



Youth Work and the Welsh Curriculum

Practitioner Toolkit

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Introduction

“Youth work is a key component of the education system in Wales, delivered by a wide range of organisations. As a core service for young people, youth work forms part of wider youth support services but uses a distinct educational approach based on the voluntary engagement of young people as equal partners in their own development.” – **Welsh Government (2026)**

This toolkit is designed to support youth workers in Wales to understand, engage with, and complement the Curriculum for Wales. It recognises the unique role of youth work as a form of informal, relationship-based education that supports young people’s holistic development and contributes to the four purposes of the curriculum.

Developed through Youth Cymru’s Taith Pathway 2 project and informed by practice across Wales, the UK, and Ireland, this resource brings together insights from organisations including Youth Work Ireland, YouthAction Northern Ireland, Youth Scotland, and UK Youth. It reflects a growing national and international focus on strengthening collaboration between formal and informal education.

The toolkit aims to:

- Support youth workers to align their practice with the Curriculum for Wales
- Provide practical tools to build effective partnerships with schools and education settings
- Share good practice and examples from across different contexts
- Strengthen confidence in evidencing the impact of youth work within education

The toolkit is organised into modular sections that can be used flexibly in training, workshops, or self-directed learning. Each module includes an overview, practical strategies, and real-world examples to support youth workers in delivering high-quality, youth-centred provision that enhances educational outcomes.

Module 1: Understanding the Curriculum for Wales

The Curriculum for Wales is a learner-centred framework designed to support young people to become:

- Ambitious, capable learners
- Enterprising, creative contributors
- Ethical, informed citizens
- Healthy, confident individuals

These four purposes sit at the heart of all learning and provide a shared vision for both formal and informal education.

The curriculum is structured around six Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs):

- Health and Well-being
- Expressive Arts
- Humanities



- Languages, Literacy and Communication
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- Science and Technology

It also includes cross-cutting themes such as well-being, Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE), human rights, and work-related experiences, encouraging a holistic and interdisciplinary approach to learning.

The Curriculum for Wales became statutory in 2025 and is being rolled out to all learners by 2026, with a strong emphasis on collaboration between schools, communities, and wider partners

Youth workers can enhance these aims by aligning informal education with the curriculum's holistic model (Welsh Government, 2020).

What This Means for Youth Work

Youth work already aligns strongly with the principles of the Curriculum for Wales. Its informal, relationship-based approach supports many of the same outcomes, particularly in areas such as well-being, personal development, and youth voice.

Youth workers can:

- Support the Four Purposes through youth-led, experiential learning
- Contribute to Health and Well-being AoLE through emotional support, resilience-building, and safe spaces
- Enhance Expressive Arts and Humanities through creative, cultural, and social action activities
- Develop skills and competencies such as communication, teamwork, and critical thinking

Rather than duplicating school-based learning, youth work extends and enriches the curriculum by providing:

- Voluntary participation
- Safe, trusted relationships
- Opportunities for voice, choice, and leadership
- Real-world and community-based learning

Key Takeaways for Practitioners

- The Curriculum for Wales is flexible and locally designed, creating space for youth work to contribute
- Youth work is a natural partner in delivering the Four Purposes
- Alignment does not mean changing youth work practice, it means making existing practice visible and intentional in relation to the curriculum
- Building a shared language with schools can strengthen collaboration and recognition



Practical Tool: Mapping Youth Work to the Four Purposes

This quick activity helps youth workers recognise how their existing practice already aligns with the Curriculum for Wales.

Instructions (for workshops or team reflection)

1. Think of a youth work session, project, or activity you currently deliver
2. Reflect on the skills, behaviours, or outcomes young people gain
3. Map these against the Four Purposes below

| Youth Work Activity | Ambitious, Capable Learners | Enterprising, Creative Contributors | Ethical, Informed Citizens | Healthy, Confident Individuals |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| e.g. Youth-led community project | Problem-solving, planning | Creativity, leadership | Community awareness, social action | Confidence, teamwork |
| | | | | |
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Let's take a moment to reflect:

What skills are young people developing through this activity?

Where do young people have choice, voice, or leadership?

How does this activity support well-being or confidence?

Are there opportunities to make links to school learning or future pathways?



Module 2: The Role of Youth Work in Supporting Curriculum Goals

Youth work provides a distinct and complementary form of education that supports the aims of the Curriculum for Wales. Through voluntary participation, trusted relationships, and experiential learning, youth work creates environments where young people can develop confidence, skills, and agency beyond the classroom.

