

LOST IN TRANSLATION?

- WORKING TOWARDS A SHARED LANGUAGE BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND YOUTH WORK

PURPOSE

This resource is intended to support youth workers and teachers to further strengthen collaboration by:

- Building a shared understanding of roles and terminology.
- Sharing and learning from practice.

Partnership between schools and youth work can support improved outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty, including approaches to improving school attendance and engagement.

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

The resource has been designed and structured to support professional dialogue and collaboration between youth work and school practitioners, as part of ongoing improvement activity. Each section contains an activity, suggested challenge questions and links to additional resources.

It is suggested that the resource be used as a framework for discussion between youth work and school practitioners together.

What you will need:

- Someone to facilitate the session – including introducing the resource and each activity.
- Between 1.5 and 2 hours.
- [The slide pack](#).



INTRODUCTION

The National Improvement Framework¹ outlines the need for a collaborative system to achieve excellence and equity in Scottish education.

A continued collaborative approach is also central to deliver the refreshed mission for the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC), “to use education to improve outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty, with a focus on tackling the poverty related attainment gap”².

The refreshed Challenge places greater focus on the breadth of achievements and the importance of health and wellbeing to improving outcomes for children and young people. Effective partnership with youth work improves the readiness to learn, health and wellbeing and educational outcomes of children and young people.

We know that key characteristics of effective collaboration include:

- Mutual trust and respect
- Clear, agreed purpose and aims
- Shared understanding of roles, responsibilities and approaches
- Common professional language
- Sharing of skills, knowledge and experience
- Shared accountability (Joint planning and evaluation of progress)
- Open, regular communication and review
- Youth voice is representative, heard and valued

Shared language is when people develop a mutual understanding which helps them communicate more effectively. This might include explaining terminology and considering the language we use. It’s also about recognising that collaboration needs diverse perspectives to reach a point where we can appreciate others’ perspectives, while acknowledging our own. Using a shared, common language within collaboration is most effective when it’s co-created. It can provide a focus, help to define clear goals and ensure a common understanding.

This resource will provide opportunity to consider how we can work towards a shared understanding of roles, responsibilities and approaches. And how developing a common language to work with young people can strengthen partnership working.

REACHING A SHARED UNDERSTANDING

This section should help you towards reaching a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities for children and young people’s learning and development.

WHOSE ROLE IS IT?

Timing: 20 – 30 minutes (10 minutes quiz, 10 minutes to view the PPT explanations)

Activity 1

Challenge questions (10 minutes)

- Did any of the roles and responsibilities surprise you. Why?
- How did it feel to acknowledge areas of shared responsibility?
- What impact might this have on your practice?

ACTIVITY 1



Additional resources:

- [National Youth Work Outcomes and Skills Framework](#)
- [Youth work guide for schools](#)

TOWARDS A SHARED LANGUAGE – LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER AND BUSTING SOME MYTHS

Now we've developed an understanding of some of the shared responsibilities between youth work and schools this section will help you work towards developing a shared language. It is suggested that participants work in small groups to undertake Activity 2.

Additional resources:

[Sharing terminology between practitioners](#)

MYTH BUSTING

Timing – 20 minutes

Activity 2

Challenge questions (10 minutes)

- How did the different knowledge, experience and perspectives of your group help to develop a shared understanding?
- How can a better understanding help us work towards a common language to plan, track progress/achievement and measure improvement together?
- What opportunities are there to find a shared language?



ACTIVITY 2





LEARNING FROM PRACTICE

It may be helpful to provide opportunity for participants to engage with some of the following practice sharing examples as part of the session.

The following case studies illustrate where a shared understanding and a common professional language have supported the development of relationships based on mutual respect and improved the partnership working:

[St Mungo's Academy and FARE Scotland](#)

[Jack Kane Centre and St Francis Primary](#)

[Youth Voice – Forth Valley & West Lothian Regional Improvement Collaborative](#)

[Braes High and Falkirk Council CLD Youth Work](#)

[Newbattle and Y2K](#)

[Use of PEF to support school attendance and engagement](#)

[A Rights-based approach to tackling Engagement and Attendance](#)

[A Collaborative Approach to Tracking Achievement](#)

Further case studies and examples of practice can be found at [YouthLink Scotland](#)

Additional resources:

- [Developing Youth Work and School Partnerships](#)
- [Understanding Impact](#)
- [Dave Gregory Blog](#)
- [Education Scotland SAC Self-Evaluation Resource](#)
- [Scotland's Equity Toolkit | Resources | Education Scotland](#)

NEXT STEPS

The following questions might be helpful to consider how you could continue the conversation.

