

# ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK RETURNS

April 2017 – March 2018

## Summary Analysis Report 2018

*DRAFT NOT FOR CIRCULATION*



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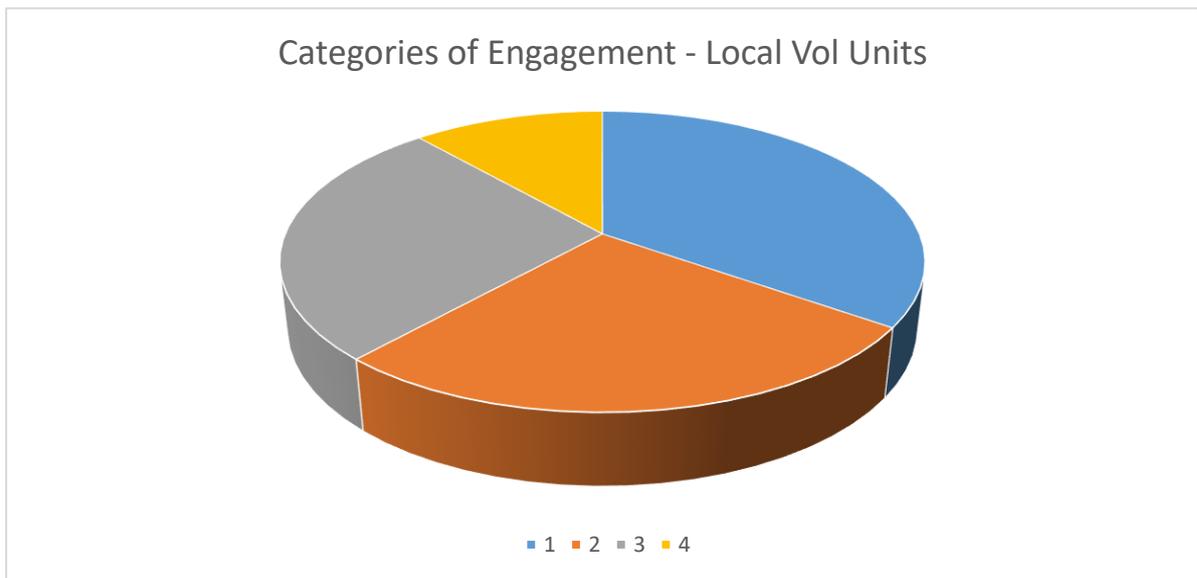
## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following Report sets out the Engagement Framework Summary for 2017-2018 for all returns received within the requested deadline of the 30 June 2018 and a range of case studies captured from this dataset to provide examples of good practice across the various youth service settings.

# 1 LOCAL VOLUNTARY UNITS

- 1.1 993 local voluntary units completed Engagement Framework returns for the period April 2017-March 2018; assigning over 87,300 young people to one of four engagement categories.
- 1.2 The Youth Service Regional Assessment of Need (Dec 2018) records 1,645 registered local voluntary units. Based on these figures, an estimated 60% of all local voluntary units are actively using the Engagement Framework.
- 1.3 Comparing the return rate by membership, the Youth Service Regional Assessment of Need (December 2018) records a total membership of 131,253 across all local voluntary units. Based on these figures, an estimated 67% of all registered members across local voluntary units have been assigned to an engagement category.
- 1.4 As the pie chart below highlights, across all local voluntary returns most young people (and 35% of all young people) were assigned to the **Contact** category (n=30436, 35%). The total number of young people assigned to the **Engagement** and **Active Participation** categories were very similar (n=23444 and n=23503 respectively) and made up just over half of all assigned young people (54%). 11% (n=10015) young people were assigned to the **Maximising Potential** category.

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1 = Contact (30436)                      2 = Engagement (23444)  
3 = Active Participation (23503)    4 = Maximising Potential (10015)

## 2 RETURNS BY LOCAL OFFICE

- 2.1 Most local voluntary unit returns indicated that their local office was Armagh. However this data should be treated with some caution for two reasons.
- 2.2 Firstly, analysis of the data has highlighted that the request to forward the Engagement Framework return to Armagh resulted in some local units interpreting this as ‘their’ local office. A number of these have been re-categorised to Belfast, Dundonald and Ballymena, however this process was not a detailed systematic process and errors persist across the data set.
- 2.3 Secondly, the recent Council boundary changes have also created some confusion, with the result that there are further errors in this data for units situated in new boundary areas.

