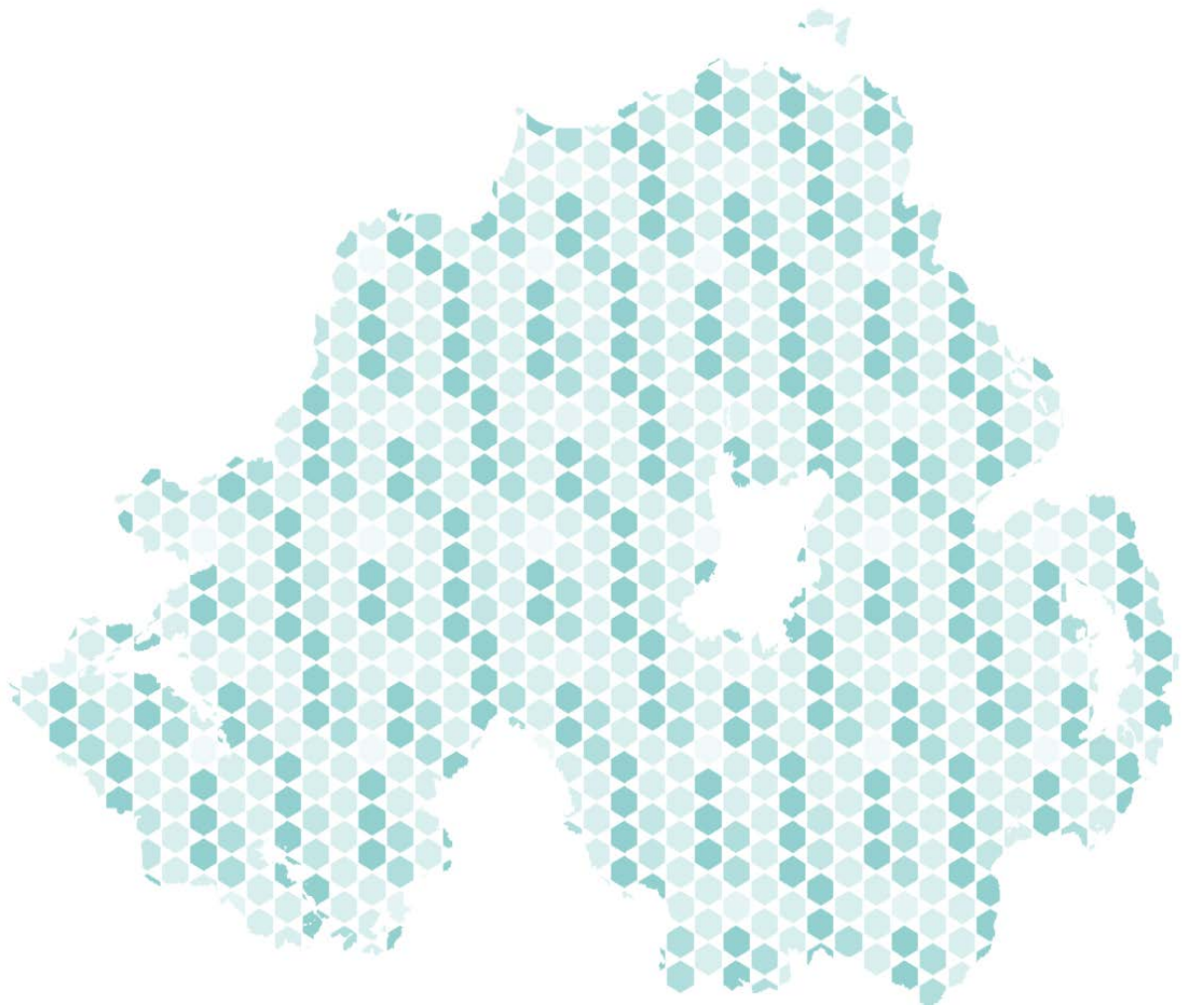


YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

South-Eastern Education and
Library Board Youth Provision
in the Castlereagh Area

Report of an Inspection
in February 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 Castlereagh youth division is part of the South-Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) youth service and is located within the Castlereagh Borough Council district area. There are four full-time youth projects in the area: Brooklands youth centre; Cregagh youth centre; Belvoir area project and Ardarnet youth centre. In addition, the SEELB youth service supports 92 voluntary and uniformed organisations in the area.

