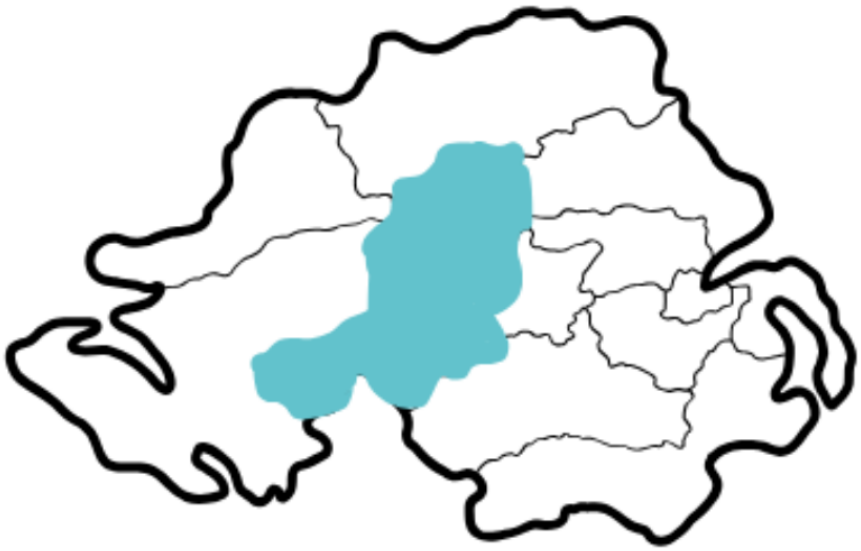


MID ULSTER

LOCAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2026 - 2029

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Introduction

The Education Authority (EA) Local Youth Development Action Plan for Mid Ulster (2026-2029) 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, and 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, outputs, and 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 RYDP which can be found here.

Background

Mid Ulster is a rural district in Northern Ireland, stretching across parts of Tyrone, Londonderry, and Armagh. It is made up of farmland, villages and small towns such as Cookstown, Dungannon, and Magherafelt.

The Education Authority (EA) provides statutory Youth Services for young people aged 4 to 25 across Mid Ulster. These services seek to provide safe and welcomed space for all young people, helping them grow socially and emotionally and ensuring everyone feels included and heard. EA youth work is delivered in three main centres - Magherafelt Youth Centre, Cookstown Youth Centre and Dungannon Youth and Education Centre, as well as through area-based projects that bring youth work directly into rural and isolated communities. These include the Magherafelt, Cookstown and Dungannon Area Projects, which are designed to meet local needs.

Alongside EA services, there is a strong network of community and voluntary youth organisations. Local churches and community groups offer their own programmes, often shaped by the unique culture and social life of the area. Together, statutory and voluntary providers work to ensure young people across Mid Ulster, no matter where they live, have access to youth provision.

All Youth Services in Mid Ulster are delivered in alignment with the Model for Effective Practice underpinned by current policy frameworks. This guarantees a consistent and high-quality approach to youth work that reflects regional priorities and standards. At its core, this model is about empowering young people, building their confidence, encouraging active participation in their communities and supporting them to achieve positive life outcomes.

Vision for EA Youth Services in Mid Ulster (2026–2029)

Within the Mid Ulster area, EA Youth Services vision is that *every young person, regardless of background or identity, deserves the opportunity to grow, lead and feel a deep sense of belonging and empowerment*. There is a commitment to developing a service that places young people at the centre of everything, built on inclusion, informed by local perspectives and committed to future growth.

The vision is to build an *inclusive, youth-led service* that enables all young people to thrive, realise their full potential and actively contribute to their communities. EA Youth Services recognise that *high-quality, accessible youth work*, delivered across both rural and urban settings, can break down barriers to participation, improve health and wellbeing and create a culture of *leadership, opportunity, and belonging* for every young person in the district.

Through *collaboration with young people and local stakeholders*, and by aligning efforts with the unique needs of Mid Ulster's District Electoral Areas (DEAs), the aim is to create a Youth Service that is *responsive and equitable*.

The strategic vision for youth work in Mid Ulster is built on *five interconnected pillars*:

- Youth Voice and Co-Design: Embedding youth participation in every stage of planning, delivery and evaluation that reflects the diversity of Mid Ulster and respond to emerging needs.
- Partnership and Collaboration: Building strong connections with community organisations, statutory bodies and key stakeholders to foster collaboration and enhance collective impact.
- Capacity Building: Investing in youth workers, volunteers and young leaders through training and mentoring to build a resilient and skilled staff team.
- Inclusive and Responsive Services: Prioritising universal access while remaining responsive to marginalised and underrepresented groups, supporting their social, emotional and educational development.
- Achieving Quality and Standards: Aligning all practices with the EA Youth Service Quality Assurance Framework to ensure continuous improvement, accountability and meaningful outcomes.

