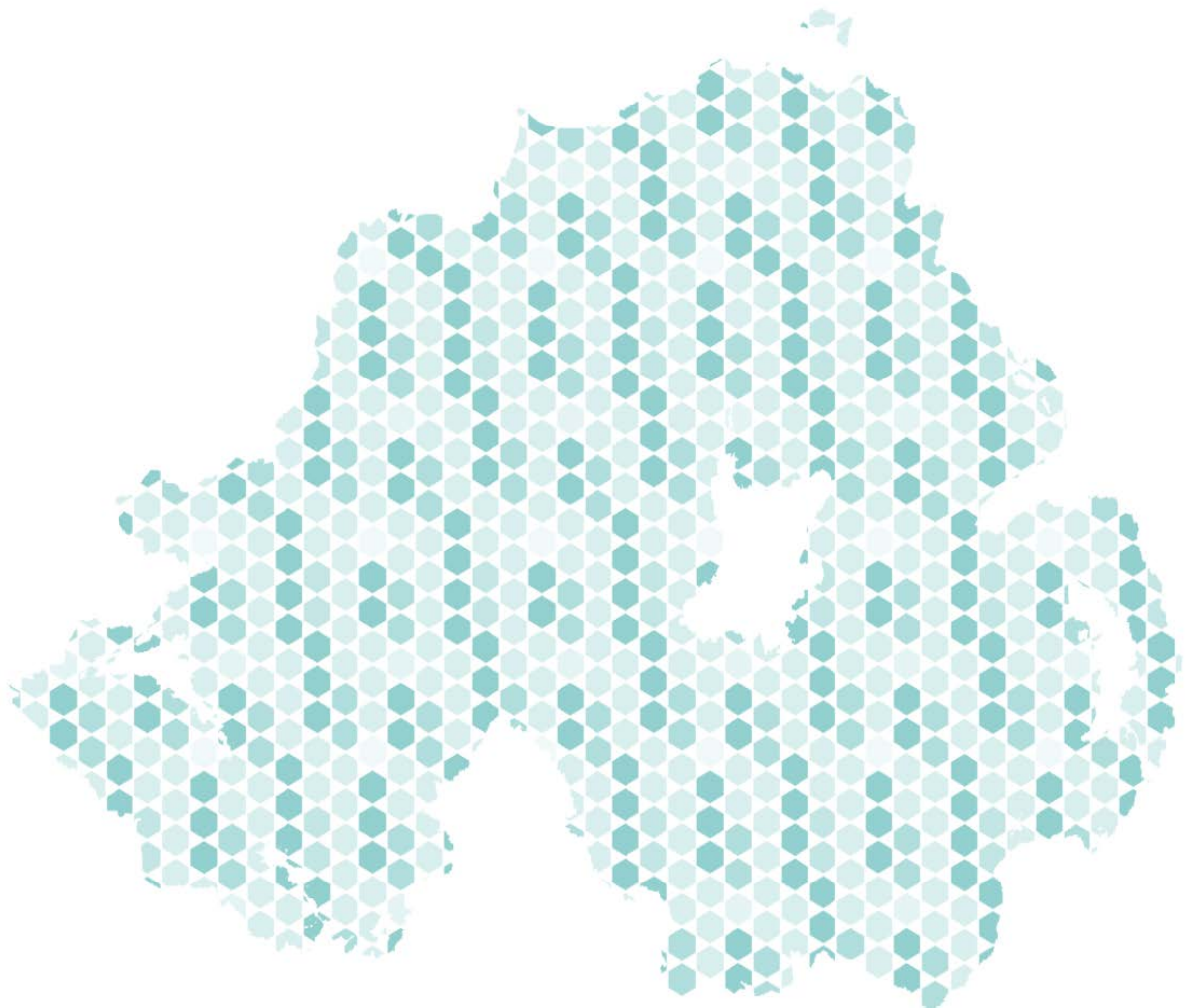


# YOUTH INSPECTION



Education and Training  
Inspectorate

Newbuildings Youth Centre,  
Londonderry

Report of an Inspection in  
March 2014



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

CUSTOMER  
SERVICE  
EXCELLENCE



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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:

<b>Performance level</b>
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

## 1. Context

Newbuildings Youth Centre is located in the rural area of the Waterside in County Londonderry. The full-time youth worker is seconded from the Western Education and Library Board (WELB) to the Newbuildings Community and Environmental Association (NCEA) and is in post since September 2013. The NCEA is administered by a voluntary Board of Directors; the full-time youth worker is managed by a senior youth worker on behalf of the WELB and reports regularly to the Board of Directors. There are five part-time paid staff, most of whom have been appointed within the past six months and are involved in initial youth work training.

The area has a population of approximately 500 young people aged 5 to 25. The current membership is 100 young people, which is almost a 30% increase since September 2013<sup>1</sup>. The centre reports that the area faces many social and economic problems such as low educational attainment and anti-social behaviour.

