

A Class of Their Own

The Youth Workers in Schools

Youth Work Methodology Handbook

|

Overview

This handbook has been developed to introduce, explain or expand on existing knowledge and experience in relation to delivering youth work in schools.

In seeking to meet the outcomes for young people focussed upon in the Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales and the National Youth Service Strategy for Wales, this document encourages consideration of how best to ensure young people across Wales have opportunities to engage with non-formal learning within the school environment. The National Assembly for Wales has in recent years emphasised the need for Community Focused Schools. “A community focused school is one that provides a range of services and activities, often beyond the school day, to help meet the needs of its pupils, their families and the wider community”¹. Whilst recognizing the scope for youth services to play a key role in Community Focused Schools during the evening and holidays and reaching a wider population of young people, this handbook will consider youth work provision during school time and will focus mainly on engaging disaffected young people.

In developing this handbook, experienced partners have explored this subject on several levels, resulting in some practical support and ideas to help practitioners.

The ideas and opinions expressed within this handbook are not intended to be a prescriptive way of delivering youth work in schools. The handbook offers suggested methods and approaches. Good youth work practice expects practitioners to adapt any model or ideology to best meet the needs of the beneficiaries and where possible, to share with others new methodologies and practical ideas to more widely benefit young people.

This document is part of a library of Good Practice Methodology Handbooks for Youth Work in Wales. You are encouraged to delve into the other handbooks to find a plethora of practical resources and good practice theory to enhance your youth work practice and deliver the best possible outcomes for young people in Wales.

¹ Community Focused Schools, Circular No 34/2003, National Assembly for Wales
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/dcells/publications/publications/circularsindex/03/communityfocusedschools/nafwc3403-e.pdf?lang=en>

Of particular relevance to this handbook are:

14-19 Learning Pathways

Working in Partnership with Young People

Equalities

Welsh Language

Partnerships

Planning and Evaluation

Volunteering

We wish you well as you seek to provide increased and better opportunities for young people to develop.

Index

Introduction

What is youth work in schools?

What's the difference between a teacher and a youth worker?

How does youth work in schools fit into broader strategies?

Youth workers in schools – delivering activities and projects

Is Youth Work in Schools a New Thing?

Case Studies

Appendix 1 – Policies and Safeguarding

Appendix 2 – Risk Assessment

Appendix 3 – Supervision

Appendix 4 – Referrals

Other Useful Resources

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Introduction

This handbook is aimed at anyone who plans and delivers school-based youth work in Wales. It is relevant to new and experienced youth workers at all levels.

The Youth Work Curriculum Statement states:

“Youth work is delivered by both the statutory and voluntary youth service in Wales through a voluntary relationship between young people and youth workers. Youth workers operate within their own organisations and communities and in partnership with others.

The Youth Service, as a universal entitlement, is open to all young people within the specified age range 11-25. The type, mix and priorities of youth work are determined on a local, national and organisational level. The establishment of appropriate provision should be determined by the needs, wants, interests and aspirations of young people”²*

*The most relevant age range for this handbook is 11-16 although the content can be adapted for young people in Key Stage 5 – 16 to 18 year olds

Youth Work in Wales is usually provided in the following ways:

- Through major third sector organisations
- Through the local authority
- Through small independent local projects

It is true to say that ‘the youth workforce is very broad and challenging to encapsulate’³ and youth workers across all sectors have a range of qualifications and experiences. Many individuals are providing effective youth work and youth work related support without having any relevant qualifications. Perception plays a part in the definition of youth work. Individuals can be considered youth workers because they are supporting young people and are using youth work approaches.

² The Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales

³ Final draft for consultation: An Education for the 21st century: A narrative for youth work today

<http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/a/an%20education%20for%20the%2021st%20century.pdf>

Effective youth work should:

- Offer quality of support which helps young people to progress and achieve
- Enable young people to influence decision makers at all levels
- Provide choices on a wide spectrum of personal and social development issues
- Promote social inclusion and combat disaffection⁴

Ultimately all youth workers, no matter what their experience or qualifications, have one thing in common: the desire and ability to support young people to achieve their potential.

Youth Work in schools is largely dictated on a local level by policy and funding. Thus some Local Authority areas in Wales employ dedicated school-based youth workers. In other areas, local, regional or national third sector organisations may be carrying out school-based youth work. This document is not intended as a directory of current provision but draws on experiences of different schools-based programmes to provide relevant and practical case studies and guidance.

Objectives (*how we are hoping to achieve the aims*)

- Through a clear, concise document that is practical and fun to use, relevant to new and experienced statutory, third sector and voluntary youth workers.
- Through a document that signposts further reading and specialist organisations in Wales and beyond.

⁴ Youth Work and Schools Partnership Toolkit, Wales Youth Agency, 2003

What is “disaffection?”

There are many characteristics displayed by young people who may be identified as disaffected. These characteristics vary according to the individual and we have tried to detail some of these below.

It is important that young people are not labelled as “disaffected” too easily. We all have our off days don’t we?

- Lack of confidence or self-esteem
- Low educational attainments
- Socially isolated / poor social skills
- Lack of motivation
- Self-harm
- Inability to concentrate within lessons
- Depression
- “Victim” or “bully” behaviour
- Truancing (what are they running from? Running to?)



- Extremely negative or positive self-image
- Challenging behaviour
- No value placed upon achievement
- Seek either excitement or “to forget things I cannot cope with” by risk behaviours (alcohol, drugs, offending, sexuality)
- Lack of self-control (displaying as extremes of behaviour such as aggression.
- Lack of “coping strategies”

We have detailed below some of the possible reasons for disaffection, however, again these reasons will vary depending on the individual.

