

14-19 Entitlement Co-ordinator

SUMMARY REPORT

Overview

As a result of consultation with the London Borough of Havering, a need for support on 14-19 rollout was identified and the job role of 14-19 Entitlement Co-ordinator was created to deal specifically around the dissemination of information to a variety of audiences including schools/colleges, parents/carers, Connexions colleagues, CEIAG network and partner agencies. Karen Thipthorp of Prospects Services Ltd was recruited in November 2009 on secondment from her home borough of Bexley to undertake this task. The contract initially ran until the end of March 2010 but was extended until July 2010 due to the success of the rollout and as all parties were agreed that more time should be given to the role in order to maximise the impact and reach a wider target audience. Karen quickly established the relevant networks including attending Collegiate and Diploma Lead meetings along with involving herself with the CEIAG Network, Cegnet and the Diploma Employer Champion Network whilst working with Connexions colleagues, Prospects in the City and offering INSET to all 18 schools in the London Borough of Havering.

Year 9 Options Evenings

Karen also offered her services at Year 9 Options evenings to all schools in the borough and was invited to attend at 5 of the borough's schools: Abbs Cross, Albany, Chafford, Marshall's Park and Sanders Draper. The efficacy of Karen's attendance was not easy to measure as different schools had different levels of engagement with the Diploma. In some schools, notably Abbs Cross, there was high support for her attendance and, as a result, in conjunction with James O'Keefe, a number of parents/carers were seen and information (both verbal and prepared) was disseminated. At other schools where there was less commitment to the Diploma a lesser role/prominence was given but Karen ensured that Diploma documentation was made available to the school for use on the evening and after the event.

Diploma Events

With the help of local information from Connexions' colleagues, it was identified that the same event should run in two locations in the borough in order to best capture the widest possible audience. Karen organised both events with support from James O'Keefe, John Mead and Connexions' colleagues and with some help from the Diploma Leads. Historical evidence from previous events which had been run in the borough suggested that attendance would be very low (Karen was informed that figures in the low 20s would not be unreasonable). The four events in February attracted audiences of 150-220 parents/carers and students and the two events in May attracted similar numbers.

The six events organised were:

- 2nd February 2010, Langton's Hall, Hornchurch – 2 sessions – Year 9 parents/carers/students
- 9th February 2010, Town Hall, Romford – 2 sessions – Year 9 parents/carers and students
- 18th May 2010, Duke's Hall, Hornchurch – Year 8 parents/carers and students
- 27th May 2010, Salvation Army, Romford – Year 8 parents/carers and students

2nd and 9th February – Year 9

These six events were organised in anticipation of Year 9 Options so that young people were aware of the new qualification in advance of their making choices. In order to maximise parents/carers' availability, we decided to run two sessions on each evening. The target audience was reached by way of a direct mailshot from the Connexions database to named students offering them the choice of both dates and all four sessions. A reply-paid envelope

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was included for ease of reply along with the added option of contacting Karen by email. Responses and enquiries were collated by Karen.

18th and 27th May – Year 8

The May events were organised in conjunction with Prospects in the City and, again, were run in two locations in Havering. These events were aimed at Year 8 as they were the first cohort (under the previous government) to be required to stay on in education or a job with accredited training until the age of 17 in line with the previous government's edict on Raising of the Participation Age. The first event on May 18th 2010 was at Duke's Hall, Hornchurch and the second on May 27th at the Salvation Army, Romford. Audiences for both events were between 140-220 parents/carers/students.

For this event, parents/carers of Year 8 pupils received a generic invitation which was hand-delivered by Karen and a colleague to all of the 18 maintained secondary schools in the borough. Prospects in the City organised the monitoring of replies and queries and a personalised invitation was sent out to parents/carers to confirm their attendance at the event they had opted for.

All events were opened by a keynote speaker and comprised an expert panel for Q&A (including Diploma Leads, HE/FE specialists, Diploma Employer Champion) along with the support of Connexions' staff and, for the events held in May, in partnership with Prospects in the City.

The statistics and analysis of the data gathered became more sophisticated after the first events in February, hence the different formats of the information presented below:-

Langton's Hall – Tuesday 2nd February Diploma Event Session 1

Attendees

120 plus attended over the two events which were aimed at parents/carers of Year 9 students. The figure of 120 represents a mix of parents/carers and students. Had some good feedback from parents/carers as they left including a few from Sacred Heart who were disappointed their school was not doing anything for 2010.

Year 9 Pupils

Male Pupils: 27

Female Pupils: 24

First Session: 51 young people represented

School:

Albany: 1

Chafford: 13

Gaynes: 11

Redden Court: 5

St Edwards: 1

Campion: 3

Frances Bardsley: 3

Marshalls Park: 3

Sacred Heart: 11

Langton's Hall – Tuesday 2nd February Diploma Event Session 2

Year 9 Pupils

Male Pupils: 18

Female Pupils: 19

Second Session: 37 young people represented

School:

Bower Park: 1

Chafford: 4

Campion: 1

Frances Bardsley: 7

Diploma Event – Year 8, Thursday 27th May, Salvation Army – Hornchurch

School:	Attendees:		
Abbs Cross	Girls: 2	Boys: 3	Total: 5
Albany	Girls: 4	Boys: 1	Total: 5
Bower Park	Girls: 2	Boys: 1	Total: 3
Campion	Girls: 0	Boys: 6	Total: 6
Chafford	Girls: 2	Boys: 1	Total: 3
Gaynes	Girls: 2	Boys: 1	Total: 3
Emerson	Girls: 0	Boys: 3	Total: 3
Hall Mead	Girls: 0	Boys: 3	Total: 3
Kingswood	Girls: 1	Boys: 1	Total: 2
Marshalls Park	Girls: 2	Boys: 3	Total: 5
Redden Court	Girls: 0	Boys: 1	Total: 1
Royal Liberty	Girls: 0	Boys: 1	Total: 2
St. Edwards	Girls: 4	Boys: 5	Total: 9
Sacred Heart	Girls: 2	Boys: 0	Total: 2
Sanders Draper	Girls: 1	Boys: 1	Total: 2
Totals:	Girls: 22	Boys: 31	Total: 54

There were approximately 140 attendees altogether made up principally of parents/carers.

INSET/Staff Training

In addition to the above, Karen held three training sessions with Connexions' colleagues in Havering and delivered INSET on an 'Overview of the Diploma' to St Edward's School on 10 March 2010 to an audience of 9 staff and on 5th July to Redden Court school where the attendance numbered 8 members of staff including the Head Teacher and two Deputy Heads. No other schools have taken up this offer despite reminders from Karen through the Collegiate and Diploma Leads' meetings and reminders from James O'Keefe.

Diploma Leaflets

A supply of the then DCSF leaflets for each Diploma line which were made available to Connexions' colleagues, schools/colleges and parents/carers/students at Options evenings and the Diploma events. Where relevant, information has been disseminated to colleagues, schools/colleges, parents/carers students by signposting them to useful websites. This has often been through requests from those parents/carers who were unable to attend the events organised wherein Karen either posted or emailed relevant documentation and weblinks.

Other Networks

Karen joined the CEIAG Network to help disseminate information about the Diploma and the wider offer of INSET and any bespoke training that might be required to in-house Careers Co-ordinators. In addition, Karen has continued to work closely with her home borough of Bexley as it is a 'statistical neighbour' to Havering and has maintained contact with relevant 14-19 colleagues there to share best practice. This has been useful for sharing information on experiences of Careers Education and IAG across both boroughs and has fostered greater partnership working and sharing of resources ie common networks (Cegnet, the Diploma Employer Champion Network etc). Karen has worked closely with Jo Jack, Prospects Curriculum & Training Manager to devise INSET and contribute to the CEIAG Network and also with Prospects in the City.

Karen has attended the Collegiate and Diploma Leads Meetings at CEME and has regularly updated attendees with progress reports.

Findings

Overview

It became quickly apparent that, as in other boroughs, there was much misinformation and lack of understanding about the concept of the Diploma and its framework and content. This led us to ensure that any information circulated or events attended made no assumption of any understanding of the new qualification. In view of this, the four month timescale was almost wholly focused on disseminating information about the Diploma. The offer of attending Year 9 Options Evenings, setting up events for parents/carers of Year 9 students and INSET to schools went out swiftly to address these immediate needs.

Year 9 Options Evenings

The original four month tenure of the contract (November 2009-March 2010) meant that the delivery period was somewhat short. This had no impact on Karen's offer to attend Year 9 Options Evenings at all 18 of the maintained secondary schools as work had begun on this before the end of the Christmas term. That said, only 5 out of the 18 schools took up this offer with varying reasons being cited by schools who did not: 'students already well-versed in the Diploma', 'planned events around the Diploma will suffice', 'not needed this year', 'school not yet engaged with the Diploma'. Local information from colleagues and other networks based on their previous experience confirmed that this outcome was not unexpected.

Diploma Events

Again, despite there being a tight timescale it was still possible to organise and run four events in February 2010. There were varying levels of support from the 18 maintained secondary schools in the borough and low expectation about parent/carer involvement (around low 20s was suggested) for such events but the attendance numbers (140-220) at all six events would seem to bear out a strong appetite for Havering parents/carers to be kept informed of new developments in education in order that they are able to help their offspring make informed choices.

Extending the contract to July 2010 allowed us to focus on parents/carers of Year 8 students and a further two events were organised in May 2010. Attendance was strong again (140-220) and not only were parents/carers able to learn about the Diploma in advance of next year's Options but also about the wider 14-19 reform particularly as Year 8 would be the first cohort for Raising of the Participation at that time.

At all events, involvement of Diploma Leads was quite low and mainly revolved around support from those leading on Creative & Media, Business Administration and Finance and IT along with support from Hair & Beauty lecturers at HCFHE.

INSET

INSET training on an 'Overview of the Diploma' was offered to all 18 maintained secondary schools out of which 2 schools took up the offer. Both schools seemed to receive this well and it was confirmation that understanding of the Diploma, in this context, is relatively limited. This does not, of course, preclude the fact that some schools will have accessed training from other sources either central or local and may be well versed nor that those schools who had engaged with the Diploma (ie schools who were leading/part of the consortium) had not already undergone rigorous training in the run up to rollout.

Conclusions

- Focusing the emphasis on the Diploma for the duration of the contract was a necessity in light of lack of activity around this in the previous academic year.
- Getting schools on board with IAG around the Diploma was patchy but drawing conclusions from this is not a straightforward issue. One element which has been strongly proposed in a variety of arenas is that the Diploma structure is complicated and therefore difficult to get across to those who need the information most,

however, it is part of statutory obligation that impartial IAG is delivered in schools, by schools.

- Colleges are more engaged with the Diploma and have been more actively engaged in its promotion as their infrastructure is often better suited to accommodating the new qualification.
- Higher than expected attendance numbers at all six events would seem to indicate that parents/carers are eager to have up-to-date information on education and are willing to give up their free time to learn what choices are on offer to learners.
- Due to the recent change in government the Diploma offer is already changing and it will be important for all those involved in education and IAG to ensure that their information is completely current.

Recommendations

- It will be important to identify who will offer ongoing 14-19 support and to ensure that those involved have access to coherent and ongoing training/information. Obvious candidates for this are in-house Careers Co-ordinators and Connexions PAs as well as the appointed senior staff member in school who is responsible for IAG (as per statutory requirement).
- Benefit can be derived from maintaining the link between the 'statistical neighbours' of Havering and Bexley in order to share best practice and resources particularly due to the similar destinations of both boroughs (ie London universities, City jobs etc). A mechanism needs to be found for this – Karen is working to find a solution and will report back to the London Borough of Havering. It may also be beneficial to identify other 'statistical neighbours' in order to establish similar partnership working relationships.
- As the Diploma offer changes over time and the funding with it most likely diminishes, more creative ways of delivering IAG will need to be implemented. As an example, Prospects are looking into using 'pods' to deliver roadshows in schools/colleges in order to keep the momentum of IAG around the Diploma and related issues.

Contact List

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All four events owe tribute to the generous contribution of those above and other colleagues without whom the success of the evenings would not have been assured.