Evidence from across Wales, the UK, and Ireland shows that youth work plays a critical role in supporting well-being, engagement, and personal development, particularly for young people who may feel disengaged from formal education (Estyn, 2023; NYA, 2023). It also plays a key role in promoting citizenship and youth voice through community action, peer education, and participation in decision-making, central to the curriculum's goal of developing ethical and informed citizens (Welsh Government, 2020; Youth Work Ireland, 2021).

Insights gathered from practitioners involved in the Wales–Ireland cross-national learning exchange further highlight the unique contribution of youth work as a space where young people feel heard, supported, and empowered in ways that differ from formal education settings.

What Makes Youth Work Distinct

Youth work enriches learning with life skills and employability support, offering creative, outdoor, and enterprise activities that build independence and motivation (YouthLink Scotland, 2023). Practitioners consistently identified key differences between youth work and classroom-based learning:

- Voluntary and relationship-based: young people choose to engage, building trust and openness
- Youth-led and flexible: programmes adapt to young people's interests, needs, and experiences
- Safe spaces for expression: young people can “be listened to and heard” without judgment
- Holistic development focus: supporting emotional, social, and personal growth alongside skills

One practitioner described youth work as “*a space where young people are listened to, heard, and supported in ways that formal education cannot always provide.*”

How Youth Work Supports the Curriculum for Wales

Youth work contributes directly to the Four Purposes:

- Ambitious, capable learners: Through informal learning, mentoring, and confidence-building activities
- Enterprising, creative contributors: Through youth-led projects, creative expression, and problem-solving opportunities
- Ethical, informed citizens: Through social action, rights-based approaches, and youth voice initiatives
- Healthy, confident individuals: Through well-being support, trusted relationships, and safe environments

Practitioners emphasised that youth work often reaches young people who struggle in formal settings, helping them re-engage with learning and build confidence:

“It can be transformational... turning ‘I can’t’ into ‘I can!’”



Observed Impact on Young People

Survey responses highlighted consistent outcomes across different settings:

- Increased confidence and self-belief
- Improved emotional well-being and resilience
- Greater engagement in learning and participation
- Development of life skills such as communication, teamwork, and leadership

Youth Work can be “Life changing.”

Challenges in Linking to the Curriculum

While there is strong alignment between youth work and the Curriculum for Wales, practitioners consistently highlight challenges in making this connection visible and understood in practice. One of the most common barriers is translating the outcomes of youth work into the language of the curriculum. Youth work often focuses on personal, social, and emotional development, such as confidence, resilience, and relationship-building, which can be harder to measure or articulate within formal education frameworks.

There is also a lack of shared understanding between youth workers and school staff about each other’s roles, approaches, and values. This can lead to youth work being undervalued or seen as an “add-on” rather than a core contributor to young people’s learning and development. In some cases, this disconnect results in siloed working, where opportunities for meaningful collaboration are missed.

Practitioners also identified practical challenges, including limited time, capacity, and resources to build and sustain partnerships with schools. Competing priorities within education settings, alongside workforce and funding pressures in the youth sector, can make consistent collaboration difficult to maintain.

Finally, there is a risk of youth work being drawn too closely into formal systems in ways that dilute its distinctiveness. Maintaining the voluntary, youth-led, and relationship-based nature of youth work is essential, even when aligning with curriculum goals. The challenge, therefore, is not only to connect youth work to the Curriculum for Wales, but to do so in a way that preserves its unique strengths while making its impact more visible and valued.

Key Takeaways for Practitioners

- Youth work is not separate from the Curriculum for Wales; it is a natural and essential partner
- The strength of youth work lies in its distinct approach, not in replicating classroom practice
- The challenge is often not delivery, but articulating and evidencing impact in ways schools understand
- Practitioner voice and lived experience are powerful tools in demonstrating value



Module 4: Tools for Building Partnerships with Schools

Strong partnerships begin with a shared understanding of the complementary roles of youth workers and teachers (NYA, 2022). Strong partnerships between youth work and schools are essential to realising the ambitions of the Curriculum for Wales. When done well, these partnerships create a more coherent learning experience for young people, where formal and informal education work together to support holistic development. However, building effective partnerships requires more than goodwill. It involves developing shared understanding, aligning goals, and creating structures that support collaboration over time.

