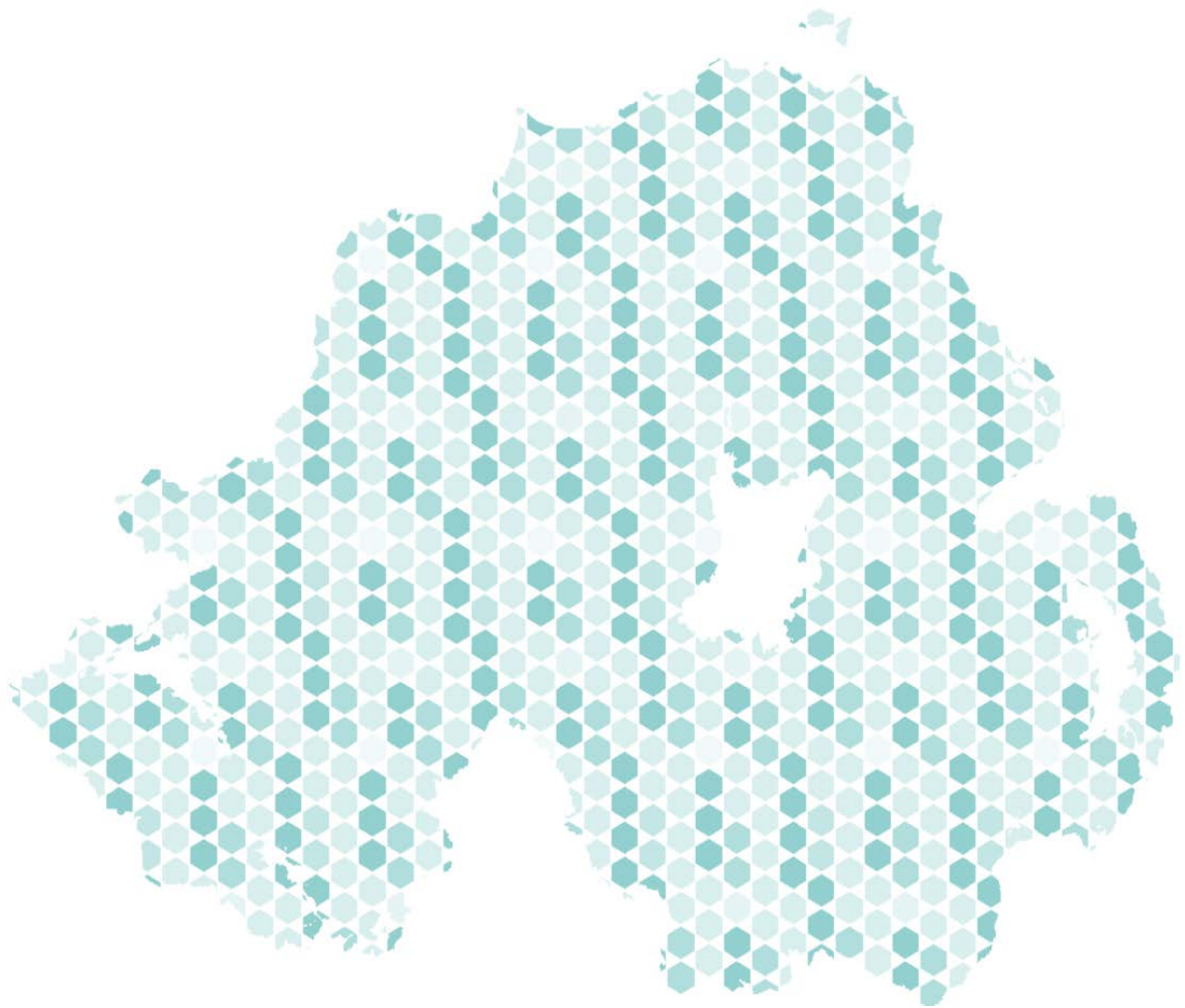


YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Newcastle, Castlewella and
Dundrum Area Project

Report of an inspection in
April 2014

eti

*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*

Providing Inspection Services for

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

CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



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

Contents

Section	Page
1. Context	1
2. Focus of inspection	1
3. Overall finding	1
4. Achievements and standards	1
5. Provision	2
6. Leadership and management	3
7. Conclusion	3
Appendices	

1. Context

The Newcastle, Castlewellan and Dundrum Area Project (project) is a controlled youth project that is part of the East Down Rural Area Project funded and managed by the South Eastern Education and Library Board. There is a full-time youth support worker in charge and six part-time paid staff who deliver outreach and detached youth work provision to appropriately identified areas of social and economic need within the electoral wards of Castlewellan, Donard, Dundrum, Murlough, and Shimna. The part-time staff are deployed throughout the East Down Rural Area Project catchment area and they deliver specialist support when required.

The staff team operates on four evenings each week, including Friday and Saturday and the full-time worker delivers a personal and social development programme in two local primary schools as part of the transition programme to post-primary. The project provides activity and diversionary programmes for the young people for five weeks during the summer. According to figures supplied by the organisation, there are currently 206 registered young people demonstrating a significant increase in the young people registered in the previous two years; almost all of the young people are of post-primary age.

2. Focus of Inspection

The inspection focused on:

- the quality of the young people's achievements and standards;
- the quality of the provision for learning; and
- the quality of the leadership and management, including the processes for self-evaluation leading to improvement.

