

# How to fulfil your Statutory Duty

under Section 507B of  
the Education Act

A toolkit for local authorities



# Foreword

**Providing young people with access to the particular support and life-enriching advocacy which is provided by youth work results in better lifetime outcomes for young people and promotes community cohesion. It's what we all want – to see our children and young people flourish, find their passions, learn essential life skills and be happy.**

Young people spend 85% of their waking hours outside of their school and so it's entirely logical that as a nation we need to invest in young people's personal and social development in the community spaces where they spend the majority of their time. The new National Youth Work Curriculum sets out how effective youth services wrap around children and young people, placing their wellbeing at its core.

Local authorities' role to deliver or commission youth services is nothing new, but the detail of what must be provided has been open to interpretation over recent years. The advent of the government's new Statutory Duty guidance provides much of the clarity needed but will inevitably require local authorities to secure a youth work offer based on young people's diverse needs locally. Placing young people and providers at the core of this offer will be key to success. Whether delivered internally or via a commissioning model, it will be imperative that services are of a high quality, are effective and are provided by trained youth workers.

We appreciate that this will require focus and the need to direct resources to ensure success. We hope that this toolkit, together with our various associated standards and frameworks, will make this process simpler for you.

Please do get in touch if you have any questions or need further explanation. We are here to help.

**Leigh Middleton**  
Chief Executive,  
National Youth Agency

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The new National Youth Work Curriculum sets out how effective youth services wrap around children and young people placing their wellbeing at its core.

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# About the National Youth Agency

**The National Youth Agency (NYA) is the national body for youth work in England. We are funded by the UK Government to act as the Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) for youth work in England.**

In our capacity as the PSRB for youth work we provide guidance and standards to promote the effective delivery of youth services across public, private and voluntary sector agencies.

The NYA, while funded by the UK Government, is an independent body that works closely with government departments, the Local Government Association and other youth sector bodies to promote the interests of young people across society. We provide leadership, support, training and advice to youth workers, youth organisations and young people to promote best practice in youth work.

As the PSRB for youth work the NYA works to raise the profile of high quality youth work and to ensure that it is recognised as a profession that plays a vital role in the lives of young people. We provide a range of frameworks and services to assist local councils in developing youth work provision and partnerships that meet the requirements of Section 507B of the Education Act (1996).



## Statutory duty under S507B

Under Section 507b of the Education Act (1996), all young people aged 13 to 19 years (and up to 25 years for those with special educational needs and disability (SEND)) have the right to access youth work activities which are for the improvement of their wellbeing and promote their personal and social development.

In Autumn 2023, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) published refreshed statutory guidance outlining the lengths expected of tier 1 local authorities in England to ensure young people's rights and needs are met.

## About this document

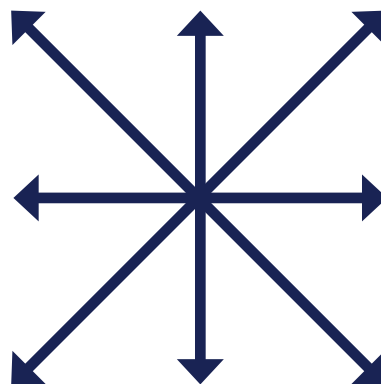
The NYA has developed this toolkit to support council officials, elected members, funders and partners in responding to the S507B statutory guidance to local authorities issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

This toolkit is the core of a suite of documents and resources available from the NYA. In this document we have set out the standards, frameworks, factors and steps local authorities should consider when developing their local youth offer.

The NYA is providing this document in support of local authorities to self-assess activities referenced in the statutory guidance and to advocate for best practice with respect to youth work.

We provide a roadmap and tools to review the needs of young people and develop a strong local ecosystem of youth work provision that supports young people's wellbeing, education and development.

## Figure 1: The nine 'essentials' of a local youth offer



### Interactive buttons

Use the buttons above to navigate to the respective sections

In responding to the S507B duty, we encourage local authorities to evaluate how its current youth work offer meet the nine 'essentials' shown in Figure 1. Each of these 'essentials' is integral to enabling local authorities to secure a local youth offer in compliance with the S507B duty. Local authorities may have existing provision that, at least partially, fulfil the duty and are encouraged to review the nine 'essentials' in full in partnership with young people, professionals and volunteers to secure an effective local youth offer to meet the needs of qualifying young people.

In evaluating the current local youth offer across the nine 'essentials', local authorities will find it helpful to consider the NYA's guidance as provided in: Youth Work Practice Standards; Safeguarding Standards for the youth sector; the National Youth Work Curriculum, Hear by Right organisational development tool (youth participation) and the Workforce Development Self-Assessment Framework. Links to all these resources, training opportunities, events or groups and wider support from the NYA and our partners are available throughout this document and can be found on the NYA website on the dedicated Statutory Duty page.

## Who should use this document?

This document is primarily written for tier 1 local authorities that hold the S507b duty. Council Leaders, Cabinet Members and senior officers who hold responsibility for fulfilment of S507b functions will find this document an essential reference guide.

Other organisations who support young people may also find this guidance a valuable reference tool when planning to deliver a combined local youth offer alongside local authorities. We recognise that, increasingly, youth work is funded and delivered through local schools, academy trusts, the NHS, housing, emergency services and voluntary sector agencies. We encourage local authorities to work closely with sector partners in evaluating the fulfilment of a local youth offer that meets the S507B duty.

To ensure all readers find this guidance useful, we have explained some elements and concepts in detail. We appreciate that local authority leaders and officers may already be familiar with the wider frameworks and legislation around children and young people, but have included them here so that young people, parents, volunteers, and youth sector organisations can also engage with the content.

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## How to use this document

The NYA has reviewed the new S507b statutory guidance and structured our response to support local authorities in three sections:

### Section 1:

#### The context for statutory guidance with respect to youth work

This section is divided into three parts:

- 1.1 provides context for the reader and includes a background to the evolution of statutory guidance with respect to youth work;
- 1.2 provides an overview of our response to the 2023 edition of S507B statutory guidance; and
- 1.3 provides a summary explanation of how we view the role of contemporary youth work.

This section of the document will be most relevant to those less familiar with the history, practices and profession of youth work.

### Section 2:

#### The nine 'essentials' of a local youth work offer

This section is divided into nine parts that frame best practice in securing a local youth offer that meet the duties under S507b and help local authorities fulfil the latest statutory guidance. Each of our nine 'essentials' (illustrated in Figure 1) includes:

- An explanation of the 'essential' activity
- Reference to legislation and guidance
- How to implement the activity (what this means in practice)
- A checklist for self assessment
- Links to additional resources

The aim of this section of the document is to provide the key information and reference material for each 'essential' to support local authorities and their partners to understand and respond to discreet activities that enable the fulfilment of the 2023 statutory guidance.

### Section 3:

#### Resources and references

This section includes links to supporting resources and a glossary of terms.



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# Section 1

## The context for statutory guidance with respect to youth work

### 1.1 The history of statutory guidance

There has been a form of statutory guidance for local authorities with respect to youth work activities dating back over 100 years. One of the earliest statutory notices was the granting of powers to local education authorities to establish 'Juvenile Organizing Committees' in 1921 (Board of Education Circular 86). However, the beginning of an organised youth service in England is usually traced back to the issuing of Circular 1486 in 1939 by the then Ministry of Education entitled 'In the Service of Youth'.<sup>1</sup>

This Circular placed a responsibility on the then Board of Education to 'undertake a direct responsibility for youth welfare' and called on local authorities to provide resources for a youth service which would promote 'the social, physical, and recreative welfare of those boys and girls between the ages of 14 and 20'. The statutory duty for local authorities to support young people in their leisure time was first included in the 1944 Education Act and has appeared in continuing revisions of Education Acts up to its current inclusion in the Education Act 1996<sup>2</sup> (Section 507B was inserted by section 6(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006).<sup>3</sup>

The development of youth services in response to the statutory duty has been the subject of several revisions in statutory guidance and directives for use of public resources. A landmark development for local authority youth services was the publication of recommendations in the 'Albemarle Report'<sup>4</sup> in 1960. This was a major review of youth services in England and Wales, commissioned by the Ministry of Education. It resulted in public funding for the construction of 3,500 youth centres and the development of national training programmes that doubled the number of youth workers.

Further reviews have refined and contemporised the statutory guidance and directives for the use of resources in support of youth services. In 1969, the Fairbairn-Milson Report<sup>5</sup> advocated for a greater emphasis on community development practices and the extension of professional training of youth workers to two years. In 1982, the Thompson Report<sup>6</sup> led to further reforms to the youth service workforce and development of national standards via the then National Youth Bureau (now the National Youth Agency). It also saw reinvigorated investment in open access and professionally led youth work services. The report re-affirmed the role of youth services in providing social education and placed a renewed emphasis on political education within a youth work curriculum.

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In 1992, the UK ratified and adopted the articles that make up the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)<sup>7</sup>. This placed a universal responsibility on authorities to uphold and promote children’s rights (for persons under 18 years).

These rights are recognised in the 1996 Education Act where it laid down the current statutory duty (Section 507B, also referred to as S507B) of functions for local authorities ‘in respect of leisure-time activities’ for young people. Related UNCRC articles include:

Article 13	Article 15	Article 31
<b>(freedom of expression)</b> Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.	<b>(freedom of association)</b> Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.	<b>(leisure, play and culture)</b> Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.



Since the turn of the millennium, successive governments have issued statutory guidance to inform the development of local youth services and the wider youth offer. In 2002, the then Department for Education and Skills published ‘Transforming Youth Work’<sup>8</sup> providing a specification for youth services aimed at ‘resourcing excellent youth services’.

In 2004, HM Government published ‘Youth Matters’<sup>9</sup> setting out an ambitious agenda for young people that led to the inclusion of section 6 of the Education and Inspections Act (2006) titled ‘Functions in respect of youth work’. This expanded the S507B responsibilities of local authorities as current in the Education Act 1996 (section 507b) giving young people and the voluntary sector the right to be involved in developing the local youth offer.

In 2011, the new Government set out its agenda for young people in a cross-government policy called ‘Positive for Youth’.<sup>10</sup> This continued to advocate for young people’s right to have their voice heard in the shaping of local youth services and for local authorities to work with other agencies to agree

priorities for the local youth offer. In 2018-19, the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Youth Affairs, a group of 60 Members of Parliament (MPs), undertook an extensive inquiry on youth work to assess its status and role in support of young people. It published its [report](#)<sup>11</sup> in 2019 making several recommendations including that the government review the S507B statutory guidance.

Ministers accepted their recommendations and a public consultation was undertaken by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), which holds the cross-government portfolio for youth services. The outcomes from the consultation supported the recommendation for strengthening and clarifying of the S507B guidance to local authorities. Despite work on the guidance being paused during the COVID-19 pandemic, the latest version – to which this toolkit refers – was published by the DCMS in 2023.

## 1.2 The 2023 statutory guidance

The latest statutory guidance is issued by the Secretary of State under Section 507B of the Education Act 1996 1 ('the act'). Section 507B was inserted by section 6(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. It also references other legislation and government frameworks which will be familiar to local authorities.

The NYA has mapped the requirements of the new guidance to national and/or professional frameworks and other good practice to support local authorities to meet, and ideally exceed, the minimum standards in England.



**The guidance prescribes the actions and considerations local authorities must take to meet the duty.**



The S507B duty only applies to tier 1 local authorities in England. These are councils with the strategic lead for education of children and young people to ensure that every child fulfils their educational potential. The 2023 guidance sees a closer alignment to the original 2008 guidance following the enactment of the 2006 amendments. The guidance prescribes the actions and considerations local authorities must take to meet the duty.

It is important to qualify that legislation and the guidance places a duty on local authorities to 'secure' sufficient youth provision. The council is not duty bound to directly deliver these services themselves, but to ensure access to youth services that meet high standards. This means that programmes or projects funded and supported by other agencies (state, private, charitable or philanthropic) should be included when assessing sufficiency and, in practice, will mean the local authority won't need to fund or deliver the full local youth offer.

## 1.3 Guide to contemporary youth work

Contemporary youth work is a dynamic and evolving field of practice, which seeks to engage with young people in a meaningful way and support their growth and development as they transition to adulthood. It aims to provide young people with opportunities to develop their skills, knowledge, and confidence, and to help them navigate the significant and ever-evolving challenges of growing up – especially in light of our digitised age. The ultimate goal of youth work is to help young people become happy, healthy and confident adults based on the principles of youth empowerment, participation and inclusion.

Youth work can take many forms and is often carried out by specially trained youth workers and volunteers who have expertise in working with young people and understand their needs. Youth workers trained to National Youth Agency standards, recognised by the Joint Negotiating Committee<sup>12</sup> (JNC), are also recognised as key workers in the provision of essential services for young people.

From 2023, youth workers with a professional qualification can be formally registered on the [National Youth Worker Register](#) in recognition of their professional status. Qualified youth workers and trained volunteers are therefore central to contemporary youth work.

Youth work, as with all professional disciplines, is constantly evolving and adapting to the socio-economic environment and needs of young people. Today, youth work is more diverse and inclusive than ever before, reflecting the changing needs and aspirations of young people and youth workers in the 21st century. Youth work is now integral to the wider ecosystem around children, young people and their families.

It is estimated the economic value of youth work in England to be £5.7bn and that youth work delivers high value for money when using the indices for social return on investment<sup>13</sup>. This reflects the positive effects youth work has on young people in terms of mental health, wellbeing, education, employment and other areas. As youth work responds to issues that matter most to young people, rather than one single issue, this leads to benefits across multiple outcomes.

Youth work is increasingly recognised as a force for good in addressing contemporary issues. Youth workers have been on the frontline of responses to societal concerns, for example in developing preventative services in response to the needs of serious youth violence, in adapting youth services throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and in addressing the increasing mental health needs of young people. Youth workers continue to innovate and adjust in response to the needs of young people when other professionals or services are being stretched to their limits.