Youth workers should map their sessions to curriculum purposes, using frameworks like the *Curriculum for Wales* to align goals and language (Welsh Government, 2020). Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs), co-planning tools, and joint evaluation methods help formalise these partnerships and build sustainability (NYA, 2023; YouthLink Scotland, 2023). This module provides practical tools and strategies to help youth workers initiate, develop, and sustain meaningful partnerships with schools.

4.1 Building a Shared Understanding

A common barrier to partnership working is a lack of understanding about the role and value of youth work. Establishing a shared language is a crucial first step.

Practical Strategies:

- Use the Curriculum for Wales Four Purposes as a shared framework for discussion
- Clearly articulate what youth work offers (e.g. relationships, youth voice, voluntary engagement)
- Share examples of impact using language that resonates with education settings

Tool: Youth Work “Elevator Pitch”

“By youth work we understand: A planned programme of education designed for the purpose of aiding and enhancing the personal and social development of young people through their voluntary involvement, and which is complementary to their formal, academic or vocational education and training and provided primarily by voluntary youth work organisations. (Youth Work Act 2001)” – Youth Work Ireland ‘Youth Work for All’

“Youth work is a rewarding profession. Youth workers can change the course of a young person’s life – helping them to gain essential life skills, overcome barriers and unlock their potential.” – NYA (2026)

“The key purpose of youth work is to... “enable young people to develop holistically, working with them to facilitate their personal, social and educational development, to enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society and to reach their full potential.” Youth Work National Occupational Standards (2023)

“Youth work provides or facilitates:

1. places and relationships within which young people can enjoy themselves, feel secure, supported and valued, learn to take greater control of their live...
2. non-formal, informal and structured educational opportunities and experiences ... to enhance their personal, social and political development;
3. access to relevant advice, information, support and guidance.

Good youth work provides all young people with opportunities, can support them through significant developments in their lives, assists them to understand their rights and encourages them to develop knowledge and skills.” – Youth Work in Wales (2022)



Tip: Ensure you adapt this to your own context and area!

4.2 Mapping Youth Work to the Curriculum

To strengthen recognition, youth workers need to show how their work aligns with curriculum priorities.

Practical Strategies:

- Map activities to the Four Purposes and AoLEs
- Identify where youth work contributes to well-being, RSE, and skills development

Tool: Curriculum Mapping Template

| Youth Work Activity | AoLE Link | Four Purposes | Skills Developed | Evidence |
|---------------------|-----------|---------------|------------------|----------|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

4.3 Initiating Partnerships with Schools

Starting a partnership can feel challenging, especially where relationships do not already exist.

Practical Strategies:

- Begin with informal conversations and relationship-building
- Identify shared priorities (e.g. attendance, well-being, behaviour, transitions)
- Start small with a pilot activity or short-term project
- Be clear about roles, expectations, and boundaries

Conversation Starters:

- “How are you currently supporting student well-being?”
- “Are there groups of young people who are less engaged?”
- “Where could youth work add value alongside what you’re already doing?”

4.4 Formalising and Sustaining Partnerships

As partnerships develop, more formal structures can help ensure consistency and sustainability.

Practical Strategies:

- Develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) outlining roles and expectations
- Use co-planning sessions to design programmes together



- Agree on shared outcomes and evaluation methods
- Build in regular review and reflection points

Tool: Partnership Planning Checklist

- Shared goals agreed
- Roles and responsibilities defined
- Communication methods established
- Safeguarding and data sharing agreed
- Evaluation approach identified

4.5 Maintaining the Distinct Role of Youth Work

While alignment is important, youth work must retain its unique approach.

Effective partnerships recognise that youth work:

- Is voluntary and relationship-based
- Prioritises youth voice and co-design
- Provides a different type of learning environment

Maintaining this distinctiveness ensures that youth work continues to add value, rather than duplicating classroom practice.

4.6 Overcoming Common Barriers

Practitioners identified several recurring challenges in partnership working, including time constraints, differing priorities, and a lack of understanding.

Approaches to Address These Challenges:

- Start with shared priorities to build trust and relevance
- Use evidence and case studies to demonstrate impact
- Develop small, achievable projects to build momentum
- Invest time in relationship-building, not just delivery
- Advocate for youth work as a core partner, not an add-on



Module 5: Planning and Delivery of Youth-Led Interventions

Effective youth work interventions are grounded in the needs, interests, and experiences of young people. Co-facilitation with schools, inclusion of youth-led components, and strong logistical planning are essential to ensure alignment with both curriculum aims and youth work values (NYA, 2023; Welsh Government, 2020). Effective youth work interventions are grounded in the needs, interests, and experiences of young people. Interventions must be co-designed with young people and tailored to address well-being, citizenship, and personal skills, using flexible youth work approaches (Youth Work Ireland, 2021; YouthLink Scotland, 2023).

