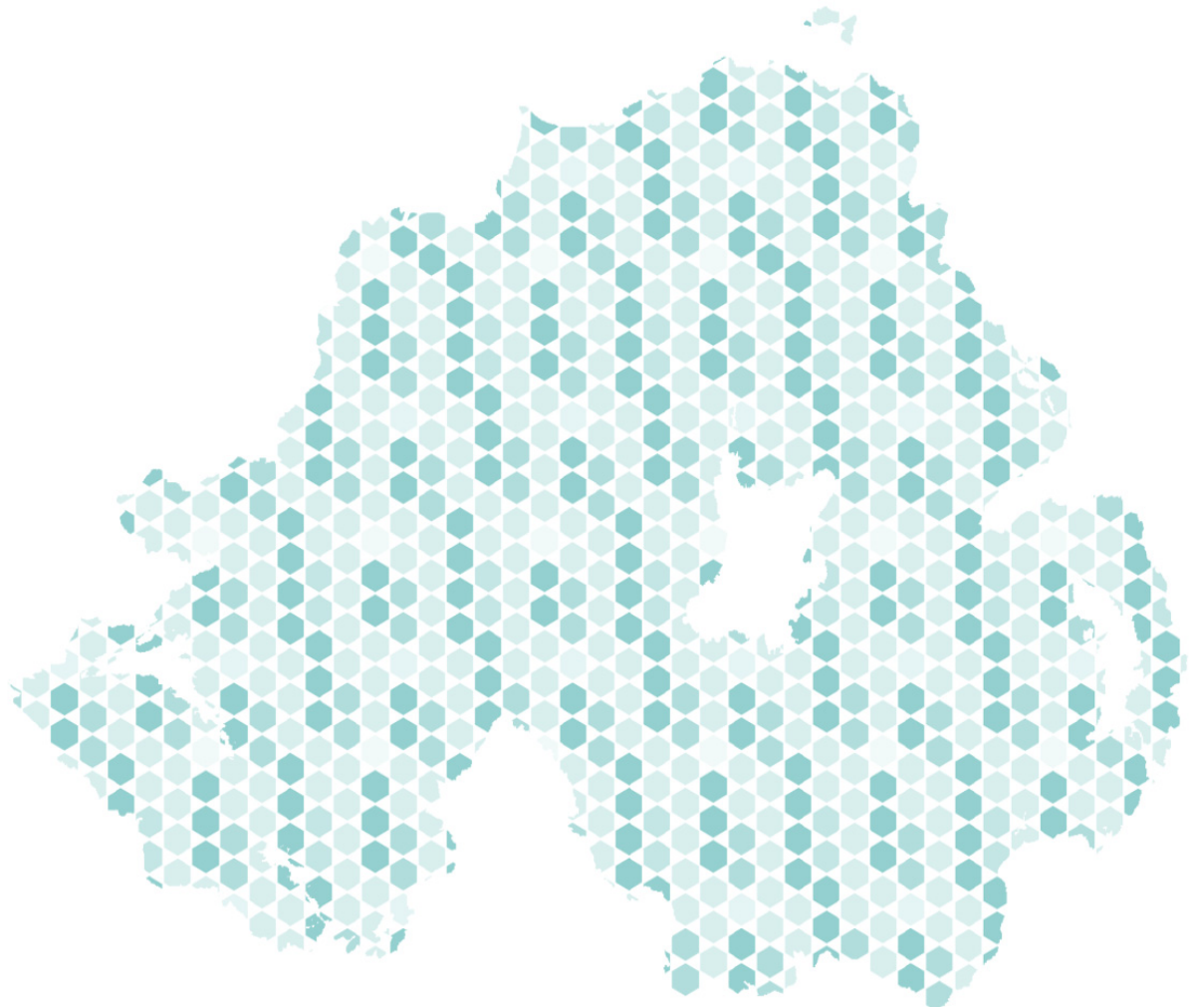


YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Western Education and Library
Board Youth Provision in the
Fermanagh/South Tyrone Area