Mid Ulster is a district rich in heritage, community spirit and rural character. EA Youth Service will reflect these strengths while addressing local challenges such as geographic isolation, limited transport and access to services. By listening to young people and responding to what they need, the Education Authority can reshape Youth Services into something relevant and responsive, creating support that reflects their lived experiences and aspirations.

Youth Service Delivery Model

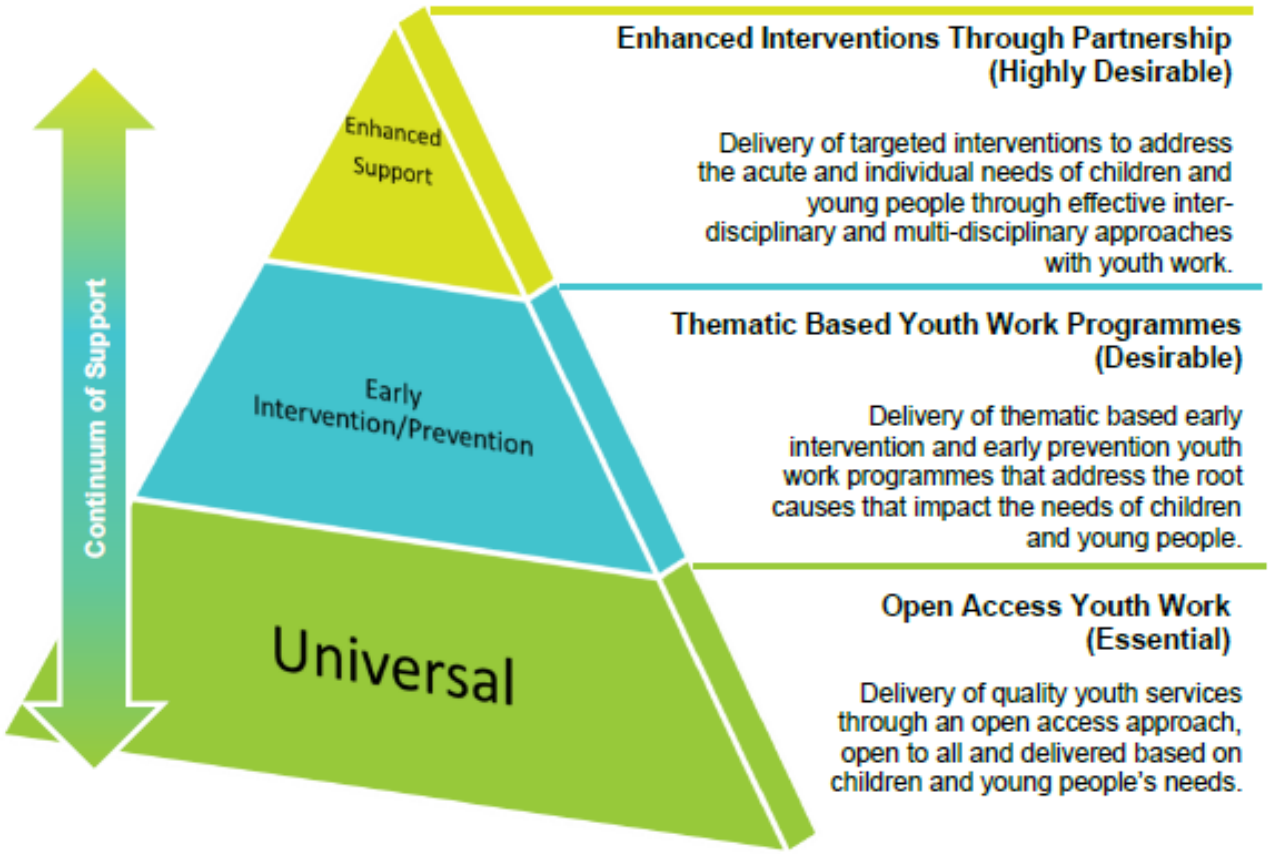
The Youth Service Delivery Model outlines how Youth Services will be developed through an adaptation of the Public Health approach that focuses on the provision of Universal, Early Intervention and Prevention and Enhanced Support services (Part 1a).

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 function as key partners and actively support young people at the Early Intervention/Prevention and Enhanced Support tiers.

