

IAG Gold Standard assessment – David Lister School

External Assessment carried out on 03.06.08

Assessor – Brenda Hardy

Overview

David Lister School is a mixed 11 – 16 comprehensive school, larger than the national average with 1265 learners currently on roll. In 2006/7 David Lister School and Isaac Newton School merged - the latter being in special measures. For a year the learners were on separate sites with most staff based separately. The schools have now fully merged on to the original David Lister site on Rustenburg Street, East Hull. The new headteacher took up the post in September 2007. The new David Lister School is situated in an area with low levels of employment and higher than average levels of deprivation. The number of pupils on the special educational needs register is 25% and the number of pupils eligible for free school meals is approximately 30% although staff report that not all of those eligible for free school meals are claiming.

Assessment

Prior to my visit I was given a very comprehensive portfolio of paper evidence which contained policy documents, programmes of work, minutes and agendas of meetings, training plans, copies of CPD evaluation reports (which were overall positive), work experience schedule, SEF, OfSTED report, Connexions Agreement, Job Descriptions, School Improvement Plan. A planned programme for assessment was prepared and arrangements were made for me to meet and talk at length with Barbara Foyston, Guidance Co-ordinator, Julie Fields, tutor of Citizenship and Personal, Social, Health, Careers and Enterprise Education (PSHCEE), Cath Rudkin, Head of PSHCEE, Val Kendall, Resource Centre Manager, Debbie Bell, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) Sonia Lobar, Connexions Personal Adviser (PA), Ann Rourke, Manager of 'The Centre', Elaine Maxwell, Governor, Sue Dearing, Year 7 tutor, Terri Marshall, Year 10 tutor, Mrs Hemming, Headteacher and a selection of young people. The school has a written policy for IAG and a coherent PSHCEE programme with schemes of work for each year group from Year 7. PSHCEE is delivered by tutors in a rolling programme of tutorials, 50 minutes every 2 weeks. This is changing in September 2008 to 1 hour every week. They have regular meetings and staff development opportunities.

The assessment procedure took a full day. During the assessment, observation of IAG practice was carried out and visual inspection of the available facilities for learners to access information, advice and guidance confirmed that these were in place and accessible. The relevant evidence demonstrating each Element and Component of the Kingston-upon-Hull Gold Standard for Information, Advice and Guidance was provided and matched to the required standard as follows.

Element 1 – Accessible and Visible Information

Component 1: There will be one or more information areas, open at clearly displayed times, accessible to all learners and providing a range of appropriate, current and impartial information which meets all needs

There is a Learning Resource Centre (LRC) to which all learners have access at publicised times between 8.00 am and 5.00 pm (opening times vary each day All available information available is clearly signed, referenced, relevant and available to learners in a range of formats. The area is staffed by a professional librarian who keeps information well stocked and up to date. There are computers with internet access and a good variety of multimedia packages including 'Streets Ahead', 'Careerscape' 'Fast Tomato' and use Connexions Direct jobs4U.

Component 2: All staff involved in providing information will be familiar with its content and purpose

All school staff are aware of the range of available information as described above and support learners in accessing information appropriate to their needs. The librarian is on hand at all times to advise staff and learners on content and purpose of materials and information. All materials used in tutorials are reviewed and monitored by staff involved to check effectiveness and relevance. Any suggestions for improvement are passed to Barbara Foyston for consideration; she also monitors the quality of delivery of tutor-led lessons. Learners were questioned about the effectiveness of PSHCEE inputs and were in the main positive about the quality and relevance.

Element 2 – Accessible Advice and Guidance

Component 1: Internal and external advice and guidance practitioners will collectively possess the necessary skills, knowledge, training and qualifications to identify and respond to each learner's needs.

Teachers can make learner referrals as and when necessary and PAs have regular formal and informal meetings to share information with school staff. There is a designated room with phone and internet-enabled computer for the use of guidance workers in school situated next to the Guidance Co-ordinators office in the year 11 social area. Learners are given introductory talks by Connexions staff and invited to access help whenever it is required. Day-to-day communication between school and advice and guidance workers is excellent and provides a strong basis for sound partnership working.

