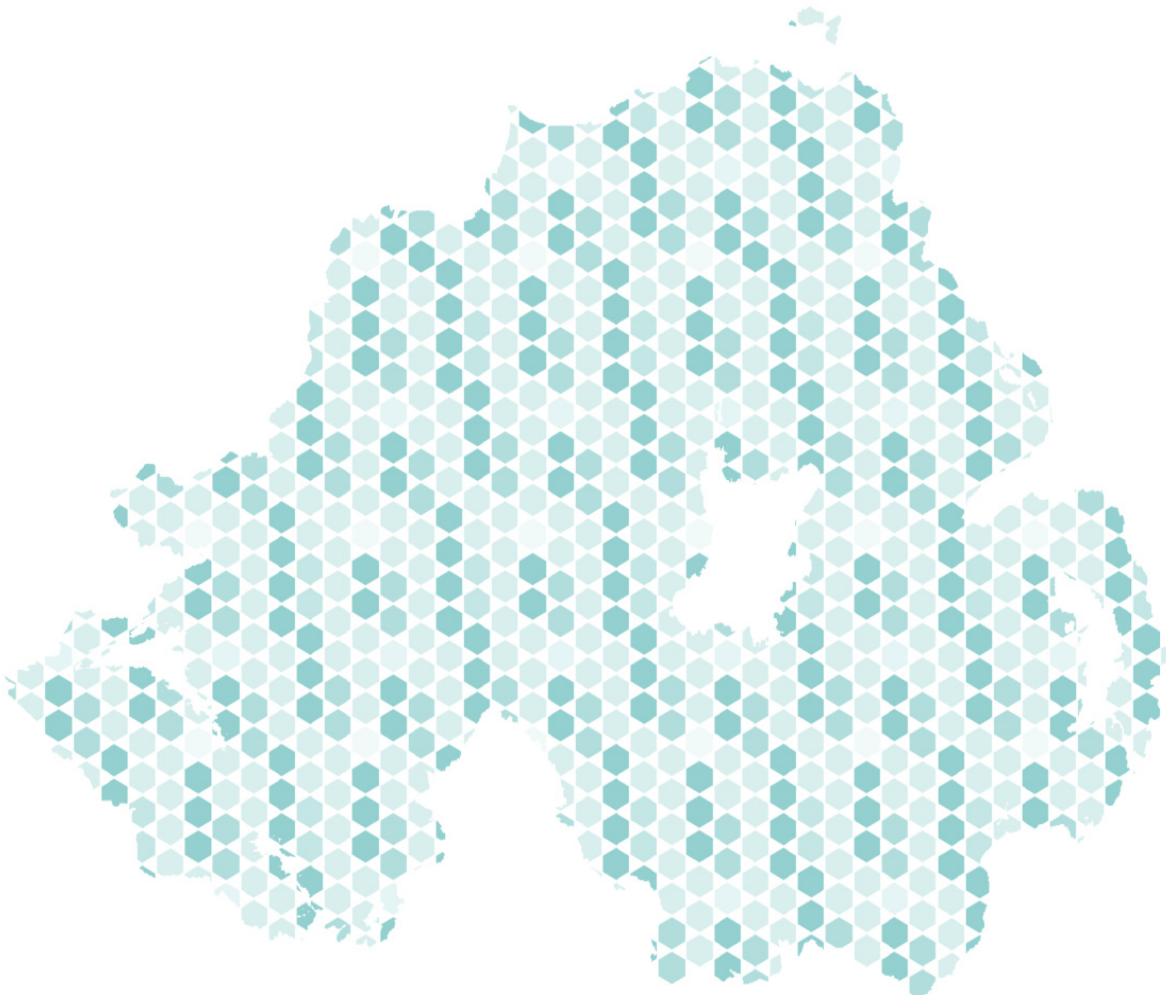


YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Centre-Based Provision in the
Newtownabbey Area

Report of an Inspection
in April 2012

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
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE REPORT

AYO	Area Youth Officer
DE	Department of Education
NEELB	North Eastern Education and Library Board
SYW	Senior Youth Worker

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1. CONTEXT

1.1 Newtownabbey is one of the three youth divisions within the Carrickfergus, Larne and Newtownabbey area of the NEELB. An Area Youth Officer manages the statutory and voluntary youth provision with the support of a SYW for whom he has line management responsibility. There are three statutory part-time youth centres which operate four evenings each week; **Rathcoole** centre operates a fifth evening. These centres are located in areas of greatest need including **Millgreen**, New Mossley and **Rathcoole**. In addition, there is a cohort of area-based youth workers who work in schools and in outreach and detached projects. They are managed separately at a local level by an area-based SYW (team leader) and at NEELB level by a senior youth officer.