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Youth work has also adapted to the changing technologies that frame young people's daily lives. The way practitioners connect with young people has been transformed by social media and the use of digital channels have become vital to successful youth work. While youth work is a relational practice, there is recognition that it must be complemented with learning, innovation and engagement in digital spaces.



### **In summary, contemporary youth work can be described as:**

- Practice and knowledge that is inclusive, accessible, equitable and evolves with the needs and interests of young people
- Practice that engages young people and is genuinely collaborative in the decision-making and direction of youth work
- Practice that is underpinned by high quality training and qualifications
- Practice that is part of a local ecosystem of professionals around the child, young person, their family and wider community
- Practice that plays a vital role in the growth, development and protection of children and young people
- Practice that remains up-to-date and responsive to emerging trends
- Practice that is digitally connected and takes steps to ensure accessibility for all

## Legislation and guidance:

A local youth offer supported by local authorities should be designed with the following standards and guidance in mind.

- Digital Youth Work Standards (due for publication in 2024)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)<sup>14</sup>
- [Essential digital skills framework](#)<sup>15</sup>
- [Hear by Right](#)<sup>16</sup>
- [NYA Quality Mark](#)<sup>17</sup>
- [How to use the National Youth Work Curriculum](#)<sup>18</sup>
- [NYA National Practice Standards Guidance](#)
- [Safeguarding standards](#) for the youth sector
- [Online Safety Bill](#)<sup>19</sup>
- [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)<sup>20</sup>
- [UK Digital Strategy](#)<sup>21</sup>

## Implementation

In ensuring youth services are contemporary, local authorities should consider a wide range of factors and ensure that they are relevant and responsive to the current needs and aspirations of young people.

We recommend consideration is given to the following areas:

### **An understanding of contemporary issues faced by young people: responsive, reactive and reflective.**

There are many contemporary issues faced by young people, from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to the cost-of-living crisis, young people require support that is reactive and responsive to needs. Local authorities can develop their understanding of these needs through a range of activities including undertaking local needs analysis and community profiling alongside taking learning from national surveys that consult young people on what is important to them such as the British Youth Council's [Make Your Mark](#) initiative.<sup>22</sup>

## Valuing the voice of young people: actively listening and learning.

The most important way to deliver your local youth offer is to involve young people in the design, delivery and evaluation of services. S507b requires local authorities to engage and involve young people in the co-design of local youth provision. Using frameworks such as NYA's [Hear by Right](#)<sup>23</sup> and applying models such as the [Lundy model of participation](#),<sup>24</sup> local authorities can involve a wide range of young people in decision-making processes to ensure that services are relevant and meet their needs. Young people are experts on their own lived experiences and a commitment from local authorities to participation will enable services to recognise the importance of diverse perspectives, experiences, and ideas in achieving shared goals and equitable outcomes.

## A skilled and thriving workforce: training and continuing professional development (CPD).

A skilled and thriving contemporary workforce is also one that is diverse and inclusive. Local authorities should offer a wide range of training and development opportunities for the local workforce by equipping staff (across the youth provision, both within the council or its youth partners) with up-to-date knowledge, skills and attitudes. This can be informed by supervision, workforce surveys (see section 2.6 Workforce Planning) and local needs analysis. By mapping training to local needs local authorities can respond and address the evolving needs of young people through the development of training opportunities and workforce plans.



### Equality, equity, diversity, and inclusion (EEDI) at its heart.

Creating environments that are accessible and supportive of all young people is essential to delivering youth programmes that are culturally competent. A modern youth service should prioritise creating a safe, welcoming, and inclusive space for all young people, with consideration to their race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, ability, or socioeconomic status.

By committing to creating an inclusive and diverse environment where all young people have an opportunity to participate and engage, local authorities will be able to provide services that are accessible, valued and welcoming to people from all backgrounds, cultures and abilities. This could be achieved by undertaking an Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EEDI) analysis of local communities and the workforce to ensure, as far as possible, that the youth provision is culturally aware and knowledgeable. The local workforce should ideally be representative of the communities where young people are from.

### Digitally connected: keeping up with new and emerging technologies.

With the increasing use of technology and social media, a modern youth service should prioritise promoting digital literacy and safety among young people. This includes educating them about online privacy, cyberbullying, online harms and the responsible use of technology.

Incorporating digital offers into services will enable local authorities to engage young people in new ways, offer more flexible opportunities and increase accessibility. With the internet and social media playing a pivotal role in young people's lives, local authorities should grow knowledge of digital mediums, such as using online and social media platforms for communication, delivering virtual youth work or providing online resources. This needs to be supported by robust training for staff to keep up with new technologies and best practices, completing a needs analysis and by developing safeguarding policies that address online safety.





### Collaboration: integrated approaches.

Local authorities will be able to provide a more integrated approach through collaborating with local voluntary and community frontline sector (VCFS) and partner services. This can be achieved by creating networks among, for example, schools, community organisations, faith groups, or health services to provide a more holistic approach to meeting needs. In order to achieve this, local authorities could facilitate regular partnership meetings, create referral pathways and use communication channels to promote local youth work provision and opportunities.

### Social action: community spaces for young people to thrive.

Many young people today are passionate about making a difference in their communities and the world. A modern youth service should provide opportunities for them to get involved in social action and youth initiatives. Increasingly traditional youth clubs are less attractive to those over the age of 13 years. However, young people want provision that supports them through key transition points and spaces that are creative and familiar to young adults.

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Many young people today are passionate about making a difference in their communities and the world.

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### Mental health and wellbeing.

Many young people today are dealing with serious mental health challenges, such as anxiety and depression, as well as stress related to academic or social pressures.<sup>25</sup>

A modern youth service should prioritise promoting mental health and wellbeing by offering resources, support and guidance to help young people manage their emotional and psychological needs at a time when the world is facing significant crises.



## Contemporary youth work checklist

- |  |                      | <b>Key</b> ✓ Yes    ○ Partially    ✗ No   |                      |
|--|----------------------|---|----------------------|
| <p><b>1.</b> Have you mapped local needs and considered the specific local context and needs of local young people?</p>  | <p>✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p> | <p><b>4.</b> Have you recruited a diverse and skilled workforce and offered training reflective of the needs of young people and staff? This includes ongoing awareness of the contemporary issues faced by young people?</p> | <p>✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p> |
| <p><b>2.</b> Have you developed a strategy for delivery including a range of activities and interventions that are tailored to the needs of young people including the use of contemporary tools and technologies, such as social media, online platforms and mobile apps?</p> | <p>✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p> | <p><b>5.</b> Do you offer a range of participation opportunities for young people that are accessible, inclusive and tailored to their needs?</p>   | <p>✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p> |
| <p><b>3.</b> Are there robust supervision, training and CPD opportunities in place for staff – paid and voluntary, both within the council and its youth partners?</p>   | <p>✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p> | <p><b>6.</b> What training and CPD opportunities do you offer your workforce and volunteers? It may help to develop a training matrix using ideas from the NYA's Youth Work Academy.<sup>26</sup></p>                         | <p>✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p> |
|  |                      | <p><b>7.</b> Create a youth voice and participation group to make young people feel valued and heard. You can use the <a href="#">NYA's Hear by Right's</a> framework to develop this piece of work.</p>                      | <p>✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p> |
|  |                      | <p><b>8.</b> Do you regularly reflect on your inclusion policy? You may want to think about conducting an EEDI audit, to make sure your services and venues used remain accessible and inclusive.</p>                         | <p>✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p> |
|  |                      | <p><b>9.</b> Keep up-to-date with relevant digital developments, offer training opportunities for staff and learn from young people.</p>  | <p>✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p> |

### Additional resources

Ann Craft Trust, '[Safeguarding and online youth work – digital safeguarding](#)'

British Youth Council, '[Make your mark](#)'

Council of Europe, '[Conseil de l'Europe – brochure A4 portrait \(coe.int\)](#)'

NYA '[Continuous professional development catalogue](#)'

NYA '[Working with young people – media literacy and digital youth work](#)'

Youth Work One, '[Resources](#)'

Youth Work Support, '[Screenagers Guidance](#)'

# Section 2

## The nine 'essentials' of a local youth work offer

### 2.1 Developing your needs assessment

Youth work involves a systematic and comprehensive approach to understanding the specific needs of young people in your community. This will include an assessment of the available data and feedback from qualifying young people from the high-need group (see p25 for explanation). The local authority should publish this needs assessment alongside its local youth offer plan setting out how the local authority, working in partnership with stakeholders, aims to secure youth work provision for the area.

Here are some steps you can take to conduct a thorough needs analysis:

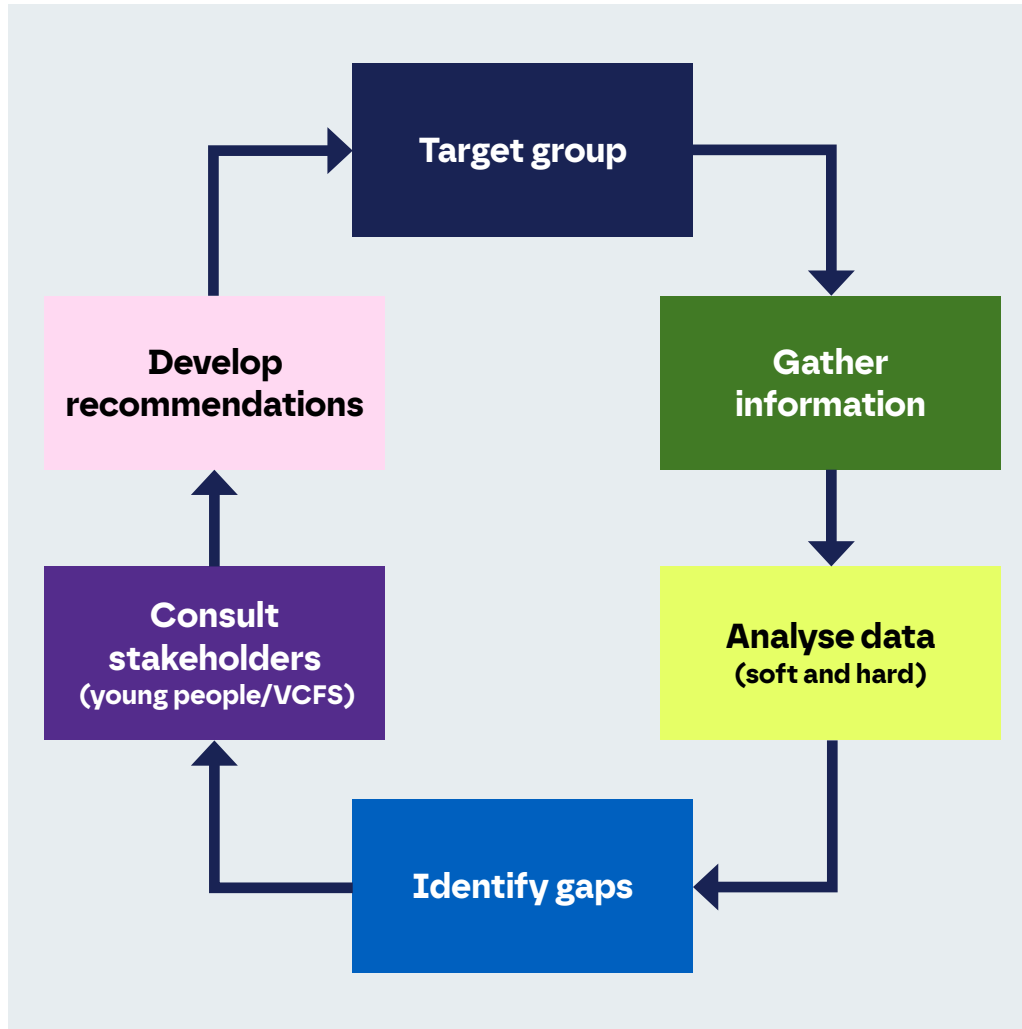
### Implementation

- 1. Identify the target group:** first, define the age range and demographic of the young people you need to serve. This will help you to understand the specific needs of this group and tailor your assessment accordingly.
- 2. Gather information:** collect information from a variety of primary sources including surveys, interviews, focus groups and secondary sources like academic literature and demographic data. Consider the specific needs of the target group, such as their social, emotional, educational, and health needs.

- 3. Analyse the data:** once you have gathered the data, analyse it to identify common themes and trends. Look for patterns and recurring issues that young people face, as well as areas where youth work can make a positive impact.
- 4. Identify gaps:** identify any gaps in the provision of youth work in your community. Determine the areas where services are lacking and consider how you can develop programmes to fill these gaps.
- 5. Consult with stakeholders:** consult with stakeholders, especially young people themselves, to ensure that your recommendations reflect their needs and priorities. Use this feedback to refine your recommendations and develop a plan of action.
- 6. Develop recommendations:** based on your analysis, develop recommendations for youth work services that can effectively meet the needs of young people in your community. These recommendations should be evidence-based and grounded in the data and feedback you have collected.



Figure 2: Six key steps for a needs assessment.



## Legislation and frameworks

### Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

The JSNA is a statutory requirement under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, and local authorities and clinical commissioning groups are required to produce a JSNA every three years.<sup>27</sup> The JSNA is an important tool for ensuring that health and social care services are delivered in a way that meets the needs of the local population and that resources are used effectively to improve health outcomes and reduce health inequalities.

The JSNA is a collaborative process, involving a range of stakeholders, including local authorities, clinical commissioning groups, health and social care providers, and community groups. By working together, these stakeholders can identify the key health and social care challenges facing their local area and develop plans to address those challenges in a coordinated and effective way.

**NYA Census:** the [National Youth Sector Census](#) is a routine survey conducted by the National Youth Agency (NYA).<sup>28</sup> The Census aims to collect

information about the youth work sector in England, including the types of services provided, the number of young people served, and the workforce delivering youth work services. The data collected from the Census is used to inform the development of national policy and practice in youth work, to support the provision of high-quality services for young people and to inform funding and resource allocation for the sector.

The Census collects data from a range of organisations that provide youth work services, including local authorities, voluntary sector organisations and private providers (where applicable). The National Youth Sector Census is an important tool for understanding the state of the youth work sector in England, for identifying gaps in provision and areas for improvement. The data collected can be used by policymakers, funders, local authorities and youth organisations to inform decision-making, the allocation of resources, and the development of effective services that meet the needs of young people.



The Census is a vital free tool to support local authorities with their mapping of local youth provision. All youth providers (including local authorities) are being encouraged to complete the Census and keep their data up-to-date on a quarterly basis.

The NYA provides a free data hub and dashboard (accessible on [Youth Work One](#)) where councils can view the key metrics needed to assess their S507B capacity. The hub has a mapping tool which shows where youth provision is and where it may be needed. The data hub also has data on local funding, workforce capacity (number of trained youth workers), nature of provision and much more. Councils should encourage local youth providers to complete the Census to ensure the most accurate picture is provided to help their planning.



## Needs assessment checklist

Key ✓ Yes ○ Partially ✗ No

Which of the following are currently available for your needs assessment:

- |  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| <b>1.</b> Demographic information: age, gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status.   | ✓ | ○ | ✗ |
| <b>2.</b> Health and physical wellbeing: physical health status, diet and nutrition, access to healthcare, and mental health status.         | ✓ | ○ | ✗ |
| <b>3.</b> Education and learning: current educational attainment, access to education and training, and support needed for academic success. | ✓ | ○ | ✗ |
| <b>4.</b> Employment and income: current employment status, income level, and skills needed for employability.                               | ✓ | ○ | ✗ |
| <b>5.</b> Social, family and carer relationships: family dynamics, relationships with peers, and support networks.                           | ✓ | ○ | ✗ |

- |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <b>6.</b> Housing and environment: living conditions, access to safe and affordable housing, and exposure to environmental risks. | ✓ | ○ | ✗ |
| <b>7.</b> Safety and security: exposure to violence or crime, feelings of safety and security, and access to support services.    | ✓ | ○ | ✗ |
| <b>8.</b> Recreation and leisure: access to recreational activities and opportunities for personal development.                   | ✓ | ○ | ✗ |
| <b>9.</b> Civic engagement and participation: involvement in community activities and opportunities for civic engagement.         | ✓ | ○ | ✗ |
| <b>10.</b> Technology and digital literacy: access to technology and digital skills needed for participation in modern society.   | ✓ | ○ | ✗ |

This list is not exhaustive, and additional items may be added depending on the specific needs of the young people being assessed. The goal is to gather as much information as possible about the young people's needs across different domains, so that youth work services can be tailored to meet those needs and support their overall development.

### Additional resources:

NYA, '[National Youth Sector Census](#)'



## 2.2 Youth engagement

Youth engagement will look different in each organisation because it is based on the **needs of young people, ethos, values** and ultimately **voluntary participation**.

Youth voice, participation and engagement is a fundamental right as included in Article 13 of the UNCRC. Section 507b expressly requires councils to engage, listen to and involve young people in the decision-making and service design. For youth work this is exemplified by the active involvement of young people through voluntary participation – where young people choose to participate. This can include participating in governance, activism, youth work, community events, volunteering, panels, boards and ultimately anything that interests young people.

Youth participation is a fundamental part of youth work as it empowers young people to take ownership of their lives and communities. It provides them with opportunities to grow, learn and make positive contributions to society. By involving young people in the process of youth work, it enables practitioners to become more in tune and responsive to their needs and concerns, which leads to positive outcomes. In addition, this process fosters a sense of belonging and interconnectedness in how young people identify with youth work.

“

**Young people are ‘experts by experience’ and uphold the best insight into what personal, social, political and economic issues affect them.**

”

Young people are ‘experts by experience’ and uphold the best insight into what personal, social, political and economic issues affect them. Meaningful outcomes are often created by involving young people at the start through to finish of projects, ensuring they are taking an active role in shaping their experiences and ownership of outcomes. Local authorities should be mindful not to overly use very formal groups to ascertain young people’s needs. While youth parliaments and similar groups are a part of the participation process, they are not always fully representative. This means creating and maintaining a safe space for all young people to have a voice in the decision-making processes.



Youth participation work should align with the embedment of anti-oppressive practice. Integrating youth participation better equips young people in developing their skills, confidence, competence and identity. Local authorities should consider providing a framework for youth engagement that can be adopted by all organisations that are working collaboratively to deliver the local plan. This will ensure you have a standardised and fair approach to youth participation that fulfils your statutory duty requirements.

## Legislation and frameworks:

**Hear by Right** is the national standard and associated kite mark that all councils should aspire to implement when co-designing their local youth provision with young people. This should be applied in tandem with the Lundy model in how councils, partners and professionals create the space, voice, audience and influence for young people to have their views and opinions heard.

**The Lundy model** is a child participation model based on four key concepts. This has been used and adopted by national and international organisations, agencies and governments to inform their understanding of children's participation, best practice and a shared global understanding of child rights-based participation in both policy and practice. The four principles of the Lundy model are:

- **Space:** children must be given the opportunity to express a view
- **Voice:** children must be facilitated to express their views
- **Audience:** the views of children must be listened to
- **Influence:** the views of children must be acted upon, as appropriate

## Youth engagement checklist

Which of the following are currently available for your needs assessment:

- |  |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|
| <p><b>1.</b> Have you clearly defined the purpose and goals of your participation work?</p>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/><br><input type="checkbox"/><br><input type="checkbox"/> | <p><b>2.</b> Are these goals aligned with the needs and desires of young people?</p> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/><br><input type="checkbox"/><br><input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p><b>3.</b> Are you regularly reviewing and updating the purpose and goals of participation work?</p> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/><br><input type="checkbox"/><br><input type="checkbox"/> |  |   |



**Key** ✓ Yes ○ Partially ✗ No

### Access and inclusion

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>1.</b> Are young people's rights being respected and upheld in the decision-making processes?</p>   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/><br><input type="checkbox"/><br><input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p><b>2.</b> Are you reaching out to a diverse group of young people?</p>   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/><br><input type="checkbox"/><br><input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p><b>3.</b> Are you creating opportunities for young people who may face barriers to participation, such as those from low-income families or with disabilities?</p> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/><br><input type="checkbox"/><br><input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p><b>4.</b> Do you actively promote and encourage the participation of marginalised groups?</p>  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/><br><input type="checkbox"/><br><input type="checkbox"/> |

### Participation processes

1. Are you using a range of methods to engage young people in real life and through online platforms?
  - ✓
  - 
  - ✗
2. Are young people being provided with the necessary support to fully participate, such as training, mentoring, or advocacy?
  - ✓
  - 
  - ✗
3. Are young people involved in wider council services that affect them, such as those related to education, housing and social care? Are their views and opinions taken into account?
  - ✓
  - 
  - ✗

### Accountability

1. Do you review how young people are involved in your organisation or those delivering the local plan?
  - ✓
  - 
  - ✗
2. Are you transparent about how young people's views and opinions are being used and acted upon?
  - ✓
  - 
  - ✗
3. Are young people involved in monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of participation work?
  - ✓
  - 
  - ✗
4. Are you providing feedback to young people on the impact of their participation?
  - ✓
  - 
  - ✗

### Collaboration

1. Are you actively seeking to collaborate with other organisations or stakeholders to increase the impact of participation work?
  - ✓
  - 
  - ✗
2. Are mechanisms for youth democracy, such as youth councils, functioning? Are young people engaged and involved in decision-making processes at all levels of the local authority?
  - ✓
  - 
  - ✗
3. Are you creating opportunities for young people to work collaboratively with other partners and stakeholders?
  - ✓
  - 
  - ✗
4. Are you regularly reflecting on how to strengthen collaborative working practices?
  - ✓
  - 
  - ✗

### Recognition

1. Does your organisation emphasise that young people have the right to be informed, express their views and have those views taken seriously?
  - ✓
  - 
  - ✗
2. Are you publicly recognising and celebrating young people's participation and achievements?
  - ✓
  - 
  - ✗
3. Are young people involved in the development and evaluation of youth services? Are they able to provide feedback on what works well and what could be improved?
  - ✓
  - 
  - ✗
4. Are young people being given opportunities to develop leadership and decision-making skills?
  - ✓
  - 
  - ✗
5. Are you promoting the positive impact of youth participation in the wider community?
  - ✓
  - 
  - ✗



## Additional resources:

British Youth Council, [‘Make your mark’](#)

Children and Families Act 2014, [‘section 17 the Children Act’](#)

[Human Rights Act 1998](#)

[Mental Capacity Act 2005](#)

NYA [‘Continuous professional development catalogue’](#)

NYA, [‘Hear by Right’](#)

Participation People, [‘How to implement the Lundy model of participation across your organisation: a checklist’](#)

[Section 10 & 12 Education and Skills Act 2008](#)

Unicef, [‘Where we work, child-friendly cities and communities’](#)

[World’s children’s prize, ‘Child rights heroes’](#)

YMCA, George Williams Collect, [‘The youth engagement survey’](#)

Youth Work One, [‘Resources’](#)

## 2.3 VCFS engagement

A rich and vibrant local youth offer is likely to involve collaborating with the local authority’s voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS). There is a requirement, set out by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport in their guidance, that the VCFS will be included and involved in local decision-making alongside young people.

The VCFS often has a rich level of local expertise and experience, which local authorities will want to draw upon when developing their needs analysis and local youth offer plans. The local youth offer should probably be delivered via a blend of in-house youth workers and those in the VCFS alongside workers in allied sectors (health, police, schools etc.).

Engaging the voluntary, community and faith sector requires an approach that considers their unique characteristics and motivations. Some useful strategies that may support local engagement include:

- **Establish genuine relationships:** Build personal connections with community groups by attending their events, meetings and gatherings. Take the time to understand their values, concerns, and priorities.
- **Collaborate and co-create:** Involve the VCFS in the planning and decision-making processes in the co-design of local needs analysis and local youth offer plan. Seek their input and involve them in co-creating initiatives, programmes, and priorities that benefit qualifying young people and their communities.
- **Capacity building:** To get the best out of local partners, local authorities may wish to explore developing training sessions, workshops and resources to build the capacity of individuals and organisations within the sector. These will be most effective when co-created with VCFS stakeholders and will demonstrate a commitment to strengthening the VCFS’s development, while also equipping partners with the skills and knowledge necessary to contribute effectively.
- **Recognise and celebrate their contributions:** Publicly acknowledge the valuable work done by the VCFS locally and how partnerships have supported young people. Highlighting their achievements, sharing success stories, data and evidence of their impact may support partners to secure additional support for local young people.



- **Establish inclusive partnerships:** Actively seeking opportunities to collaborate with the VCFS on joint initiatives with the local authority and allied sectors will help leverage additional resources, expertise and improved outcomes for young people. Encouraging diverse participation to ensure representation from different groups and communities (especially those in high-need communities) will support the council to ensure a sufficient youth offer is available.
- **Communicate effectively:** Using various channels of communication, local authorities can engage with the sector to keep partners informed and develop a sense of shared ownership. It could be important to reflect the diversity of the VCFS in tailoring your messages to resonate with their values and priorities, as well as ensure that information is accessible and easy to understand.

- **Support to access resources:** Where appropriate and possible, local authorities may choose to allocate resources, grants, training and funding to support the initiatives and projects of the VCFS. Financial support can significantly enhance their ability to deliver meaningful programmes and services when joined up with other local authority initiatives.
- **Foster networking opportunities:** Facilitating networking events, training and workshops that bring together organisations, individuals and leaders from the sector will enable the local authority to establish a collaborative culture of working with VCFS partners. These gatherings provide opportunities for knowledge sharing, collaboration and the formation of new partnerships.
- **Engaging the VCFS** is an ongoing process that requires consistent effort, active listening and responsiveness. By cultivating a mutually beneficial relationship, local authorities can harness the energy, passion, capacity and expertise of the voluntary, community and faith sector to enhance or deliver their local youth offer.

## Legislation and Frameworks

Section 507B states that tier 1 local authorities must engage the voluntary community and faith sector when considering how to develop their local youth offer.

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations has developed a useful [toolkit](#)<sup>29</sup> on developing, revising and renewing local VCFS Compacts (or similar). Most councils have a Compact or agreement on how they will work with the VCFS locally.

“

By cultivating a mutually beneficial relationship, local authorities can harness the energy, passion, capacity and expertise of the voluntary, community and faith sector to enhance or deliver their local youth offer.

”





## VCFS engagement checklist

By using this checklist, local authorities can assess their current level of engagement with the VCFS and identify areas for improvement or areas where they are already performing well. It can serve as a starting point for strengthening relationships and collaborating with important stakeholders.

- 1.** Does your local authority actively seek input and feedback from the voluntary community and faith sector around youth provision and your local youth offer?
- 2.** Are there formal mechanisms in place to involve the sector in the decision-making process related to the local youth offer and its implementation?

- 3.** Does your local authority provide training and capacity-building opportunities to support the VCFS's growth and development to meet the needs of young people?
- 4.** Does your local authority allocate resources specifically for initiatives and projects within the S507B duty?
- 5.** Does your local authority publicly recognise and celebrate the contributions of the VCF youth sector?
- 6.** Are there efforts made to foster inclusive partnerships and ensure diverse representation from the sector?