**Table 1: Local Voluntary Returns by Local EA Office**

Sum of Returns	
Armagh	377
Ballymena	214
Belfast	151
Dundonald	131
Omagh	120
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>993</b>

- 2.4 Despite these known errors, sufficient evidence persists to conclude that the Engagement Framework is in use across a significant number of local voluntary youth units in all local EA areas.
- 2.5 In terms of planning for data collection going forward, it will be important that the Engagement Framework returns can be clearly and readily mapped to one of nine council areas, either using postcodes or by self-selection. This will facilitate statistics on Engagement categories being available to support service planning and delivery across each of these nine Council areas.

### 3 RETURNS BY TYPE OF PROVISION

- 3.1** Almost half (n=490/49%) of all local voluntary returns were received from uniformed units.
- 3.2** As the Regional Assessment of Need (Dec 2018) records uniformed youth provision is the most common type of provision, with 937 local units registered with the EA.
- 3.3** Based on these figures 52% of all uniformed organisations submitted an Engagement Framework return and are actively using the Engagement Framework.
- 3.4** A notable number of uniformed units had self-identified themselves as ‘voluntary church based’ and were re-categorised. This error highlights the need for descriptors for each type of provision going forward to support more accurate self-reporting at local level. This issue was further emphasised when analysis highlighted that a significant number of local voluntary groups self-identified themselves as controlled. All have since been re-categorised.

**Table 2: Local Voluntary Returns by Type of Provision**

Sum of Returns	
Uniformed	490
Voluntary Church Based	306
Voluntary Community Based	197
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>993</b>

- 3.5** 306 returns were received from voluntary church based units. The Regional Assessment of Need (Dec 2018) records 326 voluntary church based units registered with EA. Based on these figures 94% of all local church based units are actively using the Engagement Framework.
- 3.6** 197 returns were received from voluntary community based units. The Regional Assessment of Need (Dec 2018) records 326 voluntary community based. Based on these figures 60% of all voluntary community based units are actively using the Engagement Framework.

**Table 3: Local Voluntary Returns by Local EA Office**

	Sum of Contact	Sum of Engagement	Sum of Active Participation	Sum of Maximising Potential	Sum of Unit TOTAL
Uniformed	6744	6743	7193	3628	24308
Voluntary Church Based	11852	9828	9067	3572	34319
Voluntary Community Based	11840	6873	7243	2815	28771
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>30436</b>	<b>23444</b>	<b>23503</b>	<b>10015</b>	<b>87398</b>

**3.7** As Table 3 (above) records engagement of young people across local voluntary church and community based units largely reflects the general picture for all local voluntary groups; with most young people being assigned to contact, numbers assigned to engagement and active participation quite similar and collectively making up approximately 50% of all young people and 10% of membership categorised as maximising potential.

**3.8** The uniformed unit's pattern of engagement differs slightly, with most young people assigned to the active participation category and 15% of membership falling within the maximising potential category. This difference is largely felt to be due to the active badge work and strong leadership development programmes within these units.

