INTRODUCTION

This strategy sets out the vision and direction of St. Helens Council Youth Service and the role it will play as a targeted service in the council’s Early Help strategy and St Helens Cares. The role of the Youth Service is to offer early help and intervention with the aim to improve outcomes for young people by supporting them as soon as problems start to emerge, helping them to overcome any specific difficulties. By providing effective intervention at the right time, we aim to reduce the need for more specialised, costly interventions later on.

AIMS (What do we want to achieve?)

- Prevent or reduce the escalation to specialised services
- Improve outcomes for young people related to their personal and social development
- Improve the health & wellbeing in young people

PROCESSES (How will we do it?)

- Work in partnership with young people on a one to one basis in order to help them to overcome any difficulties
- Encourage and support young people to engage in positive activities, education and employment and training
- Signpost / refer young people to specialist services if necessary
- Deliver targeted group intervention to young people within localities in St Helens based on geographical concerns or identified needs on the streets, in schools and in community centres
- Work in partnership with other professionals and agencies to ensure that young people are receiving the help and support they require
DELIVERY

Our targeted support service will include:

1. **One to One Casework**
   - **Level 2 on the Continuum (Age 11-18 and up to 25 with additional needs)**
     Youth Engagement Officers will work with the young person to discuss their needs and to develop an action plan for support. Where a young person requires one-to-one support they can be referred to the Youth Service using the Youth Service referral form. The service will accept referrals from professionals who have identified that the young person needs level 2 support. The young person must have an EHAT open and a lead professional must have been identified prior to the referral.
   - **Child Exploitation (Age 11-18 and up to 25 with additional needs)**
     Youth Engagement Officers will work with any young people on a one to one basis (at any level on the continuum of need) that have been identified as low risk on the Child Exploitation Measurement tool and are therefore not open to MACE. Catch 22 will continue to work with medium and high risk.

2. **Group Work - Schools (Year 6-Year 7)**
   Youth Engagement Officers will deliver issue based work to groups of young people in schools. The Coordinator will use the one to one referrals, health profiles and communication with pastoral leads and other professionals to identify any geographical patterns of concerns and will target their work accordingly. Schools can also request group work using the group work request form. TAZ will continue to deliver group work in schools with year 8 upwards.

3. **Group Work - Community (Year 6-Year 11)**
   The Coordinator will identify any geographical patterns of behaviour or needs and will target their work accordingly in localities in St Helens. The service will set up evening and holidays sessions in varying areas in St Helens which professionals can refer young people on to, using the group work referral form.

4. **Detached Youth Work**
   Two detached teams will work with young people on the streets every Friday evening. Youth workers will meet young people who gather in public spaces. The youth workers will deliver informal education and targeted interventions and offer young people support, information and guidance on issues that may leave them vulnerable to exploitation as well as looking out for signs and vulnerabilities of exploitation. The outreach team will report any intelligence regarding locations of concern, possible perpetrators and concerns about young people to relevant partners and signpost / refer young people to specialist services if necessary.
The focus of the Youth Service is supporting the young person before problems get worse. Our Youth Engagement Officers are Youth Workers who will work with young people to assess their needs, set goals and achieve positive outcomes. In order for the service to support young people effectively, it is important that the relationship between the young person and Youth Worker is based on trust and respect.

Using the four principles of Youth Work, Youth Workers will build professional and positive working relationships with young people, which will encourage them to engage in a process where they can support young people to overcome difficulties, find solutions and to stop issues from getting worse.

- **Participation & Voluntary Engagement**: Young people choose to be involved and workers respond to what young people want and need. Youth Voice will play an integral part in the service.

- **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion**: Youth Workers will treat young people with respect and create an environment of acceptance and understanding where young people can be themselves, test boundaries and explore issues.

- **Partnerships with young people & others**: Youth Workers will actively listen and respond to the needs of young people and enable them to act as a key partner in decision-making and empower them to take control of their lives.

- **Personal, Social & Political Development**: Young people will be encouraged and enabled to raise their aspirations and to develop themselves so that they are able to reach their potential and use their voice to influence their place in society.

The Youth Service will work collaboratively alongside other professionals and services aimed at supporting young people at the first sign of difficulty.
WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

OUTCOMES (What difference do we want to make?)