Report of an Inspection
in May 2010

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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, the Inspectorate relate their evaluations to six descriptors as set out below:

| DESCRIPTOR |
|----------------|
| Outstanding |
| Very Good |
| Good |
| Satisfactory |
| Inadequate |
| Unsatisfactory |

1. BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

1.1 The Fermanagh/South Tyrone division of the Western Education and Library Board (WELB) youth service covers an area of 1,877 square kilometres and has an estimated total population of over 64,000. According to figures supplied by the organisation, approximately 16,910 young people aged between 4–25 years of age live in the area and over 5,300 are members of the 93 units and organisations registered with the WELB. Approximately 77% of the population reside in rural areas, characterised by small villages and rural communities. There is no full-time centre-based youth provision in the area; a large multi-purpose full-time facility in Irvinestown, The Bawnacre Centre, is two thirds funded by Fermanagh District Council and one third by the WELB with youth provision also supported by the WELB on three evenings per week.

Table 1 Number of registered youth units at the time of inspection

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| Controlled full-time units | 0 |
| Controlled part-time units | 8 |
| Voluntary full-time units | 0 |
| Voluntary part-time units | 26 |
| Uniformed organisations | 48 |
| Other (community) | 11 |
| Total | 93 |

1.2 An Assistant Education Officer (ASEO) is head of the WELB youth service; a deputy head of youth has direct management responsibility for four area youth officers (AYO) including the AYO for Fermanagh/South Tyrone division, who is based in Enniskillen. There are only two core-funded full-time youth work posts in the Fermanagh/South Tyrone area: a senior youth worker and a youth support worker. Three other full-time youth work posts rely on short-term funding that will terminate in March 2011 (Appendix 1). Approximately 8 paid part-time staff and over 675 volunteers, work in the voluntary/uniform sector. Most of the registered groups serve rural areas; the eight part-time controlled units receive financial assistance, including 24 part-time paid hours, for 26 weeks of the year. Other voluntary and uniformed units receive small amounts of financial support through the WELB scheme of assistance. At the time of the inspection, almost all of the part-time units were closed as they had used their 26 weeks' allocation of funding.

1.3 The overall trend for attendance in registered part-time units over the past four years is decreasing. Apart from the decreasing overall youth population, evidence gathered by the inspection team indicates that a reduction in financial resources and services available to the registered units from the WELB has impacted negatively in the overall membership.

Table 2 Total membership over the past three years across the Fermanagh/South Tyrone area in registered part-time units

| Total membership over last three years indicating male/female and age group: | Male 4-9 | Female 4-9 | Male 10-15 | Female 10-15 | Male 16-8 | Female 16-18 | Male 19+ | Female 19+ | Total |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|------------|------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|----------|------------|--------------|
| 2006/07 | 643 | 717 | 1,867 | 1,803 | 352 | 310 | 90 | 60 | 5,842 |
| 2007/08 | 591 | 823 | 1,865 | 1,804 | 254 | 227 | 64 | 54 | 5,682 |
| 2008/09 | 527 | 751 | 1,793 | 1,767 | 289 | 216 | 123 | 73 | 5,539 |
| 2009/10 Current membership | 456 | 747 | 1,647 | 1,643 | 334 | 312 | 96 | 71 | 5,306 |

1.4 The full-time youth workers normally work on specific projects and do not record membership in the same way as the part-time registered units above. These full-time staff record attendance of young people through quarterly target monitoring returns; figures examined by members of the inspection team indicate that the full-time staff work with over 100 young people each week. At the time of the inspection approximately 70 young people, in the first week, were engaged in projects and activities provided by the full-time staff; these figures are not analysed on a regular basis to measure trends and patterns of attendance.

