

**#youth
#VIP**

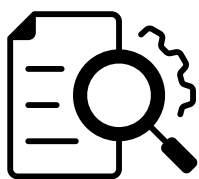


Youth Volunteering in Schools Resource



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

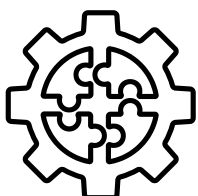
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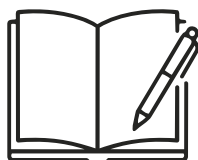
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Examples of Good Practice

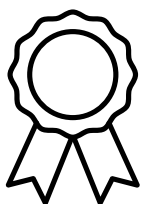
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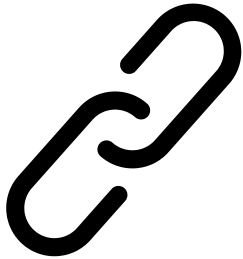
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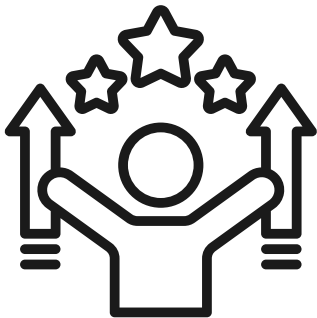
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Welcome!



- This resource aims to act as a bridge to connect ideas, practices and approaches that currently exist around youth volunteering in schools.



- It brings together different policies and practices, as well as youth voices and stakeholders to work towards the collective goal of creating a cohesive, engaging, and evidence-based resource that can be used to improve youth volunteering, participation and engagement.



- Young people and youth voices are at the core of YouthVIP, an idea echoed throughout this resource, with young people being active participants every step of the way.

Background



- The Youth Volunteering Innovation Project (YouthVIP) consortium is a youth-led project comprised of Young Scot, Volunteering Matters, YouthLink Scotland and an amazing panel of young people, all working towards the shared goal of creating more empowering, inclusive, and accessible spaces for young people to engage in youth volunteering in Scotland.

- Despite a huge appetite for youth social action, youth volunteering is declining.

- Volunteer Scotland published a **comprehensive report** in May 2023 analysing the current volunteering landscape in Scotland; detailing the benefits and decline.

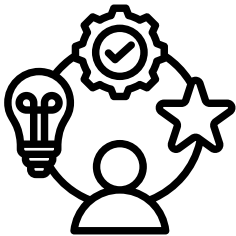
- The YouthVIP consortium **conducted research** in 2024-2025 on young people's perspectives on volunteering, helping us understand young people's experiences and recommendations to improve access to volunteering.

What is the YouthVIP Project?



click onto this video to hear some of our young volunteers discuss who we are, what we do, alongside learning about why they joined, and what they have gained from being on the panel.

Benefits young people realised



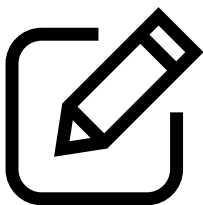
**developing skills
and gaining
experience**



empowerment



**making themselves
known**



**creating
opportunities for
other young people**



**showing that
young people
care**



**finding
confidence**

Schools' Role in Volunteering

- Schools are a hub of connection for many young people throughout different stages of their lives.
- Schools can act as a link between young people and volunteering, with them being able to provide, promote, and support internal and external volunteering opportunities.
- Taking this into account, it's no surprise that many believe that schools can play a vital role in engaging and supporting youth volunteering and social action.

