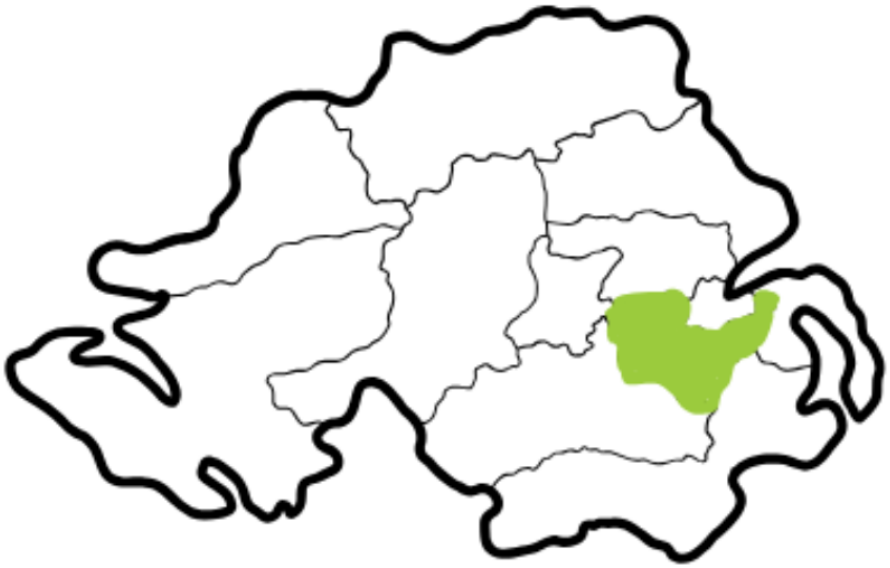


LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH

LOCAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2026 - 2029

AUTHOR
Johnny Crymble

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Introduction & Background

The Education Authority (EA) Local Youth Development Action Plan for 2026–2029 for Lisburn and Castlereagh 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 regularly, with progress reported in line with the Regional Youth Development Plan (2026–2029), and within the framework of the EA's Strategic Plan (2017–2027) and Corporate Business Plan. The resources provided to the EA Youth Service by the Department of Education are deployed in accordance with the local plan to achieve specific, policy-led objectives, outputs, and outcomes. Key actions within this Local Area Youth Development Plan are informed by the Local Assessment of Need, Local Statistical Profiles, the 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.

By listening to and addressing the needs raised by young people, and implementing their suggestions, the EA Youth Service can play a vital role in creating a safer, more inclusive environment for all young people in Lisburn and Castlereagh.

This Local Youth Development Plan is also directly aligned with the Lisburn & Castlereagh Community Plan (2017–2032), which states that "*our children and young people have the best start in life… the positive role of children and young people in the community is valued and encouraged".* In response, this Plan commits to a rights-based approach that places the needs and voices of children and young people at its centre, ensuring that services remain relevant, inclusive, and empowering.

Vision Statement

Youth work in Lisburn and Castlereagh will be inclusive, ambitious, and focused on leadership. We recognise the unique scale and diversity of the area, which stretches across vibrant city centre communities, growing suburban neighbourhoods, and rural villages. This mix presents both opportunities and challenges, and our vision is to ensure that all young people, regardless of geography or background, have access to high-quality youth services and meaningful opportunities.

Provision will be consistent and needs-led, shaped by the voices of young people and informed by evidence. By working in partnership with statutory agencies, voluntary and community organisations, and schools, we will create services that are responsive, sustainable, and capable of meeting the varied needs of young people across a vast and diverse area. Leadership will sit at the heart of youth work in Lisburn and Castlereagh. Young people will be supported to develop the skills, confidence, and resilience required to take on leadership roles in their own lives, in their communities, and in wider society. Opportunities for volunteering, peer leadership, and social action will enable young people to influence decisions, strengthen communities, and inspire others.

