

Youth Service Registration

Parents/Carers Information Pack
(Covid-19)



Welcome Back to Youth Services

On Friday 20th March, all Education Authority (EA) funded youth service centres and programmes were asked to close to protect the health and safety of children and young people. Whilst our buildings were closed and we couldn't work face to face with our members, our youth workers engaged with many young people through various online initiatives and some specialist services and we continue to do so.

This special parent's information pack outlines how we are returning to delivery of Youth Services through the re-opening of our buildings and the restart of our programmes.

We have made preparations to return to full programme delivery where the safety and wellbeing of children and young people is our greatest concern. As we re-open our youth centres and youth programmes, which will be done gradually, we will follow the current government/PHA guidance but, we will need your help with this.

We have developed and enclosed an outline of guidance which provides details on how we will support the return of children and young people to our centres and programmes, and what we need you to do, to make sure your children and young people are safe and able to do so. We ask that you read through this pack and if you have any questions or need further information please contact your local youth worker or leader in charge.

We have updated our registration form to include provision for you to grant permission to share contact details should the PHA Test, Trace, protect service needs to get in touch with you. It is important that prior to your child or young person attending any session this form is completed and returned. If we have a case, or suspected case of COVID-19 in our centre/programme you will be notified of any temporary closures.

We will also be developing a safety agreement along with our young people which will outline how young people will be expected to take responsibility for their actions, in order to stay safe in our centres and programmes. We will ask them to agree to this and I will write to you again, to ask you to sign up to this, as your commitment to keep your child and all young people who attend our programmes safe.

It is possible some of these processes may change based on government and PHA guidance. We will write to you with an update, if this happens.

Thank you for your patience and support during this challenging time; we look forward to welcoming your child/young person to our programmes again soon.

Arlene Kee

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Covid-19 What we need you to do:

1

Do not send your child/young person to the youth centre or youth programme if they are unwell or displaying COVID-19 related symptoms (high temperature, new or persistent cough and/or loss of taste or smell).

2

Provide us with up to date emergency contact numbers, and if possible, give consent to share this information upon request to Test, Trace Protect.

3

Contact the Leader in Charge immediately, if you are aware that your child has come into contact with a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19.

4

Only send your child/young person to their allocated session. Each young person will be allocated a session time; their youth worker will confirm the day and time of this. They must not attend the centre outside of this time and will not be given access.

5

Ask your child/young person not to gather in groups at the provision; either outside, the gates, at the entrance to the centre/building or in the entrance hall.

6

If you are returning to collect your child, please do this at the allocated time given to you by the youth worker. This will be specific to ensure that there are not groups of parents gathering outside to collect their children.

7

Make sure your child/young person knows they must leave the centre and grounds when their session is over, so crowds are not able to gather, and social distancing measures are followed.

8

Ensure your child washes their hands before they attend the session and when they return home.

9

Face coverings are not mandatory in youth centres or during youth programmes, but it is strongly recommended your child or young person wears one.

10

Where the use of public transport may be used as part of the youth work programme it is mandatory for young people aged 13 years or older to wear a face covering unless and they are unable due to medical reasons.

Covid-19 What we will do:

1

Ensure that all children/young people and staff practice social distancing measures.

2

We will allocate specific room(s) and equipment for the programme which will be cleaned before and after each session.

3

Show your child/young person how to wash their hands as directed by the PHA.

4

We will expect your child/young person to follow PHA guidance of regular handwashing and will reinforce the message of Catch it, Bin it, Kill it.

5

Work with your child/young person to draw up a safety agreement. They will have to follow this agreement when they are in the centre or attending a programme.

6

Ensure Hand sanitiser and paper towels are available throughout the session. We will provide sanitation stations at the entrance and at key locations throughout the centre

7

No food or drinks will be provided to children/young people during this period of COVID-19 and we ask you not to send food or drinks to the youth centre or programme, in order to reduce the risk of young people sharing and having contact with each other.

8

There will be no sports played or any form of contact activity until it is safe to do so.

9

Equipment will be kept to a minimum and not shared.

If I have questions who can I talk to?

You can talk to your local youth worker at any time (they will have provided their contact details with this pack), we are here to listen, help and support. This will be the youth worker in charge of the programme or centre your child or young person attends.