**Key** ✓ Yes    ○ Partially    ✗ No

- 7.** Does your local authority have effective communication channels to engage with the VCFS?
- 8.** Does your local authority facilitate networking opportunities for the sector to collaborate and share knowledge?
- For each item, the council can answer 'Yes' if they have a well-established and effective practice in place, 'No' if they do not have that practice in place, or 'Maybe' if they have some initiatives but they are not consistently implemented or lack clarity.



## 2.4 Local youth offer plan

Each local authority must co-produce and publish a local youth offer plan. This will be informed by the local needs analysis of young people, their access to youth work provision and a needs or service gap analysis. The local authority must work with young people and the VCFS to develop the plan. This may include a roadmap towards securing sufficient local provision (provided by the council and/or partners) over a fixed period (recommended maximum of three years). The local youth offer plan could form a distinct part of another existing plan the council currently produces, as long as this is clearly explained to stakeholders and young people.

Councils are advised to adopt a typical 'Analyse, Plan, Do, Review' model.

Figure 3: Analyse, Plan, Do, Review commissioning model<sup>30</sup>



## Analyse

Each council must work with young people and their local youth sector partners (VCFS or uniformed groups such as the Army Cadets) to complete a local youth needs assessment (as detailed in sections 2.1-2.3 of this toolkit). This should be both quantitatively and qualitatively informed using local knowledge.<sup>31</sup> The goal is to publish a public report that shows the needs of young people and how the council and its partners will focus their efforts and resources.

The council will also need to map their current local youth provision. The National Youth Sector Census is recommended as a starting point. It's important to understand the nature of local provision and identify barriers to participation.

Things to consider include:

1. Location
2. Timings
3. Cost
4. Distance from young people
5. Curriculum or protected characteristic focus (if specialist provision)
6. Age ranges

Following a thorough needs assessment and mapping of local provision, a gap analysis should be completed to record where there is an un-met need. Gaps could be geographical, thematic (such as insufficient lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender or special educational needs and disability provision) or it may be identified that insufficient data is evident to draw robust conclusions (such as where more research is needed).

### Plan

This includes a requirement to involve young people in the co-design of provision to meet their needs.

Although, tier 1 local authorities are accountable for S507B, they should work in partnership with other stakeholders and youth sector partners to secure their local youth work provision.

The law relates to youth work for qualifying young people aged 13 to 19 or up to 24 for those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). While the duty relates to teenagers, local authorities will recognise that engaging young people at the age of 13 is often too late and that earlier provision will be important in meeting the needs of future teenagers.

“  
**The duty focuses on supporting young people with their wellbeing during their leisure time. This doesn't mean providers and provision shouldn't connect and work alongside schools and employers.**  
”

The National Youth Agency (NYA) recognises that while the duty applies to all young people aged 13 to 19, not all will want or need to access youth services. Nationally, the NYA estimates that around 10% of children are most in need of access to youth services, and we refer to this cohort of young people as the **high-need group**. This isn't a uniform percentage and, in some wards or areas, 20% to 30% of young people may need support. It is also recognised that to engage the high-need group, space and provision for their peers to join in are also required. Therefore, local authorities should be strategic in allocating their scarce resources to meet the needs of young people who need it most.

The duty focuses on supporting young people with their wellbeing during their leisure time. This doesn't mean providers and provision shouldn't connect and work alongside schools and employers. It is important to ensure local youth provision is working in partnership with other services that wrap around young people, especially schools, health services, the police and social care.

Section 507b relates to youth work provision. Youth work is defined by the NYA as:



Youth work primarily supports young people between the ages of 11 and 19 (although this can be as young as 8 or up to 25 for those with SEND). It is a distinct educational process adapted across a variety of settings to support a young person's personal, social and educational development. It aims to:

- Explore their values, beliefs, ideas and issues
- Enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society
- Help them acquire a set of practical or technical skills and competencies so that they can realise their full potential

Local authorities, through children's services, family support, early help or youth justice services, will often provide targeted one-to-one support whereas S507B is primarily focused on open access community-based youth work provision. Open access services<sup>32</sup> are often wrongly referred to as 'universal provision' because these services are usually targeted interventions that support either by geography (they are placed in higher-need areas on purpose) or thematic delivery (such as SEND).

“

**Contemporary youth services have innovated to meet the modern-day challenges young people face. From employability support to preventing serious youth violence, our youth workers are on the streets and frontline of preventing harm.**

”

While youth workers will rightly help young people on an individual level, this should not be the primary purpose of the provision. Open access youth work is most effective when young people choose to engage with skilled and trusted adults.

Youth services have changed considerably over the last decade. Contemporary youth services have innovated to meet the modern-day challenges young people face. From employability support to preventing serious youth violence, youth workers are on the streets and frontline of preventing harm. The key to success is a high-quality workforce trained to the latest [National Occupational Standards](#)<sup>33</sup>.

All youth provision in England should also be underpinned by the [National Youth Work Curriculum](#)<sup>34</sup>. This framework articulates how youth provision supports young people's personal and social development. The Curriculum should be used by local authorities to underpin all their youth services, including commissioning, planning and evaluation, as well as connections to other priorities and strategies.

## Do

The statutory duty places a requirement on councils to secure sufficient youth work provision for their area. There is often a debate over the term 'sufficient' in relation to the duty. There will be lots of 'positive activities' provided locally that young people may choose to access (uniformed youth, arts and sports provision etc.). However, other key factors must be considered when determining if there is sufficient youth provision to meet qualifying young people's needs (especially in the high-need group). It is vital to consider the following factors:

**Age-appropriate provision:** the duty relates to support for young people aged 13 to 19. However, the NYA has observed that the most substantive level of provision is currently for those under 13. So councils will need to determine if access for those aged 13 to 19 is available in sufficient quantity and the right locations. Youth provision should always be age appropriate and is not simply an extension of work with younger age groups.



**Attracting young people:** the needs and interests of young people change with their age, character, cultural or societal position. Consider if local provision is being accessed and is attractive to the cohort of young people identified in your needs analysis. For example, significantly fewer young people access uniformed provision over the age of 13, so having partners who provide cadet/uniformed groups is unlikely to meet the needs of qualifying young people on their own.



**Access:** can qualifying young people access provision? Young people repeatedly tell the NYA they want youth work support in local groups within a 15-minute walk of their home or school. They are less likely to be able to travel a long way or more than 30 minutes to access activities. Transport is often a significant barrier. Councils should consider if young people can afford the cost of travel and if they are willing to travel. Does public transport operate later in the evening so that young people can access youth provision? Where transport is available, is it safe for young people?

**Cost:** councils can charge for access to services. However, young people's needs will not be met if they can't access activities due to the cost (even joining fees or annual memberships can act as an added barrier). Provision should be affordable and ideally free to access for those from low-income families or for looked-after children.

**Protected characteristics:** young people with protected characteristics often face additional barriers to accessing suitable provision. They are frequently reliant on parents or carers knowing about the existence of youth work provision on their behalf. Young people with protected characteristics such as SEND, young carers, LGBTQIA+, Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and other diverse groups should have their needs considered where traditional settings and groups may not meet them sufficiently.

“  
Young people repeatedly tell the NYA they want youth work support in local groups within a 15-minute walk of their home or school.  
”



## Ensure youth work provision is 'reasonably practical'

A definition from section 507b that is often misunderstood is 'do as much as is reasonably practicable'. Reasonably practical is a legal phrase that sets an expectation that action will be taken. The same legal phrase is embedded in the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and the Equalities Act (2010) where employers must take reasonable steps to protect people by removing risks or discrimination. In this context, the phrase is used with the understanding that actions must be taken in most

cases but, where this is impractical, mitigations will apply. The same approach applies to S507B. Local authorities will be expected by communities to work together with partners to deliver effective and sufficient youth work. But where this is just impractical then mitigations should be applied. Local authorities will be interested to note that because S507B specifically allows councils to charge for services, doing nothing due to cost is not seen as a reasonable response.



## Review

When conducting a review of its youth work offer, a local authority should consider the following steps:

**Set clear objectives:** determine the purpose and goals of the review. Identify what specific aspects of the youth work offer need evaluation, such as services, programmes, resources or engagement strategies. How will you involve young people and the VCFS in the process and how will they know the review has been robust?

**Gather data and feedback:** collect information from various sources, including young people, youth workers, community stakeholders and relevant organisations. Use methods such as surveys, focus groups, interviews and existing data to gain insights into the effectiveness and impact of the current youth work provision. Sessional recordings, project evaluations and interviews with young people can provide unique insights into the effectiveness of the local youth offer. By encouraging all local youth provision and providers to update their profile regularly in the [National Youth Work Census](#) will also support currency of data capture.

**Evaluate outcomes:** assess the outcomes and impact of the youth work offer against the council's objectives set out in the local youth offer plan. Examine the reach, engagement and satisfaction levels among young people. Analyse data on participation rates, skills development, positive outcomes and the impact on wellbeing and social inclusion.

**Review resource allocation:** evaluate the allocation of resources, including funding, staffing and facilities, to ensure they align with the identified needs and priorities of young people in the community. Consider any gaps or areas requiring improvement, especially linked to young people's barriers of access to suitable youth provision (location, cost, equality etc.).

**Consult with stakeholders:** engage with young people, youth workers, community groups, parents and other relevant stakeholders to gather their perspectives, suggestions and recommendations. Seek input on how to enhance the youth work offer and address identified issues.

Identify best practices: explore and learn from successful youth work initiatives and models implemented in other areas. Explore innovative approaches, evidence-based programmes, and strategies that can be adapted to improve the local youth work provision.

**Develop an improvement plan:** based on the findings and feedback, develop an improvement plan that outlines specific steps, timelines, responsibilities and resources required to enhance the youth work offer. Prioritise areas for improvement and identify measurable objectives using the National Youth Work Curriculum and Outcomes Framework 2.1.

**Implement and monitor progress:** implement the action plan and track the progress of initiatives and interventions. Regularly evaluate and monitor outcomes, making adjustments as needed. Ensure effective communication channels with young people and other stakeholders to maintain engagement and transparency throughout the process.

**Promote collaboration:** foster partnerships with local youth organisations, schools, businesses and community groups to maximise resources and opportunities for young people. Collaborate on joint initiatives, shared funding applications and coordinated services to create a holistic and supportive youth work ecosystem.

**Review and continuous improvement:** regularly review and evaluate the effectiveness of the revised youth work offer. Seek ongoing feedback from young people and stakeholders to ensure it remains responsive to changing needs and priorities. Continuously seek opportunities for innovation, learning and improvement.

By following these steps, a local council can conduct a thorough review of its youth work offer, leading to informed decision-making, improved services and better outcomes for young people in the community.

## Local Youth Work Plan checklist

- |  |                      | <b>Key</b> ✓ Yes    ○ Partially    ✗ No   |                      |
|--|----------------------|---|----------------------|
| <p><b>1.</b> Are the youth work services and programmes meeting the needs and aspirations of young people in your community?</p>   | <p>✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p> | <p><b>3.</b> Are the allocated resources, including funding, staff, and facilities, sufficient and properly aligned with the identified needs of young people?</p>  | <p>✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p> |
| <p><b>2.</b> Are current youth work activities effective and impactful in promoting positive outcomes, such as skills development, educational attainment, wellbeing and social inclusion?</p> | <p>✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p> | <p><b>4.</b> Are there any gaps or areas for improvement in the accessibility and inclusivity of the youth work offer, particularly for marginalised or under-represented groups?</p>                     | <p>✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p> |
| <p><b>5.</b> Are you engaging and involving young people in the design, implementation and evaluation of youth work initiatives?</p>   | <p>✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p> | <p><b>6.</b> Are evidence-based best practices and innovative approaches being used or adapted to enhance your local youth work provision?</p>  | <p>✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p> |
|  |                      | <p><b>7.</b> Can partnerships and collaborations be fostered with community organisations, schools, businesses and other stakeholders to strengthen the overall youth work ecosystem?</p>                 | <p>✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p> |
|  |                      | <p><b>8.</b> Is continuous monitoring, evaluation and improvement being used to ensure the youth work offer remains responsive to the evolving needs and priorities of young people in the community?</p> | <p>✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p> |

### Additional Resources:

Youth provision locally must be secured that meets or exceeds the Youth Work Practice Standards in England. This is a simple set of national standards and measures that seeks to secure high-quality provision for young people.

The [NYA Safeguarding and Risk Management Hub](#) has published a set of Safeguarding Standards for the youth sector<sup>35</sup>. These have been co-designed with the youth sector and set out the measures required to safeguard and protect children, young people and vulnerable adults.



## 2.5 Quality of youth work practice

Youth work is a distinct educational process adapted across a variety of settings to support a young person's personal, social and educational development. It begins with the nurturing of a unique, challenging and developmental relationship with young people that is able to:

- Explore young people's values, beliefs, ideas and issues
- Enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society
- Facilitate the learning of a set of practical or technical skills and competencies that enable them to realise their full potential



High-quality youth work helps deliver the best outcomes for young people.



High-quality youth work helps deliver the best outcomes for young people. It is underpinned by a clear set of principles, practice guidance and values that are led by the needs and wishes of young people. It is delivered by skilled and trained youth workers and volunteers as identified by a code of professional practice, the [National Occupational Standards for Youth Work](#), and embodied in legislation, standards and guidance.<sup>36</sup>

## Legislation and standards

The National Youth Agency (NYA) has published updated [National Youth Work Practice Standards](#) for England. The document outlines the expectations set by the NYA as the national standards and regulatory body for youth work in England. These are informed by national youth sector organisations and frontline practitioners. Local authorities are encouraged to use the NYA's Youth Work Practice Standards to underpin quality assessments when funding, commissioning or delivering youth work.

In addition, we provide examples of good and best practice in the delivery of a youth work project – legally, safely and effectively. This is available through the resource '[Youth Club in a Box](#)'. This resource provides the required processes, resources, frameworks and legal requirements to deliver local youth clubs.

