES4** Number of children and young people progressing against one or more of the youth work outcomes<br>**BES5** Number of training programmes provided<br>**BES6** Number of staff participating in training |

## Priorities for Delivery

The needs of children and young people in Derry and Strabane will be met through the delivery of Universal Services and Early Intervention/Prevention Initiatives. Based on the voices of children and young people across the Derry and Strabane area the following priorities have emerged. (*These priorities are subject to ongoing review and will be dependent on resources available).*

Within the Derry and Strabane area, Universal Services will focus on the following:

1. **Safe, Welcoming Spaces & Inclusive Environments**
   Creating accessible, warm and inclusive spaces where all young people feel safe, supported and connected, ensuring equitable access to youth services across both rural and urban areas including opportunities' to engage to engage with peers in their own linguistic community.

2. **Emotional Health and Wellbeing for all**
   Support young people in building resilience, self-awareness and coping strategies through accessible peer support networks and wellbeing-focused activities

3. **Play, Leisure, Fun and Physical Development**
   Offering regular access to fun, creative and inclusive physical activities that promote wellbeing and social interaction among all young people.

4. **Learning and Achieving**
   Support inclusive informal learning and personal and social development by helping all young people overcome barriers, build confidence in their abilities and grow through tailored, empowering experiences that reflect their diverse needs.

5. **Youth Work Curriculum & Outdoor Learning**
   Delivering structured, engaging programmes that support personal and social development, resilience and learning through experience.

6. **Participation and Pathway to Leadership Opportunities**
   Embedding Youth Voice, co-design and pathway to leadership development into all aspects of universal provision.

7. **Respect for Young People's Rights**
   After the successful recognition of Derry & Strabane as a child friendly city and district, embedding a rights-based approach across all services, ensuring young people feel heard, valued and represented is paramount.

Within the Derry and Strabane area, Early Intervention and Prevention Services will focus on the following:

1. **Emotional Health, Physical Wellbeing**

Early intervention and preventative curriculum to support young people who are experiencing anxiety, low self-esteem, or the effects of too much screen time. There will also be a focus on physical activity to help address the impact of obesity.

2. **Living in Safety and Stability**
   Safe, inclusive environments where young people are protected from violence, abuse, discrimination and harmful behaviours. Support issues such as domestic abuse exposure, racism, sectarianism, hate crime, violence against women and girls and risk-taking behaviours. A focus on coercion by criminal gangs is also required.

3. **Learning & Achievement**
   Support young people at risk of disengagement or underachievement particularly those from vulnerable and marginalised groups, through inclusive, accessible educational early youth work interventions. Focus on removing barriers, promoting sustained engagement and developing leadership and employability skills. Access to devices and digital inclusion across Derry and Strabane.

4. **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion**
   Ensure all young people have access to the same opportunities regardless of background. Promotion of inclusive values and ensuring the voice of seldom heard young people is supported and acted upon.

5. **Economic and Environmental Stability**
   Support young people affected by deprivation, rural isolation and low aspirations by promoting inclusion, opportunity and mental wellbeing. Support of environmental concerns and the impact of climate change on their future outlook.

6. **Making a Positive Contribution & Respecting Rights**
   Promotion of a child-rights based approach to youth work delivery. Empower young people to feel respected, valued and confident in expressing themselves, taking initiative and participating in decisions. Promote secure environments for political engagement and awareness of their rights to develop active, responsible citizenship.

7. **Widening Horizons**
   Through local, national and international youth work experiences young people have opportunities to broaden their aspirations, build confidence and to experience, understand and appreciate cultures beyond their own.

Alongside the delivery of Universal Services and thematic work focused on Early Intervention and Prevention, a range of targeted interventions are also being implemented in the Derry and Strabane area working in partnership with other agencies to meet the specific needs of children and young people. These include:

- **ENGAGE**

This targeted programme is focused on tackling paramilitarism through groupwork, outreach and detached work, peer mentoring and peer support

- **REACH**
  This targeted programme is focused on wellbeing for all and early intervention and prevention support under the joint Department of Education and Department of Health Emotional Health and Wellbeing Framework provided in school settings

Within the scope of Enhanced Support, a range of targeted interventions are also being implemented in Derry and Strabane area which also involves working in partnership with other agencies to meet the acute needs of children and young people. These include:

- **Connect Hospital**
  This programme provides enhanced support to young people impacted by paramilitarism, criminality and violence at the Altnagelvin Hospital.