1.2 Figures supplied by the organisation indicate that the area has a population of 17,733 young people aged 4-25 years; almost one half of whom is aged 11-18 years. For the year 2011/12, 6011 (34%) of the young people attended registered youth units supported by the SEELB youth service; a decrease from the previous year of 455 (7%) young people.

1.3 The membership of the young people in registered youth organisations in the area has fluctuated over the past three years. While there has been a decrease in the numbers of young people in the older age ranges, there has been an increase in those young people aged 4-9 years. Appendix 4 contains further details on the membership and ages of the young people.

1.4 The area youth officer is supported by a recently appointed senior youth worker; the area has had significant changes in management over the last three years. In addition, a full-time youth support worker for Ardarnet youth centre took up post three weeks prior to the inspection.

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 organisation's processes for self-evaluation leading to improvement.

The appendices at the end of the report detail the evaluations of the three areas under focus as agreed with the SEELB: the quality of the inclusion programmes for young people with special educational needs within the Brookland's youth centre; the quality of the youth work with those young people identified as 'at risk' in the area; and the quality of the partnership between SEELB youth service and the Tullycarnet community.

3. Overall findings of the inspection

In the areas inspected, the quality of provision in this area is good. The organisation has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the progress of the areas for improvement.

Summary of key findings

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

4. Key findings

4.1 Achievements and standards

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

4.1.1 The young people enjoy and value highly the good range of programmes, which are well matched to their needs and interests. A majority of the young people participate in both issue-based group work and activity programmes, which help them to improve their self-confidence and to develop their talents and interpersonal skills.

4.1.2 In the last two years, a total of 151 young people have achieved accreditation in youth leadership programmes. These young people use well the extensive leadership opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills and recognise the benefits of these programmes to their future education and career pathways. They talk enthusiastically about their engagement in a range of volunteering projects and provide very good role models for the younger members and their peers.

4.1.3 In group work, the young people were attentive and most demonstrated good levels of sensitivity to the opinions of others. When given the opportunity, the young people talked enthusiastically about their activities and their group work tasks. In a majority of the sessions observed, there was a lack of opportunity for the young people to reflect on their progress and learning, and to be more fully engaged in the evaluation of the programme.

4.1.4 The area youth council is in the early stages of development; young people have been recruited and they have a good understanding of the social issues in their area. They are articulate about their needs and the issues which they experience in their communities. In particular, the older young people from the Belvoir area project advocated well on behalf of the younger members of their centre. They voiced strong, well-informed concerns about the limited programme provided for the younger members.

4.1.5 The young people from Tor Bank school who attend the Brooklands youth centre, talk enthusiastically about the wide range of activities which they enjoy and the very good relationships which they have with the youth workers and the classroom assistants. They are confident and articulate well their ideas and reflections about the quality of the youth provision. The young people who volunteer to support this programme accept responsibility readily, and have a very good understanding of the young people with additional needs.

4.2 Quality of provision

The quality of the provision for learning is good.

4.2.1 The quality of the sessions observed ranged from satisfactory to very good; a majority was good or better, with almost one-third satisfactory. The characteristics of effective practice included: well-organised programmes with the young people making decisions about the future direction of programmes; and a good range of activities which are contemporary and of interest to the young people.

4.2.2 In the less effective practice the use of group work was underdeveloped; the pace was too quick; insufficient focus was placed on the intended learning outcomes; and too much emphasis was placed on working through the task.

4.2.3 The full-time youth workers need to evaluate more effectively the impact of their practice on the development of the young people's knowledge, skills and understanding. Short-term planning for group work also requires review to focus more sharply on the intended learning outcomes for the young people. During group work, there is a need for the youth workers to review more regularly the impact of the programme on the young people, and the progress which they make towards achieving their goals.

