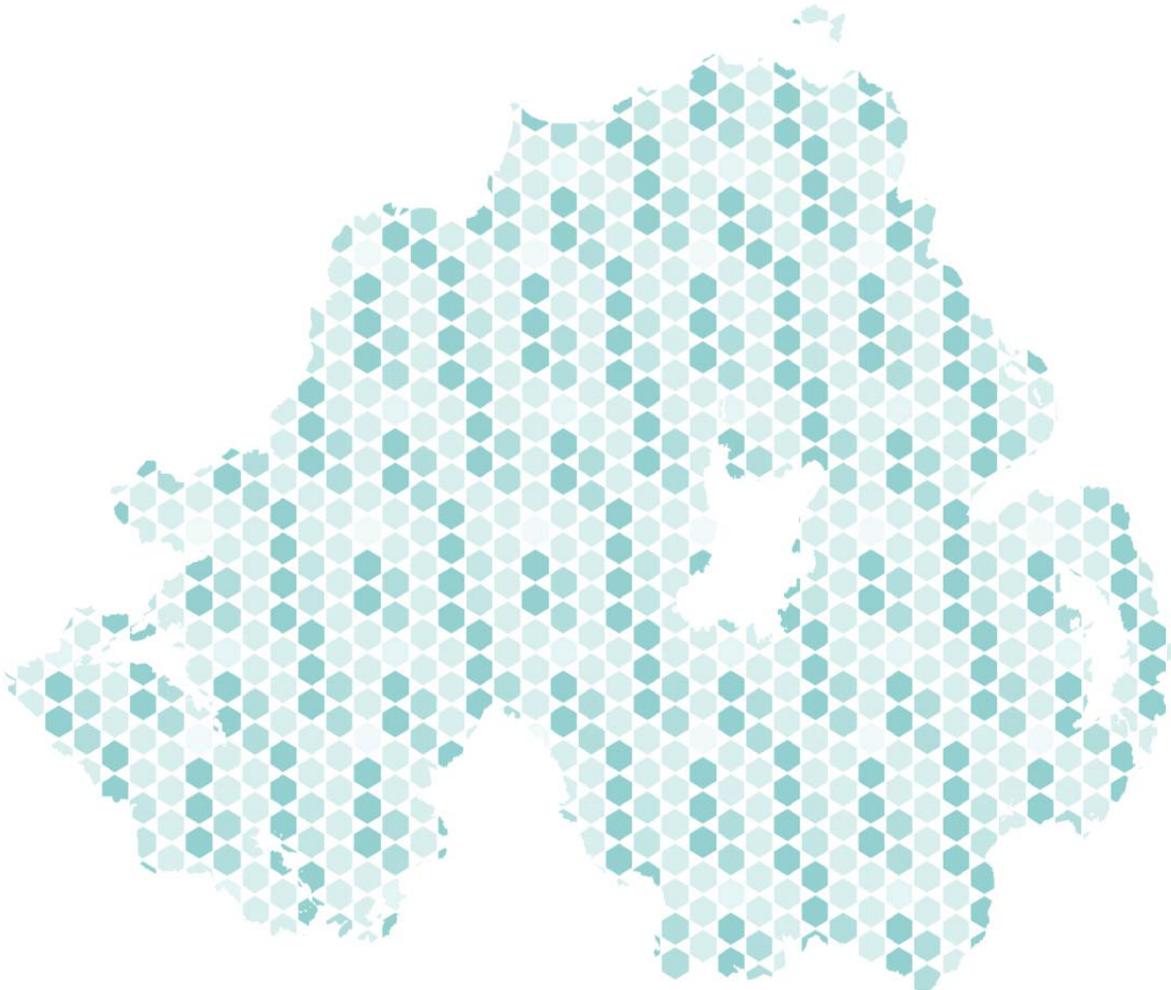


YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Rosemount Youth Centre,
Derry

Report of an Inspection
in May 2010

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*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



CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

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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:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rosemount Youth Centre (Rosemount) is a controlled centre in the City of Derry in the Western Education and Library Board (WELB). It is situated in an area of high unemployment in one of the top ten most deprived wards in Northern Ireland. The centre opened in 1972 in the Brooke Park area of the city; in 1980 it amalgamated with nearby voluntary youth provision to become Rosemount Youth Centre. It operates in the Brooke Park location, on the same site as Brooke Park leisure centre.