- Lack of family support, in terms of care and control
- Mental health issues (e.g. clinical depression)
- Looked after by the Local Authority
- Addictions (offending, substance misuse, gambling)
- Homelessness
- Bullying
- Undiagnosed difficulty (ADHD, dyslexia, hearing loss)
- Inappropriate role models
- Racism or sexism



- Dysfunctional family relationships, or a breakdown of relationships
- Child abuse (sexual, physical and emotional)
- Possess a learning difficulty (not necessarily identified)
- Child care responsibility
- Carers responsibility within the family
- Social exclusion (from peers, school, wider community)
- Early exposure to alcohol, drugs, offending and other risk behaviours

The Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales states: *“Youth work provides or facilitates non-formal, informal and structured educational programmes which challenge both the institutions and young people themselves to enhance their personal, social and political development”* Thus, this handbook provides ideas and guidance on creating opportunities and the best possible circumstances for statutory and voluntary youth services to deliver high quality school-based youth work. Partnership work is key to this and the success of youth work in schools relates to how well these partnerships are identified, developed and maintained.

What is youth work in schools?

It can be simply defined as a process of non-formal learning in a formal setting. Research suggests that “if schools need to expand their remit from a subject-led curriculum to a more student/learner-led curriculum youth workers are well placed as effective partners”⁵. The definition of youth work in schools is broad and not everyone may agree on exactly how it is defined. It is not our intention to spark debates about whether mentors, counsellors, careers advisers and learning support assistants can be regarded as youth workers in schools. Rather we are providing working examples of different types of youth work carried out in schools in Wales. It is not a definitive/exhaustive list. These examples are aimed at showing the scope and importance of partnership working in youth work in schools; to encourage youth workers not currently engaging with schools to consider ways of doing so, to help those already working in schools to identify other approaches to engaging young people.

Why is youth work in schools important?

All comprehensive schools have a number of pupils who, for a host of reasons, are unable to cope with the daily requirements of school life. Because of troubled home backgrounds, absence of appropriate role models outside school, substance abuse outside school and a whole range of other problems they can be destined for failure before they even arrive at school. Their anger and frustration often leads to confrontations with teachers leading ultimately to exclusion.

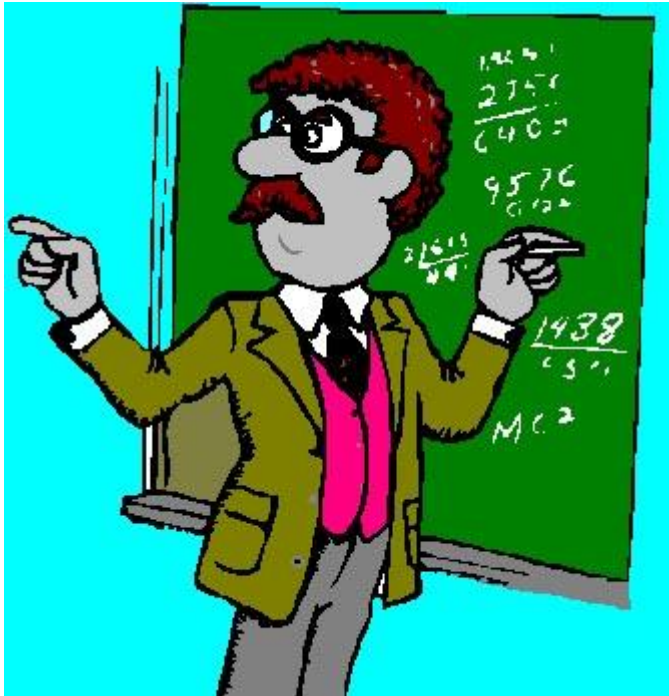
A youth worker is an independent person to whom the children can turn to for non-judgmental advice and support. This person has the skills and experience to liaise and negotiate with families and outside agencies, and to help them to find their way through the education system. (S)he can take the load away from teachers and keep them free to do their job in the classroom without the added burden of disruption.

Importantly a youth worker can also do a vast amount to broaden the range of experiences available to the children in school. Often these are the activities that can channel children away from destructive and negative influences into positive directions, which raise their self-esteem and let them experience success.⁶

⁵ Youth Work in Schools http://www.deni.gov.uk/no_48-3.pdf

⁶ Youth Work and Schools Partnership Toolkit, Wales Youth Agency, 2003

What's the difference between a teacher and a youth worker?

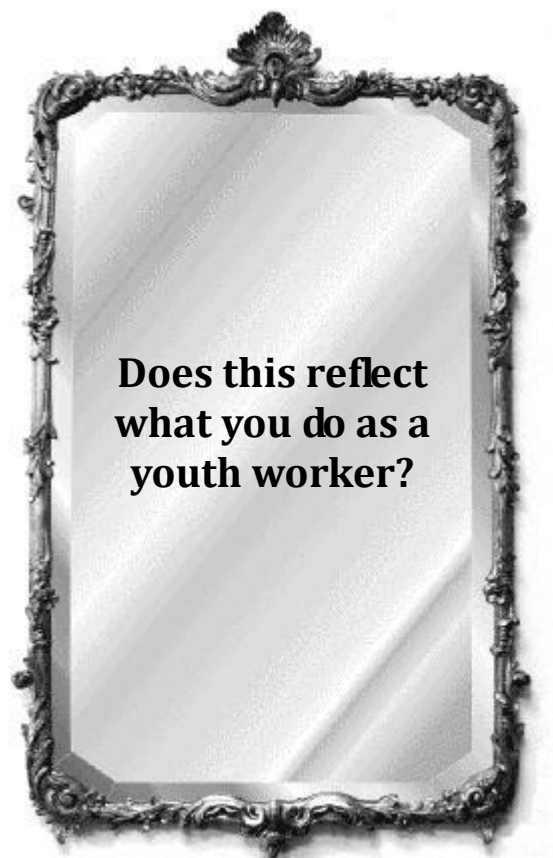


A **teacher** is there to help children learn their subject in the classroom and through the programme of extra-curricular activities. Teachers are experts in a subject area. They can only do their job effectively when the pupils attend regularly, are properly equipped and their lessons are free from disruption. However the vast majority of teachers view their jobs far more widely than mere delivery of skills and knowledge and care passionately about the broader welfare of their pupils. However they are not social workers and it is simply not

