

Children's Services

Targeted Youth Work Detached and Outreach Policy

1. Introduction

This document has been developed with reference to the [National Youth Agency \(NYA\) Detached Youth Work Guidance \(June 2020\)](#). The provision of detached and outreach Youth Work is a central part of our approach to Contextual Safeguarding and should be conducted in line with the [Dorset Contextual Safeguarding Framework](#). This document sets out why detached and outreach youth work is important and how the work should be delivered.

Detached and Outreach Work is part of our [Targeted Youth Worker Offer](#) to young people aged up to 18 years, focusing on those 13-18 years. Detached Youth Work is a distinct form of youth work practice, focused on working with young people wherever and whenever they choose to congregate. It is highly relational work as these spaces are governed by young people's rules, and on their terms, usually at times and locations outside of education.

2. Purpose, Aims and Values

a) The Purpose and Aims (Burgess & Burgess, 2006: p.76¹)

- Make contact and be available to young people in the settings of their choosing
- Work with young people through programmes of personal and social education, which help them gain knowledge and recognise new opportunities in the world around them
- Build effective and meaningful relationships with young people through regular contact, mutual trust, respect and understanding
- Identify and respond to the needs and agendas of individuals and groups of young people by developing appropriate strategies for action which are both educational and fun
- Support and challenge young people's attitudes and action towards issues such as unemployment, drugs, poverty, racism, sexism, disability, health, sexuality, criminality, peer, parental and community pressure
- Enable young people to take more control over their lives and create experiences with them which enable them to make informed choices
- Support appropriate action that young people take resulting from their own ideas and suggestions
- Signposting and relational referrals - Youth workers should be able to provide quick and accurate information to young people about services in their area, relevant to their needs. Youth workers should be able to complete relational referrals which they deem to be appropriate enabling the young person to access

¹ *Don't shoot! I'm a detached youth worker*, Burgess and Burgess, Russell House, Lyme Regis, 2006

a service they need and where they might not otherwise do so. This may require a worker going with young people to attend an initial appointment or using their contacts with local organisations to initiate the first meeting for the young person and organisation.

b) The Value of Detached/Outreach Work

- Allows all young people access to Targeted Youth Work in spaces that they identify as theirs
- Supports a wider contextual safeguarding approach by enabling professionals to understand the context that young people are navigating
- Supports and encourage young people to take an active part in their communities
- Encourages young people's development of their understanding of equal opportunities through social diversity
- Makes the provision of our work as accessible to as many young people as possible
- Advocates for and creates opportunities/platforms for young people's voices to be heard

3. Definitions/ Terminology

Detached and Outreach Youth Work in Dorset is delivered in line with NYA definitions. These are:

Detached Youth Work

Detached youth work targets those young people who either choose not to use other youth work provision such as youth clubs and projects, or do not have easy access to such provision perhaps due to transport difficulties, lack of provision in their locality, or for some reason have been excluded from existing provision”²

‘Primarily, but not exclusively, the work takes place in the street, but also in parks, cafés, shopping centres, and other spaces young people have chosen to be. This makes it accessible to young people who are unlikely to attend building-based provision’³

Outreach

“Outreach work is linked with building or project-based provision and seeks to inform young people and encourage them to use it. Detached workers do of course have a role to play in informing young people of various opportunities available to them and this often includes giving information about building based youth work and projects”⁴

² [TheYouthAssociation-DetachedYouthWorkPolicy.pdf \(youth-association.org\)](#)

³ (Federation for Detached **Youth work**, “Detached **work** Guidance 2020”).

⁴ [TheYouthAssociation-DetachedYouthWorkPolicy.pdf \(youth-association.org\)](#)

Mobile provision

Uses a vehicle, normally a converted van or bus. Mobile provision is most likely project-based (i.e. a music studio, LGBTQIA+ or mental health work). Mobile provision is usually as a form of outreach work or exists as a satellite from a building service.⁵

4. Stages of work

When approaching detached and outreach youth work, staff should plan their work in advance, ensuring that they are building structure into the work they are conducting.