All targeted initiatives funded under Early Intervention and Enhanced Support are subject to annual funding being made available to EA.

## Strategic Approach to Youth Services

When considering the delivery of local youth services, it is important to also consider the findings from the Regional Assessment of Need and the Regional Youth Development Plan. The Regional Assessment of Need has identified four emerging strategic themes which informed the Regional Youth Development Plan. These strategic themes should also provide a framework for local youth services to align common goals and achieve long-term objectives over the three-year planning period. The Strategic themes within the Regional Youth Development Plan are outlined below:

### Child and Young Person Centred

In Derry and Strabane the recognition as a UNICEF child friendly city will strengthen the desire to reinforce the fact that a young person-centred approach remains at the heart of all youth service planning and delivery. Through a rights-based lens, we will actively listen to the voices of children and young people across our seven District Electoral Areas (DEAs), recognising their diverse experiences in both urban and rural settings.

Youth services in Derry and Strabane will prioritise the needs identified directly by children and young people through ongoing engagement, consultation events and youth-led forums. We will ensure a clear feedback loop is established, showing young people how their insights have shaped service development and local decision-making.

### Delivering Services Based on Need and through Partnership

In Derry and Strabane, youth services will be shaped by the identified needs and lived experiences of children and young people. Delivery will be through a combination of statutory youth provision and grant-aided support to the community and voluntary sector. Recognising the area's rural geography and diverse communities, services will be designed to be inclusive, accessibleand responsive, ensuring all young people can engage with meaningful support and opportunities.

Collaboration will be at the heart of this approach to ensure value for money and maximum impact. Building on the proven success of previous joint working in Derry and Strabane we are committed to developing the structures and partnerships that enable this to flourish again. Statutory agencies, community groups and young people will be at the heart of the process to develop services that reflect real and evolving needs and where partnership working enhances outcomes, it will be actively supported and encouraged.

### Evidence Informed

In Derry and Strabane, we are committed to collecting only the information that is necessary and meaningful to understand and demonstrate the impact of youth work in the lives of children and young people. Our approach will focus on gathering data that directly informs service improvement, ensuring that youth work remains responsive, effectiveand centred on young people's needs. Alongside academic research, we will place a strong emphasis on practice-based evidence—the insights, experiences and outcomes generated directly from youth work practice. This ensures that our planning, deliveryand evaluation are grounded not only in theory but also in the realities of face-to-face work. By valuing both forms of evidence, we can build a more holistic and credible understanding of what works.

Importantly, we aim to minimise administrative burden by streamlining data collection and focusing on what truly matters. This will allow workers to spend more time engaging with young people, while still contributing to a robust evidence base that supports continuous learning and improvement.

### Empowering All our Staff

In Derry and Strabane, we are committed to ensuring that everyone involved in delivering youth work is equipped with the curriculum resources, training and skills needed to meet the evolving needs of children and young people. This includes providing ongoing professional development and support to strengthen practice, foster innovationand ensure a consistent standard of quality across the area.

We recognise that investing in our youth work staff is key to building a confident, capable team that can engage meaningfully with young people and support them to thrive in their communities. A core part of this approach will be the active sharing of best practice, enabling practitioners to learn from one another, celebrate what works and continuously improve the work they deliver to young people.

By creating a culture of collaborative learning and professional growth, we aim to build a resilient, forward-thinking sector that is responsive, inclusiveand impactful.

## 2026-2029 Derry & Strabane Local Youth Development Plan

Success across the four key strategic themes in practice will look like:

