

EDUCATION OTHER THAN AT SCHOOL INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Redburn Alternative Education
Provision

Report of an Inspection
in March 2013



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Inspection methods and evidence base

The inspection evaluations are based on evidence gained from 6 lesson observations, from scrutiny of the young peoples' work and interactions, and from a range of documentation, including the centre's internal data. In addition, the inspection team held discussions with the young people, and with staff.

The views of the parents, teaching and non-teaching staff were sought through confidential questionnaires prior to the inspection. The reporting inspector discussed any issues raised through the questionnaires with the head of service. A summary of the outcomes from the questionnaires is included in section five of the report.

Quantitative terms

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

The South-Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) established Redburn Alternative Education Provision (AEP) located near Holywood, County Down in 2008 to provide full-time education for 15 young people in key stage four with social, emotional and behavioural (SEBD) difficulties referred by 14 post primary schools. Redburn is managed by the Head of the AEP service, she also manages three further AEP centres and is supported by a centre co-ordinator who manages the daily work of the centre.

2. Focus of the inspection

The inspection focused on achievements and standards, learning and teaching, curriculum provision and on leadership and management.

In addition, the provision for careers education, information advice and guidance (CEIAG) and the centre's arrangements for pastoral care, including child protection, were evaluated.

3. Overall findings of the inspection

In the areas inspected, the quality of education is very good in this centre, and the pastoral care is outstanding. The centre is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the young people and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self improvement.

3.1 Main findings

- The young people demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning and almost all make very good progress in their academic learning and social skills.
- The teachers have appropriately high expectations of the young people and plan thoroughly for lessons. The quality of the teaching observed in most of the lessons was good or better with the majority evaluated as very good ensuring positive learning outcomes for the young people.
- The head of service and the centre co-ordinator's very good leadership provide a clear strategic vision for the work of the centre focused on the needs of the young people that is shared by all the staff.

4. The findings in detail

4.1 Achievements and standards

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

All of the young people have histories of disrupted schooling, non attendance or social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The centre provides a very structured programme and small group setting with good individual support and a curriculum designed around the needs of each young person. Most of the young people as a result engage well, overcome their barriers to learning and demonstrate a good level of interest and sense of enjoyment in their work.

- Most of the young people respond positively to the systems of rewards and sanctions and, consequently, behave well and engage effectively with learning throughout their placement in the centre.

- The centre's data shows that most of the young people achieve accreditation in a range of appropriate subjects that enables them to transfer to appropriate further education or training courses upon leaving the centre.
- The majority of the young people have increased their levels of attendance in education since joining the centre and a small number have maintained 100% attendance.
- The evidence indicates that most of the young people develop their social and emotional skills and consequently have positive attitudes to learning. They develop the skills to work independently and most can work effectively with others in small groups and teams.

4.2 Provision for learning

The quality of the learning and teaching is very good.

The young people benefit from well planned lessons, that are enjoyable and appropriate for each young person, through practical and interesting activities, the effective use of information communication technology and a variety of teaching and learning strategies. The pace of the lessons ensures that there is no time wasted and the work is highly differentiated to meet the needs of the individual young people. All of the young people appreciate the visits by staff from their schools and, in the best practice a senior teacher from each referring school visits their young person each term to monitor their pastoral care and academic progress.

- The teachers work hard to identify the talents and skills of the young people and have put in place strategies to develop their potential; for example a young person with exceptional soccer skills attends an Irish football association soccer training programme whilst another young person receives guitar lessons.
- The majority of the lessons observed were very good. The agreed overall planning within the centre is well focused on the individual abilities and needs of the young people resulting in lessons that engage, motivate and challenge them.
- The young people use information and communication technology well for research and producing good quality coursework but the lack of the C2k facility in the centre prevents them from accessing the range of educational programmes available to their peers in mainstream schools. (Appendix 2)
- The teachers carry out effective baseline testing as part of the induction process to identify early the ability level and learning targets for the young people and to devise accurate and appropriate individual learning programmes.
- The young people benefit from the good provision for CEIAG with mock interviews, appropriate placements for work experience and discussions of appropriate career pathways during lessons along with good opportunities for vocational education.

- The pastoral care is outstanding. The supportive ethos in the centre prioritises the education and the emotional health and well-being of the young people. A key feature of the centre is the highly individualised programmes of work ensuring that all of the young people are able to engage well with learning and make progress in accredited programmes of work. Members of staff routinely visit the young people and parents during induction regarding the aims and practices of the centre and involve them in the provision. The young people commented on the activities in the centre that they enjoy, and indicated that they feel safe and secure and know where to seek help if they have concerns.

4.3 Leadership and management

The quality of the leadership and management is very good.

The head of service has a clear and strategic vision for the centre and demonstrates a commitment to the re-engagement in learning for the young people. The centre co-ordinator supports the head of service well in the daily management of the centre, the development of the curriculum and in ensuring the young people achieve very good standards.

- The leadership of the centre has established an effective engaging curriculum and a rigorous lesson planning system.
- The leadership is effective in deploying, supporting and developing staff across all the Education Other Than At School service, to provide appropriate teaching and support for the young people in the centre.
- The centre's development plan is comprehensive, and reflects well the key objectives of the centre and the priorities for improvement.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the centre has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

5. Evidence from the questionnaires

Questionnaires	Issued	Returned	Additional Comments
Parents	12	9	*
Teachers	6	6	*
Support Staff	*	*	*

* Number redacted

A majority of the parental questionnaire responses are very positive and comment on the caring and approachable head of service, teachers and classroom assistants. The parents value the progress made by their young people and the helpful and supportive ethos throughout the centre.

Almost all of the teachers' and support staff's questionnaire responses were very positive, and indicate strong support for the work and life of the centre. The few concerns raised were brought to the attention of the head of service.

6. **Conclusion**

In the areas inspected in this centre, the quality of education is very good and the pastoral care is outstanding. The centre is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the young people and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

No follow-up inspection is required.

Evidence of the inspection

The key questions and quality indicators which guide inspection and self-evaluation are available in the Inspectorate's publication *Together Towards Improvement: a process for self-evaluation* at <http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/together-towards-improvement/together-towards-improvement-post-primary.htm>

The inspectors scrutinised documentation and the young peoples' written work and held formal and informal meetings with the young people, teachers, learning support assistants and management of the centre. Inspectors paid particular attention to CEIAG, individual education plans, policies, links with parents, and young people's records and provided oral feedback to the Head of Service and Assistant Senior Education Officer. In total, 6 lessons were observed.

Accommodation/Resources

The lack of C2k information management systems and infrastructure within this centre is a barrier to learning. In addition the lack of C2K inhibits effective communication or efficient transfer of appropriate educational information with mainstream schools and other education providers.

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