BRING IT ON

CAREER CONNECTIONS PILOT PROGRAMME

REPORT

2008 to 2009

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Programme Details

Momentum is delivering this pilot programme to develop effective partnerships between companies in the ICT industry and secondary schools in Northern Ireland for the benefit of all. Nineteen schools are participating and member companies were invited to join so they can be linked to a school or schools to host the two elements offered within the programme

Bring IT On Campaign

Delivery of this pilot programme will enhance other activities being carried out by Momentum under the Bring IT On Campaign. Throughout the programme this campaign will be highlighted by the use of promotional branding and the Bring IT On website will be promoted to teachers and pupils.

Programme Elements

The elements that are being used in this pilot programme - ***Class Connection*** **and** ***Teacher Insight*** were developed by FOSEC in the North West. However Momentum will use this model for the ICT industry only.

Class Connection

Each school is invited bring a group of pupils on a visit to its linked company. The visit will include a tour of the company and a presentation on the company, its activities and the range of career opportunities. The presentation will be followed by a Q&A sessions. Visits will last for around 1.5 hours.
Pupils in the visiting group will be aged from 14 to 17 and they may not necessarily be studying an ICT subject. As a result of the visit it is expected that pupils will achieve the following:

- Understanding of the business of real companies operating in the ICT sector
- Practical and up-to-date understanding of the variety of career opportunities available in the industry
- Understanding of the qualifications required to join the industry

It is also hoped that visits will help to generate a positive attitude to the ICT industry in general, and to ICT companies in Northern Ireland in particular.

Teacher Insight

Each school is invited to place a teacher in a participating ICT company for a two-day period of work shadowing. The first day will be with a senior member of staff who will explain the business model operated by the company. Specifically the products and/or services they sell, where and how they sell them and how the company is structured. The second day will be spent with a recent recruit to the company who is in a technical role such as software development, technical support or operations. The purpose of this day is to gain an understanding of the opportunities offered by the company, the variety of the job and the skills required to be successful. As a result of this work shadowing experience it is expected that teachers will achieve the following:

- Understanding of the latest working practices in the ICT industry
- Understanding of the work environment so as to better inform students
- Understanding of the diversity of careers within the ICT industry
- Building linkages with industry
- Informing industry about the education sector

Schools Involved

Most of the schools are within the Greater Belfast area with the exception of two in the Antrim area, three in North Down and one in South Down.

- *Ashfield Girls High School*
- *Aquinas Grammar School*
- *Ballyclare High School*
- *Belfast Model School for Girls*
- *Belfast Royal Academy*
- *Bloomfield Collegiate School*
- *Campbell College*
- *Dominican College*
- *Glengormley High School*
- *Glenlola Collegiate, Bangor*
- *Grosvenor Grammar School*
- *Malone College*
- *Priory Integrated College, Holywood*
- *Regent House Grammar School, Newtownards*
- *Shimna Integrated College, Newcastle*
- *St Columba's College, Portaferry*
- *St Dominic's Grammar School*
- *Victoria College*
- *Wellington College*

Companies Involved

Details of the pilot programme were circulated to Momentum member companies through an ezine and they where invited to participate in the scheme. The companies listed below expressed an interest so they where contacted and provided with full details of the programme.

- *Allstate NI*
- *Asidua*
- *BT*
- *Blueprint Recruitment*
- *Citi*
- *EG Information Consulting*
- *Fujitsu*
- *Good on Paper*
- *Hewlett-Packard*
- *ICS Computing*
- *Kainos*
- *Liberty IT*
- *Media Lightbox*
- *No More Art*
- *Northgate Managed Services*
- *SAP*
- *Texthelp Systems*

Implementation of the programme

January, February & March 2009

- Companies contacted with details of the programme.
- Liaison with companies to link to schools.
- Pupil work placements, company visits and other activities arranged.

Meeting programme objectives

Obstacles affecting the delivery of the programme:-

Following meetings with the schools involved it was evident that the two elements offered under the pilot were not suitable for all schools.
This was further reinforced by some companies that wanted to be involved but could not host a visit to their premises.
Teacher's industrial action which started in January affected the ability for teachers to be released from school for work shadowing without funding being available for a substitute teacher.
Not all companies could host a two day teacher work shadowing placement.

How we dealt with these:-

Some schools suggested alternative activities which they felt would benefit their pupils and also promote the ICT industry as a career choice. It was decided that, when possible, we would liaise with companies to meet these requests so that all the schools involved would benefit from the programme.
Teachers found it easier to be released from school for work shadowing during late May and June when exams were taking place or completed.
Companies were offered wider options for hosting work shadowing so that it would fit in with their other business activities.

