

What we do in Dorset – Our Targeted Youth Work Offer

A Targeted Youth Offer is a distinct and essential part of the wider locality offer. Each locality has a Targeted Youth Worker to provide leadership around early help of young people and contextual safeguarding. In the Chesil and North Localities there is also a Targeted Youth Support Worker, which reflects the additional needs of those two localities.

Targeted Youth Workers will play a key role in supporting new and existing voluntary and community sector youth provision, including youth centres previously run by Dorset County Council. Voluntary Sector organisations provide a key part of our offer to young people. The Targeted Youth Workers will act as points of contact for these partners to provide guidance and expertise around youth work in their locality to enable these organisations to thrive.

Contextual Safeguarding is also a crucial part of approach for this work and the Targeted Youth Worker takes a lead on this work where there are contextual safeguarding concerns. They will facilitate peer group mapping and group safety mapping. Targeted youth work will contribute to the wider locality objectives of:

- Disruption or limitation to reduce the risk of harm to young people in the community, or outside the family home, with a focus on working with local partners.
- Improving school attendance
- Improving school attainment
- Improving emotional and physical wellbeing
- Reducing fixed term and permanent exclusions
- Reduced youth anti-social behaviour
- Reduced Child Exploitation

Youth work can provide support to young people through focus in groups and contexts (as opposed to individual interventions) where extra-familial harm may occur, including where there are risks of exploitation, extra-familial abuse and where professional relationships do not regularly reach currently.

Our Principles and Values

The principles and values of our youth work practice build on the wider principles of the Dorset Council approach of being collaborative, strength-based and restorative.

- **Voluntary** – Youth work is based upon the voluntary participation of young people. Effective youth work is dependent upon the young person choosing to engage.
- **Young person centred** – Youth work starts with needs of the young person and works with where they are starting from and what they need. The youth worker will listen and understand. Any work will be co-produced between the young person and youth worker, empowering the young person to take control of their own life.
- **Preventative** – Our work will engage young people at the earliest point to prevent needs and issues from escalating
- **Strength based** – Our work will start from what a young person is good at and use these strengths to address the issues they may face. The work will be empowering, enabling the young person to become independent of our support
- **Relationship based** – Youth work is based upon a trusting relationship. Our youth workers will be respectful and approachable, enabling young person to have a level of confidence that enables the work to be effective.
- **Outcome based** – Our work will be focused on making a difference for young people and support them in being able to identify the progress they have made

- **Educational** – Youth work will enable young people to learn about themselves, their community and the world around them to promote their social and personal development in an informal way.

Our Targeted Youth Work Offer

Support to Voluntary and Community Sector Youth Provision: As part of our wider work to develop our Localities, the Targeted Youth Workers will link closely with voluntary and community sector youth organisations. This support will take account individual skills and strengths in each organisation, identify gaps in provision for young people and working collaboratively to find solutions together.

Youth At Risk meetings: Targeted Youth Workers will lead regular multi-agency YAR meetings to plan for young people we are concerns. These concerns relate to a young person's risk of Child Exploitation, Child Sexual Exploitation, Anti-Social Behaviour, and repeated episodes of going missing. The focus will be on those that do not have any social care or Early Help involvement. Key partners will be secondary schools; neighbourhood policing teams; ASB teams; and local youth and community organisations.

Detached and Outreach Youth Work: **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 that are governed by young people's rules and on their terms, usually at times and locations outside of education.

Outreach work is similar, but with the objective is to encourage and engage a young person into an existing setting. The times and locations of detached and outreach targeted intervention, will often be identified through the Youth at Risk meetings and through embedding into local resources.

Targeted Youth Work in Groups: Targeted Youth Workers will develop, coordinate and deliver group work programmes with young people. These may be delivered directly or alongside other professional and other partners. Targeted Youth Workers will be the main point of contact for schools to explore group work within peer and school contexts which reduces extra-familial risk. Where there are needs identified through the Youth at Risk Meeting, group work will be considered to target specific peer groups or issues.

Youth Work support on a one-to-one basis: In some situations, it may be appropriate that Targeted Youth work is delivered on a one-to-one basis, which may include situations where a whole family approach is disproportionate. This would be offered as part of a wider discussion as to the needs of the young person, how these needs could be met, and who else might be able to provide this support.

Online offer: There is an ambition to deliver some youth work services digitally so young people can access them when and where they want. We will be exploring options in due course. At present there are some services available to young people including Chat Health and Kooth. These can be accessed via the [Dorset Council Website](#). We will also be exploring how we can engage better with young people through social media.