EOTAS/SSPPR

EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSPECTORATE REPORT

2000

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1.   INTRODUCTION

1.1   The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) with support from the Economic Advisory Unit (EAU) of the Department of Education (DE) surveyed a number of projects funded by the Special Support Programmes for Peace and Reconciliation (SSPPR) and Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) during March-May 2000. The projects visited are listed in Appendix 4.

1.2   The survey was prompted by the need for an evaluation of SSPPR-funded projects and by the increasing numbers of young people who withdraw from formal education, or who are suspended or expelled from schools. The focus was on provision for marginalised young people aged 13-17 within projects which aim to bring about their social inclusion. The survey was designed to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of a range of projects and their contribution to social inclusion.   Projects were selected from voluntary, statutory and community organisations.

1.3   The following definitions are used for the purpose of this survey:

> *i.   EOTAS is the provision, often in non-school locations, of education and training for young people of compulsory school age who have, for a variety of reasons, ceased, or partially ceased, to attend school.*
>
> *ii.   SSPPR is provision funded by DE or Youthnet to promote social inclusion and cross-community activities among marginalised young people aged 13-25 years.*
>
> *iii.   Cost effectiveness is defined as the extent to which, when the outcomes and outputs of a project are set against the costs involved, the expenditure can be seen to be justifiable.*

1.4   The aims of the survey were:

a.   to evaluate and report on the ethos, the quality of experiences and the management arrangements in a sample of EOTAS and SSPPR projects;

b.   to identify good practice in the promotion of social inclusion and reconciliation;

c.   to indicate the cost-effectiveness of the projects by means of benchmark funding; and

EOTAS

SSPPR

Cost Effectiveness

Aims of the Survey

d.   to make recommendations about:

    i.   the prioritisation of resources, and

    ii.   the dissemination of good practice.

1.5   During the period of the survey, the inspectors:

- met with personnel from each Education and Library Board (ELB) and from a variety of statutory and voluntary organisations;

- visited 35 projects (19 SSPPR and 16 EOTAS);

- had 149 meetings with adults associated with the projects;

- had 76 discussions with young people;

- observed 89 sessions and lessons;

- held eleven meetings with parents/carers of the young people;

- scrutinised written information such as policy statements and records and, where appropriate, work undertaken by the young people.

The Evidence Base

A number of quantitative terms are used in the report. In percentages, the terms correspond as follows:

More than 90%	-	almost/nearly all
75%-90%	-	most
50%-74%	-	a majority
30%-49%	-	a significant minority
10%-29%	-	a minority
Less than 10%	-	very few/a small number.

2.   Background

2.1   Studies of those who are marginalised or socially excluded, for example, the Status Zero[1] survey of young people who are neither in employment nor in full-time education and training have shown that those at risk often suffer low self-esteem, low expectations and little ambition; furthermore they are more likely to be long-term unemployed when they are adults. Moreover, the Home Office Youth Lifestyle Survey[2] concluded that those who were disaffected at school or who were persistent truants had a higher risk of committing serious criminal offences and persistent offending. Accordingly, there is a need for policy and practice to address young people who have experienced, or are at risk of experiencing Status Zero.

2.2   In Northern Ireland compulsory schooling is provided for all between the ages of 4-16. However, not all gain sufficient from or give sufficient attention to their education and are subsequently disadvantaged in the labour market. EOTAS is targeted primarily at pupils during the last two years of compulsory schooling, who have either been excluded from or refuse to attend school. The SSPPR projects considered in this report are targeted at pupils who are at risk of becoming excluded from mainstream education.

2.3   A recent study undertaken by Kilpatrick[3] found that a large number of pupils in Northern Ireland, who had been suspended frequently in previous years, were no longer in mainstream education. Furthermore, few expelled pupils returned to mainstream education, and the majority ended up in home or group tuition projects provided by ELBs. In addition, the study found that there was a group of pupils without a permanent school placement for a variety of reasons, which included:

- parental decisions to withdraw the pupil from school;

- the ELB's decision to provide alternative education provision;

- the placing of the young person(s) in care; and

- pregnancy.

[1]   McVicar, D., Loudon R., McCready, S., Armstrong, D. and Rees, G. Young People and Social Exclusion in NI: Status 0 four years on. Training and Employment Agency, Belfast (2000)

[2]   Siobhan Campbell & Victoira Harrington, Home Office "Findings from the 1998/99 Youth Lifestyles Survey".

[3]   Rosemary Kilpatrick and Alex Barr "Pupils with three plus suspensions: what happens to them and what are the alternatives?" Draft report, October 1999.

2.4   In most cases, when parents decided to withdraw their child from school few problems arose in that the child was quickly enrolled in an alternative school. However, in certain circumstances pupils did not find a school placement. These pupils included those waiting for a place in a special school, older pupils who were disaffected with school, and/or were posing behaviour management problems to the staff at the school.

2.5   It is difficult to gauge the full extent of the problem of pupils without a permanent school placement, as identified by the Kilpatrick research. Despite the apparent fall in the number of exclusions, the number of suspensions and school attendance rates indicate a further deterioration since 1996, (Figures 1, 2 and 3 in Appendix 1A refer).

2.6   Useful indicators which give a broad indication of the numbers of vulnerable young people, include the following socio-economic indicators:

•   in August 1999 there were a total of 22,071 children in Lone Parent Families in receipt of Family Credit, and 79,108 children in Lone Parent Families in receipt of Income Support;

•   in 1999 there were 1,104 children aged 12-16+ in care; this figure represents 47.5% of the total number of children in care;

•   in 1999 there were 1,463 children on the Child Protection Register; and

•   in 1998 there were 537 births to teenage mothers under the age of 18. This figure represents 2.3% of total births. (Figure 4 in Appendix 1A contains a breakdown of births to teenage mothers for each ELB area.)

2.7   In addition, the number of young people at Key Stage 4 referred to ELBs who were experiencing problems attending mainstream education was 5,302[4] in 1999/2000 (see Figure 5 Appendix 1A). This figure represents 10% of the Key Stage 4 Age Cohort.

2.8   Disaffected young people and those within school with behavioural problems pose management problems and challenge the school's capacity to cope. The Health Behaviour of School Children (HBSC) survey 1997/98 gives useful background information on the

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[4]   This figure includes the total number of young people who are known to the authorities as having problems attending school. ELBs receive this information from a number of sources including schools, social services and Probation Board.

behaviours of young people in Northern Ireland in terms of substance abuse (including alcohol and illegal drugs), sexual behaviour and relationships within school. The survey identified a cluster of certain 'risky' behaviours including:

•   smoking more than 20 cigarettes per week;

•   having been drunk more than 10 times;

•   having experienced sexual intercourse before the age of 16; and

•   currently using drugs.

2.9   The survey found an identifiable group of young people engaged in this 'cluster' of activities; the group was made up of more boys than girls, and the majority were in their last two years of compulsory education. This group also displayed a noticeable difference in its attitudes to school, reporting lower school performance, and admitting to 'skipping' school on at least four days in the term in which they were interviewed. The survey also found a high correlation between membership of this group and poorer socio-economic backgrounds, (using free school meals as an indicator of socio-economic status).

2.10 These social indicators and background research demonstrate the continued need for a range of preventative and alternative services.

3.   ANALYSIS OF QUANTITATIVE DATA

3.1   As part of the Inspectorate survey, information was provided by each centre visited and this was collated to provide useful background information on the projects. The charts at Appendix 1B illustrate in diagrammatic form the points made below.

3.2   Three broad categories of EOTAS/SSPPR provision can be identified (see Appendix 1B, Figure 6):

Categories of Provision

> i.   <u>*Schools & Further Education*</u> *establishments which try to deal with disruptive behaviour in mainstream provision in school or college, and often through participation in other activities outside normal school hours. These projects are more involved with preventing young people from becoming excluded from mainstream education.*
>
> ii.   <u>*Inter-agency, Community/Partnership*</u> *which provides alternative/ innovative approaches to prevent social exclusion. These partnerships include youth groups targeting the socially excluded and trying to encourage the empowerment and growth of self-worth among the young people.*
>
> iii.   <u>*Alternative providers*</u>, *representing educational programmes outside mainstream education dealing mainly with school refusers and those who have been excluded from school.*

3.3   An analysis by ELB area highlights the geographical spread of projects (see Appendix 1B, Figure 7). Given the social inclusion objectives, the location of the projects corresponds with deprived areas of Northern Ireland (as defined by the Robson Index of Deprivation). The majority of the projects are situated in Belfast, Londonderry and West of the Bann (see Figure 7 in Appendix 1B).

3.4   A variety of professionally qualified staff mediate the projects on the ground. This inter-agency, multi-disciplinary approach varies with the different categories mentioned at 3.2 above (see Figure 8 in Appendix 1B). For example, teachers form the largest category of staff in School/FE establishments, supported in the main by classroom assistants. Teachers also form the largest category of staff in Alternative provision and are supported by youth and peer workers and project managers. In the Community/Partnership category, youth and peer workers are the largest group, with support from teachers.

3.5   While participation tends to be on a smaller scale in Alternative and Community/Partnership schemes, figures for participants alone do not provide the full picture. When information on the number of participants is supplemented with participant hours, it can be seen that the Schools/FE category involves large numbers for short periods of a time, whereas the Alternative providers cater for smaller numbers on a more regular basis (see Figures 9 and 10 in Appendix 1B).

3.6   The remainder of the report concentrates on the findings of the survey in terms of:

- *ethos*

- *quality of experiences*

- *management arrangements*

- *outcomes.*

The findings are set out in diagrammatic form in Appendix 1C.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

Strengths of provision in EOTAS and SSPPR projects include

1.   the ethos in which nearly all the projects operate, for example:

Ethos

- •   the good relationships at all levels,

- •   the response of most of the young people,

- •   the involvement of marginalised young people;

2.   the features of the teaching/coaching and learning, for example:

Teaching/ Learning

- •   the quality of the young people's experiences,

- •   the often innovative, challenging and interesting programmes,

- •   the emphasis given to the personal and social development of the young people;

3.   the commitment of all those adults involved, for example:

Commitment

- •   the support of many of the parents,

- •   the social inclusion of the young people,

- •   the management of the projects,

- •   the leadership of the projects,

- •   the inter-agency collaboration and co-operation,

- •   the awareness of child protection issues,

- •   the use of available resources; and

4.   positive outcomes, for example:

Outcomes

- •   for young people, staff and parents/carers,

- •   for inter-agency co-operation and social inclusion.

Areas for improvement in EOTAS/SSPPR projects include the need for

1. the establishment of minimum criteria for the projects including:

    - clarity and consistency in the criteria used to select young people for EOTAS provision,

    - the breadth of the curriculum in EOTAS projects,

    - access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) provision,

    - more support for young people with special educational needs,

    - widening the scope of community relations provision in SSPPR projects;

2. the strengthening of management arrangements to include:

    - in-service training (INSET), staff development and CASS support for EOTAS projects,

    - better understanding of child protection policy and practice,

    - better links between projects and schools,

    - more attention to health and safety matters,

    - improved monitoring and evaluation;

3. more attention to funding and resource needs including:

    - funding to enable the successful completion of projects,

    - better accommodation and more adequate resources.

Criteria

Management

Funding & Resources

5.   ETHOS

5.1   In all the projects there was evidence of:

*   sensitivity towards the individual needs of the young people,

*   a non-judgemental attitude by the staff towards the young people, regardless of their ability and their previous behaviour, and

*   high quality relationships engendered by the staff at all levels.

5.2   Staff create or work to a clear value-base which reflects the specific rationale of their project. The shared understanding of the values forged, and the safe and supportive atmosphere, help to deal with the problems experienced by the young people, and to encourage their social inclusion.

5.3   Many of the young people involved in the projects live in communities that experience high levels of deprivation; a significant minority are marginalised and socially excluded from other groups within the local and wider community. Nevertheless, they demonstrate their willingness to learn and respond positively in circumstances where they feel accepted, are challenged and supported effectively to achieve their potential.

5.4   Almost all of the young people interviewed reported that they enjoyed both the educational and recreational activities offered by the projects; high levels of participation and application were observed during the visits.

5.5   In the EOTAS projects, the co-ordinators reported that the attendance of the young people is nearly always higher than their previous school attendance. The young people themselves reported that their improved attendance helps to increase self-esteem, self-confidence and their feeling less excluded from their families and communities.

5.6   Parents/carers appreciate and support the projects and recognise the beneficial influence on their children in terms of attitudes and behaviour.

6.   Quality of Experiences

6.1   In almost all of the projects, the quality of the young people's experiences is good. The range of the programmes offered to them lacks sufficient breadth.   Factors contributing to this narrowness include:

•   the limited range of staff skills,

•   the time available (sometimes as little as one hour each day), and

•   inadequate accommodation and resources.

6.2   In all projects observed, adults spend time planning programmes based on the identified needs of the young people. In a minority of projects, young people are involved in the planning and implementation of the activities and have opportunities to develop leadership skills. Within their limited scope nearly all the programmes offer young people varied and challenging experiences designed to increase their motivation and self-esteem. For example, through their involvement in visual arts, drama and music and movement young people in a disadvantaged urban community are much more involved in and contribute more to the social and cultural life of their neighbourhood.

6.3   In nearly all of the EOTAS projects, young people follow individualised learning programmes in literacy and numeracy suited to their ability and level of attainment. There is a good balance between those elements of the programme which promote personal and social development, and aspects of the school curriculum. In a small number of projects, young people have opportunities to explore their own interests, for example, writing poetry, or taking part in physical and cultural activities.

6.4   One SSPPR project provides the young people with opportunities to experience a range of sports, enabling them to acquire skills which allow them to participate with greater enjoyment and satisfaction: this project involves sixth-form pupils from a secondary school in coaching younger pupils. Social inclusion is evident in that the young people came from both urban and rural areas, and from schools in the controlled, integrated and maintained sectors.

6.5   Almost all of the EOTAS projects prepare young people for the world of work and introduce them to ICT. In a majority of the projects, work experience placements are arranged for those young people who express an interest in a particular vocational area. One

project provides participants with computer skills linked to appropriate work experience placements which help them to make informed choices about career options. Young people attending an SSPPR project integrate with pupils still at school through video-conferencing and have excellent opportunities to develop ICT skills. These young people return to school with a portfolio of ICT work across the curriculum.

6.6 Many young people experience a high level of enjoyment in their learning and interact with others in groups both socially and during structured discussions. In just under 90% of the projects visited, the outcomes in terms of learning were considered to be good.

6.7 In all cases observed, the quality of teaching and coaching ranged from satisfactory to very good. Staff are flexible in their approach, adopt a range of teaching styles, display a high degree of sensitivity and patience in their dealings with the young people, and generally have high expectations of young people's learning, attendance and behaviour.

6.8 In a small number of projects, good links exist with the feeder schools to provide aspects of the curriculum and/or facilitate the examination process: these links could be developed more widely.

6.9 There are examples of good practice in cross-community and single-identity activities in just over 50% of the projects; in others, these activities are under-developed. One Institute of Further and Higher Education (IFHE) hosts an SSPPR-funded programme for young people from controlled and maintained schools in the town. The interaction of the pupils and staff from the participating schools and their involvement in team-building exercises contribute to a significant growth in the young people's mutual understanding and respect for one another. A project designed for young people in rural areas, both male and female, from different cultural backgrounds, who have no contact with a youth group, provides them with an opportunity to acquire the skills and confidence to become more involved in their local community. In an SSPPR project, young people from different areas of Belfast prepare visual presentations depicting their own locality. The presentations are displayed in a central location. Viewing each others' work provides a good basis for the inter-community contact which takes place during the various workshops held during the event.

