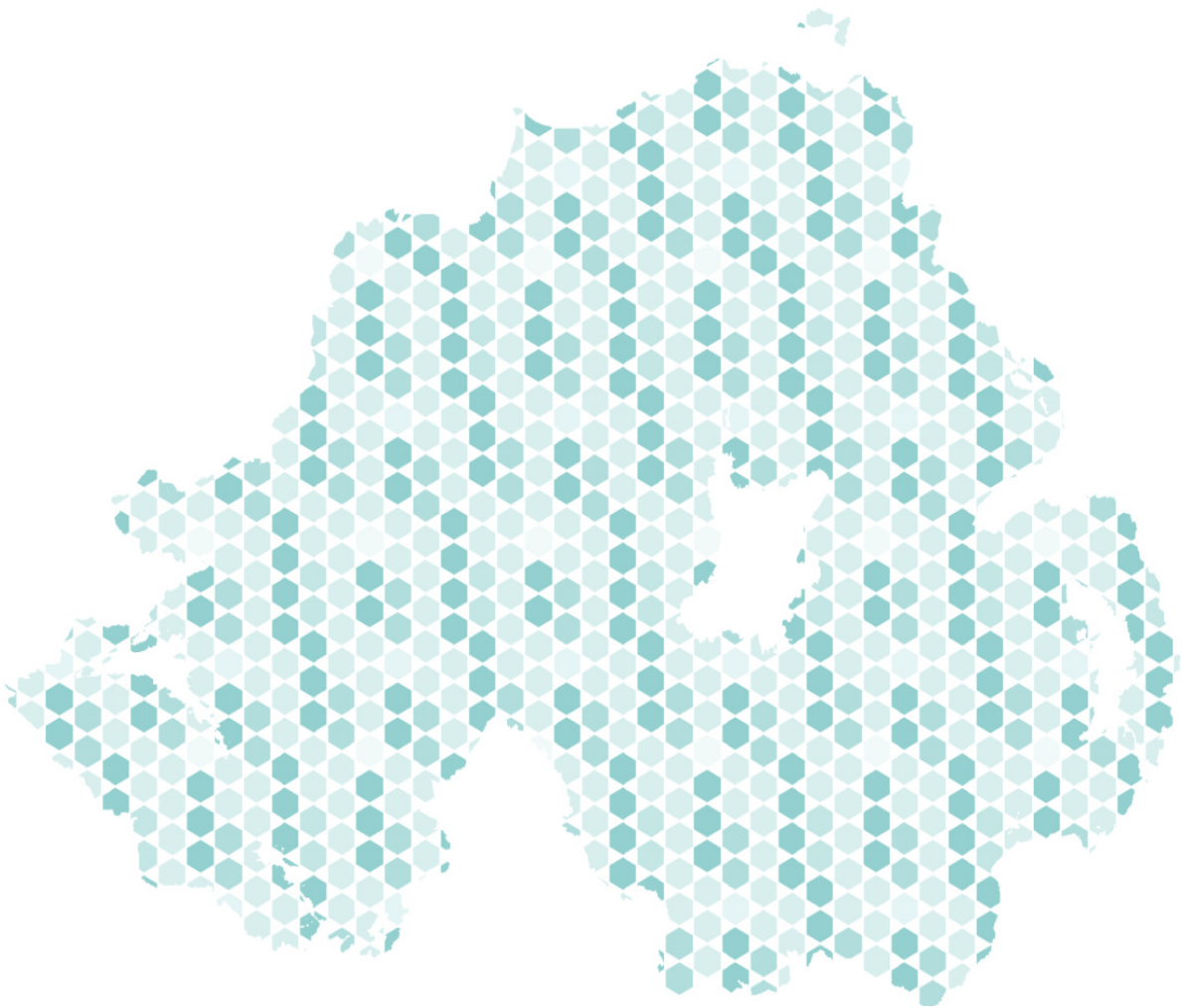


YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Taghnevan Youth and
Community Centre, Lurgan

Report of an Inspection
in February 2012



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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

ASEO	Assistant Senior Education Officer
AYO	Area Youth Officer
CEIAG	Careers Education Information and Guidance
DE	Department of Education
ETI	Education and Training Inspectorate
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
NI	Northern Ireland
NIOCN	Northern Ireland Open College Network
SELB	Southern Education and Library Board
SYO	Senior Youth Officer
YWIC	Youth Worker-in-Charge

1. CONTEXT

1.1 Taghnevan Youth and Community Centre (centre) opened on its current site in the Taghnevan estate in Lurgan in 1996. The purpose-built centre has a unique funding and management arrangement that involves an effective working partnership between the Southern Education and Library Board (SELB) and Craigavon Borough Council. A centre manager, employed previously for over 6 years as the YWIC, has responsibility for the community development programme, three main youth projects and the administration of the building. The current YWIC has been in post for 17 months and has responsibility for managing the youth programmes and the part-time youth work team. There are ten part-time paid staff and seven volunteers. A representative advisory group meets on a regular basis to provide support and advice on the overall strategic development of the centre.

