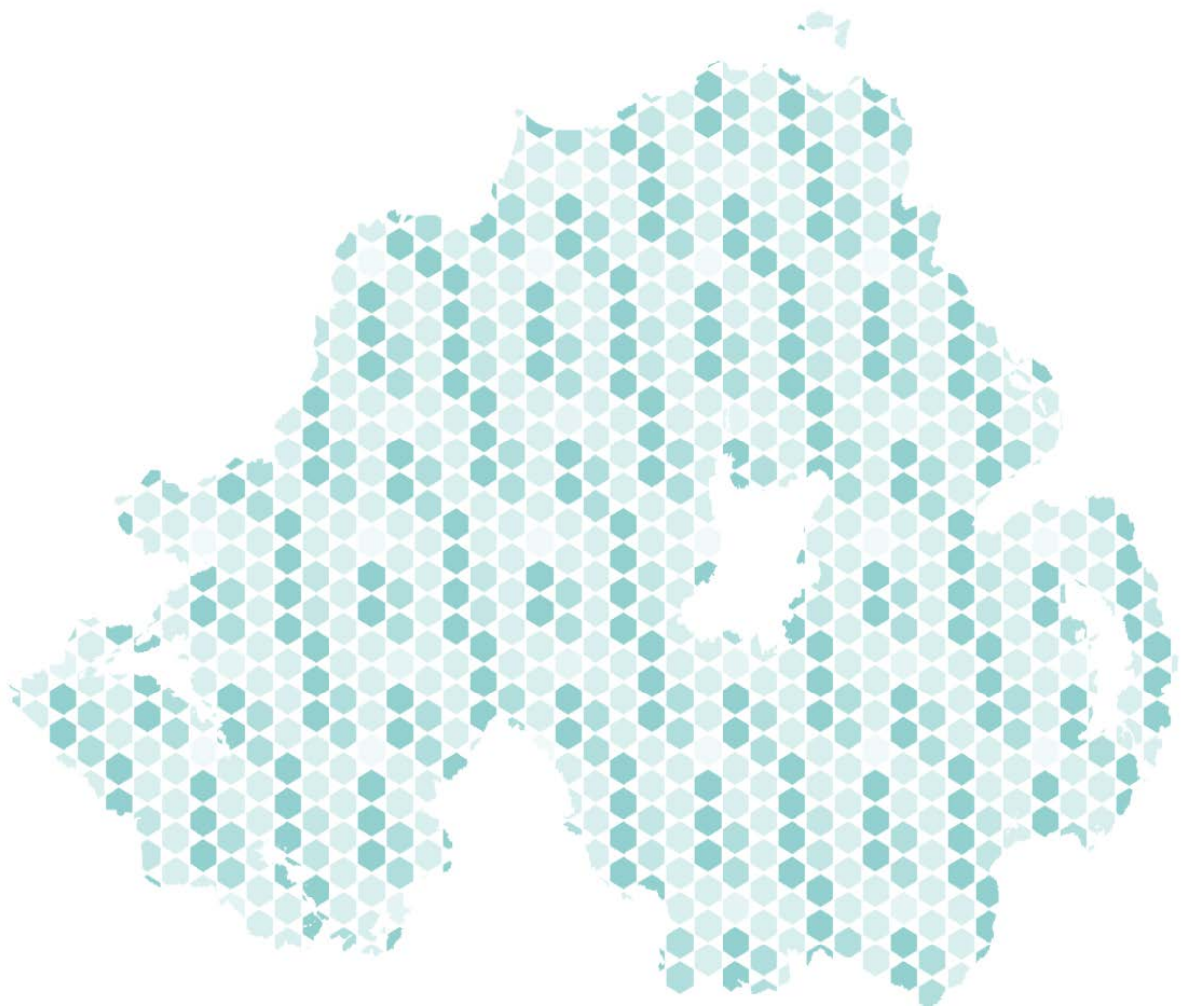


YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Charter Youth Club, Belfast

Report of an inspection in
November 2013



Providing Inspection Services for

Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure



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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:

PERFORMANCE LEVEL
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

1. Context

Charter Youth Club is a full-time youth centre, located in the Sandy Row area of south Belfast. The centre is managed by the Belfast Education and Library Board and there is one full-time youth support worker, six part-time paid youth workers and twelve volunteers.

The centre is open on five evenings and two afternoons each week, and has a current membership of 130 young people, aged 4-18 years. The membership of the centre has increased over the last three years, particularly in the numbers of young people aged 13-15 years. During the inspection, the average attendance at evening sessions was 53 young people.

2. Focus of Inspection

The inspection focused on:

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

3. Overall finding

Overall Effectiveness	Satisfactory
Achievements and Standards	Satisfactory
Provision for Learning	Satisfactory
Leadership and Management	Satisfactory

4. Achievements and standards

- The young people have a strong sense of belonging to their centre, and are keen to make a positive contribution to their local community. They have completed successfully a range of environmental campaigns, which have improved the appearance of the local area.
- The more senior young people acquire new skills and knowledge through their active involvement in programmes which engage their interests. In particular, they enjoy participating in group discussions, residential programmes and cookery projects. Although there are limited structured opportunities for the young people to formally discuss their ideas, they cite good examples of how the staff encourage and take account of their views and opinions.
- Through the young people's participation in Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) programmes, they develop a better understanding of themselves, and their attitudes towards others. They have built friendships with young people from other areas of Belfast, and they recognise how they have benefitted personally and socially from this engagement.

- A small number of the older young people are engaged in volunteering in the centre, and provide good role models to the younger members. The staff recognise the benefits of engaging these young people in a wider range of responsibilities, to develop further their social, personal and employability skills.

