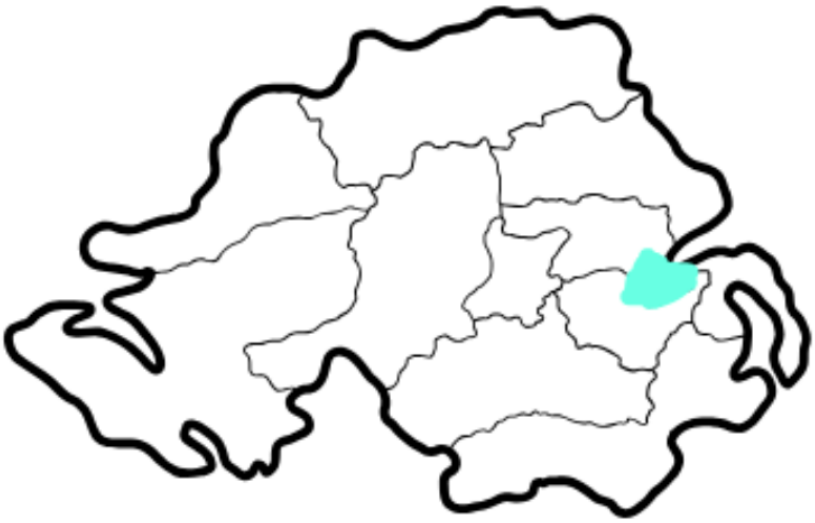


NORTH & EAST BELFAST

LOCAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2026 - 2029

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Introduction & Background

The Local Youth Development Plan 2026–2029 for North & East Belfast envisions a future where every young person has equitable access to trauma informed, strength-based youth services that nurture resilience, foster belonging, and create meaningful pathways to achievement.

This plan is shaped by the voices of children and young people, whose lived experiences and aspirations have guided its development. It responds to the findings of the Local Assessment of Need and aligns with the Education Authority's commitment to delivering youth work that is inclusive, empowering, and transformative.

In North & East Belfast, young people face a complex landscape of challenges, from emotional health pressures and social isolation to educational barriers and economic uncertainty. Yet, they also demonstrate remarkable strength, creativity, and a desire to contribute positively to their communities. This plan recognises and builds upon those strengths, ensuring that youth services are not only responsive to trauma and adversity but also designed to unlock potential and support progression.

At its core, the plan promotes:

- **Trauma informed practice** that prioritises emotional safety, trust, and healing.
- **Strength based approaches** that celebrate young people's assets, talents, and leadership.
- **Progression pathways** that support personal development, educational achievement, employability, and civic engagement.

Through universal access to safe and welcoming spaces, targeted early intervention, and collaborative enhanced support, youth services in North & East Belfast will provide the scaffolding young people need to thrive. Whether through creative expression, volunteering, leadership programmes, or international experiences, every young person will be supported to move forward with confidence, purpose, and hope.

This vision is not just aspirational, it is actionable. It is embedded in the strategic themes of the Regional Youth Development Plan and delivered through partnership, evidence informed practice, and a commitment to continuous improvement. Together, we will ensure that youth work in North & East Belfast is a catalyst for healing, growth, and achievement.

Background

The Education Authority (EA) Local Youth Development Action Plan for 2026 2029 (North & East Belfast) 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.

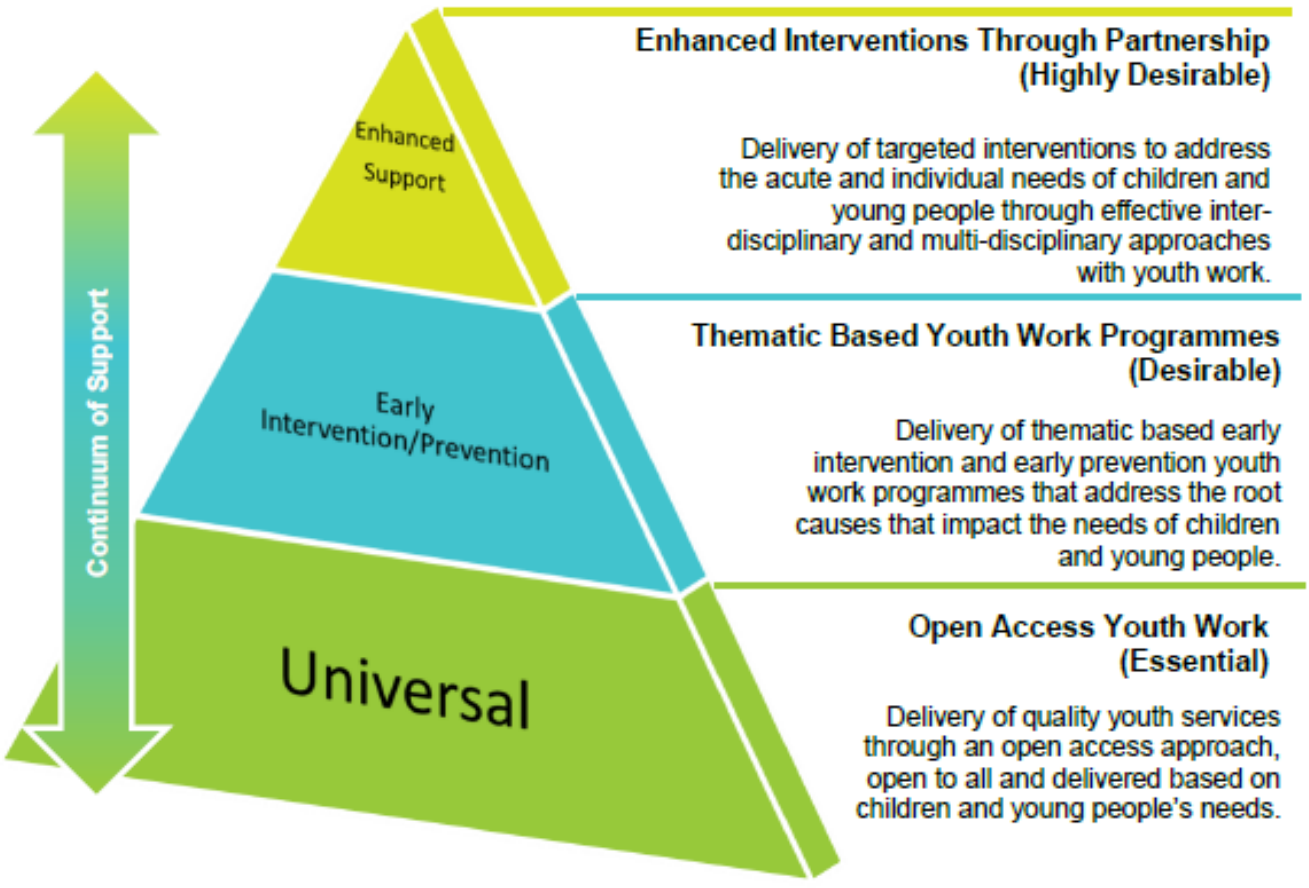
Youth Service Delivery Model (Part 1a)

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

The provision of universal services in the first instance will be prioritised and where resources can be enhanced through collaboration, partnerships or additional funding acquisition, further provision can be delivered at the Early Intervention/Prevention and Enhanced Support levels based on the needs of children and young people.

The delivery model recognises that there is overlap between the three tiers. Effective universal work will deliver youth work outcomes to children and young people that mitigate the need for specific or dedicated early intervention or prevention work. This model when accompanied with the stretch goal (Part 1b) provides how this overlap will be achieved.

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



Stretch Goal (Part 1b)

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

• Capacity of North & East Belfast staff is supported to meet the needs of children and young people presented through universal provision	delivery of early intervention and prevention programmes/projects	
How will we resource it?		
Focused use of the Department of Education Allocated Funding for Youth Work to the Education Authority	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. For example: TPP funds – Engage and Fusion DOJ funds – There's another way Peace Plus funds
The Benefits		
Children and Young People will have: • Increased protective factors in their lives • Increased sense of belonging • Experience social and emotional skills development • Increased agency to make informed decisions • Improved social connectedness • Increased sense of power to change the world around them	**Children and Young People will have:** • Improved the resilience, skills and abilities to manage their own wellbeing • Increased agency to make informed decisions • Increased participation in, and focus on, their learning • Improved emotional health and wellbeing • Development of their thinking skills, life skills and work skills	**Children and Young People will have:** • Complex needs of individual children and young people are met • Increased connection between statutory, community and public services • Enhanced youth service capacity to meet the complex needs of children and young people • Facilitated de-escalation support pathways
Benefit Indicators		
BU1 Number of open access youth work sessions provided **BU2** Number of children and young people participating in open access youth provision **BU3** Percentage of young people satisfied with the service **BU4** Number of young people volunteering within the programme	**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	**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

