



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Newtownabbey Educational
Guidance Centre

Report of an Inspection in
May 2016

Quantitative terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

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 when reporting on Achievement and standards, on Provision for learning and on 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 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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1. Inspection method and evidence base

The key questions and quality indicators which guide inspection and self-evaluation of Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) provision which were applied to this inspection, are available in the ETI publication Together Towards Improvement: a process for self-evaluation at: <http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/together-towards-improvement/together-towards-improvement-post-primary.htm>

Inspectors observed learning and teaching, scrutinised documentation and the young people's written work and held formal and informal discussions with them (individually and in groups), their teachers and staff with specific responsibilities.

The arrangements for this inspection included a meeting with representatives from the Education Authority and the opportunity for parents, teaching and support staff to complete confidential questionnaires. A significant minority of the parents of the young people and most of the staff responded to the questionnaires. Almost all of the parental responses were positive; they valued the caring ethos, the level of support provided to enable the young people to cope with their anxieties and emotions, and the resulting progress made by them. The teacher and support staff questionnaire responses were positive, and indicated strong support for the centre management. Concerns in relation to limited resources and ineffective communication were discussed with the area manager and Education Authority senior management; these have been commented on within the report.

2. Focus of the inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interests of all young people, the purpose of an EOTAS inspection is, through effective linking of internal and external approaches, to:

- evaluate the quality of the provision and the outcomes for the young people;
- evaluate the centre's leadership and management and its capacity to effect and sustain improvement in its provision and outcomes; and
- inform the centre's planning for improvement.

3. Context

Newtownabbey Educational Guidance Centre and tuition service is located in Monkstown and is part of the Education Authority's provision for young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The centre provides outreach services to support young people to manage their behaviour and maintain their place in post-primary schools in Newtownabbey, Ballyclare, Carrickfergus and surrounding areas. In addition, the tuition service provides small group education in the centre and individual education at home for young people who cannot attend school for social, emotional and medical reasons. An area head of alternative education manages the work of four teachers and one behaviour support assistant in the centre, and seven permanent and eight temporary teachers in the tuition service. The senior management team for the centre comprise the area head and deputy head of alternative education. Young people at key stage (KS) 3 are referred by the Educational Psychology service and, where possible, attend the centre full time for up to three terms before their re-integration to their referring schools or to attend the KS 4 EOTAS centre.

The model of provision within the centre has been reviewed, and from September 2016 the young people in KS 3 will attend the centre on a part time basis whilst remaining in school for some of the school week.

Newtownabbey Educational Guidance Centre	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Enrolment in the centre	12	10	11	8
Enrolment outreach	61	68	59	61
% Attendance	73%	73%	81%	72%
FSME Percentage ¹	66%	90%	82%	88%
Newcomers	*	*	*	*

Source: data as held by the organisation.

* fewer than 5

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Important areas for improvement
Achievements and outcomes	Important areas for improvement
Provision for learning	Important areas for improvement
Leadership and management	Important areas for improvement
Outreach Support	Important areas for improvement

5. Achievements and outcomes

- The behaviour of most of the KS 3 young people at the time of the inspection was good. The behaviour of almost all of the key stage (KS) 4 young people at the time of the inspection was very good; they are courteous and have developed very good working relationships with the teaching and support staff
- All of the young people have improved their attendance since engaging with the centre, when compared to their previous attendance in school. In the current year, the centre's data indicates that most of the KS 3 young people have an attendance greater than 80%, including a minority with more than 90%. In KS 4 almost all have attendance of more than 80%.
- There is a lack of formal and informal opportunities for the young people to reflect on their behaviours and to develop independence and resilience. The staff need to develop further the young people's skills with a structured programme to improve their coping strategies.
- The young people in KS 3 achieve vocational qualifications in a range of courses including ASDAN² Foodwise short course, ACET³ Substance Abuse, ACET Personal Development, and AQA⁴ units in science and food technology. They are developing their literacy and numeracy skills in line with their individual ability. All of the current year 10 young people will transition to KS 4 EOTAS placements.

¹ The term 'FSME Percentage' refers to the percentage of young people's entitled to free school meals.

² Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN)

³ Health Education and Training NI (ACET)

⁴ Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA)

- In all of the schools visited, the outreach tutors had a good knowledge of the young people and their needs. While there was evidence of record keeping and communication between the schools and the tutor, there needs to be more effective use made of this information to enable the tutors to plan a comprehensive programme of support.
- The young people in the KS 4 group tuition study a range of GCSEs including, art and design, English language, information and communication technology, mathematics and science at single award. The majority of the young people are developing their literacy and numeracy skills well and engage purposefully as they work towards their target qualifications. They also study the Certificate of Personal Effectiveness, and Occupational Studies courses in contemporary cuisine, and business services at level 2. In the last academic year, all the year 12 young people achieved at least two GCSE qualifications at A*-E providing them with opportunities to progress to further education, training or employment.