1.2 According to figures supplied by the organisation the area has a population of 2,652 (2001 Census: Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency) approximately one-fifth of whom are in the 4-19 age range. The current membership of the youth centre is 127 with only eight members in the 16 plus age range.

Table 1 Total membership over the past three years

Total membership over last three years indicating male/female and age group:	M 4-9	F 4-9	M 10-15	F 10-15	M 16-18	F 16-18	M 19+	F 19+	Total
2006/07	15	8	39	27					89
2007/08	57	35	37	35	7	4			175
2008/09	74	23	51	35	5	8			196
2009/10 Current membership	15	18	56	30	4	4			127

There is little analysis available for the reasons in the fluctuation of membership over the past four years. The overall membership trend is down by almost 40% from last year; in the sessions observed during the inspection the average attendance was 15. During the past 15 months, the centre was without the full-time youth worker for a period of three months, and closed several times throughout the year due to lack of staff. Appropriate contingency plans should be drawn up so that the membership are not disadvantaged should closure occur again.

1.3 Figures supplied by the organisation indicate that the afternoon sessions are the best attended. Despite the ongoing evaluation and review of programmes, young people do not attend in the same numbers for the evening sessions.

1.4 The centre is staffed by one full-time youth worker, six part-time paid workers and two voluntary assistant youth support workers. Two part-time staff provide a total of 12.5 hours administrative support each week.

1.5 Rosemount offers youth activities and programmes for young people aged 4-18 years on four evenings and two afternoon sessions a week. The current weekly programme includes a junior club (for those aged 4-12 years) on two afternoons and one evening each week, an intermediate club (for those aged 11-14 years) on two evenings, and a senior club (aged 14 plus) on two evenings. The centre is used by an independent Irish language youth group one evening a week. There is a published leaflet that contains relevant and appropriate information on opening times and key contacts.

2. EVIDENCE BASE

2.1 The inspection team observed eight sessions of youth work including the observation of a Growing, Learning and Developing (GLAD) programme; a young adult development course; and part of the 'Make a Difference' conference where the full-time worker facilitated a session on the promotion of good relations. Discussions were held with the area youth officer (AYO), five part-time staff, two members of the advisory committee and three parents. A range of documentation was examined including the centre development plan, the yearly action plan and the full-time youth worker's evidence file. Discussions also took place with 15 young people on the arrangements for pastoral care and child protection, and on the quality of services provided for them.

3. CHILD PROTECTION

3.1 Rosemount has very good, comprehensive arrangements in place for the safeguarding of children and young people. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education (DE). All of the staff employed by Rosemount have received child protection training in the past twelve months. Parents are informed about the procedures for child protection on an annual basis. All policies are clearly displayed on the notice-boards.

4. PASTORAL CARE

4.1 The quality of pastoral care is good. The young people spoke positively about the advice and support received from the youth workers. They reported that they felt safe and secure during the programmes provided for them. The views of the young people are taken into consideration through discussions and at the end of training session evaluations. A minority of the young people take an active leadership role in the centre; a small group of members is involved in the management and staffing of the centre's tuck shop. There is a minority of young people with behavioural difficulties and the centre has recognised the need for further training in coping with potential poor behaviour and disruption.

5. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.1 The quality of leadership and management in raising achievement in Rosemount is satisfactory. The full-time youth worker has over 20 years' experience of working in the area and is well-respected by members of the local community, including parents. She promotes good standards of behaviour and discipline within a sometimes difficult learning environment in an area of high deprivation.

