

# YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Western Education and Library  
Board Youth Provision in the  
Limavady and Rural Foyle Area

Report of an Inspection  
in February 2011



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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 Limavady/Rural Foyle division is one of four geographical areas within the Western Education and Library Board (WELB) youth service. The division covers two district council areas: Limavady District Council and Derry City Council. The two areas are among the highest unemployment rates in Northern Ireland and are in the top ten most socially deprived Local Government Districts. The main population areas are Limavady, Strathfoyle, Drumahoe, Claudy, Caw and Dungiven. The youth service also supports local voluntary and uniformed provision in several small towns and villages and has a significant rural dimension. Figures supplied by the organisation indicate that the area has a population of 18,830 young people aged 4-25 years; approximately 5,730 young people attend 64 registered youth units and organisations. Information contained in the documentation provided reports that in a survey in Limavady in 2009 over one-quarter of the school leavers did not achieve the required 5 A\*-C grades in the General Certificate of Secondary Education examinations.

**Table 1: Numbers of Registered Units**

	<b>Registered Units 2010/11</b>
Controlled full-time	2
Controlled part-time	4
Voluntary full-time	1
Voluntary part-time	26
Uniformed organisations	31
Other e.g. outreach/projects	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>64</b>

1.2 An Assistant Education Officer (ASEO) is head of the WELB youth service and has responsibility for managing and leading both the SELB and WELB youth services. A deputy head of youth service manages the four area youth officers (AYOs), including the AYO for Limavady and Rural Foyle.

1.3 The AYO has had to work within a restricted staff complement. The senior youth worker has been on secondment to another post for almost three years without being replaced. In September 2010 he returned to work in the area for eleven hours a week, with the particular responsibility of managing the further development of the Limavady and Rural Foyle Youth Council. During the inspection the area youth worker and a youth tutor were absent; an outreach worker had resigned four weeks before the beginning of the inspection.

1.4 The AYO for Limavady and Rural Foyle has been in post for over 30 years. There are currently 50 part-time paid youth work staff and 692 volunteers, most of whom work in the voluntary youth sector. Appendix 5 contains further details on the staffing structures.

**Table 2: Total Membership**

Age group	4-9 years		10-15 years		16-18 years		19+ years		Numbers involved in outreach/detached	TOTAL
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
2008/09	820	958	1671	1404	400	261	181	41		5736
2009/10	847	998	1635	1378	394	254	178	49		5733
2010/11	820	891	1756	1391	371	268	178	54		5734

1.5 The information above indicates the membership of the young people in registered youth organisations in the area which has remained consistent over the past three years. The number of young people involved in outreach or area-based youth work was not available at the time of the inspection. There was no information relating to the length of time that young people spend as members of the relevant organisations.

## **2. FOCUS**

2.1 The inspection focused on: the efficacy of leadership and management at ELB, area and individual centre level; the quality of provision; and the achievements and standards of the young people in the area.

2.2 The appendices at the end of the report detail the evaluations of the three areas under focus as agreed with the ELB: the effectiveness of the youth council and of the youth committee structures in the area; a range of inclusion and diversity programmes included in the WELB youth service Limavady area inclusion strategy; and the provision in Strathfoyle Youth Centre.<sup>1</sup>

2.3 The inspection team observed the work of almost all of the full-time staff, including the direct observation of 34 youth work sessions in ten different locations identified to reflect the work of the three areas under focus and selected jointly by the WELB staff and the inspection team. Meetings and discussions also took place with the ASEO, the deputy head of youth service, the AYO, all of the full-time staff, 25 representatives from twelve registered part-time youth organisations, and four members of the teaching staff involved in youth work delivery from the two schools visited. Discussions were also held with the key staff and the managers responsible for the three areas under focus. The inspection team examined a wide range of documentation provided by the organisation, including area development plans, the annual action plans of the youth workers, evidence files and samples of moderation records.

