

YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Ardcarnet Youth Centre,
Belfast

Report of an inspection in
March 2017



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

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1. Context

Ardcarnet Youth Centre (centre) is located in Tullycarnet estate in Dundonald, Belfast. It is a full-time statutory youth provision, funded by the Education Authority (EA) which employs a full-time youth support worker in charge and four part-time paid staff. At the time of the inspection the centre was closed due to refurbishment and a reduced programme was operating in Tullycarnet Primary School on three evenings a week. Both the youth support worker-in-charge and the senior youth worker were absent during the inspection. The area youth worker, who has been in post for ten months has been working in the centre.

Over the last three years the registered membership of the centre has declined from 123 to 97 young people aged 4-25. At the time of the inspection the average number of young people attending the sessions observed was 18.

2. Views of parents and staff

In discussions with a small number of parents no issues were raised and they stated that they valued the work of the staff, and the good levels of support their children received.

3. Focus of inspection

The inspection focused on:

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

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Important areas for improvement
Outcomes for learners	Good
Provision for learning	Important areas for improvement
Leadership and management	Important areas for improvement

5. Outcomes for Learners

The junior and intermediate members engage well with one another and enjoy their involvement in the appropriate mix of activities. They work well individually and collaboratively, particularly in the arts and crafts sessions. Those young people involved in the mental health and homelessness group work programmes are developing effective coping strategies, building good resilience and interpersonal skills which they are transferring to other areas of their lives including school, training and work. The small numbers of young people who have successfully completed group work courses are able to demonstrate how the personal development and social skills learned have assisted them in building leadership skills.

The numbers of young people attending are low, and while there is a core group of senior members who are benefitting from the positive group work experiences, the staff and management need to engage and retain more young people in the centre programmes. In addition, the progression routes into leadership roles and responsibilities need to be developed further in partnership with the young people.

A significant minority of the young people benefit from the good opportunities to develop their independence and acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills to set personal targets. The young people involved in the T:BUC¹ programme spoke positively about their experiences, they demonstrated a clear understanding of community relations work and were able to articulate how they have developed respect for themselves and for others.

6. Quality of provision

While the staff have completed an analysis of the young people's views in the last four months, the curriculum is not broad enough to take into account their current needs and interests, particularly for the 11-14 age group, and is an important area for improvement.

The quality of the youth work sessions observed ranged from very good to having important areas for improvement; most of the sessions observed were good or very good. While, in the best practice the staff use group work skills effectively which progress the young people in their learning, in a minority of the sessions observed there is a lack of appropriate intervention strategies to work with young people who at times become bored and easily distracted. In particular, there is a need to develop gender specific work with the 11-14 year age group.

The staff provide a welcoming and inclusive space for young people to come together, socialise, make friends, be part of a team and to learn. The staff have built a good level of trust in a relatively short period of time and they have provide a positive learning environment that the young people respond well to.

Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the centre's approach to the care and welfare of the young people impacts positively on their learning and outcomes. The staff provide a safe and secure environment for the young people to learn and develop key life skills.

7. Leadership and management

The management continue to build appropriate strategic links with local community organisations which is adding importance to the delivery to the young people across the wider Dundonald community.

The centre staff have little time for reflection and evaluation and the current system of staff meetings and gathering evidence needs to be reviewed. As the new centre reopens following refurbishment, it is important to increase the number of volunteers and to develop more effective support and supervision structures for the part-time staff.

¹ Together: building a united community

The action plan is not appropriate to the current needs of the young people, partly due to the disruption in the leadership and management of the centre over the past year, and is an important area for improvement. Most of the current targets are not sufficiently focused and the subsequent actions to promote improvement are not measurable and therefore difficult to inform future planning. Going forward, it is important that the key priorities for 2017-18 reflect specific developmental programmes for the 11-14 year old young people, that the curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced and that there is adequate planning for the progression pathways to leadership for the young people.

The action planning process is underdeveloped and not sufficiently supported by a comprehensive professional development programme for all staff.

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

8. Overall effectiveness

Ardcarnet Youth Centre needs to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the young people. The ETI will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the areas for improvement which include the need to:

- review and evaluate the current action plan to ensure that the key actions for improvement are measurable and in particular inform future curriculum planning;
- engage and retain more young people and develop appropriate leadership pathways; and
- increase the number of volunteers and develop more effective support and supervision structures for the part-time staff.

There will be a formal follow-up inspection in 12 to 18 months.

APPENDIX A

Age group	4-9		10-15		16-18		19-25*		Individual young people involved in outreach/detached	Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
2013/14	27	8	19	26	29	11	*	*		123
2014/15	27	13	23	22	16	11	*	*		118
2015/16	15	16	14	18	8	10	0	0		81
Current	17	18	20	16	14	12	0	0		97

Source: data as held by the organisation.

* fewer than 5

N/A not available

Inspection method and evidence base

The ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework, which guides inspection and self-evaluation within youth settings is available on the ETI website [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 a small number of parents, staff 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.

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 Achievements and outcomes, 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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