5.2 The strategic leadership of the Youth Provision in the area is co-ordinated by the AYO; she has responsibility for the line management of the full-time worker of Rosemount and for all WELB full-time youth work staff in the City of Derry. The AYO completed a thorough review of the centre's effectiveness in March 2009 and implemented a three-year centre development plan and a one-year action plan that were agreed with the full-time youth worker. As a consequence of the review, the AYO provided the full-time youth worker with additional professional support and guidance and set a number of key personal targets as part of the annual action plan. The senior youth worker for the area also provided support and training for the worker and her staff.

5.3 The inspection confirms the successful completion of several key objectives on the annual action plan. These improvements include an increase in the provision of personal development opportunities for the young people; greater participation by a significant minority of young people in the management of the centre; and the further development of external links with community-based provision.

5.4 Only eight of the 18 objectives included in the action plan, however, had been fully completed at the time of the inspection. The reviews and moderation that have taken place since March 2009 are not providing enough evaluative comment on the achievement or non-achievement of action plan targets; the majority of the targets do not have measurable outcomes.

5.5 There is a need to prioritise an agreed and measurable increase in the attendance of young people at all sessions. The deployment of the full-time worker in an outreach role needs to be reviewed to ensure that the role will enhance significantly the priority to attract and sustain new members.

5.6 The previously small staff team, and the difficulty in attracting additional staff and volunteers, have limited the range and quality of programmes on offer. In the past few months two new staff have been employed. The introduction of individual support and supervision for all of the part-time staff is beginning to help them focus more clearly on the role and purpose of youth work in the centre.

5.7 In a majority of the sessions observed the staff were not making effective use of their youth work skills and previous training to meet the personal and social development needs of members. The full-time youth worker needs to provide the part-time staff with both written and oral feedback on their youth work practice and their effectiveness.

5.8 The physical resources and the accommodation are well-maintained and the latter provides a safe space and attractive environment for the young people of the area. The well-equipped Information Communication and Technology suite was not used effectively during the inspection.

5.9 The full-time youth worker has maintained and improved her links with external community groups and other agencies including schools. These links need to be evaluated and subsequently developed, thoroughly to ensure that they are adding value to the identified targets set in the centre's development plan. The links with the nearby Glen and Hazlebank communities are beginning to have a positive impact for Rosemount. There has been a small increase in attendance from senior members from Glen and the full-time worker, along with officers from the WELB, are providing advice and support to the development of youth provision in Hazlebank. Feedback from one local post-primary school indicates satisfaction for the existing work and ongoing development of links with Rosemount.

5.10 A new advisory committee has been re-established in the past twelve months; it meets regularly and includes representation from members. The discussions held with the advisory committee indicated their long-term commitment with the centre and their support for the full-time worker. The review of the centre carried out by the WELB states that the advisory committee should ensure that the targets set in the action plan are discussed and reviewed at each meeting. The inspection endorses this action point.

6. QUALITY OF PROVISION

6.1 The number of young people attending the centre has fluctuated over the last three years. The current membership of 127 represents about one-quarter of the young people under 16 years of age living in the Rosemount area. Almost all of the young people attending the centre are under 15 years of age, and in the last 12 months the number of young people attending each session has been below the expectations for a full-time unit,

according to the WELB management review of March 2009. The provision is largely recreational with occasional educational programmes including anti-bullying and environmental issues. The AYO and deputy head of youth service in the WELB are working strategically with some of the community and statutory organisations and with the full-time worker to review the overall provision for young people in the area.

6.2 The quality of the youth work observed during the inspection varied from inadequate to satisfactory, with the majority of the work being satisfactory. In the better practice observed, the workers engaged well with the young people and used the resources effectively to encourage their participation. For example, they used well the dance, "Wii" to build positive working relationships. The part-time workers also organised games using a parachute to encourage team work and problem-solving. The art session, while spontaneous, was well-used by the staff member to encourage the young people to explain their choice of symbols. She also challenged their choice of cultural symbols in their work and explained how the centre sets out to promote inclusion.

