

NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN

LOCAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2026 - 2029

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Introduction & Vision

The Education Authority (EA) Local Youth Development Action Plan for 2026-2029 Newry, Mourne and Down 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 Regional Youth Development Plan which can be found here.

Youth Work in Newry, Mourne and Down is a vital service that supports our children and young people to thrive. Through trusted relationships, inclusive opportunities and consistent support, Youth Work helps young people grow in confidence, develop personal and social skills and build meaningful connections with their communities. This Local Youth Development Plan sets out how youth services will be delivered from 2026 to 2029, ensuring provision is effective, place-based and reflective of the needs of children and young people across this unique district.

Stretching from the scenic Mourne Mountains to over 100 miles of dramatic coastline and encompassing rural hinterlands, coastal towns and urban centres, the Newry, Mourne and Down area presents a distinctive and often complex backdrop for youth service delivery. Access to opportunities, peer networks and support can vary significantly depending on location. In this context, Youth Work plays an essential role in ensuring that geography does not determine a young person's ability to access positive developmental experiences.

The assessment of need recognises the importance of supporting all young people through a strong foundation of universal youth work. Universal youth provision is committed to equity and inclusion, ensuring that all children and young people including those who face additional barriers including those from Section 75 groups and young people interested in youth work through Irish medium are actively supported to participate fully and benefit from these positive developmental experiences.

This approach ensures that fundamental developmental needs are met for the majority of children and young people by offering consistent, inclusive and enjoyable learning experiences in non-formal settings. By focusing on equity and inclusion, universal youth provision helps create a baseline of support that promotes confidence, resilience and opportunity. These experiences lay the groundwork for longer-term positive outcomes and prevent small issues from escalating into more serious challenges.

At the same time, early intervention and prevention approaches are embedded within delivery to identify and respond to emerging needs at the earliest possible stage. Youth Work is uniquely positioned to spot changes in behaviour, disengagement or vulnerability and to provide timely support before challenges grow more complex. This reduces the need for more intensive interventions later in a young person's journey and helps to strengthen protective factors in their lives.

These approaches will be delivered through safe, welcoming and consistent spaces where young people feel secure, respected and understood. Whether in a full-time youth centre in the heart of a town, a rural-based area youth work programme, a part-time rural venue, or through outreach, these environments offer more than a place to gather, they are places of trust, learning and connection. They are open when they matter most, during evenings, weekends and school holidays, when other services are limited but young people's need for connection and support remains high.

The delivery of Youth Work across Newry, Mourne and Down is informed by the Youth Work Curriculum, A Model for Effective Practice, which ensures services are purposeful, inclusive and high quality. It also aligns with the Department of Education's policy framework, Priorities for Youth (2013), which sets the strategic direction for youth services across Northern Ireland.

This Local Youth Development Plan 2026 to 2029 is rooted in a clear and forward-looking vision: that every child and young person in Newry, Mourne and Down is supported to thrive. It is a commitment to ensure that no matter where they live or what challenges they face, they have access to high-quality Youth Work that meets their needs, recognises their potential and supports them to grow into confident, active contributors to society.

Youth Work is often the quiet catalyst for change in young people's lives. It creates the conditions in which young people can find their voice, test their limits and begin to understand their own value. In Newry, Mourne and Down, it is also a commitment to keep those spaces open, consistent and safe, and to ensure that the positive impact of Youth Work continues to reach every corner of this district.

