

Colegau Cymru CPG – “Delivering Inclusive Further Education”

21/05/19

During the presentations, Chris Denham, Colegau Cymru, spoke about the three areas of change as a result of transformation - new duties, new skills and new partnerships – and gave an update on where we are now regarding the ALN Code and transformation.

Joe Baldwin, Bridgend College, went on to talk about the good work at the college, and how prepared FE are for transformation – training and pilot schemes have been rolled out in preparation.

Finally, Karen Phillips, Coleg y Cymoedd, discussed the opportunities and challenges ahead.

Suzy Davies AM then asked the audience some probing questions such as: Have FE views on funding been considered? What funding will FE get to ensure the ALN Act and Code are effective?

From the discussion that followed, several points were raised:

- Will there be future competition between colleges for “good” ALNCos?
- How does the Act cover academic study versus vocational?
- Learner numbers - how might schools and LAs interpret the code? Will this interpretation transfer appropriately to a college?
- There needs to be consistency between FEIs or there is a risk of a postcode lottery for learners
- Both the Act, Code and Transformation process encourages collaboration and partnership between Local Authorities and FEIs which in turn, promises a better deal for children and young people
- Cost - the impact assessment carried out a few years ago suggested that the costs to FEIs might be in the region of £40k across the sector. The increase in staff needed to meet the new requirements is likely to be well in excess of £1 million per year and this does not consider any additional commissioned services we might be required to purchase. The Additional Learning Support allocation for colleges in Wales in 2018/19 was £7.6 million - this was not nearly enough to meet the needs of the 10,500 young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities