

EDUCATION OTHER THAN AT SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Education Other Than At School
Provision in the North-Eastern
Education and Library Board

Report of an Inspection
in March 2012



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In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75%-90%
A majority	-	50%-74%
A significant minority	-	30%-49%
A minority	-	10%-29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%

In assessing the various features of the provision, Inspectors relate their evaluations to six descriptors as set out below:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good – meeting needs very effectively
Good – important strengths
Satisfactory – strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Inadequate – areas for improvement outweigh strengths
Unsatisfactory - areas for improvement significantly outweigh strengths

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE REPORT

CEIAG	Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance
DE	Department of Education
ETI	Education and Training Inspectorate
EF	Entitlement Framework
FSM	Free School Meals
GCE A	General Certificate of Education Advanced Levels
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
KS	Key stage
LSC	Learning Support Centre
NI	Northern Ireland
SDP	School Development Plan
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
SLT	Senior Leadership Team

1. CONTEXT

1.1 The North-Eastern Education and Library Board (NEELB) Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) service provides education for young people aged 14-16 years with a range of social, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties (SEBD) and all of whom require significant additional support for their education. The EOTAS service has centres located in three youth centres in Ballymena, Greenisland and Garvagh and a sports arena in Magherafelt which are leased on an annual basis. The 74 young people who attend the centres are enrolled in 19 schools across the NEELB. The young people who have been referred in year 12 attend for 3 hours per day on four days each week and from January 2012 provision has been made available for young people in year 11. The service is staffed by eight part-time teachers, three full-time youth workers and two learning support assistants.

1.2 The standard inspection of the NEELB EOTAS service focused on achievements and standards, learning and teaching, curriculum provision and on leadership and management across the service. (Appendices 1 & 2)

2. OVERALL FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

2.1 In almost all of the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this organisation is inadequate.

2.2 The inspection has identified major areas for improvement in leadership and management, standards, learning and teaching, staff training, resources and accommodation which need to be addressed urgently if the needs of all of the young people are to be met effectively.

3. ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS

3.1 The quality of the young people's achievements and standards are satisfactory.

The findings are:

- the overall achievements attained by the young people in English and mathematics, although low, are commensurate with their histories of non-attendance and disrupted schooling; standards could be improved significantly (Appendix 3);
- the average attendance of one-quarter of the young people is less than 60%; raising attendance is an issue for the service and a contributory factor in the young people's low achievement;
- the centres do not have in place a common system of rewards and incentives to encourage the young people to achieve and attend on a regular basis; and
- the range of accredited courses available to the young people is too limited to meet their needs.

4. PROVISION FOR LEARNING

4.1 The overall provision for learning is inadequate.

The quality of teaching in the lessons observed ranged from very good to inadequate and the quality of the learning experience for the young people, across the centres, was variable. In the best practice, which was in a minority of the lessons, the lesson context was of relevance to the young people and engaged them fully in challenging work. In half of the lessons observed in which the teaching was satisfactory or inadequate, the teaching lacked variety; the lessons were not based on the needs and interests of the young people and there was little evidence in the teachers' planning of drawing up targets for individual young people.

The key findings are:

- the teachers need to use more effective strategies to manage the behaviour of a small group of young people in each centre who regularly interrupt the learning of others, especially those with social and emotional difficulties;
- the provision for careers education, information, advice and guidance is satisfactory for those young people who attend regularly and avail positively of the provision;
- the personal development programme is effective, varied and engages most of the young people;
- the accommodation currently used by all of the EOTAS centres is unsuitable and not fit for purpose; a number of health and safety issues are identified for attention (Appendix 4);
- the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) within the centres is inadequate; the young people do not have access to appropriate ICT resources within the centres;
- the curriculum offered is too limited and does not challenge interest or inspire the young people to re engage in education;
- the location of two of the EOTAS centres some distance from the referring schools makes it difficult for the young people to have the opportunity to partially reintegrate and study alongside their peers or participate in other aspects of their school's life;
- the young people do not have the opportunity to participate in practical vocational education courses in further education colleges or training organisations to develop their abilities, interests and knowledge of possible career pathways; and
- the teachers have insufficient opportunities for professional development or to meet as a team to reflect and share good practice.

On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection the organisation has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding young people. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education but the Project Co-ordinator needs to:

- review and update the safeguarding policy;
- ensure there is a designated or deputy designated teacher in each centre; and
- improve the security arrangements in three of the centres, which currently can be accessed by the general public when the young people are in attendance.

The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is satisfactory; the centres provide a caring, non-judgemental ethos and all staff show a strong commitment to the care and welfare of the young people. All of the centres can avail of a counselling service but the young people in two of the centres are reluctant to use the service.

5. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.1 The quality of the leadership and management of the EOTAS is inadequate.