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	**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	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 North & East Belfast

Youth services in North & East Belfast are defined by their commitment to creating inclusive, safe spaces for youth work, offering opportunities to widen knowledge, skills & horizons, and establishing clear pathways to support next steps. At the heart of this provision is the voice of children and young people, alongside input from key stakeholders, shaping services that respond to real needs and aspirations.

When asked what the most important theme of provision is? Children and young people across North & East Belfast, through the survey, ranked the themes by importance to them as follows:

1. Your Future
2. Health & Wellbeing
3. Play, hobbies and interests
4. Safety
5. Your rights
6. Education
7. Equality
8. Citizenship

Young people in North & East Belfast have shared thoughtful insights into their experiences, aspirations, and the support they need to thrive. Many are focused on building a positive future and would welcome more opportunities to develop skills that prepare them for adulthood. This includes gaining qualifications, work experience, and practical life skills such as financial literacy, CV building, and job readiness. Leadership development and international experiences are also seen as valuable, particularly during key transitions like moving to secondary school or applying for further education and employment opportunities. Poverty continues to present challenges, influencing educational outcomes, nutrition, and wellbeing. Youth services are recognised as essential in helping to address these barriers through partnership initiatives such as food banks, affordable cooking classes, and financial education.

Health and wellbeing are central to young people's lives. They are increasingly aware of the impact of substance use including drugs, alcohol, and vaping and how these behaviours are perceived in their communities. Social media also plays a significant role in shaping mental health, especially around body image and peer pressure. Young people have expressed a need for more education on internet safety, healthy relationships, and physical wellbeing, including better eating habits and active lifestyles. Many would benefit from support in building confidence, resilience, and emotional strength. Access to mental health services remains limited, and both young people and stakeholders have highlighted the need for more resources, safe spaces, and tailored support that reflects a trauma informed approach.

Play and leisure are seen as vital for personal development and emotional wellbeing. Young people have emphasised the importance of having safe, welcoming spaces where they can relax, socialise, and take part in creative or outdoor activities. These environments help foster friendships, build life skills, and support mental health. There is a desire for a wider range of activities that reflect young people's interests and allow them to connect with others in positive ways.

Safety continues to be a key concern. Experiences of bullying, racism, and sectarianism can affect young people's sense of security in their homes, schools, and communities. The safety of women and girls has also been raised as an area needing attention. Stakeholders have pointed to the value of peer support and collaboration with other key public services to help address these issues and promote safer neighbourhoods. Creating environments where young people feel secure is fundamental to their ability to engage, grow, and achieve.

Young people place great importance on having their rights respected. While many are aware of their rights and appreciate the respect they receive through youth work, some feel their voices are not always heard in wider decision-making processes. There is a strong interest in being more involved in community planning, civic engagement, and advocacy, with a desire for genuine opportunities to contribute and be recognised. Strength based youth provision can play a key role in amplifying these voices and ensuring young people are active participants in shaping their communities.

Education is both a source of opportunity and challenge. Young people have spoken about the pressures of exams, difficulties in relationships with teachers, and the additional barriers faced by those with special educational needs. They value inclusive and responsive educational approaches that support their diverse needs and help them navigate important transitions. Life skills that prepare them for adulthood are seen as essential, and there is interest in learning that goes beyond the classroom. A progression route towards achievement is strengthened when education is flexible, inclusive, and empowering.

Equality remains an area where young people feel progress is needed. Those from marginalised groups including young people with disabilities, from minority backgrounds, or who identify as LGBTQI+ have shared experiences of feeling excluded or misunderstood. There is a clear call for greater cultural awareness, targeted support, and safe spaces where all young people feel respected and included. Trauma informed and inclusive youth provision can help ensure that every young person feels valued and supported.

