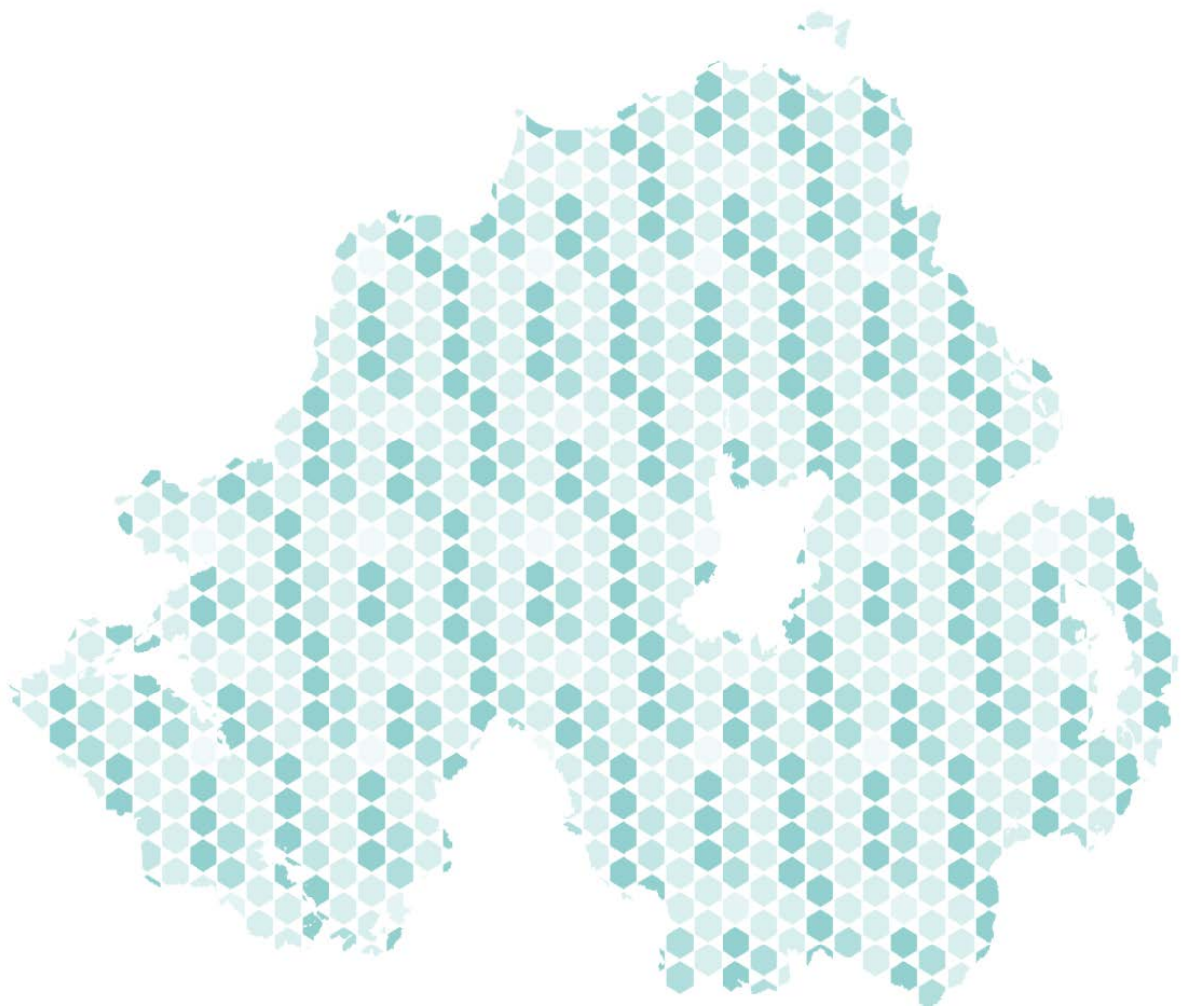


# YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Strathfoyle Youth Centre,  
Londonderry

Report of an Inspection in  
November 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 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

Strathfoyle Youth Centre is a full-time controlled centre in the Western Education and Library Board (WELB). It is situated in the Enagh ward, which is largely rural, within the Derry City Council area.

The centre has youth provision six evenings and one afternoon each week with specific activities and programmes for: primary; junior; intermediate; senior age groups; and extended provision for senior members at the week-end. The key target group is young people between 14-18 years of age, who experience inequalities with regard to accessing services in a rural community. The membership has remained constant over the last four years; at least 30% of the current members have attended the centre since 2011-2012. A local community organisation uses the premises each week and outside agencies avail of the centre for a variety of events throughout the year.

The full-time centre-based youth worker has been in post since October 2013 and has an outreach role that is currently postponed to allow the centre programme to be embedded and sustained. In addition, there is a part-time youth support worker-in-charge of the extended provision, and the primary section, six part-time members of staff and five core volunteers. The centre also has a supportive advisory committee, many of whom have given years of service and commitment.