School's Role in Volunteering



click onto the video to hear Lauren discuss how she began volunteering in school and how the experience impacted her journey!

the academic style of learning didn't suit me... I got the opportunity to volunteer every Wednesday at an organisation that focuses on Community regeneration and development...it was a lightbulb moment for me, I found my passion

How Volunteering Enhances the Curriculum

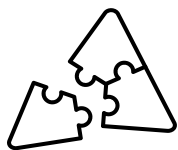
Volunteering can enrich and enhance the school curriculum in many ways, it can;



Help young people develop skills for learning, life, and work



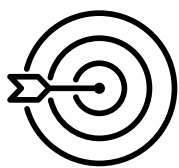
Provide an opportunity for personal learning and development



Help young people connect their learning, skills, and achievements



Enrich the curriculum with opportunities for practical learning



Help in the attainment of required learning outcomes

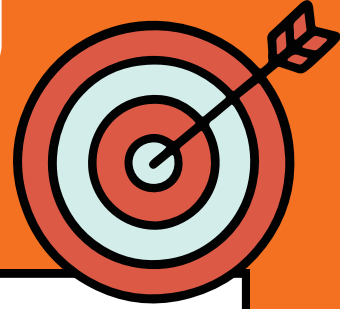


Support interdisciplinary learning



Help young people to access their entitlement to Learning for Sustainability

Volunteering and the National Youth Work Outcomes



- **The National Youth Work Outcomes and Skills Framework** can be used to measure and reinforce young people's development throughout their volunteering journey and help them connect their learning, skills, and achievements across different school and community settings.
- The Youth Work outcomes chime with the goals and benefits of volunteering;

Outcome 1:

Young people build their health and wellbeing

Outcome 2:

Young people develop & manage relationships effectively

Outcome 3:

Young people create and apply their learning and describe their skills and achievements

Outcome 4:

Young people participate safely and effectively in groups and teams

Outcome 5:

Young people consider risk, make reasoned decisions and take control

Outcome 6:

Young people grow as active citizens, expressing their voice and enabling change

Outcome 7:

Young people broaden their perspectives through new experiences and thinking

Principles: What are the Values We Hope to Work From?



Expanding & Building on Existing Practices: considering what is currently working at each school and identifying what could be expanded and improved.

Co-design: collaborating with stakeholders, including pupils, teachers, other schools, and voluntary organisations to improve sustainability within youth volunteering.

Support for Young People to Overcome Barriers to Volunteering: exploring barriers & creating more opportunities for young people to participate meaningfully in volunteering – exploring accessibility, in-school opportunities, intersectional needs, transport, and more!

Flexibility and Exploration: considering how volunteering links to the school curriculum and career interests to allow young people to form valuable connections.

Celebrate and Value: finding ways to mark and celebrate the benefits and achievements of volunteering, this could be; recognition through the Youth Work Outcomes, youth awards, creating spaces for young people to reflect and share their experiences, CV development, and much more!

Connect with Young People's Wider Personal Learning and Achievements in the Community: creating partnerships outside of school to increase opportunities while recognising the value of what young people are doing outside of school.

Guidelines: What is the Recipe for Success?



Build volunteering into the curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making volunteering a recognised part of the school curriculum, as opposed to just an extra-curricular activity.
Promote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting up volunteering boards at school designed in collaboration with young people • Sharing volunteering opportunities via online learning platforms, such as GLOW and Teams • Making students aware of opportunities available to them through assemblies, inviting along guest speakers, or printing notices in a newsletter that teachers can share with students
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosting awareness days/months to connect school & volunteering • Appointing Saltire Ambassadors within the school community and allowing them to host events, such as promoting volunteering through pop-ups or speaking to registration classes to spread the word amongst their peers
Celebrate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrating and recognising the different ways that young people volunteer, for example, peer mentoring, being a part of an eco-committee, assisting with P7 transition, and more, as a way of working towards shared goals and promoting the values of the school community.
A bank of trusted organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborating with trusted organisations which already offer opportunities such as work experience and supporting new organisations to take on volunteers and promote YouthVIP training.
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting collaboration and providing support for young people to engage and sustain volunteering through linking up with youth work, local organisations and wider learning communities to source quality volunteer placements and opportunities.

