

## 12. CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING (CHILDCARE)

**Performance Level:** Outstanding

**Areas Inspected: Further Education Provision in:**

- Full-time and part-time provision up to and including level 3 in child care, learning and development.

### CONTEXT

12.1 The College offers a broad and balanced curriculum in childcare, for full-time and part-time learners, with very good progression opportunities for learners at all levels. At the time of the inspection, there were 363 full-time and 129 part-time learners enrolled on child care courses.

**The quality of leadership and management is outstanding.**

12.2 The head of school provides excellent leadership and sets very high standards for the work of the school; she is supported effectively by the deputy heads of school who provide appropriate guidance to their colleagues to ensure a high quality of professional practice throughout the school. The strong sense of collegiality amongst the staff ensures that they all contribute to the self-evaluation process to inform the identification of appropriate priorities for development. The use of management information in the self-evaluation process is strong, and the tracking arrangements to monitor the progress of the learners in their work are very effective. All of the staff are encouraged to avail of ongoing professional development opportunities to enhance their teaching and raise further the standards attained by the learners. The lecturers regularly undertake research to identify and learn from best practice in the sector. The senior managers in the school have made a very good start to monitoring and evaluating classroom practice. Excellent partnerships have been developed with employers and other stakeholders and, as a consequence, economic engagement is strong. Staff have delivered training across the southern regional area including, for example, the transition award in play work for early years through the Department's Customised Training Programme, safeguarding training, and the training and up-skilling of practitioners through a number of work-based learning projects. The links and partnerships have also resulted in the provision of high quality work placements and very good experiences and outcomes for the learners. The monitoring and placement officers maintain excellent communication with the employers to support the learners in their work placements. A range of guest speakers are also used to deliver talks to learners, for example, representatives from Woman's Aid and the Childcare Partnership.

**The quality of provision for learning is outstanding.**

12.3 The lecturers are very well-qualified and have a wide range of relevant professional experience. They are effectively deployed to utilise their knowledge and expertise within their specialist areas to best effect. The quality of the teaching, training and learning is a key strength of the provision. In nearly all of the observed lessons, the quality of teaching, training and learning was good or better, and just under two-thirds of the lessons were very good or better. In many of the lessons, the lecturers demonstrate an excellent knowledge of their subject and provide well-planned opportunities for the learners to engage in whole class, paired and group discussions. The lessons are enjoyable with a strong emphasis placed on engaging the learners actively in their learning. These lessons are underpinned by the very good use of ILT and assessment for learning strategies which are used effectively to inform future planning, and to meet the individual needs of the learners. The lecturers give an appropriate emphasis to the development of the learners' oral and written

communication skills. They know the learners well and make very good efforts to support them and to meet their individual needs. Pastoral care is very strong and based on the core values of mutual respect, and respecting the rights of all which is evident in the work of the school. Staff have developed strong links with stakeholders in Europe, which are used well to enhance the learners' professional knowledge and skills, and contributes much to their personal and social development.

### **Achievements and standards are very good.**

12.4 In the taught lessons almost all of the learners are highly motivated and engage fully in their learning. They are keen to contribute to discussions and present their ideas to the class. The learners work very effectively in pairs and collaboratively in groups expressing their own ideas confidently and showing respect for the opinions of others. Almost all of them take pride in their work and their portfolios are of a high standard; the learners provide detailed, reflective accounts of their placement practice. The learners are well-informed about potential career pathways and the standards required to successfully progress; they demonstrate very high levels of competence in their use of ILT. The overall outcomes for the provision are very good. Over the last three years, the average retention rate is very good at 87%, and the achievement rate is also very good at 88%.

**Table of Achievements**

Course Type	Completion Year 2010/11			Completion Year 2011/12			Completion Year 2012/13			Three Year Average		
	Ret (%)	Ach (%)	Succ (%)	Ret (%)	Ach (%)	Succ (%)	Ret (%)	Ach (%)	Succ (%)	Ret (%)	Ach (%)	Succ (%)
Full-time Courses at Level 1	82	85	69	93	87	81	94	80	75	88	85	75
Part-time Courses at Level 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	75	96	72	75	96	72
Full-time Courses at Level 2	89	80	71	95	85	80	84	76	64	90	80	72
Part-time Courses at Level 2	98	86	85	97	97	95	87	93	81	94	91	86
Full-time Courses at Level 3	78	92	72	78	89	69	91	87	79	82	89	73
Part-time Course at Level 3	83	93	78	91	90	81	93	96	89%	89	92	82
Overall	84	88	74	88	89	78	88	87	77	87	88	77