- Increase the number of step downs on the continuum of need from Level 2 to Universal.
- Increase in the number of young people in education, employment or training
- Reduce the number of young people excluded from school
- Reduce the number of school absenteeism
- Increase the number of young people involved in positive activities

OUTCOME & PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (What will success look like?)

Qualitative & Quantitative effects as a result of the project

Young People will:

- Achieve their personal goals and /or understand actions they can take to achieve their goals
- Increase their knowledge of risk and understand how they keep themselves safe and reduce risk taking behaviour
- Understand and apply coping mechanisms which may help with managing their emotions and behaviour
- Feel more confident and able to join new social groups as a hobby, attend to school/college and/or find employment

Data will show:

- Increase in step downs on the continuum of need from Level 2 to Universal.
- Increase in the number of children in education, employment or training
- Reduction of children excluded from school
- Reduction of school absenteeism
- Increase in number of young people involved in positive activities
- Increase in knowledge and application of knowledge following intervention on a variety of issues concerning risk taking behaviour and health and wellbeing
- Number of young people achieving their personal goals set with youth engagement officer

We will use a wide range of measurement tools to measure the impact of our work in order to establish the success of the project and identify improvements.
Referral Pathway

REFERRAL REQUEST

All professionals can refer young people to the Youth Service directly using the one to one referral form.

For one to one support an EHAT must be open for a YEO to work with the young person and they can only work with young people who have been identified as needing support at Level 2 on the continuum of need.

Referrals for low level Child Exploitation intervention can be made to the youth service following a CE1 referral being made and screened, it will then be decided by if a CE2 is required or a referral to the Youth Service for low level intervention. An EHAT does not need to be open for us to work with young people for CE and the young person can be at any level on the continuum of need for this support.

For year 6 and year 7 group work, the referrer should complete the group work request form.

Send referral forms to youthservicebookings@sthelens.gov.uk

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

HL or HMC to reply to sender within one working day to acknowledge the referral.

ALLOCATION, UPDATE & CLOSURE MEETING

Every Monday morning, the team meet to discuss referrals, actions required and allocate cases and group work. The last Monday of every month, Youth Engagement Officers are required to give an update on all cases. As a team decisions will be made about closure of cases and further actions to take.

ALLOCATION – One to one work

Following allocation, the coordinator will contact the referrer within two days to inform them of which YEO will be working with the young person. The Youth Engagement Officer will contact the parent/carer to inform them that they have been allocated to work with the young person and ask if they still give consent to do so. If the initial meeting will take place in school the Youth Engagement Officer should ask parent/carer for consent to contact school. If consent is gained, Young Engagement Officers should contact pastoral lead to inform them and arrange initial visit in school time.

NO ACTION

Coordinator or manager will contact the referrer within one week of the referral to inform them of the decision made.

CLOSURE

YEO will complete the closure paper work (closure form, case study, outcomes) which should be signed by coordinator or manager. All contact and progress will be inputted onto EHAT and all outcomes will be inputted on the outcome spreadsheet. The referrer will be updated within two working days of closure and they will be sent the closure form via confidential email. We aim to close cases within 12 weeks however if we feel progress is being made and the young people needs longer, we will extend this timescale.

ONGOING VISITS

Ongoing visits should be arranged with young person, school and parents/carers. If the young person does not wish to engage with the Youth Engagement Officer after three visits, a different worker will attempt to meet the young person on one more occasion. If this fails the case will be closed.

When ready, the young person will be involved in identifying the difficulties they face, setting their own goals and planning with the YEO how they feel they could be supported them to overcome difficulties and achieve their goals. Youth service goal setting and outcome documents will be used to monitor this.

All visits should be logged on in house paperwork and EHAT. Recorded outcomes should be inputted on the outcome spreadsheet.

INITITIAL VISIT

The initial visit should aim to take place within two weeks of allocation. Initial visits should take place in school (if consent has been given and if young person attends school). However if a young person does not attend school, a home visit can take place and this can be arranged with parent/carer. All initial visits will be made in two’s.

On initial visit parents/carers and young person should be given the service standards & policy notice which explains their role and how their information is used. The young person should be given a choice about how they wish to be contacted in future (text, phone call, email, letter)

Lone working policy will be followed.