

Thurston Parish Council

Thurston Detached Youth Work Project

Detached Youth Work Policy

November 2022

Statement of Principles and Practice

Purpose:

This is intended as a statement of Thurston Parish Council's policy on the principles of good detached youth work and as a set of practice guidelines for all new and existing detached workers employed by Thurston Parish Council. This statement has been created from the knowledge gained from other detached youth work projects.

Scope:

This statement related to all street based youth work delivered by Thurston Detached Youth Work staff.

Our mission, principles and values

To offer a detached youth work project accessible to as many young people as possible within the village of Thurston.

To offer support to all young people including those facing multiple needs, disadvantages and barriers.

To create opportunities and channels for young peoples voices to be heard.

1. Our mission, principles and values

1.1 The core mission of Thurston Parish Council in all of its work with young people is;

- * To continue the long history of good youth work that is both rooted in tradition and progressive in outlook.
- * To make the provision of our services as accessible to young people as possible.
- * To prioritise our support for young people facing multiple needs, disadvantages and barriers.
- * To create opportunities and channels for young people's voices to be heard.
- * To support our Detached Youth Workers and others working with young people.

1.2 The Rights of Young People:

Young people have the right to gather, to use the streets appropriately and sensibly in their leisure time. They have the right to challenge appropriately any decisions made by others about their lives with which they do not agree and to receive a considered explanation; it is a duty of a detached youth worker to facilitate this process.

Young people have a right to express an opinion in their community at area, locality and neighbourhood management groups and committees; it is always preferable that young people should be supported and prepared to express their own opinion, but where this is not possible, detached workers should act as advocates and brokers on their behalf.

Detached workers have a duty to help young people to understand their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

1.3 The role of the detached worker

The primary focus of a detached worker's role should be the needs, rights and responsibilities of young people. The worker is accepting of the individual, non-judgemental, inclusive and challenging of negative or inappropriate behaviour.

The role of the worker is to help young people to learn from their own experiences through informal education; this includes helping young people to generate and create relevant experiences from which they can learn.

While we may work to promote the aims and needs of other groups and agencies in society, detached workers must always be 'on the young person's side', and such promotion must be in the interests of young people themselves. Where possible, detached workers will deliver street level services that are appropriate and useful to young people; these may include sexual health information, housing information, etc.

Detached workers will act as inter-community 'glue', linking agencies and services directly to young people and for facilitating their involvement when it is in the young person's interests to receive such support.

1.4 Voluntary engagement

All good youth work is voluntarily engaged by the young person

Compulsion or coercion of young people's involvement and participation is both counter-productive and unethical. Detached work happens in a shared public space, where young people are uniquely positioned to have at least equal power and rights with workers.

This means that it must happen in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance and respect. For this reason, detached workers must also engage voluntarily in the process; if young people are disrespectful of the role of the worker, then detached workers have the right to explain their reasons and walk away.

1.5 Young people's participation and detached work

Experiential learning (or learning through doing and reflecting) is central to the youth work process. Young people, therefore, should always be helped and encouraged to participate in the planning, organisation and implementation of all project work and activities.

The 'process' of participation takes priority over the 'product' of group activity; we are more concerned with individual and group learning of social awareness and skills than the material outcome of activity. That said, good detached workers will always aim to achieve positive process and product outcomes.

1.6 Law and authority

Thurston Detached Youth Workers will work with and alongside the Police and other authorities when it is in the interests of young people that they should do so. This will most often take the form of detached workers being 'intermediaries' between groups of young people and the Police.

Detached workers will work with the Police, but they will never compromise their commitment to the needs and rights of the young people they serve. It is our responsibility to have an up to date working knowledge of the law as it applies to detached youth work and to help the Police to understand our role, how we work and the ethics and boundaries we employ.

1.7 Professionalism

'Professionalism' is not defined by payment for doing youth work, but by the quality of service delivery, the personal qualities of the workers in the team and the organisational culture of the Project as a whole. For detached workers, professionalism is defined by the knowledge of;

- * the theories of youth work
- * boundaries, values and ethics
- * commitment to the needs of young people
- * the need to present a public persona that is respectful and respected
- * the issues (local, national and international) faced by young people
- * issue based and service based delivery skills
- * practical and organisational skills
- * how the actions of individual workers affect the public's views of youth work more generally; being an ambassador for youth work.

1.8 Working with partner agencies

We welcome and value partnership and co-ordinated work with other agencies. We will only form such working partnerships when it is clear that the aims and objectives of a partner are sympathetic and supportive of the detached youth work project aims.

Detached workers have a duty to explain the Detached Youth Work Project aims to prospective partners to enable them to assess the suitability of such a partnership before any work is undertaken with young people.

Detached staff should never be disrespectful to other agencies or of colleagues that work for other organisations, (either in front of young people or in any work-related environment). We will, however, always seek to give feedback and constructive criticism in a professional manner, directly to the agency/colleague concerned, especially when their performance affects young people.

