

YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Youth Provision in the
Causeway Coast and Glens

Report of an area inspection in
October 2018



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
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1. Context

The Causeway Coast and Glens (CCG) area is one of nine new geographical youth service areas established at the beginning of September 2018. The Education Authority (EA) has developed two strands for youth service delivery, a local service delivery model and a regional service. A senior youth officer has been appointed to lead the strategic planning and management in each of the nine areas and to monitor and evaluate the implementation of youth work provision at a local level in their area.

The staffing compliment in CCG consists of: a team leader; two senior youth workers; five area youth workers, a youth tutor, six youth support workers-in-charge, 23 part-time paid and 20 voluntary staff. According to figures supplied by the CCG, the area has had an average of 1413 young people registered over the past three years.

2. Focus of the inspection

The inspection focused on:

- the outcomes for the young people;
- the quality of the provision; and
- the quality of leadership and management.

The participation of young people and school-based youth work provided a particular focus for part of the inspection.

3. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
Outcomes for learners	Very good
Quality of provision	Very good
Leadership and management	Very good

4. Outcomes for learners

A key strength of the CCG area is the relatively large number of young people who have achieved accredited and recognised qualifications in the last 12-18 months. Figures supplied by the CCG area indicate that 550 young people took part in non-accredited training opportunities and 426 young people achieved accredited qualifications. Examples of achievements include: level one qualifications in youth development; event management; leadership in youth work; peer mentoring; skills for employability; and an innovative level three qualifications in film production, digital photography, sound production and graphic design as part of the creative arts and digital innovators programme. The young people who attended training, were able to articulate that they not only gained greater confidence and self-esteem but also they had gained skills and knowledge that are helping them to progress towards achieving their future career aspirations.

The young people welcome the opportunities to progress to and participate in leadership roles. For example, through the youth development programme and as members of the youth advisory programme and the youth council. They spoke confidently about the pathways to leadership which are clear to them and many avail of the opportunities to take an active role in the further development of their centre or project. The positive impact of the voice of the young people is a strong feature of the overall provision and there is a focus on active participation by young people at all levels.

Participation is a key element of the youth work in the CCG area, there are several formal opportunities for young people to participate in decisions about their own programmes through the youth forums established in the four local geographical areas. A further strength is the strategic planning in place for the development of a youth council with appropriate representation from young people across the area. A small number of young people represent the area on the Local Advisory Group¹ which is in the early stages of development. The participation of young people is an inclusive concept in this area and there are very good examples of young people believing that they can make a difference in their local community and beyond. Celebrating success and achievement is an important aspect of the youth work calendar and each year the young people, along with the youth workers, plan a celebration event which last year attracted over 160 young people.

The young people co-operate well with the youth workers, they work effectively individually and in small groups, their contributions are valued and respected by the youth workers. They demonstrate how collaborative working can help them achieve set targets and goals that they use well in a range of social contexts outside of youth work. There are high levels of understanding, compassion and sensitivity towards the rights and feelings of others, evident for example in the Limavady inclusion group. The young people value the good opportunities to meet with members from other centres and they spoke positively about their experiences in the 'Together Building United Communities' (TBUC)² programme.

5. Quality of provision

There is a broad and balanced curriculum that is appropriately planned and based on the identified needs of 1,073 young people who were consulted as part of a regional assessment of need exercise in 2016. The curriculum is inclusive and appropriate to the age and ability and location of the young people. It includes a wide range of personal and social development programmes, focused on issues raised by the young people such as emotional health and well-being issues, alcohol and drug awareness, personal safety and health and social care which are meeting well their needs. The gender-based and inclusion programmes create a safe space for young people to talk about issues that are important to them. The inclusion programme and young women's work is of a high quality and provides effective guidance and support.

The good use of the Model for Effective Practice³ by the youth workers provides an effective framework on which to build and develop solid youth work practice. There is a strong focus on delivering programmes that, understand where young people are in their personal and social development stage, supports their right to make choices and empowers them to voice their own ideas and attitudes. The young people across the area report that they feel that the accredited courses are important in their preparation for work they also state that they enjoy outdoor education programmes and their residential experiences particularly over the summer period. The CCG area need to continue to provide opportunities for group work in the 15 plus age group opportunities; only half of the sessions observed were group work programmes. A particular strength for a small number of young people, is the provision of very good quality digital media programmes as part of the curriculum.

¹ The purpose of Local Advisory Groups are to provide advice to support the development and implementation of local youth service provision.

² The Together: Building a United Community is a government strategy to promote the desirability of good relations and reconciliation.

³ The Model for Effective Practice is a curriculum and programme development tool for youth workers.

The quality of the youth work observed ranged from outstanding to having important areas for improvement with almost all of the sessions observed being good or better. In the best practice the workers create a safe environment, the pace of the session took account of the different ages and abilities of the group; the planning for each session was of a high standard and the sessions blend active learning and group work effectively to keep all of the young people on task. There are clear overarching objectives for the sessions and importantly ice-breaker games are linked well to the theme of the session. Going forward in a small minority of sessions there is a need to ensure that enough time is left for the end of session evaluation. In a small number of sessions the workers need to develop further more of the young people's confidence in talking about their learning.

There is an appropriate and very apparent focus on work with marginalised and vulnerable young people which enhances the mutual respect between the youth workers and the young people. For example, in one session young people were able to discuss and talk with members of the inspection team about their barriers to learning and how they are learning strategies to help them move forward as a result of their positive engagement with the youth workers. One group of young women were able to discuss with confidence, what they had learnt from taking part in a recent young women's conference in Belfast and were able to outline their plans to identify and support other young women from across the area.

