

QUALITY IN CAREERS WEBSITE ©

CEIAG Case Study: BALLYCLARE SECONDARY SCHOOL, Northern Ireland

Our first case study of a school in Northern Ireland working towards achieving the Quality in Careers Standard.

The School

Ballyclare Secondary School is a non-selective controlled secondary school with 1023 pupils in County Antrim, Northern Ireland.

It is an all ability, co-educational school for 11 to 18-year olds with an ethos that aims to ensure that *“every child, regardless of intellectual ability or social background, should have a rewarding educational experience.”*

Ballyclare aims for personal excellence being something that every child can achieve.

The following statements represent some of the school’s aims and values:

- to acquire knowledge, skills and practical abilities and the will to use them
- to be prepared for their adult lives at home, at work, at leisure and at large as consumers and citizens
- to involve parents actively involved in the school, and in their children’s education

Career Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG)

Ballyclare is currently working towards the **Quality in Careers Standard** through the awarding body - **Investor in Careers**.

As at July 2017, the school has successfully been awarded Stages 1 & 2 for their Commitment, Organisation and Delivery of their CEIAG programme. They are currently preparing for the final Stage 3 assessment of their approach to Evaluation and staff development.

This Case Study, therefore, provides the “story so far” of the school’s developmental approach to securing Quality in Careers accreditation.

Ballyclare has a committed and experienced team who have developed and implemented their “Preparing for Success” CEIAG programme which runs alongside the Northern Ireland Curriculum and Entitlement Framework.

Themes within in the differentiated programme cover:

1. Improving Careers Education
2. Improving access to Careers Information
3. Improving the provision of Careers Advice and Guidance
4. Improving Quality
5. Improving Professional Development.

There is a whole school / staff contribution to embedding CEIAG learning; this was backed up through the assessment process with evidence (for example) from discussions with staff delivering Home Economics and Health & Social Care, who were able to show how they implement the scheme of work and cross curricular learning.

Ballyclare makes effective use of careers resources available with limited budgets. Its use of LMI is a particular strength with a range of resources and information sources used with a specific ‘Work in the Local and Global Economy’ unit of work within the CEIAG programme.

During the assessment process, staff at Ballyclare provided evidence of LMI awareness and analysis which included projections, identification of growth sectors in the local and regional economy. Students interviewed also demonstrated LMI awareness.

Past pupils and their success stories are used effectively, with Ballyclare demonstrating a structured and effective use of destinations data.

1:1 Careers advice and guidance interviews are provided to students in Year 12 by external Department for Economy Careers Service advisers. Ballyclare also utilises Careers Service NI to provide all students with access to careers information. Specialist IAG input is in place for SEND. There is a contingency plan in place where the school can provide further careers interviews if needed.

Evaluation & Students’ Views

Student feedback is taken on specific CEIAG learning activities and students review their experiences. This will be reviewed and assessed further in Stage 3 of the accreditation process.

Engaging Employers and the Community

Staff at Ballyclare have good links with employers, community and parents which enhance its CEIAG programme - evidence and examples provided during the assessment process to date confirm this.

Subjects are enhanced by extracurricular links and activities - such as Young Farmers, Eco clubs and Ulster Wildlife.

Ballyclare has a structured approach to work experience, and pupils talk well about the benefits they have gained as a result.

CEIAG Quality

Ballyclare Secondary School has voluntarily chosen to demonstrate its commitment and delivery of quality CEIAG by working with the CSW Group's **Investor in Careers** team to achieve the national **Quality in Careers Standard**.

As this Case Study hopefully shows, they are working well towards achieving full accreditation for the award – and, the Awarding Body team from Investor in Carers confirms that, on the basis of their progress so far, Ballyclare is on track to meet the Standard and to be seen as an example of outstanding CEIAG practice in Northern Ireland.

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