The key findings are:

- the Project Co-ordinator has developed very good working relationships with the staff and young people within the centres; the staff have the support of the majority of parents;
- the young people enter for and have had success, albeit limited, in qualifications; standards could be greatly improved by a more rigorous approach to establishing personal learning pathways to appropriate academic and vocational accredited courses;
- the twelve hours of education per week presently allocated to young people especially those in year twelve is inadequate; the Project Co-ordinator and Head of Service need to monitor the impact of the hours of attendance and the time that is required for the young people to successfully complete their examination courses;
- the Project Co-ordinator and Head of Service need to audit the current provision and assess how to develop the EOTAS provision to raise the achievement and increase the levels of attendance and engagement of all of the young people; and
- the EOTAS service within the NEELB has developed as a separate service from the behaviour management support services; better service cohesion would enhance the levels of individual support and curriculum flexibility as would more formal links and partnerships with the mainstream referring schools.

5.2 Overall, the NEELB needs to review the strategic planning for the provision of the education of young people other than at school. There are deficiencies in the assessment of the individual needs of the young people, the planning to meet their needs and the limited curriculum. The young people require an intensive programme of support with more time within the education centres and a more collaborative approach from all who have a responsibility for their education. In addition, there are serious deficiencies in staff training, resources and accommodation, which need addressed with some urgency.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 In the areas inspected the quality of education provided by the EOTAS Service is inadequate; the areas for improvement outweigh strengths in the provision.

6.2 In almost all of the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the EOTAS service is inadequate; the areas for improvement significantly outweigh the strengths in the provision. The inspection has identified major areas for improvement in leadership and management, standards, learning and teaching, staff training, resources and accommodation which need to be addressed urgently if the service is to meet effectively the needs of all the young people.

The Inspectorate will monitor and report on the EOTAS service's progress in addressing the areas for improvement, over a 12 to 18 month period.

EVIDENCE OF THE INSPECTION

The key questions and quality indicators which guide inspection and self-evaluation are available in the Inspectorate's publication *Together Towards Improvement: a process for self-evaluation* at <http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/together-towards-improvement/together-towards-improvement-post-primary.htm>

The inspectors scrutinised documentation and the young peoples' written work and held formal and informal meetings with the young people, teachers, learning support assistants and management of the service. Inspectors paid particular attention to CEIAG, individual education plans, policies, links with parents, and young people's records and provided oral feedback to the Project Co-ordinator and Head of Service. In total, 22 lessons were observed.

The arrangements for the inspection included the opportunity for the parents and the staff to complete confidential questionnaires prior to the inspection.

VIEWS OF THE PARENTS, TEACHERS, SUPPORT STAFF OF THE EOTAS SERVICE

Questionnaires	Issued	Returned	Additional Comment
Parents	69	17	7
Teachers	12	*	0
Support Staff	8	*	*

*Number redacted

Almost all of the questionnaires returned by the parents were highly positive in nearly all respects and commented on the supportive and dedicated teachers and support staff. A small number of parents raised concerns regarding the limited time provided for the education of the young people.

Almost all the teachers and support staff responses were positive, indicating their strong support for the work of the service. A small number raised concerns that the service was not well resourced, links with the community were not developed and the young people did not contribute effectively to decision making processes in the service. The ETI reported to the Projects Co-Ordinator and Head of Service, the small number of areas of concern emerging from the questionnaire and, where appropriate, these have been commented on within the report.

Most of the young people talked about the good individual support provided by their teachers, youth worker and support staff. The young people value the care, guidance and support provided by their teachers. They feel safe and secure and know where to seek help if concerned.

Qualifications achieved by EOTAS students 2011

Qualifications	Subject	Grade	Number of Young People
Essential Skills Entry Level	Literacy	Level 1	3
Essential Skills Entry Level	Literacy	Level 2	18
Essential Skills Entry Level	Literacy	Level 3	2
Essential Skills Entry Level	Numeracy	Level 2	4
Essential Skills Entry Level	Numeracy	Level 3	27
Essential Skill Entry Level	Communication	Level 1	2
GCSE	Maths	C	3
GCSE	Maths	E	1
GCSE	English	E	1
Keyskills	ICT	Level 1	3
Entry Level Certificate	Literacy	Level 2	4
Entry Level Certificate	Literacy	Level 3	30
Entry Level Certificate	Numeracy	Level 2	2
Entry Level Certificate	Numeracy	Level 3	29
Princes Trust XL	Personal Development	Level 1	15
Personal and Social Education	Personal Action Planning	Level 3	28
Personal and Social Education	Drugs Education	Level 3	27
Personal and Social Education	Sex and Relationships Education	Level 3	25
Personal and Social Education	Healthy Lifestyles	Level 3	22

HEALTH AND SAFETY AND ACCOMMODATION

- The premises in Magherafelt, Coleraine and Greenisland do not have effective secure electronic entry systems controlled by the staff.
- Sections of the roof in Coleraine Youth centre are dangerous.
- The accommodations presently used by all of the centres are public youth centres and sport centres and have not been designed as high quality education centres that facilitate the supervision and education of vulnerable young people.

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