6.10 SSPPR projects based in youth clubs have developed a programme of single-identity activities for their members; for a minority, this programme has been extended to include sharing events in neutral venues, visits to places of cultural and historical interest and

residential experiences in Northern Ireland and further afield. In one school, the pupils have a growing understanding and acceptance of the culture and customs of the Travelling community: the staff of the school have worked hard and with success to integrate the Travellers into the life and work of the school.

6.11 The quality of the personal support for the young people is good in over 90% of the projects visited. This help is practical and consistent and involves all the staff. The high quality of the support and guidance in EOTAS projects often extends to the young people's parents/carers, involving the staff in meetings with the parents/carers, and, when necessary, home visits. The assistance usually begins at the recruitment and induction phases and continues throughout the project. Issues are discussed in group sessions and, on occasions, potential conflict situations are resolved through negotiation.

6.12 Support for those young people with special educational needs who attend EOTAS projects is often limited by the lack of professional expertise among staff, and by inadequate resources.

6.13 Personal support may include counselling sessions, and, when necessary, young people are referred to specialist agencies such as a youth counselling agency. Staff, when requested, attend case conferences or court appearances to support the young people. A project which provides exclusively for school-age mothers draws on the expertise of health professionals as part of a network of external support which is available to the young mothers. External support is available in most EOTAS projects including, for example, from the Education and Welfare Service, Social Services, the Probation Service, the Training and Employment Agency, the Youth Service and voluntary organisations and from alcohol and drug awareness centres.

6.14 One EOTAS project has introduced a mentoring scheme which provides individual support for those young people with particular problems and who find it difficult to conform to the standards of behaviour accepted by the rest of the group.

6.15 In nearly all of the EOTAS projects, young people follow specific programmes which lead to external accreditation. Many progress to further education, vocational skills training or employment.

7. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

7.1   In more than four-fifths of the projects, the management arrangements are good, and appropriate structures are in place. Management committees or steering groups are supportive and make a positive contribution to the development of the projects. Projects are managed capably on a day-to-day basis by the project leaders. There are good examples of representatives from different voluntary and statutory agencies collaborating well in the management of some projects.

7.2   The quality of the leadership provided by the full-time project co-ordinators is consistently good. In most instances, they are experienced and well-informed; they collaborate well with their colleagues to provide the best possible quality of care and support for the young people. The workers in all of the projects are well motivated and highly committed to the young people in their care; they often provide advice and support for the young people beyond the remit of their projects. They are well acquainted with important background information about the young people and handle this material in a sensitive and discreet manner. Workers with different expertise, from both statutory and voluntary sectors, were observed working effectively as a team to ensure the smooth implementation of programmes.

7.3   The SSPPR projects have clear aims and objectives which the workers try to implement. In a small number of EOTAS projects, the aims and objectives are not sufficiently clear to guide practice.

7.4   In a small number of EOTAS projects, the criteria and referral procedures for accepting young people are not well thought through. When to this shortcoming are added features such as limited time spent in the project and differences in the age and maturity of the young people attending the project, reintegration back to formal education is unlikely.

7.5   Project leaders and workers are well aware of the importance of staff development. They participate willingly in courses when opportunities are provided. However, in the EOTAS projects, only the qualified teachers who are in full-time employment have access to the ELBs' INSET provision: unqualified and part-time qualified staff are excluded. Although some of the staff teaching in community-based EOTAS projects have third-level and post-graduate qualifications, not all are qualified teachers. As a result, these workers are unable to keep up-to-date with developments in education and increasingly feel professionally isolated.   In addition, alternative educational

institutions, not being grant-aided, have no access to the ELBs' Curriculum and Advisory Support Service (CASS).

7.6   The leaders and workers in the EOTAS projects are often from the local community, and have a detailed knowledge of the young people, their families and the culture of the neighbourhood. They make a contribution to the education of the young people which is much valued by the parents/carers. The community dimension of these projects, which is crucial to their success, allows for flexible, responsive and innovative approaches.

7.7   Records are kept by the projects of the young people's attendance, progress and achievements. The records often include pertinent personal details and are used effectively for a variety of purposes, including the nature of the support to be provided for individual young people. Confidential information is handled sensitively and kept in a secure place.

7.8   In all of the projects visited, there is an awareness of child protection matters. In some instances, however, the written policies take insufficient account of DENI Circular 1999/10 and the workers and ancillary staff have not received child protection training.

7.9   Monitoring and evaluation arrangements for SSPPR projects meet the requirements of the funding bodies, but more account should be taken of the views of the young people and, where possible, their parents. Monitoring in EOTAS projects of the young people's attendance, the assessment of their work, the recording of their examination results and staff observations is generally satisfactory. There is a need however, for a more rigorous and objective approach to evaluation in relation to the stated aims and objectives of the project, the teaching, and the content and the suitability of the programmes.

7.10 In most instances, the links between EOTAS projects and the schools attended, or formerly attended, by the young people are tenuous or non-existent. There are a few examples of young people attending their former school for a limited period of time each week to pursue a particular GCSE course, or of work being supplied to the EOTAS centre by a school for a particular young person. Firmer links should be established between schools and these projects if young people who are marginalised and disaffected and whose behaviour challenges the staff are to have the maximum opportunity to benefit from compulsory education and the resources the schools have to offer.

7.11 Further education and training offer young people opportunities to develop skills, explore vocational routes and interact with a wider

range of people. There is scope for the projects to develop links with further education and training establishments to enhance the range of the young people's learning experiences.

7.12 In the SSPPR projects, links with local voluntary and community groups are often well developed. In one youth centre, for example, qualified ICT, draughts/chess and soccer personnel from the immediate locality train young people in their respective areas of expertise; in another project, the young people participate in the annual local community festival; in a school-based project, effective links have been established with local youth and community workers.

7.13 Funding for SSPPR and EOTAS projects is provided by a variety of sources. The age-weighted pupil unit (AWPU) funding allocated to the schools formerly attended by the young people in EOTAS projects generally remains with the schools. Access to this funding, or comparable funds, and the extension to EOTAS projects of the young people's entitlement to free school meals and free travel, could contribute significantly to improving the quality of, and ensuring the continuing equity of, access to the provision. (see para 10.7)

7.14 The funding of projects on a year-to-year basis results in insecurity and instability among staff; in one project, there has been a complete turnover of staff, apart from the project leader, during the past 18 months. There is a need for continuity of funding to enable the successful completion of projects. (see para 10.8)

7.15 Although just over two-thirds of the projects are located in suitable accommodation, the remainder are in accommodation which is poor and restricts the nature and scope of projects. There are health and safety-related issues in just over one-fifth of the projects.

7.16 The provision of resources is good in just under a half of the projects and in just over four-fifths of all projects, the available resources are used effectively. There are significant shortages of equipment for teaching mathematics, ICT (software and hardware) and other practical subjects; similarly, there are few resources for teaching subjects such as English, history and geography. Most of the projects make good use of community facilities such as leisure centres and museums.

7.17 ELBs often provide EOTAS projects with valued support in the form of accommodation and personnel from the Education Welfare, Youth and Psychological Services; they also contribute to the running costs. There should be a standard approach within ELBs to the provision of funds for essential resources, including premises and transport.

7.18 Opportunities should be provided for the staff of EOTAS projects to meet, on occasions, within and across ELB areas to share good practice and explore common issues.

7.19 EOTAS project co-ordinators report that there is an undetermined number of young people who are not attending school and who are unable to benefit from EOTAS provision because of a lack of resources.

8.   Outcomes - Participants and Projects

Re-engagement

8.1   The outcomes for the young people are good in more than four-fifths of the projects, and the marginalised and socially-excluded young people are re-engaged in education, though rarely in schools. Nearly all of the projects re-capture the young people's interest in, and enthusiasm for, learning.

Motivation

8.2   The young people's confidence and self-esteem are increased as they feel valued as individuals and by their active participation in a programme of activities. This resurgence of self-worth results in increased desire for new skills, knowledge and experiences.

Examination Success

8.3   Many young people sit public examinations and achieve success, for example, in basic skills, GCSE and General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQ). Others acquire Open College Network qualifications, obtain Key Skills qualifications in Working With Others and Improving Own Learning, and in the Youth Achievement Award scheme.

Progression

8.4   Most of the young people in the EOTAS projects progress to employment, further education or Jobskills training.

Social Inclusion

8.5   The projects are successful in engaging with marginalised young people and encouraging their social inclusion. Nearly all of the projects focus on young people who are considered to be marginalised; in just under four-fifths of all projects social inclusion is being achieved. These projects, with their supportive approaches, are successful in counteracting negative influences and so have added-value. It was reported by one co-ordinator that none of the young people, all of whom were involved with the juvenile justice system, had re-offended for the duration of the project in 1998/99 and that only one of them had re-offended, nine months later.

Professional Satisfaction

8.6   The adults in the projects often have a sense of purpose and achievement. For them, working successfully with marginalised young people provides professional satisfaction.

Parents

8.7   Parents/carers appreciate that their children are being educated again; they commented positively on the fact that they are consulted and kept informed about their child's progress.

Inter-Agency

8.8   Almost all of the EOTAS projects adopt inter-agency approaches which enhance the quality of provision and support for the young people.

ICT & Work Experience

8.9   Those projects with an emphasis on ICT and work experience are successful in motivating the young people and improving their employment opportunities.

Cross-Community

8.10 The cross-community element of some projects helps to challenge long-standing myths and improve the young people's understanding of different cultural traditions.

9.   Cost Effectiveness

9.1   The qualitative comments contained in this report suggest that the EOTAS/SSPPR projects are effective in terms of meeting the objectives of these programmes. However, qualitative judgements on their own do not demonstrate cost-effectiveness. Expenditure needs to be compared with costs of similar services elsewhere, ie benchmarks for comparative purposes. Each project for which full cost data existed was examined, and costing adjusted to give an estimated annual cost per place (see Figure 27 Appendix 1D). The Schools/FE category contains a more varied sample of projects aimed at those who are at risk of becoming excluded from mainstream education and can be accessible to larger numbers.

	1999
Schools and Further Education establishment (average marginal cost):	£238

9.2   Schools also receive the AWPU for the last two years of compulsory schooling in Northern Ireland as part of their formula funding allocation. In the 1999/00 financial year this was £2,022 (based on average AWPU for five ELBs throughout Northern Ireland, excluding Grant Maintained Independent and Voluntary Grammar schools).

	1999
Community/Partnership approach:	£1,369
Alternative providers:	£3,790

9.3   The average cost of alternative providers is higher than that of schools. These schemes are on a much smaller scale than schools and are therefore unable to access economies of scale. The alternative schemes also involve a more intensive multi-agency support.

9.4   In developing benchmarks for comparison to illustrate the cost-effectiveness of the Alternative and Community/Partnership approaches, average cost information was obtained for the following:

  i.   average cost for special schools in Northern Ireland for children with behavioural problems;

  ii.   average cost for special units elsewhere in the UK.

9.5   In Northern Ireland there are four special schools that cater for young people with behavioural problems. It can be argued that these are the costs which would have had to be spent in the absence of the EOTAS pilot projects.

	1999/00 data
BELB (School a)	£9,589
BELB (School b)	£11,143
SEELB (School a)	£10,162
SELB (School a)[5]	£16,667

9.6   Elsewhere in the United Kingdom the onus is very much on retaining those excluded from class within the school system. To this end a new scheme has been introduced (Social Inclusion: Pupil Support) which allows each school a grant of £130,000 to establish a special unit within the school.   Research undertaken by the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) suggests an average cost per pupil[6] of around £12,000 in special units within schools, (1999/00 data). These figures can range from £6,000 in rural areas to £25,000 in metropolitan areas. Furthermore, average costs rise to around £20,000 in special independent schools, and can rise to £200,000 when residential care is included. The figure £12,000 is therefore used by DfEE as the benchmark.

9.7   In cost-effective terms, the average cost of EOTAS projects compares favourably with that of Special Schools for children with behavioural problems and dedicated special units within schools (as is the case in England). These special behavioural schools and dedicated units within schools have access to quality resources and accommodation. The provision of EOTAS schemes represents value for money, i.e. they make a worthwhile contribution to education given their limited resources.

9.8   Any comparisons in relation to resources should also be viewed in the light of possible resource savings elsewhere in the economy. Many of the young people involved in EOTAS had previously been involved with the juvenile justice system, and as the inspection findings indicate, there was reported success in the numbers of EOTAS participants not re-offending.

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[5]   Includes residential care.

[6]   Figures relate to provision in England.

9.9   In order to get a feel of any possible juvenile crime savings it is necessary to describe the juvenile justice system. Many young people who are given their first caution by the police never re-offend. Nevertheless, there are some individuals who re-offend constantly and end up eventually in a juvenile detention centre. Cautions will depend on the relevant circumstances: ages, severity of offence, number of occurrences and so on. In between first offence and detention there are many young people who will go through the courts and have community orders or probation orders imposed on them. The residential facilities for young people on remand or found guilty of an offence, provide full educational, vocational and recreational programmes. Using data from the NIO Economic Appraisal[7] on the future rationalisation of Juvenile Detention Centres, the average cost of someone in a Juvenile Detention Centre is £118,000. Only a small apportionment of this figure can be attributed to education for comparison purposes. However, if EOTAS provision halts the process of young people headed for juvenile centres either through remand or convictions, it could in the long run result in cost savings to the economy, either through staff cost savings or the closure of some centres.

9.10   The findings of this report suggest that EOTAS provision could be effective in making in-roads into the numbers of first time offenders and those moving up through the courts and being given community and probation orders (see paragraph 8.5). In 1999 there were a total of 648 juvenile defendants dealt with by the Northern Ireland Court Service in Belfast alone and 1,925 in Northern Ireland as a whole (Figure 28 in Appendix 1D contains a breakdown of juvenile offences for each ELB).

9.11   Other long-term savings to the economy of successful prevention of exclusion could be the increased employability and subsequent employment of EOTAS participants as they participate in more productive and healthier lifestyles.

9.12   Accordingly, the measures currently in place are effective, given their limited resources, in that they achieve positive results for their participants, and they may result in further savings to the economy. However, in structuring any further support, the effect of creating any

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[7]   Currently there are around 35 children accommodated in juvenile detention centres throughout Northern Ireland. Altogether these centres have a capacity for 119 places, (Source: NIO). Recent legislation in line with the UN Convention on the rights of the child has resulted in a marked reduction in the numbers of children in custody. NIO is currently in the process of reviewing the provision of juvenile detention centres in NI and a decision regarding closing/merging centres is expected later in the year.

perverse incentives with regard to schools and pupils, will have to be taken into consideration. One view is that future alternative EOTAS programmes should be reserved for those with whom the school system has not succeeded without encouraging children at risk of exclusion to leave. Conversely, EOTAS type provision could become a valid choice for young people from the age of 14.

10.   RECOMMENDATIONS: DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION (DE)

Funding & Exclusion

10.1 DE should review its funding to schools with the most acute problems of disaffection and absenteeism to enable them to take preventative action and to provide the most flexible and effective range of in-school support so that the number of young people who are excluded from school is kept to a minimum.

Review of Provision

10.2 DE, the schools and the Inspectorate should review the extent, quality and relevance of the present provision for disaffected pupils in the form of school-based units or pupil referral units. The purpose of the review should be to develop effective preventative strategies.

Prevention

10.3 Schools, in collaboration with the education, psychological, youth and welfare services and other statutory and voluntary bodies, should act at an earlier stage to reduce the number of young people being suspended or expelled.

Curriculum

10.4 There is a need for greater flexibility in the NIC in years 11 and 12 to ensure that schools and EOTAS providers are able to design curricula which cater for the needs of disaffected and marginalised young people, including young people from the Travelling community.

