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Welsh Government

GUIDANCE, DOCUMENT

Youth Engagement and Progression Framework: handbook

Detailed guidance on how the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF) works, including case studies.

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Background

Introduction

The Youth Engagement and Progression Framework ('the Framework') outlines a process for organisations to work together to identify young people who need support and provide appropriate support to ensure they have positive outcomes.

The Framework is there to support:

- young people aged 11 to 18 at risk of not making a positive transition into education, employment or training when they leave school
- young people aged 16 to 18 who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- young people aged 11 to 18 at risk of youth homelessness

The outcomes we aim to address through the Framework are:

- for more young people to make a positive transition into education, employment or training
- for the prevention of homelessness to happen much earlier, through identifying and supporting young people who may be at risk

Underpinning the delivery of the Framework is the recognition that if young people are to be able to participate in and benefit from learning and have a smoother transition to becoming young adults, including not experiencing homelessness, then good emotional mental health and well-being is crucial.

We want young people to:

- engage in activities that are meaningful to them
- feel a part of their communities

- have a sense of belonging

The Framework was first published in 2013 and is being strengthened as a Programme for Government commitment. The revised Framework applies to those aged 11 to 18, and works in conjunction with the Young Person's Guarantee (YPG), which applies to all aged 16 to 24. Together the Framework and the YPG will ensure there is a structure to support young people throughout their school journey until they move into employment or self-employment.

The original Framework was developed with the aim of reducing NEET rates, and this remains a strong focus. However, as outlined above, the Framework now also includes the prevention of youth homelessness. The vulnerability indicators for identifying risk of NEET can overlap with indicators for risk of family breakdown and youth homelessness. This approach means we consider holistically what difficulties young people are experiencing, building up a better understanding of their circumstances, enabling us to offer targeted support.

Strengthening the new Framework involves widening and extending its stakeholder base to empower local partnerships to improve its delivery. This includes the partners delivering the YPG, including Working Wales, and the voluntary youth work sector, whose role in delivering the Framework has been under-developed to date.

There are 6 components to the Framework and the application of each depends on the vulnerability stage and age of the individual. The components are:

1. Early identification
2. Brokerage
3. Monitoring progression
4. Provision
5. Employability and employment opportunities
6. Accountability

Each of these components is covered in more detail in this Handbook. The diagram below shows how the 6 components combine to secure better outcomes for young people.

Better outcomes for young people diagram



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The way forward

A system-wide, collaborative focus is needed to remove the silos in delivery that have developed since the Framework was first published. Agencies and providers within a local area need to use their collective resources to fully engage with and better support young people.

Strengthening the Framework will involve collective accountability and responsibility for its delivery. **Public bodies** (<https://www.gov.wales/well-being-future-generations-act-essentials-html>) can build on this sense of collective accountability and responsibility as we work together towards achieving **national milestones** (<https://www.gov.wales/well-being-future-generations-national-indicators-2022>), in particular the national milestone for at least 90% of 16 to 24 year olds being in education, employment, or training by 2050.

One of our main aims is to embed a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement among all partners and stakeholders involved in delivering the Framework. This will involve partners participating in a process of review and reflection to:

- identify, as partnerships what could have been done differently
- learn lessons
- drive improvements
- provide young people with a better choice of high-quality support and opportunities

We want to ensure that as many young people as possible make a successful transition into education, employment and training (EET) when they leave school. Regular engagement with those young people identified as being at risk of becoming NEET will improve the probability of them making a successful transition into EET and reduce the likelihood of them becoming 'unknown' at a later stage. 'Unknown' status refers to those not known to Careers Wales, and

therefore it is unknown whether they have plans for EET and are therefore at risk of becoming NEET.

Partners involved in delivering the Framework also need to review and reflect on the available data for those aged 16 to 18 whose status is 'unknown' and work in partnership to engage with that group.

Through the Framework and YPG, the Welsh Government will monitor NEET levels in order to determine progress against the national milestone of at least 90% of 16 to 24 year olds being in education, employment, or training by 2050.

When organisations set their key performance indicators (KPIs), they should explore how they can collectively offer support and establish KPIs to best reflect the targets and ambitions outlined in these relevant national milestones. KPIs should also be centred around recognising the needs of the at-risk young person.

Partnership collaboration is also vital for the early intervention and prevention of youth homelessness. The Youth Homelessness Coordinator role is based within the youth service and should work closely with the Engagement and Progression Co-ordinator (EPC) to help identify young people who may be at risk of homelessness at an earlier age, in order to put suitable support in place. It is also important that these roles work with housing, social services, education and voluntary sector colleagues to ensure there are appropriate referral mechanisms, signposting, and pathways of support available to young people who need them.

This Handbook encourages all providers and stakeholders to work together to provide support and opportunities for young people in Wales. It should be read in conjunction with the '**Youth Engagement and Progression Framework: Overview**' (<https://www.gov.wales/youth-engagement-and-progression-framework-yepf-overview>), which sets out the strategic narrative around the Framework and shows how it aligns with government priorities.

This Handbook seeks to bring clarity by setting out the practices and processes required for different components of the Framework. The Handbook also includes a number of case studies, showcasing working practices already happening in different parts of Wales or illustrating possible ways of working.

Early identification

Early identification of young people who have barriers to engagement or to remaining in their home and who need support is the foundation of the Framework. Early identification enables targeted support to be put in place earlier to meet young people's needs. Not only does this give us the best chance of preventing situations such as homelessness that at-risk young people are vulnerable to, it can also increase individuals' engagement, improve attainment and develop positive pathways to employment.

We are formally embedding the identification and support of young people at risk of youth homelessness within the Framework. The early identification systems that are already in place under the Framework can be used to proactively work with those individuals at an earlier stage. Feedback from the '[Refresh of the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework Stakeholder and Youth Consultation Report](https://www.gov.wales/refresh-youth-engagement-and-progression-framework-report)' (2021) ('the consultation on the Framework') was supportive of this approach.

[The consultation on the Framework](https://www.gov.wales/refresh-youth-engagement-and-progression-framework-report) (2021) also indicated that early identification systems are a strength of the current Framework. However, we can further improve these systems by introducing greater standardisation in approaches (such as in relation to data collected) to help ensure a greater level of equity in access for young people across Wales.

To achieve this, we will work with stakeholders and develop comprehensive, up-to-date guidance on early identification, which includes the identification of those at risk of homelessness. This will allow for a greater standardisation in approaches across Wales. Work will commence on this new guidance in 2022.

The case studies below are based on the early identification of young people at risk of becoming NEET, as this is the most developed area.

For young people in school, early identification systems have focused on attendance, behaviour and attainment indicators, and all local authorities in Wales have added their own relevant local indicators.

Early identification data is used at termly, multi-agency meetings where partner organisations share relevant information where the individual is under 16 years old. This is to ensure that young people who require support from more than 1 organisation experience a seamless and effective service; and that services are coordinated, coherent and achieve intended outcomes. The data is therefore informed by practitioner input, where the discussion confirms a young person's at-risk status.

Case study: multi-agency meetings in Pembrokeshire

The multiagency or service Team Around the Pupil, Parent and Setting (TAPPAS) panels are operational in all Pembrokeshire secondary schools and units, comprising of a high priority strategic initiative supported by the Children and Schools Directorate. The panels act as a central point to identify at an early stage learners at risk from disengaging from their education (or become NEET), and to broker support and/or provision for individual learners or groups.

TAPPAS panels convene termly, clerked and chaired by the local authority. Membership includes school staff with responsibility for vulnerable learners (including those with additional learning needs (ALN)), local authority services

(for example, Inclusion, 14 to 19, youth service), post-16 providers (Pembrokeshire College and work-based learning), Careers Wales, voluntary sector youth services, and health services (including emotional health).

Schools or partner services are responsible for referring young people deemed vulnerable for professional discussion at TAPPAS. In advance of meetings, the local authority compiles and shares a database of early identification indicators and relevant information on learners to be discussed, including attendance, behaviour, education outcomes, ALN, barriers to education and known agency involvement. A vulnerability assessment profile (VAP) score is calculated using either a red, amber or green (RAG) status. For Year 11 learners, the likelihood of them becoming NEET is scored by the school. The Year 11 cohort are discussed with post-16 providers at the start of meetings so that the latter may leave prior to a discussion of younger learners.

Professional multiagency discussion enables a holistic, deeper understanding of need to support the young person. Needs are captured, and an action plan is formulated naming the responsible lead worker. If necessary, onward brokerage of services or provision is agreed. Action plans and learner progress are reviewed at subsequent meetings. During the academic year 2021 to 2022, 779 learners were discussed at TAPPAS, with 202 learners discharged at the end of the year as their needs were met. The 3 significant areas for support brokered during this period were transition, learner behaviour, and emotional health and well-being.

Case study: Swansea's approach to early identification

Swansea local authority takes a data-driven approach to identify and support young people at all stages of their journey. They identify young people through use of their VAP. They consider those young people scoring highest (red and amber), as well as those already supported by their Early Help Hubs (EHH). In considering young people with the highest assessment scoring, they then look at

additional identifiers such as previous or current social services involvement, previous or current EHH support, well-being needs, whether they have applied or interviewed for a post-16 destination and if they have missed any careers appointments.

Each term the EHH manager chairs a multi-agency meeting with the school, careers officers, pastoral support, **Cynnydd** (<https://archive.swansea.gov.uk/europeanfundingmanagementandsupport>) support and education welfare. During the meeting, they discuss:

- levels of support for identified high risk young people of statutory school age
- who will lead on support
- whether an early referral is needed

Each professional then agrees a score on a scaling question (0 representing not confident that they will make transition and 10 representing very confident of making transition). At this meeting, all professionals also have the opportunity to add other young people to the list.

In the summer term, Careers Wales will also prioritise the young people in Year 10 they identify as most at risk. Those young people will be:

- offered opportunities to meet with their careers worker
- provided with support to help them decide on their post-16 EET options

Between April and October every year, referrals come into the post-16 lead work team from school pastoral or Progress (Cynnydd) leads, Careers Wales advisers and EHH lead workers regarding young people in Year 11. Support is offered to those young people most at risk of not making a successful post-16 transition.

Between July and November, weekly case monitoring is completed using the data available through Careers Wales and the post-16 lead work team. This includes regular updates and feedback on individuals to support their successful

transition into EET.

Key elements of the early identification process

Data is critical in the early identification process. Professional judgement is also crucial, as professionals may have insight into what is happening in a young person's life, which is not picked up by the data alone.

Case study: how professional judgement can make a difference

Siân is 14 years old and has always done well at school. However, since she started Year 10 she has been bullied by a group of girls, and this is starting to take its toll. Siân has become increasingly anxious and withdrawn. Siân hasn't spoken to her teachers about this as she thinks that will make things worse.

Siân attends a local voluntary youth centre, where the youth worker had noticed Siân hanging back and not joining in activities, and that she seemed to have lost her confidence. The youth worker had a chat with Siân, who opened up about the bullying, and the impact it was having on her self-confidence. Siân said she was feeling overwhelmed and she was worried her schoolwork was suffering as she was feeling so upset and distracted. She was finding it increasingly difficult to engage in class and felt demotivated.

The youth worker asked Siân if she would mind if she spoke to the local authority and/or the school, to address the bullying and get additional support for Siân, and Siân agreed to this.

The youth worker contacted the EPC to highlight what was happening to Siân. The EPC recognised that Siân needed support and arranged for the youth worker to act as Siân's lead worker to advocate on her behalf. The EPC also agreed to speak to the headteacher to make him aware of the bullying and the

effect it was having on Siân, and to explore how the school's pastoral systems could be used to tackle the bullying and provide further support for Siân. It was agreed that Siân's case would be considered at the termly multi-agency meetings at the school, so that her progress could be monitored, and support adjusted as necessary.

Working with voluntary youth work organisations

There is scope to improve the links between voluntary youth work organisations and EPCs so they can provide additional support for the early identification process where they are working with young people outside of local authority settings. The Welsh Government facilitates regular meetings of EPCs, Careers Wales representatives, with representation from the Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services (CWVYS). As CWVYS does not cover all voluntary youth work organisations, links also need to be made at a local level between EPCs and other voluntary youth work organisations to enable a coordinated approach.

Earlier identification

The Framework applies to young people aged 11 to 18. However, during **the consultation on the Framework** (<https://www.gov.wales/refresh-youth-engagement-and-progression-framework-report>) there was strong support for early identification to start at primary school, in Year 5 or 6, to allow for earlier interventions and for support to be put in place for the transition from primary to secondary school.

Some local authorities have been exploring using early identification processes with primary school learners. This approach is currently outside the scope of the Framework. However, the Welsh Government will continue to liaise with local authorities so as to remain focused on the outcomes of this approach.

Case study: Monmouthshire's use of early identification for Years 5 and 6

In Monmouthshire, the use of the NEET Early Identification Tool (EIT) was extended to Year 5 and Year 6 in December 2020. The existing EIT used in secondary schools was adapted for use with Key Stage 2 learners, remaining consistent with indicators, weighting and thresholds, with data cuts provided 3 times a year:

- at the end of the Autumn term
- at the end of the Easter term
- at the end of the academic year

All 30 primary schools within the county were contacted and discussions were held with 29 of these, with the majority of schools optimistic about the work, positively engaging and recognising the overlap between those learners identified through the EIT and those they had highlighted as needing support.

In January 2021 it was decided to only work with Year 6 learners as the demand for support was growing and capacity for Year 5 was limited. 180 children (out of a potential 874) were discussed across the 29 Primary Schools at Year 6, with support later being concentrated to 121 Year 6 learners across 19 schools who would be supported with their Year 7 transition across the local authority's 4 secondary schools.

COVID-19 has presented many problems. Initially all meetings with school staff were held online where concerns were discussed, and professional discussions held. When it was safe to do so, primary schools were visited in person, children met and their needs, concerns and support were discussed individually. Timetables for visiting the learners in their secondary schools were drawn up.

Feedback from primary and secondary schools, parents, carers and learners

show that the approach was proving very successful, with 93% of participating pupils embracing the support. The approach used is constantly being adapted and developed to suit the needs of the schools and learners.

Early identification at 16 to 18

After young people have moved to post-16 EET they may find they require support, even if they have not previously needed any. Adolescence is a period of great change and can be challenging for young people to navigate.

If young people are struggling, if they are beginning to or have disengaged, early identification processes should kick in to show that they may require extra support. We expect post-16 education or training providers (or the young person) to tell Careers Wales when young people need additional support (and Careers Wales can align them with the appropriate tier in the Careers Wales 5-tier model of engagement).

For those identified at risk of homelessness, post-16 education or training providers should signpost young people to the local authority or to Shelter Cymru to ensure early support can be put in place to avoid the young person becoming homeless.

Self-evaluating early identification systems

In all areas of the Framework, we expect partners to proactively work together to develop and improve methods to identify young people at risk of becoming NEET or of becoming homeless. An important part of the early identification process is to review and reflect on whether the early identification system is working, to inform the ongoing development of the process.

Understanding how well the early identification process is working goes beyond

looking at the NEET rates. Some young people might be NEET at 31 October, but are about to start a job or a training course. Unless there is a risk they will not make a successful transition to post-16 EET, they would not be of concern. It is more important to consider those cases where, despite support being in place, individuals have not made a successful transition or have ended up homeless. Or alternatively, to understand why an early identification system has not identified an individual who then becomes NEET or homeless. The review and reflection process allows EPCs and their partners to develop a deeper understanding of how well the process is working and where improvements can be made.

We would expect a core team to lead self-evaluation activities in each local area, led by the EPCs, working with youth homelessness co-ordinators, local partners, Careers Wales (including Working Wales for the YPG), Regional Skills Partnerships, Community Employability Programme mentors, as well as representatives from the voluntary youth work sector. This should involve a process of reflection, working, as appropriate, with partners and/or the young person, and consider:

- whether school leavers who are NEET at 31 October had previously been identified as at risk of being NEET. If they had not been identified, explore why
- whether all educational leavers had moved on to a positive destination, and if not why
- what more could be done to engage with young people whose destination is 'unknown'
- whether young people who had received support under the Framework have managed to move on to a positive destination, and if not, why
- whether young people at risk of homelessness were being identified via the Framework's early identification system
- young people identified as at risk of NEET who also identified as at risk of becoming homeless

Brokerage

Aspects of brokerage

There are different aspects to brokerage under the Framework:

Strategic

There is a need to maintain strategic overview of services on offer in each local authority area to support those who are disadvantaged or vulnerable, and to broker appropriate support for young people. The successful operation of the Framework relies on services working together and being readily available for those with complex and multiple needs. This can include young people with ALN or disabilities, or who need support for their mental health, young people involved in the youth justice system, young carers, as well as young people at risk of becoming homeless. These aspects of brokerage are covered by the EPC and youth homelessness co-ordinator roles.

Operational

Providing continuity of support and contact for the most at-risk young people. This aspect is covered by the lead worker role.

Role of the EPC

The EPC function will continue to play a critical and strategic role, overseeing the Framework at a local authority level. Each local authority should have established an effective EPC function with sufficient influence at a senior level across the local authority and partner organisations. The EPC is instrumental in

brokering agreements with service leaders regarding the availability and quality of services on offer. This includes brokering support services for specific groups identified as needing bespoke support.

The EPC function should coordinate and oversee a local partnership that will assist them in considering the overall picture of provision and how they can successfully collaborate to meet the needs of young people in their area.

EPCs will also report to senior leadership within the local authority on a regular basis. They will provide updates to the Welsh Government, through the reporting system for the Youth Support Grant, which is a term and condition of the grant. EPCs will also work with Welsh Government officials towards developing an annual report for Welsh Ministers on the contribution of the Framework (see Accountability).

The EPC role will involve working with local partnerships to:

- manage the data process and guide the early identification system at a local authority level, to be aware of which young people are least likely to make successful transitions at 16 or be of concern pre-16
- facilitate the process or systems to start to identify the specific support needs of young people to feed into the brokerage conversation
- develop an understanding between partners as to which organisations are doing what to support a young person at any given time. This includes maintaining channels of communication with relevant local authority officials (for example home education, Families First) and other services
- facilitate the development of a network of experienced lead workers who can work with young people
- using the outputs from early identification to broker a discussion between key support agencies to identify whether a young person should be allocated a lead worker and if so, which organisation is best positioned to play that role, as well as who else will be involved in delivering support
- ensure the allocation of lead workers as appropriate, and ensure that lead

worker support is offered to those identified as requiring additional support

- receive feedback (through agreed mechanisms) from lead workers where support is not helping a young person move forward and to work with partners to find new solutions
- manage the provision mapping at a local authority level to inform a local level prospectus for young people (see Provision)
- manage the interface between the local authority and Careers Wales, and inform the 5-tier model with updates on young people in Tier 1 and 2 via the monthly spreadsheets

Case study: Caerphilly's brokerage of support for looked after children

In the Caerphilly local authority, looked after children (LAC) have been identified as being particularly vulnerable. The EPC has brokered an additional level of support for this cohort.

For the pre-16 cohort, the EPC holds 6 multi-agency meetings a year with schools, providers, and other professionals (including colleagues working on the prevention of youth homelessness) in order to identify and support vulnerable learners, including LAC, into EET. A young person who is looked after, and is uncertain or uneasy about their future, is supported by a LAC worker. The LAC worker attends the meetings and works closely with the EPC to facilitate a programme of support from Careers Wales and into a post-16 destination. Support includes providing assistance with applications, visiting venues and starting new EET.

For the post-16 cohort of young people in care, the EPC arranges information, advice and support into EET. The EPC makes referrals based on information from other panels and departments within the local authority, as well as Tier 1 and 2 data indicators. The EPC regularly attends meetings with other professionals to track progress and report on it.

Young people who are in care may sometimes become homeless, which is where the involvement of local authority officials working on youth homelessness prevention becomes so important. The local authority has established the Progress (Cynnydd) scheme, where care leavers are identified for opportunities in EET and supported into that opportunity by the EPC and a Llamau-funded progress worker. Options utilised include further education, traineeships and Llamau's Moving Forward scheme.

During **the consultation on the Framework** (<https://www.gov.wales/refresh-youth-engagement-and-progression-framework-report>), concerns were raised around how to identify home-educated young people who need support, and who are outside the school system. Brokering support for specific groups can therefore include young people who are home-educated, to ensure these young people can be signposted to additional support if they need it. To achieve this, good channels of communication between EPCs and local authority home education officials need to be in place.

When young people are taken off the school roll to be home-educated, it provides an opportunity for local authorities to make an offer of support. This could include:

- ensuring awareness of youth work provision to ensure the young person has continuing opportunities to socialise and access to a broad range of experiences
- inviting young people who are home-educated to careers events or open days
- arranging bespoke careers or induction events for groups of home-educated young people

Role of youth homelessness co-ordinator

Some young people will require additional support to prevent homelessness.

The youth homelessness co-ordinator exists to ensure that young people at risk of becoming homeless are identified earlier and they receive the necessary support to help them stay within the family home or transition into independent living where appropriate. The Welsh Government's Youth Support Grant provides annual funding to local authorities for a youth homelessness co-ordinator position. This is a specific role aimed at establishing collaborative, partnership working arrangements across housing, health, education, social care, voluntary sectors and a wide range of services and partners, to ensure a coordinated approach and shared working practices.

The youth homelessness co-ordinator should:

- work with the EPC to strengthen the Framework's early identification system to account for indicators associated with young people at risk of youth homelessness
- develop appropriate referral mechanisms, signposting, and pathways of support
- develop and deliver youth service-led training to practitioners across a range of local services, in order to develop awareness of risk factors for youth homelessness and understand how to support young people effectively to prevent them becoming homeless

The role aims to prevent youth homelessness from happening, rather than for crisis management when a young person is already homeless. This means that youth homelessness coordinators should have a focus on working with young people under the age of 16, identifying them early and putting suitable support in place. The role should be located within local authorities' youth service and not within their housing directorates. In order to avoid duplication in identifying young people at risk and providing support, it is important that the youth homelessness co-ordinator works closely with the EPC.

Role of lead worker for young people at risk of becoming NEET

The lead worker function is intended to provide continuity of support and contact for the most at-risk young people to remain in, or to enter EET. It should be focused on those needing sustained support, and an offer of additional support to an individual.

However, for young people up to the age of 18, we expect EPCs to use a range of resources, including local authority staff (for example youth workers, Families First staff), and to work with partners (for example Careers Wales and voluntary youth services), as well as linking with other support services such as **Community Employability Programmes** (<https://businesswales.gov.wales/skillsgateway/community-employability-programmes-0>).

For young people aged 16 to 18, the lead worker support is allocated against the Careers Wales 5-tier model of engagement.

The specific functions associated with the lead worker role are:

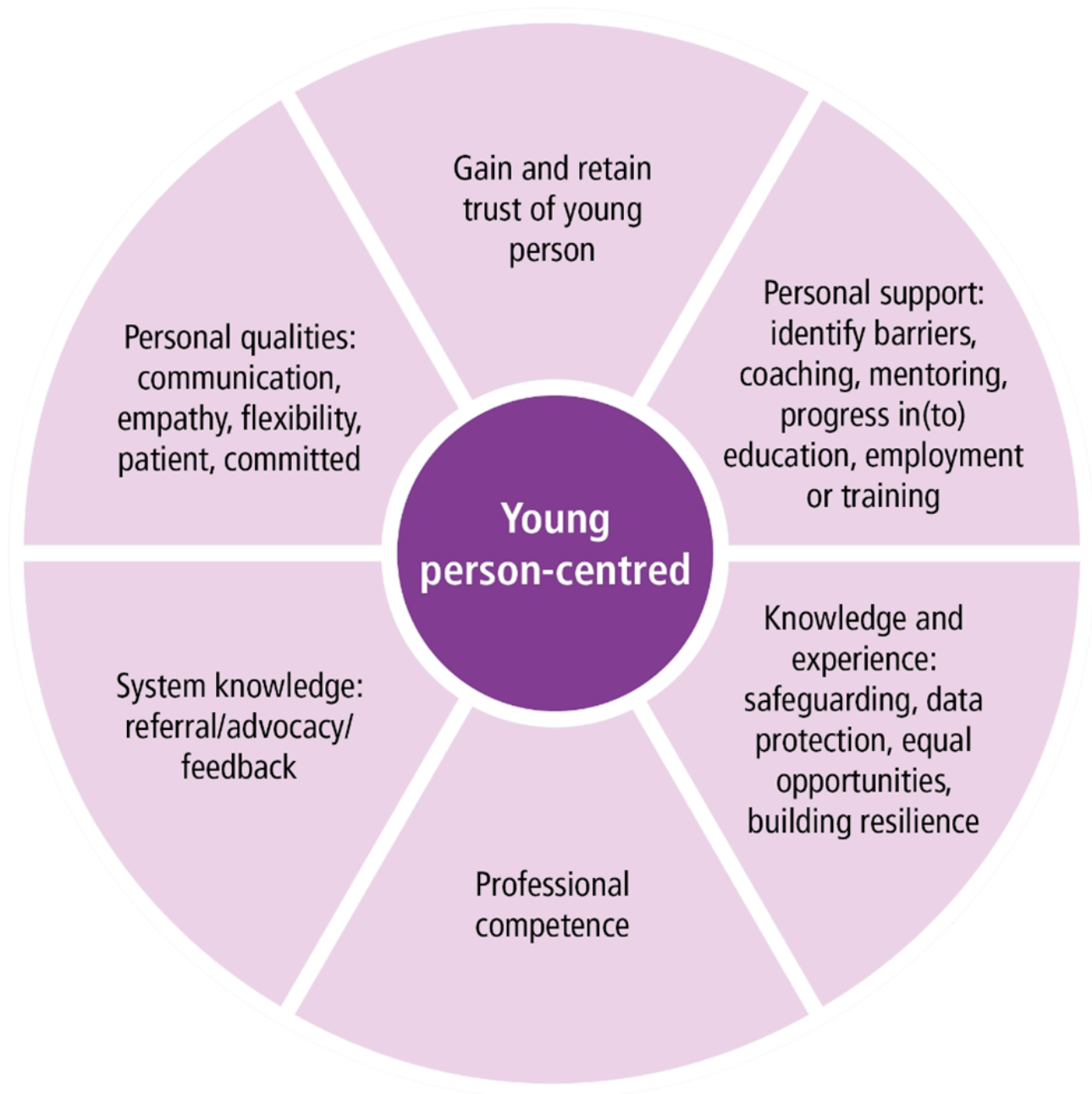
- being a named individual responsible for regularly keeping in touch with the young person
- having an awareness of the range of support in place around an individual, and if necessary, negotiating with other support services and professionals and advocating on behalf of the young person as appropriate
- flagging to a supervisor or EPC if support is not helping a young person move forward
- helping to build resilience of a young person in ways relevant to the lead worker's organisation and its particular focus and expertise
- reviewing the 'status' of the young person against the Careers Wales 5-tier model of engagement, and providing feedback to the EPC

Lead workers will therefore include a range of professionals from different organisations. In general terms, those undertaking the lead worker function should:

- build a rapport with, and gain the trust of the young person
- have the skills, competence and capacity to help the young person progress in (or into) EET
- have a knowledge of local provision and other support services
- have the communication skills to work with other professionals and advocate on behalf of the young person

Placing the young person at the centre, the diagram below shows what skills, knowledge and qualities are required by the lead worker.

Young person-centred diagram



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The allocation of the lead worker resource should be driven by early identification systems, based on data and practitioner input. The lead worker function is the offer of additional support to young people who have been identified through early identification systems. The specific circumstances of the young person should be considered when deciding which organisation is best-equipped to provide the lead worker role.

This guidance provides some starting assumptions about which young people might benefit most from lead worker support, and who may be best placed to play the role. However, the final decision will need to be informed by practitioner input and agreed through discussion between local partners.

Case study: how a lead worker can support a young person

A youth worker from the local authority youth engagement and progression team contacted a young person who had disengaged in early June 2021, initially via phone calls and finally a door knock. David, the young person, was very hesitant to speak to the youth worker, but did express a wish to go to college. In order for him to progress, further support was needed. He had become socially isolated due to COVID-19 he had experienced a change of gender identity, and had developed anxiety problems. At this point, he had not attended school for 12 months nor left the home for over 4 months.

The youth worker became David's lead worker. After a few meetings with his lead worker, David's confidence increased, and he agreed to meet with his lead worker outside the home. After building a trusting relationship with the lead worker, who showed him different provision opportunities, David expressed an interest in a pre-vocational course at a local college. The lead worker supported David with his application, and a transition meeting was set up with the college to ensure David had further support once the course started.

David was accepted onto the course and was supported by his lead worker to

apply for the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) grant and given information on the Digital Inclusion Grant. The lead worker also helped David get an exemption card from the college so that he wouldn't have to wear a mask. The lead worker arranged a meeting at the college so he could speak to learner services and provide further background on David to help David's transition to college.

The lead worker was able to support David at college on his induction day. David had a prior appointment, so his lead worker negotiated a different start time for his induction. During the induction David showed signs of high anxiety but his lead worker was able to reassure and calm him. The support he received helped David to progress into college.

Allocation of lead workers for young people aged 11 to 16 at risk of being NEET

The table below shows when a lead worker will or will not be allocated to a young person and who that lead worker could be.

Allocation of lead workers

Young person's circumstances	Lead worker offered?	Possible professional
Young person settled in provision and judged to be at a low risk of disengagement	No	N/A

Young person's circumstances	Lead worker offered?	Possible professional
Young person engaged in provision and judged to be at a low to medium or medium risk of disengagement from EET	No	Schools or providers' own pastoral systems or support should be utilised as appropriate
Young person engaged in provision and judged to be at medium to high or high risk of disengagement	Yes	Schools or provider pastoral systems or youth worker
Where a young person is disengaged from EET	Yes	Youth worker, voluntary or specialist agency

Allocation of lead workers for young people aged 16 to 18 at risk of being NEET/who are NEET

For young people aged 16 to 18, support is allocated against the Careers Wales 5-tier model of engagement. The model aims to guide and not restrict or silo operations across Wales. Strong partnership working to support individuals to get a positive EET outcome is the ultimate aim of all involved.

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Careers Wales 5-tier model of engagement for young people aged 16 to 18

Tier	Young people	Lead worker	Tracking and careers information, advice and guidance support
Tier 5: In further education or EET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In EET. • Working or studying part time over 16 hours. 	No lead worker necessary given that young person is already engaged and not judged to be at risk of disengaging. Providers' own pastoral systems or support should be utilised as appropriate.	Careers Wales
Tier 4: At risk of dropping out of EET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged in less than 16 hours of EET. • Have been identified at risk of disengagement pre-16 and/or were judged as at risk of not making a positive transition but are subsequently in further education, sixth form or training. • Have been identified to Careers Wales by EET providers (or themselves) as at risk of dropping out of EET. 	Allocation of lead worker depends on level of risk: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For low and medium risk use provider pastoral systems and/or allocate a learning coach as a lead worker. • For High risk a lead worker may 	Careers Wales

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Tier	Young people	Lead worker	Tracking and careers information, advice and guidance support
		be allocated from either youth service or Careers Wales or if Families First involved Team Around the Family will decide allocation of lead worker.	
Tier 3: NEET or actively seeking EET but known to Careers Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaged with Careers Wales and/or known to be actively seeking EET; either ready to enter EET, or assessed as requiring career management or employability skills support to enter EET. This tier should also include those known to Careers Wales, actively seeking EET but not requiring Careers Wales enhanced support, for example accessing support via careerswales.gov.wales or awaiting a college start date. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead worker identified for 100% of the cohort. Careers Wales will provide the lead worker in nearly all cases. 	Careers Wales
Tier 2:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant or multiple barriers requiring intensive personal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead worker identified for 	Careers Wales

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Tier	Young people	Lead worker	Tracking and careers information, advice and guidance support
Young people known to Careers Wales who are NEET and are not ready or available to seek EET	support. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not available or unable to seek EET (for example due to illness, being a young carer, pregnancy, in custody). (https://www.gov.wales#anchor1)* 	100% of the cohort. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth service will provide lead worker in most cases (in some instances this role may be allocated to other services or organisations providing intensive personal support). 	
Tier 1: EET status unknown to Careers Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unknown to Careers Wales. 	Once individuals are identified they are allocated to appropriate tier and allocated a lead worker accordingly.	Careers Wales

*** We expect EPCs to be aware of these young people (for example those who are long term sick, who are in custody, pregnant or are young mums) and to have arrangements to keep in touch. Where individuals have**

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multiple barriers and are supported by services such as Families First, Community Employability Programmes, social services, their lead professional can act as lead worker. (<https://www.gov.walesnull>)

Supporting the lead worker role

To support and strengthen the lead worker role, the Welsh Government will:

- commission a lead worker review to scope out how many lead workers local authorities are able to call upon, and how often they engage with individual young people
- consider opportunities for sharing good practice and networking by lead workers across local authorities and organisations

Monitoring progression

Monitoring the progression of young people involves looking at what support and/or provision they are receiving and the impact it is having, so it can be adjusted as needed. Local area partnerships can evaluate, on a case by case basis, whether the support they have put in place is working for a young person. This allows adjustments to be made where necessary.

Monitoring progression also involves taking steps to identify young people who have fallen outside the monitoring system and establishing whether or not they are in EET. This is critical at the end of years 11, 12 and 13, when school leavers may be at risk of not making a positive transition into a post-16 destination. Young people with an 'unknown' destination on leaving school, or who have dropped out of post-16 education or training, should be located, and offered support under the Framework if needed.

Monitoring the progression of young people who are pre-16

Local authority EPCs manage the process of holding termly pre-16 multi-agency meetings in all schools, to identify learners most at risk of not progressing into EET when leaving compulsory education. This means EPCs and partners have a good idea of which young people need support before the end of Year 11. Attendees at these meetings should include school pastoral staff or family engagement officers, youth workers and Careers Wales advisers. Through this process, the specific support needs of young people are identified, so appropriate support can be brokered.

When learners have been identified as at higher risk of becoming NEET, having effective processes in place ensures that agencies can quickly intervene when young people become disengaged.

Case study: Merthyr Tydfil's approach to supporting young people in education other than at school

In Merthyr Tydfil there is a specific process in place for learners who are in education other than at school (EOTAS), and at a greater risk of becoming NEET. This entails monthly multi-agency meetings to consider learners' progress and allow for speedy intervention if required.