The youth workers evidence files include some good quality session evaluations and through the very good levels of moderation and supervision the staff are able to make adjustments and improvements in their work. The inclusive and well-targeted programmes promote greater co-operation with the young people and there is good evidence of equality of opportunity throughout the project. The young people are engaged, consulted and fully involved in planning their own programmes and a nightly pre-session briefing by staff ensures that learning points and other issues are recorded and used as part of the evaluation process.

School-based youth work is a strength of the CCG area. Youth workers deliver programmes in five post-primary schools, a special school and two primary schools. All of the schools spoke positively about the involvement of youth workers and in the best practice the youth workers are considered part of the school team. The transition programme for primary seven children moving to year eight is helping to provide a smooth changeover from primary to post-primary school. In the best practice the school programmes are linked to the school pastoral programme and in the accredited Learning Together Programme⁴ (LTP) at key stage four, a high percentage of pupils achieve a General Certificate of Secondary Education equivalent at grade B. Two of the post-primary schools have youth wings attached to the school and provide a good range of activity and specialised programmes. The youth provision in these schools should be reviewed so that resources can be shared more effectively while maintaining the good provision that currently exists.

The young people commented on the how the relaxed delivery of the LTP programmes is enhancing their disposition to learning, they work well in pairs and in groups and there are opportunities for the youth workers to deliver twilight programmes that provides a wraparound educational service. The young people report how much they value the delivery by the youth workers and teachers, how it helps them learn more effectively and overcome barriers to learning. This youth-led approach allows for flexibility in learning and teaching that impacts positively on the behaviour while keeping within the boundaries of the LTP programme and school rules. Teachers also value the youth service partnerships and when they co-work with youth workers in the planning, delivery and evaluation of sessions, the outcomes for the young people are much improved.

⁴ The *Learning Together* Programme is a collaborative working partnership between individual schools and the Youth Service at key stages 2-4.

Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the CCG area's approach to the care and welfare of the young people impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners. The young people demonstrated exemplary behaviour and were open and honest with members of the inspection team. The staff work hard at providing a safe and secure environment which creates a purposeful learning experience for the young people.

6. Leadership and management

The strategic area plan is comprehensive and sets out clear, achievable objectives that are appropriate, agreed and understood by all of the staff. The controlled delivery agreements completed by each of the full-time staff, have purposeful links with the area plan and are appropriately based on the identified needs of young people. All of the strategic planning is flexible enough to take account of changing trends in young people's needs and aspirations.

The strategic leadership of the CCG area demonstrate an excellent understanding of, and live out, the EA organisational values, which includes the aim to inspire young people to be the best they can. There is a well-developed sense of teamwork across the area which is enhanced by appropriate continuous professional development. There is an enthusiastic and energetic management team who continue to build positive relationships with staff in an atmosphere of mutual respect. There is a good challenge function between managers and staff which adds an important element in meeting the needs of the young people.

The purposeful partnerships with appropriate stakeholders are used effectively to support the work with the young people throughout the area. The CCG area has highly effective partnerships with a relevant range of organisations that add value and compliment the youth service delivery including; the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, an interagency approach with a focus on health outcomes for young people. The Facilitating Life and Resilience Education (FLARE) project is another example of good partnership working between the EA youth service and the Public Health Agency with the main aim of the programme to support young people who are struggling with mental ill health; and the Causeway Rural and Urban Network which helps support work with young people from a wide range of backgrounds. The EA staff have important links with Department of Communities funded neighbourhood renewable area to ensure there is no duplication of youth services in the designated areas of high social deprivation.

There are well-developed systems in place to promote and sustain improvement. For example, the recently revised target monitor system for recording data is measuring progress effectively against the five key youth service priorities that accurately reflect the Department of Education's youth service policy. Self-evaluation is used well by each of the full-time staff and there is a greater understanding of the use of data to better inform future planning through the quarterly reports from the target monitor. The youth workers practice is regularly evaluated; controlled full-time staff have a minimum of six supervision sessions by senior managers, there are up to four monitoring visits per year. In addition the regular team meetings provide opportunities to identify and share good practice. Going forward, it will be important to review the process of critical reflection and analysis of all of the work to help measure more effectively the qualitative outcomes for the young people. The CCG area would benefit from producing a range of end of year case studies to demonstrate further the positive impact of youth work on the young people.

7. Safeguarding

Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding young people reflect the guidance from the Department of Education. The young people report that they feel safe in the organisation and that they are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or welfare.

8. Overall effectiveness

Causeway Coast and Glens has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the organisation sustains improvement.

Statistical data

Table 1: Total Membership

Age Group	4-8		9-13		14-18		19-21		22-25		Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
2015/2016	34	42	306	222	510	206	24	9	*	*	1360
2016/2017	103	31	384	286	354	270	16	10	*	*	1457
2017/2018	79	7	313	306	406	299	*	*	*	*	1424
Current	*	*	90	115	97	110	*	*	*	*	413

Source: data as held by the organisation. * fewer than 5.

Inspection methodology and evidence base

The ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework is available on the ETI website at [The Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework \(ISEF\): Youth](#)

Inspectors observed youth work sessions and also held focus group discussions with the young people. The inspectors held discussions with representatives of the Education Authority management, staff, young people and other stakeholders. In addition, the inspectors scrutinised the youth workers' planning and the organisation's self-evaluation reports. The inspectors evaluated the organisation's arrangements for safeguarding young people.

Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

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 ETI use the following performance levels when reporting on outcomes for learners, quality of provision and leadership and management:

Outstanding
Very good
Good
Important area(s) for improvement
Requires significant improvement
Requires urgent improvement

Overall effectiveness

The ETI use one of the following inspection outcomes when evaluating the overall effectiveness of the organisation:

The organisation has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the organisation sustains improvement.
The organisation demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the organisation sustains improvement.
The organisation needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.
The organisation needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the learners. It requires external support to do so. The ETI will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.

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