1.2 For the purpose of this inspection, the Education and Training Inspectorate evaluated the work of two of the three centres. The New Mossley youth centre was not included in the inspection due to the absence of key staff. The management and leadership role of the SYW was evaluated only in relation to the two centres being inspected.

1.3 According to data provided by the centre staff, **Millgreen** has a population of 246 young people between 4-25 years of age: 38% of this age group attended the youth centre during 2010-11. The total membership for this period was 71, of which 65% were males under 15 years of age and the remaining were females under 15 years of age. The average nightly attendance during 2010-11 was 33, which represents 46% of the overall membership. The total membership in 2011-12 increased by 35, which represents 33% of the total membership for 2011-12. The centre is actively retaining older members as junior leaders and volunteers which accounts for 25% of the current membership. (See Appendix 2)

1.4 **Rathcoole** has a population of 1,590 young people between 4-25 years of age: 25% of young people between 7-20 years of age attended the youth centre during 2010-11. The total membership for this period was 180. The average nightly attendance during 2010-11 was 65, which represents 37% of the overall membership. The total membership in 2011-12 increased by 70, which represents 37% of the total membership for 2011-12. Due to new housing developments there has been an increase of young people. The centre is actively attracting new members and supports them well to participate in the programmes. (See Appendix 2)

1.5 The inspection team observed the work of the two centre leaders and of most of the part-time youth workers in ten youth work sessions. The team had discussions and meetings with the Assistant Senior Education Officer, the AYO, the SYW, the youth officer (Child Protection and Development) and the team leader. The inspection team examined a range of documentation provided by the organisation, including the service level agreements, records of monitoring visits, observed a supervision session and a review process, and attended an area team staff meeting.

2. FOCUS

The inspection focused on:

- the young people's achievements and standards;
- the quality of the provision; and
- the quality of the leadership and management provided by the NEELB and the centre leaders, including the processes for self-evaluation leading to improvement.

3. OVERALL FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

The quality of provision in the two centres inspected in Newtownabbey is good. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which the NEELB youth service has demonstrated the capacity to address

4. KEY FINDINGS

4.1 ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS

The quality of the young people's achievements and standards is good.

4.1.1 The young people attending **Millgreen** and **Rathcoole** youth centres demonstrate high levels of commitment and enjoyment; they participate regularly in relevant activity programmes and issue-based group work. They acquire appropriate knowledge and skills to make informed choices about their lifestyles, develop self-confidence and achieve high standards in a range of good quality activities.

4.1.2 The majority of the wide range of programmes are well planned to maximise the young people's participation, learning and development. The staff in both centres use their individual skills and experience effectively to extend the young people's achievements. The inspection team observed a very effective social networking and technology session in **Millgreen** youth centre that was designed to raise the awareness of the young people in how to protect themselves and use social media technology safely. The session was facilitated by the SYW (Information Communication Technology and Youth Information) and most of the young people attending the session demonstrated their ability to listen and interpret information accurately. In discussion with the inspection team, the parents reported the positive impact of the information on their children's understanding of internet safety and the appropriate use of social networking media.

4.1.3 The older members develop relevant skills and knowledge through well-planned activities in the youth centres and through completing specific training courses. Eleven young people from **Rathcoole** youth centre are completing the NEELB's Youth Development Course in preparation for assuming leadership roles within the centre. The inspection team observed the centre leader deliver this course effectively with the area youth worker; the young people participated well in the activities and group discussions and identified the progress in their learning at the end of the session. The young people recognise the connections with the formal curriculum through their increased confidence and improved communication and social skills as a result of their experience within the youth centre.

4.1.4 A small minority of young people attending both centres require additional support with their learning and attend education other than at school centres or special schools. The centre leaders seek specialist help for young people who may require additional support with aspects of their learning and managing their behaviour; they need to develop stronger links with other education providers.

4.2 QUALITY OF PROVISION

The quality of the provision for learning is good.

4.2.1 The quality of the youth work practice observed in both youth centres was consistently good. The varied range of relevant programmes is well matched to the identified needs of the young people.

4.2.2 The part-time youth workers have established a very good rapport with the young people. In both centres, the young people have good opportunities to express their views informally and to offer suggestions for future programmes; the staff take their views and ideas into account when developing programmes and activities. The issue-based work, such as the young women's programme in **Millgreen** and the consultation on the **Rathcoole** youth strategy, is carefully designed to address relevant social issues and to enable the young people to apply their skills and knowledge.

4.2.3 The part-time youth leaders in **Millgreen** have recognised the need to develop an advisory group comprising of parents and young people to inform and influence decision-making and to create a greater awareness of the centre's work in the wider community. Both centres are represented by senior members on the Newtownabbey Youth Council.

