

YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

West Belfast Area Project,
Belfast

Report of an inspection in
April 2017



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments

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1. Context

The West Belfast Area Project is managed by the Education Authority (EA) and is based in the Lenadoon area of the city. The project was established to support controlled and voluntary youth provision from the Lower Falls to the Glencolin area. In addition, the project also delivers detached and outreach youth work. The project is staffed by a senior youth worker, three area youth workers, an outreach worker and two youth workers employed 18 hours each week under Extended Funding¹. According to data provided by the EA, there are currently 345 young people registered as members not including the number of detached and outreach contacts.

At the time of the inspection, the number of young people attending the sessions observed was 52, with average of 6 young people in each session.

2. 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.

3. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	Address urgently the significant areas for improvement
Outcomes for learners	Important areas for improvement
Provision for learning	Requires significant improvement
Leadership and management	Requires urgent improvement

4. Outcomes for Learners

Further opportunities are needed to develop participation and leadership skills for the young people within group work sessions. While the young people give their ideas to inform the planning for future activities and topics to address their needs, the available progression routes to leadership is not sufficiently planned for, recorded or monitored by the staff. A few of the young people have made progress in developing their creative, communication and thinking skills through purposeful project work.

¹ Extended Funding provided by the Department Of Education to the EA supports youth organisations within disadvantaged areas, through for example, additional and extended opening hours at the weekend and outreach/detached youth work.

Based on the data from the project, a small number of the young people have achieved units of work from the Open College Network (OCN)² at level 1, and at level 2, in aspects of personal development. In addition, a small number of young people completed non-accredited courses including those which focused on mental health issues. In addition a small number of adults have completed the Youth Support Worker Qualification³. The attendance and retention numbers for accredited courses is an important area for improvement to increase the small number of young people achieving 2ecognized qualifications.

The young people attending mainstream education are able to make connections between their formal and informal learning and were able to articulate the personal skills and dispositions gained as a result of the experiences. Most of the young people develop their confidence, communication skills and self esteem through group projects and the school mentoring programme. Those young people involved in the mental health programmes are developing effective coping strategies and building important resilience skills. Through the youth advocacy group, the young people are beginning to develop their understanding of their role of representing and acting on behalf of their peers. Going forward, there is a need for the young people to have more effective opportunities to carry out this role in a more meaningful way.

5. Quality of provision

The curriculum provision for the young people covers a range of appropriate topics including those related to the challenging areas of car crime, suicide and mental health issues. However, the staff facilitating these programmes require further staff development and up to date resources to support more effectively their work with the young people. Going forward there is a need for more opportunities for the young people to engage in CRED⁴ work to address more effectively the issues of equity, diversity and inter-dependence.

There is a need to collaborate more effectively with the other community and youth providers to develop further their capacity to deliver additional youth work programmes and to enable them to support the young people during and after their delivery. In the work associated with the young people's mainstream education there is no coherent system for effective communication between the youth work staff and the teachers to inform future planning.

The youth workers planning and evaluation of the progress of the young people in their learning requires significant improvement. Practice evaluations and recordings do not adequately demonstrate the impact of the youth work on the personal and social development of the young people. In group work, the young people would benefit from better opportunities to self, peer and group assess their experiences to better inform future action. The quality of the sessions observed ranged from good to having important areas for improvement. While in the most effective practice, the staff had retained the engagement of the young people and their attendance was strong, in approximately 50% of the sessions which had important areas for improvement, attendance was low, the pace of the delivery was too slow and the staff required more effective questioning strategies to develop the discussions and to support the young people in their learning. In a significant number of the sessions observed, staff were overly directive and opportunities were missed to promote more participation of the young people.

² **Open College Network Northern Ireland (OCN NI)** is a Nationally Recognised Awarding organisation which offer flexible, credit based qualifications.

³ The **Youth Support Worker Qualification** is a recognised award to gain locally professional qualified status to work within the EA youth service.