The school works closely with Connexions to ensure that all learners have regular access to a qualified Generic or Careers Personal Adviser and learners are made aware of the Connexions Centre in Hull.

The generic PA is based in 'The Centre' (formerly called MAST) which is a multi-agency resource area housing some 20 staff from various support agencies including Connexions and Social Services. All members of the school staff and external guidance workers are CRB checked.

Component 2: All advice and guidance practitioners will know about the work of other IAG providers who may be better placed to meet learners' needs

Connexions PAs have access to staff for additional information or discussion if needed, as do personnel from other relevant external organisations. The Guidance Co-ordinator actively oversees the work of all advice and guidance practitioners to ensure best response to all learners' needs. All external IAG practitioners are able to exchange information about the services they provide as they are all based in the specialist provision called 'The Centre'.

Element 3 – Linked IAG Provision

Component 1: The provision of linked advice and guidance will be part of the remit and role of a senior manager within the organisation or service

The Guidance Co-ordinator, Barbara Foyston, works closely with the Headteacher and tutors to ensure that all IAG provision is linked within the management structure of the school. There is an ethos of developing each individual to achieve their potential and of raising achievement via self-motivation and self-awareness. The Headteacher regards the Personal, Social, Health and Enterprise Education (PSHCEE) programme as central to developing well-rounded young people prepared to meet the challenges they face when leaving school. Although there is no specific budget identified for IAG, Barbara feels well supported by the school in all areas of her work.

Component 2: All IAG practitioners will make clear to learners the links between IAG services and support learners in their transition between these services

The Guidance Co-ordinator is responsible for liaison with Connexions PAs and personnel from other external IAG agencies as required. The school's Partnership Agreement with Connexions Humber defines agreed procedures for PAs. Any learner transition between IAG services is overseen by the Barbara Foyston Guidance Co-ordinator or Ann Rourke Manager of 'The Centre'.

Component 3: All IAG practitioners will recognise professional boundaries and know which alternative provision is appropriate for signposting or referral to meet each learner's guidance needs

This is a school serving a very wide range of needs in an area with many socially and economically disadvantaged families. Consequently, there is a great need for a range and diversity of guidance practitioners 'The Centre' has been developed over the last few years in recognition of these needs. It supports learners and their families in many different ways, including homelessness, benefit issues and family violence. There is a professional counsellor on hand to help learners and their families when necessary.

Element 4 – IAG Responsiveness to the needs of clients

Component 1: IAG provision will promote equality of opportunity and access

The school has a written policy on equal opportunities and the school sets out clear structures and procedures to ensure equality of IAG provision. The Learning Resource Centre and PA interview room are on the ground floor to ensure accessibility to all. IAG materials are available in a variety of formats and differentiated information is available for learners with special needs.

Staff delivering IAG and the PSHCEE programme ensure that material is suitable for all learners. Staff have regular meetings both formally and informally with each other and with outside agencies.

I interviewed learners who were randomly selected by myself and asked them at length about their experiences in school. Not all their comments generally about the school were positive but they were all very positive about the quality of the support they received within PSHCEE, IAG and the work of Barbara Foyston. Those in years 10 and 11 were especially positive about the work experience they had received. All learners are made aware of how to access information, advice and guidance from staff within school and those from outside agencies.

Component 2: IAG will be available to all, with specific resources directed to learners identified as having additional needs.

The school has learners with a wide mix of ability. Learners with identified needs are given extra support either via differentiated materials or classroom support from a classroom support assistant (CSA). See also 1.2 above.

Element 5 – Quality and Delivery of IAG

Component 1: IAG will be underpinned by a development programme of planned personal learning based upon national recommendations

The planned PSHE programme is written and co-ordinated by the Guidance Co-ordinator and delivered by tutors. The content of the programme is based upon DCSF recommendations and covers careers education, sex and relationships education, enterprise and equality and diversity. Learners receive:

- individual progress reviews recorded in the progress file/record of achievement
- support and referral for specialist advice and guidance
- careers education and personal development activities to promote job search including use of the East Riding and Hull Area Prospectus and Common Application Process (www.learnhull.co.uk) writing CVs, application forms and preparing for interviews
- access to available financial support e.g. EMA

All teaching and learning materials are available for staff via the school intranet and lesson plans are prepared and adhered to.

