



Department
for Education

EDUCATION & TRAINING
FOUNDATION



QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AND INVOLVING GOVERNORS/ TRUSTEES

PAPER SIX

Quality improvement and involving governors/trustees

The challenge for organisations is to ensure that everyone in the organisation, including governors/trustees, understands what is expected of them in relation to the SEND reforms, and that senior managers monitor the inclusiveness of their provision. They need also to ensure that their quality arrangements are sufficiently robust to rectify swiftly any identified shortfalls in inclusion.

1

Chichester College: a large semi-rural GFE college, with a land-based campus, Brinsbury

The use of a link governor as part of the involvement of the governors in understanding the SEND reforms

The managers adopted a strategy in which the role of a link governor for the Brinsbury campus was seen as particularly beneficial in enabling a continuous communication channel, as the legislation and the new arrangements came into force.

The managers informed the whole governing body of the SEND Reforms and the Code of Practice. This training included activities during governor development days, in which Assistant Principal and Additional Learning Support team provided question and answer sessions. The link governor for Brinsbury liaises regularly with the senior management team, and is kept updated on relevant issues.

Managers involve the governing body in the quality processes, and provide them with regular monitoring reports about the performance of learners with SEND,

identifying any gaps and ensuring appropriate support strategies are in place.

2

Wirral Metropolitan College: a very large urban GFE

A variety of approaches to inform governors of their responsibilities under the SEND reforms

The strategy adopted by managers was to make sure that managers were informed through different channels, so that they understood the nature of the reforms and the practical implications for the college.

The Director of Learning Support, together with the SEND manager in the Local Authority, delivered a presentation to governors summarising the duties and responsibilities set out in the Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice 2015. This initiative emphasised the importance of partnership arrangements and the role of the college in its community. A similar, but more operationally focused, presentation was delivered to all college directors to ensure they understood the implications for their own areas of the college provision.

The college put itself forward for an external SEND Reform Implementation Review, carried out by Achievement for All under a DfE funded project. This process supported the college in systematically going through the requirements under the Code of Practice, and assessing how effectively it was in meeting those

requirements. The outcome was extremely successful, confirming that the majority of requirements were being met. It also resulted in a number of actions for further improvement. This was shared with governors, and also with the Local Authority as they were key to the achievement of the additional actions.

3

Chichester College: a large semi-rural GFE College

Successful use of improvement arrangements to improve overall achievement rates for students with SEND across the college.

The challenge for Chichester College managers in 2015/2016 was to improve the overall achievement rates of young people with SEND, which dropped below those of their peers for the first time in ten years.

The strategy deployed was to scrutinise the data to determine any common factors in those areas where the achievement rates of students with SEND were lower than their peers, and to take action to improve those. A specific area that managers identified, was the achievement rates on GCSE English and Maths courses. An action plan was swiftly put in place.

In order to narrow the gap, managers identified the need for effective and regular communication between the Maths and English department and the ALS team. They appointed a specific member of staff to carry out this liaison, attending regular team meetings, cascading support plans, EHCPs and targets, whilst

feeding back to the ALS team any concerns or amendments necessary to the support on offer. This resulted in a greater awareness by teaching staff of the needs of the students, with a stronger emphasis on specific support for individuals being provided in the classroom. Additionally, more exam concessions assessments were carried out for students undertaking GCSEs.

The success of these measures can be seen in the significant narrowing of the overall achievement gap between learners in receipt and not in receipt of ALS in 2015/16. The achievement gap for learners with ALS compared to non-ALS 2014-2015 was 3.77%, for 2015-2016 the gap reduced to 0.08%.

4

Wirral Metropolitan College: a very large urban GFE

Making sure the college's quality improvement arrangements are inclusive.

The challenge facing managers was to make sure that everyone understood what was expected and that their monitoring arrangements provide good information about individuals with SEND across the college.

The strategy adopted by the managers puts inclusion at the core of the college's quality monitoring arrangements, and ensures that all members of staff understand their responsibilities under the Act.

The Principal chairs the Equality and Diversity Steering group, which identifies any gaps in performance among different groups of students, and sets an annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan

to rectify these, driving forward improvements. The framework for systematic monitoring of support includes classroom observations specifically to review the quality and consistency of learning support across the college. This is helped by clear standards for the quality of learning support assistants' (LSAs) performance developed from the relevant National Occupational Standards. Observation evaluates the way in which LSAs and teachers work together and subsequent action plans may include actions for both. Additional training is provided if needed to reinforce responsibilities and support skills development. An example includes training to help teachers differentiate their approaches to reaching, learning and assessment to meet the needs of students with SEND. This training is provided from the college's range of learning support specialists as well as through external experts.

Managers in all curriculum areas monitor the success of their students with SEND, and report on this as part of their annual Self-Assessment Report. This helps to make sure they have ownership of the students, reinforcing their duties under the Act. The learning support team also complete an annual report which includes specific performance measures such as average rates of referral times.

The managers recognise that successful inclusion is a continuous process, requiring a continuous programme of development, and rigorous monitoring at all levels in the college.

REFLECTION

Consider where you are in relation to your quality improvement arrangements and the extent to which they provide you with the accurate and robust information that you and your governors/trustees require in order to evaluate and monitor the extent to which your organisation is inclusive.

To what extent are you confident that your quality improvement arrangements provide you with an accurate picture of your inclusiveness?

- Very confident
- reasonably confident
- not very confident
- not at all confident

How do you know arrangements are working well?

What are the shortfalls in your arrangements?

What challenges do you face in bringing about improvement?

What strategies/arrangements might you consider to improve your knowledge about the effectiveness of your provision across all aspects of inclusion, from anticipatory activity to achievement?

Finally:

Consider ways in which possible strategies/interventions you have identified in each of these papers could be incorporated into, or form the basis of a strategic plan or action plan to raise the profile of inclusion in your organisation, and overcome some of the challenges you face.