4.2.4 During the week of the inspection, the staff organised a conference which provided a safe space for the young people to discuss current contentious issues within their community. The youth workers facilitated the discussions well, and as a consequence, the young people were made to feel at ease and participated to very good levels in the discussion and debate.

4.2.5 The quality of pastoral care is very good. During the inspection, the young people's behaviours were consistently good across all of the centres. The youth workers know the young people and their families well. They understand fully the issues which the young people experience and have developed strong partnerships with relevant agencies to support them in their work. All of the staff involved consistently promote practice which encourages the inclusion and acceptance of others among the young people. In discussions with the inspection team, the young people reported that they feel safe in the centres and are aware of what to do if they have concerns about their safety and well-being.

4.3 Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management of the area is good.

4.3.1 The SEELB youth service staff and managers are committed to excellence and quality improvement at all levels. The senior managers have a well-informed strategic overview of the wider education sector, and work hard to ensure the youth service is well placed to seek and to offer support to others working with young people. The area youth officer is a highly effective manager, who has a well-conceived strategic vision for the further development of the provision. In addition, she sets appropriately high expectations for the work of the staff and takes very good account of the need to be flexible to support those staff who are not yet professionally qualified.

4.3.2 While the SEELB youth service has recently introduced an improved system of planning and evaluation, there is a need to review further the impact of this process on the outcomes for the young people. The staff recognise the value in planning and reviewing their work with the young people, however, the young people require greater involvement in this process, and in the overall evaluation of the programmes.

4.3.3 The area youth plan takes good account of the statistical data available on academic achievement and socio-economic disadvantage, and the staff have analysed this information closely to inform their planning. The full-time youth workers have completed a needs assessment with young people in the area, and senior managers have identified appropriately the need to review this process to include more meaningful discussions with the young people and stakeholders.

4.3.4 In this area, the youth service represents and advocates strongly on behalf of the young people and their issues. At all levels of management, the staff have developed collaborative and effective partnerships with a range of organisations to ensure a coherent approach to address the needs of the young people. In particular, the youth service has effective links with local schools, the Police Service for Northern Ireland, and community representatives.

4.3.5 In discussions with representatives of the voluntary youth sector, they expressed high levels of satisfaction with the financial support which they receive from the SEELB youth service. They made particular reference to the many staff changes in the area over the last few years and the need for more regular effective communication with SEELB staff. They identified accurately the need for the youth service to have improved Information and Communications Technology and resources, and for the SEELB staff to visit their organisations on a more regular basis.

4.3.6 The part-time paid youth workers and volunteers receive good opportunities to further their professional development. They value highly the opportunities to participate in accredited training to support their work with young people. In discussions with these staff, they highlighted the need for additional training programmes on arts and crafts, and games to support their work.

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

5. Conclusion

5.1 In the areas inspected, the quality of provision in this area is good. The area has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the progress of the areas for improvement.

5.2 The main areas for improvement include the need to:

- review further the impact of the planning and evaluation process on the outcomes for the young people; and
- improve the quality of the developmental group work across the area.

The inclusion of young people with special educational needs in Brooklands Youth Centre

At the time of the inspection, the quality of the provision is very good.

Over the past two years, a strong partnership has developed between Tor Bank school and Brooklands youth centre. Appropriate links and shared objectives have been developed to provide inclusive programmes and activities to meet the needs of the young people. The classroom assistants and youth work staff from both organisations, work effectively one evening each week, with approximately 25 young people aged 14-19 years. They provide a stimulating environment, which enables the young people with additional needs to socialise, build friendships and to develop their interpersonal skills. Following discussions with management and staff, the partnership has further potential to share practice and training, which will improve the capacity of all staff to meet the needs of the young people.

The key findings include:

- the highly effective partnership between the staff and the management of Tor Bank school and Brookland's youth centre;
- the commitment to improvement and the clear strategic vision for the future development of provision;
- the very good quality of provision, which meets effectively the needs of the young people and provides access for all of the young people, irrespective of their additional needs or their diverse backgrounds;
- the high levels of enjoyment and engagement by the young people; and
- the highly inclusive ethos and the excellent relationships among the staff and the young people.

