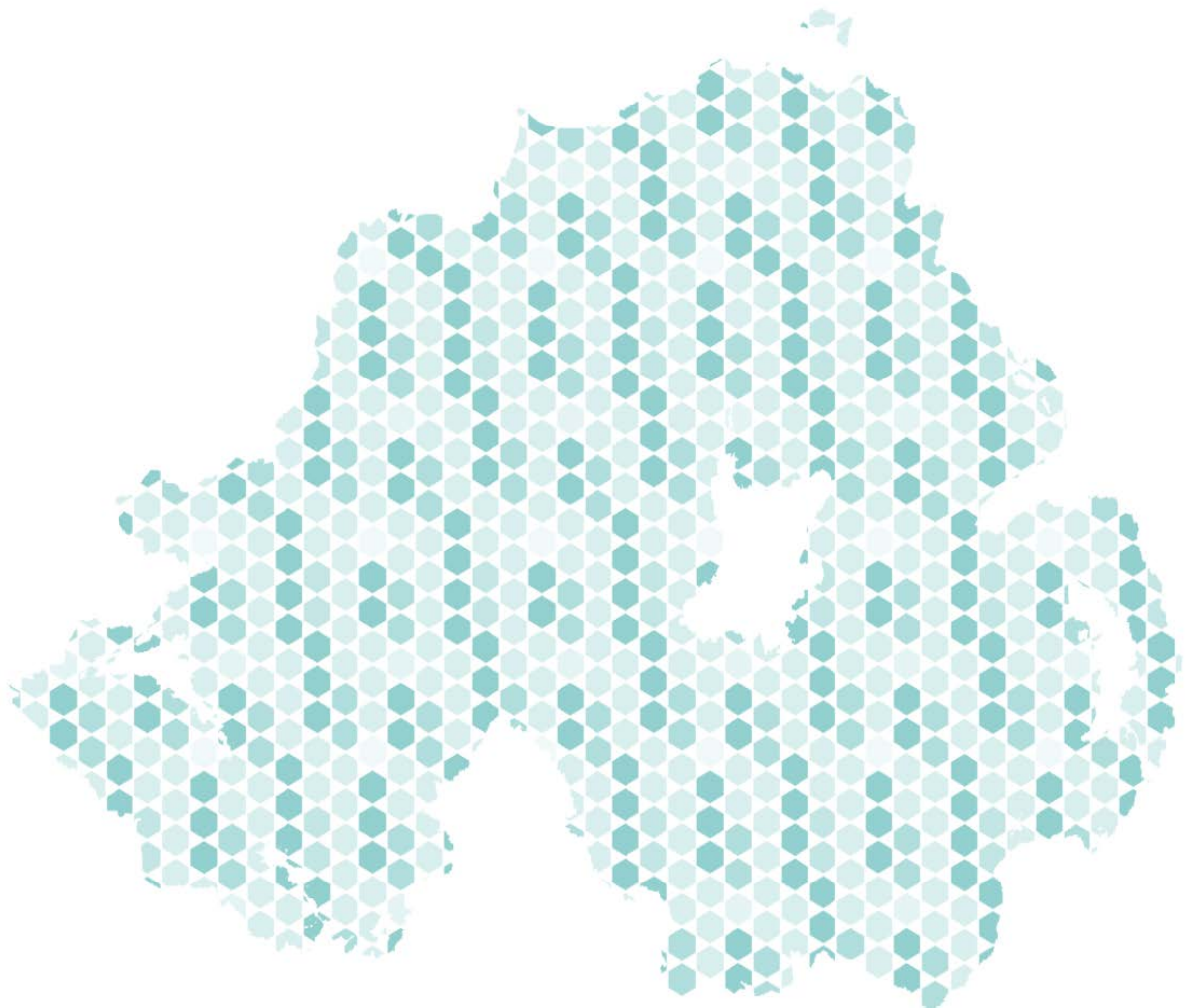


# YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Fortwilliam Youth Centre,  
Belfast

Report of an Inspection  
in January 2013

## CONTENTS

<b>Section</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. Context	1
2. Focus	1
3. Overall findings of the inspection	1
4. Key findings	2
5. Leadership and management	3
6. Conclusion	4
Appendices	

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%

In assessing the various features of the provision, Inspectors relate their evaluations to six descriptors as set out below:

DESCRIPTOR
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

## 1. Context

1.1 Fortwilliam Youth Centre (centre) opened on its current site in the Mount Vernon estate in North Belfast in 1984. The purpose-built centre is managed by the Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB) through an Area Youth Officer (AYO).