Referral

10.5 There is a need for the DE to clarify its policy and guidelines on the status and procedures for referral to and implementation of EOTAS provision.

Admittance Criteria

10.6 Each EOTAS provider should be required to establish aims and objectives, and criteria for the admittance of young people to its project and subsequent programmes of activities.

Funding EOTAS

10.7 There is a need for the financial arrangements for EOTAS provision to be sufficient and secure to meet identified needs and to be commensurate with those which apply to young people in full-time education. (see para 7.13)

Funding SSPPR

10.8 Funding for SSPPR projects would benefit from being allocated on a three or four-year basis in order to remove uncertainty, insecurity and possible high rates of turnover, among staff. (see para 7.14)

Accommodation

10.9 Minimum standards of accommodation for projects should be established to ensure that young people are educated in a safe and secure environment and are free from health and safety hazards.

Staff Development

10.10 Qualified teachers in EOTAS and alternative education projects should have parity with their colleagues in mainstream education in terms of access to INSET, CASS support and recognition of service. Arrangements should also be made for unqualified teachers.

Benchmarks

10.11 The Inspectorate should devise indicators of quality for EOTAS provision to establish a base against which judgements can be made and to promote and facilitate self-evaluation.

Child Protection

10.12 There is a need for more rigorous requirements with respect to child protection from applicants for SSPPR funding.

10.13 All types of projects should be monitored effectively in relation to child protection practice and procedures.

Dissemination

10.14 Good practice in EOTAS and SSPPR projects should be disseminated and promoted.

ITE

10.15 Initial teacher education should ensure that those entering the teaching profession have some understanding of EOTAS provision.

11.   Conclusion

11.1   While this report indicates that there is room for improvement in a number of areas, the findings show that there is much good and worthwhile provision for young people, aged 13-17, in EOTAS and SSPPR projects.

11.2   **Marginalised and socially-excluded young people are benefiting in a variety of ways:**

Benefits to Young People

   i.   they are experiencing a second chance in education;

  ii.   they are having interesting experiences in innovative and often imaginative projects;

 iii.   they are acquiring a range of new skills;

 iv.   they are becoming more socially adjusted and involved in their local community; and

  v.   they are often progressing into employment, further education or Jobskills training.

11.3   **The factors which contribute to the success of the projects include:**

Factors Contributing to Success

   i.   the good quality relationships at all levels;

  ii.   the clear value-system of the providers including the acceptance, respect and value accorded to the young people as individuals;

 iii.   the emphasis given to the personal and social development of the young people;

 iv.   the extent to which providers and, on occasions, the young people, devise and implement their own curriculum;

  v.   the existence of small teaching groups and the provision of individual attention;

 vi.   the experience of success by the young people;

 vii.   effective management, leadership and teamwork and the flexible use of time;

viii.   the highly-committed staff and effective inter-agency collaboration and co-operation.

11.4 **The messages and lessons for schools and for the providers include the need:**

i. to have a greater understanding of these young people and the problems with which they have to cope;

ii. to explore further ways of persuading these young people to return to learning;

iii. for a greater respect for, and willingness to listen to, the young people who are alienated and marginalised and who, for various reasons, feel excluded from much, or all, of what schools have to offer;

iv. to share information and resources where this is possible;

v. to review practices and procedures for suspension and expulsion;

vi. for schools to review their preventative measures, including the extent to which they use other statutory and voluntary agencies to help and support their most vulnerable and disruptive young people;

vii. to show a greater willingness to accept pupils/former pupils back to school when they show that they wish to return; and

viii. for more co-operation and collaboration between the schools and the projects.

11.5 **The implications for the main providers include the need for:**

i. access for EOTAS personnel to INSET and staff development, including training in Child Protection;

ii. opportunities for the personnel to meet to share good practice and learn from, and support, one another;

iii. effective monitoring of projects with respect to child protection;

iv. co-ordination of projects within each ELB area and across the ELBs;

v. dissemination of good practice and the creation of indicators of quality to measure success and facilitate self-evaluation;

vi. adequate, secure and longer-term funding for SSPPR projects;

vii. the establishment of appropriate criteria for the admission of young people to projects;

viii.   guidelines to ensure minimum standards of accommodation, particularly in relation to health and safety matters; and

ix.   the development of DE and ELB policies with regard to EOTAS provision and a clarification of obligations and responsibilities.

11.6   Although it is desirable that all young people of compulsory age attend full-time schooling, it seems that, although steps may be taken to reduce this number, there will always be a small but significant number who will not complete compulsory education. The findings of this report demonstrate that it is possible to provide such young people with worthwhile educational experiences which contribute to their personal and social development, and to their reintegration into mainstream provision in the form of further education, Job Skills training or employment. It is important that EOTAS provision is staffed and resourced to ensure high quality provision. It should also be sufficiently flexible to enable those who provide it to respond to, and meet, the needs of young people who are marginalised and socially excluded.

11.7   There is a need to know more about the young people who attend neither school nor EOTAS projects. In particular:

Next Steps?

- *how many are there*

- *who are these young people*

- *where are they?*

It will not be possible to completely address the recommendations identified in this report without being able to readily identify the numbers of disaffected young people and those in danger of becoming excluded. Such work is currently underway within the Department under the aegis of the New Targeting Social Need (NTSN) action plan, which seeks to gauge the full extent of the problem. As part of NTSN targets and actions have been agreed which seek to reduce the problem of pupils identified as persistent non-attenders, pupils with multiple suspensions and pupils expelled from school. Further work is also planned to establish and monitor the educational progress of vulnerable members of society, for example, Travellers, pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and children who are looked after in association with the Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS). By June 2002 the Department will also be implementing a strategy for the support of school age mothers.
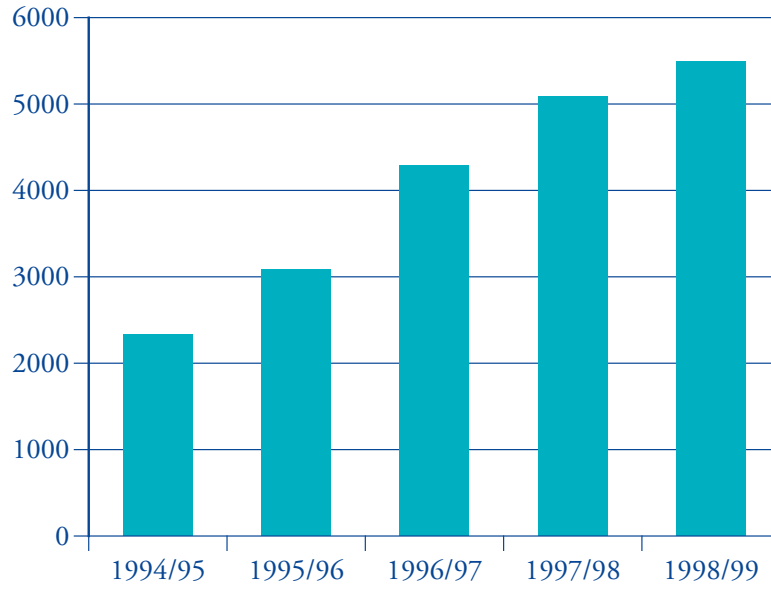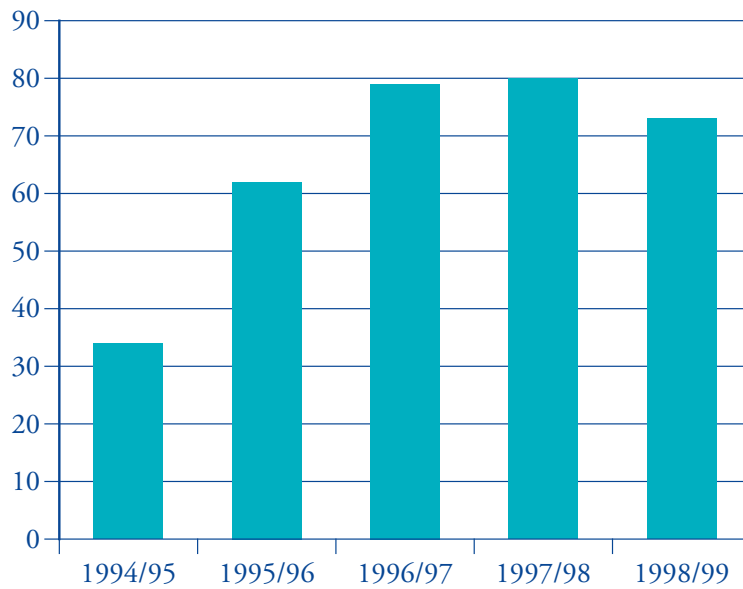
Analysis of Quantitative Data

FIGURE 1

NI Total Suspensions Over Time

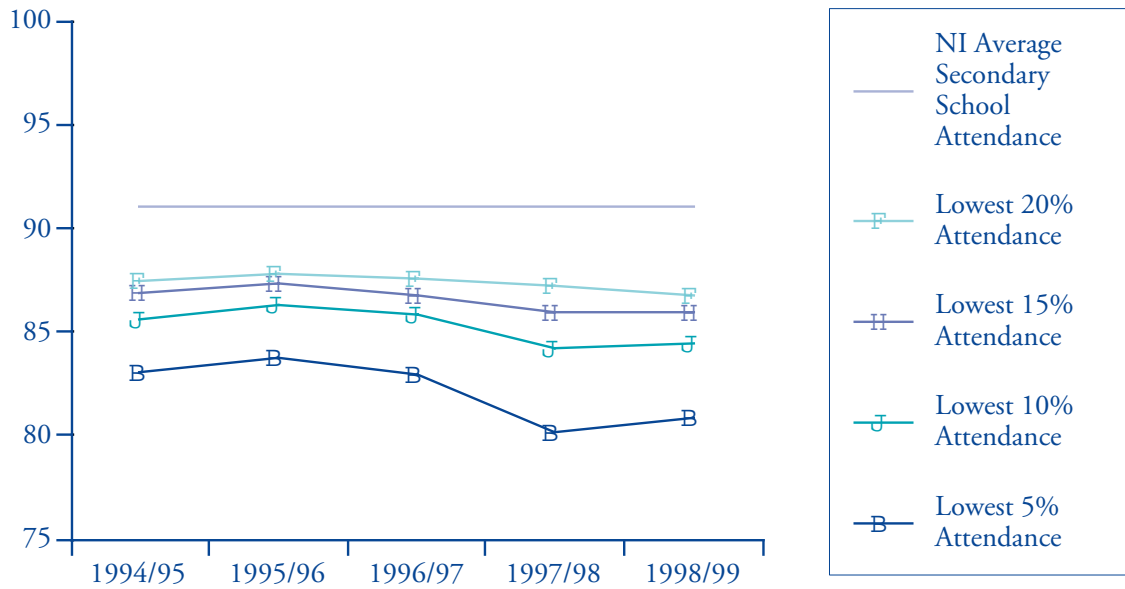*Figures may include pupils suspended more than once.*

FIGURE 2

NI Total Expulsions Over Time

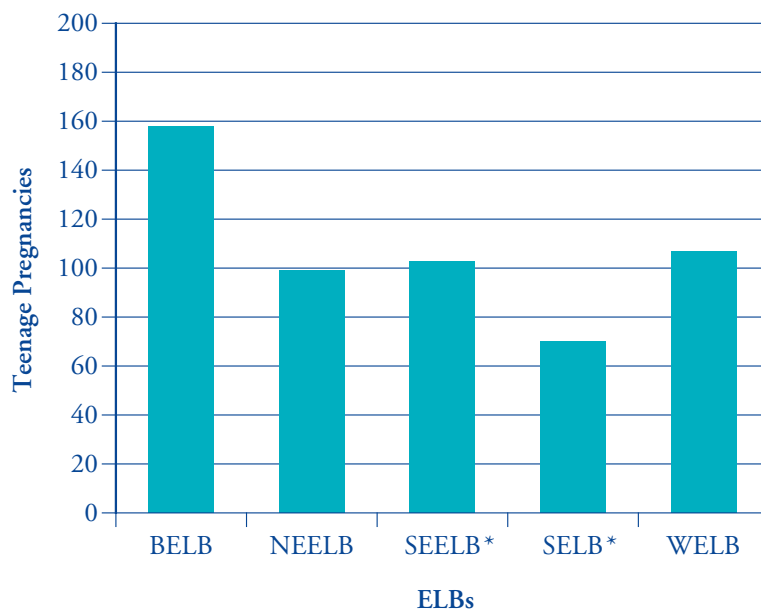*Figures may include expulsions overturned on appeal.*

FIGURE 3

NI Secondary School Average Attendance

NI Average Secondary School Attendance

F — Lowest 20% Attendance

H — Lowest 15% Attendance

J — Lowest 10% Attendance

B — Lowest 5% Attendance

Source: School census survey.

FIGURE 4

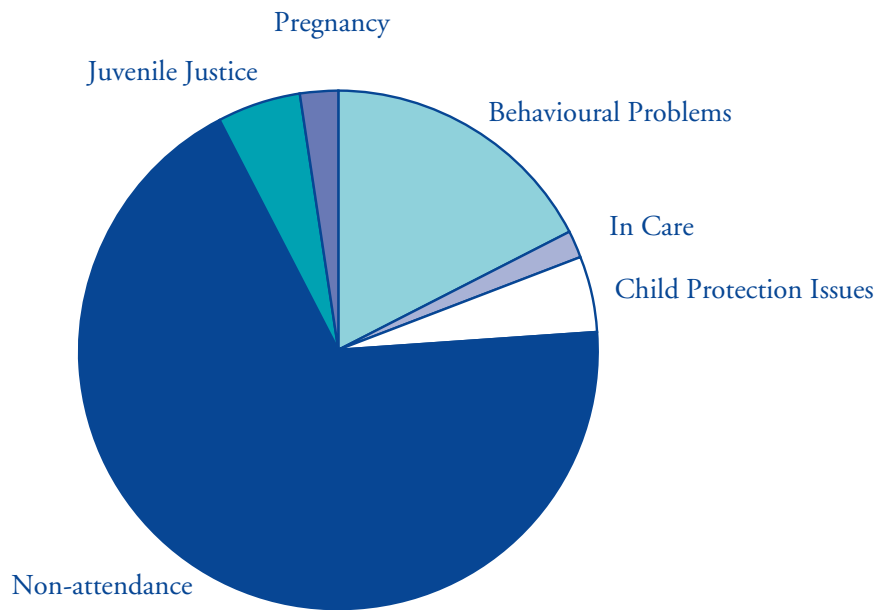**Births to Teenage Mothers Under 18 (1998) analysed by Education and Library Board Area**

Source: Registrar General.

* The figures for the Ward of Down are split between SELB and SEELB.