The EA Youth Service will be guided by values of equity, participation, innovation, accountability, and social action. Youth voice will be central to shaping provision, ensuring that services remain relevant, trusted, and empowering. We are committed to investing in a skilled and motivated workforce. Through professional development, purposeful supervision, and strong leadership, youth workers and

volunteers will be equipped to deliver impactful, youth-centred services that adapt to local contexts, whether in rural communities with limited facilities or in the busy city centre.

Youth work in Lisburn Castlereagh will adopt trauma-informed and strength-based approaches that promote resilience, belonging, and progression for all young people. Our vision is for youth work in Lisburn and Castlereagh to create safe, supportive, and inspiring spaces where young people are encouraged to lead, connect, and thrive.

Voice of children and young people and other key stakeholders in Lisburn and Castlereagh

Children and young people across Lisburn and Castlereagh have contributed clear, considered and often urgent insights into the realities they face growing up in the area. Through local focus groups, surveys, and wider engagement with schools, youth groups and community partners, a range of shared concerns and unmet needs have emerged.

The issue raised most frequently by young people was their mental health and emotional wellbeing. Young people reported high levels of stress, anxiety, and isolation, much of which they attributed to school-related pressures, social media, and a general lack of places to talk about how they feel. There was a strong desire for more support in managing everyday emotions and building resilience. Despite Lisburn and Castlereagh being one of the least deprived areas statistically, young people and stakeholders both pointed to a worrying undercurrent of "hidden need," where mental health challenges exist beneath the surface and may not be immediately visible in official data. Stakeholders also noted the lack of accessible, non-clinical mental health support options, particularly in rural parts of the council area. Young people asked for informal drop-in spaces, trusted adults to talk to, and more open conversations about emotional wellbeing in schools and youth settings.

Another priority that emerged strongly was the need for safe, inclusive spaces for leisure and social connection. Many young people said they struggle to find free, welcoming places to meet with friends, especially outside of school hours. The cost of some activities and the lack of transport options especially for those in rural or more isolated areas, were significant barriers to participation. In particular, young people with disabilities, those from newcomer communities, and LGBTQIA+ youth expressed that they often feel excluded from mainstream youth provision. Some said they avoid public spaces due to fear of judgement, bullying or harassment. Stakeholders echoed these concerns and highlighted the need for youth services to prioritise inclusion and invest in targeted outreach to underrepresented groups.

Academic stress and a narrow definition of success were also key themes raised by young people. While school leaver outcomes in the area are high, with 89.4% achieving 5+ GCSEs including English and Maths, many students spoke about feeling that academic grades were the only marker of achievement. Those who didn't fit the traditional school model said they often felt unsupported or overlooked. Young people called for more varied opportunities to learn life skills, gain work experience, and access alternative learning pathways. Stakeholders reinforced this point, noting that although formal education performance is strong, young people still need broader development opportunities to build confidence, aspirations and career readiness.

Young people were also vocal about their desire to be heard and included. Many felt that although opportunities exist to have a say, these are often tokenistic or led by adults without real follow-through. They called for a more meaningful role in shaping local services, especially those targeting their own communities. This need was particularly strong among those who felt marginalised, including young carers, care-experienced young people, and those from minority ethnic backgrounds. Stakeholders highlighted a growing recognition of the importance of youth voice but acknowledged that more investment and structure is needed to make participation meaningful and sustained.

Concerns about safety, both physical and emotional, were frequently raised. Young people reported feeling unsafe in certain public spaces due to anti-social behaviour or the threat of violence. Others mentioned bullying, peer pressure, and exposure to harmful content online as everyday concerns.

There were repeated calls for youth workers and youth spaces to play a bigger role in offering safety, consistency and guidance. The lived experiences shared by children and young people across Lisburn and Castlereagh reveal that even in a statistically “advantaged” area, there are clear and urgent needs. These include emotional support, inclusive access to leisure, a broader approach to learning and aspiration, and meaningful opportunities to lead and contribute. Stakeholders across sectors affirmed that these priorities should guide future delivery and that youth voice must remain central to the design of services moving forward.