Activities

- Fifteen school visits to seven companies – further details on summary table Page 7.
- ICT careers event at two schools – Ballyclare High School and St Louis, Kilkeel
- ICT talks at schools – by Momentum and Northgate at St Dominic's Grammar School and Ballyclare High School
- Participation at a school evening careers event – Victoria College
- Video Conferencing Sessions hosted by Hewlett Packard for Ballyclare High, Ashfield Girls and Ballyclare High.
- Web Design Workshop at Aquinas Grammar attended by No More Art and Good On Paper
- Circulation to members on behalf of Belfast Royal Academy appealing for ICT equipment for their trip to refurbish and equip a school in Malawi.
- Thirteen Teacher Insight work placements with six companies – further details on summary table Page 7.

Future Plan

Following evaluation processes it will be decided if Momentum's Career Connections can be continued and developed further for the new school term commencing September 2009.

Visits to a company summary

	School	Company	Approx No of pupils
1	Belfast Royal Academy	Northgate	36 (2 visits)
2	Glengormley High	Northgate	20
3	Regent House, Newtownards	ICS Computing	20
4	St Columba's. Portaferry	Liberty IT	30
5	Campbell College	Kainos	10
6	Malone College	Northgate	20
7	Aquinas Grammar	Citi	25
8	Victoria College	Media Lightbox	6
8	Victoria College	Northgate	13
9	Ballyclare High	Northgate	20
10	Glenlola Collegiate. Bangor	Allstate	32
		Totals	**232**

Activities at schools summary

	School	Activity	Approx No of pupils
1	Victoria College	Evening Careers Event	100
2	Ballyclare High School	ICT Careers Event	100
3	St Dominic's Grammar	ICT Careers Talk	100
4	Aquinas Grammar	Web Design Workshop	12
5	Ballyclare High	ICT Careers Talk	40
6 7	Ballyclare High, Ashfield Girls and Aquinas Grammar	Video Conferencing Session by HP on web security	45
9	St Louis Grammar, Kilkeel	ICT Careers Event	80
		Totals	**477**

Teacher Insight work placement summary

	School	Company	Details
1	Wellington College	ICS Computing	1 Teacher 2 days Dec 08
2	Ballyclare High School	BT	1 Teacher 2 days June 09
3 4	St Columba's & Shimna College	BT	2 Teachers 1 day June 09
5	Aquinas Grammar	Citi	1 Teacher 2 days June 09
6	Grosvenor Grammar	ICS Computing	2 Teachers 2 days June 09
7 8 9	Dominican College, Shimna College & Bloomfield Collegiate	SAP Research	3 Teachers 1 day June 09
10	Belfast Royal Academy	EG Information Consulting	1 Teacher 2 days June 09
11	Ballyclare High School	TextHelp Systems	2 Teachers 1 day June 09
		Totals	**13 Teachers**

Teacher Development Days at QUB

All the Career Connections schools were invited to attend these events as substitute teacher funding was available. We had sixteen of the schools represented with twenty five teachers attending.

Some further details of activities:-

Victoria College, Belfast
We were invited to take a stand at their evening Career Convention on 11th February 2009. The event was for girls from Years 11, 12 and 13 and their parents. We used the Bring IT On pull out banners and had pens and bags available to give out to those who stopped to get information on careers in ICT. We had an ex pupil who is now working at Liberty IT on the stand – Patricia Meara and two ambassadors from Citi.
The event was very successful and school visits to 2 companies were arranged for May.

Belfast Royal Academy
Following a request from them we publicised an appeal for ICT equipment donations for their trip to Malawi to equip a school.

We arranged two visits to Northgate in Newtownabbey for approximately 18 pupils each trip. Photo's and details of the programme where published in the three daily papers and in the March edition of Business Eye.

The Head of ICT, Paul Cupples will participate in 2 days Teacher Insight work shadowing with EG Information Consulting on 15th & 16 June.

Ballyclare High School

Bring IT On - Career Connections

We helped plan and organise an ICT Career event at the school on 20th March 2009.

Aims of the event

- To raise awareness of career opportunities in the IT industry in NI, in terms of types of graduate careers and the shortage of suitably qualified graduates.
- To raise awareness of IT companies in NI.
- To inform pupils about the range of IT-related course at UU and QUB and the careers to which these lead.
- To assist pupils who might be considering a career in IT with A level subject choices.

