

### **Appendix 3 - Evidence from Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI)**

3.1 ETI stresses continually the importance for providers and policy-makers from the different areas of education to make connections in the interests of the same young people with whom they work. Such connections recognise the important and complementary contribution which teachers and youth workers make towards preparing young people for employment and life. They also help young people to identify and articulate the often common learning outcomes. Strategic planning for youth services should be driven by an analysis of the educational needs of young people as articulated by them.

3.2 ETI reports that, in policy terms, youth work is strategically, and at operational levels, too discrete. It sits separately from related policies such as Extended Schools, Education Other Than At School and the development of area learning communities at a departmental level. Too often there are not strong enough links made between the skills and attributes attained through non-formal learning in the youth service, and those being developed through the work of the formal curriculum. Few opportunities exist for the dissemination of good practice.

3.3 There continues to be a need to monitor and evaluate more specifically the coherence, progression and the outcomes in the young people's learning. ETI has developed quality indicators for the youth sector around the same core themes as in the other sectors in which they work: pre-school; primary and post-primary education; further education and work-based learning; and Culture, Arts and Leisure (CAL) organisations. The core themes are: the quality of achievement and outcomes; the quality of provision; and the quality of leadership and management. At the centre of the evaluations are the learners and the progress which they make. In the same way, ETI acknowledges that the personal and social development of young people continues to be at the centre of youth provision in order to improve the life chances of young people, and to develop their personal and educational potential.

## **Key Findings from Inspections**

### **1. Outcomes**

- Through inspections across a range of youth providers, ETI reports that many young people within the youth sector display a sense of enjoyment, high levels of motivation and build on and acquire new skills and interests.
- A significant minority of young people successfully complete appropriate accreditation in a range of youth work activities and in leadership programmes.
- Good participative structures exist in the majority of centres, enabling young people to have a say in planning, organising and decision-making at centre and local youth area levels, and also within local communities.

### **2. Provision**

- In the cycle of inspections 2008-10, there was a wide range of provision: two-thirds of the youth provision inspected was evaluated as satisfactory or better; one-third was inadequate.
- Good provision is characterised by evidence-based strategic leadership, reflective practice and evaluation, and challenging programmes, which are well matched to the abilities, interests and experiences of the young people.
- Almost all of the youth workers inspected, paid and volunteers, demonstrate a good understanding of the context in which they work and have good links with their communities.

- Safeguarding is rigorous in most settings and pastoral care is very good in the majority of the provision inspected.
- Good examples exist of project-based youth work, in particular to meet the needs of marginalised young people.
- There is a variety of projects for some section 75 groups. A good start has been made to welcoming young people with disabilities into mainstream youth provision, but there is scope for much more integration.
- Transport remains an issue for many young people in rural areas.
- A major theme running through inspection reports is the need to improve the quality of planning and assessment. There is a need for more evidence of the 'Model for Effective Practice' informing practice and planning, despite the training which exists.
- At centre level, leadership and management are satisfactory or better in approximately three-quarters of the settings inspected.
- Good collaboration with other agencies secures additional funds and services to enhance the quality of provision for young people.
- The full and part-time youth workers and volunteers display a high level of commitment to the young people with whom they work.
- Staffing ratios are good or better in a majority of settings; however, with increasing numbers of part-time staff and staff with minimum qualifications and experience, it is essential that management monitors the provision regularly, and provides continuous support and training.

### **3. Monitoring and evaluation**

- Throughout the youth sector, youth workers and managers use a range of self-evaluation processes.
- In a significant minority of the areas inspected, self-evaluation is well-developed and young people are involved actively in evaluating their own learning.
- There is insufficient tracking and recording of the progress of young people, which results in a lack of tangible evidence of progression and attainment, both for the young person themselves, parents and funding organisations.