Youth Service Delivery Model

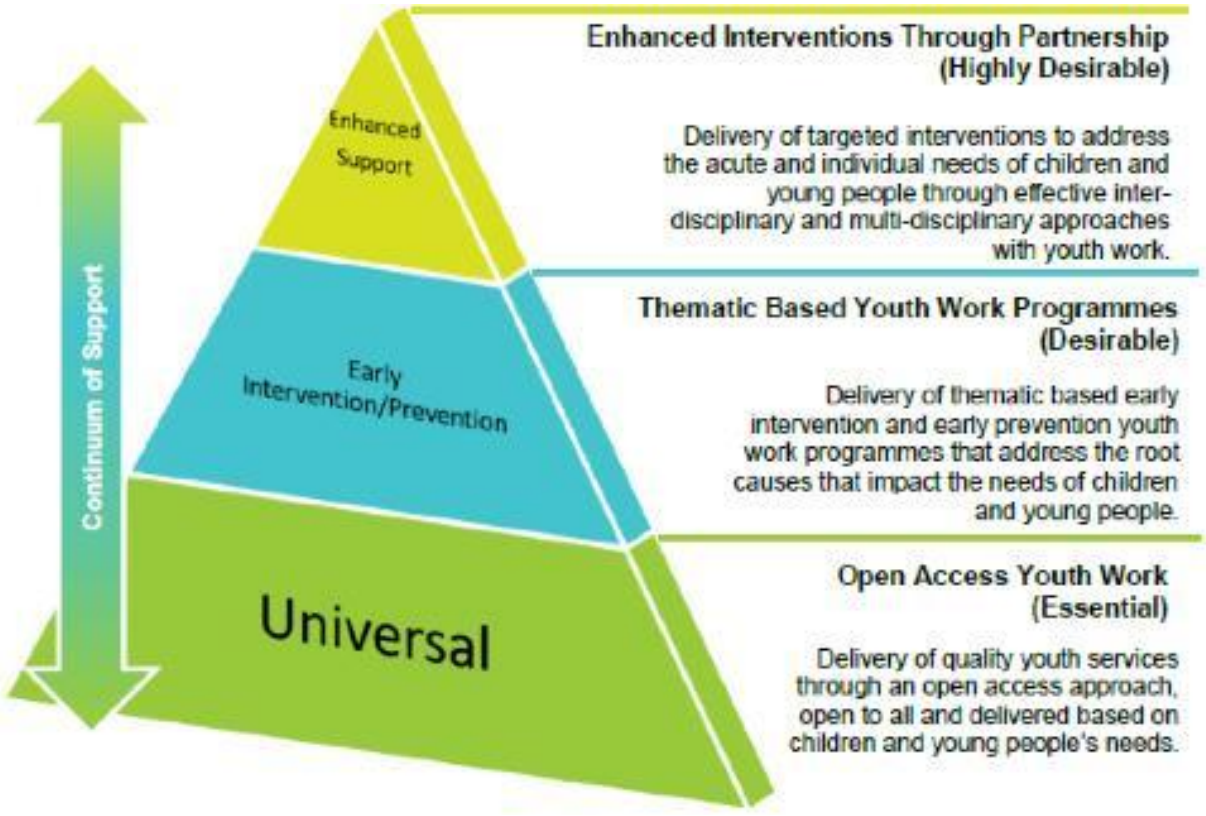
The Youth Service Delivery Model outlines how youth services will be developed through an adaptation of the Public Health approach that focuses on the provision of Universal, Early Intervention and Prevention and Enhanced Support services (Model 1a).

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 in Newry Mourne and Down		
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 Newry, Mourne and Down.	Providing ongoing **thematic based group work programmes and projects** to address the **root causes impacting the needs** of children and young people in Newry, Mourne and Down.	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 Newry, Mourne and Down.
How will we do it?		
• Providing adequate universal youth provision for children and young people, ensuring that statutory and voluntary youth services are funded to prioritise the needs of children and young people who access them • Services across Newry, Mourne and Down 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 in Newry, Mourne and Down who need early intervention/prevention to access programmes • Services are equipped with the resources to deliver a quality open access youth work programme of offer • Capacity of staff is supported to meet the needs of children and young people presented through universal provision	• 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 in Newry, Mourne and Down 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 Newry, Mourne and Down 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 staff is supported to meet the needs through the delivery of early intervention and prevention programmes/projects	• Providing resources (curriculum, training and funding) to facilitate enhanced professional development • Working with partners and agencies in Newry, Mourne and Down to deliver bespoke support services at an individual and group level • Supporting young people in Newry, Mourne and Down 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

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 Newry, Mourne and Down 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 Newry, Mourne and Down 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 across Newry, Mourne and Down 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 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	**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 **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	**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 work 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 Newry, Mourne and Down

Children and young people in Newry, Mourne and Down show great resilience, creativity, and community spirit, despite facing challenges like emotional wellbeing pressures and limited opportunities. By offering universal support and early intervention where needed, we can build on their strengths and ensure services help them thrive, connect, and reach their full potential.

These following priorities reflect the voices and experiences of children and young people captured through the Newry, Mourne and Down Local Assessment of Need, highlighting the key areas where support is most required:

1. **Economic and Environmental Sustainability**

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

2. **Emotional Health and Wellbeing**

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

3**. Access to Play and Leisure**

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

4. **Living in Safety and Stability**

Bullying, sectarianism, racism, and community violence continue to impact young people's sense of safety. LGBTQIA+ youth and young women face heightened risks, including gender-based violence and harassment. Safe, inclusive environments are essential for fostering stability and positive relationships.

5**. Good Relations and Equality**

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

6. **Learning and Achieving**

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

7. **Respect for young people's rights**

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

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

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

It is important to note that the Youth Service Regional Assessment of Need (RAON) & Regional Youth Development Plan (RYDP) are key drivers of Department of Education (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

The needs of children and young people in Newry, Mourne and Down will be met through a blend of Universal Youth Services and Early Intervention Initiatives, guided by the principles of A Model for Effective Practice. This youth work curriculum provides a clear framework for delivering high-quality, needs-led support that promotes personal and social development. It ensures that the priorities identified by young people in the Regional and Local Assessment of Need are addressed in ways that are inclusive, purposeful and empowering.

At the heart of this provision is the commitment to safe, warm and welcoming spaces available across both rural and urban areas where young people feel respected, supported and connected. Youth centres and community-based youth work must be open during evenings, weekends and school holidays, offering consistent access to trusted relationships and meaningful opportunities.

Building on previously identified priorities, the following outlines how universal and early intervention approaches will respond to the voices of children and young people in Newry, Mourne and Down.

Universal Youth Provision Priorities

1. **Economic and Environmental Stability**

Equip young people with life skills, career awareness and environmental education through informal learning and youth-led projects. Focus on rural access and youth leadership to ensure all young people feel empowered to shape their futures.

2. **Emotional Health and Wellbeing**

Promote resilience and positive mental health through everyday relationships, open conversations and stigma-free support.

3. **Inclusive Play and Leisure**

Provide inclusive, non-competitive activities that reflect young people's interests, reduce isolation and support physical, social and emotional development, including opportunities' to engage with peers in their own linguistic community.

4. **Living in Safety and Stability**

Create safe spaces with dependable youth workers who promote inclusion, respect and emotional security especially for those facing exclusion or instability.

5. **Good Relations and Equality**

Support children and young people from various backgrounds to come together in environments where identity is not just accepted but embraced including those from minority ethnic communities, young people with disabilities, and LGBTQIA+ youth.

6. **Learning and Achieving**

Support informal learning and personal growth, helping young people overcome barriers and build confidence in their abilities.

7. **Respect for Young People's Rights**

Embed a rights-based approach across all services, ensuring young people feel heard, valued and represented.

8. **Positive Contribution to Society**

Enable youth participation through forums, volunteering and leadership development, helping young people shape their communities and futures.

The following thematic areas of work can be effectively delivered through both universal provision and early intervention approaches, ensuring broad access while also addressing specific needs as they arise.

1.**Emotional Health and Wellbeing**

Respond early to signs of distress including anxiety, bullying, poor body image, screen dependency, and sleep issues by providing youth-friendly, non-judgemental spaces and timely, tailored support.

2.**Living in Safety, Inclusion and Protection from Harm**

Tackle sectarianism, racism, gender-based violence, online harms such as sextortion and exploitation, and risks to physical wellbeing including road safety, by delivering rights-based youth programmes that promote inclusion, build resilience, and empower young people through education, peer support, and advocacy, while raising awareness of safety both offline and online.

3.Reducing Barriers to Learning

Provide inclusive learning opportunities and tailored support for the most vulnerable young people, while ensuring all children and young people have access to pathways into leadership, training, and employment. Supporting transitions to adulthood

4.Gender-Based Youth Work

Deliver programmes that promote positive masculinity, self-esteem and healthy relationships challenging stereotypes and reducing gender-based harm.

5.Promoting Good Relations

Facilitate youth-led initiatives like T: BUC to explore identity, build understanding, challenge prejudice and foster cross-community connections.

6.Youth Participation

Empower young people to lead, engage and advocate through civic action, leadership programmes and rights education.

7.Widening Horizons

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

This comprehensive approach ensures that children and young people across Newry, Mourne and Down regardless of background or circumstance have access to high-quality, needs-led youth services

that support their health, safety, personal growth, and active participation in society. By combining universal youth provision with targeted early intervention initiatives, services are delivered where they are most needed, helping to reduce inequalities and improve outcomes.

Built on best practice principles and centred on young people's voices, this strategy creates inclusive and empowering environments where all young people can build the skills, confidence, and relationships needed to shape positive futures.

