Lessons From Extended Schools

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Introduction

In *Extended Schools: Access to opportunities and services for all*, the government pledges that by 2010, all children will have access to a variety of activities beyond the school day (Department of Education and Skills (DfES), 2005a).

Extended schools are intended to ensure improved access to a range of services to support children and their families, and therefore can be seen to embody a philosophical move towards a focus on the needs of the whole child. This vision is outlined in *Every Child Matters*, the government's response to the inquiry into the tragic death of Victoria Climbié (DfES, 2003).

These changes have significant implications for school leaders. At one level, they require them to further develop a range of skills and approaches to support these changes in focus. On another, they necessitate a fundamental reconsideration of the ways in which schools operate, requiring a greater focus on collaboration with partner agencies and the local community to identify and address the specific areas of local priority.

This publication summarises the key emerging lessons for leaders of extended schools. In doing so it draws upon experiences shared by practitioners at the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) Leading Practice event 'Lessons from extended schools', hosted in October 2005.

This is one of a suite of documents intended to explore in more depth the implications of extended schools for their leaders. The first of these, "ECM: Why it matters to leaders" provides a broader overview of the implication of ECM for school leaders. A subsequent report will provide a fuller consideration of the issues of multi-agency work, and is scheduled for publication during early 2006.

Leading Practice

NCSL's programme of Leading Practice seeks to capture and reflect school leaders' voice and to enrich them by bringing together research and best practice. In this way it aims to produce new, shared understandings of significant aspects of leadership that will inform debate and generate materials for ongoing professional development. Further information on Leading Practice can be obtained from NCSL's website at **www.ncsl.org.uk/leadingpractice.**

Background to
Extended Schools

Background to Extended Schools

In its prospectus for extended schools, *Extended Schools: Access to opportunities and services for all,* DfES defines extended schools thus:

Extended schools provide a range of services and activities, often beyond the school day, to help meet the needs of children, their families and the wider community. (DfES, 2005a p 7)

This definition uses the notion of 'extended' in four ways. These are in relation to the:

- scope of provision offered

- audiences the school's support is offered to

- times at which the school provides this support

- range of professionals who collectively offer these services

However, while the term 'extended school' may be new, some schools have operated in one or more of these extended ways for many years.

Schools as a resource for their local community

Indeed, the belief that a school has an important role to play as a resource for, and provider of, services to the local community can be traced back to the mid-19th century. For instance, in some rural areas schools were designed also to serve as places of worship or community centres, while others offered a venue for social activities, adult education programmes, and welfare services such as second-hand clothes stores, health clinics, meals, youth provision and summer play programmes (Smith, 1996).

However, many commentators view the establishment of village colleges in Cambridgeshire as the starting point for more contemporary developments. Pioneered in the 1920s and 1930s by Henry Morris, the then Secretary of Education in Cambridgeshire, village colleges provided schooling for rural communities and a range of additional services for children and adults (Cummings et al, 2004 p 1). At their most developed, community schools display a number of common characteristics (Smith, 1996). These include:

- an openness, both in physical and philosophical terms

- a sense of fusion and continuity between the aims of the school and those of the broader community it serves

- a high level of sharing and collaboration

- at least some espoused commitment to increased levels of democracy, in both internal and external structures

- a willingness to engage in curricular innovation to address the specific needs of the local community

- broad support for the principles of life-long education

- a culture of entrepreneurship

Many of these features can be readily identified as hallmarks of the current extended schools movement.

School as a focal point for care and support

While community schools and village colleges have played an important role in supporting less affluent and more isolated communities, this has often been achieved in isolation and through the provision of services to, rather than with, the communities they seek to support (Piper, 2003 p 190).

Following its election in 1997, New Labour sought to develop this approach by positioning schools more clearly as part of an integrated, interventionist strategy to address issues of disadvantage and deprivation (Social Exclusion Unit, 2000 p 62). Indeed, initiatives by the current government to address the social exclusion agenda began as early as 1997, and the period up to 2003 witnessed a steady stream of attempts to tackle this further. Amongst the early initiatives was Sure Start, launched in 1998 to provide additional childcare, health and emotional support to children and parents in disadvantaged communities (Glass, 2005).

