

### Leeds Youth Work Partnership

Leeds Youth Work Partnership is an inter-agency group whose members include voluntary, community, faith and statutory agencies. We are working hard to encourage effective and integrated delivery of services to young people across Leeds and to make sure that the voices of young people are heard and reflected in services designed to meet their needs..

The distinctive element of the Youth Work Partnership is our collective commitment to the development of youth work practice and delivery throughout the city. The Partnership will advocate and promote the Youth Service as a significant, definable service and will seek to ensure that the needs of older young people are fully considered in the emerging structure that will shape the nature of services for children and young people. Member organisations subscribe to a collective statement of values, adhere to principles of best practice and are committed to the delivery of the emerging city wide statement entitlement / offer for young people.

Youth Work partnership aims to break down historical perspective of separate providers of youth work provision i.e. Local Authority Provision and Voluntary, Community and Faith sector providers. It is also our explicit intention to challenge the inherent boundaries created by the funder / recipient relationship. The partnership recognises that changing the existing culture across all sector will present a considerable challenge. The creation of the Partnership, as a strategic body able to drive policy and planning while also embodying locally based practical cooperation, will significantly enhance the chances of meeting this challenge and in promoting youth work through positive example.

The partnership will work alongside existing and emerging city wide structures, which include Children Trust arrangements, Connexions, Area Committees, Safer Leeds, Youth Offending Service and Extended Schools. The Partnership welcomes the prospect of developing joint commissioning arrangements across the city for children and young people's services. The Partnership shall participate fully in future commissioning arrangements in order to share responsibility, risk, jointly own difficult decisions and break down relationships based on an imbalance of power.

Membership consists of youth work providers from both the statutory and voluntary sectors demonstrating a clear commitment to the principles, values and practices of good youth work practice. An integrated youth service for Leeds will be provided by this range of organisations, reflecting the identified needs of young people and the diversity of the city. It will be the explicit intention of the Partnership to broaden membership, enhancing capacity and increasing the level of provision throughout the city. The Partnership recognises and welcomes the supportive role of key strategic organisations. These include Leeds Youth Service, the NYA, Leeds Initiative, West Yorkshire Youth Association, Leeds Voice and the regional VYON.

The partnership is fully committed towards the Government's Change for Children agenda and seeks to directly support all providers to develop their services that will help improve the lives of every child and young person in Leeds.

The Partnership will seek to ensure that future delivery of services will be developed under the Every Child Matters framework of outcomes

### LEEDS YOUTH WORK PARTNERSHIP

#### Principles of youth work

The youth service is a complex network of providers, including voluntary and faith based organisations, community groups and local authorities. The element giving coherence to this network is a shared belief in youth work values and youth work methods.

Youth work seeks to create positive changes in the lives of young people and is not about the more negative, controlling aspects of youth policy.

Youth work can benefit all young people, although it is recognised that some young people have disadvantaged starting points in life.

Youth work is rooted in the needs of young people and encourages the identification and expression of these needs. Young people ultimately set the youth work agenda, although this may also closely coincide with government priorities such as the promotion of learning and employment opportunities and the celebration of achievement.

Effective youth work happens when young people take part in the process voluntarily. There is a voluntary 'deal' between young people and youth workers which either partner can walk away from if the process is not meeting needs.

Youth work advocates on behalf of young people and seeks to promote potential solutions to problems.

Youth work aims to enable young people to understand the links between the rights and responsibilities of citizens in society. Young people have the right to participate in the design and organisation of services and institutions that affect their lives, while also having the responsibility to do so consistently and conscientiously.

Youth work has 'relationships' at its heart, both between young people themselves and the interaction with adult youth workers. The youth work approach is founded in the many faceted dynamics of these interactions and in the potential afforded by an acknowledgement of the 'whole person'.

Youth workers are social educators whose work involves enabling young people to acquire skills, values, attitudes and knowledge.

The youth work 'curriculum' underpins youth work and includes a combination of methods used, 'programmes' delivered, the context of the work and the process of reviewing or assessing progress made.