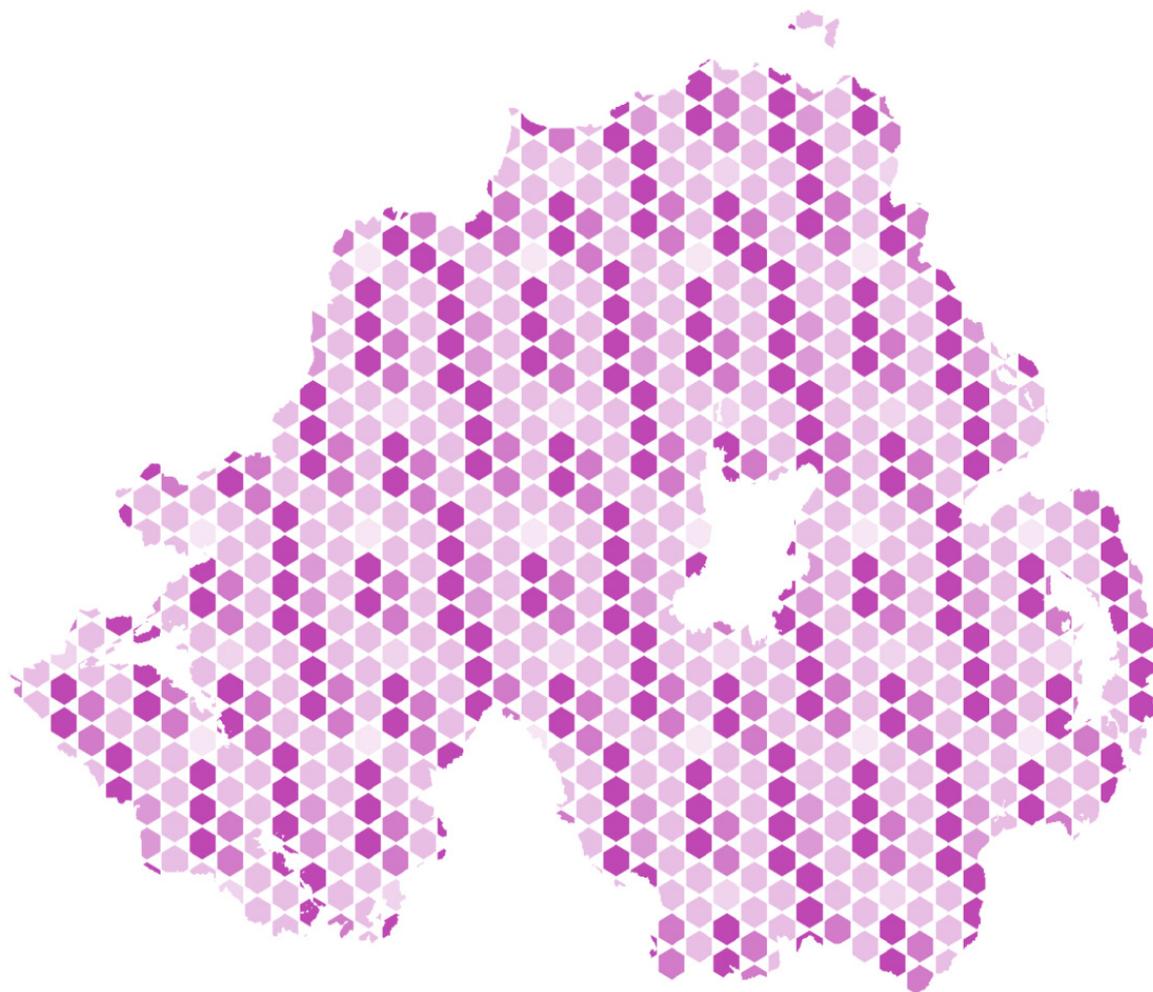


CULTURE, ARTS AND LEISURE INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

An Evaluation of the Promotion of
Critical Skills as part of a Wider
Literacy through four Organisations
funded by Northern Ireland Screen

October 2011

CONTENTS

Section		Page
1.	CONTEXT	1
2.	LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	2
3.	QUALITY OF PROVISION	2
4.	QUALITY OF OUTCOMES	3
5.	AREAS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT	4
6.	CONCLUSION	

1. CONTEXT

1.1 A Wider Literacy was published in 2004 by Northern Ireland Screen and set out seven objectives in relation to the embedding of moving image and related digital technologies across the formal and non-formal curricula in Northern Ireland.

1.2 The Wider Viewing and The Development of Critical Skills strategy (October 2011) focused on objectives 2 and 5 from a Wider Literacy.

- Schools and cultural organisations should collaborate to ensure that all young people have regular opportunities to see a wider range of moving image media, including media made in Northern Ireland, film and television from the past, and examples of world cinema.
- All institutions in the formal and non-formal education sectors should recognise the value of, and offer opportunities for, practical work and screenings to achieve social inclusion, understanding between culturally diverse communities, and re-motivation of disaffected young people.

1.3 Given the developments in the curriculum which have taken place in the formal education sector, and the growing importance of the moving image industry in Northern Ireland, it is timely to review and update the Wider Literacy Strategy with the skills-based education of young people at the centre of that review. Such a review would allow for the development of a well-focused learning strategy, in conjunction with the other educational programmes from providers funded by Northern Ireland Screen, in line with the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure's (DCAL) overall learning strategy.