Youth Service Delivery Model

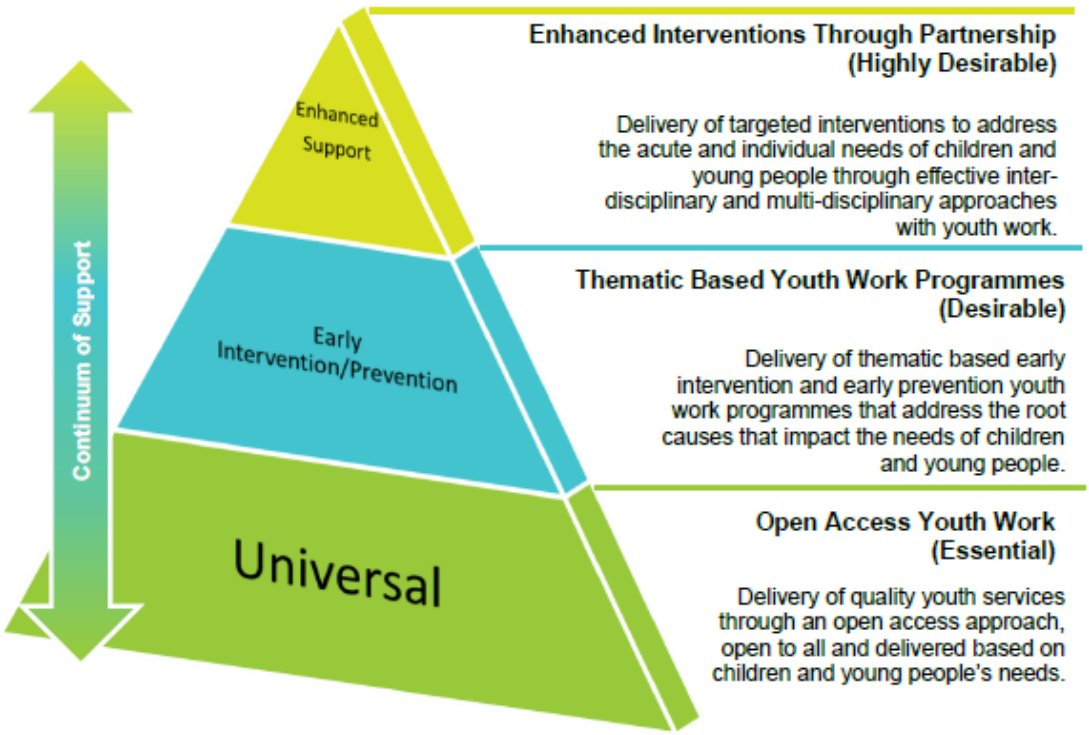
The Youth Service Delivery Model outlines how youth services will be developed through an adaptation of the Public Health approach that focuses on the provision of Universal, Early Intervention and Prevention and Enhanced Support services (Model 1a).

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 (Model 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.

Model 1a - Youth Service Delivery Model



Model 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 Lisburn and Castlereagh	Providing ongoing **thematic based group work programmes and projects** to address the **root causes impacting the needs** of children and young people In Lisburn and Castlereagh	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 Lisburn and Castlereagh.
How will we do it?		
• Providing adequate universal youth provision for children and young people in Lisburn and Castlereagh, ensuring that youth services are funded to prioritise the needs of children and young people who access them • Services are provided at the right times, in the right places based on what children and young people need • Services are informed with the participation of children and young people • Supporting children and young people who need early intervention/prevention to access programmes across the Lisburn and Castlereagh area • Services are equipped with the resources to deliver a quality open access youth work programme of offer	• Providing resources (curriculum, training and funding) to facilitate youth work programmes prioritised against assessed need through formal and informal settings • Supporting families, formal education and communities to support the needs of the young person • Services are informed with the participation of children and young people • Supporting children and young people in Lisburn and Castlereagh who need enhanced support to access programmes or connect with universal support • Services are equipped with the resources to deliver a quality early intervention and prevention programmes/projects • Capacity of Lisburn and Castlereagh staff is	• Providing resources (curriculum, training and funding) to facilitate enhanced professional development • Working with partners and agencies in Lisburn and Castlereagh to deliver bespoke support services at an individual and group level • Supporting young people to attend specialist support services • Reintegrating young people into appropriate youth work opportunities • Reconnecting young people within their family, formal education and community • Supporting children and young people to progress through early intervention and prevention programmes or connect with universal support