Youth work is recognised as a distinct informal educational approach that is voluntary, relationship-based, and youth-led, supporting young people's personal and social development (CWVYS, 2022). Research across the UK highlights that high-quality youth work contributes to improved well-being, engagement, and life skills, particularly for those less engaged in formal education (NYA, 2023; UK Youth, 2022). When aligned with the Curriculum for Wales, these interventions can support well-being, skills development, and learning while maintaining the core principles of youth work, ensuring young people are at the heart of our work.

Take a look at the National Youth Work 'National Occupational Standards (NOS)' and 'Youth Work in Wales: Principle and Purpose' to ensure effective, high-quality delivery across your provision.



Module 6: Supporting Accredited Youth Work Delivery

Accredited youth work provides a structured way to recognise and validate the learning, skills, and personal development that young people gain through informal education. It strengthens the connection between youth work and formal education by making outcomes visible, measurable, and transferable.

In Wales, accreditation supports the ambitions of the Curriculum for Wales by recognising learning linked to well-being, citizenship, skills, and progression pathways.

6.1 Why Accreditation Matters

Accreditation plays an important role in strengthening both youth work practice and its recognition within education systems. It provides formal recognition of informal learning, enabling young people to evidence their skills, experiences, and personal development in ways that support progression into education, employment, and training.

However, accreditation should enhance, not change, youth work practice. The focus should remain on recognising learning, not creating unnecessary bureaucracy. High-quality accredited youth work retains its core principles, it is youth-led, flexible, inclusive, and rooted in relationships. When delivered effectively, accreditation does not replicate classroom-based approaches, but instead complements formal education by offering alternative pathways for achievement and recognition.

For youth workers, accreditation provides a framework to articulate the impact of their work in ways that schools and partners understand. For formal education providers, it offers additional routes for learners to succeed, particularly those who may not thrive in traditional academic settings. In this way, accredited youth work supports the Curriculum for Wales by contributing to the development of ambitious, capable learners and healthy, confident individuals, while widening participation and recognising diverse forms of achievement (Welsh Government, 2020; NYA, 2023; UK Youth, 2022).

6.2 Types of Accredited Youth Work Opportunities

Youth workers in Wales can deliver or support a range of accredited programmes:

- Agored Cymru Units and Awards (Entry Level–Level 3): e.g. Digital Youth Work, Safeguarding, Communication, Teamwork
- Youth Achievement Awards (Youth Challenge - Platinum): Peer-assessed, project-based learning (youth Cymry & Youth Scotland)
- Welsh Bacalaureate (Community Challenge links)
- Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE): Recognised nationally and by employers
- Arts Award (Trinity College London): Strong links to the Expressive Arts AoLE
- Customised or locally designed awards: Aligned to the Four Purposes and youth work outcomes

Accreditation should be embedded within youth work practice, not delivered as a separate or overly formal process.



Good Practice Approaches:

- Co-design projects with young people
- Integrate accreditation into existing programmes (e.g. sports, arts, social action)
- Keep learning, youth-led, flexible, and relevant
- Focus on skills and development, not just completion

Tool: Activity-to-Accreditation Mapping

Tip: Choose accreditation that fits your setting and young people, not the other way around.

| Activity | Skills Developed | Accreditation Link | Evidence Collected |
|----------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |

6.4 The Value of Accreditation for Young People and Education Partners

Accreditation offers clear benefits for both young people and those supporting their learning across youth work and formal education settings. For young people, it provides recognition of achievements that may not be captured through traditional academic routes, helping to build confidence, motivation, and a sense of progress. It can also support transitions into further education, training, or employment by providing tangible evidence of skills such as communication, teamwork, leadership, and resilience.

For youth workers, accreditation strengthens the ability to evidence impact and demonstrate how their work contributes to wider educational outcomes. For schools and formal education providers, it offers an additional pathway to engage learners, particularly those who may be disengaged or require alternative approaches to learning.

Importantly, accredited youth work aligns with the Curriculum for Wales by supporting the Four Purposes and contributing to holistic learner development, as outlined in Module 1. It reinforces the value of diverse learning experiences and helps create a more inclusive education system where different types of achievement are recognised and celebrated.

6.5 Support and Further Guidance

Youth workers do not need to deliver accreditation in isolation. A range of organisations across Wales provide training, support, and resources to build confidence and capacity in accredited youth work delivery.

