

**IAG Gold Standard assessment –
The Hereford School, Grimsby**

**External Assessment carried out on 18 June 2007
Assessors – Brenda Hardy and Mick Mather**

Overview

Hereford School is an 11-16 school located in an area of considerable social deprivation. The number of students eligible for free school meals is well above the national average.

The school has a written policy for IAG, updated annually, and a coherent programme with schemes of work for each year group from year 7. The school's teaching careers co-ordinator and Connexions Manager, Sandy Braithwaite, writes schemes of work and lesson plans which will be used across North East Lincolnshire. A dedicated team of teachers who have regular meetings and staff development opportunities delivers the PSHCE programme.

An assessment schedule was prepared for the assessors and arrangements made for us to meet members of SMT, head teacher, IAG delivery team, work experience co-ordinator, Connexions PA and a group of young people.

We were given copies of materials used, policy documents, schemes of work and lesson plans, free access to all areas of the school and the opportunity to talk to staff and learners.

Element 1 – Accessible and Visible resources

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

All learners have access to the central library, which has extensive information resources related to IAG in a range of formats. There are computers with internet links available for learners to use.

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

All library staff are familiar with the range, content and applicability of materials and updating is regularly undertaken by the Careers Co-ordinator/Connexions Manager.

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.

Connexions Personal Advisers have a designated room with phone and computer linked to the internet. Learners are given introductory talks by Connexions staff and invited to access help anytime it is felt to be needed. Teachers are aware of the existence of advice and guidance staff and are aware of referral procedures. PAs have regular formal and informal meetings to share information with school staff. Formal meetings between Connexions staff and the Careers Co-ordinator/Connexions Manager are held termly.

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

Overall, communication between school and advice and guidance staff is excellent and provides a strong basis for partnership working. The work of school tutors complements the work of PAs and the Careers Co-ordinator/Connexions Manager operates a referral system to external IAG providers as appropriate.

Element 3 – Linked IAG Provision

Component 1: The provision of linked IAG will be part of the remit of a senior manager within the organisation or service

Sandy Braithwaite, the school's Careers Co-ordinator and Connexions Manager. She works closely with all school staff to ensure that all IAG provision is linked within the management structure. Her work on IAG is recognised outside the school and she has been a key driver of an important local initiatives to develop IAG resources across the local authority. Miss Braithwaite regularly attends partnership meetings and cascades information to colleagues.

Component 2: Practitioners will make clear to learners the links between IAG services and where necessary support learners in their transition between these services

The school has an ethos of raising achievement via motivation and self-awareness and considerable efforts are made by the school to assess the effectiveness of IAG provision through feedback from students. The services offered by external agencies is made clear and learners are supported when referred to external IAG providers.

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

Involvement of external IAG agencies is fully co-ordinated and referrals are made as and when appropriate for individual learners. Referral procedures to internal or external guidance agencies are clear and understood by practitioners.

Element 4 – Quality and Delivery of IAG

Component 1: IAG will be targeted at the needs of learners and informed by social and economic priorities at local regional and national levels

IAG is delivered by a team of teachers, supported by non-teaching staff. Liaison with other agencies is ongoing and external staff are often used either to deliver some of the lessons or for one to one work. School staff use the SIMS database for storage and retrieval of information.

All teaching and learning materials are available for staff and lesson plans are prepared and adhered to.

Component 2: A planned personal development programme based upon DfES/DCSF national recommendations will underpin IAG

The underpinning PSHCE programme comprises a number of sources such as preparation for and debrief of work experience, business liaison, visiting speakers, tutorials, career action plans/interviews and ILPs,

Well-structured and co-ordinated systems for delivery of the programme are in place alongside 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 of the PSHCE programme.

Element 5 – Diversity of IAG Provision

Component 1: IAG provision will recognise and reflect the diversity of learners' needs and promote equality of opportunity and access

The school has a written policy on equal opportunities and the school handbook sets out clear structures and procedures to ensure equality of provision. Lifts are available for physically impaired, IAG materials are available in a variety of formats and differentiated information is available for learners with special needs.

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 in other more neutral premises whenever appropriate

Learners are aware of Connexions Centre in Grimsby and some had accessed this facility with their parents. Off-site consultation with other specialised practitioners (i.e. medical, etc) is arranged as required.

Element 6 – Impartiality of IAG Provision

Component 1: IAG will promote equally all options available and open to learners based on the defined needs and circumstances of each individual to ensure as far as possible, accurate matching of stated need to help and support

Impartiality of information, advice and guidance, especially with regard to career and progression, is seen to be very important within the school. IAG is offered to learners in line with their academic ability, career aspirations and interests. Information on all options post 16 is made available to all learners via a careers convention to which a range of post-16 providers are invited. All learners have free access to Connexions Careers PA and promotional information is available in the LRC from local providers.

Component 2: IAG will support learners in making informed decisions and will not favour any particular learner or groups of learners in order to address institutional targets or goals

The PA has access to a range of learner information – from Connexions Humber's Trakrekord database and the school's internal recording systems in order to help assessment of guidance need. Learners are fully supported in selecting their next steps and in taking necessary action to achieve them.

Element 7 – IAG for Learning and Work

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

The school has a number of resources that learners are encouraged to access which relate to learning and work. It buys in Young Enterprise and offers the Partners' Programme, has strong links with EBLO, and offers work experience to all learners. Work experience is strongly integrated into the overall IAG programme.

EBLO work experience diaries and Connexions Humber i4u Progression Planners are used with every student.

Component 3: IAG provision will ensure that all learners have access to a common 14-19 prospectus from the end of key stage 3 in order that they are made aware of opportunities and qualification requirements for study and training from the age of 14 and for further study, training or employment from the age of 16.

At the time of this assessment, the North East Lincolnshire electronic Area Prospectus (www.lincs2.co.uk) was not fully functional and staff were awaiting training in its use. However, key staff are aware and it is intended that this facility will be built in to the PSHCE programme for 2007/8.

Element 8 – IAG responsiveness to the needs of clients

Component 1: IAG practitioners will liaise with each other and all external agencies and services that provide support for learners

The team of teachers delivering IAG ensure that the all materials used are suitable for all learners; they have regular meetings both formally and informally with each other and outside agencies. The Progress File is used effectively with all year 10s and year 11s.

Component 2: IAG provision will ensure that available information is acknowledged and incorporated into advice and guidance sessions

All IAG information is recorded within learner records. In addition, Connexions Personal Advisers maintain student information in the Trakrekord database. Teachers and PAs are available for consultation at parents' evenings.

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 feedback informally on IAG provision, they are also asked to complete a questionnaire on the appropriateness of PSHCE provision in the school.

Recommendation

Much of what the two assessors saw at Hereford School provided outstanding examples of good practice. Indeed, many elements of the delivery of IAG at Hereford, especially the integration of IAG across the school, could be used as examples of exemplar practice across the sub-region.

There was very strong commitment from all the staff to maintain and improve the standards achieved by the students attending. There was a strong emphasis of individual development through self-awareness and self-motivation. SMT recognised the importance of IAG in its broadest sense being a foundation for individual development, the knock-on effect being raising of attainment at GCSE or similar.

The assessors are pleased to recommend the award of the North East Lincolnshire Gold Standard for IAG to Hereford School.

Mick Mather and Brenda Hardy 21.06 .07

Date of Award: 14th November 2008

Date for re-assessment: June 2010