

YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Nubia Youth Centre, Belfast

Report of an Inspection in
May 2015

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 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

Nubia Youth Centre is a full-time youth provision, located close to the Donegal Road in south Belfast. The youth centre is managed by the Education Authority, Belfast Region. In the last year, the centre has moved from being a part-time youth provision to a full-time youth centre, with a full-time youth worker employed as well as 12 part-time and volunteer staff.

The youth centre is open on five evenings each week; at present there is no afternoon provision. The current membership is 168 young people, aged 4-19 years. The membership of the youth centre has increased significantly over the last three years; in the past year 46 new members have registered. The increase in attendance over the last year has brought many new members to the centre, and several who had stopped attending are now reintegrated into the provision. During the inspection, the average attendance at evening sessions was 37 young people.

3. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Satisfactory
Achievements and standards	Satisfactory
Quality of provision	Satisfactory
Leadership and management	Satisfactory

4. Achievements and standards

- The young people are friendly, and enjoy mostly good humoured relationships with one another and their youth workers. They have a strong sense of belonging and pride in their youth centre.
- The young people are keen to participate in group work programmes, and when engaged fully, they participate enthusiastically and readily contribute their ideas and opinions. The young people are involved in regular community relations programmes, through which they develop new friendships and an improved understanding of other young people from differing communities.

- The senior members are very confident in their interactions with adults and engage confidently and maturely in conversations. Through the Millennium Volunteers programme¹, 20 of the senior members have engaged in volunteering within the youth centre. In addition, the senior members committee is helping the young people to develop leadership and team work skills which enhance their social development and employability skills. While they are engaged in level 1 accredited and non-accredited youth work programmes, there is a need for clearer progression pathways to be available to the young people, to enable them to work towards achieving their future aspirations, as well as supporting them to develop their leadership roles. Furthermore, the young people need to be involved more fully in the planning and evaluation of the programmes, with a stronger focus on their learning outcomes.
- In the discussions held with the senior members, they recognise the contribution which the programmes in the centre have made to increase their self-confidence. They are excited about their forthcoming work with a programme for the homeless, and demonstrate an empathy and sensitivity towards those facing such challenges. These young people have developed an understanding of different cultures and are broadening their horizons through international travel and residential experiences. For example, nine of the current members are participating in a homeless volunteering and leadership project, this will include opportunities for them to volunteer in a number of locations in America.
- The junior members attend at the same time as the senior members on four evenings each week and this has a detrimental impact on the enjoyment of both age groups. A majority of the junior members are not involved meaningfully in the centre's generic programme. In particular, the younger boys do not have sufficient group work or generic youth work provision to engage and sustain their interests. The junior girls are more engaged in group work programmes, where they are enthusiastic about their new experiences and they avail of opportunities to perform, present information and gain self confidence. In addition, these girls are learning new skills through their drama and costume design and projects. However, to develop further their creativity, they need to have more opportunities to work independently with minimal direction from the staff.

5. Quality of provision

- The sessions observed range from good to inadequate; with a majority of the practice evaluated as satisfactory. In the most effective practice, the sessions are matched well to the young people's interests and needs. The range of issue-based programmes for the young people has grown significantly over the last year and many difficult and challenging issues are incorporated into the centre's curriculum plan. The issues identified for group work are pertinent to the young people, and a majority of them can connect this learning to their personal experiences in formal education.

¹ Millennium Volunteers is a national programme that recognises volunteering through certificates issued by the Department of Education and is open to anyone aged between 14 and 25.

- In the practice that was less effective, the youth workers' planning and group facilitation skills require further development to improve the quality and range of provision. While the staff have begun to plan and collate evidence on their individual projects, group work and staff debrief discussions, there is insufficient focus on the learning outcomes achieved by the young people.
- Most of the staff are long-standing and committed to improving the programmes for the young people. They have extensive knowledge of the young people, their families and the needs of the local community. Many of the young people attending the centre have parents who were also members and their support for the centre as a full-time provision is strong.
- During the last year, there have been a small number of after school group work programmes provided for the young people. However, at the time of the inspection, the centre had at no afternoon provision. The staff have identified appropriately, that as a full-time centre they need to plan for and provide additional day time services for the young people.
- The quality of the care, guidance and support of the young people is satisfactory. The centre promotes a welcoming, family-like atmosphere. The young people benefit from the convivial relationships amongst the staff and the supportive relationships with their peers. The parents are highly supportive of the work of the youth centre staff, and report an improvement in their children's confidence. There is a need, however, for staff to develop a more consistent approach to promoting positive behaviours throughout the centre. The young people reported 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 satisfactory. The leadership of the centre has an enthusiasm for working in the community, with the young people and are committed to developing the capacity of the staff to improve the quality of the provision. At the time of the inspection, the centre did not have an advisory committee in place; however, members of a committee have been identified and the establishment of this group is soon anticipated.
- The staff have regular staff meetings and are a collegial team, who are committed to work together to continuously improve the youth work provision for the young people. They are supportive of the leadership of the centre and the management have identified appropriately the need to develop individual support and supervision for the staff. There is a need to analyse the training needs of the part-time staff and to develop further the capacity of these staff to deliver generic youth work and group work programmes.
- The Education Authority area plan demonstrates a sound understanding of the needs of the area and the issues which the community face. The management need to connect this more directly to the centre's curriculum planning and to quality assure more thoroughly, the impact of the programmes on the personal and social development of the young people.

- The staff and management have high aspirations for the young people. In the last year, the management have invested significantly in new resources in the centre and have made steady progress to improve the quality of the provision. In addition, they have made effective use of partnerships and their resources to improve the range of experiences available to the young people. During the inspection, the use of and resources for ICT were underdeveloped across the provision.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the youth centre has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding children and young people. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education; however, there is a need to carry out a review of the safeguarding processes, in particular, the risk assessments and the procedures for registration and attendance.

7. Conclusion

In the areas inspected, the quality of the overall provision for the young people is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection identified significant areas for improvement which need to be addressed if the needs of all of the young people are to be met more effectively. The areas for improvement include the need for:

- the young people to be involved more fully in the planning and evaluation of the programmes, with a stronger focus on their learning outcomes and progression;
- further development of the youth work provision for the junior members to more effectively meet their needs, in particular, the group work programmes and the generic youth work provision for the junior boys; and
- the management of the centre to analyse the training needs of the part-time staff, and to develop further the capacity of the staff to deliver generic youth work and group work programmes.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the areas for improvement over a 12-24 month period.

APPENDIX

Total Membership

Age	4-9		10-15		16-18		19-25		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
2011/12	10	25	30	35					100
2012/13	12	10	19	23	3	5	1	1	74
2013/14	8	8	16	18	4	2			56
2014/15	20	28	38	34	24	22	1	1	168

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