Model 1a - Youth Service Delivery Model



Part 1b - Stretch Goal

STRETCH GOAL		
Universal (Essential Goal)	**Early Intervention and 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 local children and young people in Mid Ulster.	Providing ongoing **thematic based group work programmes and projects** to address the **root causes impacting the needs** of local children and young people In Mid Ulster.	Providing **targeted interventions** to address the **acute needs** of children and young people **in partnership** with other agencies to meet the needs of local children and young people in Mid Ulster.
How will we do it?		
• Providing adequate universal youth provision for children and young people in Mid Ulster, ensuring that statutory and voluntary Youth Services are funded to prioritise the needs of children and young people who access them, both in a rural and urban setting. • Services are provided at the right times, in the right places based on what children and young people need. • Continue to fund registered groups across Mid Ulster that meets the criteria for GNT funding. • 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 Mid Ulster area.	• 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 Mid Ulster 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 Mid Ulster staff is supported to meet the needs through the delivery of early	• Providing resources (curriculum, training and funding) to facilitate enhanced professional development. • Working with partners and agencies in Mid Ulster 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. • QAF Model implemented, monitored, and moderated.

• Services are equipped with the resources to deliver a quality open access youth work programme of offer. • Capacity of Mid Ulster staff is supported to meet the needs of children and young people presented through universal provision	intervention and prevention programmes/projects. • QAF Model implemented, monitored and moderated	
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 across Mid Ulster 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 across Mid Ulster 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 in Mid Ulster will have:** • Their complex needs 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 (Impact, Outcomes and Outputs)		
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 accreditation.	**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 the project.	**BES1** Number of children and young people engaged in enhanced support youth work programmes. **BES2** The number 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 work

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. **BU9** Increased alignment between Youth Service planning and identified needs (measured by stakeholder satisfaction or service uptake). **BU10** Number of Improved responsiveness of services to emerging youth issues (tracked via feedback or service adjustments). **BU11** Number of measured engagement metrics or perception surveys (Enhanced trust and transparency between EA and young people). **BU12** Number of participation rates or implementation of youth-led suggestions - Increased youth ownership and relevance of services. **BU13** Number of feedback loops (Demonstrated adaptability of services to changing youth priorities).	**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	outcomes. **BES5** Number of training programmes provided. **BES6** Number of staff participating in training.

Voice of children and young people and other key stakeholders in Mid Ulster

This document outlines a local vision for supporting children and young people across Mid Ulster. Built on a deeper understanding of their lived experiences, it draws from a wide range of research tools and engagement methods from children and young people and key stakeholders, to explore the challenges faced and opportunities required to address need. From emotional health and wellbeing, education, safety, inclusion and community participation, it sets out practical actions to ensure every young person in Mid Ulster feels supported, empowered and able to shape a future of which they are proud.

In Mid Ulster, some children and young people are experiencing significant challenges with their emotional health and wellbeing. Those in rural areas especially feel the absence of safe, welcoming spaces where they can open up, seek support and simply be themselves. Stress from school, pressure at home and the struggle to fit in are contributing to rising levels of anxiety, low mood and poor self-esteem.

While healthy habits like physical activity and good nutrition can help, both young people and adults recognise that support needs to be more accessible and embedded into daily life. Building emotional resilience is essential, yet the impact of excessive screen time and exposure to harmful online content continues to intensify these pressures. Feedback received noted that there needs to be more of a joined-up and compassionate response to these growing mental health concerns, one that recognises early signs of distress, breaks down stigma and creates safe, understanding environments across communities and support systems. There is a clear call for greater awareness, stronger service connections and a culture that places emotional wellbeing at the heart of young people's development, resilience and sense of belonging.

Young people believe that play and leisure important. They need fun, safe spaces to move, learn and grow and be in places where they can build friendships, develop skills and enjoy being young. Activities should reflect the wide range of interests and abilities across local communities and bring people together through shared events which build pride and connection.

In Mid Ulster, young people have voiced concerns about the pressure of academic achievement and the limited ways success is defined. Even though 89.4% of school leavers in Mid Ulster achieve five or more GCSEs including English and Maths, many young people feel that academic performance is treated as the only meaningful measure of success. Those who do not thrive within the traditional school system often feel overlooked and unsupported. Therefore, there is a need for more diverse and inclusive opportunities that go beyond academics, including life skills development, hands-on work experience and alternative learning pathways. Stakeholders echo this, recognising that while formal education outcomes are high, young people still require broader personal development to build confidence, raise aspirations and prepare for meaningful futures.

Feeling safe and secure is fundamental for all young people. Sadly, some in Mid Ulster are dealing with domestic abuse, substance misuse, violence against young women and girls, bullying and peer pressure. Online harm and social media also pose serious risks. Poverty and discrimination, especially for minority ethnic groups, create further barriers. Community division remains, and road safety, although not a Youth Service issue, is a growing concern, especially across rural areas. To change this,

there needs to be a community-wide effort. That means stronger safeguarding, trauma-informed spaces and inclusive, welcoming spaces where young people know they can get help. Youth workers and local services must work together to build trust and offer consistent support. Promoting inclusion and celebrating diversity can help build a more united Mid Ulster.