1.5 Prior to 2006 the Fermanagh/South Tyrone area had school-based youth tutor posts attached to two schools. Due to reorganisation by the WELB; financial constraints and a reduction in the number of young people living in the area, there is only part-time provision two evenings a week in three of the local post-primary schools; in a fourth school the evening youth provision is closed.

1.6 A full-time senior clerical officer is based in the area youth office and provides an effective service to the area youth officer, full-time youth workers and registered units and organisations.

2. EVIDENCE BASE

2.1 The inspection team observed the work of all of the full-time staff, including the direct observation of 14 youth work sessions. Meetings and discussions also took place with the deputy head of youth service, the AYO, all of the full-time staff, 10 part-time youth workers, 22 representatives from 16 voluntary registered units, and three school principals. The inspection team examined a wide range of documentation provided by the organisation, including area development plans, youth worker annual action plans, evidence files and samples of moderation records. In addition, members of the inspection team attended a WELB-wide meeting of area youth officers in Londonderry, and received feedback from over 40 young people on the quality of services provided and the arrangements for child protection and pastoral care.

3. CHILD PROTECTION

3.1 The WELB has very good, comprehensive arrangements in place for the safeguarding children and young people. These arrangements reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education. In the last 12 months, 52 part-time youth workers completed a nine-hour child protection course with youth service staff. All staff employed by the WELB have received child protection training.

4. PASTORAL CARE

4.1 The quality of pastoral care is very good. The evaluation of pastoral care included discussions with different groups of young people from across the area. The young people spoke positively about the advice and support received from the youth workers. They reported that they felt safe and secure during the programmes provided for them. Youth workers act as effective advocates for young people in local areas and in wider contexts through the very good provision of positive personal and social development programmes. The views of young people are taken into consideration through oral and written feedback during the sessions observed. A minority of the young people take an active leadership role in their local communities. In all of the sessions observed, the young people demonstrated their respect for one another and for the staff. The youth workers are committed fully to the well-being and of the young people.

5. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.1 The senior management of the WELB youth service, including the ASEO and deputy of service, provide good direction and leadership to the team of youth officers. As part of the ongoing positive development of a system of moderation and quality assurance, each AYO is required to provide an area development plan. In Fermanagh/South Tyrone the area development plan for 2010 is based on the annual WELB youth service business plan that is informed by appropriate consultation with full-time youth staff, part-time workers and a representative sample of young people.

5.2 Although good work has been developed, in the Fermanagh/South Tyrone area, in the setting of appropriate targets related to the overall WELB youth service strategic objectives, the current process of self-evaluation at AYO and senior youth worker level is not providing adequate strategic medium/long-term direction to the work of the area. The list of key achievements from the 2009 area development plan is too descriptive and contains little evaluation to inform future planning. The mid-year evaluation in April 2010 lists many achieved objectives, but lacks critical reflection and does not adequately demonstrate the quality of the youth work provision. The data generated through the returns on the monitoring of targets and the qualitative evaluations in the full-time youth worker evidence files, are not being used effectively to review the provision strategically in order to evaluate rigorously year-on-year improvement.

5.3 There is a lack of adequate centre-based youth provision in Enniskillen town, which has a population of over 2,000 young people. The Lakeland centre in Enniskillen is not sufficiently used by the general youth population and, in particular, by those who are socially excluded. The WELB youth service should take further cognisance of the findings of the Education and Training Inspectorate's evaluation in 2009, of the services to support the health and well-being of young people in the area¹. The management within the WELB youth service has successfully applied to additional funders and is building partnerships with other youth providers to enhance the current resources and youth work delivery in Enniskillen. The development of appropriate links, including the link with the Community Leadership Programme (CLP) managed by Youth Action, is adding value to the youth service provision, but only in a short- to medium-term capacity. There is little evidence in the strategic planning or how the current additional resources could be sustained after the CLP programme ends.

5.4 The links between formal and non-formal education in the area are not well developed; there is little reference to the school-based work in the area development plan; the potential of working together with the formal sector in the achievement of health-related targets set in the area development plan is not realised.

