Aimhigher Kent & Medway Learning Mentor Survey 2009-10

Analysis of Results

Overview

All 42* AHKM target schools were emailed a link to an on-line survey (*number of target schools now reduced due to amalgamation of some schools into academies).

Responses were received from 29 schools (Kent=24, Medway=5) (69% response rate).

Questions in this survey differed from those in the 2008-09 survey as the 2009-10 survey asked questions directly related to the sustainability of AHKM post-2011.

Summary of Responses

Q In your opinion, what do you think might significantly hinder Aimhigher delivery in your school during 2010-11? (LMs could choose more than one and therefore data on chart shown by number not percentage):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your workload</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student timetable constraints</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of resources eg room, telephone</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of offer from partner HEIs</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specified below):</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The support of teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lack of training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- National Challenge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Unknown throughout the school system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Time – 16 hours isn't enough to cover</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>years 9 to 13</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig 1
Q. What activities do you think your school should continue to try and fund, where possible, post-2011? (LMs could choose more than one and therefore data on chart shown by number not percentage):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Designated Learning Mentor work – HE</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEI master class or taster session</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEI campus visit</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associates Programme (1-1 or small group work delivered by undergraduate)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE Ambassador talks (delivered by undergraduate eg What’s HE really like?)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCAS support eg help with statements</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specified below)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Student finance assistance and the Aimhigher summer school</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 6th form general support – pastoral and academic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Careers Talks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Pie chart]

Fig 2

Q. What do you feel your school will miss the most if Aimhigher funding ceases? Please state why:

Responses summarised and included:
1-1 support for students and access to a Learning Mentor whenever they require it
Ah funding provides the resources the Learning Mentor uses
The Roadshow, campus visits, summer schools, master classes and taster sessions and a designated person to organise them
A specialist to deal with specific queries and subjects eg UCAS
“It’s not so much what the school will miss but the students. My Aimhigher students are very proud to be called so and because of this, I am in no doubt, more motivated in their studies than they would be otherwise”

“The school will miss the range of support and activities that Aimhigher offers to the students both within and outside the school, as the school may not have the funds or staff in place to carry these out. The school will also miss the links and contact with the various HE and FE establishments, as they will not have the same links and networks in place as Aimhigher has”

“I think the one-to-one mentoring would be missed the most. Although I only started in April 2010, the change in attitude of the students I am working with is evident already”

“Having someone available on a full time basis for students to drop in and talk to whenever they need to. The visits to local HEIs would also be a huge miss as they have always had a positive impact on our students”

“The confidence it instils in pupils that they have the opportunity and the ability to consider HE”

“Our students would miss the many taster days, university visits, assemblies and master classes which have now become embedded into the college calendar”

**Q** What information could AHKM provide to your school to encourage them to sustain delivery of AHKM related activities, post-2011?

**Responses summarised and included:**
Contact details for WP officers in colleges and universities
Individual data about delivery and impact
Statistics
Up to date knowledge of Student Finance

“Just exactly what you do now, collate data and feed this back to the Headteacher directly, and all staff through Learning Mentor, showing factual evidence of the impact Aimhigher has on the targeted students they work with”

“You’ve only got to look at the events/ sessions that students have been able to access due to the scheme. Focus on the successes, and the impact of which there are many!!”

“Information about the amount of students that have applied for FE and HE from recent years compared to those that applied before AHKM was formed and those that have applied and continued their education in 6th forms and compare this also with areas that do not receive Aimhigher intervention”

**Q** For each of the activities below, please rate what impact participation in this activity has had on your AH cohort, in changing their attitudes towards further study at college or university? (Fig 3)
Q What can AHKM do to support you in your role during 2010-2011?

Ongoing training
Continue with conferences and cluster meetings
Remind us about paperwork and support us if we need it
Reduce the amount of paperwork

“The programme of conferences and cluster meetings available throughout the year, together with the core team and website, provide me with all the information and support I need”

“Nothing, the Aimhigher team are a great support already”

“Participation of many more workshops for vocational routes, involve the FE colleges”

“Keep offering days out and opportunities for the students to explore FE/HE. Keep the Project funding”

“Continue the Roadshow and if possible extend it to Yr12. Try and increase the HE taster days and if possible spread them more evenly during terms 3-6. Maintain the financial support for transport for Campus visits and taster days. Further Mentor training days would be valuable”

“Continue to provide training opportunities for learning mentors. More opportunities to meet with other mentors to share good practice would also be useful”

“I would like AHKM to come into the school to give a presentation to the staff in particular the senior management about the work Aimhigher does and what the role of the Aimhigher co-ordinator/Learning mentor is within the school”

Q Are there any other activities (not previously offered) that the AHKM Partnership should offer in 2010-11? Or, what activities already offered would you like to see more of?

- More vocationally orientated events, perhaps a 1 or 2 day experience of a career linked to a particular subject, which could also be used as an important addition to a student’s CV
- More CPD opportunities for AHKM LMs or development opportunities. Help facilitate a meeting with school and the LM about how the school could continue AHKM activities post 2011, I personally feel in the dark about how the school wants to move forward
- Subject specific taster days at universities
- Vocational ie plumbing, hairdressing, vehicle maintenance
- 3 years in 1 year, this course was provided by CCCU. It was fantastic and gave student a chance to experience 3 years of University in 1 year spread over the course of the year. Outstanding
- More offers made by Universities, so we can get more students out there experiencing them. Summer Schools are always a favourite
- School visits by professionals with interesting jobs that require HE
- Mentor training
- Extending the offer of the Roadshow to Yr 12 would be very helpful
- We attended two university campus visits - the taster day at CCCU was fantastic and I would definitely like to see more of them for each of the year groups. I am going to be linking in more with the universities this year
An Online forum for 6th formers to ask current university students questions and to network with other students possibly going to the same university so that they know someone else there when they get to the campus, similar a buddy system. But a monitored safe forum. Taster days and campus visits. The Ambassador Scheme. Talks/Presentations from FE/HE establishments in school.

- Provide subject specific ambassadors to support students

Do you have any other comments that you would like to feed back to the Partnership?

I really believe in Aimhigher and the service it provides for targeted young people although I have conflicting thoughts about how we target sometimes. It would be a great shame for Aimhigher to disappear altogether and I know that the students will miss out if a similar provision is not put in place after 2011. I am grateful for the opportunity that this job has given me to understand education, mentoring skills, organisation skills and I have learned how to take the challenges head on. My fear is that without the partnership communication could break down between FE colleges, schools and universities which will have a detrimental effect on students who don’t get this information normally. I also think that if AHKm disappears there will be a lack of structure which could mean the school will take on a different agenda.

Aimhigher is a fantastic project, it’s great to be part of it and the help the students receive is outstanding. Aimhigher and the work I do within the College was part of the information given to the Investors in People team when the College was recently awarded their special status.

It is my belief that through Aimhigher’s training to become a mentor this in turn had an enormous impact on my joint subsequent new role of CEIAG Coordinator 2 years ago in helping to reducing the school’s NEETs from 16% to 1% over 2 years in conjunction to working more closely with Connexions. Although this is not a direct remit of Aimhigher it most certainly has been an indirect one and one the funders need to recognise.

Having been involved with the Partnership for six years I have found the initial training and ongoing support excellent and would, alongside general praise for the efforts of the central team, highlight Sharon Smith’s work to provide us with an evaluation framework despite the pain of the paperwork.

The targeting of the whole student body and not selective opportunities

Mandy Fretwell
Project Officer: Monitoring & Evaluation
October 2010