Barriers, Challenges, and Perceptions



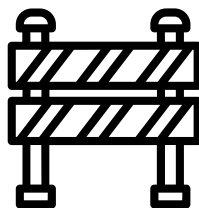
click onto the video to unpack some of the barriers young people face when looking to volunteer, the challenges they have to overcome, and some of the stigma surrounding youth volunteering



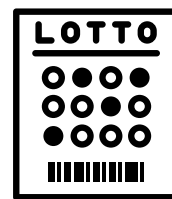
Common Perceptions of Volunteering



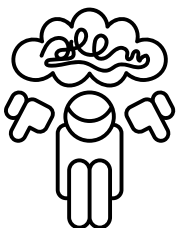
“unpaid labour”



“inaccessible”



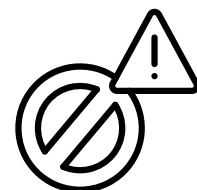
“postcode lottery”



stigma



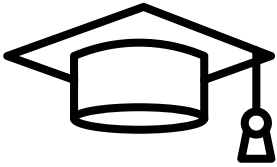
“only helps with a CV”



“few opportunities”

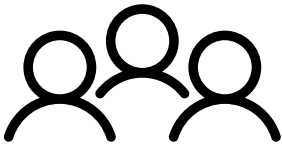
Potential Benefits of Volunteering

For Schools



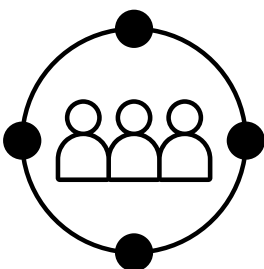
- Aligns with the curriculum
- Can foster an altruistic culture
- Can create friendships and a positive environment
- Can help take steps towards reducing the poverty-related attainment gap by providing opportunities for young people to engage and achieve

For Young People



- Creates optimism for the future
- Helps build personal, social, and formal relationships
- Creates a space for young people to express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas
- Broadens perspectives
- Builds confidence
- Provides an opportunity to learn new skills
- Fosters relationships
- Gives them a sense of purpose
- Improves mental & physical health
- Creates networks and connections for future opportunities

For Communities



- Community integration and cohesion
- Collective social action
- Tackling inequality and exclusion

Examples of Volunteering



At School:

- Eco-committee
- Peer support
- Debate club
- Helping with events, school shows or clubs
- Helping on school trips
- Campaigning & activism

In the Community:

- Community Garden
- Community Centres
- Animal Shelter/Community Farms
- Sports Clubs
- Befriending
- Uniformed Groups
- Youth Work

How to Find Volunteering Opportunities in the Community?

There are various resources which can help young people access and connect with volunteering opportunities which meet their needs and relate to their interests! Some of these include;

- **Volunteer Scotland:** database has a filter which allows opportunities to be sorted by age range
- **TSI Scotland Network:** your local TSI or volunteer centre will have information about local opportunities

There is also the option to contact local youth work and community organisations for opportunities directly as many would welcome the opportunity to take on young volunteers!

What if Volunteering was Built into the Curriculum?

- Volunteering is often seen as an extracurricular activity, which can prevent many young people from being able to take part.
- Barriers such as caring responsibilities and lack of access to transport may prevent young people from being able to volunteer outwith the school day.
- Our proposal is: what if volunteering was built into the curriculum for all students, at any age?
- We recognise that this does exist in some schools, and in others it is referred to as work experience, however, we have discovered from listening to a wide range of young people that this is often a 'postcode lottery' situation and is not accessible for everyone.

Volunteering in Schools; The Practice



watch this video to hear Lauren's thoughts on what embedding volunteering into the curriculum could look like, alongside some practical recommendations for doing so

Case Studies of Partnership Working in Action



LACE Case Study.

Growing2gether Case Study.



FVA Case Study.

The Mark Scott Award Case Study.



Volunteering in School; A Case Study



click on the video to hear Ella discuss her experience volunteering in her school; how she got involved, the change she has been able to make, and the benefits she has realised.

North Lanarkshire Future Fridays

click onto the video to hear Lauren's experience with the North Lanarkshire Future Fridays program as she discusses the benefits, examples of good practice, and potential opportunities for the program.



Examples of Support to Enhance Volunteering Through Partnership

Young Scot Hive



- YSHive aims to empower young people to be system changers and influencers by sharing power with organisations and tackling society's toughest challenges. Co-designed by young people, YSHive supports organisations to partner with young people to define, design and deliver of new policies and improvements to services. YSHive promotes volunteering opportunities to many young people through the Young Scot Card.