Ballyclare High School continued

The event programme ran from 9.30am to 1pm and approximately one hundred Year 12 pupils attended. All pupils are studying GCSE ICT as well as Maths and mostly two Sciences/Technology for GCSE. There were presentations by Microsoft on the ICT industry and careers followed by the two universities outlining the computing courses available. Then some fun demos. We had nine ICT ambassadors from Allstate, BT, EG Information Consulting, Texthelp Systems, Microsoft, Northgate, NBHT and a QUB PhD student. The ambassadors were assigned to a group of pupils for a quiz based on the ambassadors' company, job and career path. Feedback from the school and pupils was very positive –

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BT39 9HJ
Fax/Tel: (028) 9332 2248
www.ballyclarehigh.co.uk

European Curriculum Award

Headmaster: D A Ross BA(Hons) MA Dip A S Ed Grad Cert Ed

23rd March 2009

Dear Kate,

Thank-you for contribution to our IT careers event on Friday. Your time and expertise were greatly appreciated both by the Year 12 pupils and by me. Feedback from the students has been very positive. They found the day varied, interesting, informative and enjoyable. I know that as a result, they now have a much greater understanding of the varied opportunities which exist within the IT industry in NI and of the university courses and A level subjects which would lead to such careers. Some pupils now have particular career ideas to consider and all have gained a better insight into the world of work.

Knowing how busy you must be, I really appreciate your willingness to give of your time to help young people at this critical time in their education.

Yours sincerely

JMA Richardson

Julie Richardson
Head of Careers

Ballyclare organised some Video Conferencing Sessions with Hewlett Packard and we liaised with two other schools to participate – Ashfield Girls and Aquinas Grammar.

Northgate provided an in-school talk for Ballyclare in May and a visit for pupils to Northgate was planned for June.

Ballyclare have been linked to Texthelp Services and BT for Teacher Insight in June.

Glengormley High School
A visit was arranged to Northgate for twenty Year 12 GCSE ICT Students on 24th March 2009. Typical agenda for the Northgate visits is:-

Proposed Time	Activity	Duration
10:30am	Presentation on Northgate & careers in ICT - include key staff speaking about their roles & Q&A	45 minutes
11:15am	Writing CV & interview Skills	15 minutes
11:30am	refreshments	15 minutes
11:45am	Tour of Hillview House	30 minutes
12.15pm	Depart Hillview	

The teacher involved has reported a notable increase in the amount of pupils now considering a career in ICT following their attendance at a Bring IT On event and the company visit to Northgate.

We are assisting Glengormley with organisation of their 'FemininITy' Event (all girls' conference) which will take place at the Waterfront Hall in October 2009.

St Dominic's Girls School
We arranged a career talk at the school for approximately one hundred Year 13 girls on 25th March. After a general overview of Bring IT On and the local ICT Industry we had a presentation from three girls employed at Northgate in different roles.

Some pupil feedback:-

"It was very beneficial. I would suggest telling people the actual grades into each job and qualifications and the salary amount. But overall it was excellent and i liked the fact that it was all female"

"it was extremely beneficial, it taught me a lot about the careers and opportunities before the talk I had no intentions of going into an ICT career however now I am extremely interested! thank you!"

We have also received two requests for summer work experience which Northgate hope to facilitate.

Regent House Grammar School
A visit was arranged to ICS Computing for approximately twenty Year 13 ICT and computing A level students on 26th March 2009. Agenda was similar to above but interaction with employees instead of CV writing and interview skills. An article and photos on the visit was published in the Newtownards Chronicle.
Some pupil feedback:-

"It has provided me with a lot of information regarding jobs in the industry and do hope to enter university in Belfast and complete a computing course. Thanks!"

"I was impressed with the information provided to me; it was a very informative visit. The pen was a particular highlight. On a more serious note, it helped co-ordinate me in a specific career path, preferably into networking that Ross Kirk vividly described. It threw away the belief for me that hardly any good technological facilities and industries existed in Northern Ireland. It was highly useful, and may again prove useful in the future"

St Columba's College, Portaferry
A visit arranged to Liberty IT for approximately thirty Year 12 ICT GCSE students on 27th March 2009. The company managed the visit very efficiently by splitting the large group into three for sessions with employees. Then there were presentations by a placement graduate from University of Ulster and other the other employees, followed by a tour.

Head of ICT is participating in a Teacher Insight work placement with BT on 4th June.

Wellington College
A teacher work placement was successfully completed in December before the teachers industrial action commenced. The feedback from the teacher was that it was very worthwhile and gave a good insight to the business.