| | |
|---|---|
| <br>**1.Child and Young Person Centred** | **1.1** Processes within the Derry & Strabane Area will capture the views of children and young people to inform planning and delivery of services on a quarterly basis |
| | **1.2** The Derry & Strabane Action Plan will respond to the changing assessed needs of children and young people |
| <br>**2. Delivering Services Based on Need and through relevant Partnerships** | **2.1** Accessible universal youth provision will be available for children and young people in the Derry and Strabane Area at the right time and at the right place based on available resources |
| | **2.2** Based on available resources (Youth Service funding and other earmarked funding) early intervention and prevention programmes will be delivered in Derry and Strabane based on the assessed needs of children and young people |
| | **2.3** Develop and deliver, in partnership with other agencies and government departments, enhanced support for children and young people to meet assessed need in the Derry and Strabane area |
| <br>**3.Evidence Informed** | **3.1** In line with the RYDP the LYDP will use a Benefits Realisation Framework for reporting on delivery |
| | **3.2** Information systems will be used to support the development of evaluation and measurement of impact for local youth services in the Derry and Strabane area |
| | **3.3** Dynamic planning processes will drive a flexible, responsive approach to service design and delivery that allows for continuous adaptation based on new evidence, feedback and changing needs. |

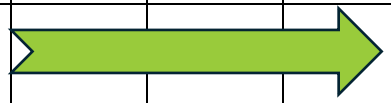
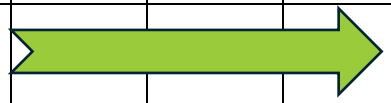
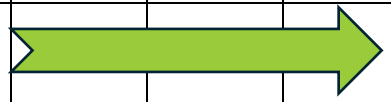
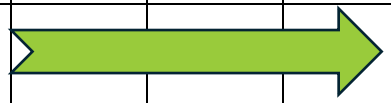
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|  **4.Empowering All Our Staff** | **4.1** Increase recruitment, improve retention and recognise and celebrate the role of volunteers in youth services in the Derry and Strabane area in line with the EA Youth Work Volunteer Strategy 2023-2029 |
| | **4.2** A skilled local workforce will be developed and supported to meet the needs of children and young people within universal and early intervention/prevention through a localised training programme in line with the EA Youth Service Workforce Development Strategy |

| **Strategic Theme** | **1. Child and Young Person Centred** | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Headline Goal** | **Actions to Achieve Goal** | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** | **How will we know it happened and worked?** |
| 1.1 Processes within the Derry and Strabane Area will capture the views of children and young people to inform planning and delivery of services on a quarterly basis | 1.1.1 Promote a core headline survey to identify the ongoing needs and priorities of children and young people to effectively inform the planning and delivery of services on a quarterly basis |  | | | Young people, representative of the youth service, involved in development of published consultations. Findings from surveys used to inform planning and delivery of services |
| | 1.1.2 Promote thematically focused surveys with children and young people to identify their needs against a particular theme to effectively inform the planning and delivery of services on a quarterly basis |  | | | Young people, representative of the youth service, involved in development of published consultations. Findings from thematic surveys used to inform planning and delivery of services |
| | 1.13 Quarterly review of feedback on the voices of children and young people and how EA has used this information to inform its decisions. |  | | | Child friendly annual report published to evidence impact of voice of young people on decision making processes within EA |
| 1.2 The Derry and Strabane Action Plan will respond to the changing assessed needs of children and young people | 1.2.1 Children and young people will be engaged to review data and to seek their views on how youth services can help address their changing needs |  | | | Revision and update to the annual local action plan based on assessed need |
| | 1.2.2 Biannual review of the Local Action Plan, with updates made based on the Assessed Needs of children and young people |  | | | Revision and update to the local youth action plan based on the identified needs |

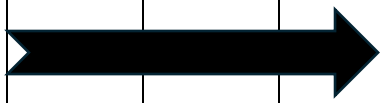
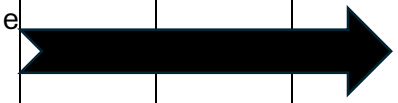
| Strategic Theme | 2. Delivering Services Based on Need and through relevant Partnerships | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Headline Goal** | **Actions to Achieve Goal** | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** | **How will we know it happened and worked?** |
| 2.1 Accessible universal youth provision will be available for children and young people in the Derry and Strabane Area at the right time and at the right place based on available resources | 2.1.1 Identification of universal open access requirements across Derry and Strabane based on population, geography and need which ensures open access youth provision is provided in the right places urban and rural and at the right times |  | | | BU1, BU2 |
| | 2.1.2 Delivery of safe warm universal open access youth services delivered through existing statutory youth provision based on identified needs and resource |  | | | BU1, BU2, BU3 |
| | 2.1.3 Delivery of universal open access youth services supported by Generic Non-Targeted funding through volunteer led organisations |  | | | BU1, BU2, BU4 |
| | 2.1.4 Delivery of safe warm universal open access youth services supported by Local Area Based Funding in the Community and Voluntary Sector based on identified needs and resource |  | | | BU1, BU2 |
| | 2.1.5 Youth work curriculum delivered in line with A Model for Effective Practice, DE Policy and priority age bands |  | | | BU5, BU6 |