Challenge questions:

- Is there anything we might do differently, as a result of this conversation?
- What opportunities are there in your context to continue to develop a shared language?
- How might this support joint planning, tracking achievement and measuring improvement?
- In what ways could you continue to strengthen your school and youth work partnership?

ACTIVITY 1

WHOSE ROLE IS IT?



What you will need:

- One person to facilitate the activity
- Facilitator's notes with the 10 questions/answers. [Slides](#)

Facilitator's notes:

Explain purpose of activity: Undertaking this activity can help to reach a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities between youth work and schools. Emphasize that participants should respect others' views and perceptions.

1. Ask Questions below (if you have an account, Mentimeter can be a visual way of engaging participants)

Participants should answer either: school, youth work, or both.

Facilitator should then reveal the correct answer and can invite participants to explain their answer, or explain their approach to this element of their role e.g. how do they track and monitor achievements?

Whose role is it to support the development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work?	BOTH	<p>2. During the quiz, please use the explanatory slides, demonstrating where youth work sits within Curriculum for Excellence (slides).</p> <p>3. Optional challenge questions to pose to participants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did any of the roles and responsibilities surprise you. Why? • How did it feel to acknowledge areas of shared responsibility? • What impact might this have on your practice? <p>4. Summary of activity: We hope that the exercise and slides have helped individuals recognise that youth workers and teachers are both part of the education system, and have similar roles and responsibilities.</p>
Whose role is it to engage with families and communities?	BOTH	
Whose role is it to deliver Curriculum for Excellence?	BOTH	
Whose role is it to support the health and wellbeing of children and young people?	BOTH	
Whose role is it to track and monitor the achievements of children and young people?	BOTH	
Whose role is it to raise attainment?	BOTH	
Whose role is it to close the poverty-related attainment gap?	BOTH	
Whose role is it to assist children and young people to recognise, realise and defend their rights?	BOTH	
Whose role is it to engage with children and young people who choose to participate in community activities?	YOUTH WORK	
Whose role is it to report to parents/carers about the progress of children and young people?	SCHOOL	

ACTIVITY 2

MYTH BUSTING



What you will need:

- A facilitator for each small discussion group
- Facilitator's notes

Facilitator's notes:

1. Facilitators to invite participants to reflect on what they've heard so far about the roles of youth work and schools. Any surprises about what they've heard? What misconceptions exist about schools or youth work?
2. Each discussion group is given the statements below to discuss. Facilitators should encourage participants to acknowledge that what is obvious to one person, may not be to another. This is because we all bring different knowledge, experiences and perspectives to the table. Be empathic and willing to learn from each other.

Feedback from group discussions and challenge questions

Participants should come back together for feedback, and to consider challenge questions.

Timing – 10 minutes

Discussion group facilitators should be invited to share any brief reflections from their group.

- How did the different knowledge, experience and perspectives of your group help to develop a shared understanding?
- How can a better understanding help us work towards a common language to plan, track progress/achievement and measure improvement together?
- What opportunities are there to find a shared language?

Statements - Is this true, or a myth?

STATEMENT	TRUE OR MYTH?
Youth work can help improve school attendance	TRUE - Youth workers often have knowledge and relationships across the community, including the wider family and are an important element of a whole-system approach to improving attendance .
Youth awards are only valuable to schools if they attract Insight tariff points.	MYTH - Does everyone understand what Insight/tariff points are? The Awards Network publishes Amazing Things – which details the range of youth awards in Scotland.
Community planning is for CLD and does not involve schools.	MYTH - Schools are part of the learning community and therefore both school and community planning should be closely linked, each taking account of the priorities and needs identified. Are there examples in the group of where schools have contributed to locality or community planning priorities?

ACTIVITY 2

STATEMENT	TRUE OR MYTH?
<p>Pupil Equity Funding can't be used for interventions that take place out-with term-time or for community-based interventions.</p>	<p>MYTH - PEF Operational Guidance PEF Infographic</p>
<p>Youth work is about playing table tennis and hanging about with your pals.</p>	<p>MYTH - Youth work may involve activities and opportunity for social interaction. Activities are often used as engagement tools, or to create opportunity to develop skills. The focus is on the learning and development of young people, with the relationship between youth worker and young person playing a key role.</p>
<p>The National Youth Work Outcomes have nothing to do with Curriculum for Excellence.</p>	<p>MYTH - As we heard earlier, the youth work outcomes are underpinned by the four capacities of CfE. In working towards the outcomes, young people develop transferable skills – the skills for learning, life and work.</p>

SUPPORT

YouthLink Scotland delivers one of the SAC national programmes. They can provide support and advice on developing effective collaboration between schools and youth work. For more information or support please contact Marielle Curran, Youth Work and Schools Manager, mcurran@youthlink.scot



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