They were unable to avail of an offer from ICS Computing to host a class visit due to teacher's industrial action.

Belfast Model School for Girls
A pupil work placement was arranged for a girl who was interested in a career in ICT. She went to the NICS and her feedback was excellent.

"I thoroughly enjoyed the placement as I gained a wide range of experience from three different areas of the ICT industry. This was very worthwhile and this has definitely gave me a good insight to the career in which I am extremely interested"

They did not take up an offer from Northgate to host a class visit.

St Louis Grammar School, Kilkeel
Although not part of our Careers Connection programme they requested our assistance when planning an ICT event for Year 11 pupils at the school in May. As they had recently achieved the status of first Technology Specialist School in Northern Ireland they wanted to feature ICT highly in the day long programme. They invited UU to present on computing courses during the morning session and the afternoon session was offered to Momentum. We put together a programme including BringITon info and quizzes. Gemma O'Donnell from QUB provided robot demo's and courses overview which was followed by a talk given by Patricia Wilson, Software Engineer from the ETB Visiting Lecturers programme. There were 80 pupils present and the event was monitored by Mark Thompson an Advisory Teacher for CEIAG and STEM.

Here is some feedback from the organising Careers Teacher:-

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You replied on 26/05/2009 17:25.

From: J DEVLIN [jdevlin564@stlouisgrammar.kilkeel.ni.sch.uk] Sent: Fri 15/05/2009 21:44
To: Kate McMaster
Cc:
Subject: careers day

Kate
just a short message of thanks for your involvement in our careers day. i very much appreciate all your efforts supporting the day. I have already had Cormac Hyland (the young lad sitting in the front row with red hair) back to me today telling me that he was on the BringITon website and getting some of the course booklets from QUB.
I thought Patricia Wilson was just inspirational and her career history amazing. Mark Thompson and i spoke afterwards about how valuable that experience would be at a meeting for careers teachers and prehaps even older students in AS considering a future in computing and wondering about global opportunities.
I wish you well Kate and hope to connect with you at future events.
Julie

The opinions expressed are those of the individual and not the school.

Campbell College
Ten pupils attended Kainos were they had an overview of Bring IT On and careers. Lisa Kinghan provided information on how the organisation was formed, the products and services they provide was this was followed by one of their developers providing a live demo to show how a video taken using a mobile phone could be instantly viewed on the internet via a specific website. A tour of the offices was followed by refreshments.

They were unable to take up the offer of a teacher work placement.

Malone College
Twenty pupils visited and the normal format for the visit was followed. The group was split in two for a tour of the premises and because the groups were smaller they could stop at work stations to hear about the job roles from individuals. Feedback from one of the attending teachers:-

"The visit was very worthwhile. It brought to life the theory we are teaching in the classroom. Also, it served to introduce pupils to all the opportunities in the IT sector. They realised you can enter IT at different levels. I would love this to become an annual event and we are very appreciative of Northgate's staff for their hospitality."

They were unable to take up the offer of a 2 day work placement as the school had managed to obtain substitute teacher funding for 5 days for 1 teacher that had to be used up. We didn't have a company that could facilitate 5 days.

Aquinas Grammar
Twenty Five pupils visited Citi and got a good overview of the organisation through videos and a talk by John Healy. There were four employees' that gave an overview of what their role was and how they got there. Following refreshments and a tour of the offices there was a question and answer session to all the employees involved.

Aquinas Grammar also had an in-school Web Help session and participated in a Video Conferencing Session with Ballyclare High and Ashfield Girls.

Two days teacher work shadowing took place in June with Citi.

Glenlola Collegiate
Thirty two girls visited Allstate during June 2009. There were presentations by senior management on the company background, careers available, employee benefits and training. They also had a chat from Victoria (age 20) who was on a work placement that had been extended. After refreshments there was a company walk around during which the pupils got to meet Bro McFerran in his office and had an informative talk by an employee inside the server room. Feedback from two pupils:-

"I thought that visiting Allstate was very good. I never thought about a job in ICT, but after visiting Allstate I am now wanting to possibly have a career in this company."

"The staff were friendly and the atmosphere was good. Bro was very nice and was interested in our opinions and what his staff wanted."

Teacher Work Shadowing
All the placements were scheduled during June. Thirteen teachers from eleven schools were placed within six companies. Feedback was very positive with all the teachers saying they gained a lot from it to bring back to the pupils and other teachers within their schools. Most said they would welcome the opportunity to take part again within different companies.