

YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Clonard Monastery Youth Centre,
Belfast

Report of an Inspection in
October 2014

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:

PERFORMANCE LEVEL
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

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1. Focus of inspection

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.

2. Context

Clonard Monastery Youth Centre is a voluntary full-time youth centre situated in west Belfast. A voluntary management committee, affiliated to Clonard Monastery, is responsible for the management of the staff and the development of the centre.

The centre is open six evenings a week and is staffed by, a full-time senior youth worker, a 25 hours-a-week worker, two 18 hours-a-week posts for outreach and detached work, eight part-time paid staff and three volunteers. A number of local community and youth organisations use the centre including a Surestart programme and an Irish dancing class. Most of the staff have been in place for less than a year, the full-time worker took up post in October 2013.

According to figures supplied by the organisation, there are few female members over 15 years of age; this does not include the figures for work with the outreach and detached initiative. Membership trends indicate a significant increase from the same period last year. Approximately 7% of the young people between 15 and 19 years of age in the catchment area are registered members.

3. Overall findings of the inspection

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

4. Achievements and standards

- The majority of the young people enjoy and participate in a very good range of activity and educational programmes that meet well their personal and social development. In particular, the eleven group work programmes, completed successfully in the past 15 months, have matched the young people's needs and aspirations. For example, during the Belfast Interface Programme, the young people acquired the self-confidence and communication skills necessary to discuss and debate racism and other prejudices with young people from different backgrounds.

- The young people develop important life skills through the appropriate range of issue-based programmes. The very good creative youth arts programme help the young people explore personal attitudes on relevant topics and they develop a greater understanding of social issues including cultural identity and bullying.
- A small minority of the senior members have completed successfully an Open College Network level 1 trainee leader course and are using those skills effectively in leadership roles within the centre. The young volunteers are making a valuable contribution to supporting and developing the provision for younger members.
- There is a need for the staff to develop further the participation of the young people in the planning, delivery and evaluation of their own programmes and create better opportunities to facilitate the member's voice.

5. Provision

- In most of the sessions observed the quality of the youth work was effective. In the best practice the youth workers engage the young people purposefully and use their local knowledge well to provide relevant and challenging programmes.
- The youth workers' programme planning takes into account the needs of the different age groups and in most cases links well to the objectives outlined in the centre's annual action plan. There is a need, however, for all staff to plan for and develop self-reflective practice to capture more effectively the good outcomes for the young people.
- In the junior section there has been a good start made to provide more focused purposeful programmes including the revised opening hours that allows for the young people to avail of multi-sport and recreational programmes suitable for their age groups. There is a need to provide more innovative and challenging programmes with a minority of the members to focus and engage them further.
- The outreach and detached work is providing a valuable intervention for young people who do not normally attend the centre and is an important extension to the youth provision in the area. The staff skilfully engage with the young people, parents, community and statutory organisations to provide much needed support and guidance for some vulnerable and at risk young people.
- The curriculum is reflecting well the core principals of youth work and takes into account current and relevant issues, for example the ongoing positive work with young people who live close to the interface through the good inclusion and diversity programmes throughout the year.
- The overall quality of pastoral care in the centre is very good. The staff provide appropriate advice and support and refer the young people to specialist services when required. The centre provides a welcoming and attractive environment for youth work. Almost all of the young people stated that they felt safe in the centre and are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety and well-being; they stated that they have the confidence in staff to deal effectively with the minority of incidents relating to behaviour that is less than acceptable.

6. Leadership and management

- The management committee are aware of the challenges of governance and are fully committed to improvement at all levels; they provide very good support and supervision for the full-time worker.
- The full-time youth worker is aware of the needs of the young people in the area; he provides highly effective leadership through his very good supervision and support to an enthusiastic and dedicated part-time staff team. The staff team place a high value on inclusion and provide an open and welcome environment for those young people with additional needs
- The quarterly reports and a small number of programme evaluations demonstrate clear outcomes for the young people. There is a need, however, for all staff and management to develop self-evaluation leading to improvement. Additional support and training is needed for the staff and management to have a greater understanding of the methods for evaluating the youth work programmes, and their part in, and contribution to the process.
- The centre places a strong emphasis on making links with local and other relevant youth organisations that add significant value to the overall youth provision. The centre has recently developed initial links with some formal education providers that are developing appropriately the afternoon provision. The links with community organisations are progressing well with the aim to ensure greater cooperation and coordination of services across the area.
- The centre has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children and young people. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education, but the following areas need to be addressed: the internet policy needs to be reviewed and implemented; and appropriate guidance developed for the use of mobile technologies.

Area for improvement

There is a need for:

- The staff and management to develop further self-evaluation leading to improvement.

7. Conclusion

In the areas inspected, the quality of the overall provision for the young people is good. Clonard Monastery Youth Centre has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral 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, through district inspection activity, the organisation's progress on the area for improvement.

APPENDIX

Table 1: Total Membership

Age	4-9		10-15		16-18		19-25		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
2011/12	29	35	114	77	9	*	0	0	277
2012/13	16	30	92	62	*	*	0	0	312
2013/14	33	40	90	55	10	0	0	0	228
current	11	29	61	32	21	5	0	0	159

* Fewer than 5

Table 2: Leadership training

Title and date of course including accreditation details (awarding body /number of credits)	Number of young people enrolled	Number of adults enrolled	Percentage completing successfully
Diocesan Managing challenging behaviour	10	10	100%
OCN Level 1 Leadership in Youth Work	10		80%
OCN Level 2 Introduction to youth work		*	100%
Designated Person Child Protection Training		*	100%
OCN Level 1 Teamworks	11		99%

* Fewer than 5

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