Young people are enthusiastic about making a positive impact in their communities. They want more opportunities to volunteer, connect across generations, and take part in civic life. With the right support, they believe they can play a meaningful role in shaping a more inclusive, sustainable, and connected society. Youth work that is strength based, and progression focused can help unlock this potential and support young people to become confident, capable contributors to their communities.

In summary, the role of youth services in North & East Belfast is to act as a consistent, trusted presence in young people's lives, one that listens, advocates, and responds. Youth work is not simply about delivering programmes; it is about building relationships, creating safe and inclusive environments, and supporting young people to explore who they are and where they want to go. It plays a vital role in connecting young people to opportunities, helping them navigate challenges, and ensuring their voices shape the services and communities around them. Through collaboration with stakeholders and a commitment to youth-led practice, youth services in North & East Belfast continue to be a cornerstone of support, development, and empowerment for children and young people.

Priorities for Delivery

The needs of children and young people in North & East Belfast will be met through the delivery of Universal Youth Service and Early Intervention/Prevention Initiatives. These will be guided by the principles outlined in the Youth Work Curriculum, *A Model for Effective Practice*, which provides a clear framework for delivering high quality, needs led youth work that supports young people's personal and social development. Regional Assessment of Need (RAON) and Regional Youth Development Plan (RYDP) are the key drivers of Department of Education supported youth provision and the setting of Regional Priorities. While these priorities are considered at a local level, the development of a Local Assessment of Need (LAON) and engagement with local stakeholders help shape relevant priorities for the Local Youth Development Plan (LYDP).

A key foundation of this provision is ensuring that all young people have access to safe, warm and welcoming spaces. These spaces available across all areas must be inclusive and accessible, offering young people a consistent place where they feel safe, respected and comfortable.

Youth centres and area youth work based in community venues should be open when young people want it most, but considers the voluntary participation principle, and recognises that at times children and young people wish to associate without adult supervision. These environments foster connection, trust, and belonging providing not only physical safety but also emotional security through positive relationships and regular support.

Based on the voices of children and young people across North & East Belfast the following priorities have emerged. (*These priorities are subject to ongoing review and will be dependent on resources available)*.

Universal Youth Service Priorities

- **Life Skills & Preparation for Transitions in Education and Work**
  Young people have expressed a strong desire to feel prepared for future transitions. Youth work plays a vital role in delivering programmes that build practical life skills, with a focus on employability, financial literacy, and job readiness. These supports help young people navigate changes in education and work with confidence.

- **Learn and Achieve**
  Access to learning opportunities remains a key priority. Youth work can support young people, particularly during transitions to overcome barriers, gain accreditation, and explore pathways that promote personal and educational development. Young people have identified exam stress, strained relationships, and educational inequality as areas where additional support is needed. Working alongside educators, youth workers can help create more inclusive and supportive learning environments.

- **Safe and Welcoming Spaces for All Young People**
  Young people consistently highlight the need for spaces where they feel safe, respected, and welcome. Youth centres and community venues offer connection, consistency, and emotional

wellbeing. Outreach approaches help ensure youth work is flexible and responsive, particularly in areas where participation is more challenging.

- **Emotional Health & Wellbeing**
  Supporting emotional wellbeing is a cross-cutting priority. Young people have identified the need for help with confidence, resilience, and managing stress. Youth work can embed wellbeing into everyday practice, through relationships, activities, and conversations, using trauma informed and strength-based approaches.

- **Community Relations, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (CRED) Work**
  Young people have shared experiences of exclusion and discrimination and called for more inclusive environments. Youth work has a unique role in promoting understanding, challenging prejudice, and celebrating diversity. This work helps build stronger, more connected communities where all young people feel they belong.

- **Local Voice Structures**
  Creating space for young people to share their views and influence decisions is central to effective youth work. Whether through youth forums, advisory groups, or informal conversations, these structures ensure provision remains relevant and responsive. Supporting young people to develop the skills and confidence to speak up is key to participation and empowerment.

- **Inclusive Access to Play & Leisure**
  Opportunities for play, creativity, and recreation are essential to young people's development and wellbeing. Youth work can provide access to a wide range of activities—structured and informal, indoor and outdoor—that help build friendships, explore interests, and develop life skills. Ensuring these opportunities are inclusive and accessible to all is a shared priority.

- **Integrate Environmental Awareness**
  Young people are increasingly concerned about environmental issues. Youth work can respond by integrating sustainability and climate focused activities into programmes, helping young people explore environmental action and responsibility.

