

# YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Doyle Youth Club, Belfast

Report of an Inspection  
in April 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:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

## 1. Context

1.1 The Doyle Youth Club is a Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB) youth provision, located within the Short Strand area of east Belfast. The centre was established in 1990 and a new building was opened in 1995.

1.2 The full-time youth worker is in post since the centre opened and is managed by a senior youth officer of the BELB. The team of part-time staff include: one 25 hours a week youth worker; 5 part-time youth work staff; and 22 volunteer staff. The centre is open six evenings each week and provides afternoon and weekend activities. In addition to the centre-based programmes, the youth workers provide extensive community relations and sporting programmes at other venues.

1.3 According to figures provided by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, the centre is located within the top 10% of the most socio-economic deprived areas in Northern Ireland. The full-time youth worker reports that the current membership of 445 young people is approximately 60% of the local youth population. During the inspection, the average nightly attendance of young people was 117; just less than three-quarters were young males.

The appendix at the end of the report provides further details of the statistical data.

## 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
<b>Contributory performance levels:</b>	
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 their centre. They acquire new interests, skills and knowledge, which support well their personal and social development. In particular, the older members accept readily opportunities to volunteer alongside their youth workers to enable the development of new programme ideas.

4.1.2 In all of the programmes, the young people have respectful relationships with one another and with the staff. In discussions with the Education and Training Inspectorate, they were friendly, welcoming and engaged confidently.

4.1.3 The centre has a number of youth committees which involve young people in the management of their programmes; and in addition, give them good opportunities to work together and to assume leadership roles. Throughout the programmes, they participate enthusiastically and show high levels of motivation and commitment.

4.1.4 The young people value highly the group work programmes, which focus appropriately on current and relevant issues. The discussions are lively and reflect the young people's needs and opinions. In the community relations programmes, the young people talk with maturity and understanding about the issues impacting on their local community. As a result of their engagement with young people from other communities, they are better informed and have a clearer understanding of how to meet their own needs and those of others.

4.1.5 In the last two years, 88 young people successfully completed relevant training courses and an additional 14 have achieved accreditation in youth leadership and soccer coaching.

### 4.2 Quality of provision

#### **The quality of the provision for learning is very good.**

4.2.1 The quality of the youth work sessions observed ranged from satisfactory to very good; most of the practice observed was of a good or better quality. The long-standing and dedicated part-time and volunteer staff provide a broad and balanced range of recreational and issue-based programmes. The centre has a strong history of local volunteers, who give generously of their time and skills to contribute to the personal and social development of the young people.

4.2.2 The staff have an appropriately strong focus on improving the health and physical well-being of the young people. In particular, they provide regular sporting and healthy eating programmes, which are well matched to the interests of the young people. Through a high standard of coaching, the young people are encouraged to develop their skills and talents, and have good opportunities for progression and to celebrate their achievements.

4.2.3 In those sessions, where the group work was most effective, the staff skilfully stimulated challenging discussions among the young people. The full-time youth worker facilitates purposeful community relations programmes, which benefit young people from the Doyle Youth Club and other local youth provision. As a consequence, the responses from the young people are thoughtful, and they are able to reflect on and understand many of the complex issues which they face.

4.2.4 The staff have a strong pastoral focus; they are committed to the continuous improvement of their area and know the young people, their families and the local community well. The young people value highly the accepting and supportive ethos which the staff promote in all of the programmes. In discussions, the young people stated 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.

4.2.5 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 full-time youth worker is a reflective, hard-working and committed, leader. Supported by the BELB senior youth officer, a dedicated staff team and well-involved local community representatives, he provides effective curricular leadership to meet the challenging needs of the young people and the local community. In addition, he has a sound understanding of the issues facing the local and wider community in east Belfast and is strongly committed to improving community relations across the area.

4.3.2 The centre has strong local partnerships with relevant organisations. The full-time youth worker advocates well on behalf of the young people and the wider community. The work of the centre is well connected to other community services in the area; this contributes to effective community collaboration and dissemination of resources.

4.3.3 The yearly unit plan is informed by the needs of the young people and the wider community. It helps to guide the work of the centre; and prioritises appropriately the further development of the part-time staff, and the need for a more formalised advisory role for local community representatives.

4.3.4 The facilities for group work in the centre are used well, but are very limited. Many of the programmes are delivered in other locations, and in particular, the use of neutral venues for community relations work is appropriate. The staff make the best use of the space available; however, the large numbers of young people attending would benefit from additional space for the wide-ranging activities provided.

### 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

### Total Membership

Year	4-9 years		10-15 yerars		16-18 years		19-25 years		Numbers involved in outreach/ detached	Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
2009/10	41	51	123	59	49	19	8	0	approx 50	400
2010/11	75	45	125	65	50	20	0	0	approx 140	520
2011/12	60	40	145	100	20	5	1	0	60	431
2012/13	66	57	109	70	45	32	6	0	60 ongoing	445

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