Figure 5

Education Library Boards EOTAS Key Stage 4 Referrals* (1999/2000)

Pregnancy

Juvenile Justice

Behavioural Problems

In Care

Child Protection Issues

Non-attendance

* *This figure includes the total number of young people who are known to the authorities as experiencing difficulties in attending school. ELBs receive this information from a number of sources including schools, Social Services, Probation Boards etc.*
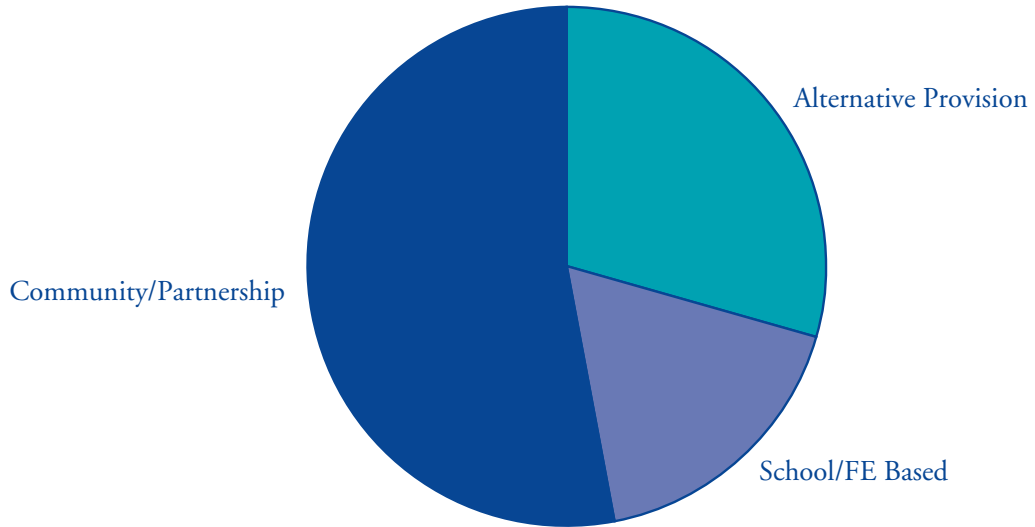
Figure 6

Nature of Project

Alternative Provision

Community/Partnership

School/FE Based

Figure 7

Location of Projects

Number of Projects

8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0

BELB NEELB SEELB SELB WELB Throughout NI

■ Alternative ■ Community/Partnership ■ School/FE

Figure 8

Delivery of Projects - Staffing
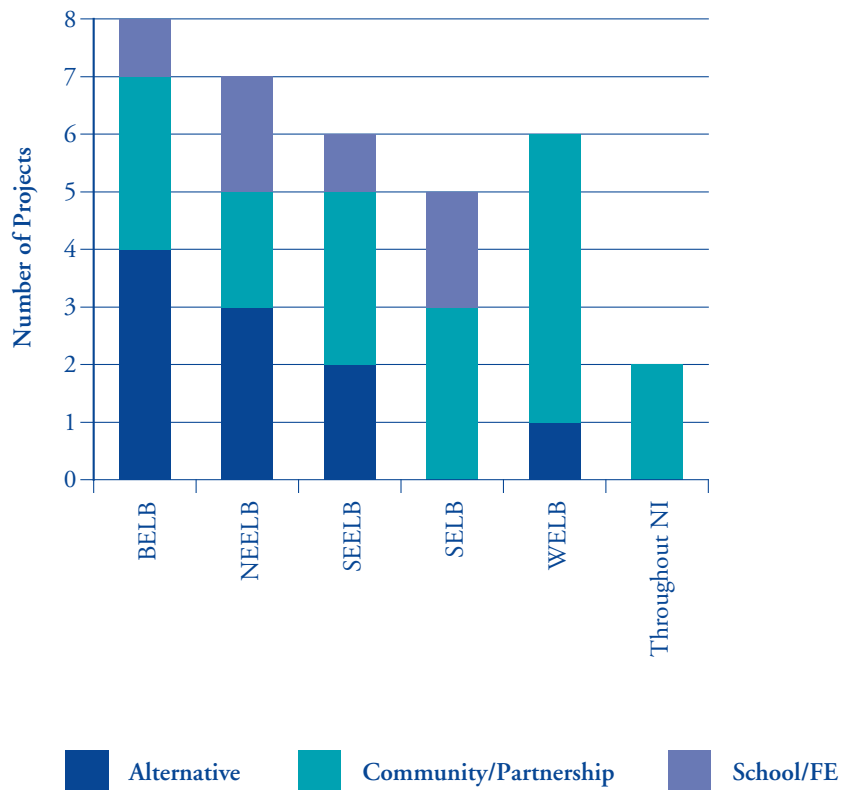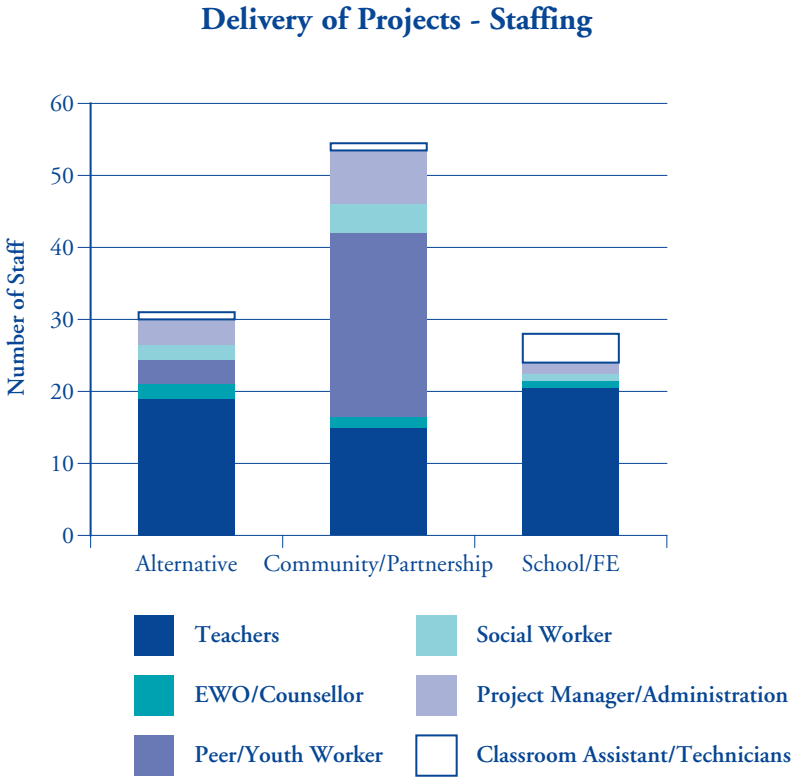

Part-time staff included as 0.5 full time equivalent.
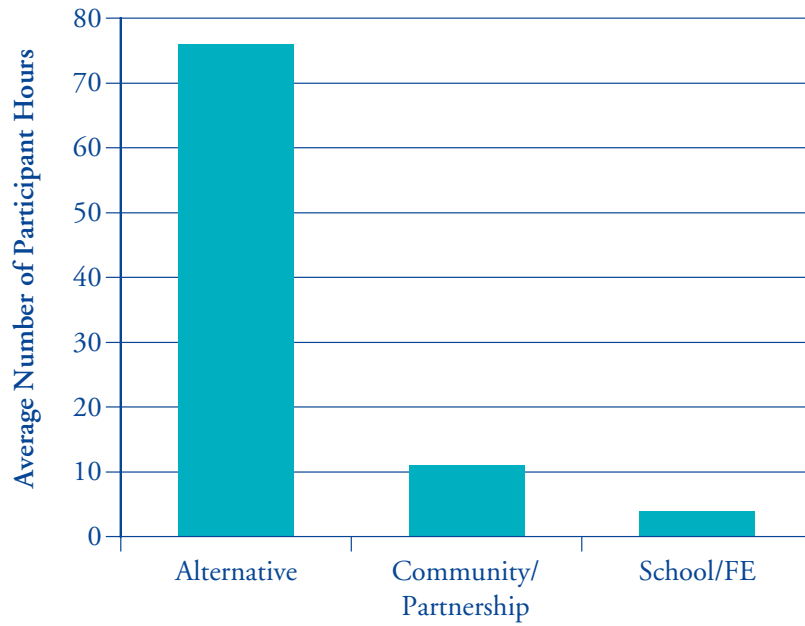
Figure 9

Participants per Project
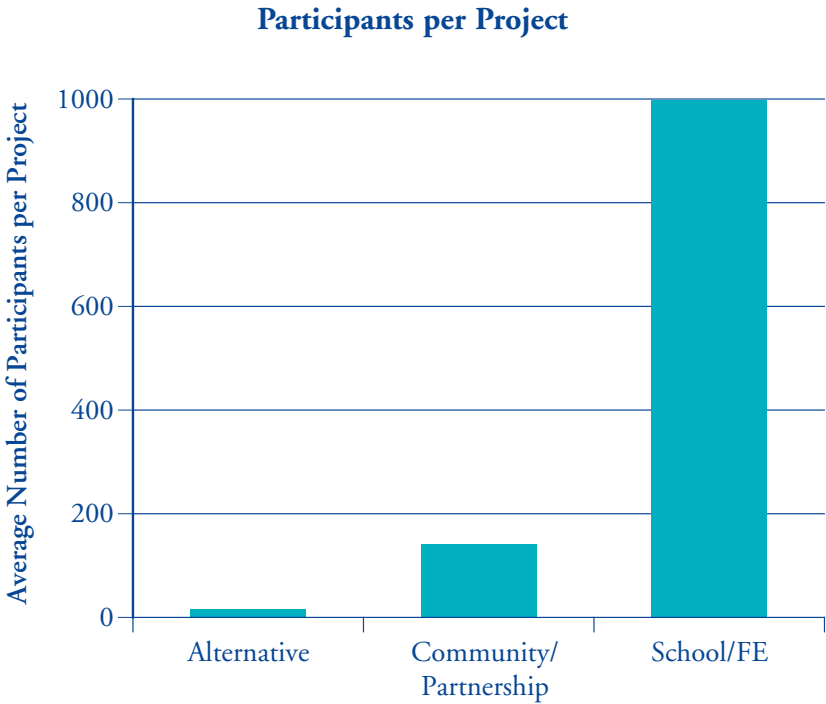
Analysis excludes 4 projects which did not have information on number of participants.

Figure 10

**Average Number of Participant Hours
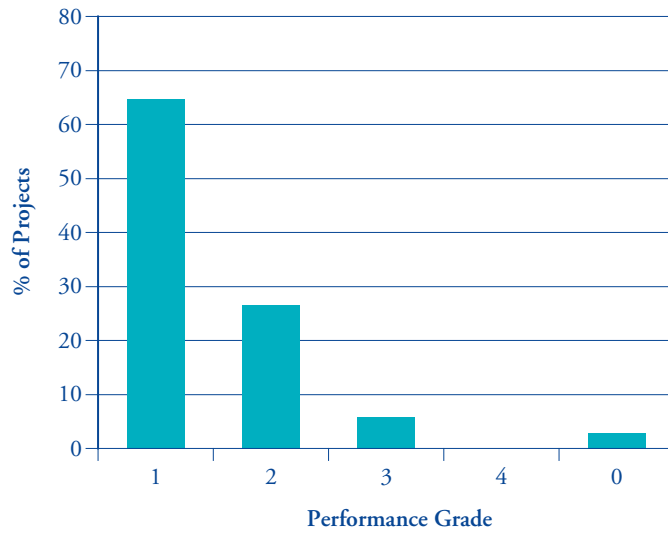(during 4 weeks prior to inspection visit)**

*Estimate of number of hours per participant based on information
on participant numbers, daily duration of programme and attendance rates.*

FIGURE 11

Quality of Ethos

Key to Performance Grading:
1. Significant strengths
2. Strengths outweigh weaknesses
3. Weaknesses outweigh strengths
4. Significant weaknesses
0. Insufficient information

Number of Projects excluded = 0

FIGURE 12

Quality of Experiences

Key to Performance Grading:
1. Significant strengths
2. Strengths outweigh weaknesses
3. Weaknesses outweigh strengths
4. Significant weaknesses
0. Insufficient information

Number of Projects excluded = 1

Figure 13

Outcomes for Participants

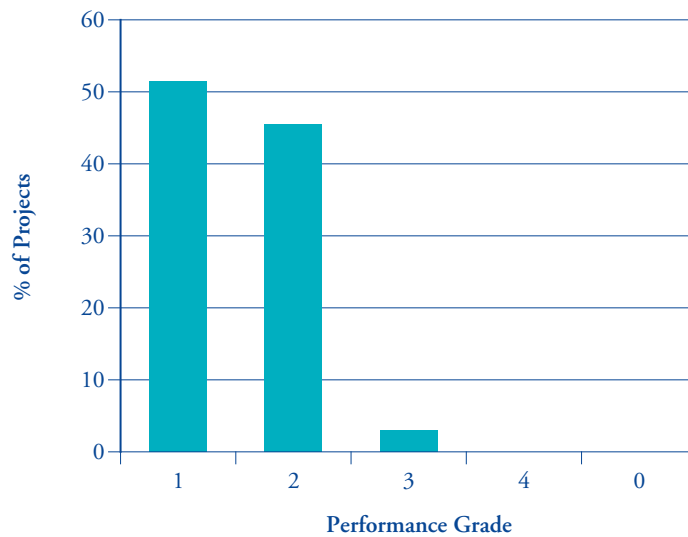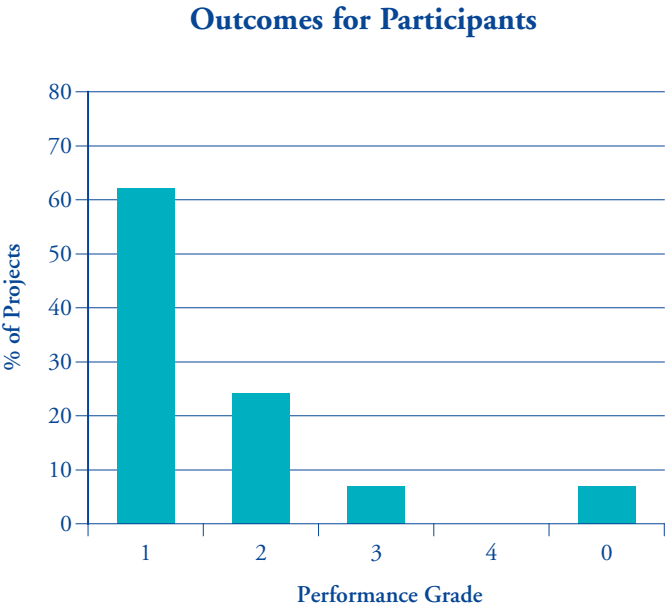**Key to Performance Grading:**
1. Significant strengths   2. Strengths outweigh weaknesses
3. Weaknesses outweigh strengths   4. Significant weaknesses
0. Insufficient information

Number of Projects excluded = 5

Figure 14

Management Arrangements

Key to Performance Grading:
1. Significant strengths   2. Strengths outweigh weaknesses
3. Weaknesses outweigh strengths   4. Significant weaknesses
0. Insufficient information

Number of Projects excluded = 1

Figure 15

Quality of Accommodation

Key to Performance Grading:
1. Significant strengths   2. Strengths outweigh weaknesses
3. Weaknesses outweigh strengths 4. Significant weaknesses
0. Insufficient information

Number of Projects excluded = 0

Figure 16

Quality of Resources

Key to Performance Grading:
1. Significant strengths   2. Strengths outweigh weaknesses
3. Weaknesses outweigh strengths 4. Significant weaknesses
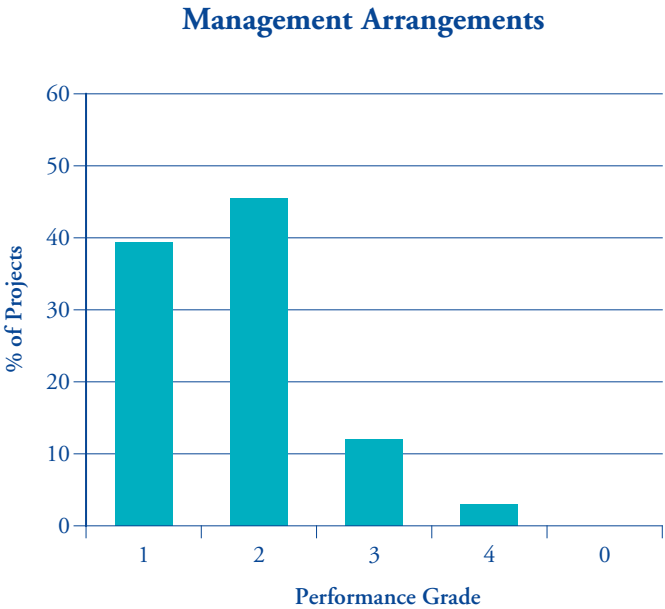0. Insufficient information