- **Youth Leadership Programmes & Volunteering**
  Leadership and volunteering opportunities allow young people to build skills, confidence, and a sense of purpose. These programmes support progression, address barriers to employment, and encourage social action. Young people value these opportunities as meaningful steps toward achieving their goals.

Within North & East Belfast, universal and early intervention & prevention delivery will support children and young people showing early signs of challenges or vulnerability by providing targeted support to prevent escalation and improve long term outcomes. For more information on specific themes relating to District Electoral Areas, refer to North & East Belfast Local Assessment of Need addressing themes based upon geographical location.

Delivery on the key themes identified by young people from North & East Belfast are proportional to the amount of resource acquired and should be in collaboration with key partners where necessary to ensure a coordinated and effective response.

Universal and Early Intervention & Prevention Themes

- **Living in Safety and Stability**
  Young people in North & East Belfast have shared concerns about bullying, sectarianism, racism, and gender-based violence. Youth work, peer support, and community collaboration are key to creating safer, more stable environments, especially for those facing challenges at home or in their communities. Early, targeted interventions delivered in partnership with other services can prevent issues from escalating and improve long-term outcomes when built on trust and flexibility.

- **The Voice of Children and Young People / Rights Based Youth Work**
  Young people value being heard and respected. Rights based youth work helps them understand their rights and that of others while encouraging active participation in shaping their communities. Creating opportunities for advocacy and civic engagement supports young people to become confident contributors to society.

- **Inclusion, Diversity and Good Relations**
  Ensuring that youth work reflects the diversity of the community is essential. Young people from marginalised groups have shared experiences of exclusion and are calling for more culturally aware and inclusive provision. This includes creating safe spaces and programmes that reflect and celebrate different identities and experiences.

- **Global Awareness**
  Exposure to international experiences can broaden young people's horizons and build global awareness. These programmes support personal growth, independence, and cultural understanding, and are often seen by young people as exciting and transformative opportunities.

- **Thematic Based Programmes / Section 75 Focus**
  Programmes that explore specific themes such as gender equality, disability inclusion, or cultural identity allow for deeper engagement with the issues that matter to young people. Aligning this work with Section 75

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

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

- **REACH**

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

Enhanced Support Themes

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

- **Fusion**
  An embedded youth work school-based approach to supporting young people impacted by paramilitarism, criminality, violence, harm and high-risk taking behaviours delivered in Blessed Trinity College.

- **Another Way**
  A new partnership programme with the PSNI and Department of Justice has been developed in East Belfast to provide an alternative diversion for young people who come into contact with the justice system.

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

Strategic Approach for Youth Services – North & East Belfast

When planning youth service delivery in North & East Belfast, it is essential to reflect the priorities set out in both the Regional Assessment of Need and the Regional Youth Development Plan. These 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 North & East Belfast, these strategic themes will guide a localised approach that reflects the area's urban diversity, socio economic challenges, and the lived experiences of its young people. The Youth Service will ensure that children and young people remain central to all planning and delivery; that services are shaped by local needs and strengthened through collaboration with statutory, voluntary youth organisations; that practice is informed by meaningful data and research; and that staff are equipped with the skills and resources to deliver high quality, trauma informed, and strength based youth work.

We will do this by:



Child and Young Person Centred

Youth services in North & East Belfast will be shaped by a rights-based approach that actively involves young people in identifying their needs and influencing decisions. Their voices will guide planning, and we will ensure regular feedback on how their input has shaped service delivery making youth work truly responsive, inclusive, and accountable.



Delivering Services Based on Need and through Partnership

Youth services in North & East Belfast will be delivered in response to locally identified needs, using a mix of statutory provision and grant-aided support to voluntary youth organisations. Services will be strengthened through meaningful partnerships and collaboration ensuring resources are targeted where they make the greatest impact for children and young people.

Evidence Informed

In North & East Belfast, we will collect only the data needed to understand the impact of youth work on young people's lives. We will use this evidence to shape services, reduce unnecessary bureaucracy, and collaborate with academic partners to strengthen planning, delivery, and evaluation



Empowering All our Staff

Youth workers in North & East Belfast will be supported with the training, resources, and curriculum tools they need to meet the diverse needs of young people ensuring high-quality, responsive, and inclusive youth work across all settings.

