

YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Pilot's Row Youth Centre,
Londonderry

Report of an inspection in
January 2019



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

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and other commissioning Departments



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1. Context

Pilot's Row Youth and Community Centre (centre) is jointly funded by the Education Authority (EA) and Derry city council and provides activities and programmes to the Bogside community in Derry city. The inspection focused on the delivery of youth work in the centre. At the time of the inspection, a senior youth worker was employed as the manager of the Pilot's Row centre and of the Our Space city drop-in facility for young adults. The senior youth worker is supported by a 16 hours per week part-time youth support worker in charge, three youth support workers and four assistant youth support workers and four volunteers. The centre opens six nights per week including the extended provision which operates on a Friday evening in Our Space and Sunday evening in the centre. According to the centre's data there were 157 members registered at the time of the inspection and an average membership of 151 over the past three years. Most of the members are in the 9-18 years age group. There was a limited programme available to observe due to an EA regional training event and because the post-primary school based programmes had not recommenced after the holidays.

During the inspection, there was a planned observation of the youth provision in a local primary school. However, the ETI were denied access by the school; the ETI were refused entry to school grounds to observe the learning and teaching being provided by a youth worker¹.

2. Views of young people, parents and staff

The young people report that they enjoy the activities and programmes on offer in the centre. They stated that they are given good opportunities to participate in the running of the centre and progress to meaningful leadership roles. The activities have increased their confidence and report that they have developed important personal and development skills which have helped them to improve their mindfulness and positive mental health and wellbeing.

The intermediate and senior members engaged enthusiastically with the inspectors, reflecting positively on how they apply their learning in a range of social contexts, participate effectively in the life and work of the centre and successfully progress into leadership roles and responsibilities.

3. 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.

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Capacity to identify and bring about improvement
Outcomes for learners	Very Good
Quality of provision	Good
Leadership and management	Good

¹ Four of the teaching unions which make up the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council (NITC) have declared industrial action primarily in relation to a pay dispute. This includes non-co-operation with the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI).

5. Outcomes for learners

The wide range of appropriate non-accredited programmes available for the young people is developing well their personal and social skills using approaches that are fun and that enable them to work effectively together. The outcomes are very good with most who enrol completing their programmes successfully. The young people explore themes relevant to them such as mental health and mindfulness, anti-bullying, physical health, domestic abuse and alcohol awareness. They demonstrate a clear understanding of their learning, for example, the 'How to beat Blue Monday' noticeboard was devised and implemented by senior members in response to the particular needs identified by the young people.

In the past three years most of the young people who participated in the Learning Together Programme² delivered in partnership with a local post-primary school achieved a recognised level 2 qualification. During the summer months 11 young people achieved a level 2 qualification in law and order which is helping them develop a critical understanding of issues within their community and become more active citizens. There are a small number of young people who have achieved the 100 hours Millennium Volunteers award which they use to their volunteering role. The 'Vlog' squad³ had a particular success in achieving an award at the EA youth Oscars, the video focused on a group of young people highlighting important issues on the theme of anti-bullying video.

The senior committee and volunteers are engaged and fully involved in planning their own programmes through ongoing consultation and by attending and contributing well to staff meetings. The young people contribute well to discussions and through the programmes and opportunities presented, can articulate clearly how they have gained confidence, can speak in public, have become more independent and developed well their teamwork skills. The young people have high levels of mutual respect for each other, adults and the community.

6. Quality of provision

The curriculum is broad and balanced and addresses most of the key issues identified through an appropriate assessment of need including an online survey and informal discussions with the young people who attend the centre. The young people are also consulted through the senior members committee and informally about the content of the programme. The programme, negotiated with the young people, includes a mix of recreational, community-based projects and issue-based provision. The wide range of programmes include the 5 Steps to Mindfulness Awareness conference in which over 1000 young people of primary and post-primary age will engage in programmes that aim to raise their awareness of health issues, including positive mental health, and to support them in making healthy choices. The young people have developed a high level of understanding of issues within their community, for example through the 'bags of happiness' programme⁴. The centre also provides support for a small number of young people to develop their literacy and numeracy skills.

The staff support the young people effectively to progress through suitable pathways which contribute to their future education training and employment. For example, there are clear pathways to leadership with existing staff acting as role models, sharing their personal stories of progression in youth work as case studies on the notice board, seven of the current staff team have progressed from members to successfully completing the youth work degree course at the University of Ulster at Magee.

² The Learning Together Programme is a collaborative working partnership between individual schools and the Youth Service at key stages 2-4.