Economic hardship continues to shape the lives of young people here. The cost-of-living crisis has added stress and anxiety, and rural poverty leads to isolation and fewer opportunities. Environmental concerns are growing and climate change is a concern voiced by many young people. Some feel stuck and unsure of what the future holds. Youth-led environmental projects, from clean-ups to climate education, can give young people a sense of purpose and pride.

Young people in Mid Ulster want to make a difference. They are ready to step up, take on responsibility and lead the way, whether through volunteering, leadership programmes, creative projects or campaigns that matter to them. They need spaces where they feel safe to speak up, explore who they are and grow in confidence. Youth provision should be places of creativity, conversation and collaboration. When young people feel supported, they are more likely to engage and take ownership of their ideas.

They also want to understand how decisions are made and how they can influence them. Helping young people understand their rights and local democracy, can help build informed citizens. Youth Participation structures such as youth councils, local youth forums and consultations give them a platform to speak out on issues like climate, mental health, education and local issues.

Respecting young people's rights is critical. Every child and young person should know their rights and feel empowered to stand up for them. That includes the right to be heard, to feel safe, to learn and to have a say in decisions that affect their lives. When young people feel valued, they develop a strong sense of self-worth. This is important for those from marginalised backgrounds, who may face extra challenges in having their voices recognised.

It is important to note that the Youth Service Regional Assessment of Need (RAON) and Regional Youth Development Plan (RYDP) are key drivers of DE supported youth provision and the setting of Regional Priorities, whilst this is considered at a local level, the development of Local Assessment of Need (LAON) and localised stakeholder engagement supports the development of relevant priorities for this Local Youth Development Plan (LYDP) outlined in the following sections.

Priorities for Delivery

In Mid Ulster, the needs of children and young people will be met through a mix of Universal Services and Early Intervention and Prevention initiatives, all shaped by the Youth Work Curriculum and *A Model for Effective Practice*. This approach ensures that youth work is high-quality, needs-led and focused on personal and social development, responding directly to the priorities identified in both the Regional and Local Assessments of Need.

At the heart of youth provision is the commitment to making sure every young person, no matter where they live or what their background is, has access to safe and welcoming spaces. These spaces must be inclusive and easy to reach, whether in towns or rural communities, offering consistency, connection and emotional safety through trusted relationships and regular support.

Youth centres, area projects and community-based youth provision should be available when young people need them most, during evenings, weekends and school holidays. In rural parts of Mid Ulster, flexible youth provision is essential to overcome access for all young people.

Universal Service Priorities in Mid Ulster

Support Emotional Health and Wellbeing

Emotional wellbeing has emerged as a key priority across Mid Ulster. Youth work will embed mental health support into all universal programmes, offering safe and trusted spaces where young people can speak openly, build resilience and develop healthy coping strategies. Programmes will nurture confidence, self-esteem, emotional literacy and peer support. Physical activity, mindfulness and creative expression will be promoted as part of the approach to emotional health and wellbeing.

Delivery of Universal Services

Young people across Mid Ulster consistently express the need for inclusive, welcoming environments, especially in rural and isolated areas. Universal youth provision will ensure that all spaces are free from discrimination and accessible to everyone including opportunities to engage with peers in their own linguistic community. Provision will be available during evenings, weekends and school holidays, offering consistency and a sense of belonging for those who may lack stability in other areas of their lives.

Promote Healthy Play and Physical Activity

Access to play and leisure is essential for wellbeing. Youth work will broaden opportunities and activities that reflect the diverse interests of young people. Programmes will include music, drama, art, digital creativity and outdoor recreation, ensuring that all young people, regardless of income or location, can enjoy enriching experiences.

Deliver Life Skills for Employment and support for learners.

Youth work supports formal education by offering hands-on learning, life skills and different paths to success. It helps and supports young people grow through new experiences, creativity and personal development outside of the school environment. Programmes will focus on practical life skills that will equip young people for independent living and employment. There will also be a focus on budgeting, interview preparation, time management and workplace readiness, with targeted support for those from low-income households.

Advance CRED and Shared Education and Enhance Awareness

Inclusion and respect for difference will be central to all youth work delivery. Programmes will promote understanding, challenge prejudice and create spaces where young people feel seen, heard and

valued. Activities will celebrate cultural diversity, raise awareness of equality issues and foster shared learning and good relations across Mid Ulster's increasingly diverse communities.

