

YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Brooklands Youth Centre,
Dundonald, Belfast

Report of an inspection in
April 2018



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

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1. Context

Brooklands Youth Centre is a full-time youth provision managed by the Education Authority. The Education Authority employs one full-time youth worker, two outreach and detached youth workers and fifteen part-time paid and voluntary members of staff. The centre is open five evenings each week, and according to data supplied by the leadership, there is currently a membership of 222 young people aged 4 to 24 years. During the inspection, there was an average nightly attendance of 34 young people.

2. Views of parents

The large number of parents who spoke with members of the inspection team value highly the communication skills and self-confidence that their children are achieving. In addition, the parents informed the inspection team that these skills are transferable and are being used in life and work situations beyond the youth centre.

3. Focus of the inspection

The inspection focused on:

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

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
Outcomes for learners	Very good
Quality of provision	Very good
Leadership and management	Very good

5. Outcomes for learners

The young people's needs are reflected well in the range of accredited and non-accredited learning opportunities available to them. For example, the young people involved in the independent living group have completed successfully a recognised level 1 qualification in personal and social development. In addition, ten young people have completed a level 1 peer mentoring qualification in the last two years. The senior members develop excellent peer-support skills through their volunteering activities with the junior members. Through effective learning experiences 16 of these senior members have achieved a 'Millennium Volunteers' award. A key feature which the young people enjoy is the regular celebration of their achievements by the staff and their peers.

The young people contribute to the development and delivery of programmes within the youth centre. Through the youth forum and youth council, they assume appropriate leadership roles and responsibilities and progress to be peer mentors and voluntary youth work staff. There are also clear pathways for those young people with additional support needs to progress from their youth club evening to the centre's independent living group, with examples of a small number of the young people assuming leadership roles.

All of the young people enjoy participating in the centre activities and develop well their communication skills and self-confidence. They also gain a very good range of transferable skills, including working within a team, as well as problem-solving and decision-making. Through the recent money management course, the young people are beginning to apply the knowledge and skills learned, for example, through their participation in the centre's tuck-shop. In discussions, the young people state that they value the high levels of support from the staff, and enjoy the social opportunities to build new friendships. As a result of their active participation, they grow in confidence, learn to respect diversity, and are empowered to participate more positively in their community.

6. Quality of provision

The annual and on-going assessment of the young people's needs has informed planning to provide an appropriate range of programmes and activities for the young people. The curriculum has a strong focus on the inclusion and integration of young people who have a range of abilities, as well as those who come from different social and cultural backgrounds. The provision for junior members is well structured, age-appropriate and matched effectively to the young people's interests and needs.

The staff provide high levels of guidance and support for the young people. There is an inclusive caring ethos throughout the centre and the staff have an excellent knowledge of the young people, their families and community issues. In addition, the staff provide the necessary support, care and welfare to help the young people to overcome any barriers which they may face regarding their participation in the centre, thereby preparing them to cope with issues beyond the youth centre.

The quality of the provision ranged from good to outstanding, with a majority evaluated as very good or better. The planning for the individual activities and programmes takes good account of the needs and aspirations of the young people. However, both the planning and evaluation of the youth workers would benefit from being more closely aligned to the skills, knowledge and understanding of the young people.

The outreach and detached staff work effectively together, they know the local area well and are clear about the protocols when working with young people outside the centre. The staff, who are enthusiastic and confident in their delivery of programmes, facilitate the young people skilfully in both their activities and through informal group work. They use open questions effectively to illicit answers and to further develop their discussions with the young people. The process of evaluation by staff at the end of each evening provides a good framework for them to reflect on how the young people benefit from their participation.

Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the organisation's approach to the care and welfare of the young people impacts positively on learning, youth work and outcomes for learners. The young people have high levels of respect for one another and for the staff.

7. Leadership and management

The leadership and management have a sound knowledge and understanding of the local area and have established highly effective and mutually beneficial partnerships with local primary, post-primary and special schools. The partnerships with special schools are well established, highly valued by the schools and excellent examples of sector leading practice in the youth service. The schools' leadership highlight the inclusive and supportive environment in the youth centre, which benefits the personal and social development of their pupils. In addition, there are long-standing partnerships with a wide range of local community organisations who see the work of the centre as crucial to the future development of the area.

There is effective curricular leadership, with highly experienced staff who are well deployed across the provision. The training offered for the part-time staff by the Education Authority is limited and the staff would benefit from supplementary training in specific youth work areas, such as supporting young people with additional learning needs.

The Curriculum Delivery Agreement identifies accurately the priorities for the centre going forward. While these priorities are mostly reflected in the recently introduced target monitor system, the outreach and detached work requires further planning to outline more clearly how it will progress over the forthcoming year, in particular, the rationale and purpose for this work. The staff have identified appropriately the need to engage more young people into the senior age group. The monitoring and evaluation of the centre's provision by the Education Authority is supportive and continuing to improve the young people's experiences.

8. Safeguarding

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

9. Overall effectiveness

Brooklands Youth Centre has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners.

Statistical data

Age group	4-8		9-13		14-18		19-21		22-25		Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
2014/15	29	22	54	34	33	24	5	*	-	-	203
2015/16	40	29	47	25	40	28	6	*	*	*	221
2016/17	45	40	43	36	30	24	9	*	*	*	236
Current	35	26	57	36	23	33	*	*	*	*	222

Source: data as held by the organisation.

* fewer than 5

N/A not available

Inspection methodology and evidence base

The ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework is available on the ETI website at [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 significant 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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