## Implementation

Providing high quality youth-centred work is vitally important to ensure all young people feel secure, can participate and have their voices heard. The NYA recognises that strong relationships are the foundation for all good youth work practice. Robust quality-assurance processes that are bound by standards provide an opportunity to celebrate the many skilled and effective youth workers and volunteers who practice educational and developmental youth work. They support young people to identify their strengths, learn, grow and become active members of their communities.



**Sufficiency and resourcing:** local authorities should identify the methods for securing sufficient resources to provide their youth offer. Ideally, this would include discussions with teams across the authority to ensure that work streams and plans are aligned. This might include public health, early help, social care, sport and leisure, and the arts, to create a multifaceted range of opportunities.

This approach can be further enhanced through joint planning with public, private and voluntary community sectors and, most importantly, young people. Embedding processes that ensure young people and key stakeholders have a meaningful role in strategic planning, development and the evaluation of youth work can lead to evidentially better outcomes for young people, quality practice and a thriving youth work ecosystem.

**Ecosystems and support:** a healthy youth work ecosystem can be established by working together to ensure that young people receive the highest-quality services by fostering an approach that creates supportive networks and training opportunities. Setting high expectations for practice, whether youth work is delivered through a retained local authority approach or grant and commissioning arrangements, is more likely to provide high-quality experiences and outcomes. Extending these opportunities to, and working closely with, VCFS partners, [Regional Youth Work Units](#) and local youth partnerships creates a stronger, more wide-reaching youth provision.<sup>37</sup>

**Needs assessment:** a dynamic approach to needs assessment can be used to shape services and steer the direction of work that is responsive to changing needs and equality, equity, diversity and inclusion considerations. Good needs analysis (as highlighted in this document) will also identify existing and new resources to support the development of quality youth work practice. This might include qualified youth workers and those with specialist skillsets, as well as trainers, programmes or activities, and even access to good venues and facilities.

**Competent and skilled workforce:** a distinct and recognised role for youth work should be established with partners and other local services. Integral to this is a clear set of standards that outline the expected training and professional development of the teams working with young people. Individuals and teams should be appropriately qualified and trained in light of their to roles and responsibilities.

**Standards:** it is appreciated that youth work operates across a range of traditional and more contemporary settings, including, for example, digital spaces, those within the allied sectors such as the uniformed sector (Army Cadets), and even health, sport and the arts. Not all providers of services to young people will consider their workforce to be youth workers, although the same practice and principles should be sufficiently and conscientiously applied. Local authorities should consider this when determining the funding, procurement and delivery of services to ensure good standards are clearly outlined and supported.

“

**Individuals and teams should be appropriately qualified and trained in light of their roles and responsibilities.**

”

**Safeguarding:** practice should be safe, sufficient and compliant. The local youth offer plan should clearly identify how it is keeping young people safe and proactively directing services in response to their individual needs. Every organisation and its staff members have a duty of care to the young people they work with to protect them from unnecessary risk or harm. The protection of young people is based on the principles outlined in the UK Government's [Children Act 2004](#) and the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#), the Department for Education's [Working Together](#) and the [Out of School Settings code of practice](#).<sup>38 39 40 41</sup>



Youth work supervision  
utilises reflective practice  
as part of continuous  
improvement and  
development of the  
workforce.



**Curriculum:** consider the skills and strength-based approach that youth workers implement to develop trusting relationships with young people. The dynamic needs assessment and planning process will have identified some of the needs of young people, and good youth work enables them to identify their own needs, goals, interests and concerns through a variety of different approaches. Supporting the implementation of the National Youth Work Curriculum will bring equal opportunity and experience to young people, wherever they are accessing youth activities and programmes in the local community.

**Reflective practice:** professional practices for youth services should be adopted that include reflection practice, supervision, professional development opportunities in line with contemporary youth work practice. Youth work supervision utilises reflective practice as part of continuous improvement and development of the workforce. Consider how this practice can be supported and adopted where it is not currently being used.

**Quality assurance:** an effective measurement framework should be adopted that identifies outcomes and indicators that can be measured through analysis, utilising a range of reliable, valid, sufficient and authentic data sources. A review of existing systems to ensure they are fit for purpose will help to ensure that youth work practice can be monitored, measured and assessed as part of direct delivery or partnership work. The findings can be used to identify the success of the strategic plan and shape future delivery.

Quality assurance processes can measure:

- the impact of young people's participation;
- the quality of practice;
- whether the intended outcomes have been met and to what effect; and
- ineffective and unsafe practices.

And can lead to:

- a better understanding of the work;
- demonstration of economic and social value;
- improved outcomes for young people; and
- increased or sustained investment.

**Sustainability of provision:** youth work is effective because trusted adults form professional relationships with young people built on mutual trust and respect. Sustainable youth services provide young people with access to resources and support that are both long-term and socially responsible. Youth services equip young people with the tools and resources they need to achieve their individual and collective potential, to become agents of positive change in their communities and beyond.

A committed and long-term approach is essential to the retention and development of sustainable youth services as part of the statutory duty for local authorities to secure sufficient services for young people. This will protect against budget cuts and any further loss of youth provision.

## Quality of youth work practice checklist

Here are the elements you can consider when building quality youth work practice:

						<b>Key</b> ✓ Yes ○ Partially ✗ No												
<p>1. Have you undertaken a dynamic needs assessment alongside stakeholders?</p> <p>2. Has the needs assessment led to the development of a comprehensive long-term youth work strategy and plan?</p> <p>3. Are the goals and objectives of the strategy clear and measurable?</p> <p>4. Is there an adequate budget to support the strategy?</p> <p>5. Is there a clear and effective structure in place to support the development of youth work?</p>	✓	○	✗	<p>6. Are there equitable commissioning or grant-making processes to support diverse groups to access opportunities?</p> <p>7. Have you established partnerships with VCFS partners, foundations and businesses?</p> <p>8. Is your approach to working with partners and commissioned services relational with a focus on the development of a thriving ecosystem of opportunities for young people?</p> <p>9. Do you have effective quality-assurance systems in place to monitor and measure the outcomes of youth work activities and best practice? Are you making good use of technology to support this process?</p>	✓	○	✗	<p>10. Do your quality-assurance systems focus on supportive approaches to improve the quality and standards of the services provided?</p> <p>11. Is there sufficient mechanism in place for young people, communities and partners to provide feedback and inform the decision-making processes?</p> <p>12. Are there sufficient mechanisms in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of young people participating in youth work activities and services?</p> <p>13. Are you responding sufficiently and proactively to your statutory safeguarding and risk-management duties, including your approaches to contextual safeguarding?<sup>42</sup></p>	✓	○	✗	<p>14. Have you determined your expected workforce standards and ensure they are met?</p> <p>15. Are there enough trained staff and volunteers to deliver quality youth work?</p> <p>16. Have you considered how an equitable, creative and contemporary Youth Work Curriculum is developed, and do youth workers and volunteers have the skillset required to undertake this work?</p>	✓	○	✗			
		○	✗			✓	○		✗		✓		○	✗		✓	○	✗
		✗	✓			✓	○		✗		✓		○	✗		✓	○	✗
		✗	✓			✓	○		✗		✓		○	✗		✓	○	✗
		✗	✓			✓	○		✗		✓		○	✗		✓	○	✗

## Additional resources:

Local Government Association, [‘Youth services’](#)

NYA, [‘A guide to commissioning outcomes for young people’](#)

NYA, [‘Hear by Right framework and quality mark’](#)

NYA, [‘Quality mark and framework’](#)

NYA, [‘National curriculum framework and briefings’](#)

NYA, [‘National Youth Sector Census’](#)

NYA, [‘Youth Workforce Development Strategy, 2022 to 2027’](#)

[Youth Work One](#)

Youth Work Register (available on Youth Work One)

UK Government, [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#)

YMCA George Williams College, [‘The Centre for Youth Impact’](#)

NYA, [‘National Occupational Standards for Youth Work’](#)

[Young People’s Foundation Trust](#)

## 2.6 Workforce planning and support

To deliver an effective S507B offer to young people, the local authority will need to assess and understand the scope and capacity of their local workforce. Local authorities will need to secure a sufficiently skilled and capable workforce to deliver its programmes and plans (the local youth offer). This includes those who are employed by the council and those employed or volunteering with external partners. One of the most impactful steps a local authority can take is to develop a youth offer workforce plan and develop locally supported training to match local need.

Modern youth services provide a huge range of services to young people in a variety of settings. They work alongside professionals in allied services like health, housing, education, criminal justice and social care while maintaining the young person centred, relational focus which sets the practice apart.

They are also in tune with the changing needs and desires of young people as society changes around them. The aim of workforce development is to ensure that your local workforce has the necessary competencies to provide high-quality services and support to young people in any circumstances. It can involve training, mentoring, coaching, secondment and so on. By investing in workforce development, local authorities can improve the quality of youth services they offer, increase staff retention rates, and ultimately enhance the outcomes of young people.



In 2023, there are new youth work qualifications at levels 2 and 3, plus continuous professional development modules at levels 4 and 5. There is a new degree-level Youth Work Apprenticeship pathway and post-graduate courses in youth work leadership. The NYA also anticipates that a growing demand for youth work services may persuade workers who left the sector over the last decade to return. These colleagues will need to retrain and update their knowledge and skills if they have been out of the sector for more than three years. The NYA Academy and local training partners can help meet this challenge.

## Frameworks and guidance

- Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC), [‘Pink Book’](#)<sup>143</sup>
- NYA, [‘National occupational standards and English youth work policy – new document published’](#)
- NYA, [‘Youth work qualifications for England’](#)
- [Youth Worker Register](#)
- [Workforce Development Self-Assessment Framework](#)



## Implementation

To secure suitable and professional youth provision, the local workforce must have the skills and competencies needed to meet the needs of young people. Youth work is a specialist profession alongside teaching and social work, and councils will need to secure appropriate JNC-recognised professionals to lead their services.

An appropriate and sufficient level of workforce capacity and skills for a local youth offer is essential. The NYA has developed a number of resourcing models that may support councils to understand what service levels could look like (based on young people's needs, geography etc.). Local authorities interested in exploring these models should contact the NYA directly. How resources are distributed and deployed must be informed by your needs assessments and decided in consultation with young people, VCFS partners and other key stakeholders.

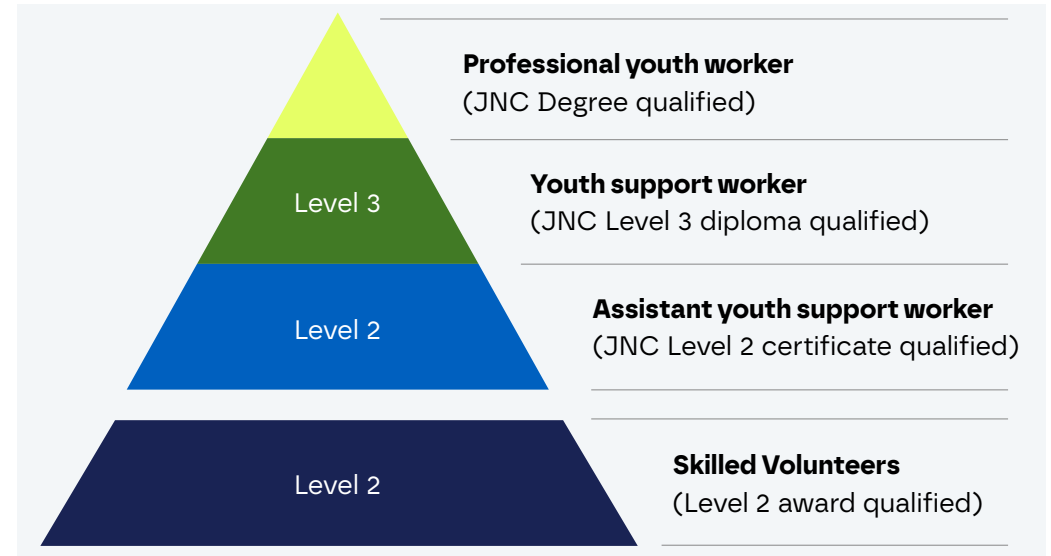
Youth work has three levels of practitioners recognised by the JNC for England and Wales. Just as in other professional areas, local authorities should secure a hierarchy of leaders, managers and commissioners who are

JNC-recognised professionals. These colleagues are appropriately placed to oversee and supervise the delivery of the local youth provision. When using VCFS partners, local authorities should consider the levels of skills and training of their practitioners and if needed support them to meet the requirements of the National Occupational Standards.

Just as parents expect their children to be educated by qualified teachers and not teaching assistants or volunteers, the same applies to the local authority's youth services.

While it may not always be possible for all projects to employ professionally qualified youth workers, it is best practice to ensure that all volunteers and youth support workers have access to support from a qualified professional youth worker (who is on the Youth Work Register).<sup>44</sup> Figure 4 shows the three different levels of skilled workers who support the delivery of the local youth offer. Local authorities will want to ensure the appropriate levels of skills and qualified staff to ensure a safe, effective and successful youth offer is delivered in line with the National Occupational Standards.

Figure 4



The local authority provides the support and infrastructure to connect and build local workforces that span the statutory and voluntary sector so that it can deliver the best service for young people as set out in the local plan. This can be achieved by engaging with existing local voluntary sector networks (such as Regional Youth Work Units or other infrastructure bodies) or supporting the development of new local partnerships.

As a minimum, all staff (including volunteers) should have completed training in:

- Safeguarding
- Managing risk
- Emergency first aid
- Leading activities with young people
- Building relationships with young people
- Recording and storing information (including confidentiality)

All staff and volunteers should have the opportunity to access and engage in training and development activities that support their own needs and those of young people. This can include accredited training, in-house or local training events, reflective practice with colleagues and supervisors, or qualifications. The NYA has an online learning platform called the [Youth Work Academy](#) that provides high-quality accredited qualifications. It is free to use and created by youth sector experts.