Several years later in 2001, the *Achieving success white paper* introduced 25 Pathfinder pilot extended schools (DfES, 2001 p 66). At around the same time, the government also launched the Schools Plus pilot project (Shaw, 2003 p 6), aimed at exploring the most effective ways for schools to help reduce educational failure, by extending their services and linking further with their communities (Community Education Development Centre (CEDC), 2002 p 1).

However, it was the launch in 2003 of *Every Child Matters* and the DfES's *Five Year Strategy* (DfES, 2004) for children and learners that really placed extended schools at the heart of the schools' agenda.

Every Child Matters

Published in 2003, *Every Child Matters* was the government's response to the findings from Lord Laming's enquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié. The main aim of the paper was to tackle the issue of child safety and the underlying problems associated with Victoria's tragic death, these being weak accountability and poor integration of services (DfES, 2003 p 4).

The paper identified five aspects that would characterise the government's vision for the child support system it aspired to. These were (DfES, 2003 p 6):

- being healthy - enjoying good physical and mental health and living a healthy lifestyle

- staying safe - being protected from harm and neglect

- enjoying and achieving - getting the most out of life and developing the skills for adulthood

- making a positive contribution - being involved with the community and society and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour

- economic well-being - not being prevented by economic disadvantage from achieving their full potential in life

Fundamental to the achievement of much of what *Every Child Matters* sought to address was the successful development of a greater range of integrated services. With this in mind, the paper recommended that all schools should become extended schools, acting as hubs for services for children, families and other members of the community. It also outlined the government's pledge to create a network of full-service extended schools, with one in every LA by 2006. These schools would offer a core of childcare, study support, family and life-long learning, health and social care, sports and arts facilities and access to ICT (DfES, 2003 p 29).

The Five Year Strategy (DfES, 2004) reiterated many of the key themes of *Every Child Matters.* However, it built upon this earlier work by introducing the government's offer to children and parents. This offer formed a central part of the government's prospectus for extended schools (DfES, 2005a).

Current models of extended schools

Current work on extended schools is perhaps best understood through reference to the Core Offer made by the government to children and parents (Table 1).

While this offer is clear on some aspects of support that should be available - most notably the principle of 'Kelly's hours' covering extended care (BBC News, 2005) - it contains considerable flexibility in other respects. Indeed, official guidance on extended schools has highlighted the need for schools to consult and work with others, in order to develop extended activities that meet the specific needs of their local communities (DfES, 2005a p 4), thereby precluding the development of a single prescriptive approach. As a result, while the prospectus identifies a range of additional services that schools may offer, the nature, scale and scope of such extended activities vary considerably across the country and are likely to continue to do so in the coming years.

Nevertheless, research on extended schools has highlighted a number of recurring themes that are pertinent to the leadership of extended schools. These can be summarised in the following series of questions that, in turn, form the basis for the next section of this publication.

Table 1: The core offer

The government wants all schools to offer extended services by 2010, with half of primary schools and a third of secondary schools doing so by 2008.

The core services comprise:

- high-quality wraparound childcare (provided on the school site or through local providers), available 8am to 6pm all year round

- a varied menu of activities, such as homework clubs and study support, sport, music tuition, dance and drama, arts and crafts, special interest clubs, visits to museums and galleries, learning a foreign language, volunteering, business and enterprise activities

- parenting support, including information sessions and family learning

- swift and easy referral to a wide range of specialist support services

- wider community access to ICT, sports and arts facilities, including adult learning

Source: DfES, 2005a

Community-related concerns

- What is the key target for extended services, ie what constitutes the school's community?

- What services are required by the school's community?

- Which factors are important in promoting take-up of services by members of the community?

Multi-agency collaborations

- Which factors are important in promoting effective collaboration with partner agencies?

- What steps are important in promoting greater equality in collaborations?

Sustaining the extended school

- What strategies are important in protecting the long-term sustainability of services?

- How can the increased leadership demands from the development of extended activity be managed without placing excessive pressure on the existing leadership team?