Alternatively, you can contact your local council area youth office at the telephone number below:

Council Area	Telephone Number
Antrim & Newtownabbey	028 2586 1725
Armagh Banbridge Craigavon	028 3751 2342
Ards & North Down	028 9056 6862
Belfast (North & East)	028 9035 2774
Belfast (South & West)	028 9598 5660
Causeway Coast & Glens	028 7035 2279
Derry & Strabane	028 9598 5665
Fermanagh & Omagh	028 8241 1484
Lisburn & Castlereagh	028 9056 6862
Mid & East Antrim	028 2586 1725
Mid Ulster	028 8241 1484
Newry Mourne & Down	028 9598 5625

Guidance on Washing Hands

We all need to wash our hands often. Click or tap the video below which provides a guide for children and young people on how to wash your hands properly. Will expect all children and young people to follow this guidance



Catch it! Bin it! Kill it!

When we cough or sneeze, we can pass on infections.

We will be encouraging all children and young people who attend our youth provision to follow this guidance.



Youth Service Registration Information

What you should have been provided with

To complete the registration form, the local youth club / centre / project should have provided you with the following unique information in relation to their programme:

- Key Club/Centre/Project Contact information including staff names and role.
- Names and contact Information for the Designated and Deputy Designated Child Protection Officer for the programme.
- An overview of the programme your child or young person is registering to participate in.

The following information provided in this pack applies to all Education Authority Youth Service Programmes.

Parental Responsibility

Throughout the year, the Youth Service will issue forms which must be signed by a person with parental responsibility. These forms could be for the purpose of:

- Registration in Youth Provision
- Permission for Educational visits, specialist programmes or residentials
- Permission to take and use photographs or digital images
- Permission to use ICT equipment

It is important that the appropriate adult signs these forms. This person must have Parental Responsibility as outlined in the Children (NI) Order 1995, which defines it as follows:

- Natural mother (who always has Parental Responsibility)
- Natural father who only gains Parental Responsibility:
 - If married to the mother at time of birth or subsequently
 - Through an agreement witnessed by a Solicitor
 - Through a Parental Responsibility Order by a court
 - If jointly registered at the child's birth (post April 2002)
- A person who has been awarded Parental Responsibility through a court order

For further clarification if required, please contact the Youth Worker in Charge.

Leaving the Premises During the Session

Young people come to youth service activities and sessions voluntarily, and youth workers encourage them to remain for the entire session. It should be noted by parents that whilst youth workers will take all reasonable steps to supervise the young people attending such activities and sessions, they cannot force young people to remain in the premises against their wishes.

Parents/Guardians are therefore requested to have a conversation with their young person regarding the expectation that they will attend for the duration of the session, and that they should seek permission from their parents if they wish to leave the premises.

Once they leave the youth club/centre premises, the Youth Service and its staff cannot accept responsibility for the young person and will not be supervising the young person. The Youth Club will allow the young person access to a telephone should they wish to contact you for permission to leave, subject to the young person notifying a youth worker that they are leaving.

Youth Service Child Protection Policy Statement

All elements of Child Protection fall within the Education Authority's Safeguarding Policy, issued in April 2019.

The Education Authority Youth Service has a duty of care for the welfare, safety and protection of children and young people using their services. They will carry out this duty through the Safeguarding Policy, which aims to ensure a caring, supportive and safe environment is provided.

One way in which the Youth Service seeks to protect children and young people is by helping them learn about the risks of possible abuse, recognise unwelcome behaviour in others and to acquire the confidence and skills needed to keep themselves safe.

All staff including auxiliary, ancillary and Youth Workers, paid and voluntary, have been subject to appropriate criminal background checks. All staff have adopted the Youth Service's "Code of Practice for Adults Working with Children" which dictates appropriate behaviour when working with young people.

The purpose of the Safeguarding Policy is to protect children and young people by ensuring that everyone who works in a Youth Provision – Youth Workers and non-Youth Work staff – has clear procedures on the action to be taken where abuse or neglect of a child / young person has been disclosed, observed or suspected. The overriding concern of all caring adults must be the care, welfare and safety of the child.

The Designated Youth Worker for Child Protection within the Youth Centre/Project will inform the Education Authority's Child Protection and Safeguarding Service, or in their absence, Social Services and/or the PSNI, of any disclosure, concern or suspicion of child abuse, in order to protect the child from further harm. Similar prompt action will ensue in the event of a complaint, disclosure, concern or suspicion against a member of staff.