feasible for them to provide formal counselling or support over the many problems young people encounter outside school. The presence of a multi-disciplinary team in school can do a vast amount to support teachers in their work and reduce the risk of exclusion for the most vulnerable pupils.

A **youth worker** helps young people learn about themselves, others and society through non-formal educational activities which combine enjoyment, challenge and learning.

Youth Workers work with young people aged between 11 and 25 particularly those aged between 14 and 19, in order to promote their personal and social development and enable them to have a voice, influence and place in their communities and society as a whole. Youth work is conducted according to a set of values which include a



commitment to equal opportunity, involving young people as partners in learning and decision making and helping young people develop their own sets of values.

The 14-19 Learning Pathways agenda in Wales enables youth workers to provide key support roles for young people within the school setting. **See page 9/10 of the 14-19 Learning Pathways Handbook.**

Engagement

We've quoted the Youth Work Curriculum Statement as saying that youth work is delivered through a voluntary relationship between young people and youth workers. It may sometimes be difficult to support this 'voluntary' arrangement when considering youth work in schools.

Invariably, the school will dictate which young people join a particular programme and a referral process will be in place.

However, encouraging and enabling the young people to consult and decide on certain aspects of a programme can introduce the 'voluntary' aspect of the relationship. Most programmes will allow a certain degree of flexibility so it is important to make use of this freedom. This process will impact certain elements of delivery but within the boundaries of the programme and school rules.

Equality

Equality isn't about treating everyone the same; it's about treating everyone fairly. Every youth worker should be aware of the Equality Act 2010 and how it supports them to adopt anti-discriminatory practices. We strongly recommend you consult the **Equalities Handbook** to ensure you are providing equality of opportunity and service to the young people you are supporting. Equally as important, you may want to include activities to raise young people's awareness of equality issues. The handbook can provide ideas and tools to help you do this.

Bilingualism

What does the Welsh Language Measure 2011 mean?

- Official status for the Welsh language
- A Welsh language Commissioner
- The freedom to speak Welsh

What does it mean for youth workers in schools?

Entitlement

When developing a flexible and more appropriate curriculum for young people, their core skills and requirements of the National Curriculum should not be neglected. A new strategy, *laith Fyw: laith Byw* will build on the vision set out in *laith Pawb: the National Action Plan for a Bilingual Wales* published in 2003. *laith Pawb* created the structural framework for a truly bilingual Wales. *laith Fyw: laith Byw* will build on this framework to increase the use of Welsh in all spheres of life. The Government's Welsh-medium education strategy stresses the importance of increasing the number of opportunities for people of all ages to learn Welsh across all sectors of education. It is a statutory requirement for young people at Key Stages 3 and 4 (Years 7-11) to receive Welsh lessons.

The Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales (2002) notes that youth work should raise an awareness of cultural identity, bilingualism and heritage. It also notes that work with young people should recognise the importance of the Welsh language. If we consider both of the above when designing and delivering programmes, the youth work delivered in schools will enable young people to learn and appreciate the linguistic and cultural strength of Wales.

Choice

The strength of youth work in schools programmes is that the individual needs and choices of young people are taken into consideration. Young people and their parents who have chosen to receive their secondary education through the medium of Welsh should have the opportunity to receive a flexible curriculum in their language of choice also. This does not mean young people who attend Welsh Medium secondary schools only, it also extends to young people who have opted for a Welsh stream in a mainly English medium school. Young

people should also have the choice to re-engage with the mainstream curriculum for subjects such as Welsh if the flexible programme is unable to deliver their needs⁷.

For more on this please see the Welsh Language Methodology Handbook

⁷Youth Work and Schools Partnership Toolkit, Wales Youth Agency, 2003

How does youth work in schools fit into broader strategies?

When delivering youth work in schools, it's important to be aware of, and demonstrate how the work links into, local or national strategies, frameworks and guidance, for example:

- The Welsh Government's Seven Core Aims⁸, which guide every Local Authority's Children and Young Person's Plans. Take a look at your Local Authority's plan to see how your school based provision meets the outcomes.
- The 14-19 Learning Pathways⁹ - Learning Pathways is made up of six key elements aimed to ensure that all learners receive the appropriate balance of learning experiences that best meet their needs. The six key elements are:
 - i) individual Learning Pathways to meet the needs of each learner;
 - ii) wider choice and flexibility of programmes and ways of learning;
 - iii) a Learning Core which runs from 14 to 19 wherever young people are learning;
 - iv) Learning Coach support;
 - v) access to personal support; and
 - vi) impartial careers advice and guidance

A youth worker in a school could contribute to each of these elements. As part of the planning and evaluation (*link to Planning and Evaluation Handbook?*) of your service or project, it is vitally important that you make reference to the 14-19 Learning Pathways.