Integrate Environmental Awareness

Young people in Mid Ulster are passionate about protecting the environment. Youth Services will integrate sustainability into everyday practice through projects that promote climate education, biodiversity and community clean-ups. These initiatives will connect environmental action with wellbeing, local pride and a sense of responsibility for the future.

Enable Youth Volunteering and Leadership

Youth voice will be embedded in every stage of service design and delivery. Local participative structures and co-designed projects will ensure young people influence decisions that affect them. Leadership and volunteering opportunities will help young people build confidence, take ownership and develop skills for life and work. Participation will be meaningful, inclusive and sustained.

Digital Safety and Positive Online Engagement

With the growing influence of digital culture, youth work will promote digital wellbeing across all universal services. Young people will be supported to navigate online spaces safely, balance screen time and understand how digital behaviour affects mental health and relationships. Programmes will model positive online engagement and encourage peer-led initiatives that promote kindness, consent and respect.

Early Intervention and Prevention Themes in Mid Ulster

Prevent Violence and harm.

Youth work will support young people facing instability at home, in school or in their communities. Targeted groupwork and mentoring will help build positive relationships, develop conflict resolution skills and increase feelings of safety. Programmes will also raise awareness of bullying, domestic abuse and online exploitation, offering early support before issues escalate.

Address Risk Taking Behaviours:

Youth Services will aim to provide preventative education and support around substance misuse, including drugs, alcohol and vaping, with a focus on harm reduction and informed choices. This will be delivered using methodologies such as interactive workshops on the effects of substances and how to manage social situations and Peer-led initiatives that encourage young people to educate and support each other. In Mid Ulster, Youth Services can integrate these principles by partnering with community safety teams and health professionals to deliver targeted education and use area projects to reach rural and underserved areas.

Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Support

Building on universal provision, Youth Services will offer small group and targeted early intervention for young people experiencing anxiety, emotional distress or social withdrawal. These programmes will help develop resilience and connection to external support services when needed.

Work to reduce Cultural Tensions:

Youth work will play a key role in tackling discrimination and promoting social cohesion across Mid Ulster. 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 initiatives and youth-led equality campaigns.

Tackle Barriers to Learning and Achievement:

Building on support for learners within universal services, Youth Services in Mid Ulster will assist young people who face challenges in education or risk disengagement. Programmes will address low confidence, poor attendance or the risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training), offering mentoring, homework support and life skills education.

Life Skills and Economic Stability

Youth work will prepare young people for independent living and future employment. Programmes will focus on budgeting, interview preparation, time management and workplace readiness, with targeted support for those from low-income or single-parent households. Collaboration with employers and training providers will strengthen these pathways.

Digital Resilience and Online Safety

With the increasing influence of social media and online culture, youth work will play a key role in promoting digital wellbeing across all areas of provision. Young people will be supported to use digital spaces safely, maintain a healthy balance between online and offline life and understand how digital behaviour can affect their mental health and relationships. Youth Services across Mid Ulster will lead by example, encouraging positive online engagement and supporting peer-led initiatives that champion kindness, consent and mutual respect in digital environments.

Support Environmental Awareness and Action

Youth-led environmental projects across Mid Ulster will promote sustainability and civic pride. Activities will include clean-up campaigns, community gardening and awareness-raising projects that link environmental protection with wellbeing and local identity.

Youth Participation and Active Citizenship (Strengthen Youth Voice Structures)

Youth work will empower young people to become active citizens and agents of change. Targeted participation programmes will build confidence and communication skills, enabling young people, especially those from underrepresented groups, to take part in decision-making and community leadership opportunities.

Promote Equality and Inclusion

Strengthen access and participation for Inclusive groups through inclusive programming and community relations work. This includes young people with disabilities, those from ethnic minority backgrounds, LGBTQ+ youth, and those experiencing economic hardship. By aligning with local strategies and listening to the voices of young people, Mid Ulster's Youth Services can become a powerful driver of inclusion and community cohesion.

Expand Horizons Locally and Globally:

By providing youth work experiences at local, national and international level will help young people build confidence, broaden their cultural awareness and raise aspirations. Through meaningful engagement in varied settings, this will help strengthen young people's sense of identity, discover new perspectives and grow into active global citizens.

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 Mid Ulster 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.

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

Summary for Mid Ulster

Delivery across both universal and early intervention/prevention services in Mid Ulster will ensure that:

- Every young person has access to safe, inclusive and engaging youth provision.
- Emotional health and wellbeing, learning, inclusion and leadership are central to youth work practice.
- Services remain flexible, responsive and informed by local evidence and need.
- Participation, prevention and partnership drive delivery, empowering young people to thrive, contribute and belong.