Number of Projects excluded = 0

Figure 17

Health and Safety

Key to Performance Grading:
1. Significant strengths
2. Strengths outweigh weaknesses
3. Weaknesses outweigh strengths
4. Significant weaknesses
0. Insufficient information

Number of Projects excluded = 1

Figure 18

Use of Accommodation

Key to Performance Grading:
1. Significant strengths
2. Strengths outweigh weaknesses
3. Weaknesses outweigh strengths
4. Significant weaknesses
0. Insufficient information
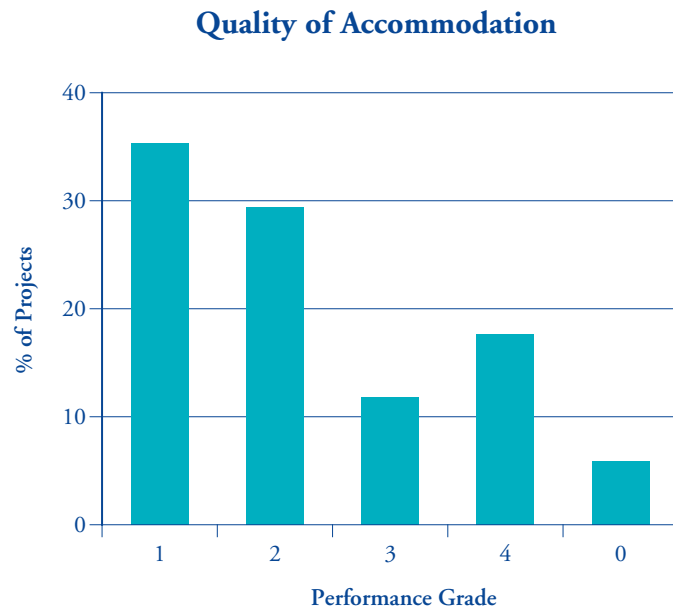
Number of Projects excluded = 1

Figure 19

Use of Resources

Key to Performance Grading:
1. Significant strengths
2. Strengths outweigh weaknesses
3. Weaknesses outweigh strengths
4. Significant weaknesses
0. Insufficient information
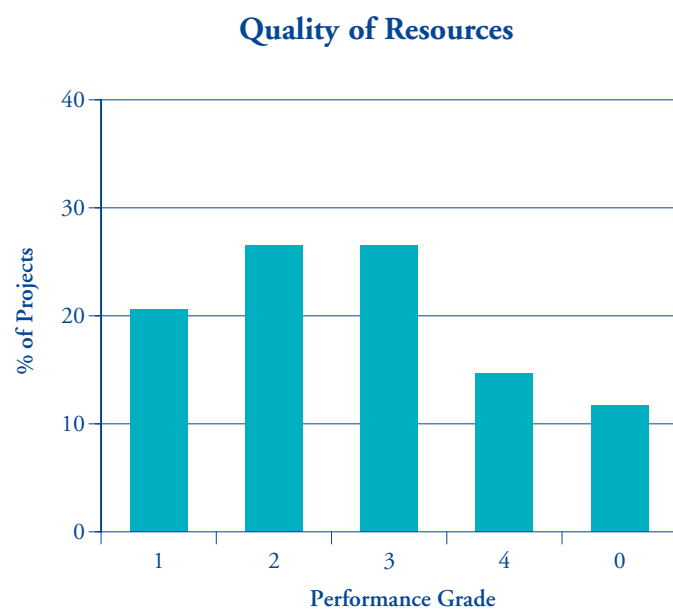
Number of Projects excluded = 0

Figure 20

Outcomes of the Project

Key to Performance Grading:
1. Significant strengths
2. Strengths outweigh weaknesses
3. Weaknesses outweigh strengths
4. Significant weaknesses
0. Insufficient information

Number of Projects excluded = 1
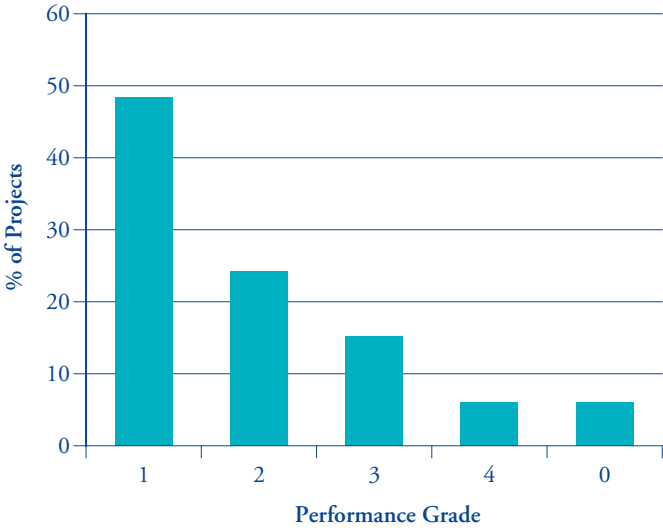
Figure 21

Cross Community Provision

Key to Performance Grading:
1. Significant strengths
2. Strengths outweigh weaknesses
3. Weaknesses outweigh strengths
4. Significant weaknesses
0. Insufficient information

Number of Projects excluded = 3

Figure 22

Learning

Key to Performance Grading:
1. Significant strengths
2. Strengths outweigh weaknesses
3. Weaknesses outweigh strengths
4. Significant weaknesses
0. Insufficient information

Number of Projects excluded = 1
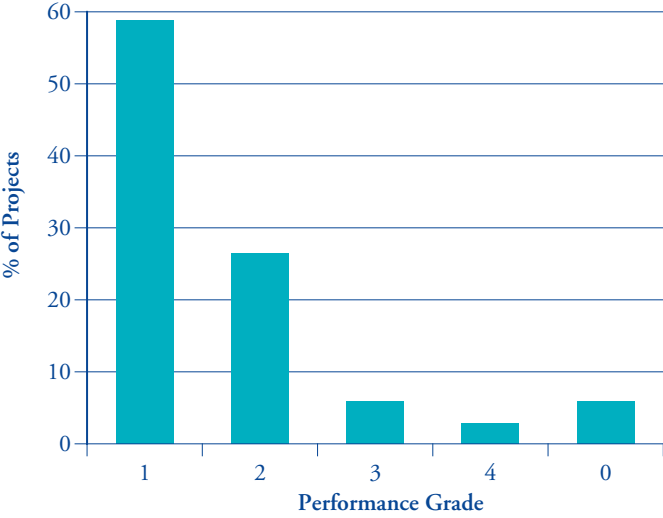
Figure 23

Achievement of Social Inclusion

Key to Performance Grading:
1. Significant strengths
2. Strengths outweigh weaknesses
3. Weaknesses outweigh strengths
4. Significant weaknesses
0. Insufficient information

Number of Projects excluded = 0

Figure 24
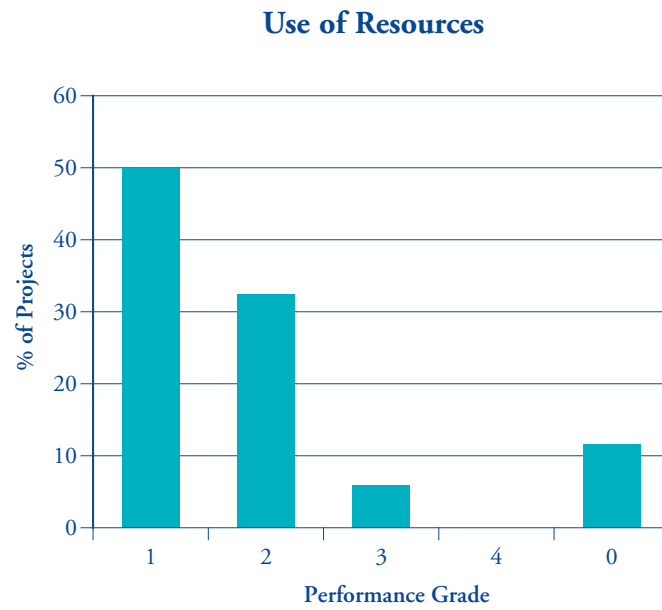
Progress Towards Achievement of Social Inclusion

Key to Performance Grading:
1. Significant strengths
2. Strengths outweigh weaknesses
3. Weaknesses outweigh strengths
4. Significant weaknesses
0. Insufficient information

Number of Projects excluded = 4

Figure 25

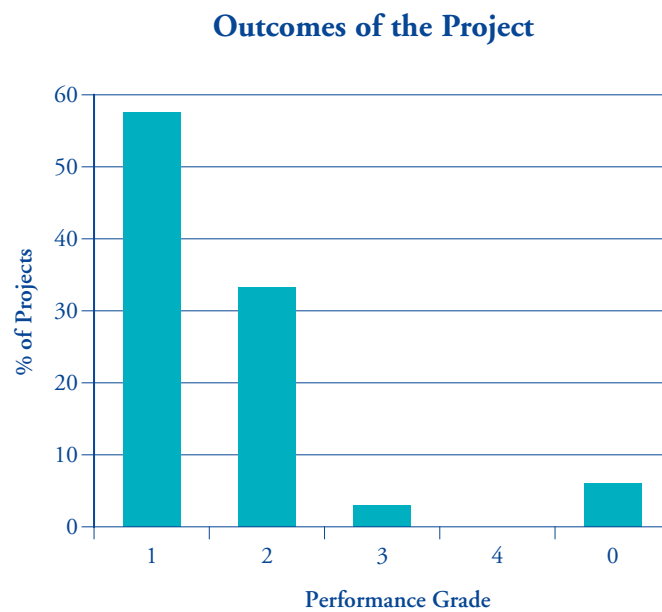## Contribution to Improved Community Relations
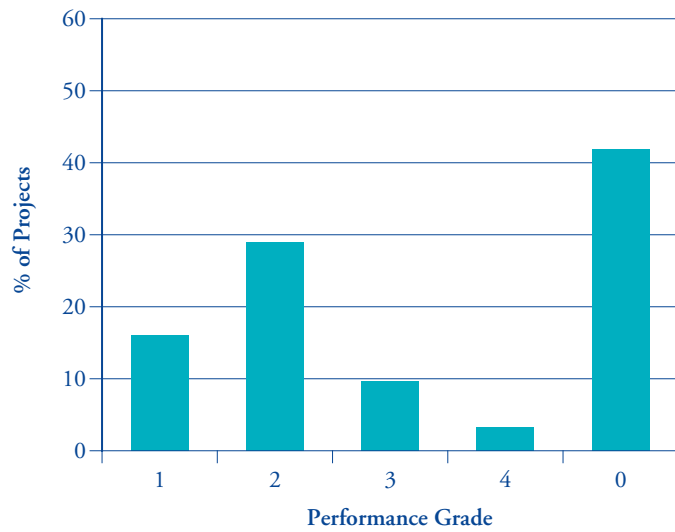
Key to Performance Grading:
1. Significant strengths   2. Strengths outweigh weaknesses
3. Weaknesses outweigh strengths   4. Significant weaknesses
0. Insufficient information

Number of Projects excluded = 3

Figure 26

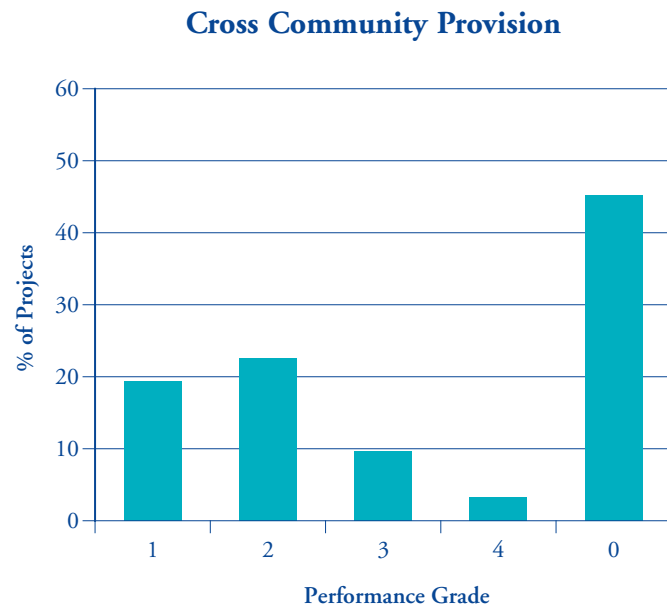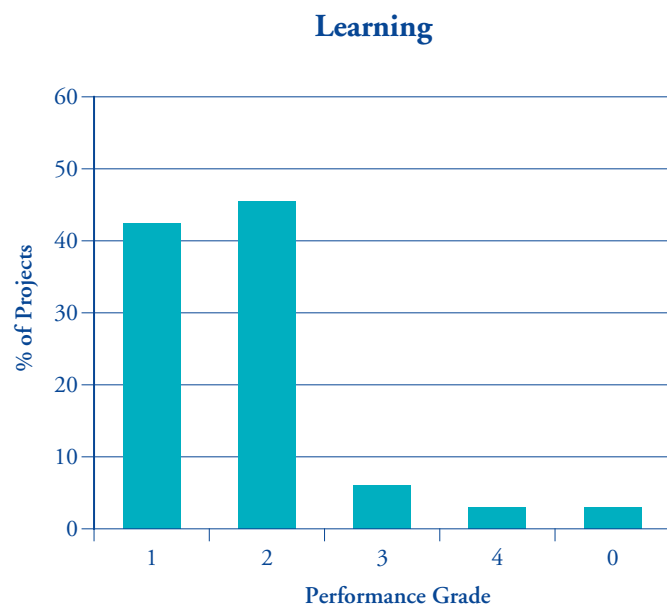## Involvement of Marginalised Young People
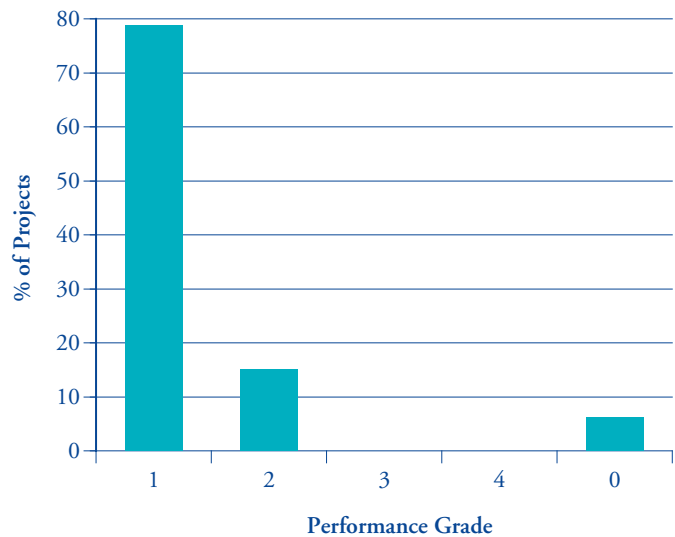
Key to Performance Grading:
1. Significant strengths   2. Strengths outweigh weaknesses
3. Weaknesses outweigh strengths   4. Significant weaknesses
0. Insufficient information

Number of Projects excluded = 1

16

FIGURE 27

Average Cost per Category*
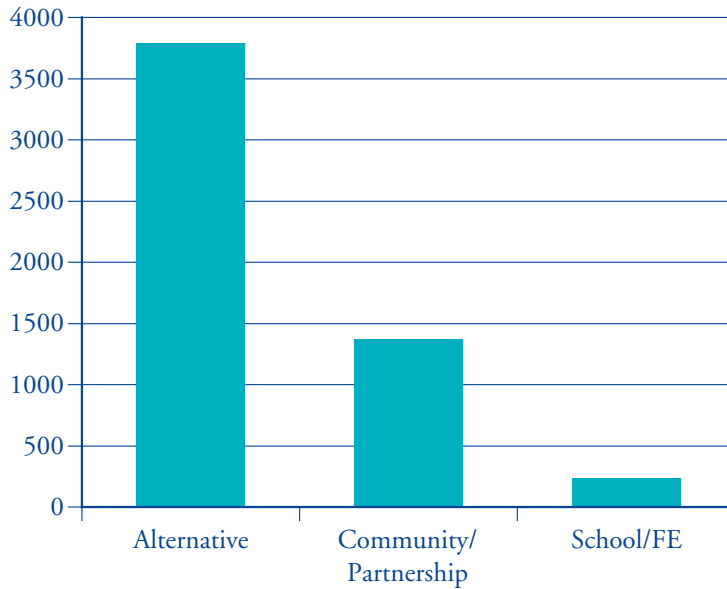
* *Adjusted to reflect opportunity cost basis. Figures relate to 1999 prices.*
  Analysis excludes 12 projects where participation is on an irregular basis
  as these would unfairly skew the results, and projects with insufficient information.

