

YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Magnet Young Adult Centre,
Newry, County Down

Report of an inspection in
February 2018



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
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1. Context

Magnet young adult centre is situated in a three floor building on the main street in Newry, County Down. The centre holds regular 'Gigs' featuring local bands on Friday evenings.

The membership is open to young people aged 15-25 years and the management committee made up of young people in this age range. The centre is staffed by a full-time youth worker, a team of eleven part-time youth workers, a youth work apprentice and eleven volunteers, who are all members of the management committee.

The centre is open six nights-a-week including weekend extended provision: during the week of the inspection there was an average of 52 members who attended each session and the centre currently has a membership of 293.

The building is used by a number of other youth providers including an outreach/detached project and an extended provision initiative.

2. Focus of the inspection

The inspection focused on:

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

3. 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

4. Outcomes for learners

Most of the young people participate positively in accredited and non-accredited programmes that are relevant to their needs, it is very good that over 70 of them successfully completed a recognised training course in the past 18 months. The majority of young people attend further education colleges and are gaining technical and employability skills that support and compliment their training and education pathways, for example in the areas of art, health and social care and journalism. In addition, the young people demonstrate a good understanding of how the experiences in the centre contribute to their personal and social development.

The progression of young people into leadership roles is a key feature of the ethos of the centre. Through effective support the young people take on responsibility for determining and leading their own programmes. The young people are supported by one another to use their initiative, to take responsibility for meeting their own needs and for supporting their peers to participate in the many learning opportunities.

The young people contribute well to discussions and through the positive learning experiences, they build resilience and a strong sense of confidence and self-esteem that in many cases had been lost before they attended the centre. When attending the interest groups such as the positive mental health group and the young women's group, the young people are fully engaged in their learning and they achieve very good communication skills, know how to work in a team to achieve goals and demonstrate self-reliance.

5. Quality of provision

The young people are fully involved in the design of the curriculum which is broad and balanced and reflects accurately the needs of the membership through the many interest groups available to them. Through programmes such as 'mindfulness' the young people are developing coping strategies and an understanding of stress and how it impacts on their mental and physical well-being. Similarly, in the arts programmes, the young people are developing their creative skills, through for example the thought provoking creative writing group anthology of poems published recently.

Almost all of the young people demonstrate high levels of involvement in a range of volunteering opportunities including taking responsibility for the planning and facilitation of the main interest groups such as the, book club, the arts group and the recording studio group. The volunteers facilitate the discussions with confidence and are able to engage effectively with the young people on important social and personal issues in a safe, supportive and secure environment. The youth workers include and actively involve young people in the life and work of the centre, promoting inclusion and widening access for all young people.

The centre engages a significant number of vulnerable young people from across the Newry and Mourne area including young people who are LGBT¹, facing mental health issues, those who have learning difficulties and young people who are at risk of educational underachievement. A significant strength of the centre is the very good youth work skills demonstrated by the youth workers and the purposeful positive support that is given to the many marginalised young people.

The youth workers assist the volunteers in planning each session and a bespoke baseline questionnaire for each interest group helps guide the group work process and in the best practice helps measure the learning that takes place. The sessions are well-planned, the peer-led approach provides an excellent challenge for members in the group work and the end of session evaluations are effectively capturing what has been learnt. Most of the part-time staff are past members of the centre, they continue to grow and develop the strong ethos of participation throughout the centre.

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 their learning, development and outcomes. The young people display high levels of sensitivity and understanding of the rights and feelings of others. They are involved in many positive social action groups that are developing a critical understanding of issues affecting them, their community and wider society. There are no behavioural issues partly due to the young people who self-regulate behaviour and deal with any issues effectively.

¹ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender

6. Leadership and management

The management committee is made up entirely of young people aged 16-25 who demonstrate a clear understanding of the purpose of youth work and a high level of maturity. Although not all of the management committee are fully aware of the strategic plan and the strategic planning process they understand the key strengths of the organisation. For example, they are well informed about the embedded ethos of participation across the organisation. The young people are involved in the leadership and management of all aspects of this project, they are making strategic decisions and empowering each other to progress through the centre.

While there are effective partnerships with local youth service providers, for example the long standing Newry and Mourne youth work strategy partnership, there is a need to support and develop further this participative model of youth work, to continue to meet the identified needs of marginalised and vulnerable young people in the area. Going forward the centre, the formal education providers and the EA need to collaborate more effectively to have a clearer strategic plan to inform the future direction of this work.

The youth workers and volunteers use well the baseline and final session questionnaires to help measure the progress and inform the future action planning process. The experienced and well-trained youth work team are provided with good opportunities to attend relevant courses and four of the youth workers have completed their professional qualification in youth work.

7. 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.

8. Overall effectiveness

Magnet young adult 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		Outreach/ Detached		Total
	M	F	M	F							M	F	
2014/15					104	118	39	62	*	*	174	129	626
2015/16					102	120	36	59	*	*	169	135	621
2016/17					98	91	52	56	*	*	146	178	621
Current					102	104	42	38	*	*	140	153	579

Source: data as held by the organisation.

* fewer than 5

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, representatives of the management committee, 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.

Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

Quantitative terms

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 ETI use the following performance levels when reporting on outcomes for learners, quality of provision and 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 the 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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