

YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Shantallow Youth Centre,
Londonderry

Report of an Inspection
in June 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 Shantallow Youth Centre is situated within the Derry City Council area; and is managed by the Western Education and Library Board (WELB).

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. According to the figures supplied by the centre, the current membership is 114, which represents approximately 8% of the local youth population. There has, however, been a significant decrease in membership over the last three years of approximately 47%. The comprehensive needs analysis completed by the WELB for this area, indicates the need for the centre to contribute to the well-being and education of the young people.

1.3 The centre is currently open five evenings each week, and provides afternoon activities. In addition to the centre-based programmes, the staff also provide residential visits.

2. Focus of the Inspection

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 the processes for self-evaluation leading to improvement.

3. Overall findings of the inspection

3.1 In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this centre is unsatisfactory. The areas for improvement significantly outweigh the strengths in the provision. The inspection has identified major areas for improvement in achievements and standards, the quality of provision; and leadership and management which need to be addressed urgently if the centre is to meet effectively the needs of all the young people.

Summary of key findings

Overall Performance Level	Unsatisfactory
Achievements and Standards	Inadequate
Provision for Learning	Inadequate
Leadership and Management	Unsatisfactory

4. Key findings

4.1 Achievements and standards

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

4.1.1 The children attending the junior section represent 43% of the centre's current membership, and enjoy participating in a wide range of programmes, which are matched to their age and interests. They are enthusiastic and interact confidently and willingly with their peers and adults.

4.1.2 The young people attending the intermediate and senior sections together represent 57% of the centre's current membership, and have limited opportunities to acquire new interests, skills and knowledge. In discussions with the inspection team, the young people were friendly, welcoming and engaged readily in conversations. However, the opportunities to achieve appropriate accreditation through relevant courses for the intermediate and senior sections are inadequate, and do not support the personal and social development of the young people.

4.1.3 Within the junior section, a small number of young people volunteer to assist the staff and are committed to supporting the programmes and contributing to their local community. Through the millennium volunteer scheme, three young people demonstrate good levels of participation, and a willingness to accept responsibility and display good leadership skills. In the last three years, three young people have achieved accreditation in relevant courses.

4.1.4 The young people have too few opportunities to discuss a range of issues which impact on their lives, including developing effective strategies to become more resilient and to respond positively to challenging situations.

4.2 Provision for Learning

The quality of the provision for learning is inadequate.

4.2.1 The quality of the youth work sessions observed was variable; the majority were inadequate. The curriculum provided for the intermediate and senior sections is unsatisfactory. The sessions are unplanned; unstructured and lack group work programmes; largely recreational; lack sufficient challenge; and do not engage or motivate the young people to participate.

4.2.2 During the inspection, the average number of young people attending was 23, approximately just 20% of the current membership which is unsatisfactory; some sessions attract less than ten young people.

4.2.3 The staff do not provide a sufficient focus on improving the health and physical well-being of the young people. In addition there is a lack of regular programmes to promote employability, sport and raising educational achievement.

4.2.4 During the inspection the behaviour of most of the young people was of a good standard; they enjoy positive 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. The staff know the young people and their families well. In discussions with parents and other adults during the inspection, they endorsed the quality of the pastoral care provided by the staff, and were positive about the provision of the junior programme, including the summer activities.

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.

5. Leadership and management

The quality of the leadership and management is unsatisfactory.

5.1.1 While the leadership and management demonstrate a commitment to improvement, the strategic planning is unsatisfactory and does not demonstrate how standards may be raised, or how the quality of provision could be improved. The leadership and management needs to urgently review all aspects of the provision to address; the unsatisfactory attendance of the young people; the lack of group work and accreditation opportunities; the absence of structure and planning of the youth work curriculum; and staff training. Although the WELB has put in place a range of external support measures for key staff over a sustained period of time, more needs to be done to improve the quality of provision for the young people.

5.1.2 The centre does not have robust and effective procedures in place to maintain and develop further the youth provision. Self-evaluation practice to promote improvement needs to be established as a matter of urgency.

5.1.3 The centre has limited local partnerships in place and needs to collaborate with other providers and government agencies to benefit the young people and to extend and improve the current provision.

The area for improvement includes the need for:

- the leadership and management, as a matter of urgency, to improve all aspects of the centre's provision; in particular to implement a broad and balanced curriculum, which reflects the needs and aspirations of the young people, and the local community.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the centre's progress in addressing the area for improvement over a 12-18 month period.

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		
2008/09	55	52	63	78	13	12	3	0		276
2009/10	41	39	53	67	7	7	3	0		217
2010/11	23	21	46	39	3	3	0	0		135
2011/12	13	27	50	25	4	2	0	1		122
2012/13	25	24	12	12	28	13	0	0		114

Health and safety

- The internal doors leading to rooms and areas occupied by the young people do not have vision panels.
- The electrical fitting in the alcove in the main area is damaged.

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