FIGURE 28
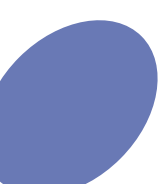
**Juvenile Criminal Business
(cases dealt with - illustrated by Education and Library Board)**
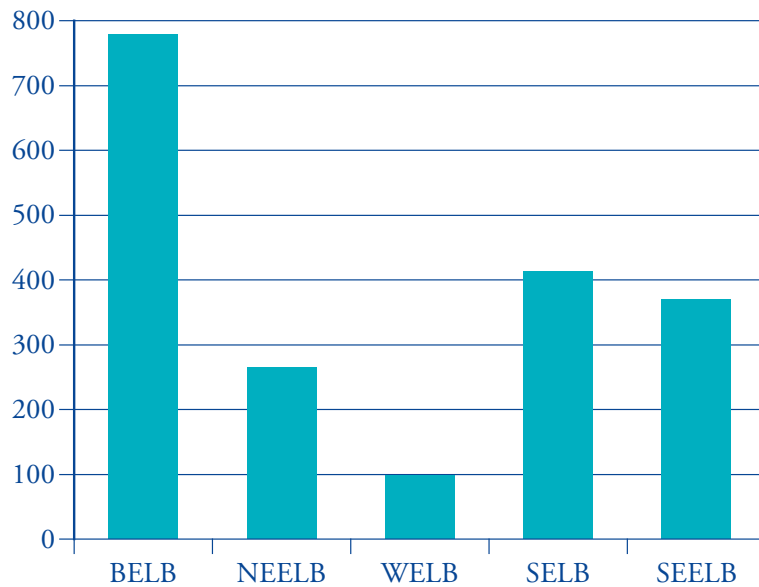
Source: Northern Ireland Office.

CASE STUDIES

School Age Mothers' (SAM) Project, Coleraine

1.   **Background**

1.1   The School Age Mothers' (SAM) project developed in response to the needs of young women in the Coleraine area who were pregnant or who had a child while they were of compulsory school age. It involves collaboration between Barnardo's, the North-Eastern Education and Library Board (NEELB), Causeway Health and Social Services Trust, and Ballysally Youth and Community Centre. There is growing concern among these agencies about the needs of school-age mothers and, in particular, about the pattern of young women not completing their education following the birth of their baby. The project was introduced as a pilot in March 1999.

1.2   The project was influenced by research which shows that:

- births to young women under 15 years of age are increasing;

- one-third of young mothers leave school around the time they give birth;

- half of all young women who are pregnant whilst of compulsory school age, do not receive home tuition, and two-thirds of young mothers believe they miss out on opportunities to sit examinations because of their pregnancy/motherhood;

- younger women have a very low up-take rate of ante-natal services;

- young people have difficulty in accessing appropriate and accurate information to do with a range of issues including contraception, health services and ante-natal services;

- young mothers experience social isolation, particularly when they are housed in areas where they do not have access to family and peer support.

1.3   The rationale for the programme is that young women who become pregnant whilst still in school have a range of needs which need to be met. As well as all the issues which their peers who are not parents face, they have a particularly complex set of needs. These include, changing roles and relationships within their family, deciding and negotiating their continued education, and accessing ante-natal care

and support. They try to meet these needs in the midst of receiving conflicting messages: on the one hand, they are expected to make responsible and informed decisions while, on the other hand, they may feel and be told they are immature and irresponsible for becoming parents at such an early age. Education is a very important issue, but it is still only one issue with which a young mother must contend. The SAM project is designed to address these issues in an overall way.

2.   Provision

2.1   The ten-week project took place for three hours on four days each week and ended with the young women sitting public examinations. It included 30 minutes to have lunch and settle the babies into the crèche. Lunch was followed by $1^1/2$ hours of structured school work, based on individual work plans, facilitated by two tutors. The final hour of each day focused on personal development, support and parenting issues. A health visitor provided an input on child health and development, and a community midwife facilitated the ante-natal aspect of the programme.

2.2   Transport was provided to ensure that all young women were able to access the programme. Lunches were also provided daily, and child care was provided on site for those young mothers who wished to bring their babies with them. This facility was particularly important as the lack of child care is identified as being one of the key factors which prevent young mothers from continuing their formal education.

3.   Outcomes

<u>Young Mothers</u>

- feel confident and comfortable to approach health professionals including the community mid-wife and access ante-natal care;

- recognise and value the positive experience of education;

- successfully complete public examinations;

- experience enhanced self-esteem through the range of external accreditation;

- are motivated to continue their education with a view to securing employment; and

- feel 'included' in their families and community.

<u>Staff</u>

- are sensitive to the individual needs of the young mothers attending the project;

- create a welcoming and 'child friendly' environment;

- collaborate with other agencies to provide the necessary services for young mothers;

- are clearly accountable for their specific delivery and support for young mothers;

- establish good relationships with the families involved;

- draw up individual learning plans with the co-operation of specific schools to support young mothers to continue their education; and

- provide clear vision and leadership.

<u>Parents and Community</u>

- value the provision which addresses 'social inclusion';

- are more aware of the opportunities for young mothers to continue their education and make a valuable contribution to their local community;

- have improved relationships within families; and

- have access to useful information and support.

GAP Project

1. **Background**

1.1 The GAP project is based in Newtownabbey and caters for young people from the Newtownabbey and Carrickfergus areas. The course participants are drawn specifically from areas of significant socio-economic deprivation, high unemployment, low income and family breakdown. Many live in large, segregated public housing estates which bear the ravages of thirty years of civil unrest. These disruptive influences and environment have contributed to the breakdown in the young people's education.

1.2 The project caters for a total of eleven young people, aged 15, whose formal education has broken down irretrievably. Each young person has his/her particular needs; these needs are identified through multi-disciplinary liaison with the Education Welfare Service, Social Services, health care professionals and agencies within the Criminal Justice System.

1.3 The project aims to address issues including non-attendance, school refusal, disruptive and aggressive behaviour, demotivation, social isolation and poor self-esteem of the young people. The wide diversity in motivation, maturity and ability among the group members is a real challenge to the staff.

1.4 The Social Services are involved since the young people have experienced family breakdown or come through the care system; accordingly, their status as children in need or children "at risk" is defined by the Children (NI) Order 1995.

2. **Provision**

2.1 Following a selection procedure involving the young people, parents/guardians and the Education and Library board staff, participants are required to fulfil the following criteria:

- to demonstrate a willingness to be involved;

- to be able to respond to the different strategies used in the programme;

- not to be so maladaptive as to pose a threat to the development of others on the programme; and

- to have parental/guardian consent and commitment towards their participation in the programme.

2.2   The project provides a personal and social development programme one day per week in an informal youth work setting and focuses on issues of self-esteem, group cohesion and individual support. Staff work in close partnership with young people, actively involving them in determining their needs and providing opportunities to increase confidence, exercise choice and develop a sense of personal responsibility.

2.3   Key features of the programme include group work, team building, creative activities, personal assessment, sports and recreation and cultural experiences. From this foundation the young people engage in other aspects of the programme.

2.4   Work experience is undertaken two days per week with local employers in the student's vocational area of interest and is complemented by a careers education programme with input from the Training and Employment Agency. The work experience provides the young people with insight into the realities, responsibilities and relationships within the world of work and supports the development of their work, social and personal skills.

2.5   Young people attend the local Institute of Further and Higher Education on two days a week and undertake a basic programme of mathematics, English, information technology, sports studies and home economics.

3.   **Outcomes for the 1999/2000 Cohort**

- eight out of eleven students completed the project: three were required to leave because of their persistent, serious, dysfunctional behaviour;

- five out of eight students achieved 80% or more attendance, two of the five achieved 90%;

- all students demonstrated improved attendance as compared with their previous record;

- seven students recorded achievements in

    - AEB Literacy (Levels 1-3);
    - AEB Numeracy (Levels 1-3);

- three students completed CLAIT I; and

- one student completed IBT II.

The majority of the students have gained in self-confidence, sense of purpose and the ability to relate positively to other people. This view is endorsed by staff, parents and the young people themselves.

The development of close partnerships, ongoing contacts and regular formal reviews greatly encourages increased parental involvement in the education of their children. This parental interest is important to the success of the Project.

Other factors which have contributed to the success of the project include:

- imaginative and effective leadership;

- experienced staff committed to the welfare of the young people;

- thorough planning, involving close liaison with participating agencies;

- a multi-disciplinary involvement in the implementation of the project;

- clear programme objectives and selection procedures;

- a programme designed to meet the personal, educational and vocational needs of the young people;

- the achievements gained by the participants;

- the involvement of parents/guardians and the wider community.

STS World of Work
Shantallow Training Services Ltd
Schools Training Scheme

1.	**Background**

1.1 Shantallow Training Services (STS) Ltd was established in 1982 primarily to provide training to bridge the gap for school leavers to adult working life. It has operated since 1991 with funding from the Training and Employment Agency for vocational training under the Youth Training Programme (YTP), the Jobskills training programme and, more recently, the New Deal training programmes. As a training provider under the YTP programme, STS had good links with a number of the local secondary schools. While these links were forged to provide a smooth transfer for school leavers to a training programme, the STS workshops also provided work-experience placements for many pupils who had difficulty finding employers for their period of work sampling.

1.2 Situated in the north of the city of Londonderry, STS serves a number of Council wards that have experienced much deprivation. High levels of unemployment, much of it long-term, high benefit-dependency and rising crime rates are features that the heavily-populated communities of Shantallow and Carnhill struggle to overcome.

1.3 In 1996, STS was approached by the principal of a local secondary school which had an increasing problem with disaffected pupils who were proving difficult to teach and were causing disciplinary problems in class. Following a meeting with a group of secondary principals and other education professionals working in the Londonderry area, it was recognised that, in most schools, there was a small number of year 11 and year 12 pupils who were quite capable of achieving GCSE qualifications but who had made clear their dislike of the requirements and discipline of school. The problems with many of these pupils were so serious that they already had been, or likely would be suspended or expelled from school. In consultation with the school principals, and with assistance of staff from the WELB Education Guidance Unit in Londonderry, STS devised a plan for an alternative educational experience for year 12 pupils outside formal schooling.

2. **Provision**

2.1 The scheme has the following aims:

- to provide an opportunity for nominated and selected pupils to continue to work for GCSE qualifications in English and mathematics, or for other qualifications as deemed appropriate in these and other subjects; and

- to provide experiences designed to prepare pupils for the world of work through personal development training, practical and vocational skills training and limited periods of closely-supervised and regularly-monitored work experience.

2.2 In addition to the English and mathematics (literacy and numeracy) curriculum, all of the participants have opportunities to engage in health and drugs education, arts and crafts and to participate in leisure and recreational activities. Participants are transported daily from their schools to a base in the STS centre, where they engage in formal classes for between two to four days each week, 9.30 am to 3.30 pm; vocational training and work experience make up the balance of each week. The model varies according to individual needs and circumstances and is determined after an extended individual assessment process involving teachers from the host school, parents/guardians, staff from STS and the pupils themselves. Realistic target qualifications are identified and all pupils are required to sign an agreement regarding their attendance, behaviour and application to their negotiated work programme. Repeated failure to comply with this agreement may result in the participating school being asked to take back the pupil to formal schooling.

3. **Outcomes**

3.1 The outcomes of the project include:

- in the four years since the initiative started, the level of attendance has been good: for a core group of pupils with a school attendance often well below 50% for the previous year, average attendance levels have ranged between 70% and 90%; an increasing number of pupils achieve 100% attendance on the project. However, the scheme has not been successful with all recruits. Each year, around one-fifth of the new starts are, for a variety of reasons, unable to sustain their commitment and are referred back to their host school;

- achievements in examinations have improved year-by-year; about half of the pupils who have been retained on the programme have gained GCSE grades C to G in both English

and mathematics; a small number of pupils have gained a GCSE in a third subject, for example, art. Almost all of the remainder have achieved pass or higher grades in other accredited English and mathematics examinations; and

•   the majority of the pupils have been assessed as competent in various elements of units of level 1 National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs). For the last three years, more than 90% of those who completed the programme progressed to the Jobskills training. About half of the participants went straight in to work placements with the same employer, or with their previous employer's highest recommendation, such were the good personal qualities and general work skills demonstrated by these young people in the workplace.

3.2   The encouraging outcomes include a much greater social inclusion of marginalised young people in their local community. Parents are very appreciative and supportive of the project; many express their relief and satisfaction that their children are re-engaged in a secure learning environment. Teaching staff and senior management from the feeder schools report their recognition of the turn around in the attitude and behaviour of many of the pupils and take pleasure in their success in examinations.
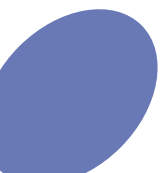
The Lagan Valley Education Project (LVEP)

1.   **Background**

1.1   The LVEP was established in 1995 by members of the local community who were concerned at the number of young people of compulsory school age in the greater West Belfast area who were not attending school. The community set up the project with a view to providing an education programme, particularly for young people aged 15-16 years who were excluded from mainstream education. The aim of the project is to provide the best possible education for these young people within the constraints of limited resources and accommodation. On average, 18 young people are involved at any one time. The project was originally based in a one-roomed flat; as the numbers increased, it moved to a two-roomed flat. It is now based in a modern building, which was purpose-built as a residential centre for adults with special needs, and has room for up to 30 students. Funding for the project is provided by Making Belfast Work, the National Lottery, various charities and a number of other voluntary groups. LVEP has established close links with the Education and Welfare Service of the Belfast and South-Eastern Education and Library Boards, Social Services and a range of other statutory agencies.

1.2   The staff see the following as distinctive features of their work:

- they value young people as individuals, regardless of their previous histories;

- they believe that all young people have something to offer;

- they try to offer young people a second chance at education;

- they try to equip young people with the confidence and skills to analyse, rationalise and take decisions which affect their future; and

- they try to build the young people's self-esteem, hope and skills to make them better able to fulfil their goals in the future.