Delivery of these priorities will depend on the resources available and will be carried out in partnership with key local stakeholders to ensure a joined-up and effective response. For more detail on specific themes by DEA, please refer to the Mid Ulster Local Assessment of Need 2026–2029.

Strategic Approach for Youth Services – Mid Ulster.

Considering the findings from the Regional Assessment of Need, including the legislative and policy context for youth work, there are four emerging strategic themes to inform the Regional Youth Development Plan. Strategic themes are crucial as they provide a high-level framework for aligning efforts towards common goals and achieving the long-term objectives over the three-year planning period. The themes below will function as a roadmap to guide decision making and the prioritisation of delivery across the Mid Ulster area.



Child and Young Person Centred

In Mid Ulster, Youth Services will be shaped by what young people say matters most to them, from emotional wellbeing and safety to play, education, and feeling heard. By listening closely to their experiences and ideas, we will design programmes and invest in the support that reflects local needs.

Just as importantly, we will keep the conversation going, showing young people how their voices have made a difference through regular updates, youth forums, and open communication. This approach builds trust, strengthens community ties, and ensures that young people across the district feel genuinely involved in shaping the services that support them.



Delivering Services Based on Need and through Partnership

In Mid Ulster, Youth Services will be shaped by what local young people need, with a strong focus on making support accessible no matter if you are in a town or living in the countryside. By blending statutory services with funding for community and voluntary groups, the aim is to create inclusive, down-to-earth programmes that reflect the area's rural character and diverse communities. Local voices matter here; young people, community groups, and agencies will work hand in hand to design services that make a real difference. It is all about giving every young person in Mid Ulster the chance to grow, be heard, and feel proud of where they are from.

Evidence Informed

In Mid Ulster, we will focus on gathering just the right information to understand how youth work is making a difference in young people's lives. This evidence will help us shape better services and work closely with academic partners to improve how we plan, deliver, and evaluate youth programmes, making sure everything we do is grounded in what works for our local communities and young people.



Empowering All our Staff

In Mid Ulster, we will ensure that all those delivering youth work are equipped with the curriculum resources, training, and skills necessary to meet the evolving needs of our children and young people. Recognising the diverse challenges and opportunities faced by young people in both rural and urban parts of the region, we are committed to supporting youth workers with high-quality, relevant tools that enable them to deliver impactful, inclusive, and engaging programmes.

This includes ongoing professional development, access to up-to-date curriculum frameworks, and opportunities to share best practice through local networks and partnerships.

2026-2029 Mid Ulster 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 Mid Ulster Area will capture the views of local children and young people to inform planning and delivery of services on a quarterly basis.
	1.2 The Mid Ulster local 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 Mid Ulster 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 Mid Ulster area 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 Mid Ulster 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 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 Mid Ulster 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.

To bring the 2026–2029 Mid Ulster Local Youth Development Plan (LYDP) to life, the following action plan sets out a clear and practical roadmap for turning strategy into real, on-the-ground impact. Rooted in four key themes, putting children and young people at the centre, delivering services based on assessed need and strong partnerships, using evidence to guide decisions and empowering our youth work staff, the plan outlines targeted actions to make sure Youth Services are inclusive, responsive and meaningful.

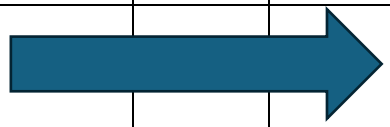
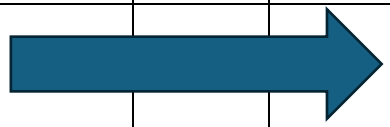
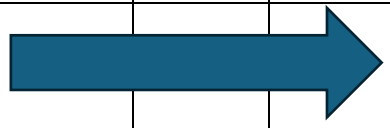
At the heart of this plan is a commitment to listening to young people and involving them in shaping the services that affect their lives. It ensures that provision is based on what is needed locally, delivered in collaboration with community partners and supported by strong evaluation to keep improving. A skilled, supported and valued workforce is central to making this happen, and the plan recognises the importance of investing in staff to deliver high-quality youth work across Mid Ulster.

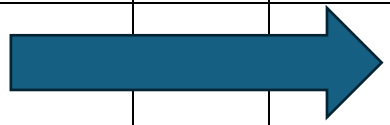
Mid Ulster Local Youth Development Plan – Action Plan

The action plan is structured to show a clear journey from vision to measurable outcomes. Each section builds on the last, starting with a Strategic Theme that sets the direction, such as putting young people's voices at the heart of service planning. This is followed by a Headline Goal that defines what success looks like: for example, young people in Mid Ulster actively shaping the services they use.

