

YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Pennyburn Youth Centre,
Londonderry

Report of an Inspection
in November 2011

CONTENTS

Section	Page
1. CONTEXT	1
2. FOCUS	1
3. OVERALL FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION	1
4. KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION	1
5. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	3
6. CONCLUSION	4
APPENDICES	

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

ASEO	Assistant Senior Education Officer
AYO	Area Youth Officer
DE	Department of Education
ETI	Education and Training Inspectorate
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
NI	Northern Ireland
SYO	Senior Youth Officer
SYW	Senior Youth Worker
WELB	Western Education and Library Board
YWIC	Youth Worker-in-Charge

1. CONTEXT

1.1 Pennyburn Youth Centre (the centre) is a full-time voluntary youth centre, purpose-built in 1975, situated in the Buncrana Road area of Derry city and funded by the WELB. The centre is governed by a management committee who employ a full-time youth worker, six part-time staff and three volunteers. A key part-time staff member is employed for 15 hours a week in addition to 12.5 hours for administration.

1.2 The centre is open 46 weeks of the year and provides structured youth work sessions on five evenings and three afternoons. A variety of local youth and community organisations use the centre at other times. The staff have developed strong links with other educational providers including: the Foyle Language school; the North-West Academy; and a strong partnership with Foyleview special school, which is in close proximity to the centre.

1.3 According to the figures supplied by the centre, the membership at the time of the inspection was 231; a downward trend from 349 registered members in 2009/10 and 270 in 2010/11 (Appendix 1). During the inspection a core group of 20 senior members attended the centre each evening and on two evenings a group of 22 junior members attended well-organised football training. The centre-based activities are significantly dominated by the male members. The staff provided little analysis to account for the decrease in overall membership and the lack of female members. There is an integrated youth work session involving young people with learning disabilities and the senior members on one of the evenings.

2. FOCUS

2.1 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 processes for self-evaluation leading to improvement.

2.2 The appendices at the end of the report provide further details of the statistical data.

3. OVERALL FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

In most of the areas inspected, the quality of youth work provided in this centre is satisfactory. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in management which need to be addressed if the needs of all the young people are to be met more effectively.

4. KEY FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

4.1 ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS

The quality of achievements and standards is good.

4.1.1 The young people participate actively in the programmes and activities and gain a good range of personal and social skills that develop their interests. In the diversity training session observed, the young people responded well to the discussions and communicated effectively with their peers in the exploration of values and beliefs.

4.1.2 In most of the group work sessions observed, the young people accepted responsibility to lead discussions, took decisions that contributed positively to the overall group task and managed their own learning well. The young people felt sufficiently confident to share their views with the youth workers about the content, timing and organisation of the planned programme. The staff need to develop further peer and group evaluation in order to allow the young people to reflect on the good learning.

4.1.3 The core group of senior members who attend regularly benefit from the good opportunities for personal development provided by the YWIC and the key part-time youth worker. The good range of personal development courses is tailored to meet the individual needs of the young people of different academic and social backgrounds. Information provided by the centre indicates that approximately 100 young people in the past twelve months have achieved recognition and accreditation in appropriate leadership training (Appendix 2).

4.1.4 The senior members display an openness and sensitivity to the needs and aspirations of their peers, in particular to those with additional learning needs and from different cultural backgrounds. The staff are working towards the further development of participative structures within and beyond the centre. Key priorities for 2011-12 are the increased participation by young people in the management of the centre, and the recruitment of members to represent the views of their peers at the Foyle youth council.

4.1.5 The centre promotes a strong ethos of inclusion. The very good links with Foyleview special school have resulted in integrated and mutually beneficial youth provision for young adults with additional learning needs and disabilities. The pupils observed during the Foyleview special school sessions engaged fully with the youth workers and clearly enjoyed the activities and programme. The interactive sessions included the good use of sensory and visual approaches for those young people with communication difficulties to engage them more effectively. The interactive whiteboard was used well in the plenary to reinforce the key learning points of the session. The youth workers and teachers know the young people well, plan effectively and work together to promote their development.

4.2 PROVISION FOR LEARNING

The quality of the provision for learning is good.

4.2.1 The quality of the youth work sessions observed ranged from very good to satisfactory, with the majority of the sessions evaluated as being good. In the more successful sessions, the staff plan well for the individual sessions with clear outcomes; the young people engage fully in the learning process; and they are aware of how the skills being developed relate to those learned in formal educational and work-related settings. The workers need to link the good quality delivery and individual session planning more strategically to the centre's action plan and to the WELB youth service area development plan.

4.2.2 The small staff team, at least half of whom have worked in the centre for over 25 years, work well together. They use their considerable youth work experience to provide valuable support to the young people whom they know well. The young people appreciate their interest and good level of support.

