

# Maydown Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) Centre, County Londonderry

## Report of a Follow-up Inspection (Involving Action Short of Strike) in May 2023



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# Second Follow-up Inspection of Maydown Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) Centre, County Londonderry, BT47 6UF

## Introduction

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) conducted an inspection of Maydown EOTAS centre in [September 2015](#) as part of the inspection of the Foyle EOTAS service. A follow-up inspection in [May 2017](#), was impacted by industrial action short of strike by the teaching unions, which identified areas for improvement as detailed in the report. This second follow-up inspection was carried out in May 2023 and was also impacted by action short of strike. Prior to the inspection, the centre informed ETI that some of the staff would co-operate with the inspection in relation to elements of the arrangements for safeguarding pupils only. No observations of learning and teaching were permitted.

The ETI has a statutory duty to monitor, inspect and report on the quality of education being provided for pupils and young people. The inspection proceeded on a partial basis, as outlined above, and the key findings are based on the evidence made available at the time of the inspection visit.

## Key actions and changes

Key actions or changes which affect the work of the centre since the initial inspection include the:

- provision for EOTAS in the Foyle area has changed since the previous follow-up inspection, resulting in the provision in Maydown EOTAS Centre being inspected as a standalone provision;
- an Education Authority (EA) strategic lead has been in post eighteen months and an advisor for Key Stage (KS) 3 post-primary behaviour support and provisions has been in post nineteen months;
- the centre now provides a Key Stage (KS) 3 partnership model, with pupils attending Maydown EOTAS centre for three days of the week and reintegrating into their mainstream schools for the remaining two days;
- the outreach service has been reinstated and provides support to ten post-primary schools in the Foyle, Castlederg and Strabane area;
- a new data management system is in place across all KS3 and KS4 EOTAS centres and requires the centre manager at Maydown EOTAS to share a monthly report on attendance, assessment, behaviour and child protection with the EA advisor and strategic lead;

- the therapeutic provision has been developed to support pupils' emotional health and wellbeing and includes a 'nurture breakfast', horticulture, learning with horses, mixed martial arts, reflexology and outdoor pursuits; and
- staff have been provided with professional learning to develop their knowledge and understanding of safeguarding issues on the themes of: nurture with 'Lego'; Mental Health First Aid; trauma and adverse childhood experiences; restorative practice; emotionally based school avoidance; and, wellbeing assessments.

## Views of staff and parents/carers

A small number of teaching and support staff and the staff from the referring schools responded to the confidential online questionnaires. The responses referenced: the progress being made by pupils; the effective communication between staff in the centre and those in the referring schools; and the strong links with other professionals to share knowledge, expertise and experience. Almost all of the parents responded to the questionnaires and almost all were wholly positive about the work of the centre. The parents highlighted the good relationships in the centre and the individualised support their child receives. The small number of issues raised were reported to the centre leader and the EA representative. The ETI intends to re-issue the questionnaires at the time of the next inspection visit to complete this follow-up inspection.

## Key findings in relation to Safeguarding

- The centre's monthly attendance data (2022-23) shows that for most months, KS3 pupil attendance is below 85%. However, attendance rates have improved for a majority of the KS 3 pupils during their time at the centre. The centre's data indicates that one-half of the pupils at KS4 consistently have attendance below 80%. The centre continues to implement a range of practical strategies to help support the pupils' regular attendance.
- The pupils spoke positively about the staff in the centre, the individualised support they receive and the respectful relationships between staff and pupils. They are appreciative of the therapeutic support they receive through nurture, reflexology and outdoor pursuits and reported that this supports them to manage their feelings and motivates them in their work.
- The KS4 pupils are completing courses in the regional further education college which are relevant to their future career ambitions. They spoke about apprenticeship courses they would like to complete in the future, and the KS3 pupils discussed how they would like to return to school full-time.
- Regional EA EOTAS centre policies are in place, with almost all personalised to the Maydown EOTAS centre. The centre has identified the need to review the staff code of conduct and the Critical Incident policy.

- Due to the partial nature of the evidence base, the ETI is unable to evaluate the arrangements for safeguarding pupils. The pupils with whom ETI met reported that they feel safe in the centre and know who to speak to if they have any concerns about their safety or wellbeing. They discussed that staff listen to their views and discussed elements of the preventative curriculum which they have found helpful.
- Currently, the EA management provides the governance scrutiny and challenge function. Assurance for the arrangements for the independent scrutiny of safeguarding and governance within Maydown EOTAS centre is needed.

## Overall effectiveness

Due to the action short of strike by the teaching unions, the ETI was unable to evaluate the efficacy of the centre's arrangements for safeguarding young people and the centre's progress in effecting the required improvements in the quality of its provision since the original inspection in 2015.

The centre's second follow-up inspection is incomplete. The district inspector will continue to monitor the centre's progress and the follow-up inspection will be completed at the request of the centre, up to and including September 2023. Subsequently, the inspection will be completed without further notice.

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