2.4 Members of the inspection team talked to over 30 young people in three different locations in relation to their health and well-being, the arrangements for safeguarding, and on the quality of youth provision.

## **3. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

3.1 The quality of the overall leadership and management of the WELB senior managers, and of the AYO, in relation to the Limavady and Rural Foyle area is very good. The effective planning of the relevant priorities at a strategic level provides a clear direction for the youth work in the area. The AYO uses well a range of appropriate local consultation processes with young people, youth workers and other stakeholders, including the youth tutors from the post-primary schools, to inform the area development plan.

3.2 The quality of the action to promote improvement is good. An operational framework, agreed and implemented well by staff, links appropriately the planning from unit level, through area-based planning, to the planning at Headquarter ELB level. Regular six-weekly youth officer team meetings, and moderation of the practice of individual youth workers by youth officers, ensure that quality improvement is discussed regularly. In the self-evaluation pro-forma completed for the inspection the ELB identifies a series of appropriate areas in which they want to develop the work-force. Among these areas is the need to develop

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<sup>1</sup> Strathfoyle Youth Centre is one of two controlled full-time youth centres in the area.

further a culture of self-evaluation among staff and to ensure that the area development plan and worker action plans assess more rigorously the achievement of young people and inform future planning. The inspection findings would concur with this identified area for development. At a board-wide level, the youth service has already begun a series of staff development programmes to support the staff to become more self-evaluative.

3.3 The absence of key staff in the past two years has impacted negatively on the provision, and has restricted the progression of parts of the area development plan. In a positive response to this situation, the WELB has attracted additional funding to employ new staff and the AYO has deployed effectively the resources to continue to meet the identified youth work priorities. The planned termly moderation visits to youth workers, along with the monthly support and supervision structures, provide valuable and appropriate support to youth workers to review the youth service provision and help effect improvement. The AYO has been pro-active in supporting youth workers to develop and improve their practice. Further professional development and training are provided for youth workers where needed.

3.4 In the meeting with 25 representatives from registered part-time youth organisations, those present affirmed the work of the WELB in providing training and support to leaders and young people. They value the very good support from the AYO, and the limited funding they receive from the ELB. Many stated that if it were not for this funding they could not provide a service to the young people in rural areas. The price of transport, and in many instances the lack of transport, remains a major inhibitor to adequate youth provision.

3.5 The AYO is supported well by the deputy head of youth service. They have set up and strengthened several strategic partnerships that provide valuable additional resources and add value to the area strategy to include more young people in youth provision. For example, the outreach worker employed by the WELB in a Neighbourhood Renewal programme funded through the Department for Social Development is deployed effectively in the Enjoying Achieving and Learning Initiative. He works well alongside local community organisations and schools to tackle underachievement with those young people most at risk. The important contribution which the youth provision is making to removing barriers to learning needs to be recognised further in the Achieving Derry Bright Futures initiative and in the Limavady area learning community.

3.6 The attendance of the youth tutors at monthly youth service meetings, and the jointly-managed out-of-school initiatives ensure that there is good collaboration between most of the local post-primary schools and the youth service. There are positive working relationships and the approaches are centred well on the needs of the young people. The WELB youth service and the management of the schools need to review further the monitoring and assessment procedures of the youth work programmes in schools, particularly in the evening, to ensure that the Department of Education Circular 1998/14 regarding the deployment of youth tutors is applied consistently across the area.

3.7 The youth workers' evidence files gather appropriate, relevant information and evaluations from the range of educational programmes they deliver. The youth workers do not make effective use of the useful data collected from the individual session and course evaluations to track, and to inform the planning for, improvement in the achievements and outcomes for the young people.

