

Hertford, Hatfield & Potters Bar Area: Guiding Principles and “that means” statements

Introduction

Through a two-part 2020 workshop, Hertford, Hatfield & Potters Bar heads and other school representatives worked together to build consensus and deepen their understanding of the ‘learning experiences’ which will define the core of Hertfordshire and individual schools’ Educational Vision. This led them to generate a set of organising guiding principles that will help define that Vision and how it is realised.

In addition to agreeing a set of guiding principles and challenge statements, Part two of the workshop enabled them to check that they had shared understanding of the meaning and implications of theirs and Stevenage’s principles.

Agreeing Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles were generated and agreed by participants:

- Principle 1: We want learning experiences to be enjoyable, safe, healthy and accessible
- Principle 2: Parents have the right to be informed and involved in the education that is appropriate for their child
- Principle 3: Local community will have a collective provision for learning opportunities for the young and old
- Principle 4: Curriculum will be diverse and reflect the demands of society without losing sight of the provision of a rounded education
- Principle 5: All learners have the right to be considered as a whole person
- Principle 6: All learners have the right to feel safe
- Principle 7: Schools should be developed as a community hub
- Principle 8: Curriculum should enable learners to use leisure time effectively and to contribute to community
- Principle 9: All learners should receive quality learning experience in a setting appropriate to their needs
- Principle 10: The learning environment should take into consideration different learning styles and provide opportunities to socialise and relax

Activity 3b: Review of Hertford, Hatfield & Potters Bar’ and Stevenage’s Principles

Participants reviewed their principles and those generated by Stevenage. There was agreement on all seven Stevenage’s principles. Five of Stevenage’s principles received very strong support. These are:

Principle 2: Our curriculum and learning experience will be personalised, flexible, relevant, rich and stimulating with breadth and depth of choice

Principle 3: We want our learners to acquire the qualities, skills and competencies for life. **There was consensus that the phrase ‘that have a currency with employers, FE and HE providers’ should be replaced with ‘that enhance the development of the individual’**

Principle 4: Our vision will be values-led and inclusive. Participants argued that the phrase 'values led' is misleading and will distract the LA and schools from being inclusive. Whose values are we talking about here?

Principle 5: Schools are the heart of our community and will lead in delivering services to meet community needs and interests

Principle 6: We want the learning experience to be enjoyable, safe, and healthy. (Participants suggested adding 'accessible')

Activity 4: Further Analysis of Hertford, Hatfield & Potters Bar's Principles

In addition, participants analysed five highline principles (including three of Stevenage's principles) and uncovered their implications. These are set out below with each principle that was articulated by the group set out in bold and statements that describe what 'that means' in practice organised beneath it.

Principle 1: Our vision will be (delete - values-led and) inclusive. That means

- All learners will have access to an appropriate curriculum and learning opportunities
- Sufficient and relevant resources will be made available to support the delivery of Personalised learning Plans
- Schools will have well-designed, modern buildings that will serve the whole community

Principle 2: We want our learners to acquire the qualities, skills and competencies that will prepare them for life that enhance the development of the individual. That means...

- Schools will work in partnership with each other, training providers, employers, FE and HE providers and take advantage of the specialisms offered
- Schools will offer relevant and flexible curriculum that will meet the needs of all learners
- We will 'commission' teaching from a wider range of providers (industry, media, creative arts, technology, etc) and encourage them to come in and share expertise
- We will offer a more flexible assessment system which enable schools to test/examine learners at different times

Principle 3: All learners have the right to receive a high quality learning experience in a setting appropriate to their needs. That means.....

- We will provide relevant information about what is available for parents and learners
- All learners will be able to access Centres of Excellence
- We will develop a continuum of provision and provide access to a wide range of learning opportunities at a place and time appropriate to learners' needs
- Schools will be encouraged to share expertise and good practice
- We will provide high quality buildings with suitable spaces for learning, social interaction and leisure
- Our teaching groups will be flexible learning groups

Principle 4: All pupils have the right to be considered as a whole person. That means.....

- We provide appropriate resources (e.g. counselling, medical support, mentoring, staff skills) in schools to facilitate this
- We will change our perception about the school's role in relation to the child. Schools will have a wider and more involving role in the overall development of a child
- We will incorporate flexible school hours to enable the whole school community involvement in extra curricular activities
- We will involve wider inter-agency working practices to meet the needs of all learners and the whole school community
- Parents will be supported and educated to encourage more involvement in their child's education
- We will use 'citizenship' in practical ways to encourage peer mentoring, etc

Principle 5: Our curriculum and learning experience will be personalised, flexible, relevant, rich and stimulating with breadth and depth of choice

- We will mechanisms (e.g. high quality environment and up to date state of the art equipment) in place which can deliver the appropriate curriculum and learning experience. This will be monitored and appropriately resourced
- All learners and teachers will have access to appropriate resources. We will address 'digital divide' by ensuring that children have access to new technologies at school and at home
- All learners will have access to relevant advice and guidance to make informed choices
- We will provide a diversity of learning opportunities (variety of learning bases, network of multi-professional support)
- We will develop links with partner agencies to ensure children are not disaffected
- Schools will operate flexibility of hours to ensure that learners can access learning from para-professionals (e.g. workers in the 'real' world)
- Curriculum will reflect the diversity of our society without losing sight of the rounded education
- Schools will establish closer links with employers
- We will prepare learners to become 'global workers' and enable them to work for virtual organisations across the world in multi-cultural settings