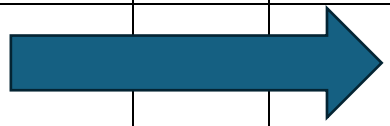
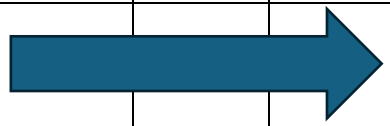
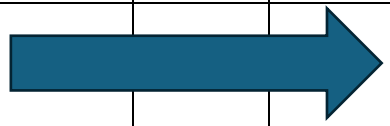
2026 2029 North & East Belfast Local Youth Development Plan

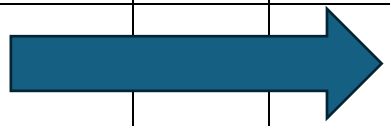
Success across the four key strategic themes in practice will look like:

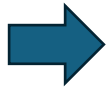
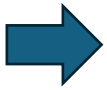
1. Child and Young Person Centred	**1.1** Processes within North & East Belfast will capture the views of children and young people to inform planning and delivery of services on a quarterly basis
	1.2 The North & East Belfast Action Plan will respond to the changing assessed needs of children and young 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 North & East Belfast 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 North & East Belfast 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 North & East Belfast
3. Evidence Informed	**3.1** In line with the RYDP the LYDP will use a Benefits Realisation Framework for reporting on delivery
	3.2 RYDP research will be used to support the development of evaluation and measurement of impact for local youth services in North & East Belfast
	3.3 Pilots and tests of concepts will be used to evidence impact and inform future planning and delivery

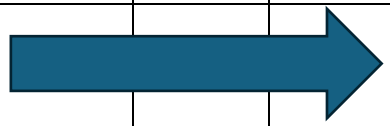
 **4. Empowering All Our Staff**	**4.1** Increase recruitment, improve retention and recognise and celebrate the role of volunteers in youth services in North & East Belfast in line with the EA Youth Work Volunteer Strategy 2023 2029
	4.2 A skilled local workforce will be developed and supported to meet 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

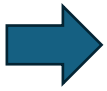
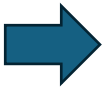
The following table sets out the strategic delivery framework for youth services in North & East Belfast from 2026 to 2029. It is organised under four key themes and includes the Headline Goal, which defines the intended outcome; Actions to Achieve Goal, detailing the steps required; and a quarterly breakdown across Years 1–3 to track progress. The final column, How Will We Know It Happened and Worked? outlines indicators for measuring impact and success linked to the benefits.

Strategic Theme	**1. Child and Young Person Centered**				
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 North & East Belfast will capture the views of children and young people to inform planning and delivery of services	**1.1.1** Ongoing assessment of needs and priorities of children and young people to effectively inform the planning and delivery of services through consultations through LAG, Youth Voice, Local Voice and other relevant surveys				Findings from consultations collated and published **Links to benefits indicators** BU2, BU6, BU3, BEI9
	1.1.2 Consult with children and young people to identify their needs against a particular theme to effectively inform the planning and delivery of services on a quarterly basis				Findings from consultations collated and published **Links to benefits indicators** BU1, BU6, BEI2, BEI3
	1.1.3 Ongoing review of feedback on the voices of children and young people and how EA has used the information to inform its decisions provided publicly for children and young people				Young person friendly report published online annually with feedback loop **Links to benefits indicators** BU6, BEI9, BU3
1.2 The North & East Belfast 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				Update to the annual local action plans based on the assessed need **Links to benefits indicators** BU2, BU3, BU6

Strategic Theme	**1. Child and Young Person Centered**				
Headline Goal	**Actions to Achieve Goal**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**How will we know it happened and worked?**
	1.2.2 Biannual review of local Action Plan completed, with updates made based on the Assessed Needs of children and young people				Update to the local youth action plan based on the identified needs **Links to benefits indicators** BU2, BU3, BU6