Leadership Themes

1. Community-related concerns

Addressing the wider need

Having a clear understanding of the vision for any extended work is a key starting point for effective extended school activity. The starting point for this vision can come from a range of different sources. In many instances, the drive towards extended activity comes from a recognition within the school of failings in the broader social infrastructure. The focus in *Every Child Matters* on caring for the whole child often resonates strongly for adults in schools. A recurring theme amongst leaders of many pathfinder extended schools is that this is more than simply the latest in a long line of initiatives and instead represents a long overdue recognition that schools cannot consider a child's educational requirements without meeting the broader range of physical and emotional needs that they carry. Maslow's hierarchy of needs provides a useful framework for considering these broader issues (Maslow, 1954) (Figure 1).

According to Maslow, human needs can be classified according to five levels of priority. The most pressing of these relates to our biological and physiological needs for survival. This is followed by a requirement for a safe environment, and a need for belonging, affection and attachment. Only once these needs have been addressed can the processes of building esteem and self-actualisation begin.

Self-actualisation
personal growth and fulfilment

Esteem needs
achievement, status, responsibility, reputation

Belongingness and Love needs
family, affection, relationships, work group, etc.

Safety needs
protection, security, order, law, limits, stability, etc.

Biological and Physiological needs
basic life needs - air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, sex, sleep, etc.
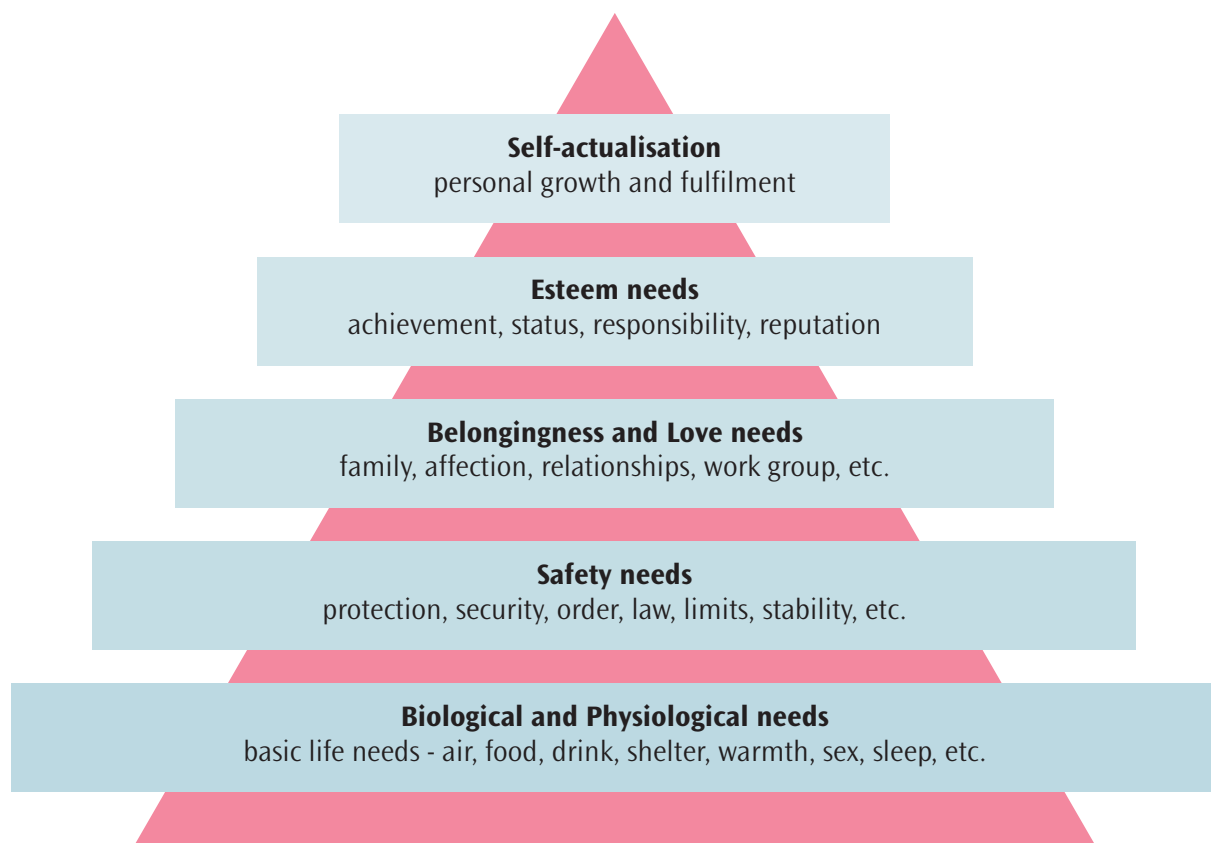
Figure 1: Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Developing social capital