1.9 Working in communities and neighbourhoods

Young people are an integral and important part of the life of any community or neighbourhood and detached workers should be prepared to help other local groups and residents understand the needs of young people. In the 'intermediary' role, detached workers should become involved in the work of local democratic decision-making and planning groups and introduce themselves to residents and local businesses.

Where it is in the interests of young people, detached workers should be responsive to the needs and wishes of local residents as expressed in neighbourhood groups and look to bring young people into the decision-making process.

1.10 The role of funding in detached work

The Detached Youth Work Project seeks funding that is supportive of young people's needs and will not relegate the needs of young people to funding opportunities.

We are clear in our processes of authorisation of work and funding that all of our ethical considerations have been satisfied before we accept resources from an external agency. It is a useful developmental process to encourage young people to participate in fund-raising for their own work.

When we accept funding from an external agency, we will always take a partnership approach to the work and consider the needs and objectives of the funder in our plans.

1.11 Quality and detached work

There is no concise or 'easy' definition of quality detached youth work.

There are a range of indicators for measurements of quality detached work that we aim to show and satisfy. Amongst them are;

- * the reliability and consistency of our work
- * positive feedback from young people, communities and partners
- * evidence of development of young people from informal education
- * participation of young people in all stages of the youth work process
- * positive outcomes and products of the work
- * the numbers of young people benefiting from the service
- * individual impact and case studies
- * social impact and change at neighbourhood level
- * accreditations of young people's work

2. Our detached youth work practice guidelines

2.1 Definition and Purpose

2.1.1 Definition

Detached youth work has been defined in a number of ways. The definition below draws on the expertise of youth workers around the country.

For our purposes;

“Detached youth work is one way of delivering a high quality service to young people in line with the overall aims of the Youth Association”

“It is youth work which takes place away from buildings, or other provision primarily intended for the use of young people, and instead happens in areas which young people might identify as their ‘own ground’, for instance: street corners, bus shelters, parks, cafe’s, shopping precincts and other places where young people choose to meet”

“Detached youth work targets those young people who either choose not to use other your work provision such as youth clubs and projects, or do not have easy access to such provision perhaps due to transport difficulties, lack of provision in their locality, or for some reason have been excluded from existing provision”

Detached youth work is not the same as Outreach Work. Outreach work is linked with a building or project based provision, and seeks to inform young people and encourage them to use it. Detached workers do, of course, have a role to play in informing young people of various opportunities available to them and this often includes giving information about building based projects.

It is not always the same as Mobile Provision which by necessity is more restricted in terms of the geographical areas it can operate in and therefore does not always take place on young people’s “own ground”.

In detached work the worker is mostly the sole resource as they are not able to draw on the same equipment and resources which attract young people to youth clubs or mobile provision. Removal of such “props” (and more importantly youth workers’ control over them) leads to a situation where the youth worker has to operate much more on young people’s terms. In short, detached work is heavy reliant on workers and young people negotiating a positive and sustaining relationship. It is important to say at this point that detached youth workers always work in pairs.

2.1.2 Purpose of detached work

Generally speaking, the aims of detached youth work are no different from those of other forms of youth work provision, because detached workers, just like other youth workers, aim to deliver a high quality, highly effective informal education service to young people. This being the case, practice guidelines need to be seen in conjunction with the aims listed at the start of this document.

Generally, the aims of youth workers involve making contact with young people and positively influencing their lives by engaging them in a programme of informal education, which is fun exciting and challenging; thereby:

- * encouraging young people to broaden their understanding of issues related to Equal Opportunities and social diversity and how these affect themselves and others
- * supporting young people in their own personal development and enabling them to develop relationships with others
- * acknowledging young people's rights and providing opportunities for them to understand and exercise those rights
- * encouraging young people to be active participants in their communities
- * enabling young people to gain knowledge and increase their understanding of issues that affect the environment
- * encouraging and supporting young people to explore and access life-enhancing opportunities
- * encouraging young people to lead healthy lifestyles

In Summary: Detached work is a method of youth work delivery, which enables workers to progress towards the aims set out at the beginning of this document, in places where young people choose to meet, away from traditional youth work venues.

2.2 Process of Detached Work

As with all forms of Youth work practice, workers will need to go through a series of stages in developing a piece of work, to ensure that it is effective and of high standard. In terms of detached work, here are 6 stages through which a piece of work should progress.

2.2.1 Stage 1 - Preliminary work

A number of preliminary measures should be taken before detached youth workers go out to work with young people.

Needs analysis:

Identify the young people workers aim to work with and be clear about why they are a target group. Look at the needs of young people and those of the local community as a whole. Make sure that the work doesn't duplicate what other people are already doing.

Planning:

Set clear and initial objectives and know how these link to the overall aims of Thurston Detached Youth Work Project.