4.2.3 The youth workers respond well to the learning needs of the young people, particularly in the 15+ age range, by providing programmes that reflect well the youth work curriculum. The curricular areas on offer need to be developed further to ensure a greater balance of gender- and age-appropriate programmes and to attract other potential members.

4.2.4 The centre has developed appropriate links with a range of organisations, including North West Academy, the Foyle language school, an Irish language group and a long-established link with a local soccer team. The centre needs to exploit further the community links to enhance the youth work provision for a greater number of young people. There is also a need to evaluate more robustly the added value and outcomes of the links: for example, the role and purpose of the small number of foreign language students who work alongside the youth work staff.

4.2.5 The youth workers who deliver personal development programmes use good evaluation methods including peer assessment, to identify the learning that has taken place. The centre has achieved local and national awards for specific project work, including anti-racism and health-related programmes. The staff need to collate and analyse the considerable amount of evidence, including written evaluations from young people, in a more systematic way so that it informs better the necessary actions to promote improvement.

4.3 CARE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

The quality of the care, guidance and support of young people is very good.

4.3.1 There is a caring environment that is valued by the young people, parents and the wider community. The young people value the advice, support and guidance given by staff. In many cases the young people spoke positively about the advice for specific mental health-related issues.

4.3.2 The young people demonstrate high levels of respect for themselves and for the youth workers and participate fully in personal and development programmes that meet their needs.

4.3.3 In discussions with the young people they reported that they feel safe in the centre. The young people are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their well-being and safety.

4.4 SAFEGUARDING

The centre has satisfactory arrangements in place for the safeguarding of children and young people. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by DE, but the following area needs to be addressed: the centre needs to ensure that the designated youth worker and designated member of the management committee receive updated training.

5. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of the leadership and management is inadequate.

5.1 The governance of the youth centre is inadequate. There are few appropriately recorded formal meetings of the management committee in the last twelve months. The specific roles and responsibilities of the management committee, the YWIC and the key part-time worker are not clear at strategic and operational levels. The YWIC needs to assume proportionate responsibility for key administrative tasks, including written evaluative reports and the analysis of relevant data of, for example, membership and attendance trends.

5.2 The acting chairperson of the management committee has been in post for a short period of time and demonstrates an understanding of the current challenges involved in the management of the centre. She is working appropriately with the WELB to ensure that committee members receive the necessary management training in order to carry out their key functions effectively. The YWIC and the management committee need to work together towards the more effective governance and management of the centre.

5.3 The current unit development plan includes realistic objectives and targets across four relevant thematic areas. However, the process for strategic self-evaluation leading to improvement is not rigorous enough. For example, the qualitative and quantitative data are not analysed to inform future planning. The views of the young people need to be represented more effectively in the development plan.

5.4 The good pastoral leadership of the YWIC ensures that all of the staff work well to meet the needs of the young people. The YWIC needs to ensure that there are regular formally-recorded staff meetings to promote further the development and training opportunities for all of the staff.

5.5 The key part-time youth worker supports the YWIC well to deliver good quality youth work programmes. She provides a valuable service to the centre and carries out her duties with dedication and commitment to the young people.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 In most of the areas inspected the quality of provision in this centre is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in management 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 centre's progress in addressing the areas for improvement over a 12-24 month period.

6.2 The main areas for improvement are the need:

- for the YWIC and the management committee to work together more effectively to improve the governance and management of the centre; and
- to underpin the actions to promote improvement with a more rigorous analysis and interpretation of the relevant qualitative and quantitative data.

APPENDIX 1

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP

Age group	4-9		10-15		16-18		19+		Numbers involved in outreach/detached	TOTAL
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
2009/10	60	46	76	63	56	26	10	12		349
2010/11	40	28	75	40	56	15	10	6		270
2011/12	38	16	70	27	40	18	18	4		231

APPENDIX 2

LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROVIDED FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND YOUTH WORKERS IN THE YOUTH CENTRE FROM SEPTEMBER 2010

Title of course including accreditation details	Number of young people enrolled	Number of adults enrolled	Percentage successfully completing
Princes Trust XL Bronze	14		100%
Princes Trust XL Silver	10		100%
Princes Trust XL Gold	9		100%
Asdan Wider Key Skills	6		100%
Know your rights	10		100%
Senior Member Training	10		100%
Anti Bullying	10		100%
Anti Suicide	11		100%
Introduction to Diversity	6		100%
Personal Development	8		100%
Summer Scheme Volunteer Training	15	2	100%
OCN Level 2 in youth work		2	Ongoing
OCN Level 2 Diversity	20		Ongoing
OCN Level One Diversity	13		Ongoing

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