

YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

All Saints' Youth Club,
Ballymena

Report of an Inspection in
January 2014

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%

Performance levels

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) use the following performance levels in reports:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

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1. Context

All Saints' Youth Club is a purpose-built voluntary youth provision, located in north Ballymena. The youth support worker-in-charge is employed by the centre's management committee. The North Eastern Education and Library Board provide financial assistance for a 24 hour-a-week post, three part-time paid staff and they make a contribution to the running costs of the centre. In addition the management committee provide financial support for an additional 12 hours-a-week for the worker-in-charge to provide faith development for young people within the parish.

The centre operates on five evenings each week, including extended opening hours on Friday and Saturday until midnight. There are currently 236 registered young people which represents a continuous increase in membership over the past four years; the senior section of the centre has had a significant increase in membership over the past two years.

2. Focus of Inspection

The inspection focused on:

- the quality of 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 finding

Overall effectiveness	Good
Achievements and standards	Good
Provision	Good
Leadership and management	Satisfactory

4. Achievements and standards

Most of the young people engage well with one another; they use the appropriately planned experiences to develop positive and constructive relationships with their peers. For example, the young people engaged in the development of the member's council and work effectively together to contribute positively to the development of their centre.

There is a good emphasis by the staff on the empowerment of the young people and how they might affect and influence change. Many of the young people spoke positively about the 'Making your Voice Heard' initiative; they were able to articulate their learning and how it relates and links to their formal education. They are learning how to make decisions and to develop the skills necessary to participate more effectively in the planning and management of their own programmes.

The young people who attend the senior section are gaining important life skills from the recently improved opportunities provided for trainee leaders and volunteers. They enjoy participating in the good range of leadership and volunteering roles and use these opportunities well to make a valuable contribution to the life and work of the centre; a significant minority achieve appropriate accreditation. In the junior section, the young people develop good relationships with one another and through the well organised and stimulating arts and crafts programme develop good creative thinking skills.

5. Provision

In all of the sessions observed, the quality of the youth work was good or very good with almost one-quarter evaluated as very good. The best practice was exemplified by: good session planning; clear understanding of the individual needs of the young people; and very good questioning that encouraged independent thinking. In most of the sessions observed, the young people were comfortable talking with their peers and demonstrated a mature attitude in their responses to probing questions asked by the youth work staff.

There is a good balance and variety of activities and personal development programmes that are age appropriate and take appropriate account of the wide range of needs and abilities of the young people. The extended provision and midnight club on Friday and Saturday evenings is successful in supporting vulnerable young people in the community. The staff involved in the initiative, use their considerable local knowledge effectively, to build positive working relationships with the young people, while providing a constructive alternative environment for the young people to meet.

The quality of the pastoral care is very good; relationships at all levels provide a sound ethos for the personal and social development of the young people. The young people who have specific social and emotional needs benefit greatly from the very good quality of the one to one support provided by the worker-in-charge; most of them value and recognise the significant progress they make in the development of their personal and social skills. The young people informed the inspection team 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.

6. Leadership and management

The worker-in-charge provides very good leadership and management for new and emerging leaders through regular formal and informal supervision. She provides effective curricular leadership that meets the wide range of learning needs of the young people.

The part-time staff work effectively as a team and they plan and evaluate well their individual projects and work through their good use of the reflective daily record sheets. They are deployed appropriately and most of the staff have successfully completed accredited training that has further developed their leadership skills.

The centre has recognised the need for a more effective quality assurance process and has made a start to implement a suitable framework and relevant training for staff. The training needs to be extended to include the members of the management committee.

The centre has developed and maintained effective links with an appropriate range of community, educational and youth organisations, which add value to the provision. These organisations make good use of the expertise and experience of the staff to support the young people, in an informal learning environment, to help them achieve their full potential.

The recently reformed management committee demonstrate a willingness to engage fully in the strategic development and future direction of the centre. However, they need to urgently review the management functions and responsibilities at all levels, particularly the management responsibilities of the worker-in-charge.

At the time of the inspection there was no annual action plan and most of the learning outcomes included in the Service Level Agreement¹ are not appropriately specific or measurable. There is a need to use more robust self-evaluation based on relevant data to review provision and effect improvement.

On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the centre has satisfactory arrangements for safeguarding children and young people. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education, but the following area needs to be addressed; the designated officer on the management committee and the recently appointed deputy designated youth worker need to receive appropriate and up-to-date training.

7. Conclusion

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

The main areas for improvement include the need to:

- urgently review the management functions and responsibilities at all levels; and
- use more robust self-evaluation based on relevant data to review provision and effect improvement.

¹ The Service Level Agreement is a written agreement between the North Eastern Education and Library Board and the centre leader for the youth project in All Saints' youth centre. The purpose is to provide a clear and precise action plan for the unit on an annual basis and to contribute to the area action plan for the Antrim, Ballymena and Moyle area.

Table 1: Total Membership

Age	4-9 years		10-15 years		16-18 years		19-25 years		Total
	male	female	male	female	male	female	male	female	
2009/10	10	12	45	25	4	8	0	0	104
2010/11	24	18	69	39	5	9	0	0	164
2011/12	25	20	39	22	6	7	0	0	119
2012/13	13	20	84	78	12	8	*	0	216
current	14	20	93	73	26	9	6	0	241

* denotes numbers less than 5

Table 2: Leadership training

Title and date of course including accreditation details	Number of young people enrolled	Number of adults enrolled	Percentage completing successfully
NEELB-Youth Development (unit based) January 2014	8		ongoing
NEELB-Youth Development (unit based) February 2013	12		100%
NEELB Trainee Leader (unit based) 2012	10		100%
NEELB Games Ideas		4	100%
Kids Alcohol and Sexual Health (KASH)		1	100%
Suicide Awareness Level 1		3	100%
Suicide Awareness Level 2		3	33%

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