Aims and objectives should be: SMART ie specific, measurable, agreed, realistic and time limited. Identify necessary resources and schedule times and methods for recording, monitoring and evaluating work. Raise awareness with any interested local agencies about the planned work.

Knowing the team:

Identify the skills the team needs; identify strengths and weaknesses and subsequent training needs within the team. Acknowledge personal limitations. Discuss individual interests and priorities.

Support and Supervision:

Establish regular Small Team meetings and individual supervision sessions.

Ensure that time is available at the start and end of each session for workers to share information. Ensure workers have emergency phone contact numbers and know what to do in the event of an emergency situation. Make sure staff have relevant I.D. cards and know to carry these at all times.

Ensure staff are aware of relevant Health and Safety, and other policy guidelines.

Administration and Finance:

Know what resources are available and plan the acquisition of any extra resources that will be needed. Make sure that the Clerk to the Parish Council knows all s/he need to know to help the project succeed.

2.2.2 Stage 2 - Reconnaissance

Workers should take time to get to know the patch. This will include identifying and liaising with any others who may be working in the same area (other agencies, community groups, residents or any other relevant provision), identifying potential target groups of young people although not necessarily making contact at this stage and looking at other aspects of the local community which will impact on young people's lives.

A brief and simple community profile is a useful approach at this stage and a profiling checklist can be found at Appendix A.

At this stage workers will need to consider the following:

The amount of time spent on reconnaissance

There may be a temptation for youth workers to want to get on with direct work with young people but it is important to remember that getting to know the area thoroughly now will benefit the work with young people later.

Careful planning at this stage is important to save time and effort later. It is likely that a reconnaissance period of two weeks should give a fair overview of the village and show up the initial areas of most concern.

Health and Safety issues

Detached youth work requires workers to operate in a variety of settings. But whilst staff have to be mindful of the unique nature of detached work, (i.e. going to where young people are and working on their ground), they also have to be aware of the need not to put themselves in situations of high risk.

The reconnaissance is to be used to identify areas of high risk and for staff to gain an overall geographical knowledge of the patch so that if necessary they can get away from situations quickly. *Appropriate Risk assessment procedures should always be carried out.*

Who to get to know

Understandably the presence of youth workers talking to young people on the streets can arouse suspicion. As part of the reconnaissance period, workers are advised to introduce themselves to relevant adults in the areas where they plan to work.

This might include shopkeepers, community groups, PCSO, pub landlords/ladies, school staff etc. workers will need to explain who they are, that they are employed by Thurston Parish Council, their expected times of working etc. Networking like this not only helps to avoid confusion later, but it also helps youth workers to get to know what else exists for young people in the area, and where they might expect to get support when they begin to work directly with young people.

Potential contact points

Workers should use the reconnaissance stage to identify places where young people choose to meet, times that they are there, how other factors (for example the weather) can affect arrangements, characteristics of different groups (e.g. age gender etc). At this stage, workers will consider whether it is appropriate to begin to publicise their forthcoming presence in the area.

2.2.3 Stage 3 - Making contact

This involves the first approach to a group of young people, early conversations and the first stages of establishing relationships.

“... contact making is likely to be a gradual process. It may begin with observation, which develops into eye contact, then to a nod which after a number of greetings becomes a conversation. All that happens up until that conversation is just as important as the conversation itself ... This low-key approach can often mean that it is a young person who makes the approach rather than the worker.” (Allan Rogers - Starting Out in Detached Work, NAYC Publications).

We need to be mindful, however, of the timescales set in our delivery plan; sometimes we will need to instigate contact if groups are slow to respond to our presence.

At this stage workers will need to consider the following:

Their own feelings, fears and anxieties

Detached work takes place on young people's own ground and therefore often takes place without the “props” that other kind of youth workers use. This may leave workers feeling vulnerable when contacting a group for the first time. It will help workers to plan how they are going to approach a group and what they are going to say.

Workers should be prepared to say who they are and what they are doing, (“we're youth workers who work away from youth centres”) and also be prepared to discuss what they can and cannot offer.

The potential for young people to feel anxious or mistrusting

Workers should remember that young people probably feel more vulnerable than them. Usually, when young people are approached by adults they don't know, whether or not it is for negative reasons (being told to move on, being told to keep the noise down etc). Consequently, workers should be prepared for situations where they are not automatically welcomed by a group.

What to take on to the streets

There are a number of times which workers can carry with them which not only “break the ice” but also help show what youth workers can offer young people. These might include leaflets, games, etc.

Who is it appropriate to work with

Although the reconnaissance should have identified potential target groups, workers will need to review the situation even at this early stage. It may not always be appropriate for the first group of young people that is contacted to become part of a longer term strategy.

