

## Extended schools Getting started/Funding

# 'Focus on what's really important'

If your school is thinking about – or in the process of – extending its services, here are some key issues to consider

Julie Nightingale

For a programme of extended services to be meaningful, rather than developed solely to fall in with government policy, it needs genuine commitment from the headteacher – but the governors also have to be onside.

### Governors

Given that governors are – justifiably – preoccupied with the needs and the performance of their own school, they may need some persuasion.

When Pia Kerridge, head of The Parks special school in Oakham, Rutland, proposed expanding the school's outreach work as part of a programme of extended services, three of her governors resigned. The remainder were won over by her argument that it was in the school's interest to share their special needs expertise around.

"I said that it was about the changing role of special provision, that before we used to be focused on our children only, but that, nationally, special schools now have a much wider role.

"Now the governors are very supportive and there is a group on the governing body that focuses on extended services. But unless you have the governing body behind you, it's a struggle."

### School improvement plan

If you are not just paying lip service to extended services, they have to be incorporated into the school improvement plan. Effective school improvement planning helps schools maximise the wellbeing and learning potential of all children, extended services must be well designed and targeted as an integral part of this.

### Staffing

Heads shouldn't feel obliged to assume responsibility for extended services – strategic or operational – by themselves. Much of the leadership and management is often delegated to a coordinator at middle management level and/or a member of the senior leadership team. Extended services may also be part of the remit of the school business manager, or bursar.

In terms of delivery, you need "a hands-on operational team," says Julie McGee, extended schools manager for Middlesbrough council. "Whoever takes on the management role needs to have the organisational skills to be able to manage, for example, 15 different organisations operating on the school site, and have the community development skills to build relationships with other groups and agencies."

### Consultation

Consult the community, staff and other stakeholders about the kinds of services

they think are needed or they would like to see the school hosting and supporting. Don't overlook the children: use the school council, activities in class or, for older pupils, questionnaires to get their views and ideas.

Do your research to determine what services already exist, find out where there are gaps, and, at the same time, it's vital to get to know the organisations and people, says McGee. People in local authorities involved in the local children and young people's strategic partnership could also be brought in to help. "Think about duplication between schools, too," she adds. "That's where the local authority can help as they will have that bigger picture of what's happening where."

### Building partnerships

Working with independent providers, multi-agency collaboration, sharing responsibilities for children with other schools... extended services is all about partnerships, though they don't happen

'Some of our families are on the breadline. Being cheap or free has been the key to getting people in'

overnight. But it helps if you can build on existing links, says David Tansey, head at Stanley high school in Southport, which has capitalised on the links developed with other agencies through its status as a sports college to build up its community side.

Listening to others and finding out what their agendas are is important, he adds. "You can make sure their agendas are being followed as well as your own and the partnership is more likely to be productive."

One of his team's first steps was to bring all potential partners together at a breakfast meeting with the Every Child Matters agenda as their common theme. "We talked to them about what our vision was of being a school at the heart of the community. We knew that ECM was important for others as well as us. We then discussed the five core themes and talked in groups about how we could work together – making parents' evenings more multi-agency, for example, so that school nursing services could attend."

### Funding

Money is always the biggest problem and at least some funding will have to come from the school budget. A good first step is to contact your LA to explore funding. Partnerships with other agencies mean some costs can be shared; it also helps to have a good contact at the local authority

who can alert you when new grant programmes come up.

Links with business can provide sponsorship or help in kind and this is an area where governors might be especially useful. Berrybrook primary school in Wolverhampton persuaded Greggs, the bakers, to sponsor its free breakfast club, and has worked closely with the Co-op, whose staff have helped out at the school.

Colin Haynes, Berrybrook's chair of governors, points to organisations such as Business in the Community as a way to find business help. "Engagement with businesses is a two-way process and the business partners get great value from the relationship, too, so don't be afraid to ask for help," he says.

The question of whether to charge for activities depends on a school's circumstances, but free classes or clubs can be the only way to kick-start interest.

One of the most successful projects at Ormsby comprehensive school in Middlesbrough has been the free, after-school What's Cooking club for children and their families. Originally aimed at children who had struggled in primary school and were on the brink of exclusion, it has since expanded to other families. It costs the school around £500 a year in ingredients and general materials, with time given free by partners from local family learning and healthy eating initiatives.

"Some of our families are on the bread-

line," says Jenny Stanton, assistant head and extended schools coordinator. "Being cheap or free has been the key to getting people in."

### Transport

For rural schools, in particular, transport presents significant problems. Why would children opt to stay behind for after-school events – and why would pupils from other schools opt to travel there – if it means a two-hour wait for a bus or inconvenience for parents who have to pick them up?