The local authority has information sharing protocols in place with partners to allow the sharing of personal information with pre- and post-16 partners. Multi-agency 'NEET Review' panels are held monthly to ensure that appropriate support is in place for EOTAS learners in years 7 to 11. By the end of Year 10 it is apparent which young people in EOTAS will be at an increased risk of NEET, and support is put in place to reduce this risk.

Throughout Year 11, partners provide monthly updates of the stage each young person has reached in their transition and the young person is offered support to move forward. At the end of Year 11, Careers Wales and the EPC will consider any EOTAS learner who is potentially 'high-risk' of becoming NEET and, if they are not ready or available to seek EET, allocate them against Tier 2 in the 5-tier model.

A monthly Post-16 NEET panel allows cases new to Tier 2 to be considered and referred to a post-16 project for support. When an EOTAS leaver is thought to be work-ready, they are referred to Working Wales for further support in entering EET. Those not engaging with or dropping out of Tier 2 provision are allocated to another provider for further attempts to be made; this continues while they remain in Tier 2.

While this process cannot guarantee that all EOTAS-leavers engage in EET, it allows the team that works with young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET to offer support, and helps to ensure that there are no vulnerable young people whose circumstances on leaving school are 'unknown'.

Monitoring the progression of school leavers into EET

School leavers with 'unknown' status

Throughout the summer months, as young people leave Year 11, multi-agency meetings should continue, with the involvement of post-16 teams and Careers Wales, to ensure continued support.

Despite the early intervention that takes place, each year there remains some school leavers in Year 11 who have 'unknown' status. This means that they are not known to Careers Wales, and so it is not known whether they have plans for EET, or whether they are at risk of becoming NEET. Careers Wales pass on the

details of the 'unknown' young people to EPCs in July. The EPCs, working with the youth service and the wider Framework partnership, then try to contact those people to find out their plans. This may involve carrying out home visits to speak to young people.

Case study: Carmarthenshire's approach to locating and monitoring the progress of individuals with 'unknown' status

Careers Wales share information of Tier 1 'unknown' individuals with Carmarthenshire local authority. Local authority staff then use various methods to contact young people, including telephone calls, e-mails, letters, home visits and leaving calling cards. There are challenges to this process. Contact information is sometimes incorrect or outdated, including telephone numbers, which is frustrating and time consuming to correct.

Home visits have proven to be the most successful approach. By interacting directly with young people, local authority staff were able to:

- establish which young people are already engaged in EET
- which young people require additional support put that support in place, and update their records accordingly
- signpost individuals with no planned destination to Careers Wales, to receive information, advice and guidance
- secure an offer of appropriate support for young people who have significant barriers to engagement

Young people with 'unknown' status are considered at the monthly multi-agency SEET (Supporting Engagement into Education, Employment and Training) meetings, in which all partner agencies are signed up to a Wales Accord on the Sharing of Personal Information (WASPI) approved Information Sharing Protocol. Partner agencies may be engaging with the young people or working with siblings or families. This pooled knowledge can help identify which

individuals require support. The SEET function has proven to be an effective means of monitoring the progress of individuals with 'unknown' status and those with significant barriers, as:

- updates are fed back to Careers Wales
- young people's movement against the Careers Wales 5-tier model of engagement are recorded
- movement in and out of the local authority area is recorded

The COVID-19 pandemic caused some disruption to locating young people with 'unknown' status and home visits have not been possible due to restrictions. However, responses from young people by other methods of contact, including social media platforms, have increased.

Case study: support for young person from Wrexham in Tier 1

Wrexham local authority's Tier 1 Project has a team of 2 staff, whose role is to locate young people in Tier 1 and ensure that those who are NEET receive the support they need.

The team works through the list of young people in Tier 1, based on postcode areas, and calls at the homes of young people on the list. If there is no reply the team leave a letter offering support to the young person. Home visits are repeated. A young person may receive 2 to 3 visits in a six-week period. As young people in Tier 1 may be hard to reach, this persistence is important to get results.

Joshua was one of the young people targeted by the Tier 1 Project team. After he finished Year 11, the team visited Joshua's home a number of times. Each time he was out. Eventually he sent a text message to the mobile number provided on the letter left by the Tier 1 Project team, asking for support.

A member of the Tier 1 project team, met with Joshua in an informal setting, over a coffee, and carried out an assessment of Joshua's needs. This showed Joshua had some significant barriers to progression, accordingly he was allocated against Tier 2. The Tier 1 project worker then referred Joshua to the MAPS (Motivate Achieve Participate Succeed) project, which supported young people via a bespoke mentoring plan. A MAPS worker arranged to meet Joshua at his home.

The MAPS worker spoke to Joshua and his mother and decided that the most suitable provision for Joshua would be Communities for Work. He referred Joshua onto this programme. When Joshua missed his initial appointment, Communities for Work alerted his MAPS worker who made contact with Joshua, and continued to support and encourage him to engage with suitable provision.

What happens once an 'unknown' learner has been located

Once a young person has been located and spoken to, an assessment of needs will identify their level of engagement against the 5-tier model of engagement. This information is then fed into Atlas, the Careers Wales customer relationship management system, via a monthly spreadsheet.

From July each year, EPCs, youth service staff and Careers Wales staff work intensively with young people in tiers 2 and 3 to support them into a positive destination. Young people in these tiers are allocated a lead worker, responsible for regularly keeping in touch with them and then formally reporting back to the EPC. The lead worker will highlight if the support package and interventions put in place for an individual are not actively helping re-engage and move the young person forward.

From July onwards, further education institutions, training providers and schools and further education colleges submit information to Careers Wales showing

which young people have started EET. (Training providers send Careers Wales a weekly list of starters and leavers because individuals' movement in and out of training provision is more fluid.) Careers Wales then updates young peoples' statuses against its 5-tier model. This information is essential to identify not only young people who have started EET, but also those who have not started provision as planned.

'Real-time' information about starters and leavers is particularly helpful as it allows leavers to be offered support as soon as possible, so they can be re-engaged.

In the autumn, the Welsh Government also provides Careers Wales with data from the **Lifelong learning Wales record** (<https://www.gov.wales/lifelong-learning-wales-record-llwr-recording-welsh-medium-learning>) (LLWR), to confirm the starter information already received and to flag up any new starters not notified to Careers Wales. LLWR data usually arrives some time after the event, and is therefore most useful for checking the data that is already held.

Careers Wales advisers change the learners' status from Year 11 to their correct status against the Careers Wales 5-tier model of engagement (for example. Tier 5: fulltime college course). The status change therefore informs the 5-tier model. Information on tier status is held on Atlas.

The annual **Careers Wales pupil destinations survey** (<https://careerswales.gov.wales/education-and-teaching-professionals/pupil-destinations>) reports the destinations of learners from all maintained and special schools across Wales who have reached statutory leaving age (Year 11), and students leaving school in years 12 and 13. The destination information is a snapshot of the learner's known activity on 31 October after they have left school. The information is published on the Careers Wales website, early the following calendar year.

(It is important to note that Careers Wales is not able to merge all the data they

receive to publish the destinations survey into their own customer management database. Careers Wales can only merge and hold data on individual young people where they have an agreement in place. This agreement will be held with either the young person directly, the school the young person attends, or the local authority.)

After 31 October every year, EPCs and the local Framework partnership should continue to monitor the number of young people aged 16 to 18 in Tier 1, and work together to locate them. If a young person aged 16 to 18 has an ‘unknown’ status and there are concerns about their safety, the EPC and/or their team should contact the local authority safeguarding lead or the Safeguarding Children’s Board for advice. The Welsh Government guidance, **Keeping Learners Safe: The role of local authorities, governing bodies and proprietors of independent schools under the Education Act 2002** (<https://www.gov.wales/keeping-learners-safe>) (2021), includes detailed information on the process and expectations for safeguarding in schools, and the wider system.

Data flow for Careers Wales' customer relationship management system (Atlas)

Pre-16

(Years 10 and 11)

Management Information System (MIS) data from schools



Pupil data from pupil referral units



Pupil level data from local authorities



EPC input



Additional information, for example, young people who have moved school



Post-16

(Ages 16 to 18)



Starter and leaver information from school sixth forms



Starter and leaver information from further education institutions (FEIs)



Starter and leaver information from training providers



Starter and leaver information from LLWR for FEIs and training providers



Tier 1 and 2 updates from EPCs via a monthly spreadsheet



Tier 3 updates from Careers Wales Advisers



Careers Wales – Data hub outputs

- Destination survey.
- New and current Tier 1 and Tier 2 data for EPCs, via data hub.
- NEET reports, via data hub.

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Data sharing

The Data Protection Act 2018 is the UK's implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). (For ease of reference, this guidance refers to UK GDPR, and covers data protection legislation in general.)

One of the key messages from **the consultation on the Framework** (<https://www.gov.wales/refresh-youth-engagement-and-progression-framework-report>) was the challenges of sharing data since the introduction of UK GDPR, both in terms of barriers to sharing data and also perception of UK GDPR requirements. (Anxiety about GDPR requirements is also cited in **Estyn's report Post-16 partnerships: Shared planning and provision between schools, and between schools and colleges** (<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/system/files/2022-01/Post-16%20partnerships%20en.pdf#:~:text=Post%20-16%20partnerships%20schools%20and%20further%20education%20%28FE%29,on%20these%20parties%20to%20collaborate%20in%20joint%20working.>), (2021).)

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is the independent authority, established to uphold information rights. Detailed information and guidance on UK GDPR is available on the **ICO website** (<https://ico.org.uk/>), including **detailed guidance on data sharing and children** (<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/ico-codes-of-practice/data-sharing-a-code-of-practice/data-sharing-and-children/>). The ICO guidance on data sharing and children highlights that organisations may share children's personal data, provided they can demonstrate a compelling reason to do so, taking account of the best interests of the child. Organisations should build this into all of the systems and processes in their data sharing arrangements.

Organisations in Wales that are directly concerned with the health, education, safety, crime prevention and social well-being of people use the **WASPI** (<http://www.waspi.org/home>) as a tool to help them share personal information

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effectively and lawfully. The WASPI website includes guidance to help organisations determine **what type of data sharing agreement is required** (<http://www.waspi.org/what-agreement-is-required->) in specific circumstances. For data sharing under the Framework, the following WASPI agreements are commonly used, depending on whether the data flow is one-way or reciprocal:

- Data Disclosure Agreements (DDA) are used when personal data is to be disclosed (that is passed one way) from 1 data controller to another for a specific purpose. **Guidance on how a DDA should be developed in line with the WASPI framework is available on the WASPI website** (<http://www.waspi.org/information-sharing-protocols>).
- Information Sharing Protocols (ISP) are developed to record practices involving the regular, reciprocal sharing (that is information flowing back and forth between organisations) of personal information between data controllers. **Guidance on how an ISP should be developed is available on the WASPI website** (<http://www.waspi.org/information-sharing-protocols>).

Monitoring the progression of individuals under the Framework is underpinned by DDAs and ISPs as appropriate.

Individuals must be informed which personal information will be processed and why, where, how and when, and who it is shared with. This information is usually provided via a privacy notice, ideally at the first point of contact with an individual or at the first point their data is being collected and processed. It can be part of a registration or consent form or a standalone document.

Local authority maintained schools are expected to issue a privacy notice to their learners and/or parents, carers and guardians, which reflect DDAs and ISPs that are in place.

The privacy notice should also set out:

- the identity of the data controller and the contact details of the data

protection officer

- the lawful basis for processing personal data
- how and why the personal data is being processed
- how long the personal data will be retained
- the rights of the individuals under data protection legislation

The data controller is the organisation (legal body) that makes decisions on why, what, how and when data is collected, what it is used for, how it is kept and for how long. The data controller is the main decision-maker when it comes to how people's personal information is handled, and how it is kept safe. Careers Wales is the data controller for the information it stores on Atlas.