• Capacity of Lisburn and Castlereagh staff is supported to meet the needs of children and young people presented through universal provision	supported to meet the needs through the delivery of early intervention and prevention programmes/projects	
How will we resource it?		
Focused use of the Department of Education Allocated Funding for Youth Work to the Education Authority. Delivered by Local Youth Services	Mixed funding model approach using the Department of Education Funding for Youth Work and other Earmarked Funding aligned to the theme delivered by Local or Regional Youth Services	Focused use of other earmarked funding supporting the delivery of youth work. Delivered by Regional Youth Services.
The Benefits		
Children and Young People will have: • Increased protective factors in their lives • Increased sense of belonging • Experience social and emotional skills development • Increased agency to make informed decisions • Improved social connectedness • Increased sense of power to change the world around them	**Children and Young People will have:** • Improved the resilience, skills and abilities to manage their own wellbeing • Increased agency to make informed decisions • Increased participation in, and focus on, their learning • Improved emotional health and wellbeing • Development of their thinking skills, life skills and work skills	**Children and Young People will have:** • Complex needs of individual children and young people are met • Increased connection between statutory, community and public services • Enhanced youth service capacity to meet the complex needs of children and young people • Facilitated de-escalation support pathways
Benefit Indicators		
BU1 Number of open access youth work sessions provided **BU2** Number of children and young people participating in open access youth provision **BU3** Percentage of young people satisfied with the service **BU4** Number of young people volunteering within the programme **BU5** Number of young people gaining	**BEI1** Number of group work programmes delivered **BEI2** Number of children and young people participating in youth work programmes **BEI3** Percentage of young people satisfied with the programme **BEI4** Number of young people gaining accreditation **BEI5** Number of young people volunteering within	**BES1** Number of children and young people engaged in enhanced support youth work programmes **BES2** The numbers of children and young people referred to external agencies **BES3** Number of referrals to early intervention or universal services **BES4** Number of children and young people progressing against one or more of the youth

accreditation **BU6** Status of children and young people's participation on the Engagement Framework **BU7** Number of training programmes provided **BU8** Number of staff participating in training	the project **BEI6** Number of referrals to external or enhanced support services or universal services **BEI7** Number of training programmes provided **BEI8** Number of staff participating in training **BEI9** Number of children and young people progressing against one or more of the youth work outcomes	work outcomes **BES5** Number of training programmes provided **BES6** Number of staff participating in training

Priorities for Delivery

The needs of children and young people in Lisburn and Castlereagh will be addressed through the delivery of Universal Services and Early Intervention and Prevention Initiatives, guided by A Model for Effective Practice.

Provision will ensure all young people have access to safe, inclusive, and meaningful spaces that promote wellbeing, learning, and belonging. Delivery will be locally responsive, recognising the area's mix of urban, suburban, and rural communities. It will reflect the voices of young people, as captured through the Local Assessment of Need 2026–2029, which identified the following top priority themes: Your Future, Play and Hobbies, Health and Wellbeing, Safety, Education, Equality, Rights, and Citizenship.

These priorities will be reviewed annually, ensuring that youth work remains flexible, needs-led, and connected to the lived realities of young people across all District Electoral Areas (DEAs).

Universal Services Priorities

- **Emotional Health and Wellbeing**
    - Emotional health is the most significant need identified across Lisburn and Castlereagh. Youth work will embed wellbeing throughout all universal programmes, providing safe, trusted, and non-clinical environments where young people can talk openly, build resilience, and strengthen coping skills.
    - Programmes will focus on confidence, self-esteem, emotional literacy, and peer support, normalising open conversations about mental health. Youth services will also promote physical activity, mindfulness, and creative outlets as part of a holistic wellbeing approach.