⁴ CRED – Community Relations Equality and Diversity in Education

Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the centre's approach to the care and welfare of the young people does not impact positively enough on the learning youth work and the outcomes for the learners.

6. Leadership and management

There is a lack of a clear strategic vision for the future direction of the work of the project, which requires urgent improvement. The staff team are not sufficiently collegial and cohesive, with clearly understood and shared objectives. Going forward, the staff need to have more ownership and a clearer understanding of their role in the delivery of the project action plan. It is also important that each worker has a defined set of achievable and realistic targets that can be used to measure progress through individual support and supervision.

There is little formal involvement from key community youth groups. Going forward, the project needs to develop further the community and youth voice that will support and challenge appropriately the project's priorities for improvement. A positive start has been made through the youth advocacy group; however, young people are not sufficiently engaged in the leadership and management of the organisation. While important working relationships have been established with mainstream formal education, there is a need to build a strategic framework and rationale for work in schools to include programmes that are not just one-off events.

There is limited monitoring and evaluation of the work of the organisation which requires urgent improvement, particularly the analysis of performance against the identified action plan targets. An important area for improvement is the collation, analysis and use of data to effectively inform planning and bring about improvement.

Safeguarding

Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding young people are unsatisfactory. The following areas need to be addressed urgently:

- the registration system for young people requires urgent review and improvement;
- the parents and young people need to be informed about how to raise a concern or complaint; and
- the implementation of the current EA safeguarding policy and risk assessment procedures.

The ETI will return to the organisation within six weeks to monitor and report on the arrangements for safeguarding.

7. Overall effectiveness

West Belfast Area Project needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the young people. It requires external support to do so. The ETI will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the need to:

- improve urgently the management of the safeguarding procedures for the young people;
- improve the quality assurance of the provision through more effective monitoring and evaluation of the work at all levels; and
- as a matter of urgency, agree and develop a shared strategic vision for the future of the project.

There will be a formal follow-up inspection in 18-24 months.

APPENDIX A

Total Membership

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	-	-	70	96	64	70	-	-		300
2014/15	-	-	*	39	65	121	*	6		235
2015/16	-	-	13	28	49	148	17	10		265
Current	-	-	31	77	54	102	31	50		345

* Denotes numbers fewer than 5

APPENDIX B

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.

ADDENDUM TO THE REPORT ON THE YOUTH INSPECTION OF THE WEST BELFAST AREA PROJECT IN APRIL 2017

SAFEGUARDING

The ETI returned to the project on 12 June 2017 to monitor and report on arrangements for safeguarding which were evaluated as unsatisfactory at the time of the original inspection in April 2017.

Based on the evidence available at the time of the follow-up visit and while some progress has been made, the arrangements for safeguarding young people remain unsatisfactory.

There remains an urgent need for the:

- registration system for young people to be urgently reviewed, and improved;
- parents and young people to be informed about how to raise a concern or complaint; and
- current Education Authority safeguarding policy and risk assessment procedures to be implemented.

Further action will be considered by the Department of Education.

ADDENDUM TO THE REPORT ON THE YOUTH INSPECTION OF THE WEST BELFAST AREA PROJECT IN APRIL 2017

SAFEGUARDING

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) returned to the project on 13 September 2017 to monitor and report on arrangements for safeguarding, which were evaluated as unsatisfactory both at the time of the original inspection in April 2017 and again at a follow-up safeguarding inspection in June 2017.

Based on the evidence available at the time of the second follow-up visit, progress has been made, and the arrangements for safeguarding young people reflect broadly the guidance from the Department of Education.

However, there remains a need for:

- the management to provide further information for the young people on how to raise a concern or complaint; and
- the small number of the staff team who have not yet participated in safeguarding training to complete this training as soon as possible.

The ETI will continue to monitor the progress of the remaining areas for improvement in safeguarding arrangements in further follow up inspection activity planned for the project.

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