



Education and Training
Inspectorate

European Social Fund provision in
Clanrye Group

Family Foundations Community
Family Support Programme

Report of an Inspection in
February 2018



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments

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Contents

Section	Page
1. Context	1
2. Views of participants	1
3. Focus of the inspection	2
4. Overall findings of the inspection	2
5. Outcomes for learners	2
6. Quality of provision	3
7. Leadership and management	5
8. Safeguarding	6
9. Overall effectiveness	6
Appendix	
A. Project registrations	
B. Inspection methodology and evidence base	
C. Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate	

1. Context

The Clanrye Group Ltd (Clanrye) is a voluntary organisation with charitable status which operates a social enterprise; it is contracted by the Department for the Economy (Department) to provide the Family Foundations, Community and Family Support (CFSP) European Social Fund (ESF) programme. The project promoter delivers a range of other funded programmes, including a second ESF project. The main aim of the Family Foundations programme is to provide a family support and referral service, tailored training, qualifications and employability mentoring support for families across the Newry, Mourne and Down, and Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council Areas. The target group is families with a high level of need, which includes a person aged 16-65 years who is not in education, employment or training. The project promoter provides a range of individually-tailored and needs-led interventions which aim to promote social inclusion, improve family relationships and support access to specialist services. Family liaison activities include community based personal, family support and recreational activities. Referral services to address family members' health and well-being, social and economic needs in order to promote progression to employment, training or education are also provided. The employability mentoring support services provided aim to address family members' educational, employment and training needs through work-experience and volunteering, and the provision of short accredited and non-accredited qualifications.

The participants engage in mentoring sessions with programme staff and can also undertake an accredited level 1 qualification in customer service and a range of online non-accredited short courses based on their needs and interests. At the time of the inspection, a small number of the participants were in a suitable work-experience placement or undertaking volunteering opportunities. The participants are typically involved with the programme for a four to seven month period, and engage on a weekly or monthly basis according to their needs.

Clanrye is managed by a general manager who is supported by a voluntary board of directors.

The Family Foundations CFS programme is managed operationally by a programme manager, and delivered by a team of four family liaison officers, four employment engagement officers and an employability tutor. The work is supported by a full-time administrator and the programme operates out of premises in four locations, namely Armagh, Downpatrick, Newry and Portadown.

At the time of the inspection, 112 participants¹ were registered on the Family Foundations programme: 28 in Armagh; 28 in Downpatrick; 37 in Newry; and 19 in Portadown.

2. Views of participants

The inspection team met with a sample of 34 participants across the four offices, individually and in small groups. All of the participants reported positively about their participation on the Family Foundations programme and stated that it had significantly improved their level of confidence and self-esteem. Most of the participants commented that the programme provides a good start to the process of improving the quality of their lives. The opportunity to engage in a range of online short non-accredited courses, or to gain a level 1 qualification in customer service, to take part in a range of outings and activities, update their curriculum vitae (CVs), and develop social networks were also cited as strengths of the programme. The participants report that they are receiving good quality support from the programme staff, and are at various stages of addressing personal and social issues and/or enhancing their employability skills.

¹ All performance data in this report was provided by the ESF project promoter at the time of the inspection.

3. Focus of the inspection

In order to promote improvement in the interest of all participants, the inspection linked internal and external approaches to evaluate the:

- outcomes for participants;
- quality of provision; and
- effectiveness of the leadership and management.

4. Overall findings of the inspection

Overall effectiveness	High level of capacity for sustained improvement
Outcomes for learners	Very Good
Quality of provision	Very Good
Leadership and management	Very Good

KEY FINDINGS

5. Outcomes for learners

Over the past three years of the programme, Clanrye has achieved (to date) 49% of the overall target set for the recruitment of individual participants to the programme. However, the programme staff have been very effective in identifying and registering families from the target group. At the time of the inspection, the programme was ahead of its overall recruitment target with 457 (117%) families registered to date, well above the three-year target set of 390. This is due mostly to the high number of lone parents and the smaller number of members in each family or household recruited than initially predicted. In November 2016, the organisation agreed reduced targets with the Department and the overall targets are currently under further review.

The retention rate on the programme was good (69%) in 2015-16, it was an important area for improvement (54%) in 2016-17 and it has increased to very good (78%) to date in 2017-2018. On completing the programme, the staff have been successful in progressing 51 and 38 participants into full and part-time employment, respectively. The number of participants gaining full-time employment has exceeded well the target of 28 (117%), while just less than one-half of the target number have progressed to part-time work. A further six participants have successfully sustained self-employment. Clanrye has also progressed 28 participants into further education and six to higher education. Overall, participants have achieved 153 level 1 and short online qualifications, 64% of the target set. The project promoter monitors well its performance against targets and identifies appropriate actions to promote greater consistency in practice across the offices, to increase recruitment and to retain participants where possible.