5. Provision

- Most of the youth work sessions observed were good or satisfactory, with almost one-half evaluated as satisfactory. The staff provide a good range of issue-based and recreational programmes for the more senior young people. The junior members, who attend the evening sessions from the age of four, require better structured activities and more robust supervision to engage and maintain their interests.
- In the best practice, the activities and projects were relevant to the needs of the young people; and the issues explored included community awareness and the benefits of healthy lifestyles. In those sessions, which were less than good, the group work skills of the youth workers were underdeveloped and they did not engage and facilitate the young people sufficiently.
- The quality of the pastoral care is satisfactory. In discussions with the inspection team, the young people reported that they feel safe in the centre, and are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety and well-being. Those parents, who spoke to the inspection team, stated that their children are well looked after, cared for and enjoy participating in the programmes. The centre has a code of behaviour for the young people; however, challenging behaviours were often not addressed fully or consistently. More effective procedures need to be followed by the staff to enable all of the young people to enjoy more fully their experiences.
- During the inspection, there was a poor level of cleanliness throughout the youth centre environment; equipment and furniture are broken, and there are significant issues with the flooring in the main hall. It is imperative that these issues are addressed immediately to provide a safe and appropriate environment for the young people and staff.

6. Leadership and management

- The staff and managers of the provision have a sound understanding of the needs of the area, and are committed to improving the provision in the interests of all of the young people. The centre's action plan reflects accurately the issues facing the young people and their local community. However, the planning for the centre and the individual programmes by staff should detail more overtly the progression of the young people's skills, knowledge and understanding within a clearly defined timeframe.
- The monitoring and evaluation of the overall provision needs to be more thorough and focus on the outcomes, which the young people achieve as a result of their participation in the programmes. The young people need to be involved more fully in the planning and evaluation of the programmes.

- The staff are dedicated and have a strong collegial approach to their work. They face particular challenges through the low levels of staffing, which is having a significant impact on the delivery of the centre's action plan. While the staff have completed a range of courses on topics, such as safeguarding and CRED, additional professional support is required to help the staff improve the quality of their planning and group facilitation skills.
- The centre has very good external links and partnerships within the local community. The homework study group is an effective example of a partnership, which is helping to address issues of low educational attainment among the young people. One-fifth of the young people attending the youth centre participates in this programme. The involvement of students from the nearby universities is a particularly innovative feature; they work alongside the youth workers to guide and support the young people with their learning.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the centre has comprehensive arrangements for safeguarding children and young people. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

7. Conclusion

In most of the areas inspected, the quality of education provided in this youth centre is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement, which need to be addressed if the needs of all the young people are to be met more effectively. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the youth centre's progress in addressing the areas for improvement over a 12-24 month period.

The main areas for improvement are the need for:

- the professional development of the staff in youth work approaches, to improve their facilitation skills when working with groups of young people;
- the staff to manage consistently and effectively those young people who present with challenging behaviours; and
- the staff and the managers to plan for, and evaluate more effectively, the outcomes of the learning experiences for the young people.

Membership

Age group	4-9		10-15		16-18		19 +		TOTAL
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
2011/12	10	27	30	26	*	*			104
2012/13	20	26	31	30	*	*			113
2013/14	14	22	42	42	*	7			130

* denotes numbers of five or fewer

APPENDIX 2

Accredited leadership programmes for young people

Title and date of course including accreditation details	Number of young people enrolled	Number of young people completed
Sept 2012 Reach training project:	14	
Essential Skills Literacy		12
Essential Skills Numeracy		12
ICT level 2		11
FASA level 1		12
Sept 2013 Reach training project :	15	
Essential Skills Literacy		15
Essential Skills Numeracy		15
ICT level 2		15
FASA level 1		ongoing

* denotes numbers of five or fewer

APPENDIX 3

Leadership programmes for young people (non-accredited)

Date	Programme	Duration	Numbers of young people involved	Age range
Sep 2012	Good relations project	6 weeks	10	11-15 years
Sep 2012	Sports development project football coaching	6 weeks	16	11-15 years
Nov 2012	Environmental awareness project with Wildlife Trust	4 weeks	16	9 -12 years
Dec 2012	Personal development self-awareness project	4 weeks	12	10-12 years
Jan 2013	Good relations project (CRED)	14 weeks	10	13-16 years
Jan 2013	Personal development young males project	12 weeks	20	11-15 years
Jan 2013	FASA drugs awareness & poster design project	9 weeks	15	12-16 years
Feb 2013	Good relations growing respect project	16 weeks	10	10-12 years
April 2013	Active citizenship re-imaging our community project	6 weeks	16	11-15 years
Sep 2013	Four Province Challenge	20 weeks	14	13-16 years
Nov 2013	Who cares We care community/environmental awareness project	6 – 8 weeks	17	11-15 years
Nov 2013	Fit for Life personal development and health and well-being project	7 weeks	12	11-15 years

APPENDIX 4

Accredited and non-accredited staff training

Title and date of course including accreditation details	Number of staff enrolled	Percentage completing successfully
Trainee leader OCN level 1 2011	*	100%
Youth Work OCN level 2 2013	*	100%
Child protection BELB 2011	6	100%
Child protection BELB designated officer training 2013	*	100%
First Aid 2011	*	100%
First Aid 2012	*	100%
IFI coaching level 1	*	100%
CRED BELB	*	100%
Finance BELB	*	100%
Educational visits BELB 2013	*	100%
Fire Safety Alpha Fire Protection	*	100%

* denotes numbers of five or fewer

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