**Table 4: Local Voluntary Returns by Local EA Office and Type of Provision**

	Sum of CONTACT	Sum of ENGAGEMENT	Sum of ACTIVE PARTICIPATION	Sum of MAXIMISING POTENTIAL	Sum of Unit Totals
<b>Armagh</b>	<b>12628</b>	<b>8466</b>	<b>8091</b>	<b>3539</b>	<b>32724</b>
Uniformed	2954	2684	2319	924	8881
Voluntary Church Based	4512	3312	3263	1488	12575
Voluntary Community Based	5162	2470	2509	1127	11268
<b>Ballymena</b>	<b>4830</b>	<b>4265</b>	<b>3516</b>	<b>1645</b>	<b>14256</b>
Uniformed	1679	1628	1544	781	5632
Voluntary Church Based	1949	1781	1371	547	5648
Voluntary Community Based	1202	856	601	317	2976
<b>Belfast</b>	<b>4716</b>	<b>3894</b>	<b>4606</b>	<b>1679</b>	<b>14895</b>
Uniformed	600	724	1347	736	3407
Voluntary Church Based	2216	2238	2018	612	7084
Voluntary Community Based	1900	932	1241	331	4404
<b>Dundonald</b>	<b>4914</b>	<b>3914</b>	<b>4747</b>	<b>2101</b>	<b>15676</b>
Uniformed	830	1224	1522	938	4514
Voluntary Church Based	2450	1934	2110	717	7211
Voluntary Community Based	1634	756	1115	446	3951
<b>Omagh</b>	<b>3348</b>	<b>2905</b>	<b>2543</b>	<b>1051</b>	<b>9847</b>
Uniformed	681	483	461	249	1874
Voluntary Church Based	725	563	305	208	1801
Voluntary Community Based	1942	1859	1777	594	6172
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>30436</b>	<b>23444</b>	<b>23503</b>	<b>10015</b>	<b>87398</b>

## 4 CONTROLLED UNITS

- 4.1** 55 controlled units submitted an Engagement Framework return assigning 8,476 young people to one of four engagement categories.
- 4.2** The Regional Assessment of Need (Dec 2018) records 92 controlled units. Based on these figures an estimated 60% of controlled provision is actively using the Engagement Framework.

**Table 5: Local Voluntary Returns by Local EA Office and Type of Provision**

ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
Contact	63	3,458	55
Engagement	44	2,442	55
Active Participation	37	2,056	55
Maximising Potential	9	520	55
TOTAL	154	8,476	55
Total Respondents: 55			

- 4.3** As Table 5 (above) highlights, across all controlled unit returns most young people (and 41% of all young people) were assigned to the **Contact** category (n=3458, 41%). The total number of young people assigned to the **Engagement** and **Active Participation** categories were similar (n=2442 and n=2056 respectively) and made up just over half of all assigned young people (53%). 6% (n=520) young people were assigned to the **Maximising Potential** category.
- 4.4** EA Youth Service Residential/Outdoor Centres were not included in this Engagement Framework.
- 4.5** In addition, a further 110 returns were received by the regional office after the deadline and after analysis of returns received within the deadline was completed. These returns were not included in this report.

## 5 SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 As stated, future local voluntary Engagement Framework returns should be clearly and readily mapped to one of nine council areas, either using postcodes or by self-selection.
- 5.2 The case studies of good practice should be disseminated to further support the development of consistent and reliable returns across all youth settings. Appendix 1
- 5.3 There is a need for EA to provide descriptors for each type of provision (controlled, uniformed, voluntary community and voluntary church based) going forward to support more accurate self-reporting at local level.
- 5.4 The EA need to ascertain missing controlled unit submissions and ensure full submission for future years.
- 5.5 The voluntary units should work towards all units completing the Engagement Framework returns as part of their annual returns to EA.
- 5.6 Information and training materials are available in the EA website.  
<https://www.eani.org.uk/publications/youth-service/engagement-framework>

## 6 APPENDIX {delete/change as appropriate}

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## Appendix i

### Ardcarnet Youth Centre

Johnny Crymble is the Area Youth Worker II for Ardcarnet Youth Centre. 140 young people aged between 4 and 25 are registered with Ardcarnet Youth Centre, with a fairly even split between male and female membership. The Youth Centre is located within a geographic area which falls within the top 28% of the most deprived in Northern Ireland.

Johnny plus three part-time staff worked together to complete the 2018 Engagement Framework Annual Return. As Johnny highlighted, the part-time staff played a vital role in assessing the participation of all young people attending the centre over the past year and assigning each young person to a category within the Engagement Framework.