It is also important for a target group to be allowed to reject outright approaches by detached workers and staff will need to be sensitive to their wishes. Workers will also need to be aware of working within boundaries in terms of the age of young people and whether they are part of the agreed target group. Other considerations might include the activities that the group are involved in, for example alcohol/drug misuse etc.

Use of identity cards

Workers should carry identify cards which they can produce when working directly with young people or when in contact with other professionals or members of the public. Identity cards are issued by Thurston Parish Council and include a photograph of the worker. In addition, workers should carry with them the phone number of their line manager, so that at a later point people can check the worker’s validity if they wish.

Detached workers - introducing ourselves

The the first meeting with a new group, detached workers should try to:

- * Give their names
- * Say they work for Thurston Parish Council
- * Say they are detached youth workers
- * Show their identification
- * Describe what detached work is
- * State their commitment to young people
- * Be open to any questions
- * Introduce the idea of boundaries and confidentiality

2.2.4 Stage 4 - Engagement and intervention

It has already been said that detached work involves delivering on the aims of the Thurston Detached Youth Work Project in settings away from buildings and projects and on young people’s territory. It is at the stage of engagement and intervention that this delivery takes place.

The Thurston Detached Youth Work Project staff aim to intervene in the lives of young people and offer a challenging programme of informal education. Just like other youth workers they use important influences on young people's lives to stimulate discussion and involve them in a variety of activities.

So, for instance, both detached workers and workers in youth clubs may use recent news stories or television programmes to raise issues with young people which affect their lives. Similarly, both may go on to use a variety of methods to encourage young people to express their views on issues e.g. video, drama, art, music, etc.

Detached youth workers need to utilise a range of skills to deliver the work and communicate with young people in a meaningful and imaginative way. In this they are no different from any other youth workers. The major differences between detached workers and other workers focus on:

- * the setting for the work - young people's own ground.
- * resources - detached workers cannot draw on the same range of resources as other workers.
- * time taken to establish and develop relationships - the nature of detached work may mean it takes longer for workers to establish relationships with young people. This can be counteracted by working with the group more intensively and frequently than is usual in centre-based work.

Detached workers need to be aware of the unpredictable environment in which that may work and the distractions this can cause, for example, working outside a pub where a fight may break out.

Some important considerations:

Encouraging engagement

It is the job of a detached worker to engage groups of young people in some shared and valued project work that the group is interested in bringing to fruition and that will lead to some identified learning outcome for the young people involved. It goes without saying that the workers will always be positive, enthusiastic, committed and deliver on their promises. The main aim of the work will always be to encourage groups of young people to take control of their own work.

Working boundaries

Maintaining professional boundaries with young people is vitally important. Workers will never disclose their personal address or phone number to young people; they will always offer a work number. Conversations with young people must remain professional; workers are not friends with young people.

Detached workers need to balance the need to be open, honest and transparent with young people and to draw on their own experiences to develop group work (what we call being 'genuine'), with the need to avoid risky personal disclosure. Workers must devise and agree their response strategy with their work partner for these situations and be clear about what will be discussed. There is a key difference between being friendly and being a friend; detached youth work is a profession particularly in the sense of its rules of conduct.

Project work

Project work is a necessary part of all long-term work with groups of young people. Detached workers should always be looking to generate opportunities for developing project work with groups. Other than the very early stages of a relationship with a new group, just chatting and 'being there' is not enough. The need to involve young people in the active participation in designing and organising the project is never a reason to neglect planning and preparation.

Detached workers need to be more prepared and spend more time planning project work than building-based youth workers, because of the length of time it can take to complete some tasks with some groups in a street environment.

Information, advice and guidance

Detached workers need to be able to provide information and guidance. It is our duty to stay well-informed and to be able to provide basic information on a range of issues that routinely matter to young people. Where more support is needed, detached workers should be able and prepared to introduce young people to other specialists and service providers who can meet their needs.

Signposting and referrals to other agencies

To act as effective and efficient network 'glue', detached workers should always be familiar with local agencies, have introduced themselves to colleagues in those agencies and be well orientated to what is available locally for young people and whom to contact.

When referring a young person to another agency, it is preferred best practice for the detached worker that has facilitated the referral to go with them to the first meeting as encouragement and support.

Attending an agency referral meeting with a young person should be by using public transport. We are lucky to have a regular train service into Bury St Edmunds and Stowmarket.

Maintaining contact and being available

Workers should be clear about meeting days, times and places and try to establish a routine with the group as soon as possible. If, for some unavoidable reason, workers cannot keep a meeting with a group, they should try to pass on a message to one or more group members; or agreed 'drop zones' for messages are useful for this purpose.

No worker should promise to be available outside their contracted working time; it is a promise that cannot be kept and young people should not have to rely on an out-of-hours response in an emergency situation. A work mobile phone number, or landline voicemail box is sufficient as a means of leaving messages and texts that a worker can respond to as soon as they are back on duty.