5.5 The AYO has 30 years' experience working in Fermanagh/South Tyrone and provides valuable support to many geographically isolated registered units and organisations throughout the area. In the discussions held with representatives of the part-time units, the youth workers took the opportunity to inform members of the inspection team of the good working relationships with the AYO and her staff. She provides valuable six-weekly support and supervision to all of the full-time staff, as part of the WELB youth service moderation process. Almost all of the full-time staff value the support received from the AYO.

¹ The Adequacy, Accessibility and Integration of Services to support the Emotional Well-being and Health of Children and Young People in the Greater Enniskillen area of Fermanagh (November 2009)

5.6 The full-time youth workers provide good support and development of youth provision to some of the rural neighbourhood renewal areas; local young people in Kesh and Lisnaskea have been supported through an initiative by the Department for Social Development, which provides activities and programmes to help the young people to improve their living standards. Other recent relevant links include a cross-border initiative with young people from Clones/Monaghan, and the Positive Futures² programme, that is working well with youth workers to improve the provision for vulnerable young people and those with specific mental health issues.

5.7 The volunteer youth workers across the area provide an invaluable service to young people, and often in very rural and isolated locations. The dedication and commitment of local volunteers includes the provision of activities and programmes well beyond the 26 weeks of financial support provided by the WELB; a significant minority take up the youth work training opportunities available from the WELB youth service.

6. QUALITY OF PROVISION

6.1 All of the full-time youth workers adequately plan their work on an annual basis and in response to local needs. In most of the full-time youth workers' action plans examined during the inspection, there is good evidence of realistic objectives and related actions set within agreed timescales. In the documentation reviewed there is evidence of planning that appropriately relates to the overall area development plan and broadly reflects the WELB strategic plan under key priorities including participation, inclusion, health, and support to registered units.

6.2 The planning relates well to the central theme and core principals of the youth work curriculum, *Youth Work: A Model for Effective Practice*, and it is appropriate that participation is one of the four key strategic areas of work on which the annual action plans are based. Each of the full-time youth workers has developed effective participative structures through the development of local area youth fora. The workers involve young people successfully in the management and delivery of specific project work in their local areas on social issues including, road safety, drugs/alcohol and an international exchange project. The members of the Fermanagh East youth forum have made an outstanding impact on the issue of road safety; following research with over 200 local young people, and with the very good facilitation of the youth support worker and support from the local police and emergency services, the youth forum developed good quality educational Digital Versatile Disks (DVD) on road safety. The DVD has been used in at least two of the local post-primary schools and in one observed session, made a demonstrably positive impact on the pupils. The road safety initiative has the potential to make a positive contribution to road safety among young people beyond the local area.

6.3 The quality of the youth work provision observed during the inspection varied from satisfactory to very good, with the majority of the work being good. In a majority of the practice observed, the workers use a relevant combination of approaches including small group work, individual work, creative work, and team games; the approaches are well-matched to the young people's different needs and abilities. In a small number of group work sessions observed, the facilitation was too-directive and the young people quickly lost interest; in the detached youth work session observed, the lack of experience and training in this type of work led to a poor response and uptake by the young people. During the inspection two of the proposed youth work sessions were cancelled at short notice because

² Positive Futures is a charity that supports young people with learning disabilities

the young people were unable to attend due to other commitments; more effective planning and evaluation is needed to maximise the use of valuable and limited resources, particularly during early summer when young people have other priorities, for example school examinations.

6.4 The evidence files for most of the full-time youth workers contain good examples of individual programme evaluations, but there is not enough emphasis on how the evaluative evidence gathered is analysed and leads to a year-on-year improvement; there were few examples of individual assessment records for young people either complementing existing formal education or making direct links with business or other providers. There is little analysis and interpretation of the qualitative and quantitative data that is generated for the evidence files.

