



Humber

Guidance for Schools (11-16 and 11-18) Good Practice in the Management of Connexions

(Revised Nov 2006)

Introduction

As the Connexions strategy has developed across the Humber sub-region, it is very clear that schools are major partners in ensuring that the support and guidance services available to all their young people aged between 13 and 19 are coherent, accessible and, above all, available at point of need. Connexions means that additional resources have become available to schools as Personal Advisers are trained and deployed.

Connexions Personal Advisers come from a range of backgrounds and bring with them a wealth of experience and knowledge of working with young people. It is essential therefore, that consideration is given to how these experienced people are deployed and managed in schools in order to ensure that they are able to offer the help, support, advice and guidance that will be of benefit both to individual young people and to the organisation itself.

This Good Practice Guide sets out what both Connexions Humber and secondary schools need to do to ensure appropriate resources and services are allocated to meet the advice, guidance and support needs of all young people in their care aged between 13 and 19.

In order for this to happen, it is very important that a member of the school's senior management team is appointed to oversee all Connexions-related activity. Given that the range and scope of advice and guidance offered to young people through Connexions Personal Advisers is much greater than ever before, it is essential that every school recognises the level of responsibility conferred upon this new role of Connexions Manager. It is recommended that the post should *not* be added to the responsibilities of a member of staff who is perceived to be already working in a related role – e.g. careers or special educational needs co-ordinator. Thought should be given to the range and extent of responsibilities demanded of this role, which are listed in Section A.

Connexions Humber has also produced 'Gold Standards' for Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) in partnership with each of the four Humber sub-region constituent Local Authorities. It is recommended that these standards are considered alongside the recommendations made in this document.

Section A. The School Connexions Manager

The following list of responsibilities has been identified by a group of experienced teachers. It is based upon the requirements of the role in an 11-16 or 11-18 secondary school of average size (1000+ on roll) with a comprehensive intake of young people with regard to academic ability and socio-economic circumstances.

1. Policies and Planning

- Developing a coherent policy for the delivery of Connexions, to include all forms of work-related and experiential learning, careers education and guidance, health and citizenship.
- Negotiating and agreeing the contractual arrangements within the Connexions Agreement in liaison with the Connexions Humber Area Manager.
- Negotiating, agreeing and managing all other contracts made between the school and other support agencies e.g. EWS, Social Services, Police, EBLO.
- Ensuring that the implementation of the Connexions Agreement and all other contracts are in accord with the organisation's Development Plan.
- Collating and analysing statistical breakdown of likely support needs e.g. numbers on special needs register, level of unauthorised absence.
- Defining effective organisational strategies for identifying and monitoring individual student support needs across key stages.
- Setting up accurate recording systems for keeping track of all interventions made.
- Negotiating a devolved Connexions budget annually to meet expected support and guidance needs.

2. Management and Co-ordination

- Arranging an induction into the school for new Personal Advisers (PAs).
- Monitoring and recording all referrals made by staff – internally, to school or college-based PAs and to external agencies and services.
- Ensuring the provision of differentiated guidance to meet the full identified range of need e.g. gifted and talented, poor attenders, travellers, those with physical or emotional disabilities, those with special educational needs, those with English as a second language.
- Maintaining clear and effective liaison and lines of communication between the school, Connexions Humber and other specialist agencies and personnel.
- Overseeing the day-to-day deployment and work of the PAs and liaising with learning mentors on site.

- Chairing a regular multi-agency meeting of key school staff with pastoral and guidance responsibilities, including PAs and personnel from other support agencies involved in the lives of young people at the school.
- Ensuring coherence in all the school's guidance and support processes e.g. tutoring, mentoring and inclusion strategies.
- Marketing Connexions and raising awareness in young people, staff, governors and parents of services available.
- Development and oversight of a Connexions resources which includes a comprehensive, up to date and accessible Information area – offering young people information on careers, health, welfare benefits, accommodation issues etc.

3. Professional Development and Support

- Liaising with the school's Professional Development Co-ordinator to ensure that all school personnel involved in the delivery of Connexions activities have access to appropriate training and development opportunities.
- Using the consultancy offered through Connexions Humber to ensure that group tutors have up to date information at the appropriate time e.g. post-16/18 opportunities, use of Year 11 i4u Action Pack.

4. Evaluation and Monitoring

- Regular checking to ensure that the strategies and the work of services and personnel in place are meeting the guidance and support needs of all young people.
- Setting up a forum of young people to seek their views and thoughts on the service they are receiving.
- Using formal frameworks such as the IAG 'Gold Standard' to review and evaluate the provision.

Essential pre-requisites for Connexions Managers

- A private and quiet office with direct dial telephone line, internet access and separate e-mail address.
- A private space with telephone where one-to-to-one confidential interviews can be carried out.
- Secure and lockable filing space.
- Access to reprographic and copying facilities.
- Access to appropriate management meetings.
- Clerical support.