3.8 The WELB participation strategy includes the establishment of an area-based youth council in each of its geographical divisions. In Limavady, 22 young people aged 15-18 are actively involved in the planning, management and provision of programmes through an agreed action plan. The WELB invests a significant amount of the senior youth worker's

time to the youth council over a two-year period. The senior youth worker is providing highly effective leadership and management and is developing well the quality of the provision for, and the sustained continuous improvement of, the youth council. The successful completion of a signed working agreement between the Limavady Youth Council and the Limavady Borough Council is a good example of how the young people are fully involved in the overall strategic planning. In discussions held with the youth council, it is clear that the young people have gained the confidence and organisational skills to challenge adults in an appropriate manner on issues of social importance that are affecting their lives.

#### **4. ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS**

4.1 The overall quality of achievements and standards is very good. Almost all of the young people enrolled engage enthusiastically with the wide range of accredited and non-accredited programmes. The organisation reports that, in the past eighteen months, just under 350 young people and adults have completed successfully a range of personal and social skills programmes, including volunteer leadership programmes and Open College Network (OCN) level 1 and 2 accredited courses in good relations, diversity and participation skills (Appendix 4).

4.2 The young people who take an active role in the Limavady youth council, and in the members' committees observed in the youth centres visited, demonstrate excellent peer leadership skills. Through creating and implementing the publicity for the Youth Council, the young people have learned how to work together, solve problems and make effective presentations to a range of audiences. Those who take on roles of responsibility within the Youth Council and the members' committees contribute well to the leadership skills of less experienced members to ensure succession. They use advocacy skills on behalf of other young people and work well together on a range of projects that reflect their needs and interests. In one project, members of the Limavady Youth Council made a successful presentation, based on effective research, to public transport representatives to change a bus timetable for the benefit of rural young people and the local community.

4.3 In the full-time centres many of the young people take part regularly in well-structured participative fora. Within the area it has been recognised that the members' committees are at different stages of development and maturity and there are definite plans to use the experiences of the Youth Council to develop and support other committees. In one of the centres visited the members demonstrated good leadership and organisational skills through providing skilful support for younger members, planning and implementing activities for them and contributing positively to the advisory committee of the centre. In the Londonderry YMCA a group of young people was fully involved in the planning and delivery of a Digital Versatile Disc demonstrating a range of technical and social skills relevant to the production. The CAW youth centre members' committee use their leadership and organisational skills well to promote their own committee to other members. As a result of their involvement in participative structures, the young people increase their self-esteem and confidence through researching and making presentations to others, including adults.

4.4 Across the area, members of the inspection team observed groups of young people engaged in, and enjoying, a range of appropriate and stimulating programmes to raise their awareness of their own culture and that of others, including from other countries, and to develop good relations with others. The young people involved have a greater awareness of their own culture and that of others through the discussion of what they have in common and where and why there are differences. They learn to work together, to research history and traditions and to listen to and respect each other's views. In addition they learn about cultures other than their own. These programmes build on the good relations which have already been developed in the area. At times the workers need to provide a deeper understanding among the young people about the issues which are raised.

4.5 The ASDAN accredited Growing Learning and Developing (GLAD) programme takes up the majority of the full-time youth workers' day-time provision. Twenty young people completed the GLAD programme successfully this year and it is projected that a further 40 pupils in post-primary schools and members of youth centres will complete it within the next twelve months. The programme works well targeting underachievement and adding value to the accreditation provided within the formal education sector. Youth workers report high levels of attendance during the GLAD courses; in the sessions observed the young people demonstrated high levels of motivation and engagement. A minority use the leadership skills gained to take a volunteering role within the youth centre and in the wider community.

## **5. QUALITY OF PROVISION FOR LEARNING**

5.1 The overall quality of provision is good. Most of the youth provision observed was consistently good or better, with almost one-quarter of the sessions evaluated as very good or outstanding.

5.2 In the best practice observed the workers used a range of relevant approaches which engaged the young people well. There was progression in the activities with an appropriate use of information and communication technology (ICT). Through skilful questioning the workers elicited high levels of response, provided links to other areas of the young people's learning and encouraged them to develop and extend their responses. The young people value equally the learning and social aspects of the sessions. A consistent feature of best practice was the excellent facilitation skills of the young people who communicate well with their peers and work effectively with youth workers in the achievement of skills for life. In the less effective practice, youth workers were overly directive, the pace of the sessions was too slow and the session planning did not take into account the different learning needs and interests of the young people.