1.2 The centre is open 49 weeks of the year and provides structured youth work sessions on four evenings and one afternoon. The YWIC delivers outreach programmes on a fifth evening and a school-based programme in a local post-primary school one morning a week. There is an inclusive youth work session involving young people with and without learning disabilities one evening a week.

1.3 A range of local educational, youth and community organisations use the centre at other times: the Taghnevan pre-school play group; the Splash pre-school programme; and an Irish language youth group with links to the local Bunscoil.

1.4 According to the figures supplied by the centre (Appendix 1), the membership at the time of the inspection was 176. The figures do not include over 30 young people engaged in outreach work on at least one evening a week. A core group of 50 young people, representing approximately one-third of the overall membership, attended on each evening of the inspection.

2. FOCUS

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

2.2 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.

2.3 The appendices at the end of the report provide further details of the statistical data.

3. OVERALL FINDINGS OF THE INSPECTION

3.1 In most of the areas inspected, the quality of youth work provided in this centre is very good. The centre is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the young people; and it has demonstrated the capacity for sustained self-improvement.

4. KEY FINDINGS

4.1 ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS

The quality of achievements and standards is very good.

4.1.1 The young people participate fully and enthusiastically in programmes and activities which build on their interests and develop a very good range of personal and social skills. Over 100 young people have successfully completed accredited and relevant training courses in the past 12 months. A core group of senior members and young leaders use the skills developed during the training very effectively in accepting various leadership roles and responsibilities.

4.1.2 Seven young leaders have almost completed the innovative NIOCN Level 1 youth leadership training course through the medium of Irish. The course provides leadership skills to assist with the recreational and planned programmes available in the after-school 'Club na N'og'. The club activities complement well the formal education received in the Bunscoil through the medium of Irish.

4.1.3 Most of the senior members extend their interests beyond the local community through their involvement in exchanges and residential experiences that have taken place over the last few years. For example, a group of 16 young adults were observed preparing for a visit to a Romanian orphanage; they share responsibility for specific elements of the programme and through good research and team work achieve the ambitious and challenging targets, including raising over £7000 towards the cost of the trip.

4.1.4 A significant majority of the young people have been members for many years. The senior members accept responsibility and are very good role models for the younger members. During the inspection, most of the young volunteers were observed supporting and encouraging younger members and, when necessary, providing effective challenge to which the younger members responded well. In discussions held with some of the senior members they were able to articulate how the skills developed and the leadership qualifications have enhanced their employability, particularly in interview situations with local employers for part-time work.

4.1.5 Over the past few years the full-time youth work staff have developed an ethos of participation and consultation with members where young people provide regular verbal and written feedback on the activities and programmes. These evaluations need to be collated and analysed to inform better the necessary actions to promote further improvement.

4.2 PROVISION FOR LEARNING

The quality of the provision for learning is very good.

4.2.1 The quality of the youth work ranges from good to outstanding with almost all of the sessions observed evaluated as good or better. The staff team use their considerable youth work experience to provide valuable support to the young people and their families, whom they know well.

4.2.2 The centre manager provides a unique contribution in a pilot programme in partnership with a local training organisation as part of the work-based learning programme. The 'Teenage Kicks' initiative is a well-planned anger management programme which combines group work with one-to-one support. The young people reported that their

involvement in the programme increases their self-esteem and that the youth work intervention has a positive impact on improving their anger management. The youth work and training staff should consider the further development, through rigorous evaluation, of this pilot four-week programme.

4.2.3 The YWIC delivers a well-structured 'Preparation for Work' course in a local post-primary school aimed at year 12 pupils who need additional confidence-building skills and personal development. The 17 pupils respond very well to the youth work method of delivery that uses individual and small group work to achieve personal and educational goals through a good standard of portfolio work. The link teacher and youth worker plan and deliver the sessions well; the school states that the programme is having a positive impact on the pupils' achievements in other subject areas. The good links to the formal curriculum and, in particular the links to CEIAG, should be developed further and included in the school development plan. Further consideration should be given to re-establishing the recognised NIOCN accreditation that was not available this year due to funding issues.

4.2.4 There are good examples of written evaluations by part- and full-time staff of programmes in the past year. There is a need to continue to develop the culture of self-evaluation for all of the staff through additional individual support and supervision by the YWIC.

4.2.5 The good quality of the working relationships, the consistency of approach in relation to behaviour, and the mutual respect between young people and staff provide a supportive environment in which the young people are both encouraged and challenged appropriately. The staff respond well to the challenging behaviour of a minority of the young people through a number of suitable interventions, including the appropriate use of active games sessions in the main hall when needed.