- NEET Strategy (Reducing the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training in Wales - Delivering Skills that Work for Wales)¹⁰ - young people who have disengaged from school, regularly played truant, have low basic skills levels, or have achieved no or low qualifications are at greatest risk of a damaging period spent Not in Education, Employment or Training

⁸<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/childrenyoungpeople/rights/sevencoreaims/;jsessionid=KvtcMMzW0LpnsyCnxqngVL FXTgFXmgJsRJrwcLYLkhCfdBmncbnt!82924164?lang=en>

⁹ http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/publications/circulars/learning_pathways_14_19?lang=en

¹⁰ <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dcells/publications/090430youngpeoplenotineduen.pdf>

- Youth Justice¹¹ - showing how a youth work in schools programme can contribute towards crime prevention
- Inclusion and Pupil Support¹² - this concerns general approaches needed to involve and engage pupils, as well as individual attention needed for pupils who have a need for additional support

¹¹ <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/childrenyoungpeople/publications/youthjusticeandschoolsinwales/?lang=en>

¹² <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/pupilsupport/?lang=en>

Youth workers in schools – delivering activities and projects

The following are examples of how youth workers are delivering activities and specific projects in schools. They may provide you with ideas on how you could extend or develop your current youth work in schools. You could even think about developing new partnerships based on the information below!

Alternative curriculum activities/ appropriate curriculum

Urdd Gobaith Cymru's Routes to the Summit project aims to raise the skills and aspirations of young people through the medium of Welsh, giving the best possible chance of future career developments and expanding opportunities to gain work related skills. Support available to improve confidence, decision-making and basic skills to ensure better progress in school and move into higher education and employment more readily. The project will develop skills in advocacy and participation of youth issues through activities and youth forums

The Urdd employs Routes to the Summit staff in Welsh medium schools in [these areas](#)

Prince's Trust xl clubs

Prince's Trust xl clubs provide a personal development programme aimed at young people aged 13-19 at risk of underachievement or exclusion from school. Activity areas include Personal, Team and Interpersonal Skills, Active Citizenship, Entrepreneurship and Enterprise, Preparation for Work and Enrichment Projects. Through successful completion of units, club members can gain awards and qualifications.

Support from The Prince's Trust includes:

- all curriculum materials, resources, training and verification
- a dedicated Prince's Trust staff member to help set up and take the club forward
- access to a network of xl clubs and regional events to share good practice and ideas
- opportunities to get involved with sports and corporate partners

The success of the above projects and activities relies heavily on a partnership approach, for example between the youth worker and the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or teacher.

Furthermore these projects and activities cannot be delivered in isolation. The young people taking part will have personal support needs, which the youth worker can seek to address personally (depending on skills, experience and/or qualifications) or work in partnership with a range of other stakeholders, as outlined below

Youth workers in schools - Personal Support

Since the pilot programme 'Youth Work and Schools Partnership Programme' there have been many developments. Since 14-19 networks were established, mechanisms have developed to provide services which are linked to Personal Support. These support services encourage young people to engage in learning and focus on providing individual support:

- Learning Support Assistants
- Learning Coaches and Mentors
- PRU – Inclusion Units

There are further difficulties in encapsulating and defining youth work in this area. Many local authorities and voluntary sector organisations have employed youth workers into these roles, while others have seen these as distinctly different to youth work. These differences have been largely determined by local need and essentially what has worked more effectively for each model.

Other examples of Personal Support youth workers could be engaging in and/or with are:

The Student Assistance Programme (SAP)

A support group for young people, providing a safe place for them to discuss any issues they are facing in life. There is no therapy and information is only passed on if there is a child protection issue. The group is for one hour a week for 8 weeks and the school hosts the group during school time. The young people are taken out of their lessons to attend the

group. There is a self-referral process or referrals can be made by a teacher, People wishing to set up a group will need to complete the training. More information available [here](#)

Pupil support projects involving informal counselling techniques

Youth workers, by definition, are not trained and registered counsellors. Youth workers do possess skills, which are common to counsellors e.g. active listening, empathy, paraphrasing. However, as part of a youth work programme in schools, youth workers would not and should not be expected to provide formal counselling unless

- a) they have the relevant qualifications, recognised by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy and
- b) there is a formal agreement between the school and provider about the nature of the provision/service

Click [here](#) for more information and clarity on formal counselling services in schools.

Awareness or prevention workshops by specialist agencies

A Youth Outreach Worker in Conwy delivers workshops on independent living to pupils in an inclusion unit at a local school. The session covers topics related to leaving home and involves interactive activities and discussion around housing issues, including homelessness. After the session the worker holds a 1:1 drop-in session where pupils can seek advice on specific housing-related topics.

Find out about similar [projects in your area](#)

Education Welfare Officers and Education Social Workers

In Swansea, for example The Education Welfare Officer Team (EWOT) supports the Local Education Authority (LEA) in ensuring that every child and young person in the City and County of Swansea has access to appropriate and relevant educational provision which enables them to learn. The Education Welfare Officer Team promotes the welfare of children and equal access to education for all children

Is Youth Work in Schools a New Thing?

Historically the relationship between schools and youth services has been important for at least 60 years. It certainly is not a recent phenomenon. Arguably, the most important development came in the late 1990s, when the National Assembly launched its Youth Work and Schools Partnership Programme. The stated aim of the Programme was to support young people in raising their levels of achievement and attendance at school and to help to improve attitudes to learning¹³. Furthermore, the Programme aimed to base youth workers in schools to tackle social exclusion and to engage and re-engage young people into mainstream education¹⁴

The projects that formed part of the Youth Work and Schools Partnership Programme demonstrated:

- The successful development of youth work practice
- The support and training needs of project workers
- The benefits to be gained from good partnership work
- The purposeful relationships between project workers and young people
- Effective support for individual clients
- Emphasis on meeting individual need¹⁵

¹³ Social Inclusion and the Youth Service in Wales: A submission to the House of Commons Committee on Welsh Affairs (Wales Youth Agency 2000)

¹⁴ Youth Work and Schools Partnership Programme, Interim Report October 2001, Helen Payne, Wales Youth Agency

¹⁵ Quality and Standards in the Youth Work and Schools Partnership Programme: Towards a new Youth Support Service, ESTYN, 2001

Case Studies

Below are a number of case studies that are examples of projects that have worked successfully within the formal education setting or in supporting the educational process. They are provided as a source of inspiration or consideration to encourage new projects to be grown.

