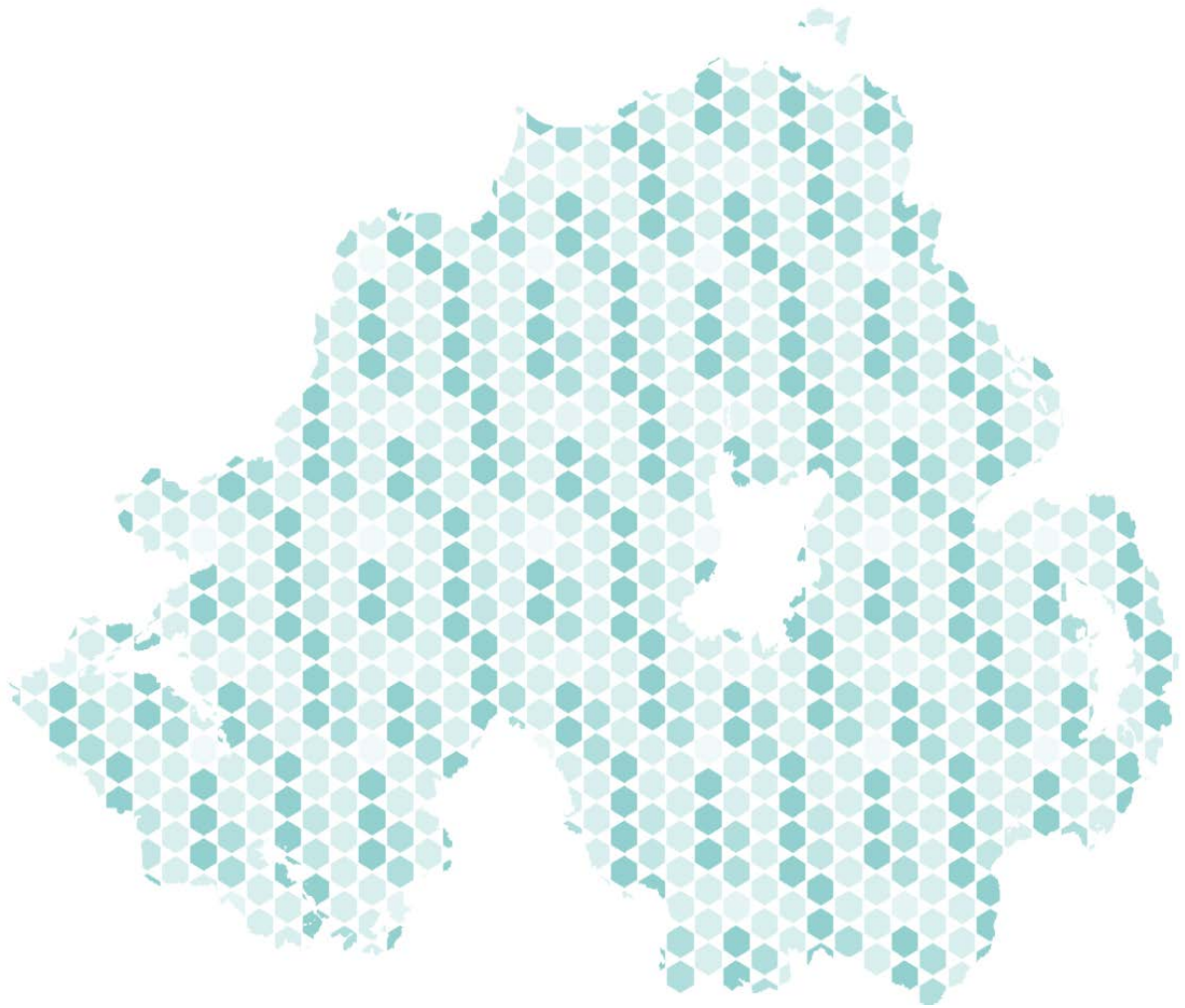


YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Waveney Youth Centre,
Ballymena

Report of an inspection in
November 2018



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
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1. Context

Waveney Youth Centre (centre) is an Education Authority (EA) managed, purpose built centre constructed in the 1970s located on Regents Park in Ballymena. It provides services mainly to the Fair Green and the Dunclug areas which are recognised as in the top 25% most deprived super output areas in Northern Ireland¹. At the time of the inspection, a senior youth worker was temporarily providing support and supervision to the part-time youth workers during the recruitment process to appoint a new full-time youth worker-in-charge. The centre has three part-time youth support workers-in-charge, seven part-time assistant youth support workers; and four volunteers. There is no daytime school-based work. The centre opens Monday to Friday nights except Wednesdays. According to the centre's data, there were 61 members registered at the time of the inspection, a decrease of just under two thirds in the membership over the last two years. There was an average of 24 young people who attended each of the sessions observed.

2. Views of parents and staff

The parents, who spoke to the inspection team, value the work of the youth workers and the support provided for the young people and commented on the positive impact it has had on raising the young people's aspirations for life and work and in developing their confidence and self-esteem. The young people report that their participation in the youth centre has increased their confidence, helped them to make friends and has improved their communication skills. In particular, they report that it has helped them to improve their mental health and wellbeing.