Confidentiality

Detached workers will abide by the Thurston Detached Youth Work confidentiality policy at all times. We need to be very clear when we are explaining our limitations and boundaries to young people, that we cannot guarantee confidentiality on all issues at all times.

Workers should describe the types of issues and situations that would require them to break a confidence and the kinds of action that they would be required to take in those situations. In any situation other than those prescribed in our confidentiality and safeguarding policies, the right of the young person to worker confidentiality should be assumed.

It is best practice to make young people aware of the consequences of any disclosure and to seek their consent to any action taken on their behalf, even when our policy dictates that no such consent is required.

Working with parents and guardians

Thurston Detached Youth Work Project encourages detached workers to work with parents and guardians when this is in the interest of the young person concerned and they have given their consent to the involvement of their parents/guardians.

Gaining consent

Any project activity away from the usual meeting place of a group, or any activity involving the transportation of young people, or any planned activity involving any element of risk (even if it is delivered where the group meets), or any capture and use of young people's images (still or video), will require written consent on Thurston Detached Youth Work Project's standard consent form.

The authorised consent of parents and guardians is required for all young people under the age of 18. Participants over the age of 18 can provide their own written consent. Where workers suspect that a parent/guardian's signature of consent has been forged or fabricated, that parent or guardian will be contacted in person or by phone to confirm their consent; young people should be told that this is the process to save any embarrassment.

All consent must be received, copied and filed before any activity takes place no advice consent, no participation. Workers must bring copies of consent forms with them during the activity in question, in case emergency contact is needed. (Please see Away from Base Policy).

Use of technology

The use of technology in a detached work setting needs to be monitored, at the same time, staying updated and aware of emerging technologies. Creativity in the approach to the work with regard to technology needs to be encouraged but monitored carefully.

Accreditation

There are various options for accreditation for young people within detached youth work. As part of the informal education process and engagement in projects accreditation may be possible. It is the responsibility of the detached workers to map project plans and discuss accreditation with their manager wherever possible.

2.2.5 Stage 5 - Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring is about continually collecting information about the work over a period of time which is relevant to aims and objectives.

Evaluation is about making an informed judgement based on collected information about the value of the work, measured against aims and objectives. It involves asking 'Have we done what we set out to do and have we met the aims of the project?' Evaluation will also be carried out to present a report to Thurston Parish Council on a monthly basis.

Monitoring

It is arguably more important for detached workers to monitor their work thoroughly than any other group of youth workers. Often, those unfamiliar with the concept of detached work are sceptical about its outcomes and impacts, this means the collection of conclusive information about the achievements of the work is vital to the future of detached work support. Not surprisingly, there are a range of performance indicators for which data must be collected. These are;

General quality indicators from our guidelines

- * the reliability and consistency of our work
- * positive feedback from young people, communities and other agencies
- * evidence of development of young people from informal education
- * participation of young people in all stages of the youth work process
- * positive outcomes and products of the work
- * the numbers of young people benefiting from the service
- * individual impact and case studies
- * social impact and change at neighbourhood level
- * accreditations of young people's work

Specific monitoring requirements:

- * young people's gender and ethnicity
- * numbers of young people misusing drugs and/or alcohol
- * numbers of young people involved in crime or ASB (Anti-Social Behaviour)
- * specific establishment of community links and contacts
- * specific establishment of links and contacts with funders
- * number and nature of positive destinations achieved by participants
- * 'soft outcomes', or indicators of any positive distance travelled by participants as a result of participating
- * numbers of young people signposted to other agencies

Programme-related quality indicators

- * number of young people taking part in activity programmes

- * number of young people taking part in residential
- * number of programmes, art, sport, music, drugs awareness, sexual health, etc
- * number of residential
- * number of films made
- * number and level of qualifications and accreditations achieved
- * young people's engagement in decision-making
- * published research, disseminated learning and external written evaluations

Monitoring systems

Data capture

The capture and recording of sessional data should be done as soon as possible after a group work session and as close to the point of delivery as is feasible.

In one evening's work, a team may work with several distinct groups of young people on one patch, or across different patches. This will mean that recording of data may happen several times during a single session. Use of paper-based systems on the street is impractical, weather and the lack of light and tables mean that pen and paper are of limited value. Most sessional statistical information should be stored in 'notes' on the work mobile phone until the end of the session when a full recording can be made. With practice these notes will become easier to write and possibly codes invented for this purpose.

Later the details of the sessional work, including reflections and outcomes, should be recorded.

Data preparation

Information should be recorded in ways which respect young people. Only write what you would be happy for a young person to read. You should inform young people that information about them will be held on computer and explain why and how it will be used, including any guarantees of anonymity that young people may require. See confidentiality policy for handling of sensitive information.

Any photographs need to be clearly marked with dates, times, where and which group.

File storage, retrieval and sharing

All prepared information and recordings will be available to project staff and senior management.