Theatr Fforwm Cymru was established in 1993 and started working within Rhondda Cynon Taf, around 10 years ago. This included input into a very successful “on track plus project” that, arose out of the Arts 2 All project and continued for a period of five years.

The current partnership with The Tai Education Centre, a large Pupil referral unit in Rhondda Cynon Taf and catering for 70 children with severe Social Emotional and Behavioural difficulties, began in November 2010. This partnership was funded via Building the Future Together monies through the Youth Arts Development officer in RCT.

The original project bid prepared by the Tai Centre involved the use of Forum Theatre to develop and empower children and young people attending the centre, focusing on the challenges faced by young people in successfully transiting from primary phase education to the secondary school sector. The idea centred around the production of a short film with the aim of developing young peoples’ emotional literacy and social resilience. By working with the premise of “rehearsal for reality” and empowering the pupils attending the sessions. This project would then be taken out as a series of outreach sessions in mainstream community primary schools.

The grant received for implementation of the “Tai Transition Project” was £9000, which allowed the Tai Centre to commission a trusted partner and provider in the form of “Theatr Fforwm Cymru” to help plan, develop and deliver the Transition Project over the following sixteen month period.

Initially, this involved the introduction and consolidation of the forum theatre and the idea of rehearsal for reality with the target group of young people within the centre. It consisted of weekly sessions of one to two hours with groups of up to 12 pupils who

interacted with the Theatr Fforwm Cymru workers in a variety of techniques that the organisation has been using and integrating into their work. in order to engage pupils and develop emotional and social resilience.

The second phase of the project involved the production of a short film starring some of the pupils and staff exploring some of the obstacles and perceptions of primary aged pupils faced with transition to secondary school. The film was made into a DVD to be used in phase three.

The third and final phase of the Tai Transition Project, involved outreach in several primary schools within RCT. The pupils themselves, staff and Theatr Fforwm Cymru professionals facilitated performances and workshops based around the film within the partner schools. Groups of around 30 children from the partner primary schools engaged in half day sessions developing emotional and social resilience tools as a preparation and a conduit to dispel some of the myths that inhibit successful transition.



“I have personally witnessed some very challenging and often withdrawn young people open-up and flourish under the direct influence of the project. If someone had told me that my pupils were going to deliver training to their peers in another school when we started, I would have been sceptical. Yesterday, I witnessed and was part of this reality, my own perceptions and scepticism were dispelled in one fail swoop.” – Dr Alec Clark, Head Teacher, Tai Education Centre, Pen Y Graig

“This project dispelled all the myths about the Tai Centre in one morning” – Chair of Governors Craig Yr Hesg Primary School, Glyn Coch

“I really enjoyed being part of the theatre group when we went to schools. Gill and her team from Theatr Fforwn Cymru made us feel like we were part of them and we felt like we could do what we needed to do.” – Lara Goodson, year 6 pupil, Tai Education Centre

“The children really enjoyed the session with the Tai Centre pupils and asked when they would be doing it again” – David Thomas, Head Teacher, Gwaunmeisgyn Primary school, Beddau

The Ethnic Youth Support Team (EYST) have been delivering the Engage project in Swansea since 2005, working to support BME young people in schools and colleges across Swansea. BME young people make up nearly 10% of the school age population in Swansea.

EYST is a voluntary organisation set up in 2005 to support ethnic minority young people. It offers a culturally sensitive mentoring programme to BME young people. Via the engage project, EYST has delivered weekly lunch-time drop-in sessions to 5 secondary schools and 2 FE colleges in Swansea. EYST workers go into schools on a weekly basis to engage with the young people as well as with the teachers. Information workshops are also provided from EYST's youth drop in centre which is open daily after-school.

The Engage Project was funded by the Welsh Government's Cymorth Fund via City & County of Swansea Local Authority. The grant value was £49k per year. This paid for two youth workers plus some running costs. The workers engage with around 100 pupils in 5 schools and 2 colleges each week, and provide one-to-one mentoring for around 90 young people each year. Information workshops are also provided from EYST's youth drop in centre which is open daily after school. The young people are provided with culturally sensitive support and advice as well as liaison between school and family.

A survey of the young people engaged showed us that as a result of their support from EYST in school or college:

- 100% thought EYST had helped them to improve their grades in school
- 100% thought EYST had helped them to feel more confident in school
- 82% thought EYST had helped them to understand more about their options with exams, college, etc
- 48% thought EYST had helped their teachers to understand them more.



Bishop Gore School has worked closely with EYST for over ten years. The relationship has developed to such an extent that Bishop Gore would be unrecognisable without their input.

- **They hold a drop in service every Tuesday lunch time for both girls and boys from minority ethnic backgrounds which is very successful. Any issues arising from talking with the pupils are shared with me; any issues that have been raised by the school are shared with the EYST team.**
- **Many of our pupils visit the EYST centre after school, where they not only socialise but they are also given help with school work.**
- **EYST provide annual study courses to help pupils with GCSE work in English, Maths and Science. The school flags up pupils who would benefit from this service and EYST makes use of their influence with the**

community to ensure the young people take advantage of this service. The result of the partnership has been that our ethnic minority pupils are the best achievers at the level 2 threshold in Swansea.