It is important that Targeted Youth Workers take a professional, non-judgemental, and non-discriminatory approach to their work whilst simultaneously keeping an even-handed stance and be able to challenge where appropriate. Maintaining this balance takes practice and time with consistency being a key factor.

a) Preparation

- All work should be planned. Well-planned and prepared projects will produce better outcomes for young people
- Consideration should be given to how long the team will be working in a location or community. A location may be select to address a particular issue or concern, which can be addressed over a defined period. However, in some cases this will be open ended. Wherever possible, Targeted Youth Workers should be honest with young people about this to avoid creating unrealistic expectations
- Any budget requirements will be considered and approved by a Team Manager
- The Targeted Youth Worker should carry out background research into locations where the detached youth work will take place. This might include:
 - A Neighbourhood assessment in line with the Dorset Contextual Safeguarding Framework
 - Liaison with councillors, ASB officers, voluntary and community organisations, local businesses such as shop staff and takeaway owners, and local PCSOs
 - Consideration of any relevant information from Youth at Risk (YAR) meetings referencing the area or locality to be worked in
- A risk assessment will be completed (see Section 6) (Appendix ***)
- Ensure any expectations associated with external funding are compatible with the work's purpose, principles, and values
- Ensure that inter-agency partners are aware of the project
- Anticipate the need to refer young people to other organisations that can help meet the needs of the young people, develop appropriate agreements with organisations about this

⁵ [portraits \(nya.org.uk\)](http://portraits.nya.org.uk)

- Inform the local Police or PCSO's to make them aware of the project and work through any likely operational concerns or safety risks. Targeted Youth Workers should consider carefully before speaking with the Police in public spaces where this could be misinterpreted and damage the relationship with young people

b) Commencing Work

- Check the contents of the rucksack for all relevant items before setting out (see *Appendix 1*)
- Staff will meet at a pre-arranged location which is well lit to start the detached youth work session. Before any work commences, the Targeted Youth Workers should agree the locations to be visited and any routes that will be followed. Any relevant information about locations and individual young people should be shared. This might include:
 - Young people who are currently missing, or those who have had recent repeat missing episodes
 - Any safety concerns including individuals or known risks of specific locations
 - Any matter relating to young people that Targeted Youth Workers may wish to follow up on from conversations with other professionals, or from conversations with young people on previous detached youth work sessions
 - Sharing of the risk assessment for the locations to be visited
- Wherever possible, the first visit to a location should be in daylight, to understand the layout of the site and identify any risks
- Wherever possible, young people should be notified in advance of the places the detached youth workers will be visiting. These can be shared via social media where this is in place, in line with Dorset Council Social Media Policy.
- On meeting young people for the first time, Targeted Youth Workers will ensure they explain their role, the boundaries they work to and the limitations around confidentiality (see section 6e)
- Detached youth work sessions should be recorded and monitored against the planned aims as set out at Section 7

c) Completion and Exit Strategy

- In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for detached youth workers to cease visiting certain locations. This may be driven by the numbers of young people present at these locations or no longer visiting locations where young people congregate on a seasonal basis
- Part of the youth work process may be enabling young people to express their needs or concerns and Targeted Youth Workers have a responsibility to support young people in doing this such that relevant decision makers can address these needs or concerns

- This may lead to a justification for detached youth work to cease in a location that continues to be frequented by young people. This could include identification that the planned objectives for that location have been achieved, such as a reduction in risk taking behaviour or anti-social behaviour, or that the context has been made safer. This might occur through police disruption or the introduction of better lighting or CCTV
- In these circumstances, detached youth workers should discuss this with the young people that frequent those locations and should signpost towards alternative support for those young people, such as the local youth centre or drop-in sessions in school

5. Employees

a) Recruitment and working arrangements

Detached and Outreach Youth Work is an area which requires specific knowledge and training. An experienced employee should lead the team, and this employee should be a trained and qualified Youth Worker.

- Detached youth work should be conducted in a minimum of pairs. Staff should never work alone when undertaking detached or outreach youth work
- All employees are required to be appropriately qualified
- Risk assessment should be made available to all employees
- All employees of partner agencies who support the outreach and detached youth work led by the Targeted Youth Work team will be required to be DBS checked and to have signed the Dorset Information Sharing Charter
- Targeted Youth Workers should inform their Team Manager of all outreach work being conducted including times, locations and workers who are present. They should also be aware of any procedures to be followed should there be an incident

b) Staff Emotional Wellbeing

Targeted Youth Workers should check in with one another at the start of every session. The check in should cover how they are feeling in themselves, any reservations they may have about the session, and anything else they feel might be relevant. A debrief should then be held at the end of the session. This can take the format of an informal chat and should provide a safe space for staff to discuss their thoughts and feelings about the session.