3. Overall finding

Overall effectiveness	Very good
Achievements and standards	Very good
Provision for learning	Good
Leadership and management	Very good

4. Achievements and standards

- The young people take an active role in the planning and implementation of their own activities. They develop creative and thinking skills through their regular attendance and engagement in youth work initiatives that are tailored to meet the wide range of abilities and needs across all of the groups observed.
- The high attendance rate of young people from the Newcastle area who participate in the Saturday night programme demonstrates their significant commitment and positive attitude to the youth work programme. The development of the Health Education and Diversity Zone initiative has been appropriately introduced to provide this group with an Open College Network (OCN) Level 1 qualification that is improving their health and well-being.

- The Percy French animation and film project was well researched and, at the end of the project evaluation, the young people demonstrated their very good animation and film-making skills through the completed short film and their excellent teamwork skills required to successfully complete the project.
- The young people across the various programmes engage purposefully in issue-based group work; they use the very good opportunities provided by the staff to develop their self-esteem and build positive relationships with their peers. For example, the members of the Mourne youth forum, contribute positively to the life and work of the project; they are exploring how to best represent the voice of young people through the 'ShoutBox' initiative that aims to promote the political awareness of young people. The members of the forum are confident and competent young people and have a critical understanding of the needs of others in their area and in the wider community.
- In the last twelve months thirty-one young people have achieved the OCN Level 1 in Leadership in Youth Work Training; most of the young people are progressing through to the next level of accreditation.

5. Provision

- In all of the sessions observed, the quality of the youth work was good or very good. The full-time worker creates a very supportive environment which is conducive for learning; she sets high expectations which challenge and inspire the young people. The best practice was exemplified by, the detailed planning, the very good independent thinking and openness of the young people and the very good process of recording achievement. For example, the young people were observed using iPads to record their learning through the 'SKILL'¹ learning logs. In almost all of the sessions observed, the young people were very supportive of one another; they work well together to help improve their future life chances in a safe environment.
- The staff use a good range of verbal and written methods of evaluation and assessment of the youth work sessions depending on the circumstances, needs and abilities of the group. There is a need to continue to critically reflect the extent to which the young people's expectations are being realised so that key learning points are highlighted and understood by all of the young people during and at the end of the sessions.
- The youth centre curriculum, is matched well to the interests and needs of the young people. A particular feature is the Saturday night programme which engages the young people from areas of social need. The workers use the planned and unplanned experiences to challenge, in a supportive environment, the many issues negative faced by this age group.
- The quality of pastoral care is very good. The staff have a strong pastoral focus in all areas of their work and maintain an inclusive ethos which contributes to a positive learning environment. They provide a very good range of programmes which support the young people to maintain their personal safety and well-being. Mental health and well-being issues and keeping safe initiatives are part of most of the group work sessions. In discussions with the inspection team, the young people reported that they feel safe in the project and are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety and well-being.

¹ SKILL – Skill Knowledge and Information Learning Log

- Those parents, who spoke to the inspection team, were extremely positive about the relevance and creativity of the programmes and they endorsed the very good quality of the pastoral care provided by the staff.

6. Leadership and management

- The South Eastern Education and Library Board senior leadership team and the management staff at a local area level work strategically and collegially, through a comprehensive needs analysis process, to identify achievable targets that reflect well the needs of the young people. The Down three-year area plan provides effective guidance for the achievement of key priorities outlined in the project's annual action plan.
- The full-time worker is fully committed to improving the lives of the young people who attend the project; she provides highly effective leadership and excellent support to her staff. Her extensive local knowledge and positive engagement skills develop sound working relationships with the parents and the young people leading to very good outcomes and increased learning for the young people.
- The very effective links with a range of community and youth organisations add significant value to the project. A locally representative and effective steering group of statutory and voluntary organisations meet regularly and give very good strategic direction to the project staff.
- The project has recognised the need to embed further the quality assurance framework so that they can evaluate more effectively the overall impact of the youth work interventions to inform future practice.
- The part-time staff provide a key role in the support of the full-time worker, they demonstrate a high degree of commitment to the young people and to self-improvement and further professional development.
- 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 is very good. The Newcastle, Castlewellan and Dundrum Area Project is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the young people; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

Catchment area profile: Newcastle, Castlewellan, Dundrum

Total Membership

Age	4-9		10-15		16-18		19-25		Total
	male	female	male	female	male	female	male	female	
2009/10	0	0	48	70	23	16	0	0	157
2010/11	0	0	54	32	23	16	0	0	125
2011/12	0	0	23	33	15	12	0	0	83
2012/13	0	0	25	25	21	24	0	0	95
current	10	10	43	60	36	37	5	5	206

APPENDIX 2

Leadership training provided for young people and youth workers in the youth centre in the last two years.

Title and date of course including accreditation details	Number of young people enrolled	Number of adults enrolled	Percentage completing successfully
First Aid 3 rd November 2012		7	100%
First Aid 1 st February 2014		6	100%
Level 1 Seminar Divisional Seminar Feb 2014		3	100%
Part Time Staff Residential Nov –Dec 13		7	100%
Child Protection Training October 2013		9	100%
OCN Leadership in Youth Work Training 12-13	31		100%
OCN Introduction to Youth Work Level 2 12-13		5	100%
OCN Programme Development Level 3 12-13		6	100%
ELB Youth Support Worker Qualification 13-14		8	100%

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