

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Education, Skills and Culture Scrutiny Committee

28th February 2019

Report of the Head of Participation Chris Millis

Matter for Information

Wards Affected:

All Wards

A report on the Junior Apprenticeship programme in Neath Port Talbot.

Purpose of the Report

This report outlines the current provision for Junior Apprentices in Neath Port Talbot.

Executive Summary

This report will outline the rationale behind the setting up of the Junior Apprenticeship Programme. It will also outline the current provision available to students. The number of students currently accessing this provision is also included in this report.

Background

The Junior Apprenticeship programme began in September 2018. It followed the format already successfully established in both Bridgend and Cardiff and the Vale College. Prior to establishing the Junior Apprenticeship scheme, Karen Thomas (14-19 strategic Manager) had made a visit to Bridgend to see the set up and running of their programme.

The Junior Apprenticeship is a scheme run in collaboration with NPTC Group of Colleges and Key Stage 4 providers within Neath Port Talbot. Currently students who attend the Junior Apprenticeship programme attended the following schools prior to their move to the college:

- Cefn Season.
- Cwmtawe.
- Cymer Afan.
- Dwr Y Felin
- Llangatwg.
- St Joseph's
- Ysgol Bae Baglan.
- Ysgol Cwm Brombil.
- Ystalyfera.

The scheme has been set up to enable students to access an alternative curriculum when they reach year 10. This course would be an alternative to the GCSE curriculum they would be offered in schools. It is intended for students who have become disengaged from school and would benefit from a reduced vocational pathway for Key Stage 4.

The current Junior Apprenticeship programme.

Students can opt for the Junior Apprenticeship scheme in year 10 as an alternative curriculum to that offered in secondary schools. The students who currently attend the college for the Junior Apprenticeship programme follow one of three pathways. There is one group of year 10 pupils pursuing a Level 2 course in Hair and Beauty. Another group of students in year 10 are pursuing a Level 2 course in Mixed Construction. All pupils on the Junior Apprenticeship course also study GCSE English and both GCSE Maths and Maths-Numeracy. Within their course the statutory

curriculum areas of Personal Social Education, Careers and the World of Work and Religious Studies are also covered during enrichment sessions.

At present there is also a group of year 11 students on the Junior Apprenticeship scheme. Some pupils in year 10 were offered the opportunity to pursue a Level 1 qualification in Public Services during year 11. All pupils on the Junior Apprenticeship course also study GCSE English and both GCSE Maths and Maths-Numeracy. Within their course the statutory curriculum areas of Personal Social Education, Careers and the World of Work and Religious Studies are also covered during enrichment sessions.

Support in College:

- There are currently four groups of apprentices (two in Mixed Construction, one in Hair and Beauty and one in Public Services). A Learning Coach supports each of these groups.
- Students have been given a 'common room' area within Afan College. This has caused problems of capacity for the college. The students are due to be moving to a self-contained area within the college grounds. This will allow common rooms, teaching rooms and areas for reflection for students.
- A breakfast club is now operating for all students every day. There had been issues with students arriving at different times (due to transport). A breakfast club allows for a smooth start to the day. It has also helped in building relationships between the Learning Coaches and the students.
- Attendance is communicated to schools on a weekly basis. This information also goes automatically to the Education Welfare Officer for the school.
- There is a monthly meeting between the schools and the college to address any issues from the programme.
- The college has access to a worker from the Cynnydd Project to support students. This worker is funded from European funding to support vulnerable students in helping to reduce their chances of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment and Training).

Problems faced in the first term:

- Due to circumstances outside of the control of the college facilities in the college were restricted in the first few weeks (this included the kitchen facilities due to Asbestos issues).
- Transport issues, especially the length of the journey.
- Communication between schools and the college have not always worked at the speed required to meet the needs of students.
- Systems and procedures in the college and schools were different.
- Despite extensive checks before offering a place to students a number have either wanted to return to school, or the college have felt that this scheme is not the most suitable for them.

However, despite these problems continuous communication between schools, college and the Local Authority have managed to resolve problems. From the start of the Spring Term, there have been fewer issues for students and no further students have left the course.

Breakdown of students who have left the Junior Apprenticeship Programme in the first term.

Construction:

- 21 pupils were registered on the course for September 2018.
- In the first term 6 pupils left the course (28% loss).
- Five of these pupils the college deemed unsuitable for the course (23% of the cohort).
- Two pupils decided that the course did not suit their needs and asked to leave the course (9% of the cohort).

Hair and Beauty:

- 17 pupils were registered on the course for September 2018.
- In the first term 7 pupils had left the course (41% loss).
- Two of these pupils the college deemed were unsuitable to continue with the course (12% of the cohort).
- Three of these pupils made an active choice to return to school (18% of the cohort).
- One pupil did not take up her place (5% of the cohort).
- One pupil was removed from formal education (5% of the cohort).

Public Services:

- 14 pupils were registered on the course for September 2018.
- In the first term 6 pupils had left the course (43% loss)
- One pupil did not take up their place on the course (7% of the cohort).
- One pupil decided to return to school (7% of the cohort).
- Three of these pupils the college deemed were unsuitable to continue with the course (21% of the course).
- One pupil has been moved on to an IT course (7% of the cohort).

Financial Impact

- The 14-19 budget has supported the appointment of a Junior Apprenticeship Coordinator. This role is based permanently in Afan College and is the pastoral support for students. The role also provides a continuing link between the students and the schools.
- Welsh Government is funding the college £2000 per student.
- Schools fund the remaining £4,500 from their allocated budget per student and Pupil Development Grant funding.
- Pupils on free school meals continue to have this in college.
- In order to ensure that schools continue to receive funding for the students there is a dual registration system. Students remain on roll at their school. They are also enrolled in the college.
- The cost for transport is currently being covered by the Education transport budget.

Integrated Impact Assessment

There are no impacts associated with this report.

Workforce Impacts

There are no workforce impacts associated with this report.

Legal Powers

There are no legal impacts associated with this report.

Risk Management

There are no Risk Management impacts associated with this report.

Consultation

There is no requirement for consultation

Recommendations

That members note this report for information

Reasons for Proposed Decision

N/A

Implementation of Decision

N/A

Appendices

N/A

List of Background Papers

N/A

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