## 3. Overall findings of the inspection

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Very good</b>
<b>Achievements and standards</b>	<b>Very good</b>
<b>Provision</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Very good</b>

## 4. Achievements and standards

- The young people demonstrate high levels of enjoyment in the well organised age-appropriate programmes and activities. In the junior section, the young people work well in small groups and develop creative thinking skills, and in particular, through the well-organised drama, arts and crafts sessions. During most of the sessions observed the young people had a very good choice and variety of activities that encourage participation, for example, during rehearsals for the Christmas show.

- In the intermediate section a minority of the young people are beginning to take more responsibility for their learning and are developing greater confidence and self-esteem. In particular, the winter intervention programme has a clear rationale to enable the young people to understand the links between rights, responsibilities and their actions.
- The senior members make a valuable contribution to the life and work of the centre. In the last year almost 150 members enrolled in appropriate training and successfully achieved accreditation in 12 relevant courses that enhanced their personal and social development.
- Through the extended provision additional young people have attended the centre, especially during summer months, and engaged in activities which have increased and developed their skills, knowledge and confidence in working with others. Most of the young people attending the extended provision complete a good range of relevant training. Courses include interview skills; completing a curriculum vitae; understanding the law and young people; online safety; and street safety. The extended opening hours on Friday and Sunday evening allows young people to attend the centre, who may not otherwise be able to participate in the personal and social development opportunities.
- The nature and good range of courses, both in-house and through other agencies, allow the young people to assume leadership responsibilities within the centre and in the wider community. The young people who attend the Open College Network level II peer leadership training are articulate and able to relate their learning to leadership roles both in and beyond the centre; those who participate in the leadership training are positive role models for the younger members
- The school-based programmes are very highly valued by the participating post-primary school and the young people respond positively in the less formal lessons. The young people use the additional time given by the school to explore feelings and discuss sensitively social issues including cyber bullying and healthy living. The full-time worker also provides a comprehensive transitions programme for the local primary school and delivers a personal development programme in a special school.

## **5. Provision**

- The very effective programme planning is focused on a comprehensive assessment of the personal and social development needs of the young people and links appropriately to the centre's curriculum delivery agreement. There is a consistent approach to session planning that takes good account of the abilities and interests of the young people.
- In almost all of the sessions observed the quality of the youth work was good or very good. In the best practice, the staff communicated and engaged the young people in the development of the learning outcomes. In the more formal sessions, the good use of high level questioning allowed the young people to articulate their learning in a safe learning environment.

- In the less effective practice there is a need for greater consistency in managing low level disruption; and in a minority of the sessions observed there needs to be more pace and challenge to maintain appropriate levels of engagement.
- There is a very good range of assessment methods that are used effectively to meet the requirements of each particular age group and are matched well to the content of the programme. For example, in the evidence files examined the young people evaluate their learning through a good range of baseline assessments and session evaluations. It is important to demonstrate how the feedback from the young people is used to inform future planning.
- The youth curriculum is relevant and has a very good balance of activity and issue-based programmes, matched well to the needs and interests of the young people. The young people avail of personal and social skills development courses including, community safety, anti-bullying, and understanding citizenship. The well resourced and attractive main hall is used for a variety of sports and activities, although boys' football tends to dominate the use of the hall.
- 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. There are clear policies and procedures to guide the staff and the young people, for example a comprehensive risk assessment is completed annually. The welcoming environment includes very good information boards and posters that reinforce keeping safe message. Two groups of members devised attractive and effective anti-bullying materials, demonstrating the high priority given to the promotion of positive behaviour. 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. The parents, who spoke to the inspection team, endorsed the very good quality of pastoral care provided by the staff and the effective communication to advise them of arrangements for out of centre visits.

## **6. Leadership and management**

- The leadership and management of the centre provide a very clear vision that motivates the staff to achieve appropriate and well-developed outcomes taking cognisance of the needs of the young people in the local area. The full-time worker demonstrates continuous improvement through the development of effective systems for the support and supervision of the staff; and provides strategic leadership through modelling integrity, setting high standards for herself and others.
- The curriculum delivery agreement contains a very good analysis and interpretation of the available research and data that is effectively guiding the work of the centre. The annual action plan includes ten main priorities with clear outputs and outcomes for the young people. Almost all of the targets have realistic and measurable outcomes well-matched to the identified needs and take good account of the different age groups.
- The WELB has comprehensive monitoring arrangements in place, including, quarterly target monitoring and very effective support and supervision structures for the full-time youth worker provided by the team leader.

- The staff report increased levels of motivation and commitment as a result of the very good support structures and appropriate challenge provided by the full-time youth worker. They have demonstrated commitment to develop as a newly formed team and show collegiality and dedication to meeting the needs of the young people.
- The very good quality of the external links has greatly enhanced the provision. For example, the close collaboration with the local community association resulted in an additional week of the summer festival. The 'Through the Lens' inter-generational project has increased community cohesion and formed positive working relationships between the community, voluntary and statutory organisations in the area.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection Strathfoyle Youth Centre has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding 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 very good. Strathfoyle Youth Centre is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the young people; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

**APPENDIX**

**Total membership**

Age group	4-9		10-15		16-18		19 +		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
2011/12	57	35	39	23	16	10	*	0	184
2012/13	54	50	47	28	16	6	8	0	209
2013/14	41	51	49	41	10	9	6	*	210
current	50	72	36	36	7	*	9	0	214

Where \* denotes five or fewer



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