In Bedford, Sharnbrook upper school has struck an agreement with its local bus company that could be applied elsewhere. Rather than contracting a vehicle for a specific route, the school has use of a bus for four-and-a-half hours in the afternoon to cover the school's staggered leaving times of 3.30pm and 4.30pm.

Besides being more convenient, it is saving around £200 a day on travel costs for the school and the county council.

### Finally...

Avoid being overwhelmed by the scale of the agenda and the range of new roles and responsibilities involved.

School governor Colin Haynes also warns against over-ambition: "Be prepared to focus on a few things that are really important to the community. Don't start something you can't carry forward. Anything you do has to be sustainable."



David Tansey, headteacher at Stanley high, in Southport, challenges pupils from the school's youth club to a game of table football Christopher Thomond

## Networking – the key to financial stability

Gaining funding to deliver the full range of extended services is all about forming close partnerships

Sarah Jewell

To help every child access breakfast clubs, out-of-hours tuition and after-school clubs, the government is to invest £1.3bn in the extended schools programme over the next three years. This includes a £265m subsidy scheme to ensure that children from disadvantaged families can access the full range of extended services. Local authorities will learn this autumn how much funding is to be released.

In addition to funding capital projects and running costs, this new investment will support extended service coordinators in secondary schools and clusters of primary schools. To deliver the full range of extended services, schools need to work in partnership with their local authorities, other schools and the private and voluntary sectors, and extended services coordi-

inators have a vital role to play in setting up and developing these partnerships.

Jo Phillips is the extended services coordinator for Chipping Norton school and its cluster of 10 feeder primary schools and a Sure Start children's centre. She works one day a week with an administrator on the extended services programme and has been successful in resourcing and distributing funds. Her main priority, however, is to make sure the after-school clubs are sustainable.

Under the extended schools core offer schools are expected to charge for after-school activities but, as Phillips says: "If a club is running and doesn't have enough children in it, it has to stop; all the time I'm thinking: have we got enough children in each club and how much should we be charging?"

The school charges for its clubs that run from 4.30-6pm. "The charge is always kept as low as possible to maximise access and increase sustainability," says Phillips. However, the school also offers a huge range of free clubs run by staff in the lunch hour and from 3.15-4.15pm. "They encourage the habit of extra-time activities and, once they have the habit, students will continue to take the opportunities on offer year on year. It's really important to offer



Thirsty work: youngsters at Charles Dickens infant school, Portsmouth

'We are starting to see the effect of children moving confidently from the nursery to the school'

students the extra dimension of learning outside the classroom."

Phillips thinks the key to making after-school clubs sustainable is networking. She is in charge of publicising activities for 3,000 children and 1,600 families in the Chipping Norton cluster – "it would cost an awful lot of money to send out fliers to everyone," she says. To make the clubs work, families need to know what is going on, and they also need to be consulted and she spends a lot of time checking to make sure the school is meeting the needs of all stakeholders. "I try to keep my finger on the pulse."

To help set up extended services, "start-up" funding of £680m was allocated for the period 2006-08. Some of this funding has been routed via local authorities through the Standards Fund and the general Sure Start grant (GSSG). Schools have also secured funding from other sources, including charities, the lottery and private sponsorship.

Local authorities have a key role to play in helping schools to plan, commission and fund their extended services. "I'm in constant touch with our ES schools coordinator for Oxfordshire," says Phillips. "They know what funding is available and will tell us what we can apply for."

Schools have spent their capital funding on new buildings and on making their premises suitable for extended services. In Portsmouth, for example, the newly built Charles Dickens centre includes a Sure Start centre and a neighbourhood nursery. This community-focused project is located at the heart of Portsmouth's most deprived district and helps to serve the many needs of the local neighbourhood. Facilities include a community sports hall, an arts space and performing arts studio. A full youth service also operates from the building, utilising a recording studio with rehearsal rooms and a video-editing suite.

Charlotte Tagg is headteacher at Charles Dickens infant school, which is attached to the Sure Start centre and the Charles Dickens centre. She manages all three. The nursery is self-sustaining through charging and she sees the benefit of the school and children's centre working together: "It's wonderful because we are getting to work with the children from when they are new-born, and all our ethos revolves around parental involvement from a very early age. We are starting to see the effect of children moving confidently from the nursery to the school, and parents are a lot more keen to get involved with what we are doing."

## Extended schools Future/Comment



Professor Alan Smithers urges schools not to get overly distracted from the main task of teaching and learning Don McPhee

# Is this the way ahead?

The extended schools programme isn't lacking in ambition, but can it deliver? We ask experts on the ground about their hopes and concerns

Dorothy Lepkowska

Extended services in hundreds of schools have become part and parcel of pupils' everyday lives. The sight of the local bobby walking down the corridor does not necessarily mean that someone is in trouble, nor is it unusual for adults other than teachers and classroom assistants to be working with children.