These include:

- Education Training Standards Wales (ETS Wales): training and workforce development support
- Agored Cymru: awarding body guidance, units, and centre support
- Youth Cymru: delivering and accrediting across the sector to young people, professionals and members.
- Other national and local providers offering CPD, mentoring, and quality assurance



Engaging with these organisations can support youth workers to develop the skills, knowledge, and confidence needed to deliver high-quality accredited provision.

6.6 Linking Accreditation to National Frameworks

Accreditation plays a key role in connecting youth work to wider national and educational frameworks in Wales. By aligning accredited outcomes with the Curriculum for Wales, youth workers can demonstrate how their provision contributes directly to the Four Purposes and Areas of Learning and Experience. This strengthens the position of youth work as a partner in delivering holistic education.

Accredited programmes such as Agored Cymru units and Youth Achievement Awards also align with broader policy frameworks, including the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, by supporting outcomes related to well-being, active citizenship, and lifelong learning. In addition, accreditation can contribute to evidence used within Estyn inspections, particularly in areas such as learner engagement, progression, and youth voice.

Making these links explicit helps ensure that youth work is recognised not as an add-on, but as a meaningful contributor to national priorities and education outcomes (Welsh Government, 2020; CWVYS, 2022; NYA, 2023).

Key Takeaways for Practitioners

- Accreditation should enhance, not change, youth work practice
- Keep delivery youth-led, flexible, and inclusive
- Focus on recognising learning, not creating bureaucracy
- Use accreditation to complement formal education pathways
- Draw on external support to build confidence and capacity



Module 3: Case Studies from Across the UK and Ireland

Across Wales, the UK, and Ireland, youth work is already playing a key role in supporting education systems and enhancing outcomes for young people. These case studies highlight different models of collaboration between youth work and formal education, demonstrating how partnerships can improve well-being, engagement, and achievement.

Each of the case studies below offers insights that can be adapted to your local context, illustrating what effective practice looks like in practice.

Case Study 1: North Wales – Community Schools through a Youth Work lens

Focus: Improving family engagement with schools and ensuring equity of education for all young people

In Wrexham North Wales Community Focused Schools is embedded within the Youth Service. The aim of Community Focused Schools, which is a vision for Welsh Government is that the school is more of a hub in the community, that people in the community are more involved in the school; PTA's, community events, that parents/family members are actively involved and included in their child learning and that all young people have a fair chance to engage in all the education opportunities available to them.

Impact:

- Improved student well-being and attendance
- Increased engagement with learning for pupils, parents and families.
- Stronger collaboration with parents and family members
- Enhanced curriculum through links with the community
- Stronger multi-agency collaboration

Key Learning for Practice:

- Co-design and multi-agency work is key to sustainability
- Youth Work principles and values have a positive impact on engagement and collaboration with parents, families and young people
- Our engagement starts from the persons lived reality
- Our approach to learning happens both informally and flexibly
- All parties are partners, not recipients.
- Our practice is rooted in rights, equality and inclusion

- Lisa Mathews

Case Study 2: Scotland – Embedded Youth Worker principles as recognised awards in Schools

Focus: Whole-school approach to well-being and attainment

In Scotland, youth workers are embedded within school environments as part of a coordinated approach to supporting young people. These roles are often co-designed and part-funded by schools, creating a shared sense of ownership and accountability.

Impact:



- Improved student well-being and attendance
- Increased engagement with learning
- Stronger collaboration between school staff and youth workers

Key Learning for Practice:

- Co-design and shared funding models support sustainability
- Embedding youth workers in schools can normalise collaboration
- Clear role definition helps maintain the distinct value of youth work

Case Study 3: Northern Ireland – Youth Action Northern Ireland and Youth Work Ireland “Our Generation” Project

Focus: Citizenship, peacebuilding, and resilience

This programme brings youth workers into classrooms to deliver sessions focused on peacebuilding, identity, and community relations. It supports young people to explore complex social issues and develop resilience and critical thinking skills.

Impact:

- Increased understanding of diversity and inclusion
- Development of critical thinking and dialogue skills
- Strengthened resilience and social awareness

Key Learning for Practice:

- Youth work can support curriculum areas such as citizenship and humanities
- Safe spaces for dialogue are essential when exploring complex issues
- Youth workers bring specialist skills in facilitation and group work

Case Study 4: England – Warwickshire Youth Service

Focus: Attendance, engagement, and inclusion

The Youth Service team in Warwickshire County Council demonstrate a range of positive partnerships with schools across Warwickshire, where youth workers collaborate to support attendance, behaviour, and inclusion. These partnerships often target young people at risk of disengagement, in different ways, including mentoring support, group work and project-based programmes. Successfully delivering workshops comprising healthy relationships, emotional regulation, understanding digital presence and youth violence.