The quality of provision for young people considered 'at risk' in the Castlereagh/Cregagh area

At the time of the inspection, the quality of the provision for young people at risk is good.

In all of the centres visited during the inspection, the staff were engaging well with young people considered to be at risk for a diverse range of reasons. Young people are engaged who have experienced, or are at risk of: low educational attainment; anti-social behaviours; negative engagements with the PSNI; and in addition, those young people who face social and personal issues within their communities and at home. During the inspection, a particular focus was given to the work with young people at risk in the Tullycarnet area.

The key findings include:

- the effective partnerships established with other organisations to target and identify appropriately young people deemed to be most at risk;
- the accurate identification of those young people who face a range of barriers in their personal and social development;
- the respectful and purposeful relationships which the youth workers have established with young people at risk;
- the strong focus to address sensitive and controversial issues facing young people, for example, current civil unrest and the relationships with authority; and
- the effective promotion of positive behaviours reflecting the specific needs of the young people targeted for the intervention programme.

Areas for improvement

The need to:

- develop further the youth workers' group work skills to improve the quality of provision; and
- promote opportunities to develop the young people's oracy, and their thinking and problem-solving skills.

The partnership between the Tullycarnet community and SEELB Youth Service

At the time of the inspection, the partnership with the Tullycarnet community is good.

The SEELB youth service experienced difficulties in the recruitment and retention of youth work staff, which in 2011 led to strained working relationships between the SEELB and representatives of the Tullycarnet community.

The relationships have improved significantly and a strategic partnership between the SEELB and the Tullycarnet community is now in place. The aims of the strategic collaboration were to:

- conduct a full needs assessment for the area;
- empower the community to manage the youth provision in partnership with the SEELB; and
- establish a representative advisory committee.

The key findings include:

- the good working relationships between the SEELB youth service and the community in Tullycarnet;
- the good quality of support from the senior youth worker for the development of effective youth work practice in the area;
- the well-resourced and attractive environment for young people attending Ardarnet youth centre; and
- the appropriate and agreed targets which the youth service and local community have developed to sustain and progress the youth provision.

Areas for improvement

The need to:

- develop an advisory group to guide and support the work within the centre; and
- continue to increase the attendance levels of young people at the centre.

Statistical information for Castlereagh youth division**Table 1: Numbers of registered units:**

	Registered Units 2012/13	Total Membership 2011/12
Controlled full-time	4	798
Controlled part-time	1	40
Voluntary full-time	0	
Voluntary part-time	5	834
Uniformed organisations	82	4339
Other e.g. outreach/projects		
TOTAL:	92	6011

Table 2: Total membership

Age group	4-9yrs		10-15yrs		16-18yrs		19 +yrs		TOTAL
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
2008/09	992	947	1620	1542	317	295	81	69	5863
2009/10	1108	1159	1757	1565	366	318	64	55	6392
2010/11	1086	1209	1675	1646	381	342	64	63	6466
2011/12	1118	1343	1467	1487	279	246	65	60	6011

Table 3: Adult training

Title of course including accreditation	Number of adults		Percentage successfully completing the course
	2011-2012	2012-2013	
OCN Level 2	25	12	95%
OCN Level 3	19	11 (ongoing)	95%
Child Protection Awareness Training Workshop	47	11 (ongoing)	100%
Emergency First Aid Training	12	12	100
Dealing with Difficult Behaviour in Youth People		25	N/A
Quality Assurance	26	24	N/A
CDA/Needs Assessment		28	N/A

Table 4: Young people's training

Title of course including accreditation	Number of young people		Percentage successfully completing the course	
	2011-2012	2012-2013		
OCN Level 1 Leadership in Youth Work	48	39		90%
OCN Level 1 Peer Mentoring	11	8		100%
OCN Level 1 Peer Mentoring	8			100%
Millennium Volunteers Award		20		100%
Youth Work in Schools LTLT	16 5 OCN Level 2 Awards each	16 5 OCN Level 2 Awards each		All students on target to complete

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