Component 2: IAG will be targeted at the needs of learners and informed by social and economic priorities at local regional and national levels

Well-structured and co-ordinated systems for the delivery of advice and guidance to individual learners are in place with extremely effective referral mechanisms. An excellent relationship exists between the school and advice and guidance staff with a high degree of integration into the school systems enabling effective delivery.

Element 6 – Impartiality of IAG Provision

Component 1: IAG will promote all available options based on the needs and circumstances of each individual.

Information on all options post 16 is made available to all learners via the Area Prospectus and various careers events to which a range of post 16 providers are invited. All learners have free access to the Connexions Careers PA and promotional information from local providers is available in the LRC. Learners are also taken to visit post 16 providers. EBP work experience diaries and Connexions Humber i4u Planners are used with every student.

Component 2: IAG will support learners in making informed decisions not led by institutional targets or goals.

As an 11-16 institution, David Lister School does not favour any particular progression route for its young people. Many progress on to further education at Wilberforce College, Hull College or Bishop Burton College and all available Apprenticeships are discussed with learners. The school has been at the forefront of testing and trialling the new Area Prospectus and Common Application Process (CAP).

Element 7 – IAG for Learning, Work and Progression

Component 1: IAG for learning work and progression will support learners in exploring the implications of possible career choices when planning their futures

The school has a number of learning opportunities that learners are encouraged to access which relate to learning, work and progression. Enterprise activities are on offer together with specific enterprise days, there are strong links with Humberside Education Business Partnership (HEBP), and work experience is offered to all learners in Year 10. Work experience is strongly integrated into the overall IAG programme. The school arranges for learners to visit colleges and for the colleges, armed forces and the Consortium for Learning (CFL) to spend time in school. Visits to the University of Hull are also arranged.

Component 2: The work of IAG practitioners will be informed by up-to-date and accurate Labour Market information (LMI)

Local labour market information (LMI) is gained via work experience placements with local employers. As mentioned above, the schools works closely with EBP to ensure that all learners receive work-related learning to ensure successful progression. Local, regional and national newspapers are used to inform learners of some of the job opportunities available.

Component 3: IAG provision will ensure that all learners have access to the information they need to make informed choices.

This school has been very keen to help in developing the local electronic Area Prospectus and inbuilt Common Application Process and this has been integrated into the PSHCEE programme. All learners are given access to computers and supported by PAs and tutors to research opportunities and make on-line applications. Not all learners have internet access at home the school has therefore kept a stock of paper-based information.

Element 9 – Evaluation of IAG

Component 1: All IAG practitioners and learners are able to feed back their views on the provision within the organisation

Learners are invited to feed back both formally and informally on IAG provision. The Guidance Co-ordinator asks learners to complete a questionnaire to assess the appropriateness of PSHCEE provision in the school at every opportunity e.g. at the end of specific events and at the end of each year.

Regular learner meetings take place between staff delivering PSHCEE where a variety of subjects are discussed including ongoing developments. The Guidance Co-ordinator has conducted a number of surveys with learners and staff. Connexions PAs are able to advocate for the learner if necessary. Staff and management meetings promote discussion between staff regarding the help and support available to learners and adjustments are then made as necessary.

Recommendation

David Lister School provides outstanding examples of good practice in the provision of information, advice and guidance. Many elements of the delivery of IAG at David Lister, could be used as exemplary practice across the region. There is very strong commitment from staff to maintain and improve the standards achieved by the learners attending. There is also a strong emphasis on individual development of self-awareness and self-motivation. The headteacher recognises the importance of IAG in its broadest sense and has demonstrated this by keeping in post a full time non-teaching co-ordinator. Much of the success of the IAG provision in the school can be attributed to the school's Guidance

Co-ordinator, Barbara Foyston. She carries a major responsibility for the implementation of the PSHCEE programme, the liaison with external agencies and the co-ordination of IAG activities.

I have no doubt that the school currently meets the prescribed standard and I strongly recommend that it should be awarded the Kingston-upon-Hull Standard for IAG.

Brenda Hardy 04/06/08

Date of Award: 17.07.08

Date for re-assessment: June 2011