Impact:

- Improved school attendance
- Increased motivation and participation
- Development of soft skills and understanding of wider informal education topics
- Better outcomes for vulnerable and disengaged learners

Key Learning for Practice:



- Targeted youth work interventions can re-engage learners
- Partnerships are most effective when focused on shared outcomes
- Youth work extends the reach of schools to those least engaged



Module 7: Capturing Impact, Evaluation, and Monitoring

Evaluation is essential in demonstrating the value of youth work and its contribution to the Curriculum for Wales. It helps youth workers evidence impact, improve practice, and strengthen recognition within education and policy contexts.

Effective evaluation in youth work should be proportionate, meaningful, and youth-centred, focusing on capturing real experiences and outcomes rather than generating unnecessary data.

7.1 Measuring and Embedding Impact in Practice

Youth work contributes to a wide range of outcomes aligned with the Curriculum for Wales and broader youth work priorities. These include improvements in confidence, resilience, and emotional well-being; increased engagement in learning and participation; development of key life skills such as communication, teamwork, and leadership; strengthened youth voice and agency; and progression into education, training, or employment. Accreditation outcomes can also provide clear evidence of achievement.

Capturing this impact does not require complex systems. A balanced approach using both quantitative and qualitative methods can provide a meaningful picture of change. This may include simple pre- and post-session surveys (e.g. confidence or well-being), attendance and participation tracking, and accreditation records, alongside richer qualitative approaches such as young people's reflections (written, video, or audio), case studies, and creative evaluation methods like graffiti walls or emoji check-ins. Youth-led approaches, such as peer interviews or group discussions, can further strengthen authenticity and engagement.

Effective evaluation is most impactful when it is embedded into everyday youth work practice rather than treated as a separate activity. Building in short reflection moments at the end of sessions, involving young people in shaping how evaluation is carried out, and using feedback to adapt future delivery, all help create a responsive and reflective approach. Sharing outcomes with young people, schools, and partners not only demonstrates value but also strengthens collaboration and continuous improvement.

Tip: Keep evaluation simple, proportionate, and youth-friendly, its purpose is to support learning and improvement, not to create unnecessary workload.



Closing: Moving Forward

This toolkit has been developed to support youth workers, educators, and partners across Wales to better understand and strengthen the relationship between youth work and the Curriculum for Wales. It highlights the unique and valuable role of youth work in supporting young people's holistic development and demonstrates how informal and formal education can work together to create meaningful, inclusive learning experiences.

Throughout this toolkit, a consistent message has emerged: youth work is not an addition to education. It is a vital and complementary part of the education system. By building on its core principles of voluntary participation, trusted relationships, and youth-led practice, youth work can enhance the delivery of the Curriculum for Wales and support young people to become ambitious, creative, ethical, and confident individuals.

The examples, tools, and approaches shared here show that effective collaboration is already happening across Wales, the UK, and Ireland. However, there is still more to do to strengthen partnerships, build shared understanding, and ensure that youth work is recognised and valued within education systems.

Moving forward, practitioners are encouraged to:

- Use this toolkit to reflect on and strengthen their own practice
- Build and develop partnerships with schools and education providers
- Make the impact of youth work visible through planning, accreditation, and evaluation
- Continue to centre young people's voices in all aspects of their work

This toolkit is part of an ongoing journey. Developed through Youth Cymru's Taith Pathway 2 project and informed by cross-national learning, it represents a step towards greater collaboration, shared learning, and sector development. Professionals across Wales and Ireland participated, including Gwynedd Youth Service, Wrexham Youth Service, Flintshire Youth Service, Powys Youth Service, Finglas Resource Centre and young people's representation. Thank you for all you do in supporting young people.

Youth Cymru will continue to support this work through training, resources, and opportunities for collaboration across Wales and internationally. Practitioners are encouraged to stay connected, share their learning, and contribute to the continued development of this resource.

Together, by working across sectors and keeping young people at the centre, we can build a more connected, inclusive, and impactful education system for Wales.

A special thank you to Taith for making this programme a reality and ensuring a meaningful exchange programme is possible across Wales





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