

Consultation Response Template

Stronger Futures – A Northern Ireland Youth Work Policy Statement

The Department of Education (DE) invites you to take part in the public consultation for a revised youth policy statement: **Stronger Futures – A Northern Ireland Youth Work Policy Statement**

This revised policy statement is a result of an extensive review of youth policy, by the Department, children and young people and other key stakeholders, including the community and voluntary youth sector and the Education Authority.

Following completion of the review process, proposals were combined into a set of six key themes, set out in the draft policy document attached.

We now wish to hear the views of the public and welcome contributions from everyone with an interest in youth services in Northern Ireland.

Have your say online via Citizen Space, click “Respond Online” below.

The consultation is open until XX 2026 at 23:59 – don’t miss your chance to make a difference.

Privacy and Data Protection Notice

How your information will be used

The Department of Education (DE) is committed to protecting your privacy. This consultation is being conducted in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

What information we collect

We collect the information you provide in Sections A, B, C, and D of this form, including any personal data you choose to share

How we use your information

Your responses will be used only for the purpose of analysing consultation feedback on the Stronger Futures policy statement. Individual responses may be read and considered by policy officials, but you will not be personally identifiable in any published summary of findings unless you give explicit consent.

Sharing your information

Your response will not be shared with third parties outside DE. Anonymous, aggregated findings may be published or shared with stakeholders.

Anonymity and confidentiality

If you do not provide your name or organisation, your response will be treated as anonymous.

If you do provide your name and/or organisation, these will be kept confidential and not published without your explicit consent.

If you request that your response remains confidential, we will respect that request unless required by law to disclose it (e.g., under Freedom of Information legislation).

Section A: About You

Name (optional):

Email address:

Post code:

Which of the following best describes you? (tick all that apply)

Young person age 4–8 ☐ 9–13 ☐ 14–18 ☐ 19–25 ☐

Parent / carer

Youth worker (paid) in a Community or Voluntary Sector organisation

Youth volunteer in a Community or Voluntary Sector organisation

Youth worker (paid) in the Education Authority

Youth volunteer in a Education Authority youth setting

Youth service manager / leader

Trustee / board member of a youth organisation

Representative of a Community or Voluntary Sector organisation

Representative of a statutory organisation (e.g., EA, DE, Health, PSNI, Council)

School leader / teacher

Elected representative / policymaker

Other (please specify): _____

Please tell us if you are responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation.

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please confirm the name of the organisation and you have the authority to respond on behalf of the organisation.

Individual

Organisation

How would you describe your level of involvement with youth services? (tick one)

Regularly involved (e.g. work in or frequently attend a youth club)

Occasionally involved

Limited or no direct involvement

Which of the following Section 75 groups do you belong to?

Religious belief: Catholic ☐ Protestant ☐ Buddhist, Hindu Jewish Muslim
No religious belief Sikh Other faiths Prefer not to say

Political opinion: e.g., Nationalists generally ☐ Unionists generally ☐
members/supporters of other political parties ☐ Prefer not to say

Racial group: Black White Chinese Indian Pakistani
Mixed ethnic background Polish Roma Traveller
Prefer not to say

Age: Under 18 18 – 25 26 – 34 35 – 44 45 – 54 55 – 64
65 and over

Marital status: Married In a Civil partnership Co-habiting with partner
Divorced Separated Single Widowed

Sexual orientation: Heterosexual or Straight Gay or Lesbian Bisexual
Other Prefer not to say

Men and women generally: Biological sex (sex at birth) Male ☐ Female ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

Person with a disability ☐

Person with dependants: ☐

Section B: Consultation Questions by Theme

‘Stronger Futures - A Northern Ireland Youth Work Policy Statement’, which is attached as a separate document, is split into 6 key themes. The following questions are seeking your views. The title of each theme and the intended outcomes are provided for ease of reference; however, the wider context and background detail is provided in the attached policy statement for your full consideration. Please answer all questions you feel are relevant to you. For each, please indicate your level of agreement, then help us by outlining your reasons and any additional comments or suggestions..

Theme 1: Services

Intended Outcomes:

1. Young people experience consistent, safe, inclusive, and high-quality youth services regardless of location or background.
2. Services are designed with young people and demonstrably responsive to their lived experiences.
3. Youth work complements formal education, improving engagement, attendance and broader life outcomes.