- EYST's presence in school means that any racial conflict is quickly diffused and in cases where it is not school based a telephone call is all that is needed to bring the calming presence of the EYST team to the school gates to ensure problems are avoided.**
- EYST is working closely with us on the 'So To Do' project, other partners being the Police service, Social services and the Youth Offending team. The aim of this group is to be proactive and prevent youth offence.**
- Many of our pupils take part in the holiday time and week end activities which they organise.**
- They provide in service training for Bishop Gore staff on issues such as Islamaphobia, Knife Crime, Forced marriage etc and they always have an input into PSE days.**
- They sit on steering groups to advise us on race equality, uniform and attendance.**
- They support us on parents evenings by transporting families who would otherwise find it impossible to attend and providing a friendly face and someone to help them understand the intricacies of education jargon.**
- When faced with financial retrenchment which meant that our bilingual Community Support Worker could no longer be employed, EYST stepped in with an offer of 7 hours to allow him to continue to work with the pupils in school time.**

The service provided by EYST is invaluable to Bishop Gore. Their vision, passion and belief in young people does much to change the nature of our society. Bishop Gore is lucky to have such a close working relationship with this organisation. The work that EYST does with the pupils and staff of Bishop Gore has made a real difference to the lives of our young people and we firmly support their bid.

The wording in bold type above is a letter from the assistant head teacher that outlines the immense value to the school of the work EYST do.

Project HQ (Communication Disorders Unit), RCT

Twelve students access a mainstream curriculum of between 45-75%. The remainder of their curriculum is aimed to develop skills for life and independent living at HQ. It was always a concern that although the students were making significant progress there was no formal recognition of the social areas covered in the curriculum. We introduced the NOCN units at HQ approximately 4 years ago with the help, guidance and support of Gill Edwards (Youth Accreditation Worker, Services for Young People, RCT)

When the Step up programme came into being we moved from stand-alone units into the Step-up programme. With Gill's support we deliver the units of work based on the student's needs. The units of work are delivered and supported by Gillian Edwards, Youth Accreditation Worker, Margaret Sussat, Teacher in charge, a teacher, and three core Learning Support Assistants. We currently have three additional one to one support assistants working in our team.

The Step-up programme suits the learning styles of our students:

"Don't tell us, show us" style.

The main outcome and success of the units covered to date is that the students have learned to work as a team; this is something that students on the autistic spectrum find difficult. The skill sharing gained through working together has had the added benefit of raising student self-esteem and confidence- students are far more willing and able to give the mainstream challenges 'a go'.

We usually manage to fund our units of work through our capitation, however our accreditation support team have funded some units that were outside our budget e.g. 'Learning to Cycle'

A big advantage of all the units is that there is no time scale limit; units can be delivered at the pace of the students. This term we have trebled the expected hours on our unit 'Health and Fitness' because the students are gaining much from it.

The units we choose are the ones we know the students will find a challenge. The programmes allow the students to learn by doing.

The students are now able to attempt things we know they find difficult.

During the autumn term the students worked on 'Developing Confidence and Personal Awareness'.

Following a group discussion the students came up with a list of things they all found difficult:

- Moving to a new school
- Asking unfamiliar people questions

From this discussion the unit was planned; students worked together to make a DVD to help future students move to 'big' school. They used their strengths to write, film, edit and make the DVD. It has been uploaded onto [Youtube](#). Not only were they successful in working as a team, completing the film, but they also gained real technical skills using advanced apparatus and techniques.

Spurred on by its success, the students were asked to come up with opportunities for asking questions. They decided to interview school staff to make a radio broadcast entitled 'Barry Island Discs'. Each student was required to approach a member of staff and ask them to participate in the live broadcast. They were confident to do this following much practise back at the centre.

Students asked staff if they were stranded on Barry Island what track would they like them to play and why. When the interviews were all completed and recorded the students worked together to make radio jingles to blend interviews together.

To complete the unit the students took the broadcast to Barry Island and played it to the holiday-makers on Barry prom- what a day! The students were so proud when

people were stopping to listen and dance along to the music.

If you have a spare five minutes check out their [Youtube upload](#).

Engage Moderate Intervention, Neath Port Talbot

Building on previous experience with the full time alternative curriculum run by Engage, comprehensive schools acknowledged the need for a more preventative early intervention with the aim of retaining vulnerable young people in mainstream education. The Engage Project dedicated 5 members of staff to work with all 11 comprehensive schools, an EBD centre, Special school and a specialist education provider.

Schools could see that the informal relationship and opportunity to work outside of the normal curriculum would appeal to the young people and encourage a two way learning process.

By trying to address the underlying barriers to each young person's education it was anticipated that there would be two likely outcomes. Firstly (and preferably) the young person would have used the opportunity to discuss their concerns and learn new coping mechanisms and strategies which retain them in mainstream education and subsequently sit the best possible qualifications available for them. Alternatively, if continued engagement with their mainstream school wasn't possible, then the young person would have already met members of the Engage team and experienced the different methods of working which they would experience on the Engage fulltime provision.



Schools would decide whether they would like the Moderate Intervention to be delivered on site or off site and the dates of delivery would be based around the school's curriculum.

Through close partnership working and consultation with the schools, a Year 10 only programme was devised where youth workers would work 3 days per term with a selected group of 15 young people identified by the school. Youth workers would deliver sessions focussing on 'soft' skills, improving communication and providing a forum for the young people to discuss the issues they have experienced in school and be encouraged or challenged with the way they handled the situations.