1.2 The full-time worker has managed the centre for over six years as a qualified youth worker and has been employed as a volunteer and part-time youth worker for over 20 years. She has responsibility for the administration of the centre as well as managing the youth programmes and the part-time youth work team. There are seven part-time paid staff and seven volunteers. A recently formed advisory group meets on a regular basis to provide support and advice on the development of the centre.

1.3 The centre is open for 46 weeks in the year and provides structured youth work sessions on six evenings and one afternoon each week. The full-time worker provides support and training to a local community youth partner on a second afternoon session each week.

1.4 According to the figures supplied by the centre, the total membership in 2011-12 was 85; this figure is just below the BELB expectations for full-time youth centres. The average attendance in 2011-12 was 65, above the BELB expectations for full-time youth centres; the majority of members observed at the time of the inspection were of primary school age. Each of the general youth centre evenings are divided into three sessions for children and young people aged 5-9 (junior), 10-14 (intermediate) and 15 plus (senior). Less than ten young people over the age of 15 attended the sessions observed.

1.5 The centre is kept to a high standard of cleanliness.

The appendix at the end of the report provides further details of the statistical data.

## 2. Focus

The inspection of the centre focused on the youth programme and activities, including the youth work element of the community programme.

The inspection focused on:

- the young people's achievements and standards;
- the quality of the provision; and
- the quality of the leadership and management, including the processes for self-evaluation leading to improvement.

## 3. Overall findings of the inspection

In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this centre is good. The centre has important strengths in most of its youth work provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the centre has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the organisation's progress on the areas for improvement.

## Summary of key findings

<b>Overall performance level</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Contributory performance levels:</b>	
Achievements and standards	Good
Provision for learning	Good
Leadership and management	Good

### 4. Key findings

#### 4.1 Achievements and standards

##### **The quality of achievements and standards is good.**

4.1.1 The well organised and appropriate mix of structured and non-structured games are enjoyed by all of the children and young people; they participate enthusiastically in programmes and activities which build on their interests and develop a good range of personal and social skills.

4.1.2 In the year from September 2011- August 2012, according to figures supplied by the centre, 155 young people have taken part in focused youth work programmes, including two young leaders, who completed successfully the Northern Ireland Open College Network Level 1 and 2 youth leadership training course.

4.1.3 The wide range of residential experiences available provides suitable opportunities for the young people to broaden their interests and to develop independent living skills within and beyond their own community. Through cultural and cross-community projects such as the Canadian programme, the young people gain valuable personal and social skills in working well with others and celebrating diversity.

4.1.4 There is a positive ethos of participation and consultation in the centre. While the young people's opinions are valued well it will be important, in the future development of the programme, for the full-time youth worker to develop further strategies for consultation and evaluation to promote long-term quality improvement.

4.1.5 The senior members of the centre accept responsibility well and are very good role models for the younger children. In the discussions held with the senior members they articulated well how the skills developed and the leadership qualifications gained have enhanced their life skills and employment opportunities.

4.1.6 The inaugural annual achievements awards and the well-attended Christmas event provide the young people, and many of their families, with valuable opportunities to celebrate personal and community success.

#### 4.2 Provision for learning

##### **The quality of the provision for learning is good.**

4.2.1 The overall quality of the youth work in the sessions observed ranged from very good to satisfactory. In the best practice, the individual sessions were well planned to maximise the young people's participation, learning and development. In important aspects of the centre's provision there remains scope for further development to more fully engage the young people, raise standards and improve overall attendance within the centre.