- **Safe, Welcoming, and Inclusive Spaces**
    - Young people consistently highlight the need for safe, welcoming, and inclusive youth environments, especially for those in rural or isolated areas. Universal provision will ensure that spaces are free from discrimination and accessible to all, including those with disabilities, newcomer backgrounds, or LGBTQIA+ identities.
    - Provision will operate during evenings, weekends, and school holidays, offering consistency and belonging for young people who may lack stability elsewhere in their lives.

- **Play, Leisure, and Creative Opportunities**
    - Access to leisure is central to positive wellbeing. Youth work will expand opportunities for free or low-cost play, sport, and creative activities that reflect young people's diverse interests.
    - Provision will include music, drama, art, digital creativity, and outdoor recreation, ensuring that all young people can access enjoyable and enriching activities regardless of cost or location. Rural transport barriers will be addressed through outreach and mobile delivery.

- **Learning, Achievement, and Life Skills**

- Youth work will complement formal education by promoting non-formal learning and alternative pathways to achievement.
- Programmes will build practical life skills such as budgeting, communication, and teamwork, alongside accredited learning that recognises personal growth and development. Youth services will support transitions from school to adulthood, particularly for those not thriving in academic environments.

- **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (CRED)**
  - Inclusion and respect for difference will underpin all universal delivery. Youth work will promote understanding and cooperation across communities, challenging prejudice and creating spaces where young people feel valued for who they are.
  - Programmes will celebrate cultural diversity, raise awareness of equality issues, and provide opportunities for shared learning and good relations across Lisburn and Castlereagh's growing multicultural population.

- **Environmental Awareness and Sustainability**
  - Young people in Lisburn and Castlereagh express strong concern for their environment. Youth services will integrate sustainability and environmental action into universal provision through projects that encourage community clean-ups, biodiversity initiatives, and climate education.
  - These activities will connect environmental responsibility with wellbeing, pride of place, and local identity.

- **Youth Voice, Leadership, and Volunteering**
  - Youth voice will be at the centre of service design and delivery. Local youth voice, Youth Council, advisory panels, and co-designed projects will ensure young people influence decisions that affect them.
  - Leadership and volunteering opportunities will enable young people to take ownership, build confidence, and develop transferable skills for life and employment. Programmes will focus on participation that is genuine, inclusive, and sustained.

- **Digital Safety and Positive Online Engagement**
  - Given the growing impact of social media and online culture, youth work will promote digital wellbeing across universal provision.
  - Young people will be supported to navigate digital spaces safely, balance online and offline life, and recognise the impact of digital behaviour on mental health and relationships. Youth services will model positive digital engagement and encourage peer-led initiatives that promote kindness, consent, and respect online.

Early Intervention and Prevention Themes

- **Living in Safety and Stability**
  - Youth work will support young people experiencing instability in their home, school, or community environments.
  - Targeted groupwork and mentoring will help young people build positive relationships, develop conflict resolution skills, and increase their sense of safety. Programmes will

also raise awareness of bullying, domestic abuse, and online exploitation, ensuring early support before crises develop.

- **Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Support**
  - Building on universal provision, youth services will provide small group or targeted early intervention programmes for young people experiencing emotional distress, anxiety, or social withdrawal.
  - These initiatives will help young people develop resilience and self-regulation skills while connecting them to external supports where necessary.

- **Inclusion, Diversity, and Good Relations**
  - Youth work will play a vital role in tackling discrimination and promoting cohesion.
  - Programmes will create shared spaces for young people from different backgrounds to learn together, celebrate diversity, and challenge stereotypes. This includes anti-racism education, cultural awareness projects, and youth-led equality campaigns.

- **Learning Support and Educational Transitions**
  - Youth services will support young people who face barriers to learning or engagement in school.
  - Programmes will address low confidence, poor attendance, or the risk of becoming NEET, providing mentoring, homework support, and life skills education. Partnerships with schools and other agencies will ensure continuity of support during key transition points.