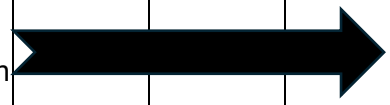
| Strategic Theme | 2. Delivering Services Based on Need and through relevant Partnerships | | | | |
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| **Headline Goal** | **Actions to Achieve Goal** | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** | **How will we know it happened and worked?** |
| | 2.1.6 Non-formal educational opportunities *that enhance the learning and development of children and young people* |  | | | BU5, BEI9 |
| | 2.1.7 Developing the Voice of Children and Young People |  | | | BU6 |
| | 2.1.8 Emotional health and wellbeing for all<br>*Offer support services, workshops and activities that help young people manage anxiety, build confidence and develop coping strategies* |  | | | BU3, BEI9 |
| | 2.1.9 Implementation of Community Relations Equality and Diversity & Shared Education |  | | | BU3, BEI9 |
| | 2.1.10 Encourage Healthy Play and Physical Activity<br>*Facilitate regular opportunities for fun, movement and creative play to support emotional regulation, social skills and physical wellbeing.* |  | | | BU2, BU3 |

| Strategic Theme | 2. Delivering Services Based on Need and through relevant Partnerships | | | | |
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| **Headline Goal** | **Actions to Achieve Goal** | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** | **How will we know it happened and worked?** |
| | 2.1.11 Reduce Screen Dependency and Promote Connections<br>*Create engaging, offline alternatives that promote face-to-face interaction, reduce isolation and strengthen peer relationships* |  | | | BU2, BU3 |
| | 2.1.12 Supporting young people to volunteer and take active roles in shaping and delivering youth-led initiatives |  | | | BU4, BEI5 |
| | 2.1.13 Preparation for Life and Work<br>Life skills |  | | | BU5, BEI9 |
| 2.2 Based on available resources (Youth Service funding and other earmarked funding) early intervention and prevention programmes will be delivered in Derry and Strabane based on the assessed needs of children and young people | 2.2.1 Preventative Youth Work Curriculum on Violence and Harm<br>*Youth work initiatives that actively support the prevention of violence against women and girls, EVAWG) hate crime, racism, Child Criminal Exploitation* |  | | | BEI1, BEI2, BEI6, BEI9 |
| | 2.2.2 Preventative Youth Work Curriculum<br>*Risk taking behaviours Substance misuse, gambling, exposure to violence, unsafe driving.* |  | | | BEI1, BEI2, BEI9 |

| Strategic Theme | 2. Delivering Services Based on Need and through relevant Partnerships | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Headline Goal** | **Actions to Achieve Goal** | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** | **How will we know it happened and worked?** |
| | 2.2.3 Preventative Youth Curriculum *For Health and Wellbeing focusing on emotional, physical and sexual health* |  | | | BEI1, BEI2, BEI9 |
| | 2.2.4 Equality and Inclusion *Strengthen community relations and increase access for Section 75 groups.* |  | | | BEI2, BEI3, BEI9 |
| | 2.2.5 Address barriers to Learning and Achievement *Particularly for the most vulnerable and marginalised children and young people* |  | | | BEI2, BEI4, BEI9 |
| | 2.2.6 Youth Leadership Development *Focus on cultivating leadership skills* |  | | | BEI4, BEI5, BEI9 |
| | 2.2.7 Strengthening digital resilience and online safety |  | | | BEI2, BEI9 |
| | 2.2.8 Widening Horizons through local, national and international Youth Work |  | | | BEI2, BEI9 |
| | 2.2.9 Environment and Sustainability through Youth Led Initiatives |  | | | BEI2, BEI9 |

