



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Newstart EOTAS, Belfast

Report of a Sustaining Improvement
Inspection in May 2018



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments



Sustaining Improvement Inspection of Newstart EOTAS, Belfast, County Antrim. BT13 2QU

Introduction

The previous inspection in April 2015 evaluated the overall effectiveness of Newstart Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) centre as outstanding¹. Since the last inspection a sustaining improvement inspection (SII) was conducted in May 2018.

Focus of the inspection

The purpose of the SII was to evaluate the extent to which the centre is capable of demonstrating its capacity to effect improvement through self-evaluation and effective centre development planning. The centre also provided evidence of provision for safeguarding as part of the inspection.

The areas of focus during the SII were:

- The development of a small focused learning area to enable pupils with significant gaps in their learning to receive intensive support for literacy and numeracy.
- The further development of an emotional health and well-being programme based on the individual needs of the pupils.

Key findings

- Newstart EOTAS has effectively developed and resourced a small room called the Positive Outcomes Development (POD) area that enables pupils identified with low levels of literacy and numeracy to re-engage with education and receive intensive support. The POD provides a safe place for individual or small numbers of pupils to receive intensive support from a teacher or a member of staff. The POD is well resourced with appropriate learning materials, the support programmes are well planned around the needs and interests of the pupils and teacher reflection and evaluation of learning is recorded weekly and used well to inform planning. The baseline testing systems identify effectively pupils who require intensive support. Information in the pupils' books and learning targets indicate that the pupils have significantly improved their handwriting, literacy and numeracy since accessing support in the POD. In discussions, the pupils spoke of their increasing confidence and new-found aspirations to gain accreditation since accessing the intensive support provided in the POD.
- The most recent cohort of pupils all achieved a literacy and numeracy qualification with a small number, who had attended the centre for at least two years, achieving six GCSEs or equivalent qualifications that enabled them to return to mainstream schools to study in sixth form.

¹ From September 2015, the overall effectiveness of a centre previously evaluated as outstanding or very good has been reported as a centre demonstrating a high level of capacity for sustained improvement.

- The staff team including an in-house social worker have developed highly effective systems for assessing and identifying group and individual emotional and health and well-being needs. They have in place a robust and effective emotional health and well-being programme based on individual needs. The programme is sufficiently flexible to respond to the emerging needs of pupils and issues within the community. The staff identify clearly the risk and protective factors for each pupil. The centre's data indicates that the risk factors for almost all pupils are decreasing and the protective factors increasing, in response to the targeted emotional health and well-being support classes. In addition the social worker also provides support for families and parents/carers of pupils.

During the inspection, the centre provided evidence that the arrangements for safeguarding pupils reflect the guidance from the Department of Education. The pupils report that they feel safe in the centre and are aware what to do if they have any concerns about their safety or welfare.

Conclusion

Newstart EOTAS continues to demonstrate a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners.

The ETI will continue to monitor how the centre sustains improvement.

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