Clanrye has established sound processes for measuring the distance travelled and progression in soft skill outcomes for the participants who have engaged in the programme, through the use of structured in-depth interviews at regular intervals during the programme. The project promoter has recorded that the current cohort of participants have the following barriers on entry to the programme: 55% have little or no qualifications; 45% have mental health issues or addictions; 43% suffer from social anxiety; 43% have low self-esteem or confidence; 21% have low levels of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills; and 13% have criminal convictions. The outcomes from this process, however, need to be used better to demonstrate more fully the impact of their work.

Almost all of the participants interviewed are making very good progress in developing their confidence and self-esteem and in addressing barriers to social inclusion and employability. In the one-to-one and small group sessions observed, almost all of the participants are also making good progress in developing their interpersonal, communication and team work skills. The programme staff have high expectations for the progress and achievement of the participants.

Almost all of the participants demonstrate high levels of commitment to overcoming their personal, social and health barriers in order to progress towards being more socially included and/or employable. The provision of flexible, tailored and needs-led one-to-one, family and employability support is a strength of this programme and has been a key factor in achieving and sustaining the retention rates to date, despite the complex range of barriers experienced by most of the participants. The high quality service has also contributed to positive outcomes for participants and their families in terms of increased social inclusion, improved family relationships and increased referral and engagement with specialist provision.

6. Quality of provision

The Family Foundations programme delivers a flexible provision which is tailored appropriately to meet the participants' individual needs. As appropriate, at the first or second interview, all of the families are initially assessed and a family support action plan is agreed that identifies their often complex barriers to social inclusion and progression to employment, and the actions planned to address them. At an agreed point, when the family member is ready, an employment engagement officer then becomes involved to help move the participant closer towards employment. A strength of the provision is the high quality team work, and complementary skills sets across and between the family liaison and employment engagement staff.

The completed documentation records clearly the often intensive individualised work which takes place and includes signposting to, and referral of just over one-half of the participants who have engaged with the programme, to a wide range of statutory, community and voluntary provision; these include the community mental health services, drugs and alcohol support, debt management and Women's Aid, in order to meet their specific needs. The programme staff have also developed high quality mutually beneficial relationships with a range of other projects in other organisations to ensure that participants can be referred to a project which best meets their needs. For a significant minority of participants, the work carried out, including the strong advocacy role undertaken by the programme staff, impacts positively on the quality of their family life and relationships.

Clanrye offers a relevant curriculum. This includes informal employability workshops, career-specific advice sessions, support for job search, CV building and job application completion. In addition, a range of short online non-accredited qualifications in areas such as first aid, health and safety, manual handling and food hygiene can be completed by the participants. The participants also have access to an accredited level 1 qualification in customer service. It is a strength of the programme that participants also have the option to

address and enhance their literacy and/or numeracy barriers by completing essential skills qualifications, in partnership with local further education colleges. A small number of participants also receive English for speakers of other languages support through collaboration with the local Councils. The recent introduction of sessions to support participants in the management of anxiety and stress, including the use of complimentary therapies and essential oils, was commented on by a few of them as helping them develop more effective and helpful coping strategies. Overall, however, the programme needs to extend the range of accredited level 1 qualifications available to better meet the identified needs, and career interests of the participants.

The programme staff have developed a range of enrichment activities which are used well to enhance social inclusion, such as outdoor recreational health and fitness and community activities, group volunteering opportunities, jewellery making, “do-it-yourself” workshops and peer support groups. Participants report very highly on the benefits of engaging in these activities on their integration into their local community, the development of social networks and on their overall well-being. They also report they are a good preparation for further engagement with programme staff and potential participation in accredited qualifications.

The learning and development and mentoring sessions observed are planned and structured well. In the best practice, the facilitators use a range of approaches and strategies to engage participants in discussion and to identify clearly their barriers to progression. The mentoring sessions are of a high quality and demonstrate the professional skills of the family liaison and employability staff in engaging the participants to progress further towards employability. The directed training is characterised by an effective use of open questioning strategies which develops well the participants’ wider literacy skills and encourages their contribution to discussions. Marking for improvement is also used effectively within the formative work to provide appropriate feedback, reflect progression and to further develop the participants’ confidence.

A small number of participants are able to access short work-experience or volunteering opportunities and this is an area which programme staff have appropriately identified as an area for further development. Staff are currently working hard to establish a more extensive range of meaningful volunteering opportunities and compiling and extending their database of employers who are willing to provide suitable work-experience opportunities for participants. There is a need for the staff to identify more clearly how they will use volunteering and work experience placements to best effect to promote further the progression of the participants.

Care and welfare impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes for participants. The family liaison and employability officers, and all of the programme staff, are very caring, respectful and supportive. In particular, the family liaison and employability officers are proactive and skilled in building positive relationships with each participant in order to address effectively their barriers to progression. A comprehensive range of links with external agencies is in place in order to access any required specialist support for the participants. It is strength that the project promoter provides regular events which celebrate sensitively the achievements, including the progression made from their baseline assessments, of all of the participants.