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 North & East Belfast at the right time and at the right place based on available resources	**2.1.1 Deliver Statutory Universal Services:** Provide safe, warm, and welcoming open access youth services through existing statutory provision, guided by local needs and available resources				BU1, BU2, BU3 BU6
	2.1.2 Support Volunteer Led Provision Allocate generic non targeted funding to volunteer led organisations to deliver inclusive, open access youth programmes				BU1, BU2, BU3 BU6
	2.1.3 Fund Voluntary Youth Organisations Universal Youth Service: Use local area-based funding to support voluntary youth organisations in delivering universal youth work that reflects local priorities				BU1, BU2, BU3 BU6
	2.1.4 Implement Youth Work Curriculum: Deliver youth work in line with *A Model for Effective Practice*, Department of Education policy, and priority age bands to ensure consistency and quality				BU1, BU2, BU3 BEI1, BEI2, BEI3, BEI9
	2.1.5 Support Learning and Achievement				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?**
	Create accessible pathways for learning, accreditation, and personal growth through youth work				
	2.1.6 Strengthen Youth Voice Structures: Support youth voice groups to ensure young people influence planning and delivery				BU5, BU6 BEI9
	2.1.7 Support Emotional Health & Wellbeing: Incorporate wellbeing into youth work through activities that build resilience, confidence, and coping skills				BU1, BU2, BU6 BEI1, BEI2, BEI6, BEI9
	2.1.8 Advance CRED & Shared Education: Deliver programmes that promote community relations, equality, diversity, and inclusion, and build connections across communities				BU6 BEI1, BEI2, BEI3, BEI9
	2.1.9 Promote Healthy Play & Physical Activity: Facilitate regular opportunities for movement, fun, and creative play to support emotional regulation and physical wellbeing				BU1, BU2, BU3, BU6 BEI1, BEI2, BEI9
	2.1.10 Enable Youth Volunteering & Leadership: Encourage young people to lead and contribute to youth led initiatives that				BU4, BU6 BEI5, BEI7, BEI9

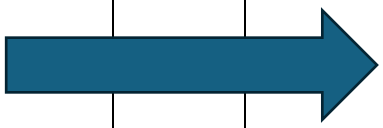
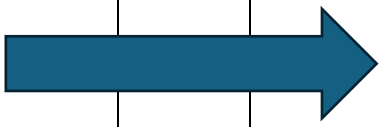
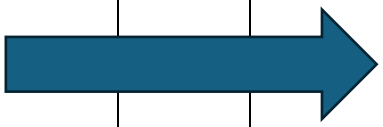
Strategic Theme	2. Delivering Services Based on Need and through relevant Partnerships				
Headline Goal	**Actions to Achieve Goal**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**How will we know it happened and worked?**
	build skills and confidence				
	2.1.11 Enhance Outreach & Awareness: Increase visibility of youth services through outreach, especially in contested spaces and among minority communities				BU2 BEI2, BEI6
	2.1.12 Integrate Environmental Awareness: Include sustainability and climate focused activities in youth programmes to reflect young people's environmental concerns				BU6 BEI1, BEI2, BEI9
	2.1.13 Deliver Life Skills for Employment: Provide practical programmes focused on employability, financial literacy, and job readiness				BU5, BU6 BEI4, BEI9
2.2 Based on available resources (Youth Service funding and other earmarked funding) universal and early intervention & prevention programmes will be delivered in North & East Belfast	**2.2.1 Tackle Barriers to Learning and Achievement:** Support vulnerable and marginalised young people through school based and community programmes that address educational inequality and promote positive transitions				BEI1, BEI2, BEI4, BEI9

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?**
based on the locally assessed needs of children and young people	**2.2.2 Expand Horizons Locally and Globally:** Facilitate youth work experiences at local, national, and international levels to build confidence, cultural awareness, and aspiration	→	→	→	BEI1, BEI2, BEI3, BEI9
	2.2.3 Prevent Violence and Harm: Implement youth work programmes that address violence against women and girls (EVAWG), hate crime, racism, and child criminal exploitation through education, peer support, and advocacy	→	→	→	BEI1, BEI2, BEI6, BEI9
	2.2.4 Work to reduce Cultural Tensions and Interface Issues: Deliver preventative youth work in areas and times of heightened cultural tension, including contested spaces and interfaces, to promote dialogue and reduce conflict	→	→	→	BEI1, BEI2, BEI9
	2.2.5 Promote Equality and Inclusion: Strengthen access and participation for Section 75 groups through inclusive programming and community relations work	→			BEI1, BEI2, BEI3, BEI9