From there, we outline the Actions needed to achieve that goal, broken down across Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 to allow for phased delivery, reflection and adaptation. The final column, *how will we know it happened and worked* is key. It tracks outputs like the number of youth consultations held, the diversity of voices involved, and the changes made as a result. It also maps these outcomes to the Strategic Goals and Stretch Goals set out in Part 1B of the LYDP, such as increased youth engagement, more relevant services and stronger long-term outcomes.

By laying out the plan in this way, EA Youth Service aims to turn strategic ideas into practical actions that make a real difference in Mid Ulster. Each step, from the headline goals to the yearly milestones, shows how we will deliver locally. The final column will help us track progress, show what is changed, and demonstrate the impact on children and young people, ensuring we stay accountable and focused on what matters most.

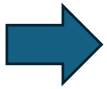
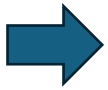
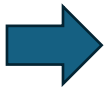
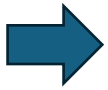
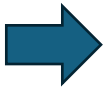
Strategic Theme	**1. Child and Young Person Centred**				
Headline Goal	**Actions to Achieve Goal**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**How will we know it happened and worked?**
1.1 Processes within the Mid Ulster will capture the views of children and young people to inform planning and delivery of 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 the Local Advisory Group, Youth Voice, Rural Voice, Local Voice and other relevant surveys.				Key Output: Annual summary report of consultation findings from the Local Advisory group, Youth Voice, Rural Voice, Local Voice and surveys. Key Benefits Indicator: BU9
	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.				Key Output: Findings from consultations collated and published addressing a specific youth-related theme. Key Benefits Indicator: BU10
	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.				Key Output: Published "You Said, We Did" updates showing how youth feedback influenced EA decisions. Key Benefits Indicator: BU11
1.2 The Mid Ulster 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. Key Output: Youth-led analysis sessions or workshops reviewing service data

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?**
					and proposing improvements. Key Benefits Indicator: BU12
	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. Key Output: Two updated Local Action Plans per year reflecting assessed youth needs. Key Benefits Indicator: BU13

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 Mid Ulster at the right time and at the right place based on available resources.	**2.1.1 Deliver Statutory Universal Services:** Provide safe and welcoming open access Youth Services through existing statutory provision, guided by local needs and available resources.	→			Key Output Staff CDA's and Action Plans Key Benefits Realised: 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.	→			Key Output Annual funding allocation reports and programme delivery summaries from volunteer-led groups Key Benefits Realised: 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.	→			Key Output Area-based funding agreements and delivery reports aligned to local priorities. Key Benefits Realised: 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.	→			Key Output Youth work session plans and delivery logs aligned with A Model for Effective Practice. Key Benefits Realised: BU1, BU2, BU3 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?**
	2.1.5 Support Learning and Achievement Create accessible pathways for learning, accreditation, and personal growth through youth work.				Key Output Number of young people achieving accredited outcomes (e.g. OCN, Youth support worker Qualification, Duke of Edinburgh). Key Benefits Realised: BU5, BU6, BEI1, BEI2, BEI4, BEI9
	2.1.6 Strengthen Youth Voice Structures: Support youth voice groups to ensure young people influence planning and delivery.				Key Output Number of active youth voice groups and documented contributions to service planning. Key Benefits Realised: BU5, BU6, BEI9
	2.1.7 Support Emotional Health and Wellbeing: Incorporate wellbeing into youth work through activities that build resilience, confidence, and coping skills.				Key Output Delivery of wellbeing-focused programmes with pre/post evaluation tools. Key Benefits Realised: BU1, BU2, BU6, BEI1, BEI2, BEI6, BEI9
	2.1.8 Advance CRED and Shared Education: Deliver programmes that promote community relations, equality, diversity, and inclusion, and build connections across communities.				Key Output Number of cross-community/shared education programmes delivered and participant feedback that includes TBUC and Good Relations Programmes. Key Benefits Realised: BU6, BEI1, BEI2, BEI3, BEI9

