



# Youth Work and Schools in Edinburgh

Working together to address the impact of coronavirus on children and young people

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[Covid-19 Education Recovery: Youth Work](#) explains how youth work, both in the voluntary and statutory sectors, can help tackle the impact of coronavirus in our schools.

This **Youth Work and Schools in Edinburgh** guide is for school leaders in primary and secondary schools. The intended purpose is to help schools consider where collaboration with youth work partners can help ensure children and young people receive the support they need in order to:

- **Address the impact of COVID-19 on health and wellbeing**
- **Close the poverty-related attainment gap**

### What does youth work deliver?

Youth work partners in Edinburgh can provide a range of interventions that can be tailored to the particular challenges facing children and young people within your school community. These include:

#### Tailored group work programmes

Group work can be delivered on a small group basis or to a particular year group, through, for example, PSE sessions. Programmes can be developed around issues affecting children or young people in your school, such as transition, sexual health, communication skills, team working and relationships. Youth workers can also tailor group work to support pupils with identified needs, for example to support their transition/re-engagement with the school curriculum, develop confidence/self-esteem, improve relationships, build resilience (e.g. Seasons for Growth) or other needs as identified by the school.

#### One-to-one support

Youth workers can provide pupil support, either within school or in the community, working closely with Guidance to promote emotional wellbeing.

“One to one helped me through my young carer duties that is linked to my mum’s mental health condition. [It] also provided a safe place for me to come and talk about my issues.”

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#### Youth awards/personal learning and achievement

Youth workers can provide opportunities for personal learning and achievement, both in school and in the wider community. This includes a range of youth awards for children and young people in primary and secondary schools. Youth awards can be a particularly good approach for those struggling to engage with the formal curriculum. They can help to improve wellbeing and provide an alternative approach to address learning loss as a result of COVID-19.

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“They helped me catch up on school work as well when I was out of school and if I didn’t have that support, I would have struggled to go back to school.”

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## Parental engagement and family learning

Youth work partners are likely to have strong relationships with families in your school community, particularly those most affected by COVID-19. They can work with you to support parental engagement and deliver family learning opportunities to help mitigate the impact on learning and development.

## Universal youth work

Universal youth work opportunities include youth clubs and groups which are not targeted at particular children or young people. [The Impact of Universal Youth Work](#) research identified the difference these opportunities make to children and young people's lives. Universal youth work opportunities can be delivered in school. This could include lunchtime groups, after school activities and groups, and health and wellbeing drop-ins. These will be useful in prevention and early intervention approaches as we move through the recovery phase.

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“When I first came into contact with youth work I began to experience a new way of being educated, one which I felt suited my needs and taught me in a way I enjoyed.”

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## Outdoor learning

Outdoor learning opportunities can be delivered to improve physical and mental health and wellbeing. These can be targeted, for example, to address the attainment gap or to support re-engagement in learning. Outdoor learning can be used alongside youth awards to recognise achievement.

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“They are always there for us. When we are sad, they are there. There has never been one time that they have not been there to help.”

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## Developing the Young Workforce

Youth work is a key partner in Developing the Young Workforce. It provides opportunities for children and young people to develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work. In the senior phase, this includes delivering No One Left Behind employability support, including opportunities for those who face multiple barriers to employment. Young people receive tailored support and learning, through one-to-one sessions, group activities and supported work experience. They develop skills, build confidence and gain qualifications to take the next step towards a positive destination.



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“I’m a more confident person because of coming here and I feel I have made better life choices”

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## School holiday provision

Youth work delivers school holiday provision to children and young people. This summer youth work has delivered a blended model of online and face-to-face activities, including those to support transition, tackle food insecurity, address learning loss and support health and wellbeing.

## Learner Participation

Youth work can support children and young people to engage with learning, express their voice and be part of decisions that affect them. This can include pupil councils, youth forums and approaches to participatory budgeting.

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“My involvement in youth work gave me the skills, encouragement, self-belief and platform which showed me how you can stand up for what you believe in and make things better.”

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## What should I do next?

City of Edinburgh Council Lifelong Learning and Lothian Association of Youth Clubs (LAYC) are working with YouthLink Scotland, as part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge, to help schools develop collaboration with youth work.

For more information about how youth work could support education recovery in your school community, please contact

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LAYC (Lothian Association of Youth Clubs) is a network of 117 community-based youth and children’s organisations across East, Mid, West Lothian and the City of Edinburgh, providing services for 19,551 children and young people through 2,109 staff and volunteers.



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