2. **Provision**

2.1 <u>Referral and Entrance Process</u>

The management group and the staff have in place an effective reference and entrance process. Before a student is enrolled in the Project:

- direct contact is made with LVEP by a statutory agency or by the parents of the student;

- information is obtained from the referral agency, the school and, where possible, the parents/guardian confirming that the student has not been attending school, or has no school placement;

- a meeting takes place involving the student, the parents/guardian, the statutory personnel and LVEP to clarify matters and to ensure that the student is clear as to what is expected of him/her in terms of, for example, attendance, behaviour and application to work. At this meeting, a formal request is made to enrol the student; and

- if agreement is reached, the student is given a three-month temporary placement. It is made clear at this stage that, for the student to be enrolled, he/she must want to attend the project.

During the initial three-month placement, a diagnostic assessment is made of the student's learning skills, an individual programme is prepared and his/her progress is monitored carefully. This procedure ensures that students do not opt for the Project as an easy option, and that only those who fit the criteria for selection are enrolled.

2.2 <u>The Curriculum</u>

The staff adopt a student-centred approach to teaching, reflecting the wishes, the interests and the abilities of the students. Project personnel recognise the importance of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) and these subjects are compulsory for all students. Those students completing their schooling in the project have opportunities to take externally-accredited courses in these, and occasionally, other subjects. In addition, there are courses in art, history and basic Irish and Spanish, careers guidance and personal and social education (PSE). The personal development of the students is an important element of the curriculum. Occasional educational visits, residential activities and visitors to the project to talk to the students, are also included in the curriculum. The limitations of the curriculum are recognised by the project staff and

reflect the lack of personnel, financial and material resources. The staff implement the curriculum in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere and in the context of mutual trust and respect; they are very aware of the students' previous failure in education, consequently they work hard to encourage them and to promote success. The students respond positively and are well behaved.

2.3 Management

The project leader is a member of the local community who has post-graduate qualifications and is well-experienced in further education. He is supported by two part-time professional workers and a voluntary worker. This group have a clear understanding of what they are doing and a clear vision for the future development of the project. They are highly committed to the aims of the project, to the young people and to the community they serve; they want their students, all of whom are marginalised and socially deprived, to become more effective as individuals and to achieve as best they can. Many improvements in the quality of the provision have been made since the project began five years ago. For example, the curriculum provided is now considerably broader and the accommodation has been improved considerably. However, the lack of access of the project staff to Education and Library Board (ELB) programmes of staff development and in-service training (INSET) results in their professional isolation and a lowering of morale. The management group is representative of the local community, the Education and Welfare Service, students and parents. Much of the success of the project is due to the significant involvement of, and support from, the local community. In addition, the students are well known to the project staff who have a good understanding of the personal and social problems confronting them.

3. Outcomes

The project staff have high expectations of the students; they work hard to ensure the best possible outcomes for the young people. The young people themselves talk readily about how this approach has helped them. Outcomes include:

- a second chance for learning for the young people;

- a sense of satisfaction among staff and students with the progress and achievements of the young people;

- an annual average attendance of at least 70%;

- a relaxed, yet challenging and demanding, learning context;

- the good behaviour of most of the young people;

- the young people's increased self-confidence and improved attitudes to learning;

- stable relationships between the young people and the adults attending the centre;

- the respect with which the young people are treated by the staff;

- success in external examinations such as GCSE, NVQ, RSA, CLAIT and the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL): the majority of the young people have been assessed as competent in various elements of NVQ level 1 units;

- year-by-year improvement in examination achievement: about 50% of the young people retained in the project have gained grades C-G in GCSE;

- the good quality of the help and support they receive enables the young people to cope better with their personal problems;

- progress for the majority of the young people from school to employment, Jobskills training or further education due in large measure, to what they have achieved and their improved attitudes to learning;

- successful work placements for the majority of young people which often lead to employment; and

- increased social inclusion of marginalised young people in their local community.

Members of the local community report benefits from the project in that some of the young people are increasingly community conscious. The parents report their satisfaction that their children are being educated in a safe and secure place by adults who care, are causing them less concern, and some are leaving with examination success.

The following factors have contributed much to the success of this project:

- a clear identification of the target group of young people;

- visionary leadership and clear aims;

- the good quality of the ethos in which LVEP operates;

- the high level of commitment of the staff and teamwork;

- the high expectations of the staff for the students;

- the knowledge which the staff have of the young people and the local community;

- the acceptance by the staff of the young people, regardless of their previous educational experiences;

- the preparation of programmes designed to meet the individual needs of the students;

- personal and educational support provided for the students;

- the success experienced by the students; and

- the involvement of the parents and community at all stages.

The project and consequently, the staff and students, would benefit from more secure funding and increased access to ELB staff development and INSET.
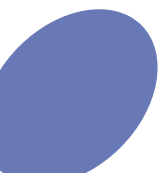
Towers Project - Newtownards/Bangor

1.   Background

1.1   The Towers project which began in 1994 provides a range of programmes for young people aged between 10-17 years who live in the North Down and Ards area, and are deemed to be in need, or at risk. The initial vision for the project came from the Whitefield organisation, a part of the Juvenile Justice services; subsequently a partnership was developed with the South-Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) and Health and Social Services Trust representatives.

1.2   Most of the young people who attend have long-standing social and educational needs, and in many cases have either failed to engage with help previously offered, or have exhausted the existing statutory provision. During the year April 1999-March 2000, 70% of the young people participating were in the court system or known to the police.

1.3   A team of teachers, social workers and an educational welfare officer, provide individual and family counselling services, individual and group activities such as art and craft, sports, special interest and discussion groups, and formal education which includes English, ICT, mathematics, science and technology and design.

1.4   In Newtownards the project operates in the old YMCA building, and in Bangor it occupies a small suite of offices above a shop.

2.   Provision

2.1   When a referral request is accepted, a meeting is held within five working days involving the referrer, the young person and at least one parent. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss what action might be undertaken, how this is to be carried out and how it fits alongside what is already being provided. Attendance at the project is voluntary, so it is critical that the young person and his/her family representative(s) can air their views and agree with the goals and the work set.

2.2   Most referrals fall into one of two groups. In the first instance, where young people are attending school reasonably well, every effort is made to support and sustain this, with the bulk of the project programme being undertaken after school hours. Conversely, where the young

people are out of the normal school system, the agreement for work is likely to include educational activities during the day: where possible, these young people are encouraged to enter for externally-accredited examinations. In both situations, an essential part of the work is to tailor the programme specifically for that young person, taking account of his/her interests, abilities and ambitions. Flexible approaches are often used to build confidence and establish a working relationship without which little progress is possible.

2.3   Staff provide a range of activities for each young person on a given day: for example, a work session in the classroom, followed by a social activity, followed by a session which might look at offending behaviour, or how the young person is managing at home or in school.

2.4   With younger children, exploring and discussing difficult issues may arise from activities such as model making, artwork, baking or the drawing page and felt-tip pens. During July and August, the focus of the work shifts more to recreational activities for those young people most likely to need a positive channel for their time and energy during the summer holidays.

2.5   Alongside this provision for young people, a parents' group is facilitated by the social workers to give parents/carers an opportunity to discuss issues which they consider important, and to draw upon one another for advice and encouragement.

2.6   Since 1994, some 230 young people have attended the project, with a normal weekly attendance of around 30. In some cases, programmes have been relatively short term (3-6 months), with a very specific work focus. In others, the support has been more general and has spanned several years, with revised goals as circumstances changed, or original targets were achieved. The high standard of pastoral care has led to a discernible improvement in self-esteem and confidence. Most noticeable is the improved relationships with, and towards adults.

3.   **Outcomes**

Almost all the young people who took part in the excellent education programme accepted the "bridge" provided, and eventually moved to other educational/training provision, or completed their formal education at the Towers.

At referral stage all of the young people exhibited, to different degrees, some behavioural difficulties. Successfully raising the young people's self-esteem and re-integrating them is of considerable benefit to the local community.

The features and procedures which reflect the success of this project include:

• visionary leadership and experienced, adaptable and highly committed staff team;

• clear and shared objectives for the multi-agency approach which is integral to the initiative. The facility to draw upon the skills from different disciplines to produce an all-round educational experience;

• high expectations by the staff and an emphasis on learning;

• regular monitoring of the young people's progress, and feedback to inform decision-making;

• good range of resources which are tailored to meet the individual needs of each young person;

• the achievements gained by the young people;

• the professional satisfaction acquired by the staff; and

• the support, encouragement and practical help available to parents/carers.
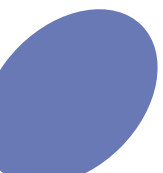
Introduction

The preceding case studies have focused on provision for young people aged 14-16 years who, for various reasons, are being educated at a place other than school. It is important, however, that schools themselves or partnerships which involve schools, external support agencies and the local community take preventative action with a view to keeping to a minimum the number of school-aged young people who do not attend school.

The following case studies illustrate the preventative measures being taken in two SSPPR-funded projects: one is a partnership project which involves a voluntary body working effectively with local primary schools and communities in a number of centres in Belfast, and the other is based in a secondary school in Newry. Both projects value the involvement of parents and other caring adults in providing support for children/young people who are at risk of becoming marginalised and socially excluded. The projects put in considerable effort to keep young people in the mainstream education system so that they can benefit in terms of both education and personal and social development.
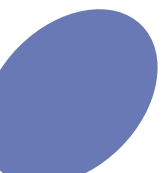
St Joseph's Boys' High School, Newry

1. **Background**

1.1 St Joseph's Boys' High School is a non-selective 11-16 secondary school with an enrolment of approximately 400 pupils. The school is situated on the edge of a housing estate in a predominantly residential area on the main road from Armagh into Newry. The pupils are drawn from three main feeder primary schools and a number of smaller primary schools, some of which are located in rural areas. Many of the pupils come from highly-disadvantaged family and community backgrounds. The area is one of long-term, high unemployment and has been characterised by vandalism, petty crime, and both alcohol and drug abuse.

1.2 For a number of years, the school has had to deal with issues such as a declining enrolment with consequent implications for staffing and curriculum provision. In recent years, however, the intake numbers have almost doubled to its present intake of 90. This increase has attracted additional funding, enabled the school to appoint additional staff and strengthen curriculum provision.

1.3 The school caters for pupils with abilities ranging from those with significant learning difficulties to those capable of achieving A* grades in GCSE; more than 50% of the pupils enter the school with serious literacy and numeracy difficulties. A significant number of the pupils have behavioural problems which affects their own learning and that of their peers. The school works hard to maintain and increase pupil attendance; in 1999/2000 attendance was just over 90% which is less than one percentage point below the NI average for non-selective secondary schools.

2. **Provision**

2.1 The senior management and staff recognised some years ago that the school needed support if it was to tackle successfully and in a systematic and thorough manner issues relating to pupils learning, the curriculum, assessment, staff development, pupil behaviour, attendance, and links with the parents and the local community. To this end, in 1995 the school opted into the Raising School Standards Initiative (RSSI) which was supported by the Department of Education and the Southern Education and Library Board. Involvement in RSSI proved to be a challenging, stimulating and

motivating experience for the staff. By the summer term of 1998 the school had made sufficient progress to enable it to continue whole-school development without the high level of external support provided by the RSSI.

2.2   The staff, following their experience in RSSI, recognised that while teaching and learning was their core responsibility, there was a continuing need for them to address matters such as attendance, pupil behaviour, disaffection at key stage 4 and links with parents and the community. Thus they developed a Counselling, Respite and Intervention Support Programme (CRISP) which began early in 2000. This programme, funded by SSPPR, led to the appointment of an additional member of staff with a social work background as a student support officer. The school's senior management team saw the CRISP programme and the appointment as ways of developing expertise in, for example, child protection, working with parents, dealing with personal and social issues and liaising with statutory and voluntary agencies.

2.3   Since his appointment in February 2000, the student support officer has worked very effectively with the school staff, pupils, parents and a range of personnel from local statutory and voluntary agencies to introduce the following initiatives:

- counselling and support for all the pupils in the school;

- a young men's health and personal development programme for year 11 pupils;

- a parenting programme which will commence in September 2000;

- an anti-bullying initiative which will culminate in a week of activities focusing on bullying by the whole school; and

- an initiative designed to improve school attendance by 2%.

3.   Outcomes

3.1   Although CRISP is at an early stage of development, encouraging outcomes are already evident and include:

- support for the staff in dealing with behavioural problems;

- support for young people in coping with personal and other types of problems;

- the implementation of a programme for year 11 pupils which deals with personal, social and learning issues which affect them;

- the implementation of a structured approach to improving school attendance;

- thirty-five parents have registered their interest in the parenting programme;

- improved information base of the pupils', teachers' and parents' views on bullying-related matters gathered from surveys of these different groups;

- the willing co-operation of the staff to the bullying programme through work in the classroom including posters, poems, drama and songs;

- the student support officer has established good working relationships with key school personnel including the SENCO and various members of the pastoral care team such as heads of year and form teachers;

- improved home/school links;

- effective consultation and collaboration with external support agencies in preparing and implementing the young men's health and personal development programme (youth workers, SELB Youth Service and Health and Social Services) and the parenting programme (Barnardo's);

- increasingly effective co-operation from local agencies in solving problems related to young people and their homes; and

- a sense of professional satisfaction for all those involved.

3.2   Although it is early days, the school is confident that it will be able to build on these initial outcomes to provide increasingly effective support for the pupils, enhance their learning and create productive relationships with the parents and local statutory and voluntary support agencies.

3.3   The school has identified the following as critical factors in the success to date of CRISP and for its continuing success:

- clearly-defined aims and objectives for the initiative and for each discrete element of it;

- the appointment of the additional member of staff with specific expertise;

- the acceptance by the teachers of the additional non-teacher member of staff;

- support of the whole staff for the initiative;

- clearly-defined roles and responsibilities for all those involved in implementing the initiative;

- the establishment of effective channels of communication with the staff, pupils, parents and support agency personnel;

- rigorous and effective approaches to monitoring and evaluation of CRISP and each of its discrete elements;

- effective record-keeping;

- relevant staff development for the teachers and professional development for the student support officer;

- the development of a management structure which facilitates regular communication between the school's senior management team and the student support officer; and

- the provision of financial resources to ensure the employment of the student support officer beyond the life of SSPPR funding.

3.4   Already, the staff and the parents see the benefits of this initiative and its potential for future development. The school's senior management team and the student support officer realise that much still has to be done over a prolonged period of time if these and other benefits are to have a positive outcome on the pupils' behaviour and attendance, and to enable the pupils to learn more effectively and improve their personal and academic achievements.

Barnardo's After School Project

1. Background

1.1 The Barnardo's After School Project supports and is aimed at primary-aged children. The intention is that through early intervention and support each child will be helped to fulfil his/her educational potential. This project targets communities in areas of multi-deprivation. It provides services in response to need as identified by the community and involves the local community and schools in the delivery of the services.

1.2 The aim is to provide additional support to encourage young people and their parents to value education and to prevent young people from becoming disaffected with and marginalised from education and training.

1.3 The approach to after-school provision was introduced in Ligoniel in March 1996 and has developed in the following areas:

- North Queen Street

- Hammer, Shankill Road

- Whiterock

- Andersonstown

- Markets

- Donegall Pass

- Glenwood Primary School.

2. Provision

2.1 One example of the work of Barnardo's is the transition pilot service in St Joseph's College, Belfast, which was set up to meet the needs of P7s transferring from primary to secondary school. The services provided are Monday-Thursday with separate sessions for children, at

key stages 1, 2 and 3. The service offers out-of-school learning opportunities through:

- promoting the development of literacy and numeracy skills;

- developing self-esteem, confidence and independence;

- supporting children through the transfer from primary to secondary schooling.

2.2   Each activity is managed and run by a fully-qualified teacher working with a committed team of volunteers. The volunteers are essential for the smooth running of the project and to enable the teacher to work closely with the children in smaller groups. Almost 340 children from across Belfast attend voluntarily on four afternoons each week.