Reflection and use of information

We aim to create learning from our monitoring. This is the process that links operational monitoring to the later stage of evaluation. Detached workers and senior management are all appropriate levels to focus and reflect on the information we have, create ideas for service improvement and generate discussion for project development. It goes without saying that small team meetings and supervision should focus on information gathered from monitoring.

To help the sharing and discussion process, information for meetings and supervisions should be prepared and available in advance, in order to give everyone the chance to fully understand the issues that are emerging.

Feedback

Gaining young people's feedback regularly and routinely is an integral part of the Thurston Detached Youth Work approach to detached work. Feedback can be captured in writing, but it is more practical to make audio and video records of young people's opinions on our service; (no consent is required for an internally used recording).

Feedback should be sought for two criteria. The first is 'excellence in experience'; (how much young people have enjoyed the session/project). The second is 'fitness for purpose'; (how well the project/session has achieved or delivered what we said it would). Of course, young people should always be asked for the ideas on how we could change or improve the service we provide.

Detached workers should carry the Thurston Detached Youth Worker's complaint form and make them available should young people wish to make a complaint; all complaints must be passed on to a member of the Senior Management Team and young people must receive a considered response to their complaint. All feedback should be discussed and analysed by the whole detached team and a summary of feedback recorded for future reference.

Quality assurance and reference groups

As noted, we seek and record young people's feedback at every available opportunity. As part of our quality assurance method and in line with our strategy to remain accountable to young people for the service we offer, all projects should develop reference groups of young people with whom they can share monitoring information and seek ideas as to how the service should change and improve as a response.

Reporting

All staff may be involved in reporting to colleagues and external agencies from time to time. The quality of how we represent our work is an important consideration for Thurston Detached Youth Work Project.

Evaluation

At key points in the project cycle, we will evaluate our work and provide a clear statement of accountability to the aims and objectives we have set. This could be done as a routine part of the cycle of project management (such as monthly reports to Thurston Parish Council), as annual reviews of progress or as ad hoc publications of learning that may be of use or interest to others in our field.

Remember, we have a professional duty to help colleagues in the wider youth work field learn from our experiences, (both success and failures), so that future work for and with young people will better serve their needs.

2.2.6 Stage 6 - Project exit and moving on

Sometimes, workers can find it difficult to close a piece of work and move on from a patch or group. This difficulty can be minimised by recognising the role of the work from the outset and planning the exit. Closing work and moving on is a necessary part of the process and enables us to begin with new groups and challenges.

Planned exit

Ending a piece of work is something that will inevitably be faced by all detached workers at some point in their careers. In all cases, it is the responsibility of the workers to ensure that young people are properly informed as to the timescales, in the case, for instance of a set project, the purpose of the work and that the expectations of what can be achieved are realistic.

Recognising the end

Good and routine monitoring, linked to clear planning and objectives will provide the best guide to the need to close down a group. When we have achieved our intended outcomes, there is no more to do, other than re-negotiate and plan for a different set of outcomes with the same group. Sometimes, this is not possible and it is only right in this instance that other young people should have the opportunity to experience good detached youth work.

As part of colleagues' reflections on sessions, evaluations, and supervision, it should become increasingly apparent that the point of exit is approaching. This recognition should be accompanied by a plan to set an exit date and to inform the group that things will change and end.

Encourage groups to reflect on what they have learned and achieved and to plan a celebration event as part of the group closure. Do not underestimate the emotional effect that closure can have on detached workers and use supervision as a discussion platform and channel for your emotions.

When a piece of group work was time limited from the outset, it is even more important to keep young people informed of timescales, progress and closure plans. Time-limited work can be very productive and just as emotional at the exit point. Reflect and celebrate with your group. Learn and move on.

Occasionally, some group members will need ongoing support and intervention for issues that have emerged from the work. It is the worker's responsibility to make sure that safe and supported referrals are made to other network colleagues to support the young person/people.

2.3 Managing detached work

In addition to some of the duties of a manager that have already been described, there are a number of other key considerations of which detached work managers should be aware;

- * ensure that working pairs have clear and specific objectives with timescales that relate to the purposes of the project
- * always act as a role-model for colleagues when working on the street
- * let workers know when, where and with whom they are expected to work
- * establish clear and appropriate procedures for support, supervision and performance review

- * define individual roles in the team and make sure all colleagues know their and others' responsibilities
- * ensure that Thurston Detached Youth Work Project written policies and procedures are fit for purpose by informing senior management of any new developments, need to change or emergent learning that would require a policy re-write or amendment
- * know the staff, know their motivations and personalities. Their experience, outlook and character
- * make sure that teams are always aware of risks and how to assess them
- * train staff to react safely when faced with hazardous situations
- * stress and implement the policies and guidelines
- * liaise with the Police where appropriate
- * ensure that workers know what to do when reporting incidents, assaults, and protection issues
- * manage team resources
- * take note of any training needs and make sure we meet them in a co-ordinated way

2.4 Health and Safety

All detached workers must comply with Thurston Detached Youth Work Project health and safety policy at all times. Specifically, in the context of detached work, consideration must be given to the following.