In seeking to secure an effective youth offer, local authorities will want to consider implementing a workforce development plan. This plan will need to be devised with consideration given to your local needs analysis, the capacity and strength of existing local providers, and the strategic and operational priorities of other allied sectors in the area. A co-produced plan will support the local authority and its partners to invest in and secure the right mix of workers (paid or voluntary) to meet the needs of qualifying young people.



## Workforce planning checklist

Key ✓ Yes ○ Partially ✗ No

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>1.</b> Have you completed the workforce development self-assessment?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p>                             | <p><b>6.</b> How do you provide ongoing support to staff and partners?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p>  |
| <p><b>2.</b> Have you conducted a training needs assessment (TNA)?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p>                                     | <p><b>7.</b> How do you recognise the impact of youth workers across wider strategic local outcomes?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p>  |
| <p><b>3.</b> Have you developed a training plan or workforce development plan that addresses TNA gaps?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p> | <p><b>8.</b> Have you identified the resources required to support ongoing workforce development?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p>   |
| <p><b>4.</b> Do you encourage ongoing professional development?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p>  | <p><b>9.</b> Have you identified the level of training and qualifications required to undertake youth work, ensuring they are geared towards the role and responsibility?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p> |
| <p><b>5.</b> Do you evaluate training effectiveness?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">✓<br/>○<br/>✗</p>   |   |

### Additional resources:

NYA, '[Getting qualified](#)'

NYA, '[Skills overview](#)'

NYA, '[The Education and Training Standards Committee](#)'

NYA, '[Workforce Development Self-Assessment Framework](#)'

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, '[Workforce planning](#)'

[JNC Agreement](#)

[Youth Work One](#)

## 2.7 National Youth Work Curriculum

The National Youth Agency's [National Youth Work Curriculum](#) provides a standardised approach to youth work practice and delivery within your area, as well as assessing supporting services that aim to meet the needs of local young people.<sup>45</sup> Its purpose is to enable a greater understanding of youth work practice and provide an educational framework, as well as acting as a reference tool to be used by decision-makers, policymakers, commissioners, youth workers and young people.



Youth work is a form of education pedagogy; it provides non-formal education and offers informal learning opportunities. The Curriculum sets out the educational process that underpins good youth work. It is set in the context of youth work values, principles and ethics. It is not a dictated set of subjects or a syllabus, but rather a framework to support and develop practices that are a catalyst for learning. Outcomes are not prescribed, so as to be flexible to the needs, interests and concerns of young people. As such, at the heart of the Youth Work Curriculum are young people as individuals, groups and communities.<sup>46</sup>



“  
**The National Youth Work Curriculum sets out the educational process that underpins good youth work.**  
”

The National Youth Work Curriculum sets out the educational process that underpins good youth work. It is set in the context of youth work values, principles and ethics. It is not a directive set of subjects or a syllabus, but rather a framework to help articulate and develop practices that are a catalyst for learning. Outcomes from the Curriculum are not prescribed but are instead flexible to the needs, interests and concerns of young people. At the heart of the Curriculum are young people as individuals, groups and communities.

The Curriculum articulates the diverse nature, fluidity and flexibility of youth work practices and how these elements enable young people's learning and development in a broad range of contexts. The process of youth work is person centred, focusing on the young person and their needs, whether as individuals or within a group. This is illustrated in the National Youth Work Curriculum model (see Figure 5 on p38) and can be read in full using the links provided.

Figure 5: The 10 themes of the National Youth Work Curriculum can be used alongside the values and ethics of good youth work to articulate how youth work transforms the lives of young people



### Legislation and guidance

NYA, '[National Youth Work Curriculum](#)'

NYA, '[Youth Work Practice Standards](#)'

Centre for Youth Impact, '[Framework of Outcomes for Young People 2.1](#)'

### Implementation

Adopting the National Youth Work Curriculum will require coordination and collaboration among multiple stakeholders. It may take time and effort to fully integrate the Curriculum into your existing youth work. Flexibility, adaptability and a commitment to continuous improvement are essential for successful implementation.

**Familiarisation and training:** familiarise key stakeholders (including senior managers, commissioners and those involved in service development and delivery) with the National Youth Work Curriculum. Ensure there is an understanding of the goals, objectives and components of the Curriculum, as well as any guidelines, standards or assessment criteria that are outlined. This could be through training, workshops or using the resources available on the [NYA website](#).

**Implementation planning:** create a detailed plan that outlines the timeline, roles and responsibilities of stakeholders, the available resources, and strategies for monitoring and evaluation. Consider how the Curriculum will be integrated into existing youth work programmes or initiatives and how any necessary adaptations or modifications will be made to suit local contexts. This could sit within the local authority's children and young people's plan to ensure that all activity and actions are clearly linked to the Curriculum for quality standardisation.

“  
It may take time and effort to fully integrate the Curriculum into your existing youth work.  
”



**Workforce training (statutory and VCFS):**

train your workforce. Provide professional development opportunities for all people involved in youth work to ensure they are equipped with the knowledge and skills to carry out the Curriculum effectively. This may include workshops, seminars or online training sessions. Consider providing ongoing support, mentoring and supervision. This could be through informal networking opportunities, support from local regional infrastructure bodies or building peer-learning opportunities, as well as more formal training structures.

**Develop local tools:** create or adapt Curriculum materials and resources to suit the local context and need. These may include session plans, activity guides, toolkits or signposting to other materials from local or national providers. Ensure the resources are culturally sensitive, inclusive and accessible to diverse youth populations.

**Stakeholder engagement:**

collaborate with all relevant local stakeholders to ensure that the Curriculum is realised across all local youth provision. This should include all places that deliver youth work included in the local offer.

It is also useful to engage with funders and decision-makers to ensure that they understand the purpose and value of the Curriculum, and how this can be used to build funding and delivery models, monitoring, evaluation and learning frameworks and to support the delivery of local outcomes.

**Monitor and evaluate impact:** ensure that you are consulting locally with young people, youth workers, volunteers and organisations to monitor and evaluate effectiveness and local use of the Curriculum. Use findings to inform improvements and updates to local resources. The evolution of local adaptations of the Curriculum should be entirely shaped by how it is used and how young people experience it in the locality. Involving key stakeholders will ensure that all changes are evidence based.



## How the Curriculum adds value to the issues that matter to young people

The National Youth Work Curriculum can help you meet the needs of the young people who live in your area. Below we outline how to take a specific theme and apply the Curriculum framework to find a solution.

**Theme:** serious youth violence. The number of serious youth violence (SYV) incidents in your borough or county has risen sharply and the welfare and safety of young people and the wider community are at risk.

### Youth work Curriculum response by theme

**Identity and belonging:** SYV is complex, but a careful intervention can help young people understand their position and place within the community. Feeling a connection to a wider community through youth work activity such as exploring what they contribute to society, how they are valued, what they offer to their peers and what their peers can offer them, can make all the difference in understanding their place, their role and their reason for belonging. Knowing who you are and feeling like you belong will lead to a sense of pride, attachment and commitment to your community and your home.

**Health and wellbeing:** the obvious impact here is that of physical and emotional wellbeing. By engaging in youth work activity aimed at increasing awareness of individual health, young people will be better informed to make positive decisions. Working with skilled professionals who can help individuals connect with their futures through a healthy physical and emotional lifestyle will improve esteem, connectivity and general wellbeing. There are many benefits to engaging in targeted youth work provision that aims to reduce SYV. Creating a directory of trusted and proven skilled youth work organisations in your area will help you respond to prioritised needs.

**Economic and financial wellbeing:** working to reduce SYV will influence the economic and financial wellbeing of young people. By providing spaces and places for young people to have access to a trusted relationship with a youth worker, you will be able to provide the environment where they can engage in employability workshops, a place where they can

explore routes into education and employment, where they can work on developing a CV, or developing the skills needed to secure future placements. Invest in young people and they will invest in their communities.

**Skills development:** there are many skills that a young person can learn and develop to help them deal with the consequences of witnessing or living in an area identified as having SYV. These include a skills development course to apply emergency first aid, a workshop to develop the skills necessary to de-escalate violence using words, or even simply learning when to walk away from a potentially dangerous situation and/or call the authorities. Working alongside their youth workers, young people can identify what skills they need to develop to keep themselves and others safe.

**The environment and sustainable development:** by engaging in a youth work project that helps young people understand their area and encourages them to take ownership of their environment, young people can develop a sense of attachment and pride. This leads to a desire to improve the general look of their community for the benefit of all residents. A community project that brings everyone together for a common purpose (such as an allotment) will positively impact people's feelings towards where they live and how they act.

**Healthy and safe relationships:** by working with a youth worker or volunteer, young people can develop the knowledge and emotional intelligence to recognise positive or destructive relationships in their lives. A skilled youth worker can empower young people to identify what they need from a friend or family member, as well as from adults and those in positions of authority.

This recognition could lead to improved life choices and hopefully support them to move away from negative relationships (if possible); manage those relationships when they can't avoid them (or ask someone for help); and build new positive relationships that will encourage personal growth and wellbeing.

**Arts, culture and heritage:** using the arts to explore, identify and connect with your heritage is key to bringing young people together. Understanding how differences and similarities relate can provide the knowledge to demystify new cultures and avoid potential community clashes. The arts are a fantastic way to bring people together through the medium of film, dance, music or theatre. The arts can also break down barriers and unite people with a common purpose. Youth workers can help facilitate sessions that give young people a safe space to explore and experience what they enjoy most.

## National Youth Work Curriculum checklist

		Key		✓ Yes	○ Partially	✗ No
1.	Have you reviewed the National Youth Work Curriculum documents and understood its goals, objectives and components?	✓	○	✗		
2.	Have you developed an implementation plan, including a timeline, roles and responsibilities of stakeholders, available resources, and strategies for monitoring and evaluation?	✓	○	✗		
3.	Does your workforce development plan include clear and accessible opportunities to equip staff and volunteers with the knowledge and skills to utilise the Curriculum?	✓	○	✗		
4.	Have you created a variety of Curriculum materials and resources or shared those already being used?	✓	○	✗		
5.	Have you engaged all stakeholders in the development of your implementation plan (young people, local authority partners, voluntary sector organisations)?	✓	○	✗		
6.	Do you have mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the implementation progress and effectiveness of the curriculum?	✓	○	✗		
7.	Have you considered strategies for sustainability of implementation such as securing funding, building capacity to develop local resources and support for VCFS partners?	✓	○	✗		
8.	Is the local implementation of the Curriculum culturally sensitive, inclusive and accessible?	✓	○	✗		
9.	Can you show how young people are actively involved in the planning, implementation and review of the Curriculum in the community?	✓	○	✗		
10.	Do you regularly assess the impact and outcomes of the Curriculum on outcomes for young people, and make data-driven decisions for improvement?	✓	○	✗		

### Additional resources:

NYA, '[Hear by Right](#)'

NYA, '[Quality mark](#)'

NYA, '[National occupational standards and English youth work policy – new document published](#)'

NYA, '[What is youth work?](#)'

The Institute for Youth Work, '[Code of ethics](#)'

Unicef, '[Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)'

[Youth Work One](#)

## 2.8 Safeguarding

Good youth work is underpinned by the principle that the welfare of young people is paramount. The Department for Education report, [Working together to safeguard children \(2018\)](#), emphasises the need for all agencies to work together locally and nationally to keep children and young people safe.<sup>47</sup>

Safeguarding standards within youth work are not universal due to variations in delivery models from the statutory to voluntary sector. It is therefore the duty of the local authority to ensure that there are appropriate and adequate mechanisms in place to support the safe delivery of youth work activity across stakeholders involved in the provision of a local youth offer.

The nature of youth work means that youth workers are often the first to notice key indicators of risk or abuse (such as behaviour and mood changes). The youth work relationship (one that centres on young people and is based on trust and reciprocity) means that youth workers may well also be the first people that young people turn to when they are ready to disclose a safeguarding concern.

Conversely, youth work happening in diverse spaces and places is more difficult to monitor and regulate for safety. Third-sector organisations may not have the infrastructure in place to provide adequate support to practitioners or safeguarding mechanisms (including access to well-trained designated safeguarding leads (DSLs)).<sup>48</sup>

Where there are concerns about welfare, it is the duty of all agencies to take appropriate actions to address those concerns by working to agreed local policies and procedures. This includes all individuals (paid or unpaid) who are working with young people as defined by the parameters of youth work.

## Legislation and frameworks

[Care Act 2014](#)

[Charity Commission Guidance: Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees 2017](#) (updated 2022)

Child Protection in Sport Unit, '[Standards for safeguarding and protecting children in sport](#)', 2018

Department for Education, '[Out-of-school settings: voluntary safeguarding code of practice](#)', 2018

[Education and Inspections Act 2006](#), part 1, section 6, page 13 a and b (physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing (a), protection from harm and neglect (b)).

NSPCC, '[Safeguarding and child protection standards of the voluntary and community sector](#)', 2019

[Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#)

[The Children Act 1989](#) (updated 2004)

[The Health and Social Care Act 2012](#)

[Working together to safeguard children](#), 2018

[Youth Work in Private Dwellings Guidance](#)

## Implementation

Local authorities are perfectly placed to coordinate and facilitate advice, support and guidance for all youth work delivered in the locality as part of the local youth provision. This will have a direct impact and benefit on keeping children and young people who are at risk safe. It can reduce the need for higher-level service intervention (by earlier identification of need and risk). If local authorities can create networks and mechanisms to upskill and support those working with young people, they enable an infrastructure that is alert, effective, efficient and sustainable.



