



*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**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

**Open Doors Learning Centre
Belfast**

May 2009

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF OPEN DOORS LEARNING CENTRE, BELFAST, BT12 4AH

The inspection of Open Doors Learning Centre, Belfast in February 2007 highlighted strengths in the positive ethos and outcomes for most of the young people attending the centre and also identified the need for improvements in the following key areas:

- the need to improve the arrangements for admission and assessment to enable the centre to monitor and evaluate the impact of their provision;
- the need to develop closer ties with the Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB) to secure funding and access to the BELB's support services;
- the need to address the lack of provision for physical education;
- the need to establish better links with further education and training providers; and
- the need to review the policy for child protection and pastoral care to align it to the Department of Education (DE) circulars and requirements.

In the interval since the inspection, the following actions which affect the work of the centre have taken place:

- new admissions and referral procedures have been introduced and service level agreements initiated with the majority of the contributing post-primary schools;
- the assessment of the young people's literacy, numeracy and personal and emotional development is in place and used to plan individual programmes for the young people;
- the outcomes of examination and attendance records, including progression routes, are recorded and maintained systematically;
- the Head of the centre has established curriculum links with local training organisations and the West Belfast Partnership Board's Local Implementation Action Group; and
- the policies for child protection have been aligned to the DE circulars and training for centre staff is planned.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out a follow-up inspection of the centre on 20 May 2009.

The action plan produced by the centre in response to the inspection findings was of a good quality. Good progress has been made in most of the areas for improvement identified during the original inspection.

Since the inspection, the centre evaluated the progress made in the areas for improvement identified in the original inspection. The Inspectorate recommends that the processes for self-evaluation are developed to focus more strongly on self-evaluation as a means of bring about improvement.

The following are the most important improvements brought about by the staff and the management:

- the initial assessment of the young people's curriculum interests and capabilities is now matched well to their individual programmes of work;
- the young people's attendance rates and behaviour improves notably during their time in the centre; for example, during the 2007-08 period, the young people's attendance rates rose from a range of 15% to 86% as recorded in their previous schools to 45%-100% in the centre; and
- the active links developed with the Belfast Metropolitan College, two local training centres and the careers service has enabled all of the young people to progress to a variety of vocational and further education courses; for example, in the 2007-08 period, eight of the nine young people attending the centre achieved grades from entry level to C in a range of General Certificate of Secondary Education courses.

It is of some concern that the BELB has not completed negotiations with the centre to find a mutual solution to the funding issue and provide access to the BELB's support services.

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this centre is now good. The centre has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The follow-up inspection has identified some aspects of the area for improvement still to be addressed but equally the centre has demonstrated the capacity to address these.

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