Developing the Young Workforce



- DYW has played a significant role in ensuring that young people can access education that sets them up for success in the world of work. A big part of this involved setting up Regional Groups led by employers, with the aim of bridging the gap between industry and education and enabling employers to play an active role in preparing young people for employment.

Youth and Philanthropy Initiative (YPI)



- The YPI programme raises awareness of social issues and local charities, alongside acting as a valuable introduction for school pupils to grant-making at a local level. Each school is responsible for directing a grant to a local charity championed by its students through a programme of teamwork, research, and competition. YPI is an incredibly unique opportunity, and one which engages a full year-group of students, allowing them to develop skills and confidence through an active, hands-on learning experience.

Stepping Up



- The Stepping Up school transition programme aims to support young people with additional support requirements and give them the opportunity to gain experience whilst benefitting from tailor-made support. The programme empowers young people to build and explore their goals and aspirations for the future, achieve an accredited qualification, and secure a positive destination upon leaving school.

Volunteering Matters - Brighter Futures Project

- The Brighter Futures project supports young people across Scotland to access volunteering opportunities in their local community. Working closely with local charity partners to re-engage young people and work with them to create positive destinations, bringing communities together through volunteering. We work closely with young people who have become disengaged with school who would benefit from exploring different perspectives and activities. Working closely with many fantastic charities we ensure that placements are suitable for the young person and provide them with the best chance of discovering something meaningful to them and help them to define their space in the community.

Volunteering Matters - Community of Practice

- YouthVIP are piloting the Community of Practice project within several schools in Fife, this pilot project is based around supporting the development of volunteering in schools for everyone – pupils, staff, school and local community, involvement for all.

VOLUNTEERING  **MATTERS**

Session Plan 1:

Reflecting & Exploring Volunteering

Activity

To create a poster, mind map or letter exploring "what volunteering means to me".

- This activity – created collaboratively with young people – aims to allow young people to share their thoughts, feelings, and experiences whilst getting them to reflect on what they associate with volunteering.

Curriculum for Excellence Outcomes

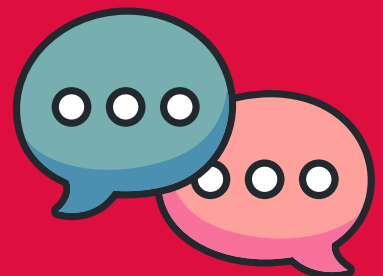
- Successful Learners & Confident Individuals: Creating space for young people to explore their own ideas and have autonomy.
- Responsible Citizens & Effective Contributors: Exploring their connection and integration with their community through volunteering.
- Curriculum Areas and Subjects: Expanding and exploring their interests.

National Youth Work Outcomes

- Outcome 2: Young people develop and manage relationships effectively
- Outcome 3: Young people create and apply their learning, and describe their skills and achievements
- Outcome 4: Young people participate safely and effectively in groups and teams
- Outcome 5: Young people consider risk, make reasoned decisions, and take control
- Outcome 6: Young people grow as active citizens, expressing their voice, and enabling change
- Outcome 7: Young people broaden their perspectives through new experiences and thinking

Skills from the Skills Framework

- Communication: Young people express their thoughts and ideas
- Building Relationships: Young people connect with other students and hear different perspectives
- Creating Change: Young people build new ways to explore their interests and passions



Outcomes and Objectives

- To create a space for open dialogue surrounding youth volunteering experiences, thoughts, and feelings
- Learn and share stories about youth volunteering, barriers, and potential ways to support youth volunteering

Resources Needed

- Paper - optional journal book for logging volunteering ideas & hours
- Coloured pens or pencils
- Optional poster decorations

Length of session



25-35 mins

As a group, in pairs or individually draw a poster or write your thoughts and ideas on the following questions

What does volunteering mean to you?



What opportunities would you like to participate in?



What do you feel is missing?



