

Enhancing Inclusive Practice Fund - Plumpton (Case Study)

What have we learnt?

The following learning has been collated having reviewed the data, and from conversations and questionnaires with schools, providers, parents, practitioners and children and young people following the initial working groups and the early 'Keeping in touch' meetings.

Generic Learning

Recruitment has been a challenge for many projects, and many have had to be creative in terms of sharing, backfilling, training, and developing existing staff or inducting staff new to education but with relevant skills sets or experience.

Collaborative work needs excellent regular communication to ensure that all parties have similar expectation and a collective belief that the project will meet their needs. This has been an issue for some in terms of 'identifying the bar for referral' for example.

Collaborative working needs staff to be flexible to work effectively across different ethos's etc.

Systems such as supervision, Lone Working and Safeguarding need to be clear, consistent, and managed across the partnership.

Projects can support and act as drivers towards whole school initiatives such as developing a sense of Belonging or pupil mental health and wellbeing.

All reporting projects have identified significant improvements in attendance, behaviour and parental confidence for a number of the pupils engaged in the project.

Several projects suggested that their projects will reduce the number of EHCP and Special School applications over time.

Creating branding for the project e.g. The Bridge can create a stronger community partnership and joint ownership feel rather than a situation where one school is 'doing something' to others.

Strand 7 Supporting Transition to 16+ provision.

Early Learning:

- Regular visits to their new college and the opportunity to meet key staff can build confidence and ally fears
- Visits to their current school or college from college staff that will be collaborating with them in the future helps students understand the transition process and builds relationships and security
- Ideally transition planning should begin as early as possible, involving any relevant agencies and specialists throughout the process to ensure the process is joined up and clear to the students
- The transition workers can help to make the transition process as personalised as possible and liaise with parents to understand what is required
- They have identified the importance of developing social belonging for the students

Case study

Plumpton college:

The Plumpton project is working to address 16+ transition issues for the increasing number of EHCP and SEND students enrolling in partnership with several feeder secondaries on a three-point transition plan to improve the quality of inclusive provision.

- Early identification of pupils with SEND needs and sharing practice.
- Bespoke CPD programme for staff to empower vocational practitioners to better support students with SEND.
- Pilot a transition/induction module for first year students to facilitate a 'soft landing' for entrants transitioning 24/25 who will struggle to be work ready.

The development and extension of the early identification planning has been delayed by school availability but is now gaining momentum with the College working more closely with schools to identify the SEND applicants with the schools as part of their statutory responsibility and ensure they have been able to access the enhanced transition programme. Working collaboratively with the schools has enhanced parental confidence in the transition process and an understanding of the SEND offer.

Work was also done to improve parental relationships and confidence, for example a meet and greet, information and Q&A coffee morning was attended by 64 parents.

A summer transition programme was attended by 76 SEND students which included further chance to familiarise themselves with the college, staff and procedures.

The bespoke CPD programme, especially for staff recruited from industry with little teaching experience, is up and running. The work is on three levels UPSKILLING for staff who lack knowledge of SEND and good practice, The second level (MAINTAINING) builds on the initial training and further develop teaching strategies and then (CONSOLIDATING) driven by staff themselves working collaboratively to address personal need and further enhance their practice.

The CPD training was delivered to 110 teaching staff, 9 Curriculum Managers and 25 Programme Managers in February 2024. The feedback from the CPD sessions has been overwhelming positive and is now impacting on quality of teaching and learning. Two new areas include 'drop-in' to support staff with an identified issue and Learning surgeries for staff picking up new classes to identify what strategies they might need for groups or students have been very well received and effective.

Staff comments:

"I feel really well equipped with the information I need to best help support my students" (Motor Vehicle lecturer), "It makes sense now, I didn't really understand why a student was classed as High Needs and another wasn't although both have an EHCP" (Animal Management lecturer) .

61 learning walks have been completed during the life of the pilot, with assessments made against the Teaching & Learning framework. An increased 75% of staff were judged to demonstrate effective adaptive planning and delivery

With regard to the induction and transition programme, the newly recruited Inclusion lead, is currently conducting some data analysis to establish the top 5 reasons why students withdraw from their programme within the 6-week induction period (prior to Census Day). This will help to inform the development of the content of the new transition programme either side of the new academic year.

On development is the introduction of an Outreach Programme to support the re-integration of students who have been out of education for extended periods or are at risk of becoming NEETS to improve their attendance through a supportive programme addressing mental health, anxiety and confidence issues via 121 and small group work to breakdown the barriers to attendance and access to their chosen courses. There is scope to extend this delivery in the local community and Plumpton are working very closely with the East Sussex Education post 16 Strategic Lead.

Recent parent and student surveys have indicated that all new SEND entrants were confident about going to Plumpton and parents strongly agreed that their children knew what to expect and who to contact for support and help to address any issues that arose. Parents strongly agreed that their children's needs would be met and that their child would be safe and well prepared for college.

Our recent Ofsted Inspection (March 2024) identified the following:

Since the previous inspection, leaders have significantly improved the quality of the provision for students with high needs. Managers and teachers implement highly effective teaching strategies and tailored support to make sure students reach their full potential. Students with high needs make excellent progress towards their planned outcomes.

The Ofsted report also commented (Grade Outstanding).

Relationships between the staff and students are positive. Staff provide nurturing support and are genuinely caring and respectful. Effective communication between the disciplines across the campus ensures that students' well-being is at the centre of practice leading to the provision for learners with high needs, judgment being Outstanding.

The following quote from the report is also of particular importance reflecting the progress made in key areas of the pilot project:

"Students with additional learning support needs and those with high needs feel at ease and welcomed within the college. They are supported very effectively by specialist staff to make sure they can access the curriculum and study successfully alongside their peers. Students with high needs are well-prepared for their next steps into further education, employment and towards greater independence".

"Students' anxieties about starting college are managed and alleviated with considerable skill and insight from members of staff. Careful, bespoke planning acknowledges the challenges for the students. Each student is supported in a way which is right for them. Staff have a deep insight and understanding of the individual challenges and anxieties which some students may have".

The College work closely with YES and other agencies to identify young people who would benefit from the Outreach programme and to ensure there is a strong system of information sharing both pre and post transition ESCC Quality Monitoring Visit 2024.