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 Newry Mourne and Down 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.

Strategic Approach to Youth Services

The Newry, Mourne and Down Action Plan for 2026 – 2029 sets out the key actions, to contribute and achieve the strategic themes and headline goals which are outlined below:

When planning local youth service delivery, it is important to reflect the priorities set out in both the Regional Assessment of Need and the Regional Youth Development Plan. These regional frameworks identify four key strategic themes: placing children and young people at the centre, delivering services based on need and through partnership, using evidence to inform practice, and empowering all our staff.

In Newry, Mourne and Down, these strategic themes will shape a localised approach that recognises the area's distinct rural and coastal geography, the diversity of its communities, and the varying needs of our young people. The Youth Service will ensure that children and young people remain central to all planning and delivery; that services are tailored through robust needs analysis and strengthened by local partnerships; that practice is guided by data and learning; and that staff are supported and empowered to deliver high-quality, responsive Youth Work across the district. We will do this by:

Child and Young Person Centred

In Newry, Mourne and Down, we are committed to making sure children and young people are listened to and involved in decisions that affect them. Youth services will reflect their views, needs and priorities, and we will show clearly how their voices have helped shape what we do. This rights-based approach ensures that young people are not just heard but are part of creating the support they receive.

Delivering Services Based on Need and through Partnership

In Newry, Mourne and Down, youth services will be shaped by the needs and voices of young people. They will play an active role in influencing how services are designed and delivered. By working in partnership with local organisations and stakeholders, the Youth Service will enhance outcomes and ensure that provision is responsive, coordinated and grounded in the realities of young people's lives.

Evidence Informed

In Newry, Mourne and Down, we will use feedback from young people, staff and partners to understand what's working well and where we can improve. We will collect information needed to show the real impact of youth work in young people's lives. This ongoing learning will help strengthen our services, support robust decision making, and ensure that youth work provision meets the needs of children and young people

Empowering All our Staff

In Newry, Mourne and Down, we will ensure that all those delivering youth work have the skills, training and resources needed to support children and young people to thrive. This means equipping staff and volunteers to respond to the diverse needs of young people across the district, deliver consistent and high-quality practice, and create safe, inclusive spaces where young people can grow in confidence, build positive relationships and reach their full potential.

2026-2029 Local Youth Development Plan – Headline Goals

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

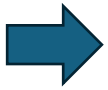
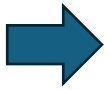
 **1.Child and Young Person Centred**	**1.1)** Processes within the Newry, Mourne and Down Area will capture the views of children and young people to inform planning and delivery of services on a quarterly basis
	1.2) The Newry, Mourne and Down Action Plan will respond to the changing assessed needs of children and young people
 **2.Delivering Services Based on Need and through relevant Partnerships**	**2.1)** Accessible universal youth provision will be available across Newry, Mourne and Down, ensuring children and young people especially those in rural and remote areas can access support at the right time and place, aligned with available resources.
	2.2) Based on available resources (Youth Service funding and other earmarked funding) early intervention and prevention programmes will be tailored to address the specific assessed needs of young people in both urban and rural communities in Newry, Mourne and Down.
	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 Newry, Mourne and Down 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 of youth work on young people's lives, capturing both quantitative outcomes and qualitative stories
	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.

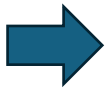
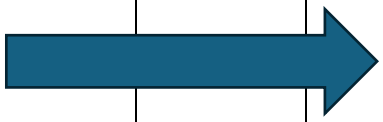
 **4.Empowering All Our Staff**	**4.1)** Increase recruitment, improve retention and recognise and celebrate the role of volunteers in youth services in the Newry, Mourne and Down area in line with the EA Youth Work Volunteer Strategy 2023-2029
	4.2) A skilled local workforce will be developed and supported 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 action plan below, coding is used to link each action to the relevant benefit indicators outlined in the Model 1b, Stretch Goal, where appropriate. This ensures that every step taken can be clearly tracked against the intended outcomes, helping measure progress and impact. By using this coding system, we can demonstrate how specific actions contribute to broader strategic benefits.

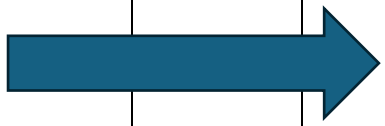
Strategic Theme	**1. Child and Young Person Centred**				
Headline Goal	**Actions to Achieve Goal**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**How will we know it happened and worked?**
1.1 Processes within the Newry, Mourne and Down Area will capture the views of children and young people to inform planning and delivery of services on a quarterly basis.	**1.1.1** Ongoing assessment of the needs and priorities of children and young people is carried out via consultations with LAG, Youth Voice, Local Voice, and other relevant surveys to effectively inform the planning and delivery of services.				**Key outputs:** Findings directly inform the planning and delivery of youth services, ensuring provision remains evidence-based, youth-informed, and responsive to emerging trends and local contexts. Services are informed with the participation of children and young people
	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 outputs:** Consultations and stakeholder engagement events with children and young people lead to clear identification of needs, and the insights gathered are directly used to shape and improve the planning and delivery of relevant services. Services are informed with the participation of children and young people
	1.1.3 Ongoing review of feedback from children and young people and ensure young people are kept informed about how their input has influenced planning and delivery of services				**Key outputs:** Regular review of feedback from children and young people Feedback Loop Published Services are informed with the participation of children and young people

1.2 The Newry, Mourne and Down 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.				**Key outputs:** Revision and update to the annual local action plan based on assessed need Services are informed with the participation of children and young people
	1.2.2 Biannual review of the Local Action Plan, with updates made based on the Assessed Needs of children and young people.				**Key outputs:** Revision and update to the local youth action plan based on the identified needs Services are informed with the participation of children and young people

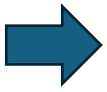
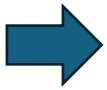
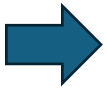
Strategic Theme	**2. Delivering Services Based on Need and through relevant Partnerships**				
Headline Goal	**Actions to Achieve Goal**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**How will we know it happened and worked?**
2.1 Accessible universal youth provision will be available for children and young people in the Newry, Mourne and Down Area at the right time and at the right place based on available resources.	**2.1.1** Identification of universal requirements based on population, geography, and identified need. This ensures services are delivered in the right places, urban and rural, at the right times and that appropriate levels of provision are available across each DEA.				**Key output:** Adequate universal youth provision for children and young people in Newry, Mourne and Down **Key benefit indicators:** BU1, BU2, BU3 BEI9, BEI2, BEI3
	2.1.2 Delivery of safe welcoming universal youth services delivered through existing statutory youth provision based on identified needs and resources across Newry, Mourne and Down.				**Key output:** Provision reflects local priorities, maximises available resources, and ensures all young people have equitable access to welcoming spaces **Key benefit indicators:** BU1, BU2, BU3 BEI9, BEI2, BEI3
	2.1.3 Delivery of safe welcoming universal youth services supported by Generic Non-Targeted funding through volunteer led organisations.				**Key output:** Provision reflects local priorities, maximises available resources, and ensures all young people have equitable access to welcoming spaces. **Key benefit indicators**: BU1, BU2, BU3, BU4 BEI9, BEI2, BEI3

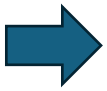
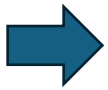
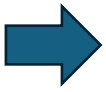
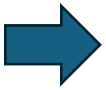
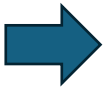
Strategic Theme	2. Delivering Services Based on Need and through relevant Partnerships				
Headline Goal	**Actions to Achieve Goal**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**How will we know it happened and worked?**
	2.1.4 Delivery of safe warm universal youth services supported by Local Area Based Funding in the Community and Voluntary Sector based on identified needs and resources across Newry, Mourne and Down.				**Key output:** Provision reflects local priorities, maximises available resources, and ensures all young people have equitable access to welcoming spaces that support personal, social, and educational development. **Key benefit indicators:** BU1, BU2, BU3 BEI9, BEI2, BEI3
	2.1.5 Youth work curriculum delivered in line with A Model for Effective Practice, DE Policy and priority age bands To support non-formal educational opportunities that enhance the learning and development of children and young people.				**Key output:** Youth work curriculum aligned with A Model for Effective Practice and DE policy is effectively implemented, providing non-formal educational opportunities that support personal and social development for priority age bands. **Key benefit indicators:** BU1, BU2, BU3 BEI1, BEI2, BEI3, BEI9

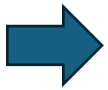
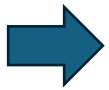
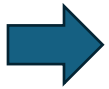
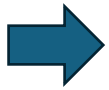
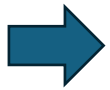
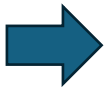
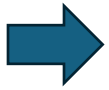
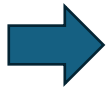
Strategic Theme	2. Delivering Services Based on Need and through relevant Partnerships				
Headline Goal	**Actions to Achieve Goal**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**How will we know it happened and worked?**
	2.1.6 Economic and Environmental Sustainability Support young people to develop life skills focused on areas such as independent living, financial literacy, problem-solving, digital literacy, job readiness.				**Key output:** Young people are supported to build essential life skills, including financial literacy, digital competence, and job readiness contributing to their economic and environmental sustainability. **Key benefit indicators:** BU1, BU2, BU3, BU6 BEI1, BE12, BE13, BE19
	2.1.7 Engage young people in climate-focused youth-led projects, such as eco-clubs, environmental campaigns, or community clean-ups.				**Key output:** Young people actively lead and participate in climate-focused initiatives such as eco-clubs, environmental campaigns, and community clean-ups fostering environmental awareness, leadership, and civic responsibility. **Key benefit indicators:** BU1, BU2, BU3, BU4 BEI5, BEI9
	2.1.8 Developing the Voice of Children and Young People Engage young people in participatory structures to ensure young people influence planning and delivery.				**Key output:** Young people are meaningfully engaged in participatory structures, enabling them to influence the planning, design, and delivery of youth services and ensuring their voices shape decisions that affect them. **Key benefit indicators:** BU3, BU4, BU6 BE15, BE19

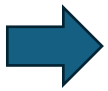
Strategic Theme	2. Delivering Services Based on Need and through relevant Partnerships				
Headline Goal	**Actions to Achieve Goal**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**How will we know it happened and worked?**
	2.1.9 Emotional health and wellbeing: Support for young people to help manage anxiety, bullying, body image to build confidence, and develop coping strategies.				**Key output:** Young people are supported to strengthen their emotional health and wellbeing through targeted interventions that address anxiety, bullying, and body image, helping them build confidence and develop effective coping strategies. **Key benefit indicators:** BU1, BU2, BU3, BU6 BEI2, BEI6, BEI9
	2.1.10 Reduce Screen Dependency and Promote connections: Create engaging, offline alternatives that promote face-to-face interaction, reduce isolation, and strengthen peer relationships				**Key output:** Young people are encouraged to reduce screen dependency through engaging, offline youth-led activities that promote face-to-face interaction, reduce isolation, and strengthen peer relationships. **Key benefit indicators:** BU1, BU2, BU3, BEI1, BEI2, BEI3, BEI9
	2.1.11 Encourage Healthy Play and Physical Activity: Facilitate regular opportunities for fun, movement, physical and creative play to support emotional regulation, social skills, and physical wellbeing.				**Key output:** Young people are supported to engage in regular, fun, and physically active play that promotes emotional regulation, social interaction, creativity, and overall physical wellbeing. **Key benefit indicators:** BU1, BU2, BU3, 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?**
	2.1.12 Living in Safety and Stability: Create safe, inclusive, environments which foster stability and positive relationships.				**Key output:** Safe, inclusive environments are created to foster stability and nurture positive relationships, enabling young people to feel secure, supported, and connected within their communities. **Key benefit indicators:** BU1, BU2, BU3, BU6 BEI1, BEI2, BEI3, BEI9
	2.1.13 Good Relations and Equality: Promote community relations, equality, diversity, and inclusion, building connections across communities				**Key output:** Youth services actively promote good relations, equality, diversity, and inclusion by fostering connections across communities and encouraging mutual respect and understanding among young people. **Key benefit indicators:** BU1, BU2, BU3, BU6 BEI1, BEI2, BEI3, BEI9
	2.1.14 Learning and Achieving: Empower young people to learn, develop skills, and achieve personal milestones through accessible youth work pathways.				**Key output:** Young people are empowered to learn, build skills, and achieve personal milestones through accessible pathways that support their individual growth and lifelong learning. **Key benefit indicators:** 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?**
	2.1.15 Respect for Young People's Rights: Inclusive education to raise awareness of identity, equality, and children's rights. Create meaningful opportunities for youth voice and participation in decision-making at all levels.				**Key output:** Youth services uphold young people's rights through inclusive education and active participation, empowering them to understand identity, equality, and influence decisions at all levels. **Key benefit indicators:** BU1, BU2, BU3 BEI1, BEI2, BEI3, BEI9
	2.1.16 Making a positive contribution to society: Supporting young people to volunteer and take active roles in shaping and delivering youth-led initiatives				**Key output:** Young people are supported to make a positive contribution to society by volunteering and taking active roles in shaping and delivering youth-led initiatives, fostering leadership, responsibility, and civic engagement. **Key benefit indicators:** BU3, BU4, BU6, BU7 BEI5, BEI9
2.2 Based on available resources (Youth Service funding and other earmarked funding) universal & early intervention and prevention programmes will be delivered in Newry Mourne and Down based on the locally assessed needs of children and young people	**2.2.1 Emotional Health and Wellbeing:** Youth Work Curriculum Health and Wellbeing focusing on emotional, physical and sexual health				**Key output:** Youth work curriculum supports emotional, physical, and sexual health through health and wellbeing programmes, helping young people build resilience, confidence, and informed decision-making skills. **Key benefit indicators:** BEI1, BEI2, BEI6, BEI9

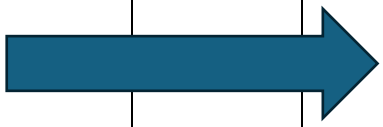
Strategic Theme	2. Delivering Services Based on Need and through relevant Partnerships				
Headline Goal	**Actions to Achieve Goal**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**How will we know it happened and worked?**
	2.2.2 Living in Safety, Inclusion and Protection from Harm: Implement rights-focused youth programmes that address gender-based violence, hate crime, racism, child criminal exploitation and online safety by empowering young people through education, peer support, and advocacy.				**Key output:** Rights-focused youth programmes empower young people to live safely and inclusively by addressing gender-based violence, hate crime, racism, exploitation, and online safety through education, peer support, and advocacy. **Key benefit indicators:** BEI1, BEI2, BEI3, BEI5, BEI6, BEI9
	2.2.2.1 Living in Safety, Inclusion and Protection from Harm: Develop and deliver youth-focused initiatives that promote physical safety and wellbeing, including road safety education, personal safety, and digital resilience. Raise awareness, reduce risks, and ensure young people feel safe in their communities, both online and offline.				**Key output:** Youth focused initiatives delivered to promote physical safety and wellbeing, including road safety, personal safety, and digital resilience. These programmes raise awareness, reduce risks, and help young people feel safe in their communities—both online and offline. **Key benefit indicators:** BEI1, BEI2, BEI3, BEI5, BEI6, BEI9