- 4. Universal, targeted, and enhanced youth work will be delivered consistently and effectively, as evidenced by annual reporting and consideration of UNCRC, equality and all other relevant legal requirements.**
- 5. Comprehensive practice improvement support, including pre and post inspection, will be provided, highlighted in annual reviews.**

Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with Theme 1 and its intended outcomes in the draft policy:

Strongly agree
Agree
Neutral
Disagree
Strongly disagree
Don't Know

Please provide the reason for the above response and any comments/suggestions you have on Theme 1 and its intended outcomes, e.g. what you think works well, or what could be changed or added:

Theme 2: Evidence-based assessment of needs and outcomes

Intended Outcomes:

- 1. The assessed needs of children and young people will be identified and addressed, with outcomes captured and reported.**
- 2. Services are prioritised based on evidenced need, ensuring resources are targeted effectively.**
- 3. Young people will be empowered to share their perspectives and influence decision-making, as reflected in Youth Voice reports.**
- 4. There is clear visibility of impact, with measurable improvements in outcomes for young people, providing a robust evidence base for youth work delivery through evaluations and research.**

Q2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with Theme 2 and its intended outcomes in the draft policy, e.g. what you think works well, or what could be changed or added:

Strongly agree
Agree
Neutral
Disagree
Strongly disagree
Don't know

Please provide the reason for the above response and any comments/suggestions you have on Theme 2 and its intended outcomes:

Theme 3: Youth Workforce

Intended Outcomes:

- 1. A skilled, diverse, and sustainable workforce is in place across all areas of youth work.**
- 2. The assessed needs of the workforce will be identified and addressed, with outcomes captured and reported.**
- 3. An effective curriculum to support youth workers will be delivered with impact measured.**
- 4. The workforce is recognised and valued, leading to greater stability and improved outcomes for young people.**

Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with Theme 3 and its intended outcomes in the draft policy:

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Don't know

Please provide the reason for the above response and any comments/suggestions you have on Theme 3 and its intended outcomes, e.g. what you think works well, or what could be changed or added:

Theme 4: Funding and facilities

Intended Outcomes:

- 1. Resources will be utilised effectively to meet the needs of children and young people, evidenced in an annual report.**
- 2. Young people have access to high-quality, safe, and accessible facilities, open at the right times and in the right places.**
- 3. Youth services benefit from more sustainable and diversified funding sources across sectors.**
- 4. Greater collaboration and reduced duplication providing better value for money.**

Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with Theme 4 and its intended outcomes in the draft policy:

Strongly agree
Agree
Neutral
Disagree
Strongly disagree
Don't know

Please provide the reason for the above response and any comments/suggestions you have on Theme 4 and its intended outcomes, e.g. what you think works well, or what could be changed or added:

Theme 5: Structures and support

Intended Outcomes:

- 1. The system operates as a cohesive and coordinated delivery model, focused on outcomes for young people.**
- 2. Governance and support structures enable efficient decision-making and continuous system improvement.**
- 3. Effective partnerships with the Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS) will be developed to meet the needs of children and young people.**
- 4. Capacity to deliver youth work will be addressed within the CVS to enhance youth work outcomes for children and young people.**

Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with Theme 5 and its intended outcomes in the draft policy:

Strongly agree
Agree
Neutral
Disagree
Strongly disagree
Don't know

Please provide any the reason for the above response and comments/suggestions you have on Theme 5 and its intended outcomes, e.g. what you think works well, or what could be changed or added:

Theme 6: Partnerships

Intended Outcomes:

- 1. Effective partnerships with other statutory agencies and government bodies will be embedded within youth work practice, with joined-up support for young people.**
- 2. Collaboration across sectors delivers shared outcomes and maximises collective impact.**
- 3. Resources, knowledge, and expertise are shared effectively, improving service reach and quality.**

Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with Theme 6 and its intended outcomes in the draft policy:

Strongly agree
Agree
Neutral
Disagree
Strongly disagree
Don't know

Please provide any the reason for the above response and comments/suggestions you have on Theme 6 and its intended outcomes, e.g. what you think works well, or what could be changed or added:

Section C: Overall Agreement with the Policy Statement

Q7. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the current title “Stronger Futures – A Youth Work Policy Statement”?

Strongly agree
Agree
Neutral
Disagree
Strongly disagree
Don't know

Please provide any alternative title suggestions you have:

Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the Stronger Futures policy statement as a whole?

Strongly agree
Agree
Neutral

Disagree
Strongly disagree
Don't know

Please provide the reason for the above response and anything else you would like to add about the Stronger Futures policy statement (you do not need to repeat responses to individual themes you have already provided)?

Section D: Equality and human Rights, Children's Rights and Rural Impact

An Equality and Human Rights Screening document as well as a Children's Rights Impact Assessment and Rural Impact Assessment are available on the DE Website <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/consultations/public-consultation-stronger-futures-northern-ireland-youth-work-policy-statement>.

We are seeking your views on these in the questions below.

Q9 Do you agree or disagree with the findings of the Equality Impact Screening document?

- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Please share any further views or suggestions you have in relation to this question.

Q10. Do you agree or disagree with the findings of the Children's Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA)?

- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
- Don't know

Please share any further views or suggestions you have in relation to this question.

Q11 Do you agree or disagree with the conclusions of the Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA)?

- Strongly agree

- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please share any further views or suggestions you have in relation to this question