

CEIAG Case Study: The Meadows Special School

(part of the Manor Hall Academy trust), Leek, Staffordshire Moorlands

November 2018

The School

The Meadows Special School provides education for young people from the age of 11 to 19 with a range of needs. The School has particular expertise in working with pupils who have profound and multiple learning difficulties, severe learning difficulties including those with communication problems, Autistic Spectrum Disorder and complex needs, and those with moderate learning difficulties.

The School prides itself on being a forward-thinking, enterprising and exciting place to learn and work. The school's vision is to create learning environments where every young person is engaged, can be enterprising and successful in their community, both today and in their future adult life. The school aims to create a hub of inspiration from which students and staff develop their independence, skills, expertise, interests and vocations by:

- Providing a happy, safe and secure environment for learning.
- Creating an atmosphere where adults and young people have value and worth.
- Supporting parents, carers and other adults so that they can support learning and development.
- Building confidence and a strong ethic of work and enterprise.
- Working proactively to meet individual needs.
- Providing a personalised and appropriate curriculum.
- Creating situations where young people interact meaningfully with the community and vice versa.
- Developing independence and self-help skills.
- Broadening young people's experiential horizons.
- Removing barriers for young people with SEND.

Career Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG)

The School achieved The Quality in Careers Standard in May 2017 through the licenced awarding body Entrust Skills & Employability Service.

The CEIAG strategy is thoroughly embedded in the curriculum. This is evidenced in the school's Policy for CEIAG - a whole school Careers Curriculum Map which is mapped to the CDI framework and colour coded for accessibility, with specific schemes of work/medium term plans related to Careers. The Policy specifically states that the careers programme is designed to meet the needs of every student at the School. It is differentiated and personalised to ensure progression through activities that are appropriate to all students' stages of career learning, planning and development. A careers library is available to all students. Careers information is available in a variety of different formats to meet individual needs.

The Careers Leader (and Assistant Headteacher) has developed the comprehensive Personal Development Curriculum Map which starts for each student in Year 7. This is a progressive plan with CEIAG activities that build on the previous year's learning.

The 6th Form Provision map is specifically geared towards transition and there is a strong emphasis on the importance of work experience for all 6th Form students, who are offered the opportunity to take qualifications in Health & Safety at Work, BTEC Employability Skills and British Safety Council awards.

All students work on their own Progress File where they can record their learning and experiences of careers enabling them to reflect on their prior learning and plan how to develop this further. Through the Education, Health and Care Plan process, students are encouraged to relate their current learning to their next steps, transition and future lives. This allows them clearly to see the link between their current school curriculum and future plans.

All students have access to independent and impartial CEIAG through a range of activities. Students and parents can access an Entrust Careers Adviser (qualified to level 6 with Matrix accreditation) through Annual Reviews, parents' evenings, PEP and LAC Reviews and Achievement for All meetings.

The school has extensive links with employers, colleges and training providers enabling students to access vocational course tasters and work experience. Students also have the opportunity to take part in the Grow Moorlands Project which is a Business Enterprise project in collaboration with Buxton and Leek College and the NHS. This gives students the opportunity to learn business enterprise skills.

CEIAG is embedded in all staff roles and staff feel CEIAG is always on the agenda. Annual appraisals are conducted for all teaching staff where they are encouraged to identify their personal CEIAG development needs. Teachers comment that they have the flexibility to respond to students' CEIAG needs and they believe they have access to any CEIAG information and training they may benefit from in a format that meets their needs as well as those of individual students. Staff feel their CEIAG provision meets the needs of the learners and they are proud to deliver a Curriculum Plan that offers relevant and timely CEIAG.

Evaluation & Students' Views

The school believes that a key advantage about achieving the Quality in Careers Standard has been the way it helps them to develop a more robust method of evaluation and reflection.

The Careers Leader is responsible for evaluating all aspects of CEIAG in school. She ensures that monitoring, review and evaluation processes relating to the school's CEIAG Policy are in place and adhered to by meeting with all staff connected with careers on a regular basis. Careers and Transition is a standing agenda item for staff briefings.

The school's Governors take an active role in reviewing the destination data of all students. This information is used to evaluate the CEIAG provision and identify potential gaps. Results of the annual CEIAG Parents' Survey are analysed and reported to Governors for further scrutiny. The school has a strong ethos of communicating with parents, with frequent letters home about events and home/school diaries about day-to-day progress. The CEIAG

Policy is available on the school's website. Feedback is actively sought from all stakeholders to improve CEIAG and the school is open to any suggestions that will improve its CEIAG strategy.

Every student has an Annual Review which looks at their progress in all areas of their education and next steps. Targets are set for each student relating to their CEIAG as part of the annual review process. For example, the school might identify that a student's lack of confidence in travelling independently is a barrier to progression, so will set targets to work on travel training.

The School will always signpost on to other appropriate agencies and ensure that every parent feels supported with their child's transition plans. Feedback from parents and students is sought after every event and annual review and analysed to inform future provision, and to improve future events. Interventions are put in place for individuals and groups based on both the progress data and feedback from the class teacher and parents.

Students interviewed by the Quality in Careers assessors all agreed they felt well supported and informed of their post-16 and post-18 options by their school.

During the Quality in Careers assessment, assessors spoke to a parent, Mrs B. She said that she felt that the careers support offered to her son was "impressive". She recognised that in later school life, post school options were always raised at the annual review meetings. She valued the biennial careers fair as representatives from colleges and work-based training providers were available to offer advice. Mrs B was very complimentary of the school links programmes run by the school and felt that these had enabled her son to ease his transition from school to a full-time FE course with confidence.

The Quality in Careers assessors also spoke to a Parent Governor, Mrs J. She confirmed that Governors receive regular updates around CEIAG developments and have particular interest in destination data of their school leavers on an annual basis.

Engaging Employers and the Community

Students have exposure to employers through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme, their long-term industry links with Morrisons and Asda and the new horticultural initiative, Grow Moorlands.

The school has an extensive work experience programme providing excellent opportunities for expanding career-related knowledge and enterprise learning. In addition, students have access to a wide range of external agencies ranging from local colleges to support organisations such as the Supporting Independence Service, Autism Outreach, EqualBase, Staffordshire County Council Travel Training Scheme and Independent Futures. The links with local colleges have provided valuable opportunities to experience a range of vocational options first hand.

The school's strong links with Morrisons include a member of their staff becoming trained as an acting Teaching Assistant to support students on placement in the store. To secure a work placement, students are required to apply on a company application form and attend an interview before being selected. Students receive an induction and health and safety briefing and are expected to record their experiences and learning in a log book. Morrisons staff believe the programme helps students to develop important life skills whilst raising their awareness of the world of work and allowing them an opportunity to test themselves

in an adult environment. As well as in-store work experience, Morrisons offers mock interviews for students who are also supported by a Job Coach from the school.

The school holds a bi-annual Careers & Transition Parents Evening open to all year groups. This is widely supported by local colleges, training providers and employers including Foxlowe Arts Centre, Staffordshire Fire Service, Asda and the Haregate Job Club.

CEIAG Quality

The School has chosen to demonstrate its commitment and delivery of quality CEIAG by working with Entrust Skills & Employability Service to achieve the national Quality in Careers Standard.

In the most recent accreditation report, the assessor commented:

“There is clear evidence of a broad promotion of CEIAG across school and a whole school ethos of supporting students with their transition. There is a clear pride in achievement and commitment to learning supported by a positive culture throughout the whole school. The bespoke curriculum has an emphasis on applying the skills students learn in lessons to real-life situations which naturally means that careers work is embedded right through the curriculum. Students talk with enthusiasm about what they have been learning in their careers lessons and evidence of their work is clearly on display around the school”.

What’s next? The Careers Leader plans to conduct annual CEIAG CPD audits to help ensure staff are up-to-date with the required quality standards, statutory duties and the whole school approach to CEIAG. This will enable the school to identify, monitor and review CPD training needs during the CEIAG planning and evaluation stages. CEIAG updates will be cascaded by the Careers Leader through staff meetings to keep everyone informed and confident in their provision of CEIAG to students and parents.

The Meadows wants to maintain the excellent links with its key stakeholders and continue to offer a broad range of work-related opportunities to support individual student interests and learning needs.

Progression data will be analysed annually to ensure the school’s CEIAG programme effectively meets the needs of its students and encourages them to develop the skills and confidence required to make a smooth transition into their desired future pathway.

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