- **Life Skills and Economic Stability**
  - Youth work will equip young people with the skills to manage daily life and prepare for future employment.
  - Programmes will focus on budgeting, interview skills, time management, and workplace readiness, with an emphasis on supporting those from low-income or single-parent households. Collaboration with employers and training providers will strengthen these pathways.

- **Digital Resilience and Online Safety**
  - Youth work will deliver targeted sessions on managing online risks, cyberbullying, and digital wellbeing.
  - These sessions will empower young people to make informed choices, recognise harmful online behaviours, and develop critical thinking about media influence.

- **Environmental and Community Action**
  - Targeted environmental projects will engage young people in local sustainability and civic action.
  - Initiatives will include youth-led clean-up campaigns, community gardening, and awareness projects linking environmental protection to wellbeing and community pride.

- **Youth Participation and Active Citizenship**
  - Youth work will empower young people to be active citizens and advocates for change.

- Targeted participation projects will build confidence and communication skills, enabling young people from underrepresented groups to engage in decision-making and community leadership roles.

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 Lisburn and Castlereagh area working in partnership with other agencies to meet the specific needs of children and young people. These include:

- **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

Enhanced Support

Within the scope of Enhanced Support, a range of targeted interventions are also being implemented in Lisburn and Castlereagh 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 Ulster Hospital.
- **Fusion**
  - An embedded youth work school-based approach to supporting young people impacted by paramilitarism, criminality, violence, harm and high-risk taking behaviours is being extended to Dundonald High School.

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

Summary

Delivery across Universal and Early Intervention/Prevention services in Lisburn and Castlereagh will ensure that:

- Every young person has access to safe, inclusive, and engaging provision.
- Emotional wellbeing, learning, inclusion, and leadership are at the heart of youth work practice.
- Youth services remain flexible and evidence-informed, responding to emerging needs across urban, suburban, and rural areas.
- Participation, prevention, and partnership underpin all delivery, ensuring that young people are empowered to thrive, contribute, and belong.

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 Lisburn and Castlereagh, Youth Services will be delivered through a rights-based approach that puts the needs and voices of children and young people first. We will listen carefully to their experiences across the city centre, suburban neighbourhoods, and rural communities, and ensure that their priorities shape the services they receive.

Young people will see clearly how their input makes a difference through regular feedback and open communication. By valuing their perspectives and encouraging active participation, we will create services that are relevant, inclusive, and empowering, helping young people to take a leading role in shaping their futures.

Delivering Services Based on Need and through Partnership

In Lisburn and Castlereagh, the delivery of Youth Services will be rooted in the identified needs of children and young people across the city, suburbs, and rural communities. This will be achieved through a balance of statutory youth provision and targeted grant aid support to the community and voluntary sector.

Partnership will be central to this approach. By working collaboratively with statutory agencies, local organisations, and young people themselves, we will co-design and deliver services that reflect local challenges and opportunities. This joined-up model will ensure that all young people can access meaningful support and feel valued in their communities.

Evidence Informed

In Lisburn and Castlereagh, Youth Services will focus on collecting only the information that is necessary to understand and demonstrate the impact of youth work on the lives of children and young people. Data will be purposeful and used to shape services that respond directly to identified needs.

We will strengthen this approach through academic research and evidence-informed practice, working with partners and stakeholders to build a clear understanding of what works. By reducing unnecessary bureaucracy, youth workers will have more time and space to engage directly with young people and deliver meaningful, high-quality support.

Empowering All our Staff

In Lisburn and Castlereagh, we will ensure that everyone delivering youth work is equipped with the curriculum resources, training, and skills needed to meet the diverse needs of children and young people across the city, suburbs, and rural communities.

We are committed to providing high-quality professional development, access to up-to-date curriculum frameworks, and opportunities to share best practice through local networks and partnerships. By supporting staff and volunteers in this way, we will enable them to deliver inclusive, engaging, and impactful youth work that adapts to the challenges and opportunities facing young people today.