The Connexions Manager should be available during tutorial time as this can be used to contact young people and tutors about Connexions-related matters.

Section B. The Connexions Curriculum Consultant

Connexions Humber recognises the need for the maintenance of effective programmes of personal, social, health and careers education – together with the provision of relevant and up-to-date information. To help with this, there is a dedicated curriculum consultant for each local authority area in the Connexions Humber region who works with schools to:

- Research, review and update materials for use in the delivery of the Connexions-related curriculum (e.g. The Real Game, Work Experience, CEG, PSHE, Citizenship).
- Identify development requirements in careers, PSHE and citizenship through negotiation with the organisation's senior managers.
- Support the delivery of appropriate training activities in liaison with the central Connexions Humber training team.
- Act as a member of the assessment team for the 'IAG 'Gold Standard', liaise with institutions to provide initial assessment, agree action plans, negotiate, agree and provide support, undertake final assessments.
- Identify effective provision in Connexions-related learning and share this with colleagues in order to network good practice and secure continuous improvement.

It should be noted that Curriculum Consultants are deployed to support the promotion and development of structures and learning activities in schools that enable the successful transition of 13-19 year olds to learning, work and adult life. They will not serve as an additional PA; nor are they expected to regularly deliver components of the curriculum.

Section C. The Connexions Agreement

Each year schools are required to complete a Connexions Agreement in consultation with the local Area Manager from Connexions Humber. This is to define each school's need and to agree resources to be allocated to meet that need. Contained in the Connexions Agreement and Development Plan are the following sections:

1. SCHOOL DEFINED PRIORITIES

2..AWARENESS RAISING OF CONNEXIONS SERVICES

Staff and Young People

3. CONNEXIONS ACCESS

One stop shop, multi agency centre, Connexions Resource Area

4. PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Visits, Work experience, Progress File, D of E, PSHE

5. BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

Protocols, suspensions, exclusions

6. OPPORTUNITY AWARENESS AND TRANSITION

Careers Education and Guidance, adherence to National Framework, use of i4u Action Pack

7. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Defining the guidance needs of registered and statemented pupils and those who are identified as gifted and talented

8. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Involving young people in the provision, delivery and evaluation of services

9. MANAGING ATTENDANCE

Authorised and unauthorised absences, absence management and EMAs (post 16)

10. 14 to 19 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Increased flexibility, working with other learning providers, ILPs

11. DEVELOPMENT OF MULTI-AGENCY TEAMS/SERVICES

EWS, Youth Service, Young Mums, EBLO, LA, Social Services,

Schools are able to negotiate which of the above sections require resources offered by Connexions Humber and to add any additional issues if appropriate.

Section D. Connexions Personal Advisers

Schools can expect to be working with Connexions Personal Advisers who bring with them a very wide range of experience, knowledge qualifications and backgrounds. In order to effectively match these qualities with the needs of young people in the school, it is important that careful consideration is given by the school's Connexions Manager, in consultation with organisations and agencies contracted by Connexions Humber to provide PAs, or with Connexions Humber itself in respect of PAs that it directly employs, as to the nature of the advice and guidance to be offered. It must be borne in mind that the services provided through Connexions must meet the needs of every young person. The Personal Adviser's role will be to engage with young people to provide advice, support and guidance and to broker appropriate services in order to remove barriers to learning. It is important that the protocols, ethos and culture of the institution are discussed with the PAs' employing organisations and understood by all PAs before they start working in the school.

Particular regard should be paid to:

- support for PAs within school
- working arrangements
- internal referral procedures and associated documentation
- issues of confidentiality
- accommodation for PAs

- computer and internet access
- school dress and behaviour codes

Once these considerations have been made, appropriate PAs can be allocated.

Schools can expect Connexions Personal Advisers to:

- operate in close liaison with existing pastoral teams.
- as far as is practical, arrange interventions with young people at times which cause the least disruption to their learning.
- fulfil the requirements of the referral procedures and associated documentation in agreed with the school.
- respect behaviour codes and policies.

If any intractable disagreements, concerns or problems are raised by either party from any of the above or any other issues, these should be referred on to the Personal Adviser's Team Manager at your local Connexions Centre.

Section E. Induction of Personal Advisers

All Connexions Personal Advisers working in schools should have a detailed induction programme. This is the school's responsibility and the following should be included as appropriate and applicable.

1. Introduction to People:

- Headteacher
- Educational Psychologist
- Education Welfare Officer
- Connexions Manager
- Heads of Years 9, 10, 11 and (where applicable) 6th form
- Child Protection Co-ordinator
- Teacher with 'looked after' responsibilities
- Teacher with traveller education responsibilities
- Careers Co-ordinator
- Connexions Curriculum Consultant
- Learning Mentors
- Governors with relevant responsibilities
- Members of the School's student Council
- Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)
- Personal, Social and Health Education Co-ordinator
- Citizenship Co-ordinator
- Other PAs working in the school
- School secretary/admin staff
- School nurse
- Youth worker(s)

2. Documentation:

- Connexions Agreement and Development Plan
- Dates of terms
- School session times
- Calendar of school events – parents' evenings, careers conventions etc
- List of staff, both teaching and non teaching
- List of Governors
- Plan/layout of the school (Health and Safety)
- School prospectus
- Copy of school improvement plan and other plans that are relevant
- Copy of the following policies - drugs, anti bullying, attendance
- Internal referral documentation
- Latest Ofsted report
- Child protection policy
- Policy on Confidentiality (if available)

3. Work shadowing:

- Connexions Manager
- PSHE Co-ordinator
- Careers Co-ordinator
- Citizenship Co-ordinator
- Heads of Year
- Education Welfare Officer

- School Nurse
- Youth Worker

It is essential that every Personal Adviser assigned to a school goes through this induction. This is to ensure a sound understanding by the PA of how the school operates, its ethos and culture and to promote a greater awareness within the school of the role of the PA. It also helps to minimise any misunderstandings in relation to practice issues and encourages a consistency of approach to working arrangements across the whole of the Connexions Humber area.

Section F. Frequently Asked Questions

Is Connexions a service or a strategy?

Connexions is an over-arching national strategy that brings together everyone who works to help and support all young people between the ages of 13 and 19. Connexions Humber is part of the Humber sub-regional Partnership which provides services and people locally to deliver that national strategy.

Who employs Connexions Personal Advisers?

All PAs with a careers specialism and the vast majority of PA generics are directly employed by Connexions Humber. However, any organisation may make a bid to Connexions Humber to supply PAs and other services such as training, youth engagement or consultancy. Currently, contracts are held by local authority departments (e.g. Social Services, Youth Services, Education Welfare, etc), voluntary organisations, the health sector. Contracting organisations vary from area to area and some organisations offer their own staff as in-kind contributions to the Connexions strategy.

What is the role of the contracting organisations in schools?

Contracting organisations who provide services to schools manage the work of all their own personnel, including casework supervision and they resolve issues of service delivery within schools where their personnel are deployed. Connexions Humber is responsible for these activities for PAs employed in-house.

What is the role of the Connexions Area Manager?

Connexions Area Managers (see page 14) are employed by Connexions Humber and their work in schools includes: Negotiating and agreeing the annual Connexions Agreement with the school's Connexions Manager; providing a link between schools and contracting organisations.

Who determines the deployment/time allocation of Personal Advisers?

Each local authority area in the Humber sub-region has a Connexions Local Management Committee which has the responsibility for the allocation and deployment of Personal Advisers. This committee is made up of representatives from partner organisations including the local authority.

What if I'm not happy with the work of the Personal Adviser?

All issues around the day-to-day work of the Personal Advisers should be referred to the PA's line manager within their employing organisation. If for any reason issues cannot be resolved, the Connexions Area Manager will act as mediator.

Will there still be Personal Advisers qualified in Careers Guidance?

Yes. Schools will be made aware which of the Personal Advisers allocated to them has a specialism in careers guidance but it should be noted that it is the school's responsibility to refer young people for careers guidance appropriate to each individual's needs. PAs will not blanket interview as in the past.

Who else will be involved in agreeing each school's Connexions Agreement?

This will vary from school to school but it is likely that PAs and/or line managers from their employing organisations will need to contribute and, depending upon the needs of the school, others such as Connexions Curriculum Consultants may be involved.

Who are the Connexions Curriculum Consultants?

There is one Connexions Curriculum Consultant available in each local authority area (see page 14) to provide support to schools and colleges in ensuring that Connexions-related areas of the curriculum such as careers, work-related learning and PSHE are appropriate and well resourced. Each consultant has experience of curriculum development and they are all directly employed by Connexions Humber. Any issue regarding the work of the curriculum consultants should be directed to the Connexions Humber Education Manager (see page 13).

Who do I talk to about Work Experience issues?

The contract for work experience is currently held by the Humber Education Business Links Organisation (EBLO) and delivered by Work Experience Placement Officers employed by Connexions Humber. Connexions Humber's Work Experience Manager should be the first point of contact (see page 13) for queries regarding any matter to do with the placing of students on Work Experience.

This document was first produced 2002 as a starting point for schools in considering arrangements to be put in place in order to get the best from Connexions. It has been updated every year since then. If you have any comments or suggestions regarding the development of good practice, please contact your local Connexions Area Manager (see page 13).

Contacts

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