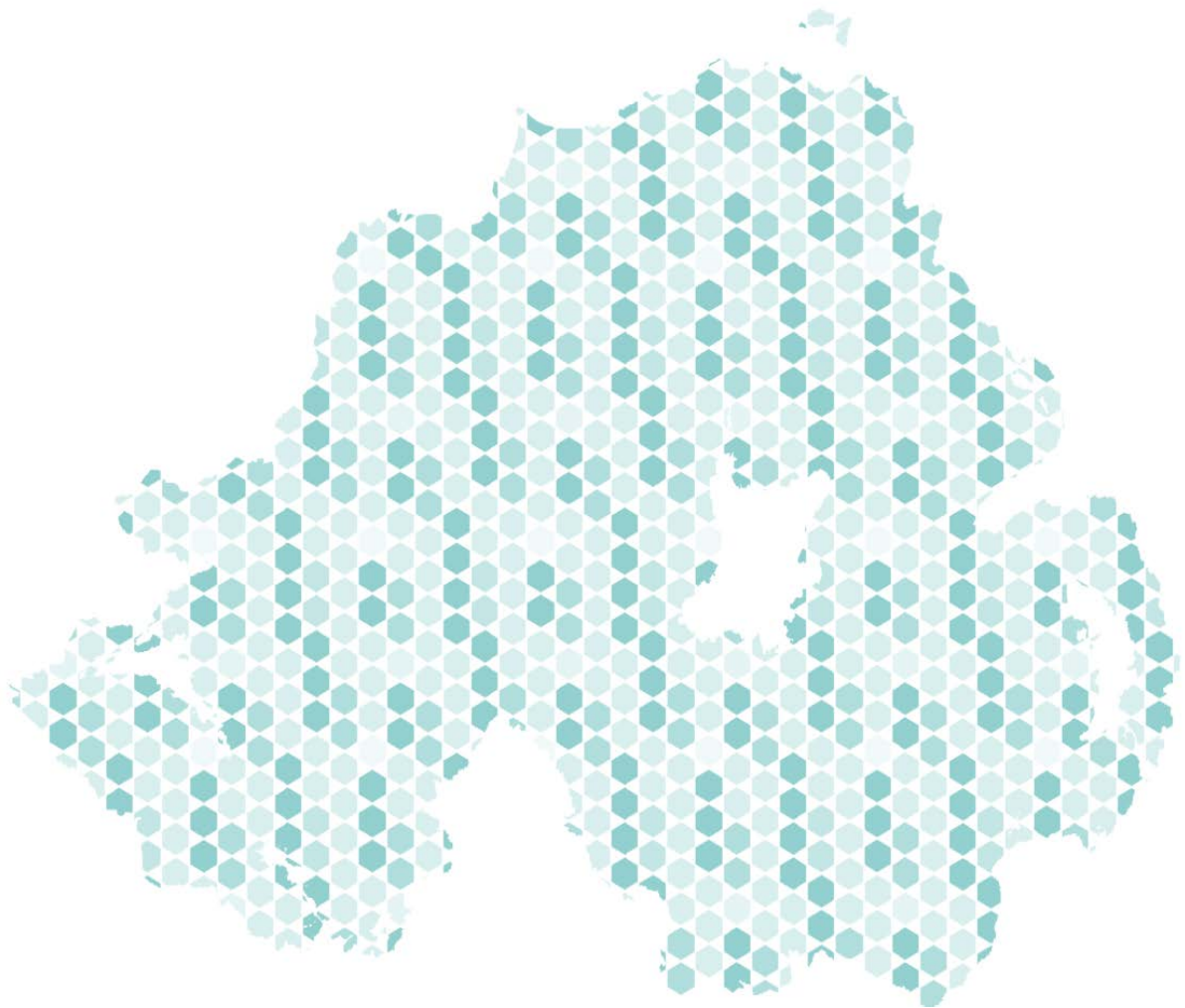


# YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Corpus Christi Youth Centre,  
Belfast

Report of an Inspection in  
April 2015



Providing Inspection Services for

Department of Education  
Department for Employment and Learning  
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure



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    |

## Contents

| <b>Section</b> |                                    | <b>Page</b> |
|----------------|------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1.             | Focus of the inspection            | 1           |
| 2.             | Context                            | 1           |
| 3.             | Overall findings of the inspection | 1           |
| 4.             | Achievements and standards         | 1           |
| 5.             | Quality of provision               | 2           |
| 6.             | Leadership and management          | 3           |
| 7.             | Conclusion                         | 4           |
|                | Appendix                           |             |

## 1. Focus of the 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

Corpus Christi Youth Centre is a full-time parish youth provision, located in the Ballymurphy area of west Belfast. The area has the highest level of social and economic deprivation in Northern Ireland. The voluntary youth centre is managed by a local committee and primarily funded by the Education Authority, Belfast Region.

The youth centre is open on seven evenings and two afternoons each week, and has a current membership of 417 young people, aged 8-18 years. The membership of the youth centre has fluctuated over the last three years; during the inspection, the average attendance at evening sessions was 51 young people.

## 3. Overall findings of the inspection

|                                   |                  |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>      | <b>Good</b>      |
| <b>Achievements and standards</b> | <b>Very good</b> |
| <b>Quality of provision</b>       | <b>Good</b>      |
| <b>Leadership and management</b>  | <b>Good</b>      |

## 4. Achievements and standards

- The quality of the achievements and standards of the young people is very good. The young people are friendly, welcoming and respectful to one another, the youth workers and visitors to the centre. They have a wide range of needs and abilities and are consistently supportive of one another. The young people have a strong sense of belonging and pride in their youth centre.
- The young people enjoy and are eager to participate in group work programmes, which develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of others and the wider community. In the group work sessions observed, they are enthusiastic, confident in expressing their opinions and are developing good coping strategies to deal with challenging issues. In addition, the young people are engaged in appropriate programmes, which support their mental health and well-being.
- Across all of the age groups, the young people are involved in community relations programmes, which enable them to develop new friendships with young people from differing communities. The discussions among the young people are meaningful and they openly debate and reflect on issues, which are controversial and sensitive within their respective communities.