6.5 At a local level, the quality of youth work provision and the response to the needs of young people, within the resources available, is good. However, there is not enough focus on the outcomes for young people at an area level. The good planning and provision at local levels is not providing sufficient analysis on the outcomes for the young people nor taking into consideration how the youth work provision can add to the overall strategic plan and compliment other educational provision in the formal and voluntary sectors.

6.6 The area-wide Fermanagh youth council is at an early stage of re-development and, in the session observed, issues about rural isolation and an agreed common vision were discussed by the three local area fora. It was not clear from the planning and the facilitation by the youth work staff how the issues raised will be addressed. The senior youth worker is not using his wealth of experience to provide sufficient strategic direction to the work of the current area-based youth council.

6.7 The WELB youth service in Fermanagh/South Tyrone collaborates well with other relevant youth providers and organisations, which complement and add value to the existing provision. The staff give good advice, support and training to identified neighbourhood renewal areas and collaborate well with key community workers to improve facilities for young people in local areas. The communities value the quality of the support from the WELB. In one school-based session, members of the inspection team observed the good presentation and facilitation of a school-based 'Growing Learning and Development (GLAD) Programme'. The work of the GLAD programme, accredited by ASDAN, is well planned and pupils respond positively to the issue-based programmes. The programme enhanced the self-esteem and confidence of a small group of young people, who were leaving school with few recognised qualifications. It is not clear how the outcomes of the GLAD programme will complement or add value to the existing formal schools' curriculum or how the learning can be progressed further in non-formal youth work provision in the evenings.

7. ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS

7.1 A wide range of locally available and appropriate accredited and non-accredited training courses are included in the board-wide training calendar. In the Fermanagh/South Tyrone area in 2009/10, 106 young people successfully completed a range of OCN courses (Appendix 2); 119 attended non-accredited courses including, Millennium Volunteer awards; youth achievement awards; outdoor education awards; 'Cook-It'³ ; and a Virtual Babies programme. The staff report that over 85% of those young people who register, complete the training courses. Interviews held with young people and young adults confirmed that the

³ Cook-It is a community-based nutritional programme aimed at young people and families to promote healthy eating.

leadership and training courses contributed to improved youth work provision in the local registered units. The high completion rate is due to the positive working relationships formed, mutual respect between young people and staff, and the good quality delivery in the most of the sessions observed.

7.2 A majority of the young people who work with the full-time youth workers in specific project and issue-based work, benefit substantially and achieve accreditation, from their involvement. There is a strong emphasis on the active participation of young people, particularly in the three areas of Fermanagh East, North Fermanagh and in Enniskillen Town. In the sessions observed, almost all of the young people demonstrated high levels of commitment and took the opportunity to accept responsibility for assisting in the provision of the youth work programmes in their own local area. For example, in the Donagh area, local young people are actively involved in the management and development of two allotments to grow vegetables. Most of the young people involved are from non-farming backgrounds; following discussions and a visit to the allotment, it is clear that the young people involved take a pride in this project and are contributing effectively to their local community.

7.3 Achievements are celebrated regularly at local and area levels. In March 2010 over 80 young people received certificates for the successful completion of accredited and non-accredited training. Youth workers record young people's achievements in evidence files; although there is good evidence of young people recording their work through the appropriate use of DVDs and other materials, the youth work staff are not developing individual records of achievement to demonstrate clearly the outcomes and achievements throughout the year. In discussions held, the young people reported that they enjoyed the experience of being active participants at two area youth conferences. The youth conferences are providing a valuable platform for young people to meet, discuss and take action on a range of relevant issues, including drug and health education.

7.4 In almost all of the youth work sessions observed, the young people are acquiring and developing their social skills and build on the already good levels of confidence and self-esteem evident as a result of their active involvement in activities and programmes. In a significant minority of sessions observed, the young people were able to demonstrate a good knowledge of research skills to find and use relevant and up-to-date information to solve problems. They are developing a sound knowledge of relevant issues and use the information to take decisions and to make informed choices. Two members of the Fermanagh area youth council spoke positively about the learning experiences, teamwork and cultural awareness provided by the international exchange to Nicaragua, led by the senior youth worker. What is not sufficiently clear is how these outcomes are evaluated and used, for example, to measure the impact on the young people's awareness of local political and citizenship issues.

