

BALLYMAGEE YOUTH CENTRE

SPECIAL NEEDS PROVISION (Thursday Evenings)

Introduction

Ballymagee Youth Centre operates Special Needs provision on Thursday evenings, meeting the needs of young people, aged 12 – 25 years, who have a range of disabilities and reside across the North Down and Ards areas. The provision originated from an agreement with SEELB Youth Service staff and a group of parents from Clifton Special School, to provide centre based activities through general youth work linked to the Youth Work Curriculum. More recently, further partnerships have developed with other agencies in the area such as Positive Futures, Autism Initiatives and Crossroads. The operational evening for the provision is Thursday from 7.00pm to 9.30pm with 30 registered members. The provision is staffed by SEELB Youth Workers and receives additional support from Clifton School Classroom Assistants.

A recent review of the provision took place which identified a number of concerns in relation to the implementation of SEELB Safeguarding procedures within the programme and principles of good practice for inclusive youth work. In the first instance, members over the age of 25 have remained within the provision without any transition planning to another service and secondly, it was identified that the age range is very broad with 12 year olds participating in activities with vulnerable adults over the age of 19 years. In addition, the particular needs of members in relation to their individual needs and disabilities needed to be recognised to ensure effective supervision and general safety of activities for risk assessment, with policy and given resources.

Contact was made to partner organisations [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] for consultation on the safeguarding review within Ballymagee Youth Centre provision.

In order to address these issues, it was agreed that SEELB Youth Officers would arrange to meet individually with parents to discuss the current youth provision and to consult on options. This consultation would also identify any individual need and/or support required in relation to each child and young person. Contact was made with parent(s)/guardian(s) of each registered member and meetings identified to take place over the period of 16th – 23rd September 2013.

Options

At the meetings with parents the following options were presented and individual needs/support was identified for their child/young person in relation to change within the youth club environment. The parents were also informed that we would welcome further suggested options.

Option 1:

The Special Needs youth club remains operational on Thursday evenings and is divided into Junior and Senior Sections reducing club times from 2.5 hours to 1.5 hours for each respective group and overall, extending the opening for ½ hour (i.e. opening 6.30pm as opposed to 7.00pm).

Option 2:

The youth club remains operational on Thursday evenings for the Senior age group only. The Junior age (12-19 years) would transfer to the Tuesday Senior Club that is currently inclusive of members with disabilities.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of adults over the age of 25 were offered additional and specialist support in order to receive signposting to other suitable/appropriate provision in the area.

Outcomes

Following consultations with parents/guardians the following outcomes were recorded:

All parents of registered young people were contacted and offered a consultation meeting.

26 meetings in total were organised with a total of 20 parents attending.

From this:-

- Fourteen parents opted for option 1,
- One parent opted for option 2,
- Four parents had young people over the age of 25 (therefore did not vote)
- One parent wanted the provision to remain the same.

N.B. 4 members over the age of 25 received offers of support to integrate into other appropriate provisions in the area.

The following concerns/requests were raised during the consultations and were taken into account during further discussions:-

- Two 18 year old members requested to be included in the 19-25 age band.
- Leadership/mentoring/buddy training/roles identified for the 19-25 year olds.
- Concern over the traffic management during Thursday division of Junior/Seniors.
- Development of Duke of Edinburgh for disability.
- Transition period to be identified in order to prepare members for the change.
- An overlap of age bands over the Thursday (i.e. 7.30pm to 8.00pm)


Recommendations/Actions

Considering the discussions and remarks made during these consultations the following is recommended:

(1) Thursday Special Needs provision is divided into two groups

- Juniors 6.30pm to 8.00pm
- Seniors 8.00pm to 9.30pm

- (2) The caretaker, along with the centre manager, will be responsible for traffic management.
- (3) A transition period is allocated to allow for the members to adapt, understand and accept the change. The plan for a transition period and the findings were sent out to parents in a letter dated 19th December 2013.
- (4) Since then it has come to our attention that not all of the parents received a letter, therefore, it was re-issued by recorded delivery on 10th February 2014.


10/2/14

CONSULTATION MEETING BALLYMAGEE

Name of Parent

Name of Young Person

Date

Time

Introduction

The SEELB currently operated Youth Centre provision on Thursday evenings at Ballymagee for young people with disability from 7pm – 9:30pm.

On review of provision in relation to safeguarding policy and good practice it was noted that the structure of this provision would have to change in relation to age range.

Therefore this consultation is taking place to find out the individual needs of young people and how we best supplied these under good practice guidelines.

Do you have any concerns at this point?

[REDACTED]

How can we best support your child at our provision?

[REDACTED]

The Youth Service would like to offer 2 options to best cater for the needs of young people while ensuring a safe environment.