Prior to receiving the Engagement Framework as part of the annual Youth Service Application (NIYSA) process, Johnny was aware of the Engagement Framework. He had held discussions with his Team Leader to examine how the Engagement Framework could contribute to the measurement outcomes for young people and the effectiveness of his work with them. In addition, Johnny had taken part in local area team training which had been rolled out in preparation for the Engagement Framework return going out to EA registered groups. This training in combination with the Engagement Framework Guidance Document supported Johnny and his team to complete the Engagement Framework Annual Return. This said, Johnny felt there was room for further training to support himself and his team to manage the Engagement Framework Annual Return process.

Johnny felt the biggest challenge to completing the Engagement Framework was supporting staff to be at ease with the fluid nature of assigning a young person to a category, whereby a young person may be assessed as 'actively participating' at one stage in the year, but in a few months' time be assessed as 'engaged' and that this was OK. Unlike the usual forms of scoring and assessment for young people, the Engagement Framework is not linear and although Johnny both understands and welcomes this, he felt this would take time for staff to become accustomed to. As Johnny noted, 'for me this allows staff to capture the journey of a young person as they develop and grow through the service, sometimes as a user and sometimes in a leadership role. I'm not sure how this could be better reflected within the Engagement Framework model. Perhaps a circular rather than the current list format could be used to set out the four categories'. Johnny

also felt there was a need to reinforce the understanding that 'it is not a failure if a young person moves from 'maximising potential' to 'contact' but rather it presents an opportunity to recognise this, reflect on why and to review the young person's future journey as part of ongoing quality assurance processes'.

Prior to the Engagement Framework return being sent out for completion, Johnny and his team had developed a recording tool which included maintaining a record of the category that each young person was engaging in. This tool also allowed the worker to record evidence to support why the young person was allocated to a given category. Over a given period of time each staff member had responsibility to assign young people to an Engagement Framework category. Discussions were held with these staff in order to complete the Annual Return. The discussions were rich and different staff had different experiences of some young people's engagement which meant that settling on an agreed annual category took time. Johnny felt further training to explore and manage this aspect would be very beneficial.

By way of an overview, Johnny found that the majority of the young people who were assigned to the 'maximising potential' category were from the post 16 years age range and who had been youth centre members for a number of years. The majority of these young people had taken part in residential and leadership programmes. By comparison, a large number of these young people were members who had joined the centre within the last 12-24 months. This was also the category with the youngest average age. Any members aged 13+ who were assigned to the contact category were generally young people who make use of the drop-in sessions within the unit.

Attendance and registration information provided the key evidence base to support the Engagement Framework return. However, the tool that was developed to support part-time workers to assign young people to categories based on their observations proved most useful. Although not 'naturally occurring' it supported staff to map and review a young person's progression through the unit and provided the preparation necessary to complete the annual review process.

Attendance and registration information would provide one level of evidence but the tool that we developed to record a young person's stage, although not naturally occurring has now focused youth workers ability to comment and evaluate a young person's progression through the unit.

On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being not very confident and 5 being very confident Johnny would rate his ability to complete the Engagement Framework as a 5. As he remarked, 'the process is fairly simple and if it is part of the normal routine within a unit it shouldn't take any additional time to complete'.

## Appendix ii

### St Mary's on the Hill Guide Unit

Laura Doherty is the Chairperson and Guide Leader of St Mary's on the Hill Guide Unit. This is a voluntary uniformed unit with around 80 members based in Newtownabbey. Laura took over her current role in June 2017, just as the pilot Engagement Framework was issued.

Laura did not receive any training, nor was she aware of any being offered. However, as Laura points out, "the guidance issued with the form made sense, and working in the learning and development sector helped me, as I've come across similar exercises before. I can sympathise with some of our other leaders for whom the process could feel very alien. Some of these leaders have been volunteers for many years."

Laura had assigned a few members to the Contact category. As Laura noted, "Given the focus on badge work within Guides, it is rare that our members would not be engaged in a number of short term programmes of activity across any given year. However, each year when records are reviewed there will be a small number whose attendance has not been regular, sometimes due to external exam and related pressures on our older members. Without regular attendance they cannot fully participate in activities. These young people are assigned to the Contact category."