7.5 In the majority of the sessions observed, the young people enjoy good relationships with one another and they work effectively together in a purposeful way. There are good examples of groups of young people who collaborate well both socially and politically in the civic link partnership with Ballyfermot, the cross-border work with Sligo youth council. Over 235 young people were involved in community relations programmes last year as part of the WELB community relations programmes; the youth work staff and management of the WELB are committed to peace building through the development of a new infrastructure involving young people as part of a special European funded programme.

8. SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

8.1 The strengths of the provision include:

- the good examples of participative project work successfully completed by the three area youth fora and the high levels of commitment to participation by the young people involved;
- the good development of the provision, and the support for young people in rural areas;
- the effective support and positive working relationships between the area youth officer, her staff and the part-time registered units;
- the good levels of achievement and accreditation attained by the young people;
- the good collaboration with other voluntary and youth work organisations which complement and add value to the existing youth provision; and
- the valuable contribution given by volunteers who understand the needs of young people, and who provide programmes and services appropriate to the provision of youth work in local areas.

8.2 The areas for further development include:

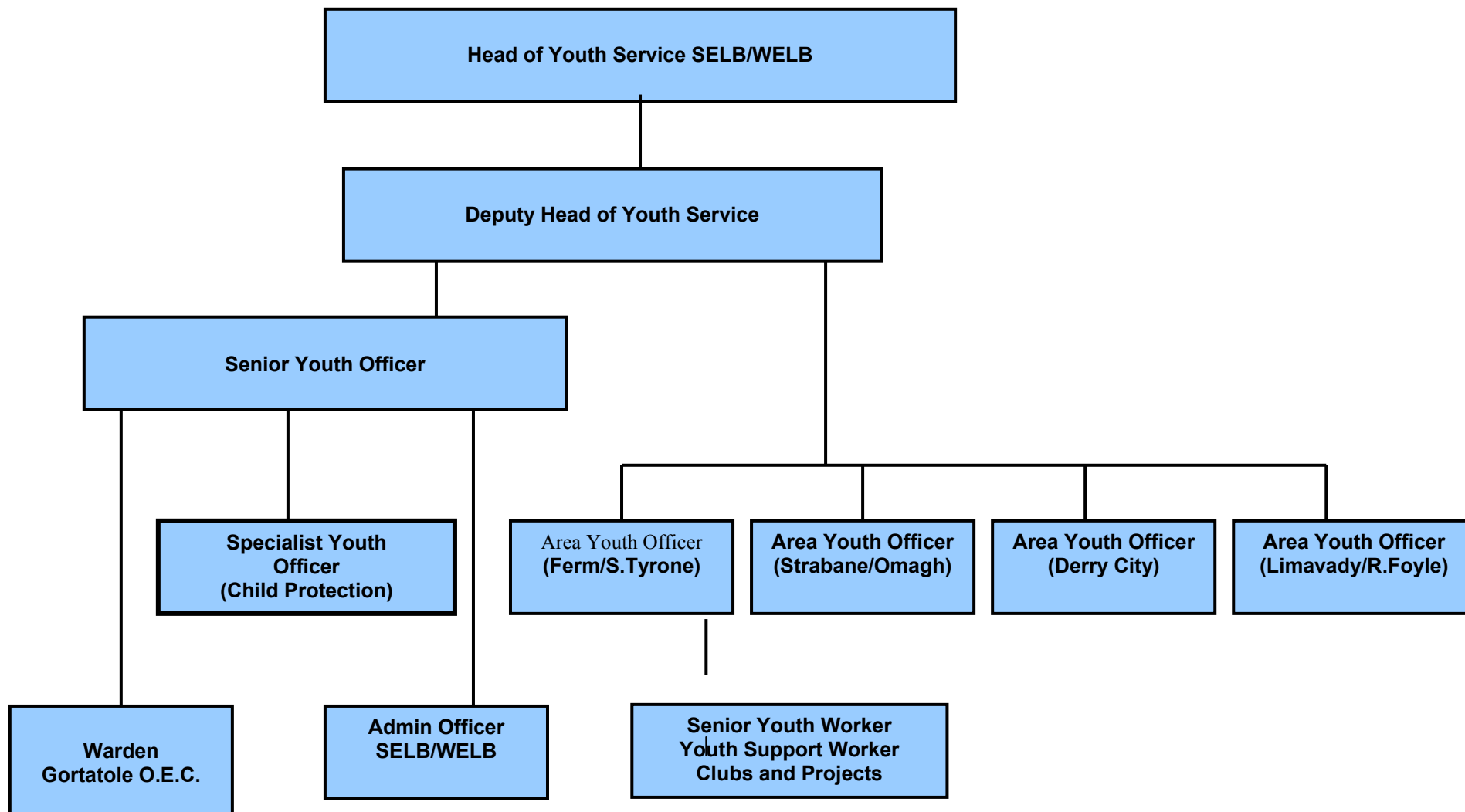
- the need for an agreed vision and long-term strategy, to ensure adequate youth provision across the area and, in particular, to improve the centre-based provision in Enniskillen;
- greater collaboration with the formal sector and increased cognisance of the achievements of young people in formal education;
- the need to ensure that year-on-year improvement and the educational outcomes for young people are clearly demonstrated in the rigorous evaluation of the area development plan.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 In most of the areas inspected, the quality of youth work provided in this organisation is satisfactory; the strengths outweigh the areas for improvement in the provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement in leadership and management, and the quality of provision, which need to be addressed if the needs of all the young people are to be met more effectively. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor and report on the organisation's progress in addressing the areas for improvement over a 12-24 month period.