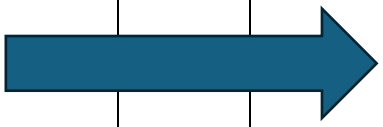
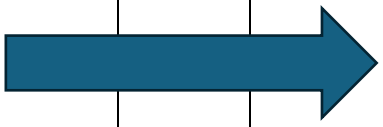
Strategic Theme	2. Delivering Services Based on Need and through relevant Partnerships				
Headline Goal	**Actions to Achieve Goal**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**How will we know it happened and worked?**
	2.1.9 Promote Healthy Play and Physical Activity: Facilitate regular opportunities for movement, fun, and creative play to support emotional regulation and physical wellbeing.				Key Output Weekly physical activity sessions delivered, and participation logs maintained. Key Benefits Realised: BU1, BU2, BU3, BU6, BEI1, BEI2, BEI9
	2.1.10 Enable Youth Volunteering and Leadership: Encourage young people to lead and contribute to youth led initiatives that build skills and confidence.				Key Output Number of youth-led initiatives (Peer mentor programmes/Horizons/Ambassadors programmes supported, and youth volunteers engaged. Key Benefits Realised: BU4, BU6, BEI5, BEI7, BEI9
	2.1.11 Enhance Awareness: Increase visibility of Youth Services among minority communities.				Key Output Outreach campaigns and translated promotional materials targeting minority communities. Key Benefits Realised: 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.				Key Output Number of sustainability-themed youth sessions or projects delivered. Key Benefits Realised: BU6, 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?**
	2.1.13 Deliver Life Skills for Employment: Provide practical programmes focused on employability, financial literacy, and job readiness.				Key Output Delivery of employability workshops and number of participants completing job-readiness programmes. Key Benefits Realised: BU5, BU6, BEI4, BEI9
2.2 Based on available resources (Youth Service funding and other earmarked funding), universal and early intervention and prevention programmes will be delivered in Mid Ulster based on the locally assessed needs of children and young people.	**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.				Key Output Number of targeted interventions delivered in schools or communities for at-risk youth. Key Benefits Realised: BEI1, BEI2, BEI4, BEI9, BES1
	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.				Key Output Number of local, national, and international youth exchanges or trips. Key Benefits Realised: 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.				Key Output Delivery of EVAWG, anti-racism and exploitation prevention programmes with attendance records. Key Benefits Realised: BEI1, BEI2, BEI6, BEI9, BES2, BES3.

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?**
	2.2.4 Work to reduce Cultural Tensions: Deliver preventative youth work in areas and times of heightened cultural tension, including contested spaces and interfaces, to promote dialogue and reduce conflict.	→	→	→	Key Output Number of interventions delivered during high-risk periods (Halloween and Summer). Key Benefits Realised: BEI1, BEI2, BEI9, BES1, BES4
	.	→			Key Output Inclusive programme delivery logs and Inclusive monitoring reports. Key Benefits Realised: BEI1, BEI2, BEI3, BEI9
	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.	→	→	→	Key Output Number of harm reduction workshops delivered and participant engagement data. Number of letters of offer from Mid Ulster PCSP / Good Relations Key Benefits Realised: 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.		→		Key Output Youth-led digital safety campaigns and online safety workshops delivered. Key Benefits Realised: 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?**
	2.2.8 Support Environmental Awareness and Action: Engage young people in youth led sustainability initiatives that promote environmental responsibility and community impact.	→		→	Key Output Youth-led environmental projects implemented and community impact reports. Key Benefits Realised: 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.	→	→	→	Key Output Number of youth consultations held and documented influence on policy or programme design. Key Benefits Realised: BU6, BEI4, BEI9
2.3 Develop and deliver, in partnership with other agencies and government departments, enhanced support for children and young people to meet assessed needs in Mid Ulster	**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 (Policing Community Safety Partnership, Children and Young Peoples Service Planning and Mid Ulster Disability Forum).	→			Key Output A compiled register or directory of active partnership projects/programmes including objectives, target groups and delivery timelines. Key Benefits Realised: 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.	→			Key Output Quarterly evaluation reports or reflective practice logs summarising partnership effectiveness, youth outcomes and areas for improvement. Key Benefits Realised: 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 7-9 for the delivery of EA statutory and EA voluntary funded youth work delivery.				Key Output Benefits framework embedded into all Youth Service reporting. Key Benefits Realised: The systematic use of the Benefits Framework.
	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.				Key Output Annual Reporting completed. Key Benefits Realised: Evidence-based reporting and adaptation of youth work delivery.
3.2 Information systems will be used to support the development of evaluation and measurement of impact for local Youth Services in the Mid Ulster area	**3.2.1** Supporting and contributing to research with academic institutions to map and evaluate benefits realisation data, including its impact.				Key Output Contribution to research paper that informs aspects of future youth work planning or delivery. Key Benefits Realised: Collaborative research validating impact
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.				Key Output. Pilot initiatives completed and evaluated, with documented findings informing aspects of future youth work planning or delivery. Key Benefits Realised: Quality assurance through pilot initiatives

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 Mid Ulster 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).				Key Output Programme established and agreed by 1 May 2026 and delivered over 1-7 June 2026 locally. Key Benefits Realised: 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.				Key Output 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. Key Benefits Realised: 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.				Key Output 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. Key Benefits Realised: BU7, BU8, BEI7, BEI8, BES5, BES6