4.2.2 A small number of the younger children who were involved in the anti-bullying programme demonstrated a good understanding of the issues raised and participated enthusiastically in group discussions. The effective questioning techniques and group work skills demonstrated by the staff help the children to contribute confidently to the discussions.

4.2.3 The junior members participated well in the after-school programme which including growing flowers and vegetables in the community polytunnel. The homework element of the after schools club was attended by a core group of eight primary school children. The children reported that they enjoyed the individual support and valued the encouragement of the staff when completing their homework.

4.2.4 The centre has developed effective links with a range of appropriate and relevant organisations that add value to the youth work priorities. For example, the important link established with Mount Vernon community house has enabled the programmes to be developed beyond the housing estate and established an effective communication network with other community providers.

4.2.5 The staff know the children, young people and their families very well, and support them empathetically within the community in times of difficulty or crisis. Two of the staff completed autism awareness training that they use effectively in their work with a small minority of members on the autistic spectrum disorder.

4.2.6 The full-time worker provides a valuable contribution to the Inner North Belfast Youth Platform. The programme, aimed at young adolescents across North Belfast, is planned well and the good facilitation give young people a safe environment to make decisions on important social and educational issues that are affecting their lives.

4.2.7 The centre takes positive steps to promote mutual understanding through the good links made with the Indian, Chinese, Jewish communities. Relevant information relating to these important community links is collated and displayed attractively by the young people within the centre.

4.2.8 The quality of the arrangements for pastoral care in the centre is very good. There is a warm caring environment which is valued by the young people and their families. The current pastoral policy guides effectively the work of the staff and the agreed standards of behaviour and positive discipline are reflected well through the respect the young people have for their environment, the staff and visitors. In the informal discussions held with the young people they reported that they feel safe in the centre and are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their health and well-being.

## **5. Leadership and management**

### **The quality of the leadership and management is good.**

5.1.1 The full-time youth worker utilises her considerable professional experience to provide good leadership to the young people and her staff. The BELB management have developed recently an appropriate area role for the full-time youth worker which is making effective links with the local community organisations and adding significant value to the centre-based programme.

5.1.2 The AYO provides good support to the full-time youth worker and to the centre through regular visits and by attending meetings of the advisory committee. Following these useful support and supervision sessions there is a need to monitor that the steps identified for improvement are clear, agreed and understood by all of the staff.

5.1.3 The current unit delivery plan is evaluated regularly by the staff to ensure that the centre's activities and programmes continue to meet the needs of the young people and the wider community. The inclusion of more sharply focused and measurable targets is required within future planning to support the more robust evaluation of the centre's provision. The Inspectorate would endorse the work of the BELB management to review and improve the quality assurance systems for the centre beginning in April 2013.

5.1.4 The recently formed advisory committee demonstrate a keen interest in the youth centre and display a good understanding of local youth work issues.

5.1.5 On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the centre has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding children and young people. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

## 6. **Conclusion**

6.1 In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this centre is good. The centre has important strengths in most of its youth work provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the centre has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the centre's progress on the areas for improvement.

6.2 The main areas for improvement are the need:

- to include in the unit delivery plan more sharply focused targets that are measurable and which will inform future planning; and
- to review aspects of the current provision in the youth centre and plan effectively for programmes that will increase the membership and attendance, most specifically in the 15 plus age group.

**APPENDIX 1**

**Total Membership**

Age group	4-9		10-15		16-18		19 +		Numbers involved in outreach/ detached	TOTAL
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
2009/10										
2010/11										
2011/12	11	9	38	17	4	6			0	85

**No figures were available for the 2009/10 or 2010/11**



**APPENDIX 2****Leadership training in the past 12 months**

Title of course including accreditation details	Number of young people enrolled	Number of adults enrolled	Percentage successfully completing
OCN Youth Work Level1& 2	2	2	100
Assist training	4	2	100
Autism training		2	100
Peer mentoring Citizenship	6		100
Child protection	6	11	100
Unaccredited young leaders course Inner North Youth Conference	6		100
	98	2	100
Finger print learning Money Matters		2	100

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2013

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the ETI website: [www.etini.gov.uk](http://www.etini.gov.uk)