With the appropriate processes in place, the progression of young people can be monitored so that when a young person is at risk of not making a successful transition into EET, they can be identified, and offered support.

Case study: how data sharing enables young people to be supported under the Framework

Alisha was in Year 11 at school and was engaged and interested in the work. She was working hard towards her GCSEs and was hoping to go to a local further education institution to study Information Technology. She sometimes experienced anxiety but was able to manage her condition with the support and understanding of her mother and her friends.

In March 2020, after the first lockdown was announced, Alisha experienced worsening anxiety. Over a period of weeks, Alisha began to experience poor sleep, and she became irritable. Alisha really missed her friends and was also worried that her mother, who worked as a carer, would catch COVID-19.

With the easing of restrictions in June 2020, Alisha's anxiety improved as she was able to meet up with friends. She was pleased with her GCSE results and

enrolled at her local further education college on her chosen course.

However, after she started on the further education course in September, Alisha felt overwhelmed by the reports of rising Covid cases. Her anxiety levels increased and she found it difficult to concentrate on her new course. She dropped out of college in early November.

The college had a Youth Engagement and Progression Framework WASPI document in place, which enabled them to inform Careers Wales that Alisha had left college. The college then informed the Careers Wales link adviser that Alisha had left college, describing her change in circumstances and her current barriers to continuing in education.

The information received from the college was immediately recorded on Atlas and a status change to Tier 2 was made. This status change initiated a referral to the EPC via the data hub, where the EPC could access the notes describing why Alisha left college and the barriers she is currently facing.

The EPC requested a member of the local authority's engagement team to contact Alisha and offer appropriate support. Alisha agreed to meet with a member of the team for an assessment of her needs.

The assessment showed that Alisha needed support for managing her anxiety and boosting her self-esteem, and Alisha agreed to a referral to local authority counselling provision and youth services to help meet these needs. A lead worker from the engagement team spoke to the college on Alisha's behalf, and the college agreed that Alisha could enrol on a number of taster courses, to help her decide the best course for her.

Provision

We aim to ensure the mix of provision available in every area of Wales can meet the needs of our young people. Within the context of the Framework, ‘provision’ refers to programmes that keep young people engaged in EET and prevent youth homelessness. There is more information on provision available in Annex A, although this is not an exhaustive list.

Some young people may also need to be signposted to specific support to boost their mental health, well-being and self-esteem: Annex B provides more information on the different support available.

The Commission for Tertiary Education and Research (CTER) will oversee the strategic planning of educational and skills delivery across all post-compulsory education and training, including funding, contracting, quality, and financial monitoring. This will bring a greater degree of coherence and efficiency to post-16 provision.

Young people identified as needing additional support can benefit from targeted pre-engagement activity. This can ensure they are aware of their options and are confident in making decisions about what they do when they leave the school environment.

Case study: Pre-engagement programme in Pembrokeshire

In Pembrokeshire, (pre-engagement programmes) PEPs are targeted transition programmes for vulnerable Year 11 learners identified as being ‘at risk’ of NEET or ‘not making a successful transition’ to post-16 education, training or employment.

The programmes are run in partnership with post-16 providers with funding

secured via an inclusion service grant. In the academic year 2020 to 2021, learners attended the programmes 1 day a week during the spring and summer terms.

Transport and lunch were provided for all learners, irrespective of whether they were eligible for free school meals.

The aims of the programme were to:

- prevent or reduce the number of young people who were NEET
- reduce drop-out rates and increase retention rates on post 16 programmes
- reduce anxiety linked to transition to post-16 EET
- aid familiarisation with post-16 settings
- sustain motivation, engagement and attendance
- support learners in their decision making
- increase learner knowledge of post-16 options and pathways

Programme content included:

- a range of vocational tasters
- information, advice and guidance on all post-16 options
- opportunity for a one-to-one careers guidance interview with Careers Wales advisers
- familiarisation activities
- visits to and from other post-16 providers
- health, fitness and well-being activities
- team building and fun activities
- support to develop skills in areas such as information and communication technology (ICT), literacy and numeracy as well as interpersonal skills (research skills, completing and submitting applications and interview techniques)

In the academic year 2020 to 2021, of the 119 learners referred to PEPs, 89

completed the programme, with 95% of all learners who participated progressing into a successful post-16 destination.

Key to the success of the programmes were:

- senior leadership support at both local authority and school level
- having an effective early identification system
- the flexibility and willingness of the providers
- development of good relationships between the local authority, schools, providers, parents, carers and learners

Case study: offering a range of provision to meet a young person's needs

Harry was disengaged in mainstream school and was generally apathetic to the educational process. He had behavioural issues, which led to him being permanently excluded from one secondary school, transferred to another, and then placed in a pupil referral unit (PRU) for 2 terms. He was on the fringes of child criminal exploitation.

The local authority's Hard to Place/EOTAS panel referred Harry to its progression team, which allocated a lead worker to support Harry. The lead worker knew the family, as he had supported older siblings, and knew the parent. The lead worker initially made home visits, until Harry felt confident enough to meet outside the home.

The lead worker asked Harry about his likes and interests, which enabled a bespoke package of education to be provided. Harry attended a weekly sport course and then a 12-week art course, and achieved 100% attendance at these. Although he had ceased to attend school, he was still on the school roll. Harry began to attend a military preparation course with a military preparation college (MPCT). However, there was a drugs incident and Harry lost his place with

MPCT.

The progression team referred Harry's case to the local authority's ALN decision panel, which agreed that Harry would benefit from also attending an outreach PRU, to give him a wider educational experience, while continuing with the sport course and completing the art course.

At the PRU, staff fostered a reignited engagement with education, through skilful curriculum design and delivery. As a measure of Harry's improved engagement he took public transport to the PRU every day, and achieved 100% attendance.

Harry was now attending provision 3.5 days a week, through a combination of the sports course and the PRU.

As there were still concerns around child criminal exploitation, the progression team and the EPC called a meeting with providers, Harry and his mother to discuss behaviours and concerns. The progression team contacted the police and youth justice services to obtain additional support. Harry was also found in possession of cannabis on a few occasions, so the progression team referred Harry to the local authority's drugs and alcohol team, which carried out a group session around drug awareness at the sports course. Subsequently Harry showed he was able to discuss substance misuse and that he was comfortable being challenged on his views. He was able to take on board the negative implications of substance misuse and agreed to continue attending group and individual sessions on substance misuse.

Harry has achieved some qualifications at the PRU and is studying towards additional qualifications. He recently secured a weekly work placement with a local mechanical garage.

Case study: offering provision to align with a young person's interests

Lewis has been attending a local voluntary youth drop-in centre since the age of 13. He comes from a large blended-family. Lewis first started attending the centre when he was in school, where he wasn't doing very well academically and was seen as disruptive. However, he flourished at the youth centre and was instrumental in helping staff develop a cooking project.

The youth workers realised very quickly that Lewis was very comfortable in the kitchen, where he supported staff to purchase ingredients, cook food and serve the members at their evening meal night. Lewis also really enjoyed developing new recipes and started a smoothie and flavoured milkshake sale. Throughout this time, Lewis was still experiencing difficulties outside of the youth project and regularly was sent home for street drinking and verging on anti-social behaviour. Sometimes, his behaviour was difficult at the youth project, but while he was busy and engaged he did well. He was given the opportunity to gain a food hygiene qualification, first aid qualification and an **Agored Cymru** (<https://www.agored.cymru/>) unit in event planning.

The youth workers encouraged Lewis to take more and more responsibility at their café, and Lewis also ran a pop-up café at a local festival.

Lewis succeeded in gaining a place at a local college to study catering and after completing the course he accepted a job at a local hospital, with a dual role in catering and cleaning.

Helping young people gain skills for independent living

In the context of youth homelessness provision **the consultation on the Framework** (<https://gov.wales/refresh-youth-engagement-and-progression-framework->

report) highlighted young people wanted a greater focus on the provision of practical support to help make the transition to life as an independent adult. The young people wanted to improve their knowledge and understanding of various areas including:

- housing options
- bank accounts
- payslips and wages
- taxes
- bills
- insurance

Case study: provision to help prevent youth homelessness

Pembrokeshire's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) is an online platform designed with, by and for young people. It provides information, support and learning resources to aid a successful transition to living independently and to help prevent youth homelessness.

It uses the experiences of young people to inform content and ensure their needs are addressed. The site hosts 7 interactive skill development modules covering a range of topics including:

- budgeting
- rights and responsibilities
- tasks involved in running a new home.
- items required for a new home
- tenancy administration
- housing options
- consequences of a tenancy failure

These modules feature activities, videos and resources which are co-designed

and produced by young people.

The platform also hosts a 'Voices' element. This is a library of audio clips featuring young people talking about their own experiences of related matters. While the primary aim of this is to give users an opportunity to learn from others, it also provides those with lived experiences a chance to express their views and opinions which are then presented to associated sectors and organisations to help shape their services. A 'Big Blue Button' facility enables young people to access youth workers live via video conferencing, or a messenger provision from within the actual portal.

Finally, the overall project aims to enable young people to deal with certain housing issues affecting them, including the factors which contribute to youth tenancy breakdowns and homelessness. Furthermore, by involving this age group in every aspect of the project, it not only looks to inform, educate and guide young people, but also use their lived experiences to benefit others.

Mapping provision

The EPC will continue to play a critical and strategic role in mapping and coordinating provision at a local partnership level to help consider the overall picture of provision and how local partnerships can successfully collaborate to meet the needs of young people in their area.

Once young people have been identified as needing support under the Framework, ensuring they have the right type of support is critical. Stronger mapping of existing provision was one of the key actions in the original Framework, and **the consultation on the Framework** (<https://www.gov.wales/refresh-youth-engagement-and-progression-framework-report>) highlighted the need to ensure those coordinating support are aware of the provision that is already available in their area. The consultation on the Framework also highlighted the importance of young people feeling informed about their full range of options in

compulsory and post-compulsory education. It is important that individuals with specific vulnerabilities who are being supported under the Framework are also made aware of other key support services, such as drug and alcohol misuse services.

Mapping remains a key priority for organisations supporting young people, to identify what is available in their area.

At a local level, there are a range of different provisions available, which is why local provision mapping is critical. EPCs are responsible for managing the mapping within their local authorities, to ensure they have up-to-date information on what support is available for young people. We would expect EPCs to consult on the creation of the provision map and make that document visible and accessible to all stakeholders and partners. To support this process, the Welsh Government will continue to update EPCs on any further support that it introduces. A list is available in Annex A, however, this is not an exhaustive list.

The Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research and Data (WISERD), is currently running a project with Careers Wales, Welsh Government and Civil Society Organisations in Wales with the aim of providing a road map to better refer young people to a wider range of support.

Case study: mapping provision in Caerphilly

Caerphilly County Borough Council has developed a website, **Welcome to Caerphilly Pathways** (<https://www.caerphillypathways.co.uk/>), which shows the full range of education and training opportunities available to young people in the county, including school sixth forms, further education institutions and local work-based training providers.

A large part of the site is an online prospectus providing details of the A-level and BTEC courses that are on offer. Other parts of the site are designed to show

young people the progression routes, careers, degrees and apprenticeships that are linked to the subjects they might wish to study.

Details of provision available

Set out below is the provision that is available around post-16 education and training (see also Employability and Employment Opportunities) as well as for preventing youth homelessness. This is not an exhaustive list, and will be subject to updates.