Share thoughts and discuss in pairs or as a class



Do you think volunteering should be available as a subject?

Additional Resources

- **What is youth volunteering?** video from Volunteer Glasgow
- **More information** on volunteering in Scotland
- **Podcast** How to involve youth volunteers

Session Plan 2:

Create a Volunteering Action Plan

Activity

To create a volunteering action plan to explore opportunities, create discussions and bring to life young people's ideas and aspirations.

Curriculum for Excellence Outcomes

- Successful Learners & Confident Individuals: Creating space for young people to explore their own ideas and have autonomy.
- Responsible Citizens & Effective Contributors: Exploring their connection and integration with their community through volunteering.
- Curriculum Areas and Subjects: Expanding and exploring their interests.

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- Outcome 7: Young people broaden their perspectives through new experiences and thinking

Skills from the Skills Framework

- Communication: Young people express their thoughts and ideas
- Building Relationships: Young people connect with other students and hear other perspectives
- Organising and Planning: Young people set their own goals and take responsibility for tasks

Outcomes and Objectives

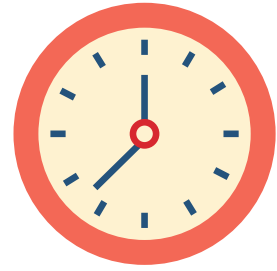
- To create a space to discuss volunteering opportunities
- To allow young people to create their own volunteering action plan



Resources Needed

- Paper - optional journal book for logging volunteering ideas & hours
- Pens/ pencils
- Optional- teacher creates a list of volunteering opportunities available in school and/or externally see page 10 for options.

Length of session



35-45mins

Beginning

Start by introducing the aim of the activity: for young people to create their own individualised volunteering action plan.

Middle

Then individually or in pairs explore and write down their responses to the following questions:

- What I plan to do
- What barriers if any might impact me achieving my plan
- What steps I will take to make my plan a reality
- What I hope to achieve from this
- How this will benefit others
- What I hope to learn from my experiences
- What support might I need and from who
- What I will do with my new learning

End

Share key thoughts and discussions with wider class

Set time/date for future discussion to see how everyone is getting on with their action plan

If you would like to share your action plan with us, you can email: iwill@youthlink.scot, we would love to hear how you get on!

Pathways to Accreditation



watch this video to hear Lauren explain some of the accreditation that can be gained through volunteering, and the impact it can have on young people



Awards Network

Awards Network
The network of youth awards in Scotland

Saltire Award



watch this video to hear more about the various options available when it comes to gaining accreditation for youth volunteering work, and how these can be flexible to your schools' own unique wants, needs, and circumstances



Further Opportunities



Sign up to become an **#iwill Changemaker**: #IWill Champions are children and young people who are working to make a positive difference in their communities, and wider society, through social action. (young people can sign up individually or as a group) @IWillScotland



#YouthVIP Toolkit: Including Young Volunteers. The aim of the toolkit is to support Volunteer Involving Organisations, (VIOs) to break down barriers and misconceptions surrounding the practical delivery of youth volunteering opportunities as part of a inclusive volunteering program.



Youth Work & Schools
Collaborative

A learning community to connect and explore youth volunteering further. The YWCollab **network** is open to any youth work practitioner and other educators interested in developing collaborative practice between formal education and youth work. @YWSCollab

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to:

- All the young people involved in the Youth VIP legacy group. Your support and engagement on all aspects of the YouthVIP project including this resource has been invaluable.
- The Scottish Government for ensuring the YouthVIP panel can continue their incredible work.
- The focus group of educational stakeholders involved in reviewing and recommending changes on this resource.
- All attendees to YouthVIP events including the YouthVIP summit (2021 & 22) and Education Roundtable (2020).



YouthVIP Partners



**YouthLink
Scotland**

Scottish registered charity
SC003923 and is a company
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Scottish registered charity
SC039171 and is a company
limited by guarantee 1435877
@volunteering_uk



Scottish registered charity
SC029757 and is a company
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@YoungScot

This resource has been co-created in partnership with the YouthVIP legacy group – a group of young people!