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	Important areas for improvement
Outcomes for learners	Good
Quality of provision	Good
Leadership and management	Important areas for improvement

5. Outcomes for learners

The centre provides an inclusive and supportive environment where young people from different communities and ethnicities meet and enjoy each other's company regardless of gender, social or educational backgrounds. Consequently, they engage well with the activities organised in the centre and display high levels of respect for each other. They work well individually and collaboratively, particularly in the arts and crafts and sports sessions.

¹ Based on the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) NI Multiple Deprivation Measure 2017 (NIMDM 2017)

The young people are confident, articulate and converse easily with adults. The Global Service Learning Programme is developing a small number of young people's understanding of global learning and citizenship through the planned activities that included a recent trip to Washington, District Colombia. The small number of young people participating in the programme are developing their interpersonal and social skills, building their resilience and are developing a wider understanding of other communities and cultures, particularly about the issues around homelessness and poverty. The young people involved in the Young Women's Group are also developing a wider understanding of relationships, and their personal and social and communication skills. There are a small number of young people who are registered on the Millennium Volunteers Programme and are working towards achieving accreditation.

While the regular members are benefitting from the positive experiences in the centre, the youth workers need to engage and increase the membership which is currently too low. While almost all of the part-time youth workers have been members of the centre and have progressed through the good support and training to become youth support workers, and a small number of the senior members are peer leaders, the pathways to leadership for the young people needs to be developed further. In addition, the opportunities for the young people to engage in a range of accredited and non-accredited courses are limited and are not meeting effectively enough their identified needs.

The young people are able to make the link between the skills they have developed in the centre and how it supports them in their formal education. They have a very strong commitment to the youth centre and have a clear vision of how it should be developed. The young people identified a wide range of programmes and activities that they would like to see developed, for example: further information and support for positive mental health, increased trips and inter-centre activities, and longer opening times to increase participation and to facilitate a drop-in facility.

6. Quality of provision

The EA's assessment of need across the local area helps guide the youth work curriculum planning and the young people contribute well to the design of the curriculum through discussion and debate with the youth workers. There is a wide-range of activities and programmes for the junior section of the centre. However, the curriculum for the senior sections needs to be developed further to meet their needs more effectively, for example, there are few programmes provided that address lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ+) issues directly.

The youth workers provide good guidance and support to the young people, they are enthusiastic and energetic in their delivery of the programmes and the young people respond positively to them. They support and encourage the young people to progress and develop to be the best that they can be.

The quality of the programmes observed were good. In the best practice the planning took account of the wide range of ability levels and there are well-planned and organised opportunities to engage in paired and group work activities by which the young people can develop their personal and social skills. The youth workers set appropriately high expectations of behaviour and achievement in the sessions observed.

The use of appropriate assessment methods by the part-time youth workers to record observations and ongoing reflection that includes the young peoples' evaluations of their programmes is not well enough developed.

The care and welfare impacts positively on the youth work and the overall outcomes for the young people. The youth workers provide a safe, secure environment for the young people to learn, they create an ethos of co-operation and mutual respect with the young people and the learning environment is well-organised with positive working relationships at all levels.

7. Leadership and management

As a result of significant recent changes to the strategic leadership and management in Ballymena and in the Waveney Youth Centre, there is a need to review this key aspect of the provision to provide a clearer vision for the future direction of the centre and its work with young people. There is a need to strengthen the leadership and management of the centre to provide the part-time youth workers with the necessary support and supervision to deliver high quality outcomes for the young people.

The centre has developed a youth centre planner for 2018-19 that the youth work team was involved in developing and which contains key areas for action, including broad targets which are appropriate for the level of management. There is a need to progress the key actions further so that the centre has clear and measurable targets that are agreed and understood by the young people and by the youth work team.

At the time of the inspection, three of the part-time youth workers were nominated as youth support workers-in-charge and had responsibility for the leadership and management of the centre for just over 12 months. They have worked well together during this time, providing the necessary guidance and support to the other part-time youth workers. They are a cohesive team and provide an enjoyable learning experience for the young people. The youth workers have responded well to the collective responsibility of being in charge on different nights and they are providing effective curricular leadership, commensurate with the levels of responsibility.

The part-time youth workers have only limited understanding of their role in monitoring and evaluating the provision which is underdeveloped. Going forward it will be important that the part-time youth workers receive further professional development and guidance from the full-time youth worker on how to record and evaluate their work more robustly and effectively to inform future planning of the provision and improve the impact it has on learning.

While there have been positive links established with key stakeholders, including the Doury Road Development Group, there remains a need for greater co-operation with a wider range of partners to enhance and extend the provision for the young people.

As a result of the vacant post of youth worker-in-charge in Waveney, there has been a significant drop in the membership of the centre and there is a need to increase the membership, in particular the senior membership, and develop participative structures within the centre so that the young people are effectively engaged in the management of the provision.

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.

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

Waveney Youth Centre needs to address important areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The areas for improvement are:

- to strengthen the leadership and management to progress the key actions and targets further so that there is a clear plan to guide the future direction of the work with the young people;
- to provide relevant continuing professional development to support the part-time youth workers more effectively in their roles; and
- to increase the membership and develop participative structures within the centre so that the young people are effectively engaged in the management of the provision.

The ETI will monitor and report on the centre's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection in 12 to 18 months.

Statistical data

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	14	15	50	72	28	28	0	0	0	0	0	0	207
2016/17	0	0	48	51	39	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	162
2017/18	0	0	25	13	15	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	68
Current	0	0	36	16	6	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	61

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 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.

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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