Young Person's Guarantee (YPG)

From age 16, young people can access the YPG via the Working Wales service. The YPG aims to provide young people under 25 across Wales with support into EET or self-employment. There will be a new YPG web presence in place on the Working Wales website together with web chats, Skype, e-mail and SMS texts. Dedicated advisers will operate online, on the high street and through improved outreach facilities across Wales.

Young people can also use the **Working Wales Support Finder** (<https://workingwales.gov.wales/change-your-story/support-finder>) to search for programmes that will help to improve their skills and work opportunities, with further support from advisers. In addition, the course search facility provides thousands of learning opportunities on the database to choose from, including all part-time further education, community education, opportunities with private providers and work-based learning.

Further education

At 16, young people may decide to remain in school or move into further

education. There are 13 **further education institutions** (<https://www.colleges.wales/en/page/members>) in Wales. Most are general further education colleges which deliver a broad range of provision to learners aged 16 and over. This includes academic and vocational programmes from entry to degree levels, apprenticeships, adult learning and independent living skills programmes for learners with learning difficulties or disabilities. More than 100,000 learners study at further education institutions each year.

There is also a range of employability programmes, covered under Employability and Employment Opportunities in this Handbook.

Provision for preventing youth homelessness

Grant funding has also been made available to local authorities since 2019 to 2020, as part of the Youth Support Grant, to fund the role of a Youth Homelessness Coordinator in every local authority, to develop support for young people at risk of youth homelessness or signpost to existing support that may be needed such as mental health and well-being. This includes universal provision such as delivering awareness raising sessions in schools and youth work settings, highlighting the signs and causes of homelessness, particularly hidden homelessness. It also includes more targeted support such as family mediation, to enable young people to continue living within the family home, or independent living skills and tenancy skills to help young people make a successful transition to independent living when they are ready to move on.

Youth Homelessness Coordinators are expected to develop appropriate referral mechanisms, signposting, and pathways of support, by mapping the relevant local provision available to support those at risk of homelessness. Shelter Cymru has developed a Youth Homelessness Early Prevention Padlet Sharing Platform where coordinators can share resources they have developed.

Employability and employment opportunities

As well as using the Framework to improve engagement and progression for young people, we need to ensure the Framework leads to more young people moving into skilled employment, with a balance of work experience, skills, and pathways to employment or self-employment. In this way, we can set young people on a path that gives them the best possible life chances.

The Welsh Government's plan for employability and skills '**Stronger, fairer, greener Wales: a plan for employability and skills: summary**

(<https://www.gov.wales/stronger-fairer-greener-wales-plan-employability-and-skills-summary-html>)' (2022) sets out areas of interim focus over the next 5 years, linked to the national milestones, which includes maintaining post-pandemic improvements in levels of young people in EET, with a focus on transition to employment.

The consultation on the Framework (<https://www.gov.wales/refresh-youth-engagement-and-progression-framework-report>) showed support for a broader and more flexible range of vocational options being made available. Feedback from young people highlighted an appetite for greater focus on employment, employability and work experience, and for comprehensive information on their options. Young people wanted to receive quality employment or self-employment support and advice in all education settings. They also wanted a greater focus on the provision of practical support to help them make the transition to life as an independent adult.

We have been considering options available to deliver adult and youth employability provision both during the COVID-19 recovery phase and longer term in Wales. This is being delivered through a combination of new and existing programmes, at a national and local level. This Handbook references national projects only, partner organisations should also be aware of what is available locally.

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Pre-16

Within schools

All young people will have access to careers services within the school setting. The curriculum in schools should enable learners to gain experiences related to work and careers, developing knowledge of the breadth of opportunities available to them throughout their lives. This learning will help them make informed decisions about their career pathways. The **four purposes** (<https://www.gov.wales/node/3319>) of the curriculum (to create ambitious, capable learners; healthy, confident individuals; enterprising, creative contributors; and ethical, informed citizens), and the integral skills which underpin them, are central to preparing learners for careers and work. These skills support learners to be resilient, creative and ambitious, requiring them to solve problems, engage with different issues, and work independently, as well as preparing them for the opportunities and challenges of a changing economic reality.

Learning about careers and work-related experiences (CWRE) is fundamental to developing skills for work and life. CWRE helps learners to understand the relationship between their learning and the world of work. Experiences should aim to open learners' eyes to the opportunities that lie ahead and should provide high-quality advice about skills and career pathways, raising the aspirations of learners who may not otherwise consider the possibility of certain opportunities being available to them. In January 2022, the Curriculum for Wales Guidance for Careers was updated with the integrated CWRE guidance. The majority of the guidance can be found at **Cross-cutting themes for designing your curriculum** (<https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/designing-your-curriculum/cross-cutting-themes-for-designing-your-curriculum/#careers-and-work-related-experiences>). There are also updated sections for CWRE within the areas of learning and experience in the cross-curricula sections, as well as updates to the

legislation section. The new Estyn National Framework will support schools in implementing CWRE.

Access to entrepreneurship learning can help young people develop entrepreneurial skills as part of their curriculum. These skills and experiences are valued by employers and are essential for starting and running a business.

Big Ideas Wales (<https://businesswales.gov.wales/bigideas/our-support/workshops>) provides an opportunity for learners to explore enterprise and learn from the experiences of entrepreneur role models. It gives information, advice and guidance to help them on the path towards becoming self-employed or starting their own business.

Junior apprenticeships

Junior apprenticeships offer Year 10 and 11 learners the opportunity to study full-time for a future career in a college setting from the age of 14. The apprenticeships offer a two-year programme of work-related education with work experience built in, alongside a Level 2 course that is equivalent to 4 or 5 GCSEs, in a range of different vocational pathways. Each apprentice also studies GCSEs in Maths and English alongside their chosen area. There are a number of programme codes in the directory to reflect different junior apprenticeship pathways.

Each junior apprentice should have access to support with learning and teaching, help with behaviour management, and a designated welfare officer to provide pastoral care and day-to-day support.

The aim of the junior apprenticeship is to make the learner employable or ready to progress onto a higher-level vocational course or apprenticeship at the age of 16.

The junior apprenticeship programme is primarily funded by the local authority

and therefore it is essential that agreement is reached between the college and the respective local authority before this provision is agreed.

Advice, support and provision available to young people post-16

Young people go on to a range of destinations at 16. Most young people will stay on at school or choose to move onto further and higher education. A small percentage may choose an option within the adult community education sector.

Some young people will choose to enter work-based learning straight after school. The key mainstream offers made available will be the Welsh Government's new Jobs Growth Wales+ programme and apprenticeships. There is, however, a range of further training and learning opportunities available, as set out in this document.

Young people often need support during this sometimes stressful transition, such as further advice on their future options and on how to overcome barriers. Some young people worry about making the wrong decision and are anxious about what options are available to them if they change their mind and their career goals. In addition, young people, who do not think staying on in school or further education, have fed back that they often feel they do not have the information or support to explore alternative options such as apprenticeships, work-based learning or employment and self-employment.

Advice services for young people

When young people reach the age of 16 they are eligible to access the **Working Wales** (<https://workingwales.gov.wales/>) service. This service provides free advice, guidance and access to training across Wales.

Working Wales is also the gateway into the YPG, and has a dedicated **Young Person's Guarantee webpage** (<https://workingwales.gov.wales/how-we-can-help/young-persons-guarantee>). The Working Wales advice and guidance processes will assess young people to determine their most suitable option and help them make an informed decision to move to the type of provision that can best support them.

Young people can register on the Working Wales website for the YPG. They will receive support by an adviser where their needs will be assessed via a guidance assessment, resulting in a referral onto provision. Working Wales will measure and report on the number of registrations and number of referrals.

In addition, many young people will have access to additional advice services made available via further and higher education as well as the UK Government Jobcentre Plus services.

Work-based learning and other employability and training options

Jobs Growth Wales+ (JGW+)

The Jobs Growth Wales+ (JGW+) programme, launched in March 2022, and is available to young people between the ages of 16 to 18. It aims to progress young people into employment or further learning and increase participants' confidence and motivation by undertaking a bespoke package of training and development support.

The programme has 3 strands:

1. Engagement

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For those needing to confirm or contextualise an occupational/educational focus prior to entering further learning or work.

2. Advancement

For those able to follow a programme of study leading to a Level 1 Qualification but assessed as being unable to currently follow a Level 2 or above programme.

3. Employment

For those who are occupationally focused and job ready.

It is important that EPCs, Careers Wales and JGW+ providers have strong partnership working relationships in place. This ensures that young people who would benefit from participating in the JGW+ programme (from those that are furthest away from the labour market through to job-ready individuals) are identified quickly and offered appropriate support. This will enable a smooth referral process via Working Wales.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships in Wales are open to anyone aged 16 or over. They combine practical training in a job with study. Individuals will gain hands-on work experience, learn new skills and gain a nationally-recognised qualification. They also get the chance to earn a wage at the same time. Apprenticeships can take between 1 and 4 years to complete.

Apprenticeships are available from levels 2 to 6 and have the following qualification equivalence:

- Foundation Apprenticeship Level 2 = 5 GCSEs or NVQ Level 2 equivalent
- Apprenticeship Level 3 = 2 A-levels or NVQ Level 3 equivalent
- Higher Apprenticeship Level 4 or 5 = HNC, HND or Foundation degree

equivalent

- Degree Apprenticeship Level 6 = Bachelor's degree equivalent (Degree Apprenticeships are currently available in ICT, digital, engineering and advanced manufacturing occupations)

Apprenticeships are available through the medium of Welsh and bilingually, allowing individuals to train and learn in their chosen language.

Apprenticeships are available for those who have a disability, health conditions or learning difficulties. Almost all apprenticeships can be made accessible and the employer will work with the individual to ensure they get tailored support to meet their needs so they can work confidently.

Further advice and guidance, including information on the **Find an Apprenticeship** (<https://findanapprenticeship.service.gov.wales/>), apprenticeship vacancy service and **Manage Apprenticeships service** (<https://www.gov.wales/employers-manage-your-apprenticeships>) can be found by **visiting our apprenticeships section** (<https://gov.wales/apprenticeships>).

Entrepreneurship: Business Advice and the Big Ideas Project (16 to 24)

Big Ideas Wales (<https://businesswales.gov.wales/bigideas/our-support/workshops>) is part of the Business Wales service to nurture young entrepreneurial talent and to support young people age 16 to 24 to develop enterprise capabilities and start their own business. Support, to access information and business advice, talk through processes and finance options, and help build knowledge and networks to help create sustainable ventures, is available through further and higher education, for community groups and for individuals.

Case study: entrepreneurship programme in Rhondda Cynon Taf

Rhondda Cynon Taf's Youth Engagement and Participation Service (YEPS) supports young people aged 11 to 25 to improve their resilience to deal with current and future challenges, supporting their well-being and their positive engagement in and contribution to the communities in which they live.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the YEPS team noticed just how creative young people were, with some using their new-found hobbies, passions and skills to support themselves, their families and communities, and raise money for charity. Few young people, however, had envisaged this passion being turned into a viable business. This is where YEPS was able to help through an exciting opportunity to provide the first youth-led entrepreneurship programme, in partnership with Welsh ICE, called the '5 - 9 Club'. This meant YEPS could help people learn how to turn those new skills, passions and ideas into a business.

A programme was developed to provide young people with the tools to market their idea, showing them how to source funding and learn from other entrepreneurs to develop their own business. The programme engaged with a group of 15 young people each week. It was offered through a blended-learning approach, which meant it was possible to cater for participants who preferred in-person learning, as well as those who wanted to attend sessions online. There was a community of support throughout the programme and beyond, with a WhatsApp group, Facebook group and support from Welsh ICE.

The objective of this programme was to give young people (16 to 25 years) the skills and confidence to be able to launch a new business. The YEPS team is optimistic that, now they have completed the programme, the young people will have the best possible chance of making their start-ups a success. As of 4 October 2021, 6 new businesses had been supported to begin trading with guidance and financial start-up from YEPS.

The Out of Work Service

The Out of Work Service supports people aged 16 to 24 who are NEET and are recovering from mental ill-health and/or substance misuse issues. It is a specialist programme, catering for those who cannot, or will not, engage with mainstream services, or for whom mainstream services are not suitable. Free confidential support is provided by peer mentors who have personal experiences of mental ill-health and/or substance misuse.

Between November 2016 and April 2022, over 4300 children and young people were supported by the Out of Work Service.

The Welsh Government is extending EET funding support until 2025 for young people who are NEET and recovering from mental ill-health and/or substance misuse issues.

Personal Learning Accounts

The Personal Learning Accounts (PLA) Programme provides support across Wales for employed people aged 19 and over and earning under the median income to gain higher-level skills which will improve their career and earning prospects.

It specifically enables people on below average salaries to achieve higher earnings on a sustainable basis. It uniquely offers flexibility around how and when people learn by helping colleges deliver courses that fit around an individual's work and family commitments.

The programme is also responsive to employers' upskilling requirements, by prioritising skills and qualifications in preparation for the future, to help employers rebuild their businesses and in turn support the economy.

In collaboration and with key advice from Regional Skills Partnerships delivery is targeted at the priority sectors of:

- logistics (in particular HGV and LGV driving), including driver licence fees and tests
- net zero and green construction (including retrofit, wind, tidal and solar power)
- advanced materials and manufacturing (including technical engineers)
- hospitality (including chefs, catering assistants, waiting and front of house staff)
- digital
- health and social care re-engagement

Full information on eligibility and how to apply for a PLA can be found on the **Careers Wales** (<https://careerswales.gov.wales/courses-and-training/funding-your-studies/personal-learning-accounts>) and **Working Wales** (<https://workingwales.gov.wales/personal-learning-account>) websites.

DWP

The DWP provides a range of support and opportunities to young people who are claiming Universal Credit and other benefits to support them progress into work. At the time of publication these include:

- the Job Entry Targeted Support (JETS) scheme which offers a six-month training scheme for those who have been unemployed for over 13 weeks
- the **Work and Health programme** (<https://www.gov.uk/work-health-programme>) which offers training and support and is available for those who have been unemployed for more than 12 months
- the **Restart** (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/restart-scheme>) Scheme which offers 12 months of intensive support for those who have been unemployed for more than 9 months with some scope for early entry

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- Intensive Personalised Employment Support (IPES) which is a voluntary programme aimed at claimants with disabilities who also have complex needs
- New Enterprise allowance which provides mentoring and an allowance to help those with an idea to start their own business
- **Access to work** (<https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/eligibility>) which helps those who have disabilities or a physical or mental health condition to get and stay in work

Accountability

Responsibility for implementing the Framework is shared by all partners (see **Roles and Responsibilities** (https://www.gov.wales#_Section_8_-)). However, **the consultation on the Framework** (<https://gov.wales/refresh-youth-engagement-and-progression-framework-report>) highlighted a lack of collective accountability across all partners working within the Framework.

Local authorities are best placed to provide the strategic and operational leadership for implementation of the Framework. The Welsh Government also has a key interest in terms of alignment with the YPG and other government priorities, as set out in the '**Youth Engagement and Progression Framework: Overview**' (<https://www.gov.wales/youth-engagement-and-progression-framework-yepf-overview>). Local partnerships (including providers) have a critical role to play in delivering provision to support the Framework. This means local authorities and their partners need to have regular, honest conversations about what is working, and when a different approach is required.

Governance

Governance structure

Local authority senior leaders should have oversight of the delivery of the Framework, ideally with a senior leader acting as a champion for the Framework. This means an appropriate governance structure needs to be in place, with EPCs providing regular updates to senior leaders on performance against the Framework. Where the Public Services Board (PSB), established under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, in an area has identified actions to support young people, there is an opportunity for the Framework to be integrated with its local well-being plan. The local authority is a statutory member of the PSB.

Updates should also be provided to the multi-agency groups involved in delivering the Framework, so they can drive continuous improvement by understanding what approaches have worked and where there are lessons to be learned.

For those aged 11 to 16 updates should include:

- the number of young people identified as at risk of becoming NEET
- the number of young people identified as at risk of becoming NEET supported by the Framework
- the number of young people identified as at risk of becoming homeless
- the number of young people identified as at risk of becoming homeless supported by the Framework
- the number of young people identified as at risk of becoming homeless also identified as at risk of becoming NEET

For those aged 16 to 18 updates should include:

- the number of young people aged 16 to 18 whose destination is ‘unknown’, and whether there are any safeguarding concerns
- the number of young people 16 to 18 who are NEET
- the reasons underlying the NEET figures, and trends
- how long individuals have remained within a tier and the progress they have made (it may be appropriate for some young people to remain within a tier for more than a defined number of days, as long as they are still making progress)
- background information on why some individuals have not moved between tiers
- the success stories and the lessons to be learned and shared

By keeping senior leaders fully informed and escalating any issues outside the EPC’s sphere of influence, senior leaders can bring their own influence to bear when there are blockages in the operation of the Framework.

Case study: Senior leaders in the Vale of Glamorgan supporting their staff to reduce the number of young people who are NEET

During the 2018 to 2019 financial year the Vale of Glamorgan (‘the Vale’) began to see a gradual rise in its NEET figures through the year. The NEET percentage had increased from 0.5% in 2018 to 1.4% in 2019.

Quarterly NEET data is examined by the Vale’s YEPF Strategic Board, which compares trends and direction of travel. The rise in the number of NEET young people was escalated to the local authority’s Head of Standards and Provision. The EPC highlighted that the rise in the number of young people who were NEET could be mitigated by improved communication between partner organisations.

The Head of Standards and Provision intervened to improve and open channels of communication at various levels. Working with the Head of Service within

Careers Wales helped to prioritise the NEET agenda in the Vale.

The Vale's EPC developed an action plan that was agreed and finalised by partners, and arranged regular meetings between managers in the youth service, the EPC and Careers Wales. Weekly meetings were also set between the EPC and the Working Wales manager to monitor the number of young people allocated to Tier 3 in the 5-tier model. The main focus of the meeting was to ensure young people were moving into Tier 3, from Tiers 1 or 2, and receiving feedback on the progress of those in Tier 3 awaiting offers or start dates. As reducing the number of young people who were NEET was a recognised high priority, the Vale's youth service was able to prioritise resources to increase the frequency of 'door-knocking' at the homes of young people with 'unknown' status.

The local authority's list of young people in Tier 1 was shared regularly with partners and Careers Wales. The list was updated frequently as new information became available. This meant all partners understood what progress was being made in locating young people in Tier 1.

The support from the heads of services in the local authority and Careers Wales allowed the development of a governance structure that aided close collaboration and improved communication. This helped reduce the percentage of young people who were NEET for the following financial year (2020 to 2021) from 1.4% to 0.9%.

Improving accountability

At a national level, we propose that Welsh Government officials will work with EPCs and youth homelessness co-ordinators towards developing an annual report for Welsh Ministers on the contribution of the Framework to reducing the number of young people who are NEET and the number at risk of youth homelessness who have been supported. This report will highlight effective

practice and current challenges, in order to provide an overarching update for Ministers on the contribution of the Framework.

Schools are important partners in the delivery of the Framework, in particular for identifying young people who need additional support. However, there can be tensions, as identified in Estyn's report, '[Pupil registration practices](https://www.estyn.gov.wales/system/files/2021-08/Pupil%2520registration%2520practices.pdf)' (2019). This report has highlighted 'the increased availability of comparative data led to school leaders seeing data as a key element of 'high stakes' accountability', in particular feeling pressure to achieve good results at the end of Key Stage 4. This has unintended consequences, as noted in the report. There is evidence schools may be using off-rolling or other inappropriate registration practices to improve their performance data. This is not in the best interest of vulnerable learners. 'Pupil registration practices' contains recommendations for schools and governing bodies, local authorities and the Welsh Government, to address these practices.

Local authorities, schools and governing bodies, and post-16 providers are expected to consider their NEET data as part of their ongoing reflection and self-evaluation processes, and in relation to the overarching aim of preparing young people for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Additionally, local authorities, schools and post-16 providers are expected to provide up-to-date NEET data to Estyn inspectors in the course of an inspection.

Monitoring performance: what information is available?

Pupil destinations (<https://careerswales.gov.wales/careers-professionals/pupil-destinations>), based on an annual survey of school leavers, reports the destinations of learners across Wales who have reached statutory leaving age, (Year 11, and students leaving school in Years 12 and 13). (This applies to learners from all maintained and special needs schools.) It also shows the

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number of school leavers with 'unknown' status (identified as 'No response'). The destination information is based on a snapshot of learners' known activity in the autumn after they have left school (usually carried out on 31 October), and the information is published on the Careers Wales website.

Pupil destination data is available at a national and a local authority level. Schools receive pre-release data on pupil destinations, so are aware of the number of their school leavers who are NEET.

Within local authorities, the Pupil destinations findings are used to review performance, particularly in respect of whether the number of young people who are NEET has increased or decreased compared to previous years. This information should supplement local authorities' own in-house reporting and scrutiny.

Information is fed into the Atlas and then the Careers Wales data hub provides EPCs with live information on young people in the 5-tier model. (The information flow into Atlas and the data hub outputs are set out in 'Monitoring Progression'.) EPCs are able to access information on the data hub on all 5 tiers, to inform their in-house reporting and scrutiny procedures. EPCs can also use the data hub to access more detailed information on young people in Tiers 1 and 2, as EPCs are more directly involved in managing support for those young people. The more regularly EPCs check the information on the data hub and reconcile it to their own records, the more accurate the information they hold on young people.

Most partners working within the Framework are held to organisational key performance indicators (KPIs). **The consultation on the Framework** (<https://www.gov.wales/refresh-youth-engagement-and-progression-framework-report>) identified evidence of different organisations and programmes working to different KPIs and objectives. There is also anecdotal evidence of the 5-tier model being used as the basis for KPIs, which creates some tensions, as this is not the purpose of the 5-tier model. For example, a young person in Tier 2, who

experiences significant barriers, may make progress, but this will not always be reflected in a KPI based solely on whether individuals have progressed to another tier.

In setting their KPIs, organisations should recognise the needs of the young person at the centre of activity. Organisations should explore how they can collectively own KPIs and best reflect the targets and ambitions outlined in the relevant national milestones. Rather than looking at young peoples' immediate destinations, KPIs could be drawn up on the basis of longer-term outcomes (for example how many young people who have received support under the Framework are still in EET after a year) rather than solely looking at immediate post-school destinations.

In all cases it is critical that the needs of the young person are placed ahead of programme targets or individual organisational KPIs.

The Welsh Government publishes **estimates of the participation of young people in education, employment or training** (<https://www.gov.wales/participation-young-people-education-and-labour-market>) annually, and these provide information on the learning activities and labour market status of young people aged 16 to 24 in Wales at the end of the calendar year. This publication also provides the main estimates for young people who are NEET in Wales (the Statistical First Release (SFR) series). Estimates are published for young people aged 16 to 18 as well as for those aged 19 to 24. These estimates can only be disaggregated by gender due to limitations in the various primary data sources used to calculate them. For those reasons, the Welsh Government also publishes a second measure, the '**Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)**' (<https://www.gov.wales/young-people-not-education-employment-or-training-neet>) series.

The 'Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)' series are more timely but less statistically robust survey-based estimates, are published quarterly by the Welsh Government. They can be disaggregated to show NEET

rates by single year of age, gender, region and disability status.

Data is available for **employment rates** (<https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Business-Economy-and-Labour-Market/People-and-Work/Employment/Persons-Employed>), **unemployment rates** (<https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Business-Economy-and-Labour-Market/People-and-Work/Unemployment/ILO-Unemployment>) and **economic activity rates** (<https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Business-Economy-and-Labour-Market/People-and-Work/Labour-Market-Summary/annuallabourmarketsummary16to64-by-welshlocalareas-economicactivitystatus>) (excluding students) at a national and local level.

Local authorities provide qualitative information to the Welsh Government on the operation of the Framework through bi-annual reports submitted in respect of the Youth Support Grant.

Key accountability message

To summarise, developing the accountability strand of the Framework means all partners involved in its delivery need to be part of an ongoing process of review and reflection to develop a deeper understanding of how well the Framework is working in their area, its successes, and where improvements can be made. This process should be supported by senior leaders. This approach will help drive improvements in NEET rates and a reduction in youth homelessness.

Roles and responsibilities

This section provides a summary of the key roles and responsibilities for implementation of the Framework that we have set out throughout this document.

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The Welsh Government

- Sets core standards and expectations.
- Links the Framework to national policies and programmes.
- Brings together policy officials to work collectively on this agenda, through the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework Task Force.
- Provides guidance to strengthen the operation of the Framework.
- Facilitates best practice across local authorities.
- Facilitates the sharing of effective practice.
- Updates EPCs on Welsh Government provision that is being introduced.
- Holds local authorities and providers to account.
- Leads on the YPG to support young people across Wales.
- Monitors NEET levels in order to determine progress against the national milestone and YPG.
- Takes forward actions set out in the guidance document '**Youth Engagement and Progression Framework: Overview** (<https://www.gov.wales/youth-engagement-and-progression-framework-yepf-overview>)'.

Local authorities

- Have strategic oversight of the operation of the Framework in relation to young people up to the age of 18 in the local authority area.
- Work closely with delivery partners.
- Provide EPC role.
- Provide Youth Homelessness Co-ordinator role.
- Provide lead worker role for young people in Tiers 1 and 2, and monitor those who decline immediate support.
- Provide and promote suitable provision to keep young people engaged or to reduce their risk of becoming homeless.

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- Part of self-evaluation partnership, looking at how well identification and support systems are working.

Careers Wales

- Inputs information into Atlas, their customer relationship management system.
- Makes information available to local authorities via the Careers Wales data hub on young people aged 16 to 18 in Tiers 1 and 2.
- Provides lead worker function for young people in Tier 3. Part of self-evaluation partnership, looking at how well identification and support systems are working.

Working Wales

- Identifying young people aged 16 to 18 accessing the YPG with significant barriers and referring them to the EPC and/or appropriate Tier 2 support.

Learning providers

Learning providers include schools, further education colleges, work-based learning providers, Community Employability Programmes, contracted providers delivering the JGW + programme, voluntary sector, including voluntary youth work organisations. Their roles and responsibilities include:

- helping to identify young people at risk of disengaging, or at risk of youth homelessness, or who require support for their emotional mental health and well-being
- supporting operational delivery of the Framework, including:
 - providing lead workers for young people in Tier 2 and 4 and/or pastoral

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- support as appropriate
 - providing suitable provision to keep young people engaged or to reduce their risk of becoming homeless
 - providing timely notification to Careers Wales of starters and leavers
- improving the number of young people with positive destinations at 16, 17 and 18, including supporting them to prepare for a successful transition
- monitoring the EET destination of their leavers to drive continuous improvement
- being part of the self-evaluation partnership, looking at how well identification and support systems are working

Annex A: Signposting to support for mental health and well-being

There is a link between young people's mental health and well-being, their engagement in EET and their risk of becoming homeless. The **consultation on the Framework** (<https://www.gov.wales/refresh-youth-engagement-and-progression-framework-report>) with young people highlighted the importance of positive relationships with individual teachers and support staff. Individuals who spoke positively about the support they received to help stay engaged in their education felt this support was an essential contributor to their successes in education and longer-term progression.

The consultation on the Framework identified concerns about a gap in relation to provision that supports young people with mild to moderate mental health difficulties to engage with education and training. **The impact of the pandemic on children and young people's mental health has been well-documented** (<https://phw.nhs.wales/publications/publications1/children-and-young-peoples-mental-well-being-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-report/>). There is a range of support available to bolster young people's emotional mental health and wellbeing, and young

people can be signposted to this.

Framework on embedding a whole school approach to emotional and mental well-being

For young people in school, the **Framework on embedding a whole school approach to emotional and mental well-being** (<https://www.gov.wales/framework-embedding-whole-school-approach-emotional-and-mental-wellbeing>) aims to address the emotional and mental well-being needs of all children and young people, as well as school staff, as part of the whole-school community. It recognises that the school alone cannot meet all the needs of what is a complex population of young people, whose needs will vary as they progress through infancy to adolescence and early adulthood. Primarily it is about building resilience and ensuring preventative action. However, it also provides guidance on how to recognise the signs and address poor well-being when it arises and to ensure effective support for schools and the learner when a learner experiences more severe distress. The Framework on embedding a whole school approach to emotional and mental well-being is meant to support and complement the Curriculum for Wales and in particular the Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience.

Curriculum for Wales

At the heart of the Curriculum for Wales framework there are four purposes which are central to every decision made about the Curriculum for Wales. One of the four purposes is to support children and young people to become 'healthy confident individuals'.

A further introduction to the Curriculum for Wales is available in **the Curriculum for Wales guidance** (<https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/introduction/#the->

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[curriculum-for-wales-framework](#)).

The Curriculum for Wales includes a **Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience** (<https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/health-and-well-being/>) which enhances a curriculum's focus on the health and well-being of learners. For the first time, health and well-being has an equal status in law to other important areas of the school curriculum. This is an innovative part of the Curriculum for Wales and aims to ensure that learning and support around issues such as physical, mental and emotional health are provided to all young people in Wales.

Independent counselling services

Local authorities in Wales are required to make reasonable provision of **independent counselling services** (<https://www.gov.wales/node/3334>) for children and young people aged between 11 and 18 on the site of each secondary school that it maintains and for learners in Year 6 of primary school. A local authority may in addition offer counselling services at other locations, for example at independent schools, further education colleges or at other community facilities.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in-reach

The CAMHS in-reach Pilot Programme was established to build capacity (including skills, knowledge and confidence) in schools to support learner mental health and well-being and improve schools' access to specialist liaison, consultancy and advice when needed. **The evaluation reports on the implementation of the Pilot** (<https://www.gov.wales/evaluation-child-and-adolescent-mental-health-service-camhs-reach-pilot-programme-final-report>), including what

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worked well and how it fitted with other initiatives. The **Programme for government: update** (<https://www.gov.wales/programme-for-government-update>) includes a commitment to roll out the 'CAMHS in-reach' in schools across Wales.

Youth work approaches

Grant funding has been made available to local authorities since the financial year 2019 to 2020, as part of the Youth Support Grant, to support young people's emotional mental health and well-being through youth work approaches. Youth workers, both voluntary and paid professional staff, are skilled at working with young people and developing trusted relationships with them. They are often well-placed to identify whether a young person may need additional support, and when that support may need to be provided by more specialist services. Youth workers based at the local authority are connected with EPCs and can highlight when individuals are struggling.

Youth work supports young people to develop holistically, facilitating their social and emotional development, enabling them to develop their voice, influence and place in society. It can take place in a wide range of settings such as in youth clubs, online, through outreach programmes, and in other settings to meet the needs of young people. Youth work responds well to creating a 'safe space' for young people who are struggling with their emotional well-being, and the informal nature of the engagement can make a substantial difference to a positive outcome.

Funding for mental health and well-being in further education

Dedicated funding for further education institutions to support mental health and well-being was introduced in the financial year 2020 to 2021. It supports

institutional, collaborative and national projects designed to improve both learner and staff well-being. The funding is used for a wide range of initiatives including frontline counselling for learners; dedicated well-being co-ordinators in colleges; professional learning; and the development of tutorial programmes. National projects have included the development of toolkits on **substance misuse** (<https://hwb.gov.wales/repository/discovery/resource/57e4d1e9-d2f1-4d2d-b0c0-2d7db52ed0b4/en?sort=recent&catalogs=dcbfcea3-865c-4acf-b16e-d0a71faa6cd5&categories=253d2953-c51f-44ab-b15e-d3e486c3d05f&strict=1>) and **trauma informed practice** (<https://hwb.gov.wales/repository/discovery/resource/feae8af5-5975-4c47-8e22-d098fb0cf444/en?sort=recent&catalogs=dcbfcea3-865c-4acf-b16e-d0a71faa6cd5&categories=253d2953-c51f-44ab-b15e-d3e486c3d05f&strict=1>).

The Out of Work Service

The Out of Work Service, which is explained in greater detail under **Employability and employment opportunities** (<https://www.gov.walesnull>), supports people aged 16 to 24 who are NEET and are recovering from mental ill-health and/or substance misuse issues.

Dewis Cymru

The **Dewis Cymru** (<https://www.dewis.wales/the-place-for-wellbeing-in-wales>) website gives individuals the opportunity to research what sources of support are available for their well-being.

Mental Health Toolkit

The Mental Health Toolkit (<https://hwb.gov.wales/repository/resource/e53adf44-76cb-4635-b6c2-62116bb63a9a/en>) links young people aged 11 to 25 to

websites, apps, helplines, and more, to build resilience across 6 categories:

- anxiety
- low mood
- keeping healthy
- bereavement
- coronavirus information
- crisis

This resource enables users to take control of their mental health with information, self-help, and advice about how to seek further support embedded throughout. This online resource will continue to be revised and updated as required.

SilverCloud

SilverCloud is an online course which offers support for anxiety, depression, and much more, all based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). Anyone aged 16 or over can sign up at nhs.uk/silvercloudhealth.com/signup/ (<https://nhs.uk/silvercloudhealth.com/signup/>).

CALL Mental Health Listening Line

CALL provides a confidential mental health listening and emotional support line which is open 24/7. CALL can also signpost to support in local communities and a range of online information. To use CALL, telephone 0800132737, text 'help' to 81066 or visit callhelpline.org.uk/ (<https://callhelpline.org.uk/>).

Information available from local health boards

Local health boards have made available clear advice and information on how to access local mental health services, if needed. This can be found on individual health board websites:

- Cardiff and Vale University Health Board: **Mental health, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (nhs.wales)** (<https://cavuhb.nhs.wales/our-services/mental-health/>)
- Hywel Dda University Health Board: **IAWN (information, awareness and well-being now), Hywel Dda University Health Board (nhs.wales)** (<https://hduhb.nhs.wales/healthcare/services-and-teams/iawn/>)
- Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board: **Mental Health Hub, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (nhs.wales)** (<https://bcuhb.nhs.wales/health-advice/mental-health-hub/>)
- Aneurin Bevan University Health Board: **Mental health and well-being** (<https://abuhb.nhs.wales/coronavirus/mental-health-and-well-being/>)
- Cwm Taf University Health Board: **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services** (<https://ctmuhb.nhs.wales/services/child-and-adolescent-mental-health/>) (CAMHS)
- Swansea Bay University Health Board: **Get help with mental health** (<https://sbuhb.nhs.wales/community-primary-care/mental-health/get-help-with-mental-health/>)
- Powys Teaching Health Board: **Your Local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS): Powys Teaching Health Board (nhs.wales)** (<https://pthb.nhs.wales/services/childrens-community-services/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-services/>)

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