| **Strategic Theme** | **2. Delivering Services Based on Need and through relevant Partnerships** | | | | |
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| **Headline Goal** | **Actions to Achieve Goal** | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** | **How will we know it happened and worked?** |
| | 2.2.10 Participation Youth Voice | | | | BEI5, BEI9 |
| 2.3 Develop and deliver, in partnership with other agencies and government departments, enhanced support for children and young people to meet assessed need in the Derry and Strabane area | 2.3.1 Identification of partnership and Collaboration<br>*Projects/Programmes to address the identified needs of children and young people on a local and citywide basis* | | | | BES1, BES2, BES4 |
| | 2.3.2 Ongoing self-reflection and evaluation of the effectiveness of the delivery of youth work in partnership | | | | BES4, BES6 |

| **Strategic Theme** | **3. Evidence Informed** | | | | |
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| **Headline Goal** | **Actions to Achieve Goal** | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** | **How will we know it happened and worked?** |
| **3.1** The Local Youth Development Plan for Derry & Strabane will use a Benefits Realisation Framework for reporting on delivery. | **3.1.1** Implementation of the Benefits Framework outlined for the delivery of EA statutory and EA voluntary funded youth work delivery |  | | | Benefits framework embedded into all youth service reporting |
| | **3.1.2** Annual Reporting for EA Funded Youth Work, including an evaluation of the impact delivery is making on the lives of children and young people and any recommendations to change delivery approach based on evidence presented |  | | | Annual Reporting completed |
| **3.2** Managing Information systems will be used to support the development of evaluation and measurement of impact for local youth services in the Derry and Strabane area. | **3.2.1** Systems in place to collect information that supports the sector in evaluating and measuring the impact of programmes. |  | | | Monthly / Quarterly reports produced<br><br>Consistent and reliable data collected to highlight impact of work being delivered<br><br>Data reviewed on an ongoing basis to adapt and improve programmes |

| **Strategic Theme** | **3. Evidence Informed** | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Headline Goal** | **Actions to Achieve Goal** | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** | **How will we know it happened and worked?** |
| **3.3** Dynamic planning processes will drive a flexible, responsive approach to service design and delivery that allows for continuous adaptation based on new evidence, feedback and changing needs. | **3.3.1** Endorsing and supporting pilot initiatives that assess the quality of youth work delivery through local universal open access and early intervention programmes. |  | | | Pilot initiatives completed and evaluated, with documented findings informing aspects of future youth work planning or delivery. |

| **Strategic Theme** | **4. Empowering All Our Staff** | | | | |
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| **Headline Goal** | **Actions to Achieve Goal** | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** | **How will we know it happened and worked?** |
| **4.1** Increase recruitment, improve retention and recognise and celebrate the role of volunteers in youth services in the Derry and Strabane area in line with the EA Youth Work Volunteer Strategy 2023-2029<br>Increase recruitment, improve retention and recognise and celebrate the role of volunteers in youth services in the Derry and Strabane area in line with the EA Youth Work Volunteer Strategy 2023-2029 | **4.1.1** Local Volunteer Celebration and Recognition events programme aligned to the annual National Volunteer Week (1-7 June)<br>*(Volunteer Strategy Theme: Celebrating the contribution of Volunteers in Youth Work)* | → | → | → | Programme established and agreed by 1 May 2026 and delivered during volunteer week on an annual basis.<br><br>BU4, BEI5 |
| | **4.1.2** Delivery of a programme of activities and actions for EA statutory youth work volunteers in line with the EA Volunteer Strategy themes. | → | → | → | Delivery of activities and actions in support of the volunteer strategy in place and successfully delivered with the engagement of EA Statutory Youth Service volunteers<br><br>BU4, BEI5 |

| **Strategic Theme** | **4. Empowering All Our Staff** | | | | |
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| **Headline Goal** | **Actions to Achieve Goal** | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** | **How will we know it happened and worked?** |
| **4.2** A skilled local workforce will be developed and supported to meet the needs of children and young people within universal and early intervention/prevention through a localised training programme in line with the EA Youth Service Workforce Development Strategy | **4.2.1** Implement and support focused training to ensure a skilled workforce meets the evolving needs of children and young people, aligned with the Workforce Development Strategy. | | | | Staff trained annually through programmes aligned with the EA Youth Service Workforce Development Strategy<br><br>Shared Youth Sector training events across Derry and Strabane<br><br>Staff feel confident in using innovative methods to meet the needs of young people<br><br>Increase in staff recruitment and retention levels<br><br>BU7, BU8, BEI7, BEI8, BES5, BES6 |