

# YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

West Belfast Area Project

Report of a Follow-up Inspection  
in February 2019



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
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## **FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF THE WEST BELFAST AREA PROJECT**

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an inspection of the West Belfast Area Project<sup>1</sup> (WBAP) in April 2017, which concluded that the project needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the learners. The following areas needed to be addressed urgently:

- 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.

Two safeguarding six-week follow-up inspections took place in June and September 2017. The safeguarding arrangements improved and were evaluated as broadly reflecting the safeguarding guidance issued by the Department of Education. However, two areas for improvement remained to be addressed:

- the need to provide further information for the young people on how to raise a concern or complaint; and
- for a small number of staff to complete appropriate safeguarding training as soon as possible.

The ETI carried out an interim follow-up visit in October 2017, met with staff and representatives of the Education Authority (EA) and conducted a follow-up inspection in February 2019. The ETI were presented with an updated version of the action plan at the interim follow-up inspection in October 2017 and a further update at the follow-up inspection in February 2019.

In the interval since the original inspection, the following actions and changes which affect the work of the project have taken place:

- additional support for the WBAP was provided by an EA senior youth worker from another region for a period of six months;
- the EA have had direct involvement in supporting the project at a strategic level, particularly over the past three months;
- each youth worker employed by the project now has a personal controlled delivery agreement and they have had their job descriptions reviewed;
- the EA has redefined the geographical boundaries of the youth service across Northern Ireland, the WBAP is now within the South and West division of Belfast;
- a new target monitor has been implemented by the EA to assist with the monitoring and evaluation of the project;

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.etini.gov.uk/publications/youth-inspection-west-belfast-area-project-belfast>

- there has been a change to the management structure of the project at officer level; and
- there have been ongoing resourcing issues due to staff absence.

### **Key findings**

- The safeguarding now reflects the guidance issued by the Department of Education. All of the youth workers have completed safeguarding awareness training and two of the youth work staff completed designated youth worker training. Guidance information is now displayed appropriately and new flyers have been redesigned to provide information for young people on how to raise a complaint.
- There has been some progress in improving the quality of monitoring and evaluation of the youth work practice through individual controlled delivery agreements for the youth workers and the introduction of a target monitor system. However, the overall leadership and management of the project is not effective enough. There is limited evidence of how the overall work of the WBAP is holistically evaluated to inform future planning of provision and to promote improvement in the project. There is a need to demonstrate clear evidence of impact and improvement based on actions taken as a result of self-evaluation.
- While the introduction of the controlled delivery agreements are now in place and are of a good quality, the links to the area plan need to be clearer.
- There has been some improvement in the quality of sessional planning and delivery observed, which is now good, leading to better outcomes for the young people. For example, a new baseline tool has been designed to assist in measuring the progress in the young people's learning. However, it is necessary to continue to develop the youth worker's knowledge of how ongoing reflection informs subsequent planning of provision and improves the impact on learning.
- Although there has been appropriate staff development provided by the EA across the area, this has not been embedded within the project and progress has been negatively impacted by staff absence. The process for support and supervision for all staff is having minimal impact on progressing the development of an agreed shared vision for the improvement strategy for the project.

### **Overall Effectiveness**

The West Belfast Area Project now needs to address important areas for improvement in the interests of all of the learners. There still remains the need to:

- improve the quality assurance of the provision through more effective monitoring and evaluation of the work of staff at all levels; and
- agree and develop a shared strategic vision for the future of the project.

The ETI will conduct a further follow-up inspection in 12 to 18 months.

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