All staff should receive reflective supervision monthly and should also be made aware of wider support available to them through Dorset Council, or their employer, where they are working alongside Dorset Council youth workers.

c) Safeguarding Staff

- 1) Buddy system to be in operation for employees for both completion of detached work as well as on their return home (due to being out of hours)
- 2) Youth workers to ensure they leave the locations at the same time

- 3) A revised version of the Dorset Council emergency phrase should be used in emergency situations, "I forgot to tell TL What time we would be finished." Should one of the detached youth workers use this phrase, the detached youth workers should immediately withdraw from the present location and make their way to a place of safety. Where appropriate, the detached youth workers should call 999.
- 4) Out of Hours contact and procedure should be followed should any immediate safeguarding concerns be identified. Youth workers should give due consideration to calling the police if the situation demands it and inform their home-based contact.

6. Health and Safety

a) Risk Assessments and Risk Management

- i) All detached youth work needs to be risk assessed by the Targeted Youth Workers, and the risk assessments should be signed off by a manager (see *Appendix 2*). These should be reviewed every six months as a minimum, or with any significant change in circumstances. Some areas will require site specific risk assessments and should take account of the presence of drugs and alcohol, anti-social behaviour, Child Exploitation, theft, or other crime.
- ii) Workers should not intervene in any threatening or potentially harmful situations, but withdraw from the scene, make any emergency contact they consider necessary and explaining their actions to the group at another time. Youth workers should have an agreed exit strategy for withdrawal, including a code word in case anyone feels unsafe. See section 5.b.3.
- iii) Maintaining professional boundaries with young people is vitally important. Detached youth workers should avoid, wherever possible, working in their own neighbourhood and should not work with a group that includes a relative or family friend. Where a detached youth worker has an unforeseen encounter with someone they know on a personal basis, they should exercise discretion as to whether to leave that location.
- iv) Workers should never disclose their personal address, phone number, or details for personal social media accounts to young people, although work numbers can be shared to enable future contact with the young person or to allow issues to be followed up.

b) First Aid Response

All Targeted Youth Workers should be first aid trained and up to date in their First Aid at Work accreditation. At least one of the two-person team should be qualified to administer first aid in the event of an emergency or situation that requires first aid. Each team should carry with them a small first aid kit, which should include barriers (such as gloves and face barriers/masks). All team members should carry charged mobile phones and be able to contact local emergency services if necessary and put into action the local emergency plan outlined in the area risk assessment.

c) Consent and Information Sharing

- i) Young people must be informed that should information be disclosed that places them, or someone else at risk of harm, or a criminal offence is disclosed, that this information will be shared with relevant professionals.
- ii) It is best practice for young people to be made aware of the consequences of any disclosure and consent should wherever possible be gained from them to any action taken on their behalf, even when our policy dictates that no such consent is required.
- iii) Written consent from parents or guardians must be gained for any trips and for the capture of and use of young people's images.

d) Co-delivery of Outreach and Detached Youth Work with Partnership Organisations

If Dorset council staff are delivering detached or outreach work, the Dorset Council employee, and partner agency will always work under the terms of this policy.

e) Detached and Outreach Work and the Law

- i) While it is important to maintain a balance between professional relationships with young people and long-term benefits to detached work, detached youth workers must operate within the law. If a serious criminal offence is committed and witnessed by staff, then the staff member must contact the Police and share their knowledge of the crime. The young person or young people involved should be encouraged to contact the police with the youth worker, to encourage their engagement with professional services.
- ii) A safeguarding referral must also be made in line with local policy. This should be explained to the young people involved if possible, and safe, to do so, seeking advice when it is feasible to do so.
- iii) Any incident of this nature should be adequately debriefed for the wellbeing of the staff involved and reported to the Team Manager at the earliest available opportunity. The incident should be robustly recorded with as much detail as the staff members can recall including times, location and names of any young people involved. Where relevant, details of the incident should be shared with any professionals working with the young people involved.
- iv) In some situations, detached youth workers may have low level intelligence which could be useful to the police but may undermine the relationship with the young person. In such situations, it is important that this decision is discussed with the relevant line manager and that the discussion is recorded. Wherever possible, information should be shared with the police in confidence. The monthly Youth at Risk Meetings are a good place to discuss individual young people in confidence within multi-agency setting, looking at the context within which young people are associating.

f) ID Badges

Workers should carry their Dorset Council ID badge, which they can produce when working directly with young people, or when in contact with other professionals or members of the public.

g) Pandemics and Public Health

All detached youth work should be carried out within current public health guidance. Targeted Youth Workers should ensure they check the guidance on a regular basis, and adjust their work where appropriate, including updating any Risk Assessments. Detached youth work is an important protective factor in keeping young people safe in public spaces, even if they are not adhering to government guidance around public health. Targeted Youth Workers play a significant role in mitigating other risk factors for young people during a pandemic such as emotional well-being, crime and exploitation, and Targeted Youth Workers should do all they can maintain a detached youth work offer, beyond the public health risks.