Strategic Theme	2. Delivering Services Based on Need and through relevant Partnerships				
Headline Goal	**Actions to Achieve Goal**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**How will we know it happened and worked?**
	2.2.3 Address Risk taking behaviours: Provide early on substance use including drugs, alcohol, and vaping focusing on harm reduction and empowering young people to make informed decisions.				**Key output:** Youth services provide early interventions addressing risk-taking behaviours such as substance use including drugs, alcohol, and vaping through harm reduction approaches that empower young people to make informed, healthy decisions. **Key benefit indicators:** BEI1, BEI2, BEI3, BEI5, BEI6, BEI9
	2.2.4 Reducing Barriers to Learning Support the most vulnerable children and young people to engage in learning and promote positive transitions through tailored initiatives that address educational inequalities.				**Key output:** Youth initiatives reduce barriers to learning by supporting most vulnerable children and young people to engage in education and navigate positive transitions including into adulthood **Key benefit indicators:** BEI1, BEI2, BEI4, BEI5, BEI9
	2.2.5 Gender-based programmes: providing safe, supportive spaces where young men and young women can explore gender-specific issues, feel heard, and build resilience.				**Key output:** Gender-based youth programmes provide safe, supportive spaces where young men and young women can explore gender-specific issues, feel heard, and build resilience through open dialogue and peer support. **Key benefit indicators:** BEI1, BEI2, BEI3, BEI5, BEI6, 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 Promoting Good Relations Enhance inclusive programming and community engagement to improve access and participation for Section 75 groups.				**Key output:** Inclusive youth programmes enhance good relations by improving access and participation for Section 75 groups through community engagement and inclusive programming that fosters equality, respect, and shared understanding. **Key benefit indicators:** BEI1, BEI2, BEI3, BEI9
	2.2.7 Widening Horizons Provide young people with opportunities to broaden their aspirations, build confidence, and engage with diverse cultures locally, nationally, and internationally to enhance their understanding and appreciation.				**Key output:** Youth services provide opportunities for young people to broaden their horizons, build confidence, and engage with diverse cultures locally, nationally, and internationally enhancing their aspirations, understanding, and appreciation of the wider world. **Key benefit indicators:** BEI1, BEI2, BEI3, BEI5, BEI9
2.3 Develop and deliver, in partnership with other agencies and government departments, enhanced support for children and young people to meet assessed need in the Newry, Mourne and Down Area.	**2.3.1 Youth Participation** Empower young people to actively shape programme design, policy, and decision-making processes at both local and regional levels.				**Key output:** Young people's voices influence strategic priorities, service delivery, and resource allocation through structured participation mechanisms, youth-led initiatives, and ongoing dialogue with decision-makers. **Key benefit indicators:** BEI3, 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?**
	2.3.2 Identification of partnership and collaboration projects/ programmes to address the identified needs of children and young people across Newry Mourne and Down for this planning period.				**Key output:** Partnership and collaboration projects are identified and developed to enhance service coordination, maximise resources, and ensure a joined-up approach to improving outcomes for young people. **Key benefit indicators:** BEI1, BEI2, BEI3, BEI9 BES4
	2.3.3 Ongoing critical self-reflection and evaluation of the effectiveness of processes and delivery of youth work in partnership				**Key output:** Initiatives are developed with statutory community and voluntary sector partners, ensuring coordinated responses, shared resources, and improved outcomes for children and young people during the planning period. **Key benefit indicators:** 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 The Local Youth Development Plan for Newry Mourne and Down 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 Youth services demonstrate clear alignment with strategic priorities, improved impact measurement, and enhanced accountability through the application of the framework's principles and indicators.
	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:** Comprehensive annual report is completed for EA funded youth work, evidencing the impact of delivery on the lives of children and young people.
3.2 Information systems will be used to support the development of evaluation and measurement of impact for local youth services in the Newry, Mourne and Down Area.	**3.2.1** Quality Standards Framework will be implemented on a quarterly basis to collect, track and analyse data on participation, outcomes, and impact.				**Key output:** The Quality Standards Framework is implemented quarterly to collect, track, and analyse data on participation, outcomes, and impact.

Strategic Theme	**3. Evidence Informed**				
Headline Goal	**Actions to Achieve Goal**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**How will we know it happened and worked?**
3.3 Dynamic planning processes will drive a flexible, responsive approach to service design and delivery that allows for continuous adaptation based on new evidence, feedback, and changing needs.	**3.3.1** Ongoing feedback and data to regularly review and adapt services, ensuring they stay responsive to changing needs, evidence, and experiences.				**Key outputs:** Services are continuously adapted using evidence and feedback to meet the evolving needs of young people Service delivery demonstrates clear, measurable outcomes aligned with changing needs.

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 across Newry, Mourne and Down 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 each year and delivered during volunteer week annually. **Key benefit indicators:** 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 benefit indicators:** BU4, BEI5, BEI7, BEI8

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?**
4.2 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 training to ensure a skilled workforce meets the evolving needs of children and young people, aligned with the Workforce Development Strategy.				**Key outputs:** Staff trained through programmes aligned with the EA Youth Service Workforce Development Strategy Staff retention and engagement improve. Quality of youth work delivery is consistent and reflective. Innovation and creativity increase across teams. **Key benefit indicators:** BU7, BU8, BEI7, BEI8, BES5, BES6
	4.2.2 Implement training for part time staff to meet the evolving needs of children and young people in line with EA Youth Service Workforce development strategy				**Key output:** Part time staff trained through programmes aligned with the EA Youth Service Workforce Development Strategy Quality of youth work delivery is consistent and reflective. Innovation and creativity increase across teams. **Key benefit indicators:** BU7, BU8, BEI7, BEI8, BES5, BES6

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?**
	4.2.3 Collaborate across the youth sector to deliver a coordinated local training programme that supports all youth work staff both statutory and voluntary in Newry, Mourne and Down to develop the skills, knowledge, and competencies required to effectively meet the diverse needs of children and young people across the area.				**Key outputs:** A local training and development programme is designed and implemented with voluntary sector partners. Quality of youth work delivery is consistent and reflective. Innovation and creativity increase across the area. **Key benefit indicators:** BU7, BU8, BEI7, BEI8, BES5, BES6