

# 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

## HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

The resource has been designed and structured to support professional dialogue 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 is used as a framework for discussion between youth work and school practitioners together
- Someone facilitates the discussion
- Between 1.5 and 2 hours is allocated for the session.

## INTRODUCTION

The National Improvement Framework<sup>1</sup> 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”<sup>2</sup>.

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. This requires effective partnership between schools and youth work.

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?

### Additional resources:

- [Personal Learning & Achievement - Wakelet](#)
- [Education Scotland Learning Resource 8: Personal learning and achievement](#)
- [Youth work skills framework](#)
- [Youth work guide for schools](#)
- [Awards Network](#)

<sup>1</sup><https://www.gov.scot/publications/achieving-excellence-equity-2022-national-improvement-framework-improvement-plan/documents/>  
<sup>2</sup>SAC Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress





## 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.

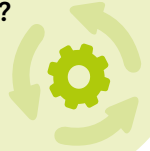
### MYTH BUSTING

Timing – 20 minutes

#### Activity 2

Challenge questions (10 minutes)

- 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?



### 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?

### Additional resources:

[Sharing terminology between youth work and teachers](#)



## 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](#)

[Learning for Sustainability CLD Award Commendation: Minecraft Project, St Philomena's Primary School](#)

[Learning for Sustainability Community Learning and Development Award Commendation The North Lanarkshire Youth Climate Ambassadors](#)

Further case studies and examples of practice can be found at [YouthLink 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. [PPT slides 4 – 18](#)

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. Following the quiz, please show the explanatory slides, demonstrating where youth work sits within Curriculum for Excellence (<a href="#">slides 4 - 18</a>).</p> <p>3. Optional challenge questions to pose to participants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did any of the roles and responsibilities surprise you. Why?</li> <li>• How did it feel to acknowledge areas of shared responsibility?</li> <li>• What impact might this have on your practice?</li> </ul>
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	<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 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.

Statements - Is this true, or a myth?



STATEMENT	TRUE OR MYTH?
There are only a couple of awards that young people can get outside of school.	The Awards Network <a href="https://www.awardsnetwork.org/">https://www.awardsnetwork.org/</a> publishes Amazing Things – which details the range of youth awards in Scotland.
Youth awards are only valuable to schools if they attract Insight tariff points.	Does everyone understand what Insight/tariff points are? Discuss the value of the learning, skills and capacities developed through youth awards regardless of SCQF.
Community planning is for CLD and does not involve schools.	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?
Pupil Equity Funding can't be used for interventions that take place out-with term-time or for community-based interventions.	Myth! <a href="#">PEF Operational Guidance</a>
Youth work is about playing table tennis and hanging about with your pals.	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.
The National Youth Work outcomes have nothing to do with Curriculum for Excellence.	As we heard earlier, the <a href="#">youth work outcomes</a> 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.

## 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 Bruce, Youth Work and Schools Manager, [mbruce@youthlinkscotland.org](mailto:mbruce@youthlinkscotland.org)

[YouthLink Scotland](#) has also developed a professional learning resource to support the further development of youth work and school partnerships. In particular, it may be most useful for those who are seeking to work towards sustainable, effective partnerships to close the poverty-related attainment gap.



Achieved.  
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