But how bright is the future for extended schools, and how can they contribute to the success of the myriad of other initiatives being implemented by the government?

Graham Holley, chief executive of the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA), believes the nature of the multi-agency approach to learning will offer faster help to the pupils that need it.

"By 2010 we will see schools being the hub of the local community in ways we have not done before, reflecting and serving the needs of children and the community in a multi-professional and holistic way," he says.

"Schools will no longer just be providers of academic and vocational excellence. It will be about standards sitting alongside the Every Child Matters agenda, achievement sitting alongside well-being and growth alongside children's safety.

"Extended services will be the back-

drop to what happens in schools, offering a different structure and climate and different aspirations. I have no doubt that it will narrow the achievement gap.

"We already know from Ofsted that it has a positive impact where it is being delivered well."

Professor Alan Smithers, director of the Centre for Education and Employment Research at the University of Buckingham, says extended services have created the right environment to allow schools to implement other key initiatives. But he urges schools not to get distracted from the main task of teaching and learning.

"It is significant that Gordon Brown divided up the education department to include children, schools and families, and this shows his desire to give all children the same chance in life," he says.

"The challenge now will be to ensure the primacy of teaching and learning and not to allow schools to become overly distracted with the other aspects. Another issue is funding and where the money is going to come from to allow schools to open 52 weeks a year, when already they are relying on teachers' goodwill to a large extent."

David Dixon, head of Bowbridge primary in Nottinghamshire, where extended services have been in place for the past 11 years, agrees there is a danger of teachers becoming over-burdened.

"We approached extended services by looking at the needs of the children and because a significant number of them have basic needs that are not addressed outside school. By running a breakfast club, for example, you have children who are receptive to learning.

"The government needs to make more money available for some of the remedial measures for dysfunctional families. If you made schemes available earlier [you]

would not have to deal with the consequences of disadvantage and social problems later.

"But I remain concerned that we continue to rely on the goodwill of teachers to run after-school clubs beyond their normal working hours, and I think this is true in many primary schools."

### Time consuming

Other headteachers were also concerned about the amount of time additional services took to organise. Mike Ainsley, head of Frederick Gent school, in Derbyshire, says extended services have allowed the school to tackle some of the "external factors" that prohibit children from learning, such as poverty and mental health problems within families.

"These are the barriers we have to tackle before we can even begin to implement other initiatives," he says. "Extended services are sustainable, but there must be a political will to enable this. Supporting children and families cannot be maintained without adequate time and resources within schools devoted to that purpose."

Hilary Emery, executive director of the TDA, says the creation of extended services is a key part of public sector reforms, and cooperation between schools and other agencies should lessen the burden on teachers trying to implement improvements in standards.

"There is a substantial amount of money in the public sector that is no longer being spent on individual silos but used where it is most needed to address the most important problems," she says.

"There is a future for extended schools precisely because there is a wealth of experience and talent out there among people who are all working together to focus on learning and provide the right environment for pupils to succeed."

## It's about kick-starting community pride



Richard Thornhill  
Comment

Extended schools are about raising children's educational aspirations and expectations by boosting their social capital and underpinning the role of the family.

My experience of extended services really started in September 2000 when I came to Loughborough primary to fresh-start the school and raise standards. I could see right away that the conventional approach of concentrating on teaching English and maths wouldn't work. The school's catchment area is one of the most deprived in Europe with broken families and a range of challenging issues from drug dependency to gun crime.

We saw extended services as a way of developing the social capital of the children and their families – to provide the support infrastructure that would enable them to engage successfully with education. Children lacking social skills and a stable family life have few reasons to work hard.

So we began in a small way offering sports clubs and activities in the evenings after school and at weekends – things like football, basketball, gymnastics and cricket. The message quickly

'Children lacking social skills and a stable family life have few reasons to work hard'

## We need to assure the quality of service



Patsy Headlam  
Comment

Our priorities are extra-curricular sports for children, lifelong learning through engaging parents and young adults to improve their skills and employability, and counselling, therapy and support for our vulnerable children. We fill our remit pretty well.

We do not offer wraparound care as there is no demand. Local families largely make their own provision. Adopting the core offering has added significant extra duties, and diluted our original focus.

What we have done is to try to make the extended model fit. Under our lifelong learning remit, for example, we reach the wider

'I think that schools, the local authority and the voluntary sector need to work closer together'

caught on that this was a lot better than wandering the streets.

We organised visits to Premier League football academies like Chelsea, Fulham and Arsenal and from having no aspirations, children – particularly boys – could see they could achieve. The training and self-discipline they were developing began to have an impact on attendance and Sats results. One child on the verge of being excluded has moved on to secondary school where he now plays football for South London and has represented his team overseas.