"Our Brigini's will tend to fall into the Engagement category. Their programme is called "Let's do it!" and offers a number of challenges for them to choose to complete on the topics of health, the environment, international, creativity, out of doors and communication. These challenges are short-term programmes. Through participation they learn new skills or, in the language used by the Engagement Framework, "are engaged in lots of thinking, life and work skills", and by completing the badges they make lots of decisions related to these topics."

"Our Guides are a mix of both Engagement and Active Participation. Each year they work towards badges as part of their "Count Me In" programme, with each guide making their own choice about the range and level of badges they get involved with. Our Patrol system means that some Guide's may also be regularly involved in assessing the interests of others and planning the programme based on these needs. These latter members are generally assigned to the Active Participation category."

“Each year these members also work towards the World Thinking Day programme, which introduces the Guides to the UN Millennium Development Goals and challenge them to think about how they can contribute to these on behalf of Ireland. For those who really get stuck in, this increases their participation and again they could be assigned to the Active participation category.”

“Rangers are our 14+ age range. In addition to the Rangers programme, many of these members will be completing awards such as Chief Commissioners Award, The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award/President’s Award, Millennium Volunteer, or John Paul II Award which require them to design and complete their own programme of activity. Volunteering, social action and acting in leadership roles are core aspects of these programmes. Often they will volunteer as leaders here at St Mary’s. These members are all maximising their potential and engaged in active citizenship. Some of our Rangers are currently completing the community development programme through Newtownabbey Council leading to OCN qualifications in Leadership and Community Relations and, although this will form part of our evidence for the forthcoming year, it is another example of a programme which results in these members being assigned to maximising potential.”

Attendance records provided the key evidence to support the Engagement Framework return alongside St Mary’s Badge order for the past year. These are held as part of OGM the Online Guide Management system. As Laura records, “A download of attendance can tell you a lot straight away. Some volunteers keep their own diaries and record details in these from September to June which can be an important source of evidence. Other evidence includes photographs/pictures/displays and specific programme files. Now that we know we have the Engagement Framework to complete, we can also brief volunteers, supporting them to jot down relevant information if and as required in preparation for next year’s return.”

## Appendix iii

### Comber BB

Boys' Brigade Northern Ireland (often referred to as BB or BBNI) is a Christian Youth organisation for boys aged 5 years to 18 years. A varied programme of activities is provided, including football, rugby, volleyball, craft, drama, outdoor pursuits and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and Bible teaching. The Boys' Brigade Northern Ireland also provides a comprehensive leadership training and development programme for all its Leaders and runs a young leadership programme called KGV1.

Stephen Cowden is the Captain of Comber BB. A relatively large BB Company with over 120 members. Comber BB's 2018 Engagement Framework return recorded 52 young males in the engagement category, 57 in active participation and 12 maximising potential.

Stephen was aware of the training being offered by BBNI Headquarters to support local companies like his to complete the Engagement Framework, but felt he did not need this. In response to the launch of the Engagement Framework by EA, BBNI Headquarters had produced an 'At a Glance' guidance leaflet. Stephen found this very helpful and felt this was sufficient to help him and his team of volunteers complete the return, although he did add maybe as a teacher the language used within the framework was less of a barrier.

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**EA Engagement Framework at a Glance**  
For groups registered and in receipt of funding from EA

The three indicators below are provided to help you assign an engagement category to each child/young person.

**1 ENGAGEMENT CATEGORY** Nos (not names)

Contact	
Engagement	
Active Participation	
Maximising Potential	
<b>TOTALS</b> this should add up to the total number in your membership	

**2 INDICATORS**

- Intensity and commitment of engagement
- Distance travelled (progression) for children and young people
- Children and young people's influence in decision making

Check out the guidance overpage for descriptions of each of the indicators - these will help you assign each child and young person to a category on the framework.