7. Recording, Monitoring and Evaluating

a) The purpose of recording and monitoring

Monitoring of detached youth work is about continually collecting information about the work, the area Targeted Youth Workers are working in and who is passing through over time, to track progress against planned aims and objectives.

Evaluation is about making an informed judgement based on the collected information about whether the planned aims and objectives have been achieved. In some situations, it may be helpful for an evaluation to be carried out by an external agency, such as researchers or funders.

b) What recording should capture:

- Needs of young people
- Recording number of young people seen
- Numbers and approximate ages of the young people engaged with under location headings
- Summary of the topics of conversations at each location
- Project work undertaken
- Safeguarding issues or concerns
- Locations of concern
- Professional judgement and analysis of the safety of individual locations visited or peer groups engaged with and identification of any follow up work to be undertaken
- Links to Youth at Risk Meetings, Child Exploitation Champions and any individual case work meetings

c) Recording Work within Early Help and Social Care systems:

If there is significant engagement with a young person who is open to Early Help or Social Care, a record should be added on Mosaic. This should be recorded on the Case

note template (see *Appendix 3*) The template creates an in-depth record of the engagement that has taken place.

Where the template is not relevant, but there is still a need to record that a Youth Worker has had contact or seen a young person, a case note can be used instead of the template. This might apply if there are concerns around the young person being missing or at risk of Child Exploitation and the details of peer groups or location may be relevant.

When adding any case note the Targeted Youth Worker should ensure that the allocated worker is made aware.

Detached Youth Work is also recorded via a session evaluation template (see *Appendix 4*). This is not uploaded on to Mosaic but can be shared with individual workers if relevant.

8. Insurance

Detached Youth Work carried out by the Targeted Youth Workers is covered by Dorset Council's Public and Employer's Liability Insurance.

9. Further sources of support

- [Resource Library – NYA](#)
- <http://www.youth-association.org/downloads/TheYouthAssociation-DetachedYouthWorkPolicy.pdf>

Appendix 1 - Checklist/Toolkit

All Detached/Outreach youth workers should have a work bag or toolkit that they always carry with them when working with young people on the streets.

- This is a standardised Dorset Council Rucksack.

Essential- Items

- Torch
- First Aid Kit – to include sanitary products and foil blanket
- Gloves, Masks and Hand Sanitiser
- Empty refuse sack and nappy bags
- Bottled Water x 2
- Info Cards
- Mobile Phone
- ICE (In Case of Emergency) Card for individual workers
- Copy of emergency procedure including emergency telephone numbers
- Paper and Pen
- ID Badge
- *Condoms (where the youth worker has completed their C-Card training)
- Complaint forms

Appendix 2 - Detached/Outreach Youth Work Risk Assessment

Workplace:			Date of Assessment:	
Assessment completed by:				
Role		Due for review:		
Hazard / Risk e.g. slip/trip hazards, electricity, equipment/activity related hazards	Who is at risk?	Current Controls in Place Are they adequate? Is the risk reduced as far as possible?	Level of Residual Risk Low, medium, high or very high?	Additional measures to control the risks

Appendix 3 – Template for recording specific concerns for a young person on Mosaic

(Add Zone) – Detached Youth Work Recording	
Date/Time:	Workers present:
Location(s)	
Name/Mosaic No. Of YP who was seen:	
Associates/Peers also present (Use Mosaic Ref and Initials only)	
Overview of Discussion/Engagement	
Was the YP aware that the contact would be recorded/discussed with their allocated worker? (Yes/No/Rationale)	
Professional Judgement – Strengths and Challenges	
Actions/Follow Up	

Appendix 4 - Sessional recording template

PEER GROUP – What was observed? Group Dynamic? Group Presentation? Strengths and Concerns?	LOCATION – Where? Observations? Strengths? Concerns?
INDIVIDUALS – Specific follow up’s? Individual actions to note etc.	THEMES/ANALYSIS

Date of Session:

Workers: