

## **Appendix 3 – specific Service responses**

### **Response to and engagement with young offenders**

1. Following negotiation with YOS management and a review of pre-existing arrangements (particularly following the JAR), it was agreed that the most effective service to YOS clients/young people would be through a dedicated PA role which is currently filled by Stephen Matthews.
2. Stephen's role is primarily to set in place procedures and activity to ensure ETE destinations (and impact positively on the ETE target/indicator); identify potential provision and negotiate access for YOS clients; monitor practice and seek continual improvement; ensure data is accurate and up to date; and engage in a wide range of supportive interventions directly with young people, including – action planning, home visits, accompanying to training provision, attend pre-release meetings and attend multi-agency meetings.
3. Stephen's current caseload is 37 young people (plus an additional 7 who are currently detained) and he is engaged in a wide variety of activities and interventions with young people across a range of issues and circumstances.
4. Stephen faces considerable challenges in engaging YOS clients into ETE destinations. In addition to their offending behaviour and the circumstances which have led to this, a significant number of young people face considerable literacy and numeracy difficulties and many simply want jobs (whilst lacking the skills and aspirations to secure and sustain employment). Additionally there are specific issues around the Skills 4 Me referral criteria, EMA regulations and some issues with specific training providers (and their willingness and ability to engage YOS young people).
5. Given the age range of young people engaged with YOS, other members of the Education, SEN, OSS and Targeted Teams will support and complement Stephen's work alongside the Connexions ISSP Placement Support Worker who is seconded to the YOS. As the Connexions Service is responsible for information, advice and guidance to any young person aged 13-19, and works closely with all schools to discharge this function, the likelihood is that there will be contact between Connexions and a young person before they become engaged with the YOS – and this can obviously continue after YOS interventions have ceased.
6. In addition to the above Skills 4 Me is an ESF funded project aimed at young people who require intensive 1-1 support to address their barriers to learning. All referrals are made through a Connexions Personal Adviser. Seven providers are contracted to deliver on 8 programmes, two on early prevention via schools, one dedicated to teen parents and one for young people who have been or are within the criminal justice system (although a young person can be referred to any provider as it is based on individual need). Engagement varies from 6-16 hours per week and providers are paid on outcomes to EET that must be sustained for 3 months after a young person has made that transition. Each young person has an individual learning plan (ILP). DISC currently delivers specifically for YOS clients and NACRO are also a delivery partner. Both organisations are experienced in working with YOS clients.
7. All work with young people engaged with the YOS is undertaken collaboratively with YOS officers and there is significant emphasis on communication and joint planning.

## **Response to and engagement with young people not in education, employment or training**

8. The work of the Education team is initially pivotal in ensuring that young people are able to engage in education and make a successful transition at 16 (the Connexions Service is responsible for collating and reporting on the destinations of all young people in Year 11 by the November of the year they leave school) and hence the importance of the September Guarantee as referenced above.

9. The work relies on accurate identification of young people and on careful monitoring and tracking – in reality and in terms of the status or ‘currency’ ascribed to each individual young person. The work of the KIT team is pivotal in maintaining accurate and up to date records on the CCIS database and to monitor and track all young people aged 16 – 19 based on the currency system.

10. Thereafter the Targeted Team hold individual caseloads of young people and through relationships and meetings provide regular and on-going advice, guidance and support. This includes regularly keeping in touch and undertaking home visits as required. The Team engages in collaborative work with all 14-19 partner agencies (work-based learning providers, colleges, Third Sector agencies and employers) and with a range of other agencies given the specific needs and circumstances of individual young people.

11. Currently the NEET figure for Darlington stands at 7.2% (with situation not known at 3.4%). This figure has increased since January but not substantially, which is encouraging given the continued economic downturn and limited employment opportunities for young people (which in itself has added significant pressure on all Connexions staff).

12. The Youth Support Partnership Manager has recently acquired responsibility for the multi-agency NEET Reduction Partnership. The role of the Partnership is to support the work of the Connexions Service but also to ensure cross-sector, cross-agency support to engaging young people in education, employment and training. The Partnership Manager has agreed that an initial core task will be to refresh the exiting NEET Improvement Plan, to align it with Governmental NEET strategies, to ensure it identifies and implements a range of core functions and actions, and crucially identifies and implements (through a revised and accurate action plan) a range of additional actions which can be taken to further reduce the Borough’s NEET figure and further support those most vulnerable and marginalised young people who face complex and multiple barriers in engaging in positive choices and destinations.