**3 Your Records**

	CONTACT	ENGAGEMENT	ACTIVE PARTICIPATION	MAXIMISING POTENTIAL	MY REASONS
Boy A	✓				Note here in this column why you assigned boy A, B, C or D to a specific category and where the evidence is retained to support this.
Boy B		✓			
Boy C			✓		
Boy D				✓	
<b>Totals</b>	Total numbers in each category here are recorded on the Engagement Framework flip left which will be on your EA reporting form (NPSA or Y38)				

Retain some evidence to support your allocation - this could be on a spreadsheet or in OBM

**4 Why?**

- It's a Policy Directive of the Department of Education as laid down in Priorities for Youth.
- It can be used to promote the value of youth work to a range of external stakeholders/investors.
- It will help you and the EA articulate the value and initial impacts for children and young people of participation in youth service provision.
- It will help you identify alternative and on-tailor opportunities for enhancing engagement, participation and learning.

EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE: attendance register • badge work records • awards gained • participation in camp, Enrolment, battalion events, fundraising etc. •

This is an annual reflective exercise, designed to

Comber BB is an uniformed organisation, and all boys, at all stages within the company work towards badges. Regular attendance is a fundamental aspect of this process. For this reason,

it would be uncommon for any young person to fall within the Contact category of the Engagement Framework.

For Anchor Boys (P1-P4) and Junior Boys (P5-P7) badge work provides a variety of short-term programmes for members across health and well-being, creative, spiritual and community based themes. The boy's participation in the programme includes selecting the games they want to play, selecting activities to complete across the badge work themes and, as parent night approaches, selecting their favourite activities to show case at this event. The Junior Boys programme provides additional opportunities for the boys to participate in decision making in relation to the programme. From September – Christmas these boys will be invited to highlight anything that they would like to do for social nights out, foods to make or eat and what to watch on film night. This is then used to plan out these activities.

Boys within Company Section (Year (Y) 8-Y11) and young men in the Senior Section (Y12-Y12) tend to fall into the Active Participation category of the Framework. The Company Section (Y8-Y11) badge work focuses on recreation, skills and community aspects. The programme is led by the boys and because the activities are longer term, they can have a number of different activities running at the same time. The programme aims to develop fundamental skills in decision making, planning, leadership, and communication. An example of a recent activity undertaken by this age group was to identify the need for volleyball nets in order to play this as part of their programme. These boys completed an application to get a youth grant, which was successful. This increased distance of travel for the young boys within the programme firmly places their engagement within the Active Participation category.

By Year 11 onwards the young men are generally working towards the Presidents Badge – which really builds their skills in terms of team-work (working with others) and leadership. Whereas the Challenge Plus Senior Section programme consists of a range of one-off projects and challenges, with points awarded per project or challenge completed. Examples of activities include 'Homelessness', 'Conservation', 'Driving', 'Preparing for Work'; there are also opportunities to go away on camps and residential, and there may be international opportunities. The number of points obtained by any young man will dictate if they earn the Bronze, Silver or Gold Senior Badge. A popular project within the Comber Company is 'Make it, Sell it'. Where young men come up with an idea, make it, and take a stall at the Christmas Fair to sell it. All profits go to their chosen charity.

By Year 11 young men can, and often do, begin to progress to become Non-Commissioned Officers. Lance Corporal training begins at Year 11, Corporal training begins at Year 12. Sergeant training programme begins at Year 13 and Staff Sergeants begin their training programme at age 17-19. Once young men have completed their Lance Corporal training and are taking on a leadership role within the company they fall within the maximising potential category. These young men are actively designing programmes based on the interests of those they are working with.

As Stephen notes, not all boys fall neatly into these categories. We have young men with different learning needs and depending upon the severity of these some young men may be maximising their potential by simply being in attendance. Comber BB through adapting training and the leadership role, has also supported one young man with Autism and Mastocytosis to become an Officer.

The BB online database OBM helps Stephen monitor attendance and progress in badge work. This data facilitates quick and easy completion of the Engagement Framework return. Stephen did not feel there was a need for any additional support, although in terms of supporting volunteers and young leaders to understand the process he felt it may be useful to develop the framework into BB language.

## Appendix iv

### Londonderry YMCA

Catriona Coyle, is the Centre Based II Youth Worker of the Londonderry YMCA.

As Catriona notes, Londonderry YMCA found completing the Engagement Framework Return for 2017-18 straight forward and on a scale from 1 to 5 (with 1 being not very confident and 5 being confident) would rate her centre's capacity to complete the return as a 5.

