



*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**



Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

The Pathways Project Belfast

January 2012

FOLLOW-UP TO THE STANDARD INSPECTION OF THE PATHWAYS PROJECT, BELFAST, BT14 6BP

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an Inspection of The Pathways Project Centres (Centres) in March 2009 and in most of the areas inspected, the quality of the education provided was satisfactory but significant areas for improvement in the curriculum, strategic management and the accommodation needed to be addressed. The Department of Education (DE) indicated at that time that a follow-up inspection would take place and that interim follow-up visits (IFUV) would evaluate the progress being made in bringing about the necessary improvements.

The inspection in March 2009 identified the main strengths in:

- the excellent working relationships at all levels and the mutual respect between the staff and the young people;
- the nurturing and supportive environment for the young people who attend the Project;
- the responsive and flexible response to meeting the needs of the pupils;
- the positive outcomes for most of the young people and the progress made by them in terms of their self-confidence, good attendance and ability to cope with their difficulties; and
- the very good tracking of the young people who had recently left.

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

- to develop a more strategic management structure and plan to ensure the long-term viability and development of the project;
- to increase the range of curriculum experiences, accreditation routes and vocational education available in partnership with local schools and others;
- to increase access to staff development organised by BELB, particularly those targeting issues relevant to AEP and special educational needs; and
- to improve the poor standard of accommodation that in general was not suitable for the delivery of a broad and balanced programme.

In the interval since the original inspection the following changes which affect the work of the centres have taken place.

- The Centres no longer employ essential skills tutors.
- The BELB have supported the Centres by providing appropriately qualified teachers of English and Mathematics on a part time basis.

The following are the most important improvements since the inspection:

- a small number of the young people now attend vocational education classes along with their peers from their mainstream school;

- the staff have had more access to BELB training;
- two of the three Centres have relocated to premises that are more suitable for the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum; and
- all of the young people have been allocated notebook computers with wireless connectivity.

Overall, the quality of education provided by Pathways remains satisfactory. The Centres have demonstrated evidence of improvement. The follow-up inspection has identified continuing areas for improvement in increasing the range of curriculum experience and accreditation routes available and to improve the accommodation in the remaining Centre to ensure it is suitable for the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum. The Education and Training Inspectorate will continue to monitor and report on the Centres' progress in continuing to address 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.eti.gov.uk