3.   Outcomes

3.1   The volunteers benefit from in-service training provided by Barnardo's, including compulsory training in the Children's Order and child protection. An accredited training course for parents and volunteers will be piloted in October 2000; the course is geared specifically to helping parents/volunteers assist their children in literacy and numeracy from P1-P7.

3.2   The significant outcomes of the after-school service for the children include:

- completion of homework tasks and progression in homework;

- building up self-esteem and confidence;

- improved communication skills between and amongst peers and adults;

- education being seen by children and adults as enjoyable and rewarding through, for example, praise, rewards, star charts, trips, certificate days;

- improved links with the school: the young people see learning as not only confined to school, but as part of the whole community.

TRAVELLER COMMUNITY

1. Introduction

1.1   The education of Traveller children presents considerable challenges to schools in Northern Ireland; marginalisation of the Traveller community and associated social and cultural factors have resulted in, for most Traveller children, unequal educational opportunity, adverse influences on school attendance and achievement, and a lack of inclusion and integration, and recognition of diversity. The Forum for the Education of Traveller Children (NI), comprising representatives of the Education and Library Boards, CCMS, the Department of Education, and the Inspectorate, seeks to address these core issues in a cohesive manner.

1.2   Visits made by the Inspectorate to primary and secondary schools in recent years have yielded ample evidence of improvement in the quality of education of Traveller children. The provision made for many of the 454 primary school children and 162 post-primary pupils belonging to the Irish Traveller community, currently enrolled in schools in Northern Ireland, represents a significant enhancement of educational opportunities, as compared to those experienced by their predecessors. Nevertheless, the Inspectorate findings have also identified particular challenges which will need to be addressed systematically if the educational needs of all Traveller children are to be met more effectively.

2. Ethos

2.1   In many schools, Traveller children learn in well-organised environments, with hardworking teachers who know the children well, who have realistic expectations, and who display the children's work attractively, often featuring that which reflects and celebrates aspects of Traveller culture. In a small number of instances this degree of consideration and rigour is lacking and Traveller children are expected to learn in uninviting and unchallenging environments.

2.2   Schools in general are aware of the need to encourage and foster the integration of Traveller and settled children. There are many examples of good practice: Traveller children in learning support groups alongside settled children, participating in the school choir, opting into day and residential trips, integrating socially at meal and break times, and Traveller children being given the responsibility of school prefect duties. In addition, many schools have worked diligently to address the attendance, behaviour and social skills of Traveller children; a majority of these schools report a significant improvement in attendance and behaviour in recent years, and inspection visits, particularly in primary schools, confirm these indicators of progress.

2.3   Nevertheless, many schools, primary and post-primary, which both Traveller and settled children attend are finding a particular challenge in developing ways to celebrate the diversity of cultural heritage. The core aspect of this challenge, which is illustrated by and affects minority ethnic children in general, and Traveller children in particular, is the need for teachers and pupils to reflect on and come to an understanding of how to move on from seeing integration as the acceptance of Travellers within settled peoples' norms, to that of acceptance, understanding, celebration and consolidation of difference and uniqueness. The resources package *'Starting Out',* produced by the ELBs, has made a useful contribution to begin to meet this challenge, and further resources for older children, currently in production, will enhance provision.

2.4   The challenge of enabling a wider understanding, acceptance and celebration of Traveller culture, and the reduction of stereotyping is magnified within those schools in which there is little or no first-hand contact with Travellers. While there are examples of effective practice - one selective school had introduced a module on minority ethnic groups as the result of its audit of its provision for mutual understanding, much remains to be done in terms of ensuring a full understanding and acceptance of cultural diversity.

3.   **Curricular Provision**

3.1   One notable development is that schools are providing Traveller children with a curriculum that is broader and wider, and that, in most instances, is in line with the entitlement of the NIC. Evidence of effective classroom practice includes:

- a rural school enrolled the children of a Traveller mother who had moved from Dublin due to family conflict. The staff - who had no previous experience of teaching Traveller children - recognised that one of the children needed immediate additional learning help, opted for early intervention, and included the child in their Reading Recovery programme; this child achieved marked progress in reading skills.

- in another school, Traveller children were celebrating a religious festival through the medium of drama, participated willingly in a session of song (in more than one language), and engaged with considerable interest in ICT and reading activities.

- elsewhere, classes were observed in which the teacher set appropriately differentiated learning activities having taken account of the diverse needs of Traveller children. The Traveller children were learning in line with their individual education

plans which were specific in detail and focus, and subject to regular review.

3.2   In a small number of instances education plans were insufficiently focused on the short-term needs of individual Traveller children, and learning activities did not stimulate or challenge the pupils.

4.   Management Issues

4.1   Schools acknowledge the positive effect of Board curriculum and welfare support on the provision for Traveller children. This support is reflected in the efficient and regular help from ELB officers, and in terms of being able to access additional per capita funding to provide extra learning support for Traveller children to co-ordinate in-school provision, and to provide links between the school and sites or houses.

4.2   Not all schools are able to access advice and support at the point of immediate need, or the additional per capita funding available to schools in similar circumstances in other areas. There is a need to develop a more consistent and systematic implementation of curriculum, welfare and financial support for schools to ensure the continued provision for Traveller children.

5.   Outcomes

5.1   The traditional association of the Traveller child with least able classes in non-selective maintained schools is no longer as tenable as it was. In different areas of Northern Ireland, a small number of Traveller children have chosen to join controlled or integrated post-primary schools, or have accepted places in selective schools. There is also evidence that a small number of Traveller children are achieving their potential in KS3 and GCSE examinations, and proceeding from achievement in GCSE to post-16 GNVQ.

5.2   While a small number of Traveller children are achieving academic success and examination accreditation, many share the challenge of reaching their potential, as do other disadvantaged children. To help every child, and every Traveller child to realise his or her full potential:

•   further improvement is required in school attendance particularly at KS3 and 4, and particularly for boys. Schools cannot improve attendance on their own. They need greater involvement and support from parents, and the development of effective co-operation between the voluntary and statutory sectors;

•   primary and post-primary schools need to share information on pupil attainment;

- careful monitoring and evaluating is required, in an integrated whole-school context, of assessment information on each Traveller child as he/she progresses through schools.

6.   **Conclusion**

Many schools have been working, or have begun to work, diligently to address the issue of the education of Traveller children, and with varying degrees of success. In order to build on the progress achieved in recent years and to promote further the highest possible standards of educational provision for Traveller children, it is essential that all involved - in partnership, as, for example, in the cohesive approach of the NI Travellers' Forum - keep the quality of provision under constant review, plan for short and long-term development, and use specific evidence in order to chart and celebrate progress.

List of Projects Visited

School/Further Education Category

1. **Travellers Transition from Primary to Secondary School -** To facilitate the transfer of 10-16 year old Traveller children from St Paul's Primary to local secondary schools in West Belfast and to support the young people throughout their secondary education.

2. **Youth Sport NEELB** - To promote sport among young people aged 9-15 throughout the NEELB area.

3. **CRISP** - To tackle the problems caused and faced by disruptive young people attending St Joseph's High School, Newry, to achieve better attendance and improved examination performance.

4. **ICT Mobile Unit** - to introduce ICT to 4-11 year olds in five rural schools in the Aghadowey area.

5. **Cross-Community Education in Craigavon** - aims to develop a strategy for effective cross-community education for 10-18 year olds in the Portadown area.

6. **STEPS** - provides an alternative education provision for twelve 14-16 year olds in the Ballynahinch/Downpatrick area who are expelled or at risk of expulsion.

Community/Partnership Category

1.   **Armagh Youth Initiative** - an initiative to promote a community development approach to youth work in rural areas for 16-21 year olds in the Armagh area.

2.   **Inner East Youth Project** - a project to provide for marginalised and excluded young people aged 12-25 years old in East Belfast.

3.   **Mourne Youth Committee** - an initiative to bring young people (12-18) from four areas into a joint work to promote community youth work in the Kilkeel/Mourne area.

4.   **Armagh and Dungannon Adolescent Partnership** - a partnership project (ELB/PBNI/HSS/NIO/Barnardo's/NIACRO) to prevent young people aged 10-17 years from going into care or custody.

5.   **Powerhouse** - a partnership exercise with 12-19 year olds, to improve the quality of life in the Bogside and Brandywell areas.

6.   **Wheelworks (Art Cart)** - to promote and provide artistic and creative opportunities for young people and children (5-25) marginalised from mainstream activities throughout Northern Ireland.

7.   **Ardcarnet Project** - a project to enhance the education, training and employment prospects of young people (15-16) in the Dundonald area who are not currently attending school.

8.   **Individual Programme Plans (Lisburn YMCA)** - a year long programme for young people (14-16) who are at risk and may be heading for care or custody.

9.   **Interface** - offers community groups training packages designed to suit their needs, combining off-the-shelf courses with additional community relations and community development materials. The programme is for 18-25 year olds across Northern Ireland.

10.   **Fountain Street Youth Project** - a community youth project to empower young people, 8-18 year olds in the Strabane area, to widen their experiences and enhance their skills.

11.   **Charter Work Experience Project** - to introduce a computer-based, pilot work experience programme for schools in the BELB area for 15-18 year olds.

12. **I Spy With My Little Eye** - to raise awareness and appreciation of diversity within our society and to challenge the perceptions of 9-14 year olds in the Derry area.

13. **Bridge Youth Centre** - to help 14-17 year olds at risk from paramilitary activity in Monkstown and Newtownabbey to attain greater self-esteem.

14. **STS World of Work** (Personal Effectiveness) - a programme for 14-16 year olds from the Derry area which provides an alternative educational experience away from the school premises, in a vocational context and through periods of work experience.

15. **The Link Youth Project, Newtownards** - a charitable body using a Christian-based approach aims to assist 10-20 year olds to develop into caring and committed members of the community.

16. **School Age Mothers (SAM)** - SAM provides a supportive environment for 14-16 year olds in the Coleraine area where school age mothers and mothers-to-be can continue their education and discuss issues affecting them as parents.

17. **Hammer After School Project** - provides after school activities for 5-11 year olds to encourage and support children to enjoy learning. The project is community led and is attempting to address the low education attainment of local people from the North Belfast area.

18. **Bayview Educational Project** - provides a virtual link for 13-16 year olds in Derry between the centre and two mainstream post-primary schools. The link would allow for the development of a two-way and three-way video conferencing. Science is the main focus.

Alternative Category

1.   **Lagan Valley Educational Project** - Alternative educational provision for 13-16 year olds from the Dunmurry/Poleglass area who are not in compulsory education.

2.   **Conway Mill Education Centre** - Alternative educational provision for young people aged 14-16 from West Belfast who are not in compulsory education.

3.   **Northside Education Project** - Alternative educational provision for young people aged 14-16 from North Belfast who are not in compulsory education.

4.   **Lift Off** - for 14-16 year olds in the Larne area who have been expelled and are known to the police, to maintain their education and social inclusion.

5.   **Towers Project** - to support 9-17 year olds in the North Down and Ards area away from offending, and to support their current placement.

6.   **The Pathways Project** - an educational/training programme for 15-16 year olds in the BELB who are at risk of educational and social exclusion.

7.   **Omagh Education Project (EDEX)** - provision for 14-16 year olds in Omagh who are excluded from mainstream schooling.

8.   **Open Doors Learning Centre** - to provide for a maximum of ten 14-16 year olds from the Lower Falls who have been suspended (long-term), expelled or are long-term absentees with a second chance at education.

9.   **Antrim Forum** - provides for young people (15-16) who are experiencing school related problems.

10.   **GAP Project (Newtownabbey)** - offers a broad and balanced education for 15-16 year olds in Newtownabbey whose mainstream secondary education has completely broken down.

SURVEY OF EOTAS/SSPPR
AND TRAVELLER COMMUNITY

PRO-FORMA

A. **Basic Information** (Supplied by DE)

1.   •   Type of Project   EOTAS ☐   SSPPR ☐

       •   Category of Project   Alternative   ☐

                                        Community/Partnership ☐

                                        School   ☐

     •   Name of Centre

     •   Name of Project Leader/Contact Name

     •   Address

     •   Tel No

2.   •   Title of the Project

     •   Date of letter of offer of funding/starting date of project

     •   Nature/Scope of the Project _____

                                                  _____

     •   Location of Project (ELB)

3.   •   Amount of SSPPR Funding for this Project: from DE   ☐

                                                from Youthnet ☐

     •   Projected number of f/t and p/t jobs created through SSPPR Funding

     •   Projected number of Young People involved -

        Male   ☐   Female   ☐   Total   ☐

     •   Age Profile **(Table)**

B.   Basic Information (To be gathered during visit)

1.   •   Days/Hours of Opening

2.   •   Number of Project-based Teaching Staff and Qualifications **(Table)**

     •   Number and Nature of other Project-based Professional Staff

     •   Number and Nature of Ancillary Staff

     •   Use of Staff from other Institutions/Organisations

     •   Number and use of Volunteers

3.   •   Actual number of f/t and p/t jobs created

4.   •   Actual number of young people involved

     •   Selection Procedures for Participation in the Project

     •   Average Daily % Attendance for the <u>four weeks</u> prior to the survey visit

1.   **Quality of Ethos** (behaviour, relationships,
     attitudes, participation/engagement, environment)   **Overall Grade:**

     Features and Illustrations (Grades 1 and 4)

2.   **Quality of Experiences**   **Overall Grade:**

     **(Graded to correlate the quality of experiences to the aims
     of the Project)**

     Prompts for Programme/Curriculum

     •   Features of SSPPR and social inclusion

     •   Programme might include pastoral/PSE/work experience/IFHE
         courses/careers education/other

     •   Support for individuals, including SEN Provision

     •   Nature and Scope of Out-Centre Experiences

     •   Subjects leading to External Accreditation

- Progression Routes for Young People

- Situation of young people one year after leaving the project, if known (FE/Training/Employment/Unemployment)

- Quality of Teaching

- **Cross-Community provision including Single-identity activities**   **Grade:**

Features and Illustrations (Grades 1 and 4)

3. Outcomes for the Participants   Overall Grade:

- Learning (motivation/application/response/progression)   **Grade:**

- Examination Results

- The extent to which social inclusion is achieved   **Grade:**

- The extent to which there is discernible progress to   **Grade:**
  social inclusion

- The extent to which the programme is contributing to   **Grade:**
  improved community relations

- The extent to which marginalised young people are involved   **Grade:**

- Destinations of Young People

Features and Illustrations (Grades 1 and 4)

4. Support for Young People   Overall Grade:

Prompts

- Nature, Scope and Effectiveness of Pastoral Support/Guidance

- Nature and Scope of External Support

- Child Protection Procedures
  (include comment in report)

Features and Illustrations (Grades 1 and 4)

5. **Management Arrangements**   **Overall Grade:**

Prompts

- Effectiveness of Leadership

- Management Arrangements

- Staff Development/INSET

- Record keeping

- Monitoring and Evaluation Procedures

- Funding Sources

- Links - schools/other institutions/trainers/employers/parents/community

Features and Illustrations (Grades 1 and 4)

6. **Accommodation, Resources, Health and Safety**

- Accommodation	-	Quality	**Grade:**
	-	Use	**Grade:**
- Resources	-	Quality	**Grade:**
	-	Use	**Grade:**
- Health and safety			**Grade:**

Features and Illustrations (Grades 1 and 4)

7. **Outcomes of the Project**   **Overall Grade:**

- The unique features of the project

- Potential of the Project for Sustainability

- Elements of Project with potential for replication/dissemination

- Cost-effectiveness   **Grade:**

8. **Strengths**

9. **Areas for Improvement**