Child Protection Court Orders or Exclusions:

To ensure the safety of young people, the Youth Service should be informed of any court order or exclusion of a named adult(s) who should not be in contact with a specific children and young people. By signing the registration form, the person with Parental Responsibility indicates that no such order or exclusion exists. However, if one does exist, the appropriate form should be obtained from the youth worker in charge and completed.


Procedure for Reporting a Concern

Outlined below is the procedure for a parent/carer/guardian to report a concern about their (Or Another) Child's Safety. This process should be used for a complaint, disclosure, concern or suspicion against a member of staff.

I have a concern about my or another child's safety



I can talk to the Youth Centre/Project Designated Youth Worker for Child Protection or the Deputy (they will report back within 5 working days)



At any time, I can talk to the local Social Services Gateway Team, OR the Out of Hours Social Worker OR The PSNI Public Protection Unit

Child Protection Contacts and Phone Numbers

External Organisation	Contact Number
Northern Trust	0300 1234 333
Belfast Trust	028 9050 7000
South-Eastern Trust	0300 1000 300
Southern Trust	0800 7387 745
Western Trust	028 7131 4090
Out of Hours Regional Emergency Social Work Service	02895 049999
PSNI Public Protection Unit	101
NSPCC	0808 800 5000

Anti-Bullying Policy

All elements of addressing bullying behaviour fall within the Education Authority's Anti-Bullying Policy. This states that:

- Young people have a right to a safe, secure and caring environment.
- All forms of bullying behaviour are not acceptable.
- Bullying behaviour will always be addressed.
- Staff will promote an environment where individual difference and diversity are accepted.
- A preventative approach to promote an Anti-Bullying culture in the Youth Service will be adopted.
- Staff will provide direct intervention with vulnerable groups to ensure bullying does not occur.

Parents will be encouraged to follow the procedures for Reporting Bullying Concerns.

Any complaint of bullying made by a parent will be fully investigated by an EA Officer, and a personal response to the complaint will be made within one week. Action to protect the victim will be taken immediately. This may include contacting the parents of the bully, and, depending on the seriousness of the attack, suspending them from attending the relevant Youth Service Provision.

Using Photographs of Young People

EA Youth Service may wish to take photographs/produce films of young people for promotional purposes. These images may appear in the local press, EA printed publications or on the EA website. The EA Youth Service operates Social Media sites, and it is possible that images could be used on Twitter or Facebook. To comply with Data Protection legislation and EA Safeguarding Policy, parental permission is required before any image of young people can be used.

Conditions of use

- We will not include details or full names (first name and surname) of any child in an image without good reason. For example, we may include full name of a competition prize-winner if we have their consent.
- We will not include personal e-mail or postal addresses, telephone or fax numbers.
- We will only use images of children who are suitably dressed, to reduce the risk of such images being used inappropriately.
- We will not use full face images on Social Media without your express permission.

Permission for Use Of ICT

EA Youth Service will provide opportunities to use computer equipment and use of the internet according to EA policies and procedures within various programmes. The ICT guidelines and policies must be adhered to at all times.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

The relationship between youth workers and young people is crucial to positive youth work practice. In order to establish and maintain positive relationships and behaviour, the parent(s)/guardian(s), staff and young people all have their part to play. The following standards are expected of everyone involved:

- Staff and young people will work together to create a positive environment
- Staff and young people will strive to develop good working relationships based on mutual respect
- Staff will encourage and support young people to develop self-discipline, and respect for others
- Staff will encourage positive standards of behaviour and provide appropriate recognition for this
- Staff and young people will work together to establish clear boundaries to guard against inappropriate behaviour
- Staff and parents will communicate if there is a cause for concern
- Staff will ensure that young people are aware of all Child Protection and Health and Safety Procedures
- Young people will care for the building and equipment
- Young people will follow the directions given by staff
- Staff will intervene immediately to challenge unacceptable behaviour
- Sanctions for inappropriate behaviour will be highlighted by the Youth Worker in Charge, and discussed with young people, staff and parents/guardians as appropriate
- Staff to ensure that young people are clear about the expectations in relation to positive behaviour at all times

Drugs and Alcohol Policy

The Education Authority operates a non-smoking, no drugs and no alcohol policy for staff and young people within all youth provision, including on Educational Visits and residential.

EA will support young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs based on knowledge and skills developed through Youth Service health education programmes.



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