4.2.6 The centre promotes a strong ethos of inclusion and has developed outstanding links with a range of appropriate and relevant organisations that add value to the youth work priorities. For example, the Connect programme operates on one evening a week for young people with and without disabilities. Following a successful pilot programme, all of the staff and young volunteers received training in autism and disability awareness. Members of the local Health and Social Services Trust disability and inclusion team work in partnership with the club to provide disabled young people with the same opportunities and activities as their peers. The inclusive nature of the well-planned sessions ensures that all of the young people, irrespective of their abilities, enjoy the activities. The feedback from parents and other professionals indicates that the young people increase their self-esteem and confidence as a result of the very good facilitation and delivery of the programme.

4.2.7 The overall club programme offers a good range of activity and issue-based programmes that meets well the needs of the membership and reflects appropriately the core principles of the youth work curriculum. The 'drop-in' session is well structured and allows young people to participate in meaningful activities or to relax and meet friends informally. During the summer months the centre staff and young volunteers work collaboratively with the Community Development Association and the local Gaelic Football Club to provide an extensive summer activity programme.

4.3 The quality of the care, guidance and support of young people is outstanding.

4.3.1 The outstanding caring environment is valued by the young people, parents and the wider community. The staff provide valuable and valued advice and support to all young people, including seeking appropriate specialist support for a minority of the young people with particular needs.

4.3.2 The young people demonstrate high levels of respect for themselves and for the youth workers; they participate fully in the activities and issue-based programmes that meet their needs. In discussions with the young people they report that they feel safe in the centre; they are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their well-being and safety.

4.4 SAFEGUARDING

4.4.1 The centre has satisfactory arrangements in place for the safeguarding of children and young people. These arrangements reflect broadly the guidance issued by DE, but the following areas need to be addressed: the centre needs to inform parents on an annual basis of the safeguarding policy; and, access to the building through the front door needs to be monitored more effectively.

5. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of the leadership and management is very good.

5.1.1 The area youth officer and the principal community services officer from the Craigavon Borough Council work strategically in providing a very good service to the youth and community sectors in Taghnevan. The regular formal and informal meetings, underpinned by written agreements and detailed action plans, provide effective and cohesive management of the centre.

5.1.2 The centre manager provides outstanding strategic leadership and utilises her considerable experience to provide strong leadership on behalf of the young people in the community. The effective long-established partnerships with a wide-range of relevant external agencies support the needs of the young people very well.

5.1.3 The very good leadership of the YWIC provides the young people and the wider community with a very good service. The curriculum and programmes are planned strategically through very good formal and informal consultation and research with relevant stakeholders, including the young people.

5.1.4 The new service level agreement implemented by the SELB provides a sound framework for the good integration of the SELB youth work priorities with the delivery of services at a local level. The annual unit development plan includes five key priorities that have been agreed with the key stakeholders; the written planning is developing the youth work priorities in a coherent and consistent manner. There is a need to develop the end-of-year evaluation in order that the reporting structure is consistent with the key priorities and objectives set out in the unit development plan.

5.1.5 The advisory committee meets regularly, records accurately all of their meetings and receives written reports from key staff. The committee is representative of the local community and includes parents, statutory representatives and the Principal of a local primary school. They demonstrate a very good understanding of the role and purpose of youth work and have successfully secured external funding to support specific youth initiatives.

5.1.6 The very good working partnership between the centre-manager and the YWIC provides a positive working environment for all of the staff. The centre is kept to a high standard of cleanliness.

5.1.7 The part-time youth work staff demonstrate a very good understanding of the role and function of youth work; as a team they work well together but would benefit from more regular individual support and supervision. There is a need to further develop the leadership and management skills of the younger staff to ensure the continued progression of young people becoming trained youth workers.

6. CONCLUSION

In most of the areas inspected the quality of provision in this centre is **very good**. The organisation is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the young people, and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

APPENDIX 1

Total Membership (complete where applicable)

Age group	4-9		10-5		16-18		19+		Numbers involved in outreach/ detached	TOTAL
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
2008/09	35	27	69	44	12	6	11			204
2009/10	35	27	75	44	14	4				199
2010/11	15	14	74	39	12	6				160
2011/12	30	14	74	44	12	2				176

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 Conflict Management Level 2	8		100%
OCN Good Relations & Civic Leadership Level 2	8		100%
OCN Understanding Diversity in Society Level 2	6		66.6%
OCN Working with Contentious Cultural Issues Level 2	20		90%
OCN Preparation for work Level 1	35		97%
B Positive Training Course		1	100%
Top Activity Training		1	100%
Young Voices Project		1	100%
Choices Programme	10		100%
OCN in Youth Leadership through the medium of Irish Level 1	11		100%
OCN Developing Leadership Level 2	7	1	Near Completion
	10		Near Completion

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