Option 1

Junior Section	1½ hours	Thursday evenings
Senior Section	1½ hours	Thursday evenings

Option 2

Senior Section	Thursday evenings	
Junior Section	Integration programme	Tuesday evenings

Comments

[REDACTED]

Preferred Option

1. ☒ 2. ☐

[REDACTED]



**SOUTH EASTERN EDUCATION
AND LIBRARY BOARD**

Chief Executive: Mr Gregory P Butler B Ed M Ed MPA

[REDACTED]

10 February 2014

Dear Parent

Reference: Ballymagee Youth Centre Thursday Night Inclusion Programme

The attached letter was issued in December 2013 to parents of members who attend the Thursday Night Inclusion Programme at Ballymagee Youth Centre.

It has become unclear as to whether all parents have received this letter. We are therefore issuing the letter again but by recorded delivery in order to ensure that all parents receive the correspondence.

The new arrangements for the Thursday Night Inclusion Programme at Ballymagee Youth Centre are now operational.

If you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]

Headquarters Offices

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**SOUTH EASTERN EDUCATION
AND LIBRARY BOARD**

Chief Executive: Mr Gregory P Butler B Ed M Ed MPA

[REDACTED]

19 December 2013

Dear Parent

**Subject: Consultation re Thursday Evening Provision at
Ballymagee Youth Centre**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your contribution to the above consultation. As all meetings and discussions have taken place I am now writing to confirm, based on the response from parents, the future arrangements for Thursday Evenings at Ballymagee Youth Centre.

1. Provision will be retained for young people aged 12 to 25 years old
2. Provision will remain on Thursday evenings and will be divided into a Junior and Senior Section
3. Junior Section age 12-19 years old (young people attending school) will operate from 6.30 pm to 8 pm
4. Senior Section age 19 – 25 years inclusive (young people who have left school) will operate from 8 pm to 9.30 pm
5. Young people who are members of the Senior group will have the opportunity to avail of Buddy/Mentoring and/or Leadership Training.
6. New innovative programmes and opportunities will be developed for both Junior and Senior sections
7. To allow for understanding and acceptance of change, a transition period of 6 weeks will be implemented. This period will allow for the organisation of a celebration event for all the young people if desired.
8. The new structure for the Thursday evening provision will be implemented in full from Thursday 6 February 2014.

I again would like to thank you for your very positive contributions to this review and wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 19 December 2013 14:11
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Ballymagee Thursday programme letter Dec 13

[REDACTED]

Sent on behalf [REDACTED]

Please print on headed paper

[REDACTED]

19 December 2013

Dear Parent

Subject: Consultation re Thursday Evening Provision at Ballymagee Youth Centre

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your contribution to the above consultation. As all meetings and discussions have taken place I am now writing to confirm, based on the response from parents, the future arrangements for Thursday Evenings at Ballymagee Youth Centre.

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5. Young people who are members of the Senior group will have the opportunity to avail of Buddy/Mentoring and/or Leadership Training.
6. New innovative programmes and opportunities will be developed for both Junior and Senior sections
7. To allow for understanding and acceptance of change, a transition period of 6 weeks will be implemented. This period will allow for the organisation of a celebration event for all the young people if desired.
8. The new structure for the Thursday evening provision will be implemented in full from Thursday 6 February 2014.

I again would like to thank you for your very positive contributions to this review and wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

A large, thick black rectangular redaction mark covering the signature and contact information of the sender.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 15 October 2013 13:25

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: Ballymagee Thursday programme letter Oct 13

[REDACTED]
I have made the changes to the letter as discussed and attached [REDACTED] has approved and this is now good to go at your end for parents on Thursday evening.

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

10 October 2013

Dear Parent

Re Consultation Thursday Evening at Ballymagee Youth Centre

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your contribution to the above consultation. As all meetings and discussions have taken place I am now writing to confirm, based on the response from parents, the future arrangements for Thursday Evenings at Ballymagee Youth Centre.

1. Provision will be retained for young people aged 12 to 25 years old
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4. Senior Section age 19 – 25 years inclusive (young people who have left school) will operate from 8 pm to 9.30 pm
5. Young people who are members of the Senior group will have the opportunity to avail of Buddy/Mentoring and/or Leadership Training where applicable
6. New innovative programmes and opportunities will be developed for both Junior and Senior sections
7. To allow for understanding and acceptance of change, a transition period of 4 weeks will be implemented. This period will allow for the organisation of a celebration event for all the young people if desired.
8. The new structure for the Thursday evening provision will be implemented in full from Thursday 7 November 2013

I again would like to thank you for your very positive contributions to this review and wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