5.3 The quality of the provision for participation in this area is very good. The youth workers involve young people well in the strategic planning of programmes. They provide the young people with very good opportunities to make collective decisions through the development of talking and listening skills as well as the use of key negotiation skills. The young people work co-operatively with each other and the youth workers to design programmes which meet their individual and group needs. The programmes demonstrate effective communication between the young people and relevant stakeholders, including the Limavady Borough Council, elected public representatives and the public transport authority. The youth workers deliver good quality programmes which make an important and positive contribution to the development of political awareness on a range of issues that affect the lives of young people in rural areas.

5.4 The good quality of inclusive youth work is planned strategically within the available resources to meet the needs of those young people not engaged formally with the youth service. Through a series of well-planned programmes, in conjunction with the young people, there is progression in their understanding of different cultures beyond their immediate environment. They make practical use of this knowledge to plan and provide programmes for other young people.

5.5 The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care within the youth provision across the area is very good. The young people reported that they feel safe in the sessions provided by the youth workers and are aware of what to do if they have any concerns. They talked enthusiastically about the support provided by the youth workers. The consistently



good standards of behaviour, in almost all of the sessions observed, reflect well the mutually respectful relationships among the young people and between the young people and staff. In the centres visited the guidelines for reporting safeguarding issues are clearly displayed along with the name of the designated staff member for safeguarding.

5.6 The WELB has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children and young people in the statutory youth sector. These arrangements reflect broadly the guidance issued by the Department of Education. There is a need to review the risk management procedures and door control in one of the full-time centres.

## **6. SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS**

6.1 The strengths of the area include:

- the leadership and management, at all levels, who provide clear direction for the youth work provision within the area based on appropriate consultation with a range of stakeholders, in particular, with the young people;
- the good development of effective participative and inclusive structures which provide the young people with leadership and negotiating skills which help them to contribute positively to their centres and their communities;
- the range of appropriate programmes and activities which meet effectively the needs and interests of the young people, and develop a good range of skills;
- the consistently good quality of the youth work practice observed, including the effective support of the part-time youth workers and volunteers;
- the good links and working relationships which have been developed with external agencies to increase the benefits for the young people in the area; and
- the highly effective leadership and support, which the Area Youth Officer provides to the youth work team and to the wider community.

6.2 The main area for development is:

- the further development of evaluation and the use of data to inform future planning for the achievements and outcomes of the young people.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

In the areas inspected, the quality of youth provision in this area is good. The organisation has important strengths in most of its youth work provision. The inspection has identified an area for improvement which the organisation has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the organisation's progress on the area for improvement.

**STRATHFOYLE YOUTH CENTRE**

The strengths of the provision include:

- the appropriate range of accredited and non-accredited programmes that are developing well the inter-personal skills for a majority of the members who are involved in the structured programmes;
- the experienced part-time youth support workers who are aware of their roles and responsibilities and have with the young people very good working relationships that benefit their personal and social development;
- the good development of the ethos of participation in the centre and the good uptake of the opportunities available for young people in leadership roles;
- the positive steps taken by the full-time youth worker to develop the educational and recreational opportunities available for the members through the communication structures set up with staff and members;
- the very good challenge function provided by the advisory committee to the youth work staff and to the overall development of the work of the centre; and
- the good links developed with other youth centres and agencies that promote well inclusion and diversity.

The areas for development are:

- the need to review the centre action plan to ensure that there is a prioritised and achievable list of objectives that will address the low levels of membership; and
- the further use of evaluation to demonstrate more effectively how the youth work programmes are making an impact in meeting the young people's needs and how they inform the future planning of programmes.