We ran coffee mornings for parents two days a week – providing free coffee and biscuits and giving them a room in the school to meet. We started running courses they would find useful like nutrition, first aid and quitting smoking. Once trust had developed we moved on to helping parents with the bigger issues – drug misuse and unemployment.

You have to persevere. An extended school is a hub where parents can contact social services, health and community care. You can start asking parents about sensitive issues such as setting their children's bedtime and providing a quiet room for homework.

I believe the government has got it dead right that school is the best place to lead community regeneration and break the cycle of deprivation. But change cannot happen overnight. It happens slowly, one step at a time. A consistent approach to extended services means not having to reinvent the wheel in an attempt to patch up the social ills of each generation.

Schools need to realise that extended services are not just about providing childcare. You have to have a planned programme and clear expectations for children. The aim has to be to build social capital – giving children a stake in society and reinforcing the message that while you're in school you need to work hard. This isn't a soft option. It's about kick-starting self-help and community pride.

Interview by Stephen Hoare

Richard Thornhill is executive headteacher of the Loughborough/Kings Avenue primary school federation, London borough of Lambeth

community by advertising our courses in local libraries and mailings to local housing estates. Our cluster of 13 schools catering for 6,000 pupils has brought economies of scale. Our adult classes on subjects such as ICT, back-to-work and starting a small business are invariably full to capacity.

But being part of a cluster means that some services are not those that individual schools would have chosen to provide. Extended schools are not about the teaching staff doing everything. It's about buying in the services we need from third-party suppliers or agencies. What we do need to do is to assure the quality of service and to make sure the school's interests are protected.

My biggest criticism of extended schools is that they do not engage enough with the local voluntary sector. We are not talking about cosy relationships with well-heeled national charities, but rather tiny, ad hoc and often fragile community groups that need nurturing.

Voluntary groups often can't afford the fees we're forced to charge for our facilities. It could be a small group of Somali mothers or a disability group that performs a vital role in community cohesion. What is wrong with letting groups have free use of a room? For extended services to achieve their full potential, I think that schools, the local authority and the voluntary sector need to work closer together.

Interview by Stephen Hoare

Patsy Headlam is community learning coordinator for the Children First cluster in Harrow, Middlesex

### Resources

**The Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA)** works with local authorities to support schools as they develop extended services, providing training, support and other resources. The TDA has developed a **School Improvement Planning Framework** to help schools design extended services to deliver improved standards and Every Child Matters outcomes. Support for **extended schools in rural areas** is also available, as are resources supporting the development of early intervention work and **swift and easy access to services**, and more than 100 case studies. Links to all these resources can be found at: [www.tda.gov.uk/guardian](http://www.tda.gov.uk/guardian)

**ContinYou** runs the **Extended Schools Support Service**, offering focused support for schools and local authorities: [www.continyou.org.uk/extendedschools](http://www.continyou.org.uk/extendedschools)

Information and resources about **childcare in extended schools** at: [www.4children.org.uk](http://www.4children.org.uk). **Childcare Link** provides information about individual

childcare services throughout the UK at: [www.childcarelink.gov.uk](http://www.childcarelink.gov.uk)

**DCSF toolkit for schools** can be downloaded at: [www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/familyandcommunity/workingwithparents/ipratoolkit](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/familyandcommunity/workingwithparents/ipratoolkit). The DCSF guidance on ES and school improvement is at: [www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=10747](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=10747)

Extensive resources about **setting up and managing extended services** and activities in schools: [www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/extendedschools](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/extendedschools). See information on developing good quality study support opportunities at: [www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/studysupport](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/studysupport)

Information on **employing staff**: [www.dfes.gov.uk/a-z](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/a-z) and from the **Criminal Records Bureau** at [www.crb.gov.uk](http://www.crb.gov.uk). For **training, qualifications and support** for those working with children and young people, see Children's Workforce Development council at: [www.cwdcouncil.org](http://www.cwdcouncil.org)

**Every Child Matters: Change for Children** – programme spanning all children's services aiming to improve outcomes for all children and young people. See [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk)

**Updated DCSF prospectus** – Extended Schools: Building on Experience – sets out core offer of extended services the government wants all schools to offer by 2010: <http://tinyurl.com/2pf9y2>

Information for governors on **governor responsibilities** and regulations at: [www.governornet.co.uk](http://www.governornet.co.uk) and on planning and funding extended schools at: <http://tinyurl.com/24kcks>

DfES/Sure Start Unit **research on extended schools and childcare** at: [www.surestart.gov.uk/ensuringquality/research/earlyyears](http://www.surestart.gov.uk/ensuringquality/research/earlyyears)

Final report on the **Evaluation of the Full Service Extended Schools pilot**: [www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RR795.pdf](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RR795.pdf)