1.4 The evaluation included the following organisations: Northern Ireland Screen's After School Film Clubs; Cinemagic; Nerve Centre; Queen's Film Theatre as agreed with Northern Ireland Screen and DCAL.

1.5 The After School Film Clubs give pupils and teachers the chance to explore and enjoy the world of film with free weekly screenings, online reviewing, industry events and hands-on support. The funding agreement between DCAL and Northern Ireland Screen recommended that the Film Clubs were facilitated through Extended Schools to target young people in disadvantaged areas, and to provide them with their cultural entitlement.

1.6 Overall findings of the evaluation

In the areas inspected, **the quality of education provided by this programme promoted by Northern Ireland Screen is good.** The programme has important strengths in most of its educational provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the organisation has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) will monitor the organisation's progress on the areas for improvement.

2. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of the **leadership and management is good.**

2.1 Key findings are:

2.1.1 Northern Ireland Screen has **a clear vision for the promotion of enjoyment**, within young people, of the viewing of a range of moving image media. They provide **good overall direction and support** for the various programmes of the organisations which they fund.

2.1.2 Those staff with responsibility for the individual educational programmes within the various organisations provide **good strategic direction for broadening access to moving image** and for developing links to the skills promoted in the Northern Ireland Curriculum within their planning.

2.1.3 In the best practice they provide very **good and informed practical support** to the facilitators of the various programmes within the schools. In many instances the After School Film Clubs link effectively into other areas across the curriculum. In those organisations which have availed of training in animation through the Creative Learning Centres, there are often good links made between the two programmes to the benefit of the participants.

2.1.4 The **sharing of ideas and good practice** through the joint meetings which have taken place recently between the organisations **is proving effective**. There remains the need for greater clarity as to what the agreed understanding of 'critical skills' is, and how they can support effectively the further development of literacy within the organisations with which they work.

2.1.5 The organisations **need to embed a regular and rigorous self-evaluation process** through the use of the agreed Quality Indicators (QIs) and a more focused learning strategy linked to DCAL's overarching learning strategy.

3. QUALITY OF PROVISION

The **quality of the provision for learning is good.**

3.1 The key findings are:

3.1.1 The facilitators within the majority of the schools are the Extended Schools co-ordinators; they have **a good understanding of**, and have embraced fully, and in most cases promote well, **the aims of the After School Film Clubs**. The quality of the interaction of the majority of facilitators observed was appropriate to the age and abilities of the participants. In the very good practice observed the facilitators adapted the same activity skilfully to raise the element of challenge and to stretch the critical skills of older or more able participants.

3.1.2 **The quality of the provision in two-thirds of the sessions observed was good or better**; the facilitators built well upon the participants' developing knowledge of moving image and the language associated with it. Through the use of effective questioning, the facilitators, teachers and classroom assistants encouraged the participants to develop their responses and their ideas about the subject matter in the films.

3.1.3 The facilitators use **a good range of strategies**, including the use of practical activities which engage the interest of the participants, to develop the wider literacy of moving image. In the very good and outstanding practice they have incorporated the work of the After School Film Club into the general literacy work within the school, thus making meaningful connections for the participants. This good practice needs to be disseminated further to demonstrate how to provide challenge in order to develop further the critical skills, the presentational skills and writing.

3.1.4 The programmes use the participants' evaluations to provide feedback and, in the best practice, to inform future planning. **The evaluations** are based mainly on enjoyment and content; they **need to focus more clearly on the learning or the skills acquired**, on how they link to other areas of learning within the participants' education, and on how the skills might be developed further.

3.1.5 The arrangements for **Safeguarding** are satisfactory and in line with the guidance issued by DCAL.

4. **QUALITY OF OUTCOMES**

The quality of **the outcomes for the participants is very good.**

4.1 The key findings are:

4.1.1 The participants display **high levels of enjoyment** in, and engagement with, the films in the After School Film Clubs. There is **a high retention rate** and in most of the clubs the participants plan the programme with the facilitator. The After School Film Clubs have provided good opportunities for many of the participants to have an affordable and realistic cinema experience.

4.1.2 Most of the facilitators **develop the participants' talking and listening skills well** through the opportunities to discuss the films before and after viewing. The participants develop their ability to listen to, and to value, the opinions of others. In the best practice there is the good use of prediction to develop the participants' imagination. There is **a positive response** from the participants, who talk knowledgeably about the content and use language appropriate to the moving image.

4.1.3 Most of the participants have the opportunity to **develop their critical skills through writing** for a specific audience. In the sessions observed, there were good examples of both story-boarding and the writing of film reviews with, in most cases, appropriate support to meet the varying abilities of the participants. There is still **the need to have an agreed view of the critical skills** which the programme aims to develop with clear progression in the planning for their development.

4.1.4 The older members in some of the programmes have good opportunities to work in a team and to make informed decisions about a programme of films, which develop their critical skills to a high level. They display good organisational skills and deal well with the general public.

5. AREAS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

5.1 The areas for development include:

- the need for the participants' evaluations to focus more clearly on the learning; and
- the need to embed the use of the QIs in a regular and rigorous self-evaluation process and to continue to share identified good practice between the facilitating organisations.

6. CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected, **the quality of education provided by this programme promoted by Northern Ireland Screen is good.** The programme has important strengths in most of its educational provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the organisation has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Inspectorate will monitor the organisation's progress on the areas for improvement.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2012

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website: www.etini.gov.uk

