

## Extended Schools Agenda

1. The Government has invested heavily in the concept of what it calls 'Extended Schools,' and has provided funding in order to achieve the national target that by 2010, **all** schools should provide access to a core of extended services, with half of all primary schools and a third of all secondary schools doing so by 2008.
2. The 'Extended Schools Agenda sets out a core offer of services that all children should be able to access through schools by 2010. While many schools may choose to develop an even richer mix of services and activities, the core offer for mainstream and special schools is:
  - high-quality childcare provided on the school site or through clusters or other local providers, with supervised transfer arrangements where appropriate, available 8am – 6pm all year round,
  - a varied programme of activities to be on offer, such as homework clubs and study support, sport (at least two hours a week beyond the school day for those who want it), music tuition, dance and drama, arts and crafts, special interest clubs such as chess and first aid courses, visits to museums and galleries, learning a foreign language, volunteering, business and enterprise activities,
  - parenting support including information sessions for parents at key transition points, parenting programmes run with the support of other children's services and family learning sessions to allow children to learn with their parents,
  - swift and easy referral to a wide range of specialist support services such as speech therapy, child and adolescent mental health services, family support services, intensive behaviour support, and (for young people) sexual health services. Some may be delivered on school sites, and
  - providing wider community access to ICT, sports and arts facilities, including adult learning.
3. Working In Partnership

In order to provide those services, schools have had to work closely with parents, children and others to shape the activities they provide around the needs of their community and many have chosen to provide extra services in response to demand. Many schools have chosen to develop the core offer by working in partnership with existing local private and voluntary sector providers, or by building on existing links with other local schools and working as a cluster. Local authorities are key partners in supporting the development of extended services across communities. It is crucial to the success of the extended schools programme that there is close cooperation at local level between partners working in education, childcare, children's centres, health and other children's services.
4. Providing quick and easy access to services such as health and social care means that problems affecting children's learning can be more easily dealt with. Where families are involved in activities such as family learning, they

become more involved in their children's education, embracing new learning opportunities and encouraging their children to learn.

5. Benefits of Extended Services

A national evaluation of Full Service Extended Schools (FSES), has shown that extended services can have significant positive effects on children, adults and families. These effects can also benefit schools - improving pupil attainment and exclusion rates. Specific benefits identified include:

For Parents – Greater choice, flexibility, convenience and accessibility to help them balance family and work commitments. The 8am-6pm offer allows greater flexibility for full or part-time employment. Some parents may choose to use home-based carers who can also be part of the extended schools offer. Working parents on lower incomes, who are accessing childcare through their school, can benefit from claiming the childcare element of the working tax credit which can cover up to 80% of the costs.

For Teachers – There is no expectation that teachers will deliver childcare, though it may be appropriate for a member of the teaching staff to undertake a coordination role. The Training and Development Agency has taken a lead role to ensure that there is no increase in teacher workload. It is about working well with existing private and voluntary sector childcare providers, and with support staff who want to get involved. Extended services can help remove barriers to learning and give support to pupils with problems outside their academic work, helping teachers focus on their core job of teaching.

6. Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) - National Survey

To monitor the provision of extended services, Ofsted and other involved inspection organisations developed a system of school inspection that covered both education, wider childcare provision and extended activities. In 2006, Ofsted carried out a national survey<sup>1</sup> to look at the impact that extended services were having on children and young people, families and the wider community, and to identify the factors that were contributing to the effective provision of those services. The factors identified included:

- Services were most effective when there was a plan which considered standards, value for money, affordability and long term sustainability
- Strongly committed leaders and managers were key factors in successful provision and management

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<sup>1</sup> This small scale survey was carried out between April 2005 and March 2006 and included 20 settings in 16 local authorities, of which 7 were children centres, 4 secondary schools, 8 primary/junior schools and 1 special school.

- A strong inclusive approach would enable a wide range of age groups to access services
7. The survey results showed that most extended services were meeting the needs of children, young people and the wider community, and were giving users more self-confidence, helping them to develop better relationships with family members and peers and raising their aspirations and attitudes to learning.
  8. The results also highlighted the need to carry out adequate consultation to gather information on local requirements before setting up services. It recognised that by involving children, young people and the wider community in the type of services provided, providers were able to maintain interest and create a sense of ownership and inclusion for all those involved.
  9. A report on the findings of the survey identified improvements in achievement in English and Mathematics. It also evidenced that pupils were keen to remain after school to work and relax and there were signs of improvement in attendance, punctuality and behaviour.
  10. As a result of the findings of their survey, Ofsted made a number of recommendations aimed at Local Authorities:
    - Establish systems for measuring the impact of extended services on standards and achievement of children and young people, particularly the most vulnerable
    - Provide a strategic overview of provision to ensure that services are developed cohesively within a community
    - Ensure a continuity of provision of support services between children's centres and schools.
  11. It also recommended that Schools and Children's Centres should:
    - Plan to sustain services through funding, maintaining interest and encouraging good take-up, and be flexible enough to adapt to changing needs
    - Work with other settings to provide for the community's wider needs.
  12. Community Access To Schools  
The wider aspiration for schools to provide a focus for community activity is now almost routine in thinking about the future of the education system. The concept of community education, or community schools, actually combines a number of different ideas. These can be broadly summarised as follows:
    - Children should have access to educational opportunities outside the regular school day, and this should be provided on a voluntary basis at the schools they attend,
    - Adult Education should be provided using the same network of buildings that are used to provide education for children,

- School buildings represent a valuable asset which, in the interests of efficiency, should be used by the community when they are not being used by children,
- The curriculum should be shaped and influenced by the needs of local communities.

13. Government Funding

The 2007 Budget brought positive news for children, young people and families, with £10.7 billion more capital and revenue funding being invested in schools, colleges, universities and children's services by 2011. In regard to extended schools, it recognised the Training and Development Agency's concerns about the workload involved in developing and maintaining extended activities. It therefore provided additional funding for use between 2008 – 2011 for building effective links with local agencies, businesses and other educational institutions to ensure the continued development of a full menu of activities and services.

14. Section 106 Funding

The provision of community facilities is heavily dependent on capital funding to ensure that facilities are maintained to an appropriate standard. Public expectations have risen significantly in recent years and many adults are no longer prepared to tolerate the kind of facilities that are available in schools. A main source of funding is through Section 106 funding for leisure facilities as a condition of planning permission for the development of sites in the city.

15. This funding for leisure facilities is received from developers when there is no play, amenity open space or space pitch provision with their development. Not all sites make payments, for example medium size sites may include play and amenity provision but not sports pitches and therefore only a sport payment would be made. Where payments are made it has to be used reasonably close to the development so that the occupants benefit from the investment.
16. Use of 106 Payments are administered by members of the Parks and Open Space and Sport and Active Leisure teams. Parks and open space money tended to go to city centre sites reflecting where the development had taken place. But in April 2005, a change in the housing threshold down from 10 dwellings to 1 dwelling, resulted in more Parish Councils receiving payments where they were the providers of facilities close to new developments.