

YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Colin Youth Development
Centre, Belfast

Report of an Inspection
in May 2013



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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
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

1. Context

1.1 The Colin Youth Development Centre, originally known as Poleglass Youth Centre, was built in 1984. The centre is situated within the Lisburn City Council area; and is managed by the South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB).

1.2 The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency places the centre within the top 10% of the most socio-economic deprived areas in Northern Ireland. The area has a population of 30,000 living within a four mile radius; and almost half of the population is under the age of 16 years. According to the figures supplied by the centre, the current membership is 1783, which represents 23% of the local youth population. In the past two years, while there has been a decline in the number of young people attending the youth centre, there has been an increase in the number of those young people involved in outreach and detached youth work. (See Table 1 in the appendices for further details).

1.3 The centre is 'the hub' for three types of youth provision, which have evolved due to the changing needs of the young people and the local community. As well as a full-time youth centre located within the main building, the Colin Detached Project was established to respond to those young people not engaging in youth services. Furthermore, the Lagmore Area Project was established in 2004 to provide for the large number of young people living in the outskirts of the Colin area. The overall provision is managed by the Colin Area Co-ordinator and each project is managed by a full-time youth worker.

1.4 The centre is open six evenings each week, and provides afternoon and weekend activities. In addition to the centre-based programmes, the staff provide extensive personal development programmes offsite and residential visits.

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, including the processes for self-evaluation leading to improvement.

3. Overall findings of the inspection

In the areas inspected, the quality of provision and the quality of pastoral care in this youth centre is very good. The centre has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

Summary of key findings

Overall performance level	Very good
Contributory performance levels:	
Achievements and standards	Very good
Provision for learning	Very good
Leadership and management	Very good

4. Key findings

4.1 Achievements and standards

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

4.1.1 The young people have a strong sense of belonging to the centre and enjoy participating in a wide range of programmes, which are well matched to their age and interests. They are enthusiastic and interact confidently and willingly with their peers and adults.

4.1.2 Throughout the programmes, the young people show high levels of motivation and commitment. They acquire new interests, skills and knowledge through their involvement in a range of accredited and group work programmes, which support well their personal and social development. In discussions with the inspection team, the young people were friendly, welcoming and engaged readily in conversations.

4.1.3 Across the provision, the young people volunteer to assist the staff and are highly committed to supporting the programmes and contributing purposefully to their local community. Through a number of youth fora, they demonstrate high levels of participation, willingness to accept responsibility and demonstrate very good leadership skills. The younger members aspire to assume leadership roles as they progress through the various projects. In the last three years, 128 young people have achieved relevant accredited training in various courses. (See Table 2 in the appendices for further details).

4.1.4 The young people value the group work programmes, where they discuss a range of issues which impact on their lives. They are highly motivated and are developing effective strategies to become more resilient and to respond positively to challenging situations.

4.2 Quality of provision

The quality of the provision for learning is very good.

4.2.1 The quality of all of the youth work sessions observed ranged from good to very good. The dedicated staff provide a broad and balanced range of recreational and issue-based programmes relevant to the diverse needs of the young people. Throughout the programmes, the core values of equity, diversity and interdependence are well promoted by all of the staff.

4.2.2 The staff provide an appropriately strong focus to improve the health and physical well-being of the young people. In particular, they deliver regular programmes to promote sport and healthy lifestyles which are well-suited to the needs of the young people. The young people are continually encouraged to develop their skills and attitudes and have good opportunities for progression.

4.2.3 The staff prepare well for and understand the value of group work to help the young people reflect on and understand some of the complex issues in their local community. In those sessions, which were well facilitated, the group work challenged and stimulated purposeful discussions among the young people.

4.2.4 The detached and outreach provision is well planned and of a high standard. The young people progress into a variety of group work programmes, which are skilfully led by the enthusiastic staff.

4.2.5 The full-time youth workers are effective practitioners with a sound understanding of the issues facing the local and wider community. They are committed strongly to improving the life chances for all young people and set high standards and expectations for them to achieve to their full potential.