**The youth work relationship (one that centres on young people and is based on trust and reciprocity) means that youth workers may well also be the first people that young people turn to when they are ready to disclose a safeguarding concern.**





## This can be achieved by:

### **Oversight and responsible**

**infrastructure:** Local authorities should ensure that they have a clear infrastructure in place (directly, in partnership or through commissioned services) to ensure that the VCFS youth work providers have robust safeguarding policies and practices. Where they don't exist, local authorities should ensure they have access to support for developing safeguarding policies and practice. This could include access to gaining disclosure and barring service (DBS) checks for all volunteers, support to develop policies and procedures, and opportunities to learn about safer recruiting and staff management in safeguarding.<sup>49</sup> Support should also be in place for organisations to access help, advice and guidance in relation to risk assessment and management.

**Key information availability:** ensuring that there is clear signposting to information that can help providers of the local youth offer is essential. Most councils will have a resource to signpost providers to. This can build a foundation of knowledge, good practice and, most importantly,

embed a safeguarding culture across the organisation regardless of its size or status.

This could be through the creation (and clear communication of):

- an information hub or page on a website;
- regular drop-in sessions; and
- the support of a dedicated individual to lead and coordinate information accessibility.

Often, VCFS grassroots providers do not have knowledge of where to access support, information and advice about issues around safeguarding. More obvious high-level child protection concerns have clearly delineated pathways for referrals, information sharing and actions. For things that are a grey area (unclear or unique), it may not always be clear where to get information that can help and support practitioners and volunteers. Local authorities should consider how they support VCFS grassroots providers to access informal advice in assessing grey areas.

### **Including youth work in information sharing:**

youth workers have unprecedented access to young people and their families. They often work very closely with them and have privileged access to information they share. The appropriate sharing of information can dramatically increase safeguarding for young people. This was best highlighted through the Rochdale Inquiry where local youth workers were highlighted as the professional service trying to prevent harm when few would listen.<sup>50</sup> Local authorities should build mechanisms for ensuring that VCFS youth workers (where appropriate) are included in reciprocal information-sharing at all levels.

### **Access to designated safeguarding**

**leads and support:** Local authorities should ensure that all providers of youth work in their communities have access to well-trained, well-resourced DSLs, and that there is a mechanism for these leads within community organisations to access support and supervision (including peer supervision).

Research conducted by the [NYA and the NSPCC](#) in 2020 identified that not all VCFS organisations had access to a DSL who was appropriately trained or experienced. Often DSLs were volunteers who gained the title by default. While most have undergone some level of DSL training, they lack support networks and mechanisms to ensure checks and balances in decision-making. Local authorities should consider whether the support for DSLs across delivery partners is suitably robust and supportive.

**Training:** local authorities, and all providers of youth work, can create a one-stop-shop that provides routes to safeguarding training for practitioners at all levels within their organisation (from minimal contact volunteers to DSLs). This should include opportunities for regular training updates and refreshers for those in direct contact with young people.

There should be an expectation that all people working with young people (paid or unpaid, in any capacity) have undergone basic safeguarding training that is updated bi-annually. There should be opportunities (and expectations) that people are undergoing training that responds directly to the needs of keeping young people safe today. Examples include:

- Online safety
- Child sexual exploitation
- Child criminal exploitation
- Mental health
- Conditions at home and school
- First aid
- Risk-assessing activities

This training does not have to be provided by the local authority but it should be identified, coordinated and promoted by them. There is a wide range of free training available nationally, including from the NSPCC and through the [NYA Safeguarding and Risk Management Hub](#).<sup>51 52</sup>



## Safeguarding checklist

- |  |             |
|--|-------------|
| 1. Do you provide access to safeguarding training and resources, such as policy templates, guidance and best-practice examples?  | ✓<br>○<br>✗ |
| 2. Do you conduct regular checks and audits of youth and community organisations to ensure they are meeting safeguarding standards, including DBS checks for staff and volunteers? | ✓<br>○<br>✗ |
| 3. Do you offer advice and support to youth and community organisations in developing their own safeguarding policies and procedures?  | ✓<br>○<br>✗ |
| 4. Do you provide opportunities for youth and community organisations to share best practice and learn from each other, such as workshops or training sessions?                    | ✓<br>○<br>✗ |

- |   |             |
|---|-------------|
| 5. Do you promote and encourage participation in local safeguarding networks, including local safeguarding-children boards and other relevant forums?   | ✓<br>○<br>✗ |
| 6. Do you ensure that youth and community organisations are aware of their responsibilities and duties under relevant legislation and regulations, such as the Children Act 1989 and the Care Act 2014? | ✓<br>○<br>✗ |
| 7. Do you provide support and guidance to youth and community organisations in responding to safeguarding concerns and allegations, including how to report incidents and manage risk?                  | ✓<br>○<br>✗ |

**Key** ✓ Yes ○ Partially ✗ No

- |  |             |
|--|-------------|
| 8. Do you ensure that youth and community organisations are aware of the appropriate referral pathways and channels for safeguarding concerns, including LA children's services, the police and other relevant agencies? | ✓<br>○<br>✗ |
| 9. Do you provide ongoing support and monitoring to youth and community organisations to ensure they continue to meet safeguarding standards and maintain a safe and secure environment for children and young people?   | ✓<br>○<br>✗ |
| 10. Do you encourage youth and community organisations to involve children and young people in the development and implementation of their safeguarding policies and procedures?   | ✓<br>○<br>✗ |

In addressing these questions, the aim is to provide a supportive framework for youth and community organisations, enabling them to meet their safeguarding responsibilities and ensure that children and young people are protected from harm.

### **Additional resources:**

Department for Education, [‘Out-of-school settings: voluntary safeguarding code of practice’](#)

NSPCC, [‘Nominated child protection lead or designated safeguarding officer’](#)

NYA, [‘Safeguarding governance guidance’](#)

NYA/Youth Work One, [‘Safeguarding and Risk Management Hub’](#)

NYA, [‘Safeguarding and Risk Hub Training’](#)

NYA, [‘Youth Club In A Box’](#)

NYA, [‘Raising the bar – Youth Work Practice Standards’](#)

## **2.9 Monitoring, evaluation and impact**

Monitoring and evaluation enables local authorities to assess the effectiveness and impact of youth work provision on young people’s lives. By regularly reviewing and analysing the outcomes of youth work, local authorities can identify areas for improvement, make informed decisions about resource allocation, and ensure that youth work provision aligns with local priorities and needs.

Regular monitoring and evaluation also helps local authorities demonstrate accountability and transparency to stakeholders. By regularly reporting on the performance of youth work provision, local authorities can show how public resources are being used to support young people and communities and ensure that outcomes are being achieved.

Lastly, monitoring and evaluation can help local authorities build a robust evidence base about the value and impact of youth work provision, which helps to secure more funding. By collecting and analysing data, local authorities can contribute to the wider body of research on the benefits of youth work for young people’s personal and social development, education and wellbeing.

## **Legislation and frameworks**

[National Youth Sector Census](#)

[Public Contracts Regulations](#) (2015)

[Integrated commissioning for better outcomes](#) – A commissioning framework (LGA)

[NYA Quality Mark](#)



## Implementation

Monitoring and evaluation are essential tools for local authorities to ensure that youth work provision (delivered directly or through VCFS partners) is effective, accountable and evidence based. By investing in monitoring and evaluation systems, local authorities can ensure that the provision is making a positive difference to the lives of young people and contributing to the development of thriving communities.

Nationally, work is underway, at the time of writing, between the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), the NYA and the Centre for Youth Impact to develop a common set of standards for data collection that will allow the sector to build a coherent picture of evidenced-based impact. In anticipation of this development, we highlight some key areas for local authority consideration in building a framework for youth work monitoring and impact evaluation:

**Remain focused on need:** ensure that the locally produced and published needs assessment reflects the holistic needs of young people and not just adults in power. For example, reflect on the National Youth Work Curriculum and consider the importance of the development of socio-emotional skills within this needs analysis. All monitoring and evaluation frameworks should then be aligned to the published local youth plans for children and young people and provide transparency in access to monitoring and evaluation outcomes.

**Planning your monitoring approach:** context is key. Planning should therefore start from the point of what evidence you need and want, and why. Ensuring that there is a centralised point of data collection and analysis will allow you to maximise the impact of this evaluation across all services.

Understanding (and mapping) local funding streams for youth work direct from local authority budgets and indirect from violence reduction units, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, and third sector funders, as well as their evaluation requirements, will allow you to plan a framework that demonstrates impact and outcomes.

Consider, where practical, whether your impact measurement activities can be aligned with the emerging consensus. By doing this, you will be contributing towards providing an evidence base for the value of youth work. This will ensure fairness across youth and community work and provide longer-term opportunities for evidence of impact against a wider data set.

The ultimate aim is that all funding partners agree a common monitoring, reporting and evaluation framework. This will save all providers considerable time in meeting the needs of different funders and allow for a more accurate picture to be created of impact through local youth provision.

There is a suite of impact monitoring and measurement tools that already exists (championed by the DCMS) to support the development of internal plans. These tools can be found on the Youth Work One platform. Training on these tools and methods is freely available.

**Developing your monitoring tools:** ensure that whatever tools and frameworks are developed are accessible, inclusive and can be used by a diverse range of youth work providers. Making processes as straightforward as possible should be at the heart of your plans, although this may require additional training support. This could be found from the local authority or local organisations such as the voluntary and community sector or regional youth work units.

Whatever the approach to capturing monitoring and evaluation activity, it is important to recognise that it takes time and resources to deliver. Consider whether there is a need to formalise monitoring and evaluation activity within procurement processes.



There is excellent work happening across the youth sector that is leading to incredible results. Supporting organisations to reflect that against the statutory duty is helpful. This should be underpinned by the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion. It is not simply enough to say that there is provision – it must be the right provision for all young people, in the right locations and at the right time. This can be achieved in ways that should be supportive and developmental rather than onerous and uncomfortable.

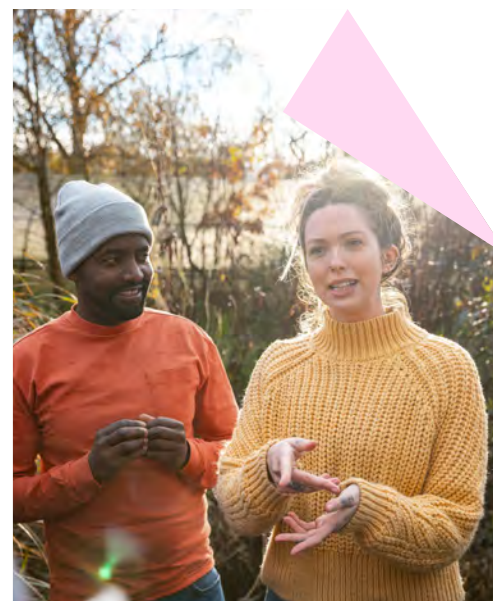
**Mechanisms for this may include:**

- Project or programme visits from senior youth work staff from the local authority
- Establishment of peer observation quality networks
- Action learning and reflective practice cycles
- Liaising with wider funders to share monitoring processes and information

**Evaluation:** evaluation should focus on three levels:

- **Project or programme:** Providing tools to youth workers that bring quality and standardisation of delivery. This should include templates, case studies and training.
- **Outcomes against local plans and needs:** Ensuring project, programme or service delivery responds to that which is identified in the dynamic needs analysis and local plan. This will demonstrate value for money and contribute to both quality and sustainability of provision.
- **Strengthening the evidence base:** Being part of demonstrating the overall return on investment and benefit of youth work to young people nationally provides the opportunity for reciprocal learning. This informs future planning and policy at both local and national levels.

**Collaborating across commissioners and funders:** across localities, funding for youth work can be disparate and differentiated. A single provider could be in receipt of statutory funding, but this could come from different sources (public health, education, social care). They could also be in receipt of grants and trust funds. For VCFS providers, diverse funding approaches are critical for sustainability. One challenge with this is that it can lead to conflicting pressures and drivers for outcomes.



Bringing local funders and commissioning approaches together to enrich and enhance the local youth provision is best achieved through connecting needs analyses, monitoring and evaluation. This should not create competition or a race to the bottom but should be part of an overall quality enhancement and sustainability approach.

Clear determination of local needs should drive local plans, which then inform monitoring, evaluation and learning frameworks. Developing a local funding group or local youth partnership, where key stakeholders can be part of developing collective impact and determining what success looks like, is increasingly recognised as best practice.