³ A group that produces short videos to share online

⁴ A programme that involves a group of young people giving people in the local community small bags containing messages and items that promote positive mental health

The quality of the youth work practice observed was good or better in the small number of sessions observed. The characteristics of effective practice included, the planning for learning which was purposeful and ensured that almost all of the young people were involved in activities which were age appropriate, enjoyable and which built effectively on the young people's prior knowledge and interests. The youth workers set appropriately high expectations of behaviour and achievement in the sessions observed. The young people engaged enthusiastically in the activities and were encouraged by the youth workers to identify and reflect on their learning. The assessment and evaluation of the youth work practices needs to be developed further in order to identify more clearly the learning outcomes achieved through the activities.

The centre celebrates well the achievements of the young people through, for example, the wall displays and the annual 'superstars' awards event where parents/carers and teachers are invited to attend.

The care and welfare impacts positively on the youth work and the overall outcomes for the young people. The centre provides a welcoming and inclusive environment, where all young people are valued and have a strong sense of belonging. The youth workers have high expectations of behaviour which are agreed, shared and maintained with the young people. The youth workers provide a safe, secure environment for the young people to learn and young people and youth workers enjoy good working relationships with one another. In discussions with the young people, they were highly supportive of and valued the work of the youth workers.

7. Leadership and management

The area plan for the delivery of youth services in the Derry and Strabane area is based on a two-year planning cycle for 2018-2020 which reflects well the overarching goals in Priorities for Youth. The needs of the young people have been accurately identified through an online questionnaire which had 589 responses from young people across the area and includes feedback from discussions with young people in each of the projects and centres.

While the action plan for the centre contains targets that are recorded through a target monitor system it does not reflect accurately enough the full breadth of the delivery of the youth work; a minority of the current targets are not measurable enough. Although there is effective curricular leadership and management of the centre, further development is needed for the part-time youth workers to provide them with the skills to assess the individual needs of the young people and to plan more effectively for their progression. The target monitor is assisting in the collation of data and in the overall quality assurance of the action plan however, the organisation is aware of need to develop further the system for collecting qualitative data to inform future planning to bring about greater improvement.

The young and relatively inexperienced part-time youth workers demonstrate maturity beyond their years; they have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and are deployed effectively in each of the sections of the centre and in the extended provision. They are supported well and are led effectively by the more experienced youth workers who know the young people's personal circumstances, family and community well. They work well together as a collegial team, support each other effectively and have high expectations of themselves and of the young people.

The youth workers record their work in evidence files which contain some good examples of the young people's work including reflections and evaluation, for example in the senior member evidence file. The youth workers would benefit from further development of a more consistent approach to gathering evidence in their files, including an end of programme evaluation for each of the programmes to better inform the strengths and areas for further development going forward.

There are well-developed partnerships with key stakeholders that are adding value to the delivery of youth services in the area including the city council, schools, Public Health Agency and a number of key community youth organisations including TRIAX⁵. The schools report that they value highly the partnership with the youth service and in particular the youth service valuable contribution to the positive intervention work with young people who are at risk of underachieving at school. There is a strong emphasis on developing strategies and partnerships to help improve and promote positive mental health as identified through the delivery of programmes following the needs analysis of young people in the area.

8. Safeguarding

Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding young people reflects broadly the guidance from the Department of Education. However, there is a need to ensure that the young people are clear about how they can raise a complaint or concern; and a need to review access by the young people to the Pilot's Row community centre when community activities are taking place. The young people report that they feel safe in the centre and that they are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or welfare.

9. Overall effectiveness

Pilot's Row youth centre demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The main areas for improvement are:

- to develop further the target monitor to collate and use more effectively qualitative data to improve the quality of self-evaluation of the centre's work and inform better future planning; and
- for the youth workers to evaluate their work more effectively in order to inform better the actions to promote improvement.

The ETI will monitor how the organisation sustains improvement.

⁵ Triax is the Neighbourhood Partnership Board for the Bogside, Brandywell, Creggan, Fountain and Bishop Street areas.

Statistical data

Table 1: Total Membership

Age group	4-8		9-13		14-18		19-21		22-25		Outreach/ Detached		Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
2015/16	11	13	19	21	11	8	2	6					91
2016/17	25	25	28	34	24	17	4	8					165
2017/18	19	14	31	20	26	23	5	6					144
Current	18	12	40	24	28	26	5	4					157

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 youth workers 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.

ADDENDUM

Following the inspection, the local primary school provided the required access to ETI. Although the youth provision was no longer in place, the school affirmed the youth provision provided by Pilot's Row in relation to a transition programme for year 7 children.

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