The WELB youth centre provision is open on two afternoons and three evenings each week and provides activities and programmes for three specific age groups; juniors aged 4 to 9, intermediates aged 10 to 13 and seniors aged 14 plus. The centre is used by other community and youth organisation which were outside the remit of this inspection.

## 2. Focus of Inspection

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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Very good</b>
<b>Achievements and standards</b>	<b>Very good</b>
<b>Provision</b>	<b>Very good</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Very good</b>

## 4. Achievements and standards

The young people participate fully in the planning and implementation of their own programmes. The increased levels of membership and participation demonstrate the young people's commitment to the life and work of the centre and the wider community. They engage well in the very good range of programmes and are able to identify clearly what they have achieved through their involvement in the good sporting activities and formal group work programmes.

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix 1

There are very good examples of extended learning and positive outcomes for the young people, for example the visit to 'ChildLine', and involvement in the graffiti and arts programme and the comic relief funded 'Sports 4 Change' project. The young people develop good communication skills, problem solving and team work as a result of their active participation in these programmes.

The young people understand well how their involvement can effect and influence change in their own community to meet best their needs and the needs of others. A good example of how they are effecting change is the 'Foyle Search and Rescue' programme which prepares young people to become volunteers. The young people achieve relevant accreditation and have the opportunity to work with their peers from other communities.

The centre places a high priority on transition and development through the relevant age appropriate programme and activities on offer. The recently developed links with local primary schools is further evidence of the importance given by the centre to raising standards for the young people. The post-primary schools report that the school based programme is making a significant contribution to closing the performance gap through the specific intervention including preparation for independent living and relevant accreditation.

## **5. Provision**

The youth work sessions observed ranged from satisfactory to outstanding; almost all were good or better. In the best practice the sessions were well planned with clear learning outcomes that the young people understood, and took into account the range of their interests and abilities. The effective structured group work creates a safe environment for the young people to explore and challenge their feelings and opinions about a range of important social issues including bullying, self-image and making positive life choices. In most of the sessions observed the staff provide a positive learning environment through the very good open and probing questions that stimulate honest and direct discussion among the young people. The relevant use of Information Communication Technology enhanced the learning and enjoyment of the sessions.

The staff and volunteers understand the role and purpose of youth work; they achieve an appropriate balance between activity and issue based programmes. For example, in the anti-bullying sessions observed the young people identified the key issues through the creative games used by the staff.

The junior section provides a mainly recreational programme for the younger children on two afternoons each week. While the Board of Directors recognise the need for the provision for this age group, the suitability of the programme, activities and resources need to be reviewed.

The young people in the intermediate section demonstrate high levels of maturity and the centre is purposefully developing the future leadership potential of this age group. The senior membership has increased in recent months allowing for greater involvement in the management of the centre through the newly formed member's committee.

The positive impact of the current provision for young people makes a valuable contribution to increased community cohesion. The recent strategically planned residential experiences and educational visits have provided a solid foundation for the development of positive working relationships, and built trust between the staff, the young people and the parents.

The quality of the pastoral care is very good; relationships at all levels provide a sound ethos for the personal and social development of the young people. The young people benefit greatly from the individual support provided by the staff; most of the young people value and respect the staff and their peers, they enjoy one another's company and recognise the significant progress they make. The young people informed the inspection team that they feel safe in the centre and are aware of what to do if they have any concerns about their safety and well-being.

## **6. Leadership and management**

The leadership of the centre is outstanding and inspirational, clearly demonstrated through the shared strategic vision and a commitment to excellence and quality improvement at all levels. A systematic approach to planning has been developed, including the effective support and supervision structures for all staff.

The staff set, share and review realistic targets that are well matched to the identified needs of the young people and the community. The new enthusiastic staff team and a long standing experienced member of staff, work effectively together, know one another's strengths and make good use of their expertise and interests.

The senior youth worker provides effective quality support and supervision for the full-time youth worker and completes moderation reports which are evaluative and assure the quality and appropriateness of the youth work.

There is an appropriate memorandum of understanding between the NCEA and the WELB which guides the management and work of the centre. The full-time youth worker makes good use of the agreement framework which identifies the centre's unique contribution to the youth provision within the local community.

The staff have made a very good start, within a relatively short time scale, on the development of a common approach to recording their work. There is a clear understanding between the staff and the young people of the importance of evaluation.

On the basis of the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the centre has satisfactory arrangements for safeguarding children and young people. These arrangements broadly reflect the guidance issued by the Department of Education, but the following area needs to be addressed; the designated officers on the Board of Directors need to receive appropriate training.

## **7. Conclusion**

In the areas inspected, the quality of the overall provision for the young people is very good. Newbulidings youth centre is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the learners; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

**Total Membership**

Age group	4-9		10-15		16-18		TOTAL
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
2013/14	14	13	10	8	15	11	71
Current	14	31	10	20	15	10	100

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