## Monitoring and evaluation checklist

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <p><b>1.</b> Are there clear goals and objectives set for the youth and community work provision (as set out in the published local plan)?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">✓<br/>○<br/>×</p>             | <p><b>5.</b> Have you developed or adopted appropriate data-collection tools to ensure that you are able to measure the impact of your services?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">✓<br/>○<br/>×</p> | <p><b>9.</b> Do you communicate results of the monitoring and evaluation process to stakeholders including young people, communities, providers and elected officials?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">✓<br/>○<br/>×</p> |
| <p><b>2.</b> Have you ensured there is sufficiency of provision against the local needs analysis?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">✓<br/>○<br/>×</p>  | <p><b>6.</b> Have you ensured that monitoring and evaluation tools are inclusive, accessible and aligned with emerging best practice?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">✓<br/>○<br/>×</p>            | <p><b>10.</b> Do you regularly review and evaluate monitoring and evaluation plans to ensure that they remain effective and aligned with local plans?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">✓<br/>○<br/>×</p>                  |
| <p><b>3.</b> Have you ensured there are sufficient resources applied to the monitoring and evaluation process (including personnel, time and funding)?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">✓<br/>○<br/>×</p> | <p><b>7.</b> Do you regularly analyse and interpret data to identify trends and areas for improvement?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">✓<br/>○<br/>×</p>   |  |
| <p><b>4.</b> Have you established regular reporting and review processes to assess progress towards goals and adjusted plans accordingly?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">✓<br/>○<br/>×</p>              | <p><b>8.</b> Do you use data and evaluation processes to inform decision-making and improve provision (including identifying good practice)?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">✓<br/>○<br/>×</p>     |  |

**Key** ✓ Yes ○ Partially ✗ No

### Additional resources:

[Youth Work One](#)

NYA, '[Youth Work Academy](#)'



# Section 3

## Resources and references

### 3.1 References

Organisation or initiative	Link
All-Party Parliamentary Group on Youth Affairs	<a href="http://www.youthappg.org.uk/appg-publishes-final-report-on-youth-work/">http://www.youthappg.org.uk/appg-publishes-final-report-on-youth-work/</a>
Ann Craft Trust	<a href="https://www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/safeguarding-and-online-youth-work/">https://www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/safeguarding-and-online-youth-work/</a>
Anti-social behaviour action plan	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/anti-social-behaviour-action-plan">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/anti-social-behaviour-action-plan</a>
Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/22/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/22/contents</a>
British Youth Council Make Your Mark	<a href="https://www.byc.org.uk/uk/uk-youth-parliament/make-your-mark">https://www.byc.org.uk/uk/uk-youth-parliament/make-your-mark</a>
Care Act 2014	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted</a>
Centre for Youth Impact, The Youth Engagement Survey	<a href="#">The Youth Engagement Survey (YES)   Centre for Youth Impact</a>
Children Act 1989 (2004) and Children's and Families Act 2014	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted</a>
Children and Social Work Act 2017	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/16/contents/enacted">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/16/contents/enacted</a>
Children with SEND	<a href="https://www.england.nhs.uk/learning-disabilities/care/children-young-people/send/">https://www.england.nhs.uk/learning-disabilities/care/children-young-people/send/</a> <a href="https://www.gov.uk/children-with-special-educational-needs/extra-SEN-help">https://www.gov.uk/children-with-special-educational-needs/extra-SEN-help</a>
Children and Young Persons Act 2008	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/23/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/23/contents</a>
Crime and Disorder Act (1998)	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/37/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/37/contents</a>

Organisation or initiative	Link
<b>Data Protection Act 2018</b>	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted</a>
<b>Digital strategy</b>	<a href="https://www.gov.uk">UK Digital Strategy – GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>
<b>Department for Education out-of-school settings code of practice</b>	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-out-of-school-settings-code-of-practice">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-out-of-school-settings-code-of-practice</a>
<b>Education Act 1996 section 507B (2002)</b>	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/507B">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/507B</a>
<b>Education and Skills Act 2008</b>	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/contents</a>
<b>Employment Rights Act 1996</b>	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/18/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/18/contents</a>
<b>Equality Act 2010</b>	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents</a>
<b>Health and Care Act (2022)</b>	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2022/31/contents/enacted">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2022/31/contents/enacted</a>
<b>Health and Safety at Work Act 1974</b>	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/37/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/37/contents</a> <a href="https://www.hse.gov.uk/legislation/hswa.htm">https://www.hse.gov.uk/legislation/hswa.htm</a>
<b>Home Office, PREVENT duty guidance</b>	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance</a>
<b>Human Rights Act 1998</b>	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/contents</a>
<b>Improving strategic commissioning in the culture and sport sector: Needs assessment.</b>	<a href="#">guidance-paper-1-needs-as-997.pdf</a>
<b>New public health and LA strengths and risks tool.</b>	
<b>Institute for Youth Work, Code of Ethics</b>	<a href="https://iyw.org.uk/code-of-ethics/">https://iyw.org.uk/code-of-ethics/</a>
<b>Joint Negotiating Committee Agreement ‘pink book’</b>	<a href="https://uniteforoursociety.org/our-sector/jnc/">https://uniteforoursociety.org/our-sector/jnc/</a>



Organisation or initiative	Link
<b>Joint Strategic Needs Assessment</b>	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/joint-strategic-needs-assessment-and-joint-health-and-wellbeing-strategies-explained">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/joint-strategic-needs-assessment-and-joint-health-and-wellbeing-strategies-explained</a>
<b>Local Government Association</b>	<a href="#">Public health strengths and risk tool   Local Government Association</a>
<b>Local Government Association, Youth Services</b>	<a href="https://www.local.gov.uk/topics/children-and-young-people/youth-services">https://www.local.gov.uk/topics/children-and-young-people/youth-services</a>
<b>L2 and L3 certificate or award indicative content</b>	<a href="#">Indicative Content L3 Cert and L3 Dip</a>
<b>Mental Capacity Act 2005</b>	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/9/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/9/contents</a>
<b>National Minimum Wage Act 1998</b>	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/39/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/39/contents</a>
<b>National Occupational Standards</b>	England: <a href="https://www.nya.org.uk/national-occupational-standards-and-english-youth-work-policy-new-document-published/">https://www.nya.org.uk/national-occupational-standards-and-english-youth-work-policy-new-document-published/</a>
<b>NSPCC</b>	<a href="https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/templates/nominated-child-protection-lead-role">https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/templates/nominated-child-protection-lead-role</a>
<b>NYA and the Education and Training Standards Committee</b>	Education and training standards for youth work (validation, JNC, practise) <a href="https://www.nya.org.uk/youth-work/ets/">https://www.nya.org.uk/youth-work/ets/</a>
<b>NYA, Hear by Right</b>	<a href="https://www.nya.org.uk/quality/hear-by-right/">https://www.nya.org.uk/quality/hear-by-right/</a>
<b>NYA Quality mark</b>	<a href="https://www.nya.org.uk/quality/quality-mark/">https://www.nya.org.uk/quality/quality-mark/</a>
<b>NYA, National Youth Sector Census</b>	<a href="#">National Youth Sector Census</a>
<b>NYA, National Youth Work Curriculum framework and briefings</b>	<a href="https://www.nya.org.uk/quality/curriculum/">https://www.nya.org.uk/quality/curriculum/</a>
<b>NYA, Workforce Development Strategy</b>	<a href="#">Youth Workforce Development Strategy – 2022 – 2027</a>
<b>NYA, Youth Work Practice Standards</b>	<a href="https://www.nya.org.uk/practice-standards/">https://www.nya.org.uk/practice-standards/</a>

Organisation or initiative	Link
<b>Online Safety Bill</b>	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/a-guide-to-the-online-safety-bill">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/a-guide-to-the-online-safety-bill</a>
<b>Public procurement policy</b>	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/public-sector-procurement-policy">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/public-sector-procurement-policy</a>
<b>Regional youth work units</b>	<a href="https://www.regionalyouthunits.com/">https://www.regionalyouthunits.com/</a>
<b>Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education (2006)</b>	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-safer-recruitment-in-education">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-safer-recruitment-in-education</a>
<b>Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006</b>	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents</a>
<b>Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992</b>	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1992/52/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1992/52/contents</a>
<b>Unicef, child-friendly cities UK</b>	<a href="https://www.unicef.org.uk/child-friendly-cities/where-we-work/">https://www.unicef.org.uk/child-friendly-cities/where-we-work/</a>
<b>Unicef</b>	<a href="https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights">https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights</a>
<b>Working Time Regulations 1998</b>	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1998/1833/contents/made">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1998/1833/contents/made</a>
<b>Working together to safeguard children (revised 2018)</b>	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2</a>
<b>YMCA George Williams College, Impact and improvement training programme</b>	<a href="https://www.youthimpact.uk/what-we-do/impact-improvement-training-programme">https://www.youthimpact.uk/what-we-do/impact-improvement-training-programme</a>
<b>Youth Work One</b>	<a href="https://www.youthworkone.org.uk/">https://www.youthworkone.org.uk/</a>
<b>Young People's Foundations Trust</b>	<a href="https://ypftrust.org.uk/">https://ypftrust.org.uk/</a>

## 3.2 Glossary of terms (in alphabetical order)

**Contextual safeguarding** – an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people’s experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships young people form in their local community, schools and online can also feature violence and abuse.

**Equality, equity, diversity & inclusion (EEDI)** – ensures fair treatment and opportunity for all. It aims to eradicate prejudice and discrimination based on an individual’s or groups of individuals’ protected characteristics.

**Evaluation** – the use of information from monitoring and elsewhere to judge and understand the performance of an organisation or project.

**Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)** – a designated safeguarding lead is someone who has been named the operational safeguarding leader for an organisation. Their role is to ensure members of staff or volunteers follow the organisation’s child protection and safeguarding procedures. They are the person who is likely to escalate a case for referral.

**Disclosure and barring service (DBS)** – a DBS check is a criminal-record check that you can do for staff or volunteers who are working with children and young people or vulnerable adults. There are three levels: basic, standard and enhanced. Ideally, all people working with children and young people should have enhanced checks.

**Formative evaluation** – takes place where there is continuous feedback during a course, programme or project. It provides information that can be used to adjust or improve the programme as it proceeds.

**General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)** – [The Data Protection Act](#) controls how your personal information is used by organisations, businesses or the government. The Data Protection Act 2018 is the UK’s implementation of GDPR.

**Health and safety (safe practice)** – the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 is the primary piece of legislation covering occupational health and safety in Great Britain. It is sometimes referred to as HSWA, the HSW Act, the 1974 Act or HASAWA.

It sets out the general duties that:

- employers have towards employees and members of the public;
- employees have to themselves and to each other; and
- self-employed people have towards themselves and others.

**Impact** – usually the broad or long-term effects of a project’s or organisation’s activities, outputs and outcomes, after taking into consideration an estimate of what would have happened anyway (in other words, the outcomes that can be attributed to a project or organisation).

**Impact measurement** – the set of practices through which an organisation establishes what difference its work makes. We use the term to define a broad set of practices that includes measuring both outputs and outcomes. This does not mean we equate measuring outputs with measuring impact – it is just part of the overall process.

**Local plan** – the publicly visible plan published by the local authority outlining the roadmap to delivering the local youth offer to young people.

**Measurement framework** – a list of the outcomes that an organisation seeks to achieve together with information on indicators of these outcomes, such as data sources, methods of analysis, and measures of its processes and quality.

**Monitoring** – a systematic way of collecting and recording information to check progress and enable evaluation.

**National Occupational Standards (NOS)** – defines the competencies required of youth workers to carry out youth work.

**Outcomes** – changes that occur as a result of actions.

**Outputs** – products, services or facilities that result from an organisation's or project's activities.

**Reflective supervision** – regular collaborative meetings between two parties, such as in-depth conversations about our experiences as youth work practitioners, that focus on ways to reflect upon values, principles, practices, strengths, and areas for development.

**Safeguarding (safe practice)** – every organisation and its staff and volunteers have a duty of care to ensure the protection of children and young people (aged 8 to 25) from unnecessary risk or harm. The protection of young people is based on the principles outlined within the [Children Act 2004](#) and the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) and [Working together 2018 guidance](#).

**Social impact** – the effect of an activity on the social fabric of a community and the wellbeing of the individuals and families.

**Special educational needs and disability (SEND)** – as defined by the NHS: “A child or young person has special educational needs and disabilities if they have a learning difficulty or a disability that means they need special health and education support.” This also extends to children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder or those with sensory needs.

**Transformative evaluation** – involves all stakeholders in the process to ensure a holistic view is taken.

**Vision** – the long-term changes your organisation would like to achieve in the future. This helps to direct the work of organisations.

**Voluntary and community faith sector** – the voluntary and community faith sector includes organisations that are driven by volunteers and aims to address social, cultural and environmental needs within communities.

**Youth advocacy** – the process of identifying, understanding and addressing issues that are important to young people. By being an ally to young people, it shows we recognise and support youth social action for social change.

**Youth engagement** – youth engagement is the process by which young people become actively involved in activities. This could mean involving youth in planning and decision-making that affect themselves and others.

**Youth governance** – youth governance promotes positive outcomes among young people. It teaches the skills of active citizenship such as understanding how decisions are made and how to organise, plan and communicate. Young people should be supported to take actions and make decisions that affect them.

**Youth participation** – an umbrella term to identify how young people choose to participate voluntarily within youth work.

**Youth voice and influence** – a process by which there are safe spaces for young people to amplify their voices and share their lived experiences, which in turn will influence strategy, policies, operational delivery and more. This should be an empowering process, giving young people a sense of ownership over matters that concern them.



## Endnotes

- 1 Board of Education (1939) In the Service of Youth, London: HMSO. Available in *the informal education archives*: <https://infed.org/mobi/circular-1486-the-service-of-youth/>
- 2 UK Government, '[Education Act 1996](#)'. Published on LEGISLATION.GOV.UK.
- 3 UK Government, '[Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)'. Published on LEGISLATION.GOV.UK.
- 4 The Albermarle Report was published in 1960 as a result of a review of youth services across England and Wales. Alongside identifying the need for expansion of youth work and better leadership, it argued for greater research into the needs of young people.
- 5 Department of Education and Science (1969) The 'Fairbairn-Milson Report' Youth and Community Work in the 70s. Proposals by the Youth Service Development Council. London: HMSO.
- 6 Review Group on the Youth Service in England (1982) 'The Thompson Report' Experience and Participation. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office 1982. Available in *Education in England documents*: <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/thompson1982/index.html>
- 7 Unicef, '[UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)'. Published on UNICEF.ORG.UK.
- 8 Department for Education and Skills (2002) Transforming Youth Work – resourcing excellent youth services. London: HMSO.
- 9 Department for Education and Skills. (2004) Youth Matters. HM Government. London: HMSO
- 10 HM Government (2011) [Positive for Youth](#) London: HMSO.
- 11 All-Party Parliamentary Group on Youth Affairs, '[Youth work inquiry](#)', 2019. Published on YOUTHAPPG.ORG.UK.
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