



Deanby Youth Club

16-20 Oldpark Terrace BT14 6NP

Charity number: NI101009 Phone:07873605823



Deanby Youth Club Annual report 2023

Deanby youth centre is a part time, voluntary youth organisation and registered charity in a church-based facility which delivers youth provision within the Oldpark and greater area of North Belfast since 1969. Our youth centre consists of a sports hall, a computer room, a gaming room, a senior room, a programme room, a dance studio and spacious outdoor grounds. As an organisation we are very much aware of our role within the community. The Youth Club provides community-based support for young people across Oldpark, Cliftonville, Westland, Marrowbone and Upper Ardoyne areas of North Belfast. We offer a variety of age specific groups that participate in several positive, fun, and structured activities. Our organisation uses the methodology of informal education to enhance the personal and social development of young people in a safe and caring environment. The Centre develops means of engaging young people through programmes which they can not only participate in but also help to design and deliver. We feel that this approach fosters a greater sense of engagement from the young people which ultimately ensures that the projects have a much greater impact in improving the quality of life that they experience. Our programmes and activities are responsive to and reflective of the needs of the young people in the Oldpark and wider area which we serve and are strategically designed to correspond with the curriculum for youth provision. We provide gender specific work with both boys and girls, and we often provide a range of projects that young people can use to develop skills, confidence, and self-esteem. We seek to develop a range of cross community initiatives to address the legacy of the troubles and to tackle some of the remaining fractious and tense relations between young people of both communities. We monitor the impacts this has with the young people through a number of evaluative means including, recordings and observations of staff members, other qualitative data from parents, teachers, and community representatives, quantitative data from programme and project evaluations and data and feedback from other sources including other service providers both statutory and non-statutory. There is no private profit or benefit derived from our operations, all is done for the benefit of the public.

During the year we operated a generic provision of 2 nights per week and a further 2 nights per week as a drop in-centre between the hours of 6:30pm and 9:30pm, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, to facilitate our members between 9 and 18 years of age. Our centre is run by a committed and skilled staff team of 7. We have 1 qualified part time leader in charge, 3 qualified part time youth workers, 3 Volunteers. Our volunteers are a major help in the running of the youth club. Our membership is currently at 136 and growing, with the approximate attendance of 50-70 per night.

Management committee chair comments

The year commenced with the announcement that the Leader in Charge, John Murphy and Senior Youth Worker Lorraine Murphy would retire from their roles once suitable replacements could be found. Both John and Lorraine have led the Club since it reopened in 2004 following a short period of closure and have overseen the development of the Club into a welcoming and safe facility for the young people of the Oldpark area. The Management Committee would therefore wish to record their thanks to John and Lorraine for their work over almost 20 years and for making Deanby YC a success.

The Management Committee commenced a recruitment exercise which in June 2022 led to the appointment of a new Leader in Charge and Senior Youth Worker. Despite undertaking a successful Summer programme, without the aid of independent funding, the Leader In Charge resigned from her position in October 2022 due to a change in personal circumstances. At that time the Senior Youth Worker stepped into the Leader In Charge role while the Management Committee again sought to recruit further part time Assistant Youth worker staff. The staff changes also had the effect of reenergising the Club with the result that the numbers of young people attending increased as life returned to normal after the COVID period. The Management Committee would also wish to express it's thanks to all the staff and volunteers who helped the continued operation and success of the Club.

Programmes and Activities

During the 2022/23 year Deanby Youth Club delivered at least 1 session of our continued programmes per week which also included participative structures and other workshops, capacity building support which is accessible and relevant to each individual participant and to provide support for young people to volunteer and gain experience in the local community. We make our plan around these programmes through good quality youth engagement and through the DE's as well as our own needs assessment for the local area. We collaborate with parents, young people, schools, local politicians and other youth providers.

These programmes have valuable educational outcomes that meet the needs of the young people through the following key headlines:

- Mental health and wellbeing
- Drug and alcohol awareness
- Inclusion, diversity, equality of opportunity and good relations
- Participative structures
- Mentoring
- Summer programme

To assist with the development of the Club the Leader In Charge prepared a Development Plan in an effort to benchmark the progress that was being made. In doing so he spoke to the young people and their parents to understand their needs and how the Club and it's activities impacted on their lives.

Some of the comments received were: -

- My two Boys Attend the club every night it is on and they absolutely love it.
My child has said that you all take time to listen to her.

- Kids had a safe/ entertaining place to go in the evenings especially in bad weather/ dark nights. Even if they had no friends to go to the youth club with they always felt safe & valued by the leaders there.
- Created a bit of Space for the older kids using the youthclub to just “ hang with their friends “.
- Providing a safe place
- Have fun, good friends and playing games.
- I felt safe and I met my gf
- Felt safe and made friends and enjoy the club
- I have somewhere to go when I want to go out and if I’m in an argument u sort it out for me
- Yea like if we argue then you sort it out
- My son was having to do structured activities is able to spend time with his peers in youth club he’s able to relax chat play with his friends in a safe environment
- The club has helped me make a few friends so if you are lonely the club can be helpful for that sort of thing
- We have had a lot of new leaders that have left for some reason
- I met lots of friends
- Every member of staff are good people and the club has been ran smooth
- My daughter feels safe. Helps her not to overthink what is actually going on in her head and makes her smile

What do you think we need to do better?

- Only to open more nights, if possible
- Maybe a residential
- Possibly with a bit of funding get some equipment. Clear up the outside space make it useable.
- Fundraisers for outings.
- Y’all could be better

Conclusion

Overall with it’s new Management Team in place Deanby Youth Centre continues to grow and to impact positively on the young people of the Oldpark area.