**PARTICIPATION**

The WELB youth service in the Limavady Rural Foyle area has established a formal area youth council and youth forum committees, which aim to provide young people with opportunities to have their voice heard and to advocate on behalf of themselves and others. The WELB youth service aims to develop the capacity of young people to progress through their youth centre committees to the area-based youth councils, which enable the young people to design action campaigns, programmes and learning situations to meet their own needs.

In the area inspected, the quality of provision for youth participation is very good.

The strengths of the area include:

- the highly effective leadership and facilitation skills of the senior youth worker and the full-time youth workers with responsibility for the youth council and youth committees;
- the very good quality projects, which are initiated by the young people to have a beneficial impact on themselves and the wider community;
- the excellent peer leadership skills demonstrated by the young people who chair the youth council and committees;
- the very good advocacy skills demonstrated by the young people who work well together on a range of projects which reflect their interests and needs;
- the mutually respectful working relationships among the young people, and between the staff and the young people; and
- the mutually beneficial partnership, which the youth service has established with Limavady District Council to ensure that the young people are influencing decision-making in their local community.

### INCLUSION

The focus on the active promotion of inclusive practices which will provide equality of opportunity to the young people within the Limavady and Rural Foyle area is an overarching theme of the overall planning and of the annual action plans of each key worker. The programmes within the area attempt to provide a balance of young people from different social and economic backgrounds, ethnic and minority groupings and to include those young people with disabilities. There are several programmes resourced under Peace III funding to promote a greater understanding of Good Relations and Diversity. In addition, the work of the youth tutors within the schools aims to engage disaffected learners in a range of accredited programmes which will improve their academic qualifications and increase their employability.

In the area inspected, the quality of provision for the inclusion of young people is good.

The strengths of the area include:

- the good level of strategic planning to identify and meet, within the available resources, the needs of those young people who are not engaged with the youth service;
- the good work of the outreach worker, the centre leaders and the youth tutors in building relationships with the young people and their communities, and the effective support provided by the part-time workers;
- the involvement of the young people in the planning, implementation and review of the programmes which look beyond their communities;
- the appropriate and varied range of strategies and resources used in the delivery of the programmes;
- the increased understanding in the young people's knowledge and understanding of their own and others' communities and of the concepts of equity, diversity and interdependence; and
- the excellent role model, which is provided by the youth leaders in projecting effective good relations, and which is mirrored in the positive attitudes of the young people towards one another.

Among the areas for development are:

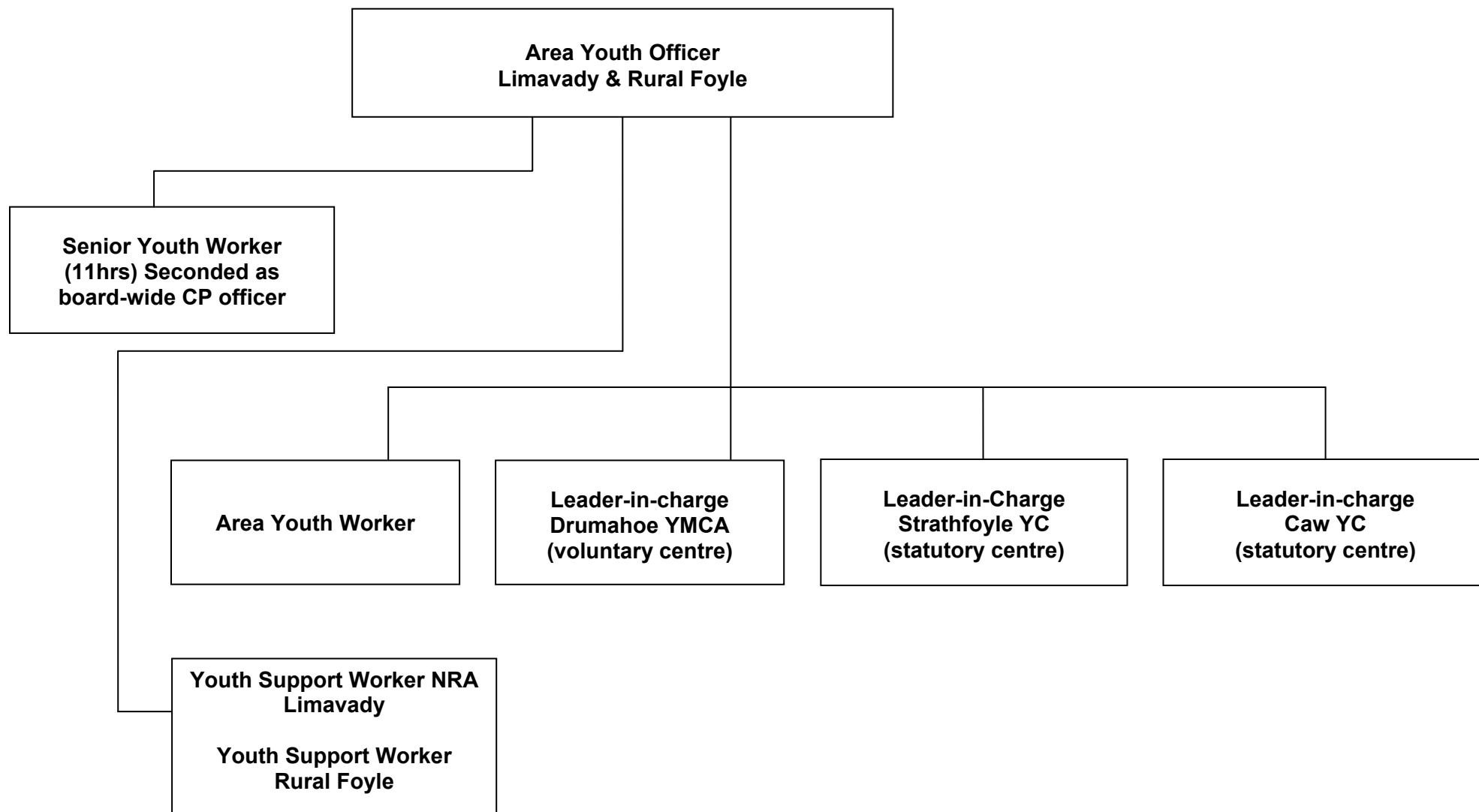
- an increase in the levels of inclusion with a greater representation and integration of ethnic and minority groups; and
- a continuation of the training programme in order to support a more in-depth approach to the work in community relations, equity and diversity.

APPENDIX 4

**LEADERSHIP TRAINING (TRAINING COURSES PROVIDED FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND YOUTH WORKERS IN THE AREA FROM SEPTEMBER 2009)**

<b>Title of course including accreditation details</b>	<b>Number of young people enrolled</b>	<b>Number of adults enrolled</b>	<b>Percentage successfully completing the course and level of award</b>
NI OCN Level 2 Introduction to Youth Work		16	75%
NI OCN Level 3 programme development		12	92%
Child Protection Keeping safe x 9hrs		35	100%
Child protection x 3hrs		41	100%
First Aid		12	50%
BOUNCE training		10	80%
Understanding Autism		14	100%
Promoting Positive Behaviour		24	88%
Disability Awareness training		18	100%
Duke of Edinburgh Award	177		Gold 26% Silver 54% Bronze 20%
Presidents Award	11		Bronze 100%
OCN Level 2 young adult development PSD training x 3 courses	36		95%
OCN Participation Skills Course	12		75%
OCN Level 1 Good Relations & Diversity	12		92%
OCN Level 1 Peer Education for promoting Good Relations	10		80%
Choices Sexual health & relationships	12		100%
Two young volunteer leadership programme	24		67%

Glad wider key skills in youth club x 2 Glad in schools	20		70% Wider key skills equivalent to 2.25 GCSEs 100% Per above
Drugs & Alcohol Basic Awareness Training	60		100%
Good Relations and Diversity awareness training	15		100%



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