6. Provision

- All of the staff endeavour to achieve effective working relationships with the young people, and encourage them to develop further their learning, social skills and behaviour. The young people have the opportunity to participate in a breakfast session each morning. The staff need to develop these sessions further as positive learning experiences by guiding the young people to socialise purposefully, adopt roles and responsibilities and to develop more positive dispositions towards their peers and staff.
- In the lessons observed in the centre and in the outreach provision, approximately three quarters were good or better. In the majority of lessons, the good practice was characterised by a range of well-paced, and engaging practical activities, the learning was contextualised and relevant to the young people. There were high expectations, appropriate resources and planned plenary sessions building the confidence of the young people and consolidating their learning. In the less effective practice there were insufficient differentiated activities to meet the needs of all the learners, the lessons were not based on the interests of the young people and did not engage them in their learning.
- In the most effective practice, the short and long term planning is detailed, and includes differentiation to meet the needs of the young people. In the less effective practice, the planning does not focus on the learning outcomes for the young people, consequently the young people were not effectively motivated and engaged. The evaluations of the learning by the teachers are varied, and do not consistently inform future planning for effective practice. The staff need to determine and record the long term objectives of each young person's placement in the centre, and include planning for re-integration of the young person to school. The format of the individual education plans was reviewed last year; however, they are focused exclusively on behavioural targets, and do not include clear educational targets.

- There is an appropriate curriculum offered within the centre for KS 3 and KS 4; it provides the young people with a broad range of opportunities to progress their learning. The young people engage in English lessons with developing confidence, and have opportunities for discussions, to write for a range of purposes and audiences, and to read a variety of texts. In the most effective practice within mathematics, the young people benefit from the well-paced, purposeful activities.
- Further therapeutic input with cognitive behavioural strategies are needed to enable the young people to reflect upon, recognise and understand the causes of their behaviours and provide them with a range of effective strategies to develop independence and resilience, relieve their stress and cope with the challenges in their lives.
- The staff carry out baseline assessments in literacy, numeracy, and behaviour for the KS 3 young people when they join the centre. These assessments need to be more robust to ensure there is sufficient information to inform their individual behaviour support plans and education plans. Further monitoring and assessments need to be carried out during the school year to track the progression of the young people and to determine their achievements at the end of the school year.
- The limited information and communication technology (ICT) in the centre results in insufficient provision for learning through on-line resources. The lack of ICT equipment for the tuition teachers to use with the young people needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. (Appendix 1)
- All of the KS 4 pupils received guidance from a careers advisor from the Department for Employment and Learning⁵ and in addition are supported through the Prince's Trust and work experience opportunities to plan for the future; this needs to be consolidated and extended by support from staff within the centre. The staff have effectively tracked all of the young people who left the centre last year and the data indicates that they have successfully transitioned to further education training or employment.
- The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care is good. There is a caring, supportive ethos. All staff interact positively with the young people and demonstrate through their actions sensitive and effective care for them. The young people in KS 4 with emotional and anxiety difficulties are very well supported in small groups that encourage them to make progress academically, socially and emotionally, and build their confidence and self esteem.
- The young people are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles and have toast, cereals and fresh fruit provided at breakfast and break times. They are taught about healthy diets and are given the opportunity to learn basic cookery skills, and take part in boxing, soccer and other activities with external agencies. The young people have participated in a review and change of lunchtime menu choices.

⁵ Now the Department for the Economy (DfE).

7. Leadership and management

- The senior management team is highly committed to the well-being and education of the young people, and work well to develop very effective working relationships with them and their parents and the staff of the centre. They are effective in managing the daily running of the centre and encourage a calm and pastoral working environment for the young people. The senior management team have appropriately developed effective group tuition for young people at KS 4 who require a nurturing support structure for social emotional and anxiety issues. The senior management team in the centre need to review current procedures for monitoring and evaluating the planning, learning and teaching within the centre, outreach and the tuition service and to share the good practice identified.
- The senior management team within the Education Authority and the leadership of the centre need to develop more effective working relationships, and to agree a shared strategic, collaborative vision for the development of the centre in line with Department of Education guidance for EOTAS. The Education Authority needs to ensure that staff, including tuition staff, have the appropriate resources, including information and communication technology equipment, to carry out their work and effectively meet the needs of the young people. The Education Authority educational psychology services needs to work more closely with staff and young people in the centre to support them more effectively to meet their challenging and complex needs.
- The centre is governed by the Behaviour Support Service Management Group comprising of officers from the Education Authority. Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection the parents and staff can have limited confidence in the aspects of governance evaluated. The Education Authority should consider how to facilitate greater involvement of local referring schools and parents in supporting the work of the centre with representation on the Behaviour Support Service Management Group.
- On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the centre has satisfactory arrangements in place for safeguarding young people. In discussions with the inspectors, the young people reported that they feel safe while attending the centre and know what to do if they have any concerns about their well-being. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education. The following areas, however, need to be addressed: to review the safeguarding policy to ensure that procedures are clear and the code of conduct for staff to include reference to the use of social media.

8. Overall effectiveness

The centre needs to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The areas for improvement are:

- to develop further the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the learning and teaching in the centre, outreach and tuition service;
- to further develop the curriculum to include a therapeutic input and greater focus on enabling the young people to manage their behaviour, build their self esteem and resilience to help them maintain their place in school; and

- to review the safeguarding policy to ensure that procedures are clear and the code of conduct for staff includes the use of social media.

The ETI will monitor and report on the centre's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a follow-up inspection in 12-18 months.

Accommodation

1. The lack of information communication technology for teachers in the tuition service creates a barrier to learning and inhibits their ability to deliver effectively the curriculum to the young people.
2. The hot water systems in the home economics room are inadequate and require urgent attention to ensure proper levels of hygiene can be maintained.

Health and Safety

1. There is a need for management to review the policy on the provision of mobile phones for lone-working tutors to ensure their safety and enable them to communicate appropriately with parents and the Newtownabbey guidance centre.

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