

PRD project – case study

Building effective practice in partnership working to support young adults (18- 24) to progress to employment, including apprenticeships



Project title – Working Together – Getting young people working

Worth reading if you are interested in: supporting young NEETs into education, employment and training

Contact information

Main contact: Julie McGinn Vice Principal

Name of Peer Review and Development (PRD) group: Cheshire and Warrington Colleges

Participating organisation(s): West Cheshire College, Warrington Collegiate, Macclesfield College, Reaseheath College, Mid Cheshire College, South Cheshire College attended initial project briefings with West Cheshire College, Warrington Collegiate and Macclesfield College participating fully. We also included the Prince's Trust in the project as they are a major contributor to the NEETs engagement in the local area.

What the PRD group set out to do and why

The group decided that the best approach would be to review existing provision for 18+ NEET young people in the area including any strategies that are currently in place within the PRD group. This was to be done by the production of a survey which would be completed by members of the PRD group as well as observing and capturing examples of best practice from within the area. The group agreed that the outcomes should be shared with the group and partner organisations.

The activities would enable group members to build on their existing knowledge base and expand their partnerships in order to improve their ability to support NEET young people into education employment and training

What has been achieved so far

The PRD group have met to discuss current provision and engagement strategies within each organisation and local areas. Open and honest professional discussions took place regarding the different approaches from the colleges. Participants were comfortable sharing their experiences and collaborated to obtain an accurate assessment of current issues and successes.

The Project Manager has visited examples of good practice as identified by the group.

A survey has been devised and returned by partners capturing current provision provided by partners and in the community. Examples of good and unsuccessful practices, as well as common factors in successful engagement activities will be highlighted.

What still needs to be done

Customise

The survey has now been collated and the findings will be disseminated to the PRD group and local partners including those who have contributed to the survey

The outcomes will be cascaded through the federation of North West colleges and training providers

We are planning the following actions:

- To initiate a local strategic multi agency NEET group to include all partners whose remit is to support young people who are NEET
- To initiate a sub-regional multi-agency practitioners group

Resources to be shared with the sector

We will share the survey template and the final report once agreed by partners.

Key learning points

The findings of the survey have informed key learning points:

- There are elements of good practice in engaging NEETs eg multi-agency meetings led by one LA involving strategic discussion on authority wide provision as well as individual cases.
- In some areas there is a lack of understanding about what constitutes NEET, with some participants confusing NEETs with LDD.
- There is some reluctance to share practice at higher organisational levels although practitioners working with NEETs are only too pleased to share ideas.
- There is some reluctance to find out what initiatives are going on locally for NEETs with a perception from some that 'they're not our problem'.
- There are innovative projects which are engaging and retaining NEETs with good progression rates to further training e.g. STEPs and Life-cycle.
- Short courses 6-12 weeks are more successful at engaging NEET young people before progressing onto more permanent provision/employment
- The Mentor/personal tutor role is an important factor in engagement and retention of students who sometimes have many barriers to learning, especially when they progress to further training or into employment.