7. Leadership and management

The Clanrye management team and board of directors have a clear vision for the continued development of the Family Foundations programme and the complementary provision that participants can access. There is participant-focused strategic planning and a strong commitment to delivering a range of community development and support programmes and to invest in staff, accommodation and resources. Despite recent staffing changes in the programme team, the quality of delivery remains high. The project promoter has ensured that all team members demonstrate high levels of commitment to engage with and support the participants, most of whom present with a wide range of complex needs, to participate fully on the programme.

The programme team are highly committed to their work with an appropriate range of skillsets, including previous family support experience, social work and youth work backgrounds. In addition, it is notable that Clanrye support well the continuing professional development of staff to ensure that they have the appropriate knowledge and skills to work well with, and meet, the participants' individual needs. For example, staff have undertaken ASSIST training, mental health first aid, first aid at work, epilepsy support and training updates on the revised benefit system.

Clanrye has established a wide range of relevant links and partnerships in order to inform, plan and facilitate the delivery of its strategic aims and objectives. In particular, the well-considered partnerships with key referral and support agencies, for example, the Jobs and Benefits Offices, the Probation Board, and children and family services, ensures that the Family Foundations programme is targeting well, and accessible to, participants in significant need of mentoring support and training. Across the geographical area, including with other ESF project promoters, communication is effective, underpinned by a shared vision and passion to achieve successfully the key aims of the programme in the best interests of the participants.

The quality of the accommodation and learning resources ranges from good to very good; the premises are bright, welcoming, resourced well and strategically located to provide easy access to participants in Armagh, Downpatrick, Portadown and Newry. Further consideration with regard to enhancing the curriculum offer and increasing the training capacity within the programme is an important area for development for the project promoter.

The programme staff are provided with one-to-one case reviews and good opportunities for peer reflective practice with co-ordinators, and with their colleagues. There is also a well-planned series of team meetings for delivery staff and middle managers which contribute much to the overall development of the programme, in particular opportunities for sharing best practice. Due to the intensive nature of the work, Clanrye should give consideration to providing more regular opportunities for the programme staff to meet and debrief with external specialists.

There is an effective organisation-wide, inclusive self-evaluation process and while this still needs to be refined and further embedded, the Family Foundations team are highly reflective and have accurately identified most of the main areas for improvement. There is a need for the further development of the quality cycle to structure, formalise and extend the range of quality assurance activities carried out. The action planning should be developed further to be more succinct, use more measurable targets and prioritise more effectively the key areas for improvement.

8. Safeguarding

Based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection, the arrangements for safeguarding participants reflect the guidance issued by the Department.

9. Overall effectiveness

Clanrye's Family Foundations Community and Family Support programme demonstrates a high level of capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interests of all the participants.

In order to improve the programme further Clanrye needs to:

- develop further the accredited curriculum offer and increase the number of participants undertaking individualised volunteering opportunities and/or work experience placements in order to promote further progression.

The ETI will monitor how the project promoter sustains improvement.

A. Project registrations

Programme	Numbers of enrolments	% against target
European Social Fund Family Foundations 2015/2016	147	41%
European Social Fund Family Foundations 2016/2017	230	59%
European Social Fund Family Foundations 2017/2018	176 (to date)	45%

B. Inspection methodology and evidence base

The ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework is available on the ETI website www.etini.gov.uk.

Three ETI inspectors and one associate assessor observed 34 participants, including one past participant, in a range of settings; this included learning and development sessions, one-to-one mentoring sessions, focus groups and work-experience placements. Discussions were held with the senior management team, the programme manager, four employment engagement officers (EEOs), four family liaison officers (FLOs), the employability tutor and the administrator. Meetings were also held with the two community centre managers, one work placement provider, six referral agencies, two external agencies (volunteering), one support worker and one employer. The management information systems, including the tracking and monitoring systems, samples of the participants' work and personal action plans, and the tutor's planning documents were examined. The project promoter's self-evaluation report, quality improvement plan and other relevant documentation were also scrutinised.

C. Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75%-90%
A majority	-	50%-74%
A significant minority	-	30%-49%
A minority	-	10%-29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%

Performance levels

The ETI use the following performance levels when reporting on outcomes for learners, quality of provision and on leadership and management.

Outstanding
Very good
Good
Important area(s) for improvement
Requires significant improvement
Requires urgent improvement

Overall effectiveness

The ETI use one of the following inspection outcomes when evaluating the overall effectiveness of the project promoter:

The project promoter has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the participants. The ETI will monitor how the project promoter sustains improvement.
The project promoter demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the participants. The ETI will monitor how the project promoter sustains improvement.
The project promoter needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the participants. The ETI will monitor and report on the project promoter's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.
The project promoter needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the participants. The ETI will monitor and report on the project promoter's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.

Key Performance Indicators and Definitions	
Retention	The percentage of enrolments measured over the full duration of their programme.
Achievement	The percentage of participants who completed their targeted individual outcomes.
Progression	The percentage of successful completers who achieved positive progression.

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