



*The Education and Training Inspectorate -  
Promoting Improvement*



*Providing Inspection Services for*  
**Department of Education  
Department for Employment and Learning  
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

## **Education and Training Inspectorate**

### **Report of a Follow-up Inspection**

**Loughshore Education Resource Centre  
Belfast**

**November 2008**

## **FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF LOUGHSHORE EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTRE, BELFAST, BT36 7DH**

The focused inspection of Loughshore Education Resource Centre, Belfast in October 2004 highlighted strengths which include:

- the progress made since the Centre opened in 2002;
- the strong leadership and vision of the Principal;
- the success of the staff in catering for a wide range of diverse needs and circumstances;
- the satisfactory or better quality of most of the teaching;
- the breadth of the curriculum and the range of accreditation opportunities;
- the quality of care and support provided by the staff, and the positive impact of this on the young people's engagement with learning, their achievements and personal development; and
- the high quality of the partnership with the parents, their participation in the Centre's activities, and their strong approval of its work.

The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- to address the weaknesses in aspects of the teaching;
- to reduce the length of time a small number of the young people remain on one-to-one tuition, to facilitate more social interaction;
- to ensure that suitable arrangements are developed to disseminate, internally and externally, the good practice observed during the inspection;
- to review the current transport arrangements to eliminate the need for transportation by members of staff;
- to review and develop current accreditation opportunities to promote greater consistency and improve standards; and
- to establish a system to monitor and evaluate further the quality of the provision.

The report also identified the need for the Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB) to clarify the Centre's role and maximum enrolment, and to implement a strategy which strengthens the Centre's partnership with mainstream schools and other alternative education providers in the BELB area.

In the interval since the inspection, the following actions which affect the work of the Centre, have taken place:

- an audit of teaching practices was completed, and small teaching teams were created to identify and share the lesson planning and recording of progress;
- the system of one-to-one tuition was revised and monthly reviews of progress were introduced;
- arrangements were made to ensure that the teachers had frequent opportunities to discuss good practice and to disseminate this to wider audiences, including presentations at conferences and the publication of articles;
- the staff no longer transport young people in their cars; the BELB provides four minibuses for out-of-school activities;
- accreditation courses were streamlined and focused on General Certificate of Secondary Education and Learning for Life and Work;
- peer observation of lessons is now in place and supplemented by the Performance Review and Staff Development evaluation; and
- a family support programme was introduced to help the young people and their families to engage better with education, and to facilitate their wider needs.

On 27 November 2008, the Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out a follow-up inspection, and the following are the most significant improvements since the original inspection:

- the teachers' planning has improved and there is a better focus on varying the teaching approaches, including the good use of information and communication technology to support learning, for example, in mathematics; the layout in some classrooms to enable small groups to work separately is a distraction for some of the young people; and
- the introduction of practical activities, for example, beauty therapy, catering and the "Eco Programme" enhance the learning opportunities and level of enjoyment of the young people.

The area which needs further improvement is:

- the need for the BELB to enter into discussion with the Department of Education (DE) to clarify fully the role of the Centre as an alternative education provider, and ensure that inappropriate referrals and the placement of young people in the Centre is more rigorously considered, and the numbers matched to the capacity of the accommodation.

## **CONCLUSION**

Good progress has been made in most of the areas for improvement identified during the original inspection. In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this Centre is now good. The Centre has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The follow-up inspection has identified one significant area of improvement still to be addressed; this matter has been drawn to the attention of DE.

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