- In the discussions held with the senior members, they spoke highly of the new experiences and learning which they gained through their participation on international visits, for example, to Boston, America. Through the international programmes, they are widening their horizons and developing useful skills to cope with living away from home. The senior members also work alongside their leaders to organise a popular range of activities throughout the year that includes, for example, the summer programme and the highly successful Christmas bazaar.
- The junior membership engages well in the broad range of programmes, which are matched well to their interests. They are learning new creative and practical skills, such as sketching and cookery. They are a lively group of young people, whose behaviour towards one another and the staff was exemplary throughout the duration of the inspection.
- The young people are keen to contribute to developing and improving their centre and the local community. In particular, the senior members are willing to take on responsibilities for planning and evaluating the programmes, and to be more directly involved in the management of the centre.

## **5. Quality of the provision**

- The quality of the provision is good; the sessions observed range from good to satisfactory; with most of the practice evaluated as good. In the most effective practice, the sessions are prepared and planned well, with good use made of questions to engage actively the young people in discussions. The topics are challenging and relevant to the issues faced by the young people. In the practice that was less effective, the staff needed to improve their group facilitation skills and they require further staff development in this area.
- The staff have recently begun to plan and review their individual projects more robustly; they are becoming more self-reflective in their work. While the system of recording practice is now enabling the staff to reflect more closely on what they are delivering, there is a need for them to plan and evaluate more sharply what impact the programmes are having on the young people's learning and development.
- The staff provide a well-balanced curriculum for the young people. The activities are age-appropriate, and there is a very good range of issue-based and recreational programmes. The youth centre prioritises and has well-established cross community links. During the inspection, the staff facilitated challenging group work programmes, which are helping the young people to build positive attitudes to living in a shared society.
- The young people and parents value highly the extended opening hours, particularly at the weekends, when the youth centre provides a safe and constructive environment where the young people can meet. The staff have identified appropriately that they need to engage in outreach and detached youth work to make and sustain contact with those young people who are not currently participating in the youth centre's programme.

- All of the staff are hard-working and committed to improving the life chances of the young people. Most of them have progressed through the centre from members, to volunteers, to paid youth workers. Consequently, they have a sound understanding of the needs of the young people in the area, and they are excellent role models.
- The pastoral care arrangements in place for the young people are very good with all of the staff giving significant voluntary commitments to support and develop further the provision. The parents report that their young people are well cared for, secure in the centre and that they have many opportunities for new experiences. They are highly supportive of the work of the youth centre staff, and report an improvement in their children's confidence and in their appetite for learning. The young people recognise the commitment, care and interest, which the staff have in their welfare and enjoyment. In addition, the young people report 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 quality of the leadership and management of the centre is good. The management committee for the centre have an appropriate range of expertise to guide and support the work of the staff. They value the commitment of the staff and the support which they receive from the Education Authority. Recently and appropriately, the management committee reviewed their constitution, and they are now better placed to improve the quality of the youth work more effectively.
- The management have a comprehensive understanding of the needs of the young people and the local community. In discussions with the Education and Training Inspectorate, they recognise the need to monitor and evaluate more thoroughly, the impact of the programmes on the personal and social development of the young people.
- The centre staff are a small team, who are well deployed. Their regular meetings have a strong focus on improving their own youth work skills and their understanding of the issues facing the young people. The staff are involved in a wide range of partnerships, where they advocate on behalf of the young people, and work collaboratively with others to make the best use of local resources. The staff are keen to develop further their links with local schools, in particular, to address the needs of young people with additional learning needs.
- The centre is effective in promoting inclusion and widening access for all young people, regardless of their ability, background, or personal issues. The management and staff provide accessible programmes, which reflect well their shared vision for the young people, which is to 'Aspire, Achieve and Succeed'.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the project has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children and young people. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

## **7. Conclusion**

In the areas inspected, the quality of the overall provision for the young people is good. Corpus Christi Youth Centre has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the organisation has demonstrated the capacity to address. The areas for improvement include the need for:

- the management of the centre to develop further their monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the programmes on the personal and social development of the young people; and
- the staff to access further professional development in group work skills.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor, through district inspection activity, the centre's progress on the areas for improvement.

**APPENDIX****Total Membership**

| <b>Age</b>     | <b>4-9</b>  |               | <b>10-15</b> |               | <b>16-18</b> |               | <b>19-25</b> |               | <b>Total</b> |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
|                | <b>Male</b> | <b>Female</b> | <b>Male</b>  | <b>Female</b> | <b>Male</b>  | <b>Female</b> | <b>Male</b>  | <b>Female</b> |              |
| <b>2011/12</b> | 38          | 34            | 204          | 138           | 42           | 23            | 0            | 0             | 479          |
| <b>2012/13</b> | 21          | 14            | 157          | 91            | 45           | 40            | 21           | 2             | 391          |
| <b>2013/14</b> | 62          | 41            | 132          | 108           | 35           | 28            | 23           | 12            | 441          |
| <b>current</b> | 23          | 21            | 130          | 97            | 62           | 63            | 12           | 9             | 417          |



© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2015

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website: [www.etini.gov.uk](http://www.etini.gov.uk)