

Information, advice and guidance case study

Collaborative IAG in practice

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Consortium partners

Ripley Heanor Learning Community (RHLC) in Derbyshire includes:

- six mainstream schools
- one special school
- one further education college
- a training provider
- Connexions.

Communication and decision making

The RHLC information, advice and guidance (IAG) group started three years ago to support the Diploma and Key Stage 4 vocational subjects being planned for collaborative learning in the community. Initially chaired by Connexions – which has the lead professional role for IAG support and services to ensure consistency in order to meet 14-19 strategic priorities – the group is now run by its members. Connexions still maintains an important and active role providing support and resources.

The group focuses on the planning and implementation of collaborative IAG. Members are required:

- to be able to make decisions on behalf of their organisation
- to have an understanding of IAG in order to implement the Learning Community (LC) ideas into the existing framework of careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) within their organisation.

To make the Key Stage 3 options process realistic and effective, the IAG group meets with the RHLC curriculum group once a term to improve communication, discuss ideas and develop action plans. An example of this collaborative approach is the calendar of events for the academic year.

The IAG Chair is invited to attend:

- RHLC board meetings –to explain ideas and speed up decision making
- the county IAG group – to share ideas and develop a consistency of IAG across the county to support access to all Diploma lines.

Meetings are held each term by Connexions for the LC Careers Co-ordinators. This ensures that decisions and information about new national and local resources, standards and legislation go to the appropriate person in the organisation. This information informs CEIAG programmes in schools and colleges. Being active in the IAG group adds to the workload of all members, both in organising RHLC events and implementing new ideas in their home organisations

Resources, activities and events

RHLC has planned a series of events and produced a number of resources, including:

- a Year 9 timeline for options
- an RHLC options evening for Key Stage 3 students and parents
- a prospectus giving information about Diplomas and Key Stage 4 apprenticeships for all students in the community.
- a local community website about the Diplomas and Key Stage 4 apprenticeships, with student videos about the courses and links to further support and information
- input into the local area online prospectus for progression routes
- an apprenticeship information evening for Key Stage 4 students informing them of the National Vacancy Service and local provider information, developed in partnership with the local Education Business Partnership and Connexions.

Quality assurance

Career Mark, the local quality standards award, is used to assess the quality of CEIAG in each organisation. Several members of the group have achieved the award and all others are working towards it.

To help students provide feedback about their experiences, evaluation across the LC has been planned at strategic points on the action plan and is collated at every event within the Learning Community.

Developments

It is important that the Learning Community takes ownership and responsibility for the group. This will ensure sustainability and consistency, in working to county IAG priorities within 14-19 developments and implementing national requirements. To assist with this process, an action plan has been produced following an IAG audit by igen, who offer free audits to Diploma consortia on behalf of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).