Strategic Theme	2. Delivering Services Based on Need and through relevant Partnerships				
Headline Goal	**Actions to Achieve Goal**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**How will we know it happened and worked?**
	2.2.6 Address Risk Taking Behaviours: Provide preventative education and support around substance misuse, including drugs, alcohol, and vaping, with a focus on harm reduction and informed choices	→	→	→	BEI1, BEI2, BEI6, BEI9
	2.2.7 Build Digital Resilience and Online Safety: Equip young people with the skills to navigate online spaces safely, manage digital risks, and build healthy digital habits		→		BEI1, BEI2, BEI9
	2.2.8 Support Environmental Awareness and Action: Engage young people in youth led sustainability initiatives that promote environmental responsibility and community impact	→		→	BEI1, BEI2, BEI9
	2.2.9 Strengthen Youth Participation and Voice: Create meaningful opportunities for young people to influence programme design, policy, and decision making at local and regional levels	→	→	→	BU6, BEI4, BEI9

Strategic Theme	**2. Delivering Services Based on Need and through relevant Partnerships**				
Headline Goal	**Actions to Achieve Goal**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**How will we know it happened and worked?**
2.3 Develop and deliver, in partnership with other agencies and government departments, enhanced support for children and young people to meet assessed need in North & East Belfast	**2.3.1** Identification of partnership and Collaboration Projects/Programmes to support addressing the identified and ongoing needs of children and young people for this planning period (PCSP, school, CYPSP). This may be city wide or locally based				BES1, BES2, BES3, BES4, BES5, BES6
	2.3.2 Ongoing critical self-reflection and evaluation of the effectiveness of processes and delivery of youth work in partnership				BES4, BES5, BES6

Strategic Theme	**3. Evidence Informed**				
Headline Goal	**Actions to Achieve Goal**	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**How will we know it happened and worked?**
3.1 In line with the RYDP the LYDP will use a Benefits Realisation Framework for reporting on delivery In line with the RYDP the LYDP will use a Benefits Realisation Framework for reporting on delivery	**3.1.1** Implementation of the Benefits Framework outlined on pages 4-6 for the delivery of EA statutory and EA voluntary funded youth work delivery				Benefits framework embedded into all youth service reporting **Links to benefits indicators** BU3, BU6, BEI3, BEI9, BES4
	3.1.2 Annual Reporting for EA Funded Youth Work, including an evaluation of the impact delivery is making on the lives of children and young people and any recommendations to change delivery approach based on evidence presented				Annual Reporting completed **Links to benefits indicators** BU4, BU5, BEI4, BEI5, BEI9, BES4
3.2 Information systems will be used to support the development of evaluation and measurement of impact for local youth services in North & East Belfast	**3.2.1** Supporting and contributing to information systems to map and evaluate benefits realisation data, including its impact				Contribution to research paper that informs aspects of future youth work planning or delivery **Links to benefits indicators** BU6, BEI9, BES2, BES3, BES4
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 dynamic planning processes that assess the quality of youth work delivery through local universal open access and early intervention programmes				Pilot initiatives completed and evaluated, with documented findings informing aspects of future youth work planning or delivery **Links to benefits indicators** BU1, BU2, BU3, BEI1, BEI2, BEI3, BEI9

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 North & East Belfast in line with the EA Youth Work Volunteer Strategy 2023- 2029	**4.1.1** Local Volunteer Celebration and Recognition events programme aligned to the annual National Volunteer Week (1-7 June) (Volunteer Strategy Theme: Celebrating the contribution of Volunteers in Youth Work)				Programme established and agreed by 1 May 2026 and delivered over 1-7 June 2026 locally **Links to benefits 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				Delivery of activities and actions in support of the volunteer strategy **Links to benefits indicators** BU4, BEI5, BEI7, BEI8
4.2 A skilled local workforce will be developed and supported to meet the needs of children and young people within universal and early intervention/ prevention through a localised training programme in line with the EA Youth Service Workforce Development Strategy	**4.2.1** Implement and support training to ensure a skilled workforce meets the evolving needs of children and young people, aligned with the Workforce Development Strategy				Staff trained annually through programmes aligned with the EA Youth Service Workforce Development Strategy **Links to benefits indicators** BU7, BU8, BEI7, BEI8, BES5, BES6