4.2.4 There are very effective links with external organisations including the Youth Education Social Inclusion Partnership Programme (YESIP) and the Northern Ireland Youth Forum. Through YESIP a group of people from Newtownabbey have been trained as peer educators to provide a culture and identity programme in **Rathcoole** youth centre. This programme is skills-based and aims to equip the young people to acknowledge their own cultural identity and to appreciate other cultures and traditions.

4.2.5 The programmes are planned to be enjoyable with learning outcomes that support the personal and social development of the young people. The part-time staff collate good evidence of the evaluations and contributions of the young people; however, they need to develop more effective systems to assess the outcomes of each session to inform future planning.

4.3 PASTORAL CARE

The quality of pastoral care is outstanding.

4.3.1 The young people in **Millgreen** and **Rathcoole** youth centres demonstrate high levels of respect for themselves and for the part-time youth workers; they participate fully in the activities and programmes designed to meet their needs.

4.3.2 The young people and their parents engaged willingly with the inspection team and spoke highly of the part-time youth workers and the outstanding pastoral care provided in **Millgreen** and **Rathcoole** youth centres.

4.3.3 The part-time staff in both centres know the young people and their families well and are aware of the social issues that may have a negative impact on the young people. The staff provide valuable advice and support to all of the young people.

4.3.4 In discussions with the inspection team, the young people reported that they feel safe in the centres and are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety and well-being.

4.4 SAFEGUARDING

The centres have very good comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children and young people. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education (DE).

4.5 LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management provided by the NEELB and the centre leaders is good.

4.5.1 The current business plan for the NEELB youth service and the overt links to other education providers demonstrate a holistic response to the identified needs of the young people. The plan makes good use of the five priorities identified by DE to ensure that 'every learner fulfils her or his full potential at each stage of development.'

4.5.2 The Area Youth Officer, in consultation with the team, is devising a new area plan. The plans for centre-based provision need to include a longer term strategic plan with clear outcomes linked to identified need and a robust monitoring system to enable more effective evaluation.

4.5.3 The Area Youth Officer knows the areas well and maintains effective links with local politicians and relevant stakeholders to highlight the needs of the young people, and to secure additional resources. For example, he represents the youth service on the Rathcoole Youth Strategy sub-group which is funded through Neighbourhood Renewal. He is well informed by the SYW who has a good understanding of the staff, and who provides good leadership and sets high standards for the centre-based provision.

4.5.4 The current quality assurance process is not demonstrating clearly enough the good learning outcomes for the young people. The Senior Youth Worker and the centre leaders have identified the need to demonstrate more effectively the young people's achievements. The Club Management System can be used to analyse further the relevant data to identify the young people's achievements and the trends and patterns of attendance and retention. The Area Youth Officer and the SYW need to review the effectiveness of the quality assurance procedures and to include more specific measurable targets in the centre-based plans.

4.5.5 The Senior Youth Worker provides good quality support and development for the centre-based staff and fulfils her role effectively. The current managerial aspect of her role does not include sufficient monitoring and evaluation of the centre-based provision.

4.5.6 The centre leaders provide good curricular leadership and management and high quality provision, which meet the needs of the young people. They have established and sustain very good working relationships with the part-time staff, the young people and their parents. The centre leaders are hard-working, enthusiastic and motivated to improve the quality of the provision for all the young people.

4.5.7 Almost all of the part-time staff understand the role and purpose of youth work as a result of relevant unit-based training and have completed suitable youth work qualifications. They demonstrate dedication and commitment to the young people and their local communities.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The quality of provision in the two centres inspected in Newtownabbey is good; **Millgreen** and **Rathcoole** youth centres have important strengths in most of their youth work provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which the NEELB has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the progress on the area for improvement.

5.2 The main area for improvement is:

- to develop more robust strategic planning to include more effective monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes for the young people in the centre-based provision.

HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES

- The fire doors in the **Millgreen** youth centre require inspection by a competent person to ensure that they comply with the relevant safety regulations.
- The electrical sockets within the hair and beauty salon in the **Rathcoole** youth centre have been positioned very close to the sink units and present an electrical hazard.

APPENDIX 2

Total Membership for Millgreen Youth centre

Age group	4-9		10-15		16-18		19 +		Numbers involved in outreach/ detached	TOTAL
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
2008/09	19	12	47	24	0	1		0		103
2009/10	17	29	16	10	28	2		0		102
2010/11	7	0	39	24	1	0		0		71
2011/12	7	6	37	29	13	14		0		106

Total Membership for Rathcoole Youth Centre

Age group	4-9		10-15		16-18		19 +		Numbers involved in outreach/ detached	TOTAL
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
2008/09	25	17	49	39	22	12	2	0		166
2009/10	30	26	56	44	23	13	2	0		194
2010/11	26	16	55	48	21	12	2	0		180
2011/12	43	31	74	54	29	14	2	0		247

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