- * workers must work in pairs or teams of three or more; no worker ever works alone and they must always be within sight of their partner when working
- * workers must always carry their identification badges when they are on duty
- * it is good practice to inform the local police when and where we will be operating; this can be done by email
- * in all but the most pressing of circumstances, it is ill-advised for all male teams to work together and mixed gender teams are preferred
- * each pair must carry a Thurston Detached Youth Work Project mobile phone for use in emergencies and emergency phone numbers
- * workers should be provided with suitable clothes for the cold and wet when necessary ... this will be one fleece jacket and one wet weather jacket
- * workers should not intervene in any threatening or potentially harmful situations, but withdraw from the scene, make any emergency contact they consider necessary and explain their actions to the group at a later date. Agree a code word for immediate withdrawal.
- * have an agreed exit strategy for withdrawal

- * all workers will have undergone an enhanced DBS disclosure check carried out by Thurston Parish Council.
- * always observe what is going on around the group
- * stay within contactable distance of your co-worker at all times and preferably not back to back.
- * never give out personal information, (phone numbers, addresses, facebook, etc).
- * beware of trespassing. Know your patch.
- * do not go into young people's houses
- * undertake risk assessments for all activities and regularly update them especially when circumstances or conditions change

Work related stress

Youth work may place staff under particular stress; this may arise from having to deal with difficult situations or frustration at being unable to have an impact in certain circumstances.

It is important that workers make use of what is available to them in terms of support from colleagues and supervision from their line manager. Space should always be available at the end of a session for workers to discuss their feelings and frustrations if necessary. Time should also be available during regularly scheduled supervision sessions for workers to discuss their experiences with their line manager and seek advice.

Thurston Detached Youth Work Project takes its responsibilities towards its staff very seriously and the Senior Detached Worker is advised to keep senior management informed of any reports of worker difficulty or stress, even if they seem relatively minor.

2.4.3 Health and Safety of young people

All youth workers must at all times be aware of their responsibilities in terms of the young people they are working with. For detached workers these responsibilities may on occasion be different from those of others.

For instance, a youth worker in a centre has to ensure the safety of the building to ensure the work is taking place and can take direct measures to ensure that young people are not putting themselves at risk.

On the streets the detached worker does not have the same kind of authority and may not always be able to prevent young people putting themselves in risky situations.

Nevertheless, detached workers need to be aware of all health and safety guidelines and procedures. This is important should the detached workers decide to organise a residential, trip or visit away from Thurston. In this instance their responsibilities change.

Other procedures workers need to be aware of are the following forms and policy;

- * parental consent
- * risk assessment

* Away from Base Policy covering residentials, trips and visits

Workers who are unsure about these or any other procedures must contact their line manager in the first instance.

2.4.4 Alcohol and drugs

Thurston Detached Youth Work Project youth workers will **not** work with young people who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Youth workers need to assess the situation from a safety point of view. Are the young people concerned in any danger, if yes, call the appropriate people. If you consider that they are not in danger, explain that you cannot work with them or condone their behaviour but will speak to them about their behaviour another day when they are free from alcohol and drugs.

Young people will not be able to use drugs or alcohol during any activity organised with the Thurston Detached Youth Work Project; this applies at all times during residential work.

It is considered an act of gross misconduct subject to instant dismissal for employees of Thurston Detached Youth Work Project to use alcohol or drugs in work time or to smoke tobacco in the presence of young people. It is not acceptable to arrive for work under the influence of either drugs or alcohol.

We aim to maintain the drugs awareness training of all detached youth workers, in order to help them to make more informed decisions when working with young people using drugs and alcohol.

2.4.5 Insurance

All project activities must be covered by appropriate insurance. It is the Senior Youth Worker's responsibility to ensure that relevant insurance is in place in advance of any planned activity: when in doubt, workers should contact Thurston Parish Council to clarify the status of insurance and the activity plan.

2.5 Legal issues

Detached workers must not condone risky or illegal behaviour by young people, even if they are unable to prevent it. This may require workers explaining and negotiating with young people about when they can and can't work with them.

This will include, for example, not being present when illegal activities are taking place (e.g. drug dealing, etc.)

At all times youth workers must operate within the law. This may mean on occasion being obliged to contact the police if they have knowledge of a serious crime (e.g. serious assault), whereas at other times they may be required to answer truthfully if questioned by the police about a less serious offence, (e.g. a smashed window).

In either instance youth workers will not lie on behalf of young people and young people must be made aware of this.