As Catriona points out, National YMCA played an active role in the initial launch of the Engagement Framework in January 2018. Gillian McClay, National YMCAs Training Coordinator, attended the EA Training for Trainers Seminar in November 2017, and followed this up with internal YMCA staff training in early 2018 which Catriona attended. At this time all local YMCA centres were encouraged to complete the initial Engagement Framework pilot return in April 2017; which both Larne and Londonderry YMCA did.

The slides and resources developed by EA following the Training for Trainers Seminar were subsequently used by Catriona to train her local centre staff team, which comprises of 6 part-time staff and a number of voluntary Junior Leaders. Reflecting on this Catriona recalls being issued with resources as part of her training and notes, "Everything was there and straightforward to use. I remember hosting a staff training day and using the PowerPoint presentation along with the resources to support my staff to become familiar with the Engagement Framework and its different categories. The examples provided were relevant to our setting and the staff found the process of assigning young people to the categories easy to understand. The training gave staff space to discuss the Engagement Framework and build their confidence on how to use it. For me the key message was (and is) keep it simple. Don't over think it. Know why you have assigned a young person to a given category, make a quick note of the evidence you hold that supports this, and move on."

Londonderry YMCA would fall into the EA category of full time (church based) youth provision and provides a youth club programme of activity for local young people five nights of the week alongside summer and schools based youth work programmes. Programmes support the EA's priorities for Youth through the provision of drop in activities alongside longer term programmes aimed at developing personal and social capabilities, mental health and well-being, digital media skills, community relations and leadership.

The majority of young people registered with the centre fall into the contact category. They attend and take part in activities such as arts and craft, team games and social interaction. These activities enhance their personal capabilities (building confidence, self-awareness, resilience, empathy), improve their health and well-being, and develop their thinking, life skills and work skills. The activities they take part in play a valuable role in the young people's personal and social development and the young people choose to take part in them; although the young people themselves would often describe their participation as about 'just coming to be with friends and have fun'.

Any young person who opts to take part in a short programme such as positive mental health or summer intervention is assigned to the engagement category. Generally the decisions these young people are making are with staff and based on taking part in the programme. Often it means working as part of a group that is wider or different from their usual social group and so by taking part they are learning to build positive relationships.

Young people assigned to the engagement category also include young people who have completed the buddy training but do not wish to act as buddies. In other words, they have done more than just attend and have fun, they have participated in a programme, but did not wish to take the next step to being a buddy.

Young people who participate in buddy training and junior leader training and go on to take up this role on a long term basis within the centre will be assigned to maximising potential. Others may take up the junior leader role for a short time only, but because they also go on to complete other programmes that result in planning and problem solving they will be assigned to the active participation category.

Londonderry YMCA find that the senior members who take on a responsibility and support the organisation within and outside the youth programme are most likely to be assigned to the maximising potential category. These are generally young people who are taking part in volunteering within the centre and/or completing Junior Leader training, although there can be exceptions depending upon the individual. For example a young person who has overcome a personal challenge.

Having taken part in the first pilot return provided Londonderry YMCA with the opportunity to plan for the 2017-18 return. A Spreadsheet was adapted from the registration lists within the

centre in order to specifically prepare for the Engagement Framework return. Knowing that this data would be requested by EA in April, Catriona started preparation in December by asking staff to assign young people to an engagement of category based on their participation from September and any known plans for the forthcoming term. At this stage registrations from the summer programme were also considered – and young people assigned to categories across this period. Catriona used January and February as the opportunity to follow-up with staff and provide support where necessary to complete this task. This meant that when the 2017-18 return arrived in April completing it was a quick exercise of issuing stats held to staff, making any minor adjustments as required and completing the return.

Catriona highlighted that one of the challenges she faces is marrying her reporting systems to EAs April-March cycle. To keep it practical the focus is on assigning young people based on their engagement during July/August (Summer) and September - March. For young people attending Londonderry YMCA, it would unlikely that this could or would change significantly during April and June simply by nature of the programming cycle.