2026-2029 Local Youth Development Plan

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

 **1. Child and Young Person Centred**	**1.1** Processes within the Lisburn and Castlereagh Area will capture the views of children and young people to inform planning and delivery of services on a quarterly basis
	1.2 The Lisburn and Castlereagh Action Plan will respond to the changing assessed needs of children and young people
 **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 Lisburn and Castlereagh 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 Lisburn and Castlereagh 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 Lisburn and Castlereagh area
 **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 Lisburn and Castlereagh 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.

 **4. Empowering All Our Staff**	**4.1** Increase recruitment, improve retention and recognise and celebrate the role of volunteers in youth services in the Lisburn and Castlereagh 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

Within the following youth development plan, a targeted coding system is applied to selected headline goals to establish clear links with the overarching Stretch Goal. This focused approach enables specific areas of the programme to be tracked more closely, ensuring that key developmental priorities remain connected to the wider strategic intent. By coding particular goals rather than every element, the plan maintains both structure and flexibility, allowing for responsive adaptation to emerging needs and opportunities.

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 Lisburn and Castlereagh Area will capture the views of children and young people to inform planning and delivery of services	**1.1.1** Ongoing assessment of needs and priorities of children and young people to effectively inform the planning and delivery of services through consultations through LAG, Youth Council, Local Voice and other relevant surveys/mechanisms.				Findings from consultations collated and published.
	1.1.2 Consult 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.				Findings from consultations collated and published.
	1.1.3 Ongoing review of feedback on the voices of children and young people and how EA has used the information to inform its decisions provided publicly for children and young people.				Young person friendly report published online annually for children and young people to access feedback on what they said and how EA used the information to inform its decisions.
1.2 The Lisburn and Castlereagh 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 plans based on the assessed need

	1.2.2 Biannual review of Local Action Plan completed, 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 Lisburn and Castlereagh Area at the right time and at the right place based on available resources	**2.1.1 Deliver Statutory Universal Services:** Provide safe, warm, and welcoming open access youth services through existing statutory provision, guided by local needs and available resources				BU1, BU2, BU3 BEI9
	2.1.2 Support Volunteer Led Provision Allocate generic non targeted funding to volunteer led organisations to deliver inclusive, open access youth programmes.				BU1, BU2, BU3 BEI9
	2.1.3 Fund Voluntary Youth Organisations Universal Services: Use local area-based funding to support voluntary youth organisations in delivering universal youth work that reflects local priorities.				BU1, BU2, BU3 BEI9
	2.1.4 Implement Youth Work Curriculum: Deliver youth work in line with *A Model for Effective Practice*, Department of Education policy, and priority age bands to ensure consistency and quality.				BU1, BU2, BU3 BEI1, BEI2, BEI3, BEI9
	2.1.5 Support Learning and Achievement Create accessible pathways for learning, accreditation, and personal growth through youth work.				BU5, BU6, BEI1, BEI2, BEI4, 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?**
	2.1.6 Strengthen Youth Voice Structures: Support youth voice groups to ensure young people influence planning and delivery.				BU5, BU6, BEI9
	2.1.7 Support Emotional Health & Wellbeing: Incorporate wellbeing into youth work through activities that build resilience, confidence, and coping skills.				BU1, BU2, BU6, BEI1, BEI2, BEI6, BEI9
	2.1.8 Advance CRED & Shared Education: Deliver programmes that promote community relations, equality, diversity, and inclusion, and build connections across communities.				BU6, BEI1, BEI2, BEI3, BEI9
	2.1.9 Promote Healthy Play & Physical Activity: Facilitate regular opportunities for movement, fun, and creative play to support emotional regulation and physical wellbeing.				BU1, BU2, BU3, BU6, BEI1, BEI2, BEI9
	2.1.10 Enable Youth Volunteering & Leadership: Encourage young people to lead and contribute to youth led initiatives that build skills and confidence.				BU4, BU6, BEI5, BEI7, 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?**
	2.1.11 Enhance Outreach & Awareness: Increase visibility of youth services through outreach, especially in contested spaces and among minority communities.				BU2, BEI2, BEI6
	2.1.12 Integrate Environmental Awareness: Include sustainability and climate focused activities in youth programmes to reflect young people's environmental concerns.				BU6, BEI1, BEI2, BEI9
	2.1.13 Deliver Life Skills for Employment: Provide practical programmes focused on employability, financial literacy, and job readiness.				BU5, BU6, BEI4, BEI9
2.2 Based on available resources (Youth Service funding and other earmarked funding) early intervention and prevention programmes will be delivered in Lisburn and Castlereagh based	**2.2.1 Tackle Barriers to Learning and Achievement:** Support vulnerable and marginalised young people through school based and community programmes that address educational inequality and promote positive transitions.				BEI1, BEI2, BEI4, BEI9, BES1

