



Providing Inspection Services for:
Department of Education
Department for the Economy



Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

The Pathways Project Belfast

April 2016

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF THE PATHWAYS PROJECT, BELFAST

The original inspection carried out in October 2014¹ concluded that in almost all of the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by this project was inadequate. The areas for improvement outweighed the strengths in the provision.

The areas for improvement included the need to:

- raise the young people's attainment in public examinations by ensuring they have access to sufficient and appropriately timetabled classes, particularly in literacy and numeracy, with opportunities, where appropriate, to study for GCSE accreditation;
- review the curriculum to ensure it is broad and balanced with lessons that are short in duration, well-planned and focused on the individual needs of the young people; and
- review the whole programme for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) to ensure that there is sufficient progression in key concepts and skills for the individual level of each young person.

In the interval since the inspection, the following actions which affect the work of the project have taken place.

- The organisation has appointed a new permanent manager, a full-time experienced teacher as curriculum co-ordinator, and two part-time experienced English teachers.
- New timetables have been introduced with classes of shorter duration in English and mathematics on four days each week.
- The staff have reviewed the curriculum and introduced a range of qualifications in literacy, numeracy and ICT for essential skills entry level three and levels one and two, and in addition, a personal development course through the Princes Trust xl programme.
- The organisation is currently pursuing its arrangements for governance and planning is at an advanced stage to formulate a steering group with strategic oversight of the project's work and outcomes of the young people.
- One of the three centres used by Pathways has relocated to more suitable premises in East Belfast.
- The organisation has redeveloped the Nelson Street centre to provide additional teaching space, separate office accommodation and separate toilet facilities for staff.
- The C2K ICT system has been installed in all centres and staff have received additional training for ICT. The organisation has provided additional ICT resources for each centre.

¹ <https://www.etini.gov.uk/publications/education-other-school-inspection-pathways-project-belfast>

Key findings

- The young peoples' attainments in public examinations have improved with almost all attaining appropriate qualifications in literacy and numeracy. There is a need to develop further the opportunities and motivation of the young people, where appropriate, to study for GCSE accreditation.
- The organisation has reviewed the curriculum provision, and lessons are now of an appropriate duration, well planned and focused on the needs of the young people. There is a need to develop further the curriculum to include sufficient vocational, creative and expressive opportunities for the young people.
- The organisation needs to extend the hours of attendance for all the young people in accordance with the EOTAS guidance 2014 /24.

Overall effectiveness

In the areas inspected the project has demonstrated improvement. The project, however, needs to continue to address important areas for improvement in the interests of the learners. The areas for improvement include the need to:

- develop further the opportunities and motivation of the young people where appropriate, to study for GCSE accreditation;
- extend the curriculum to include vocational, creative and expressive opportunities for the young people; and
- increase the hours of attendance for all the young people in accordance with the EOTAS guidance 2014 /24.

The ETI will continue to monitor and report on the project's progress in addressing the areas of improvement. A further follow-up inspection will be carried out in 12-18 months.

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