Youth workers deliver numerous sessions or qualifications bespoke to the schools requirements. Continual improvement of the Moderate Intervention's reputation means that school's now use the evidence generated through the high quality youth work sessions towards their Welsh Baccalaureate, ESW and work experience programmes. The ability to deliver relevant qualifications in a very informal and interactive manner with young people in the schools ensures the young people continue to engage with their education.



Subjects such as Citizenship, Social Communication Skills, Sex & Relationships and the British Safety Council Award enable the young people to learn new life skills, reinforce their new learning and allow them to take knowledge forward into their school environment. No matter what the subject matter, the young people are always reminded about the importance of acting appropriately and behaving correctly while enjoying

themselves in a safe and positive environment.

Young people have commented that they "enjoy the way the lessons are different and help us learn and have fun". Teaching staff have stated that "it's great the way the youth workers have come in and given our young people new experiences of learning".

Schools have commented on the young people feeling re-energised and re-focussed after the Moderate Intervention ready for their last year in school.

The staff costs of the Project are covered through ESF and Cymorth funding at present and there is no charge for the schools to access this provision as Engage sees this as part of their assessing and proactive intervention with vulnerable young people.



Schools have reported that the young people thoroughly enjoy the Moderate Intervention and regularly come back enthused and having an improvement in their attendance and/or behaviour. In a quite unique occurrence this year, three of the schools asked the Moderate Intervention to deliver a qualification to the entire year group rather than a selected group of 15. This shows that the Project is highly respected and regarded as an equal within the schools in relation to the quality and necessity of the standard of work. It is great to know that the young people are thriving on the informal and knowledgeable delivery of the youth workers, while the school also

value and appreciate the contribution of the Youth Service.

Young people completing the Moderate Intervention have gained one or more of the following accreditations:

British Safety Council Entry Level Award in Hazard Workplace Awareness

NOCN Entry 3 in Introduction to the Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship

NOCN Entry 3 in Social and Communication Skills

Bronze Youth Achievement Award

NOCN Entry Level Award in Skills Towards Enabling Progression



Detached Youth Work – D of E Group: through the medium of Welsh. Rhondda Cynnon Taf

Detached Youth Workers work with schools to ensure D of E is available for young people: one English language (Bryncelynog), one through the medium of Welsh (Ysgol Gyfun Garth Olwg). Though both the schools concerned had a history of successfully operating the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (D of E), in the past few years their capacity to do so had diminished. In 2011, responding to demand, RCT Services for Young People's Detached Youth Work Team members in these areas enthusiastically took up the reins, and we now have thriving D of E Groups across the Cluster area.

The Detached Youth Workers are able to engage the young people after school, on the school premises, as well as on the streets, or in other venues. Working with other Services for Young People Teams, Y G Garth Olwg currently has 43 participants at Bronze Level, and Bryncelynnog Comprehensive has 25 at Bronze Level.

Detached Youth Workers worked alongside RCT's D of E Development Officer, to give Presentations in school assemblies and promote the D of E, this was done during July 2011. The pupils then enrolled in September 2011, and both groups were run by the Detached Youth Workers (DYW).

The year 10 pupils at Garth Olwg, have been given a range of opportunities, eg. being involved in charity walks, like the Rhondda Ramble (12 mile sponsored hike across the Rhondda Hills) They have also been given the opportunity to do a range of practice walks, to enable them to be competent enough to complete the Expedition Section of the Award.

During this time the group have given a range of presentations to the school about their 'journey' and what they have learnt from participating in the Award so far. The group is a Welsh medium group, and the whole delivery has been in the Welsh language.



There has been a lot of partnership work taking place during this time, and most of the partners in the area such as 'Urdd' 'E3' and '5x60' have offered their support.

Examples of this are the 'Eco Group' which a group of young people from the D of E set up. They meet every once in a while with the DYW and Eleri Thomas from Urdd to discuss various environmental issues within the school and the surrounding community.

The group have completed a range of questionnaires as a part of their research to see 'how environmentally friendly is the school?' The school then identified that there were bags of clothing with no name tags that were left in school and no pupils had come to collect them. The young people discussed a possible 'sort out' and sorted the clothing into bags. After the young people had completed 'sorting' they discussed the possibility of getting the clothes washed, packed nicely and given to a homeless shelter.

The young people continue to meet and are in the process of setting up the 'packing processes.' All the hard work put in by the young people will count as a part of their Volunteering section. 5x60 also supported a group of young people from the D of E group to complete the Sport Relief Mile which was in fact a 6 mile run!

This intervention has cost the young people as little as possible. They have all paid their own D of E enrolment fees of £14 each (recommended for commitment), and will also be expected to contribute a small amount of a few pounds for camp site fees during their Expedition. All staffing, training and transport costs are funded by RCT Services for Young People.

The D of E programme is long established and valued by employers, FE and HE, and the community in general. It recognises the skills and abilities needed to enable young people to fully engage and achieve within any walk of life, and enhances the employability of young people.

There have been many fantastic outcomes and benefits from these programmes:

- Bridges built between D of E and YG Garth Olwg, to benefit both pupils and the school.
- Engagement of young people in a wide range of community activities and personal development.
- Good partnership work with partners such as; Detached Youth Work Team, D

of E, Urdd Gobaith Cymru, E3, 5x60 – This has enabled the Cluster members to work well together, to support a strong D of E group.

- An out of school activity for Welsh speaking young people
- Increased confidence in a group of young people by learning new skills, and by enabling them to present their learning experience to the school.
- Relationships built with teachers at the school who are interested in offering their support.
- Relationships built with members of the community 'Eco Group', to benefit the wider community.

