**Aimhigher NCOP School and College Forum 6th December 2017**

**Format:**

A 1.5 hour lunchtime briefing on progress to date, including:

* Contributions from two schools on how the programme has been integrated into the wider curriculum
* Round table discussions to identify and share both good practice and challenges faced
* Opportunity to look at upcoming activity and future planning

**Inputs:**

The event provided a good opportunity to thank school and college staff for their support to get the programme “from concept to delivery” so rapidly, and to share information on our progress to date.

Presentations by St Michael’s and Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy (OSCA) demonstrated how the programme had been embedded into schools, and illustrated significant local tailoring and innovation:

* In St Michael’s where 80% of students are NCOP eligible, the programme seeks to maximise opportunities for all students to be supported.
  + In year 9 the focus is on awareness and aspiration raising, via weekly student voice meetings and research activities, mentoring carousels, virtual campus visits and promoting the importance of GCSEs, with an emphasis on Modern Foreign Languages.
  + In years 10 & 11 the focus is on GCSE support (My Tutor for high performing students in Maths and English, focus days for middle attaining students and revision residential for borderline students). Careers evenings have been used to engage year 11 parents and carers.
* At OSCA, where 38% of students are NCOP eligible , the More Able and Gifted and Talented registers have been identified for intensive support.
  + A survey has been developed to identify students’ needs, leading to a focus on re-engagement, motivation and career aspiration-raising. The school’s APA has delivered whole year group assemblies, and is working with the school coordinator to ensure at least 50% of students attending large group activities are from the NCOP cohort (100% for more intensive activity).
  + The school has developed self-reflection documentation to enable students capture their learning after each activity.
  + Staff buy-in has been generated via CPD briefing sessions, flagging NCOP students on the school’s SIMS system, and linking Aimhigher Plus to the house rewards system and Teach First “Challenge the Impossible” programme.
  + To create ‘buy in’ from staff and support the progression agenda in school, staff can bid for Aimhigher funding by demonstrating how any proposed activity will support the “5 A’s” model (awareness, aspiration, attainment, application and access). Aimhigher Parental Engagement meetings are being developed.

**Outcomes:**

Those present valued the insights from St Michael’s and OSCA, with many delegates taking away transferable ideas, particularly around the targeting of students and the engagement of curriculum and senior leaders.

Colleagues in the room identified the placement of APA’s in schools and colleges as the most beneficial part of the programme. APA’s have been able to create some capacity in school whilst delivering effective interventions with NCOP learners.

The Aimhigher plus fund to support progression of NCOP leaners has also been useful and has and will continue to be used in a variety of ways. Colleagues suggested that they would like more opportunities to share best practice. Case studies and ideas of how to spend the funds to make the most impact would be useful moving forward.

Round table discussions supported further sharing of good practice and development ideas.

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| **Challenges** | **What Works and Development Ideas** |
| Raising awareness and gaining the support of curriculum and senior leaders in some schools and colleges | * Opening up of Aimhigher Plus funding via internal bidding process * Aimhigher to produce termly updates for school and college coordinators to share with senior colleagues. * Consider inviting SLT reps to accompany coordinators to next Forum (7th March 2018) |
| Access to students for activity during school or college day | * Avoidance of core subject curriculum time * Ensuring all activity is flagged in school and college planning calendars and approval systems * Greater use of after-school and evening delivery slots * Development of more weekend and holiday activity |
| Achieving best fit with FE curriculum, timetable and student attendance patterns | * Use of “drop –in” surgery type support sessions * Creation of an FE Forum to address challenges of working with FE and 6th Form Colleges students. First meeting planned for January 2018 |
| Making the NCOP programme inclusive and not exclusive. | * Mobilise APA’s in schools to work with a group of students on a less intensive bases, such as lunch time groups, assemblies and tutor group sessions * Take the opportunity to support students who are FSM/PP on activities that are less intensive * Look to engage HEI outreach work that is not NCOP related. |
| Making the most of the funding | * Aimhigher to share with schools information around activity/interventions that have proven to make a difference * Guidance around how and where funding can be used * Any useful case studies with examples of how to measure impact |

**A.O.B**

Next Forum (venue to be confirmed)

07 March 2018

09:00 – 13:00

Please encourage a member of SLT and your Aimhigher coordinator to attend.