Examples:

Alcohol

Detached workers may encounter young people consuming alcohol in a public place. If they are under 18, they will be committing an offence, and certain areas have restrictions on people over 18. A detached worker should not accept or participate in any way in the consumption of alcohol as this may be construed as aiding and abetting. Workers should also be aware that the influence of alcohol often leads to young people committing other offences. Again, do not attempt to work with the young people, but check to see if they are safe. Either call for support for them if necessary or walk away.

Theft

The intention to deprive someone permanently of his or her property is an offence. 'Property' may range from a bag of crisps to articles of significant value. A person caught shop-lifting even a low value item is likely to be prosecuted. As a worker, you have to weigh your knowledge of the young person, your relationship with them and the seriousness of the offence. If the theft is of high value and they are known to be persistent offenders, they may be better helped by reporting them so that they can receive intervention from the youth justice system. If you have previously had a confidentiality understanding with a young person and they start tell you about an offence, you should immediately tell them that if they continue you may have to report the incident.

Drugs

Cannabis is a class B drug, and possession is an offence. For a first offence of possession, a young person may receive a warning together with an intervention with Youth Offending Team but persistent offending is likely to result in a criminal prosecution. As with class B, class A possession for a first offence of possession would likely lead to a warning and intervention with Youth Offending Team. Supplying any controlled drug is a serious crime.

Anti-Social behaviour

An Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) is usually made after persistent offending of a particular kind with the intention of preventing further offences. The breach on an ASBO is a serious offence (as is the breaching of any court order). A minor or unintentional breach is likely to result in a low level of punishment. However, the commission of further offences of a criminal nature themselves will be treated seriously.

There is no legal requirement upon any member of public to report the breach of an ASBO. However, some people who may have been the victim of persistent offending or who feel that they have a common duty to do so, may report the breach to the police.

Disorderly Behaviour

The use of threatening or abusive language and/or being drunk and disorderly are offences. They are more serious if racially or religiously aggravated.

Assault

Common assault resulting in minimal injury with no lasting marks or bruising is of low level seriousness. Assault resulting in actual bodily harm (ABH) or grievous bodily harm (GBH) is very serious.

Note:

This information “Legal Issues” is intended for guidance only and does not have any legal status. If in doubt about how to respond to a criminal incident, a worker should seek the advice of their line manager.

Appendix A

Community/Patch Profiling Checklist

Useful things to know or find out about a new patch before you start work:

Nearest police station - telephone number

Named Community Police Officer

Duty chemist including those with emergency contraception scheme

Post office

Youth offending team, Social Services and Social Care telephone numbers

Doctors' surgeries, Health Centres and Hospitals - phone numbers

The nearest A and E department

Any needle exchanges

Schools

Libraries

Provision for young people

Shops

Shelters for young people - shelter from the rain

Play parks

Areas of high graffiti

Any other professionals based in the patch

Unsafe, unlit or derelict areas

Churches

Big local employers

Pubs and clubs

Names of Councillors and MP

Neighbourhood Management Group Meetings

Skatepark Group

ASB (anti-social behaviour) statistics and details of residents' complaints

Recent press coverage of young people's issues

NEET statistics

Many of these things can be found by internet searches and walking the patch. Keep a clear file of the information you find and add to it as your work and knowledge progress. Blow-up a local street map on a photocopies and mark your information on it. When you have finished with your profile share and refer to it often as your work progresses.

Appendix B

Confidentiality

It is critical when working with young people that if they ask you if you can keep their confidence or a secret (however they like to say it) that the answer is that it depends on what it is that they are going to say. If they want to speak about someone hurting them or harming them in any way then the answer is “no” confidence cannot be kept. The same would be if they have committed a criminal offence and they want you to keep that confidential - this is not possible either.

Generally there is not any instance when complete confidentiality can be promised. It is really best not to promise confidentiality at any time.

If the young person goes on to divulge harm being done to them then this is when the guidelines in the Safeguarding Policy come immediately into effect.

Some workers feel that if they cannot keep the confidence of a young person they will lose the relationship. Losing the relationship is much better than leaving a young person in an intolerable situation.

If you are worried about further support for the young person in the instance of Safeguarding, this will be left with the Safeguarding Team.

This will be covered in more detail in Safeguarding Training.

Please address any questions to your immediate manager for further discussion.

Appendix C

Detached Worker Work Bag

It is suggested that detached youth workers should have a street bag and that the following items are considered for inclusion:

Essential

Information leaflets on what is relevant to the area

Pens

Note pad

Disposable gloves / disposable masks

Torch

Street map

Mobile phone

Emergency phone numbers

Project ID card

Advisable after training

Condoms

Discretionary

Pair of pants

Sanitary towels

Freshen up pads

Personal security alarm

Games

Appendix D

Training for Workers

The following are key areas for training for Detached Youth Workers:

Health and Safety (including personal safety)

Safeguarding

Dealing with violent and aggressive behaviour

Sexual health

Drugs

Mental Health

Group work skills