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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*

**Providing Inspection Services for
Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure**



Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

**Education by Choice Centre
The Bridge Community Association
Belfast**

January 2012

FOLLOW-UP TO THE STANDARD INSPECTION OF EDUCATION BY CHOICE CENTRE, THE BRIDGE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, BELFAST, BT6 8DR

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out an inspection of Education by Choice in the week of 1 June 2009 and in most of the areas inspected, the quality of the education provided was satisfactory. However, significant areas for improvement in standards and teaching and learning also needed to be addressed. The Department of Education (DE) indicated at that time that a follow-up inspection would take place and that interim follow-up visits (IFUV) would monitor the progress made in bringing about the necessary improvements.

The inspection in June 2009 identified the most important improvements brought about by staff and management as:

- the improved focus on accreditation and the developing opportunities the young people have to gain accreditation in a range of areas;
- the appointment of additional part-time teaching staff with subject specialisms;
- the strong links made with community agencies which improved the young people's and their families' opportunities to benefit from the centre's provision;
- the improved attendance rates which, for a minority of young people, reached 100% over a one to two month period; and
- the continued high level of commitment of the Bridge Community Management Team, the Education by Choice Manager and the staff to the young people and their well-being.

The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following areas:

- the need for a teacher, with post primary experience of assessment and curriculum planning, to co-ordinate the educational planning, and to assist in raising the Centre's expectations and standards;
- the staff's capacity to plan thematic lessons through accessing the Belfast Education and Library Board's support services, for example Educational Psychology and the Curriculum Advisory Support Service; and
- the more purposeful working as a staff to share practices, such as the use of information and communication technology across all subjects, and a better co-ordinated system of planning and reporting on the young people's progress across the curriculum.

In the interval since the inspection the following changes which affect the work of the centre have taken place:

- the BELB have reduced significantly the number of funded places they require; and
- a number of changes in the tuition staff personnel.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out a follow-up inspection of the centre on 17 January 2012.

The following are the most important improvements since the inspection:

- the centre has appointed a teacher, with post primary experience of assessment and curriculum planning;
- the staff are beginning to plan thematic lessons which is helping to promote coherence across the curriculum;
- the quality of planning has improved; in particular, individual tutors plan well for their lessons which has led to an improvement in the quality of the teaching; and
- a start has been made to co-ordinate and improve the quality of the planning.

These improvements are having a positive impact on the outcomes of the work of the centre.

Overall, the quality of education provided by Education by Choice remains satisfactory as the centre has made a start but has not yet made sufficient progress in addressing the areas identified for improvement. The follow-up inspection has identified continuing areas for improvement in developing further as a staff the sharing of good practice and the development of a co-ordinated system of planning and reporting on the young people's progress.

The Education and Training Inspectorate will continue to monitor and report on the centre's progress in continuing to address the areas for improvement.

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