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Department of Education
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Education and Training Inspectorate

**Report on the contribution of
the Nerve Centre to Education
through the Foyle Film Festival**

September 2004-June 2005

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE NERVE CENTRE TO EDUCATION THROUGH THE FOYLE FILM FESTIVAL

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Foyle Film Festival (FFF) has been in existence for 17 years. Over an eleven-year period, the Nerve Centre has provided a separate but concurrent education strand to the festival. The education strand is planned and organised by the Nerve Centre's film development officer, with the assistance of two officers from the Nerve Centre's education team. A range of funding bodies, including the Northern Ireland Film and Television Commission (NIFTC) and the Department of Education (DE), supports these three posts.

1.2 The education strand of the festival follows the same basic format as the FFF. It shares a common annual theme and consists of a range of screenings and workshops. In some instances, longer-term education projects are launched at, or incorporated within, the education strand of the festival. The Nerve Centre confirmed that all members of staff who work with children have been vetted and that all members of their staff participated in a Child Protection programme, delivered by the Youth Services' Training Team of the Western Education and Library Board (WELB).

2. METHOD OF WORKING

2.1 In 2004, the education strand ran from the 20-27 November and was based on the theme 'Heroes and Villains'. Members of the Education and Training Inspectorate, (the Inspectorate) visited a range of screenings and workshops, held discussions with key personnel involved in the organisation of the education strand and scrutinised relevant documentation provided by the Nerve Centre and the NIFTC. Based on these observations and discussions, the Inspectorate identified a number of strengths and areas for development within the education strand of the FFF.

3. SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

3.1 The strengths include:

- the comprehensive structure and range of the education programme;
- the creative content of the education programme;
- the good relationships at all levels among the staff of the Nerve Centre;
- the good relationships developed with participating organisations;
- the enthusiasm and enjoyment of the young people involved in all sessions observed during the festival;
- the appropriate opportunities for the young people and their teachers to work with experienced industry professionals;

- the high quality of delivery of the majority of the sessions observed during the festival;
- the good quality of the resources to support the delivery of the education workshops;
- the dedication and commitment of the film development officer and her team; and
- the affordable costs to the individual participants and to their organisations.

3.2 The areas for development within the education strand of the FFF include the need to develop:

- clearly focused objectives for the education programme based on a rigorous planning review and evaluation cycle, including: a marketing strategy; targeting of organisations which have never used the festival before; an annual action plan; increased use of the Nerve Centre education programme as a result of participation in the festival; the total costing of the festival to the Nerve Centre and its contributing sponsors and clearly defined roles and responsibilities for the film development officer and her team;
- clear learning outcomes for the individual elements of the education programme; and
- agreed objectives and learning outcomes with receiving organisations for longer term projects resulting from participation in the festival.

4. CONCLUSION

The education strand of the FFF is an important and integral part of the festival and of the Nerve Centre's education programme as a whole. The inspection has identified many strengths in the current provision. Equally, the areas for development need to be addressed if the provision is to meet, more consistently the aims of the Nerve Centre and its funders.

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