WELB YOUTH SERVICE STAFFING STRUCTURE AUGUST 2010

There are two permanent youth work posts in Fermanagh/South Tyrone: a senior youth worker and a youth support worker-in-charge based in Enniskillen. Three other youth support worker posts are based in Fermanagh East, North Fermanagh and a newly-appointed post funded through the European Union “Peace III” Initiative with the aim of “Involving Young People in Peace Building”. The “Peace III” post is part of an SELB initiative that will tackle sectarianism and racism and is aimed at young people aged 15-18. The new youth support worker was on induction at the time of inspection. All of the current youth support worker posts in Fermanagh are funded or in place until March 2011.



Accredited courses provided in 2009/2010

| Name of Course | Numbers of Achievement |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| OCN Personal Development | 31 Young People |
| OCN Participation Skills | 21 Young People |
| OCN Introduction to Youth Work | 12 Part-Time Youth Leaders |
| OCN Inside the Council Course | 11 Young People |
| OCN Young Adult Development | 13 Young People |
| Child Protection 9 hr Course | 8 Part-Time Leaders |
| Youth Achievement Awards | 10 Young People |
| Duke of Edinburgh/President's Award | 195 Young People received Bronze Award 191 Young People received Silver Award 51 Young People received Gold Award |

Non-Accredited Courses

| Name Of Course | Numbers of Achievement |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| "Cook It" Programme | 17 Young People & 15 Adults |
| Art Programme | 14 Young People |
| Men's Personal Development Programme | 9 Young People |
| Sexual Health & Virtual Babies | 23 Young People |
| Drugs & Alcohol Programme | 12 Young People |
| Learning to Canoe | 19 Young People |
| Introduction to Global Youth Work | 12 Young People |
| Road Safety Programme | 15 Young People |
| Personal Safety Programme (Special Needs) | 8 Young People |

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