If you offer a service to young people but currently have no link or relationship with your local schools, the first step to developing any youth work in schools will simply be to make contact with the head teacher to explore opportunities. Once contact has been established, the examples above will hopefully provide some useful and exciting ideas.

Appendix 1

Policies / safeguarding

Youth work can produce many situations that need to be risk assessed, making sure young people are correctly safe guarded.

Make sure you check schools and Local Education Authorities (LEA`s) policies before any hazardous activities or residentials have been planned. Make sure you understand school procedures, noting that not all schools work in the same way. Some schools require governing bodies to sign off trips/activities while others need LEA approval. Make sure you speak with the appropriate child protection officer within the school and discuss the correct plan of action.

Some things to consider are:

Child Protection Policy (including a visible child protection flow chart available at all times)

Protection of Vulnerable Adults

Anti-bullying Policy

Clear and available information about first-aid and other emergency procedures

Fire and other emergency procedures

Lone working policy

Off-site or educational visits guidance

Appendix 2

Risk Assessment

It is a legal requirement for all employers, youth workers; schools or any organisations that work with young people to make sure their risk assessments are detailed, comprehensive, and accurate and signed off 2 weeks before the actual activity. This usually is carried out by the group leader.

EVC procedure must be followed and must be signed off and approved by official EVC lead before activities are run.

Some things to consider when assessing a trip/activity

1. Type of activity
2. The location, your route and appropriate transport
3. Ratio of staff to young people and experience of the staff supporting the activity
4. Young people with medication and special education needs
5. Quality of facilities and equipment being used
6. The need to monitor the risks throughout the entire length of activity
7. Emergency Procedure in case a situation arises.

Other things that need to be taken in to account...

1. What kit / equipment do young people need to take
2. Staff training needs
3. Complete register and emergency details of young people attending
4. Completed register given to home contact person
5. Contact information given to parents in case of emergency back home.

Appendix 3

Supervision

Supervision is a support structure enabling workers to discuss issues, plans of action, and good practices. Supervision can be a positive experience but at times maintaining regular supervision can be challenging. Work loads of both worker and manager can sometimes get in the way, but being flexible on times and venues can help with time on track. There is no real substitute for regular supervision meetings and these should be given priority. It is especially important for those who work remotely from the rest of the youth work team; working in the school setting is a perfect example.

Supervision enables you to carry out your working duties effectively by giving you access to information, knowledge, resources, aims and objectives of your organisation and where you and your work fits into the overall plan. It should be an extremely supportive time, identifying issues and challenges, and developing appropriate support mechanisms to deal with these.

It ensures that you are working properly and within the defined parameters, i.e. job description, policies and target areas. Supervision sessions should provide space for reflection on working practice and encourage growth and development.

Supervision can be with your direct manager or on times can be a professional outside of the work place.

Supervision helps with ensuring that as workers we debrief. As youth workers we can forget at times that we are dealing with young people's lives and the complexity that comes with that.

Contractually you are entitled to...

- Be offered supervision at regular intervals usually 1-2 months but this is not set in stone.
- Time, date and venue to be agreed with both parties.
- Written recording of session and provided on request
- No interruptions while supervision is taking place, people walking in, mobile phone ringing etc.

Appendix 4

Referrals

If you are a youth worker in a school, how do you find the young people to work with?

Young people are more often than not referred, identified, targeted by the school to attend your sessions. This will change over time as the relationship with youth worker and school grows and involvement and opportunity to work more freely develops.

Many youth workers over time are welcomed and given the freedom of the school giving you the scope to identify and work with all the young people within the school.

The Best way to engage young people and promote your service is within dinner and break times etc.

Referral contracts are now very important in modern youth work. The contract is between the service being requested to work with a young person and person, school, organisation or young person their selves who are requesting the support.

The worker will meet with the young person and draw up an agreed action plan. This action plan with help to guide the process more effectively and make both parties aware of any progress made.

Support can include –

- Class support
- Group work
- Integrating into school
- Making friends
- Support while on activities
- Support in lunch / break time
- Mentoring
- Behavioural support – anger, aggression etc.

Other Useful Resources

The internet is a valuable resource in itself, but below are a few signposts to particularly useful websites when considering youth work in schools.

UK Youth

A library of resources available to download at:

<http://www.ukyouth.org/resources.html>

Russell House Publishing Ltd

Books and resources for youth work and teaching available for purchase:

http://www.russellhouse.co.uk/?state=pre_az_menu&letter=A&session=1334046426XXupaXsUTIOJbU2

Gender and Education Association (GEA)

Resources that tackle specific gender related issues e.g. boys underachievement, inequalities etc.:

<http://www.genderandeducation.com/resources/>

Infed

The encyclopaedia of informal education. A plethora of thoughts and discussions about a wide range of issues that impact on youth work. The site is provided by the YMCA George Williams College:

<http://www.infed.org/index.htm>

CWVYS

The overarching body supporting the voluntary youth sector in Wales. CWVYS can provide information about groups and organisations working with young people and support partnership and collaborative work across the youth work sector:

www.cwvys.org.uk

Welsh Government Department for Education and Skills

For assistance in making contact with schools or advice about how to work within the formal education setting:

http://wales.gov.uk/contact_us/bydept/dcells/?lang=en

Youth Work and Schools Partnership Toolkit

This document was developed in 2003 by the Wales Youth Agency. It is a substantial document that is referred to on a number of occasions throughout this Handbook. Whilst written almost 10 years ago it is still very pertinent to current practice and provides excellent support and resources for any youth worker delivering any service in a school setting.

[NB I have been unable to provide a direct link to this document, but it has been scanned and is supplied as a separate document. I would suggest that it is placed on the website in any resources section]