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?**
on the assessed needs of children and young people	**2.2.2 Expand Horizons Locally and Globally:** Facilitate youth work experiences at local, national, and international levels to build confidence, cultural awareness, and aspiration.				BEI1, BEI2, BEI3, BEI9.
	2.2.3 Prevent Violence and Harm: Implement youth work programmes that address violence against women and girls (EVAWG), hate crime, racism, and child criminal exploitation through education, peer support, and advocacy.				BEI1, BEI2, BEI6, BEI9, BES2, BES3.
	2.2.4 Work to reduce Cultural Tensions and Interface Issues: Deliver preventative youth work in areas and times of heightened cultural tension, including contested spaces and interfaces, to promote dialogue and reduce conflict.				BEI1, BEI2, BEI9, BES1, BES4
	2.2.5 Promote Equality and Inclusion: Strengthen access and participation for Section 75 groups through inclusive programming and community relations work.				BEI1, BEI2, BEI3, 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?**
	2.2.6 Address Risk Taking Behaviours: Provide preventative education and support around substance misuse, including drugs, alcohol, and vaping, with a focus on harm reduction and informed choices.				BEI1, BEI2, BEI6, BEI9, BES2, BES3
	2.2.7 Build Digital Resilience and Online Safety: Equip young people with the skills to navigate online spaces safely, manage digital risks, and build healthy digital habits.				BEI1, BEI2, BEI9
	2.2.8 Support Environmental Awareness and Action: Engage young people in youth led sustainability initiatives that promote environmental responsibility and community impact.				BEI1, BEI2, BEI9
	2.2.9 Strengthen Youth Participation and Voice: Create meaningful opportunities for young people to influence programme design, policy, and decision making at local and regional levels.				BU6, BEI4, 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?**
2.3 Develop and deliver, in partnership with other agencies and government departments, enhanced support for children and young people to meet assessed need in the Lisburn and Castlereagh area	**2.3.1** Identification of partnership and Collaboration Projects/Programmes to support addressing the identified and ongoing needs of children and young people for this planning period (PCSP, school, CYPSP).				BES1, BES2, BES3, BES4, BES5, BES6
	2.3.2 Ongoing critical self-reflection and evaluation of the effectiveness of processes and delivery of youth work in partnership				BES4, BES5, BES6

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?**
3.1 In line with the RYDP the LYDP will use a Benefits Realisation Framework for reporting on delivery In line with the RYDP the LYDP will use a Benefits Realisation Framework for reporting on delivery	**3.1.1** Implementation of the Benefits Framework outlined on page 6 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 Information Systems will be used to support the development of evaluation and measurement of impact for local youth services in the Lisburn and Castlereagh area	**3.2.1** Supporting and contributing to research with academic institutions to map and evaluate benefits realisation data, including its impact				Contribution to research paper that informs aspects of future youth work planning or delivery
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				
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 Lisburn and Castlereagh area in line with the EA Youth Work Volunteer Strategy 2023-2029 Increase recruitment, improve retention and recognise and celebrate the role of volunteers in youth services in the Lisburn and Castlereagh 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) (Volunteer Strategy Theme: Celebrating the contribution of Volunteers in Youth Work)				Programme established and agreed by 1 May 2026 and delivered over 1-7 June 2026 locally 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 BU4, BEI5, BEI7, BEI8
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 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 Staff feel knowledgeable around the need of children and young people Staff feel confident in addressing those needs BU7, BU8, BEI7, BEI8, BES5, BES6