6.3 In a minority of sessions observed, there was a lack of planning and structure to the evening; the youth worker's interaction with the young people was poor. The staff did not use the casual and activity-based sessions as an opportunity to build positive relationships or to extend the young people's learning.

6.4 The full-time youth worker knows the area well and has identified the need to provide older young people with the opportunity to enhance their employability, and has responded appropriately by providing the GLAD programme. In recent months contact has been made with two community-based youth providers. A small group of four young adults from a neighbouring area is attending a personal development programme based in the centre. The staff member has established good working relationships with this group of four participants and the young people engaged well in the session observed, and understood the learning outcomes. All of the personal development programmes are used well to promote positive mental health and to raise the young people's awareness of underage drinking and the associated anti-social behaviour.

6.5 All of the staff are expected to maintain an evidence file, which documents programmes and records the young people's evaluations. The evaluations are not demonstrating adequately the support provided to the young people. There is little reflection on the learning outcomes to help staff recognise the value of the youth work process. The full-time youth worker records comments which are often descriptive and lack sufficient evaluative comment. In the case of persistent unacceptable behaviour and language, it is not clear how such behaviour will be managed effectively in future sessions. The planning is not taking into account the extent of the young people's learning within the recreational activities and programmes.

6.6 There is a need to put in place a more appropriate curriculum to match the needs of all of the young people attending the centre, and a programme that will also attract other potential users.

7. ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS

7.1 A minority of the senior members have assumed appropriate leadership roles and have taken part in relevant training opportunities, including the young adult development course and attendance at WELB youth conferences. Two members of the centre are active participants on the Foyle Youth Council; one is the current chairperson of the council. Fourteen senior members have taken appropriate accredited courses in the last year including the Open College Network (OCN) Personal Development Programme.

7.2 In the almost all of the group work and discussion-based sessions observed, the young people worked well together to develop their understanding of a range of social issues. For example, in the 'Make a Difference' session, three young people from Rosemount actively participated in round-table discussions on inclusion and promoting good relations.

7.3 In other group work sessions, almost all of the young people spoke of the confidence and self-esteem they gained as a result of their attendance, and their contribution to the personal development programme. In the accredited courses most of the young people are aware of how the learning will help them in the search for employment. A minority stated that the learning made them more aware of how they can influence their local community representatives to provide better services for young people.

7.4 In the junior section, the young people enjoy the mainly activity-based programmes. There are limited opportunities to work creatively, to make choices and take decisions about their own programmes. For example, in one afternoon session observed, an enjoyable outing to a nearby activity park could have been developed further with an environmental theme. The young people in the afternoon session enjoyed the adventure park activities and the open space provided a healthy environment. The majority of the younger members are not involved in the planning of their own programme. In general, the staff do not make the necessary links in learning between the activity-based and personal development programmes.

7.5 The limited number of young people attending the youth centre restricts the centre's potential to achieve challenging targets. For those young people who do attend regularly, however, there is a satisfactory mix of programmes that includes cultural awareness, the acquisition of personal development skills and health education awareness. The annual summer activity programme is attended by up to 60 young people a week and appropriately uses the local parks and the adjacent leisure centre.

8. SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

8.1 The strengths of the provision include:

- the good response of a minority of the young people in assuming appropriate leadership roles and in participating in relevant training opportunities;
- the relevant links with schools and community organisations to improve the overall youth provision in the area;
- the positive feedback from the community with regard to the dedication and commitment of the full-time youth worker; and
- the safe space and attractive environment provided for the young people in an area of high deprivation.

8.2 The areas for further development include the need:

- to analyse more carefully the membership and attendance statistics, and to use these to inform future provision;

- for the full-time youth worker to provide more effective leadership to help the staff reflect and critically evaluate their practice, with a view to its improvement; and
- for almost all of the staff to improve their interaction with the young people to help them achieve new skills through the better use of planned and unplanned learning experiences.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 In most of the areas inspected, the quality of the youth work provided in this centre is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in leadership and management, quality of provision, achievements and standards which need to be addressed if the needs of all the young people are to be met more effectively. 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.

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