4.2.6 The staff demonstrate a strong pastoral focus in all areas of their work and know the young people and their families well. They maintain an inclusive ethos which contributes to a positive learning environment. During the inspection the behaviour of the young people was consistently of a high standard; they enjoy very good working relationships with both the staff and their peers. 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, endorsed the high quality of the pastoral care provided by the staff, and were extremely positive about the very good quality of the programmes, including the after-school and summer provision.

4.2.7 On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the centre has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children and young people. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

4.3. Leadership and management

The quality of the leadership and management is very good.

4.3.1 The senior management and staff demonstrate a commitment to excellence and quality improvement at all levels of the provision. The co-ordinator provides excellent strategic leadership and has engaged successfully and supported a range of youth providers within the area. Her planning is well conceived and reflects accurately the needs of the young people and the wider community. She provides strong curricular leadership, and has a very clear vision for the future development of 'the hub'.

4.3.2 The centre has robust and effective procedures to maintain and develop further the high standards of youth provision. The staff have completed a comprehensive needs assessment for each project and make effective use of this information to plan their curriculum delivery. Self evaluation practice is well established across the projects and continues to be reviewed and improved.

4.3.3 The staff at all levels prioritise the progression of the young people. They have devised and maintained an effective tracking system, which is in the early stages of demonstrating the young people's progression across a range of programmes. This information is used well to celebrate the young people's achievements throughout the year, and is shared with their families and the wider community.

4.3.4 The SEELB continues to make a significant financial and management investment in this youth provision. The young people benefit greatly from the appropriate and extensive resources. The centre has strong local partnerships with relevant organisations and the full-time youth workers advocate well on behalf of the young people to the wider community. The very good collaboration with other local youth providers and community services helps to avoid any duplication and maximises the resources available to support the young people.

5. Conclusion

5.1 In the areas inspected, the quality of provision and the quality of pastoral care in this youth centre is very good. The centre has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

APPENDIX

Table 1 Total Membership 2009-2013

Age group	4 - 9		10 -15		16 - 18		19-25		Numbers involved in outreach/ detached	TOTAL
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
2009/10	110	78	304	210	117	68	37	19	875	1818
2010/11	120	102	340	258	129	99	24	8	1130	2210
2011/12	66	42	152	90	70	49	16	24	987	1496
Current membership	56	45	163	128	98	58	23	12	1200	1783

**Table 2 Leadership training completed by young people and youth workers
September 2010-2013**

Title of course including accreditation details	Number of young people enrolled	Number of adults enrolled	Percentage successfully completing
September 2010 – June 2011			
OCN Level 1 – Leadership in Youth Work	18	-	100%
OCN Level 2 – Introduction to Youth Work	-	-	-
OCN Level 3 – Programme Development	-	-	-
September 2011 – June 2012			
OCN Level 1 – Peer Mentoring	12	-	100%
OCN Level 2 – Introduction to Youth Work	-	9	88%
OCN Level 3 – Programme Development	-	7	100%
Area Based Training Residential Oct 2011		14	100%
OCN Level 2 Understanding Diversity (Youth Work in Schools/IFI)	24	-	awaiting verification
OCN Level 1 – Active Citizenship	15		awaiting verification
Outdoor Education Hill walking Level 1		3	100%
Outdoor Education Hill walking Level 2		2	100%
September 2012 – June 2013			
OCN Level 1 – Leadership in Youth Work	17	-	100%
OCN Level 1 – Peer Mentoring	8	-	100%
OCN Level 2 – Introduction to Youth Work	-	1	100%
OCN Level 3 – Programme Development	-	3	100%
OCN Level 2 Prejudice and Discrimination (Youth Work in Schools/IFI)	24	-	ongoing
Area Based Training Residential Oct 2012	-	12	100%
Presidents Award	10	-	ongoing
Child Protection Training Jan 2013		8	100%

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