There has been learning as a result of taking part in the pilot Engagement Framework returns. To date, schools and partnership based work has not been counted by Londonderry YMCA. Often these young people are not registered with the centre, they 'belong' elsewhere and some are benefiting for a short period from the skills and expertise offered by centre programmes through partnership arrangements. This is an issue that YMCA's are currently reviewing. The forthcoming Outreach and Detached Framework may be helpful. Alternatively YMCA recognise that registration may be required going forward. Linked to this YMCA are also beginning a process of reflecting on the Engagement Framework returns completed by each local centre to support shared learning and moderation of these across the organisation.

Catriona's advice to anyone completing the Engagement Framework is to make sure you access the training available. Once you have this, supporting others or putting in place administration arrangements to complete the Framework is relatively straight forward. With time it also becomes more practical to engage junior leaders in the process, and this is something Catriona plans to further encourage this year. Although the online resource has not been used by Londonderry YMCA, Catriona plans to use this as a tool to refresh staff on the engagement framework ahead of this December.

## Appendix iv

### Loughmacrory Youth Club

Loughmacrory Youth Club is a rural voluntary community based club which operates two nights a week from a youth and community centre based on the Ballybrack Road in Loughmacrory, Omagh. It has over 150 members aged 4 to 18 with a largely 50:50 split in male female attendance and is staffed entirely by volunteers. A number of 22-25 year olds also attend as volunteers but can and do participate in other mainly external programmes such as summer camps if possible. Loughmacrory Youth Club is registered with The Boys and Girls Clubs (NI).

In addition to the day-to-day youth work programme, activities run by the Youth Club include a tin whistle class, a dedicated Irish Language evening, a transition programme (supporting members to meet those attending other youth



groups in the local area ahead of their transition into secondary education and build friendships with those they would be joining in formal education for the first time).

There a large number of young people, particularly those in the younger age range, who simply attended the youth club to meet friends and take part in the range of creative, recreational, social or sporting activities which are programmed each week. These include arts, cooking and a range of sporting options. These young people were assigned to the Engagement category. There were also a small number of young people signed up for registration including those who expressed an interest in trainee volunteer helpers or the Tin Whistle class, but did not attend regularly. These young people were also assigned to the contact category.

Young people regularly attending the Tin Whistle class and nothing else were assigned to the Engagement category. They were attending to follow a programme of activity as well as to make friendships and learning the Tin Whistle involved lots of thinking, life and work skills.

Young people attending both the Tin Whistle class and participating in the wider youth club programme were assigned to the Active Participation category. These young people were taking part in long-term programmes of activity within the club looking at topics such as Healthy Eating and Positive Mental Health.

21 of the 16-18 years old members completed in-house leadership training and then acted as trainee volunteer helpers during 2017-18. These young people were also working towards their John Paul II Gold Award which required them to select and complete their own activities from the Parish Involvement and Social Awareness options which make up the award. Volunteering, social action and participation in the design and delivery of programmes for others means that these young people were engaged to the maximum of their potential.

The volunteers running Loughmacrory Youth Club were not aware of any training being available on the Engagement Framework. As volunteers they found the language within the guidance unfamiliar and not easy to interpret. The volunteers sought the help of a member of the local parish whom they knew worked for EA (although not EA youth service) as well as some family members who were teachers and had come across this type of thing before.

The leader-in-charge, Sean Curran, has since looked at the online video clip and found this very useful. In addition to meeting with myself, which had reassured Sean that the club had interpreted the task correctly, Sean felt the online video clip now met any needs in terms of additional support. He did, however, emphasise that as a volunteer who is not steeped in the language used by professional work workers, he found both the support offered by friends and family at the time of completing the return and this follow-up meeting very useful and felt other volunteers running small, but busy voluntary clubs would welcome similar support.

He also highlighted that holding evidence can become an issue for a voluntary club reliant upon volunteers and without administrative support and responsibility for records can pass to different individuals from year to year. Clarity on how long units are expected to hold evidence would be very welcome in this respect as well as reassurance that the naturally occurring evidence held, such as programme files, attendance records, registrations is sufficient.