However, it is impossible to consider the whole needs of the child without paying attention to their broader position within the family and the wider community. For this reason, many extended schools offer a range of family support and community services, in addition to the enhanced opportunities and help provided to the children they care for.

The precise nature of such services will clearly vary according to the nature of the community the school serves. However, a commonly held belief amongst many leaders of extended schools is that the school has a major role to play in helping to build social capital. In essence, social capital can be viewed as the common set of values, understandings and relationships that hold a community together. Put simply, it is the glue that holds us together (Smith, 2000). The ongoing breakdown in social relationships is well documented. The factors behind this are multiple, and include increased migration driven by changing work patterns, rises in the level of marital breakdown and in numbers of lone-parent families, and falling commitment to formal institutions such as religion and political organisations. Further background on social capital is included in text box 1.

As a result, many believe that the school has an increased role to play in promoting values and facilitating social networks (NCSL, 2004). Part of the rationale for this is the belief that schools are broadly neutral, and their commitment to the care of children provides an unquestionable moral basis for their work, although this view is far from universally held. Furthermore, in many communities, schools, particularly primary schools, are among the few regular meeting places for parents and families. Again, this gives an opportunity for a school to act increasingly as a focus for the community, supporting the development of a symbiotic and mutually dependent relationship between the school and the people it serves.

This combination of factors places greater emphasis on schools working with others to provide support for parents and members of the broader community.

Text box 1:

Background to social capital

The concept of social capital was introduced early in the 20th century by Lyda Judson Hanifan, in his examination of rural school community centres. In this, he used the term to describe 'those tangible substances [that] count for most in the daily lives of people' (Hanifan, 1916 p 130).

More recently, social capital has been most closely associated with the work of Robert Putnam. It has also been used as an organising principle by the World Bank.

Social capital refers to connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them. In that sense social capital is closely related to what some have called 'civic virtue.' The difference is that 'social capital' calls attention to the fact that civic virtue is most powerful when embedded in a sense network of reciprocal social relations. A society of many virtuous but isolated individuals is not necessarily rich in social capital.
Putnam, 2000 p 19

Social Capital refers to the norms and networks that enable collective action. It encompasses institutions, relationships, and customs that shape the quality and quantity of a society's social interactions.
World Bank, 2005

Promoting dialogue

There is consensus within published materials that engaging with the community is a critical step in clarifying its needs and aspirations and is essential for the extended school to be successful (Wilkin et al, 2003 p 43).

In the past, the degree to which schools have engaged with their broader communities has been mixed. While many community and village schools have a good record of working with their communities to help address identified areas of need, others have less tradition of doing so. Grainger, for instance, has written of 'extroverted' and 'introverted' schools to highlight this difference in approach (Grainger, 2003 p 33).

Ongoing community dialogue is important in ensuring that support offered by the school remains relevant to its community, whose needs may change over time (Calfee et al, 1998 p 43).

Consultation with the community can take a range of forms. Examples of these include:

- informal dialogue with parents and carers by school leaders and teachers in the playground

- surveys and focus groups undertaken on the school's behalf by external providers

- using students to manage the completion of surveys and questionnaires

- holding consultation events for local people

- encouraging governors and local people employed in the school to act as intermediaries and advocates for the school

- ad hoc conversations with individuals participating in events and activities hosted by the school

- drawing upon other local agencies and organisations that may already have well-established links with local people

Many schools have found that existing community groups and associations are able to play an important role in the consultation process, for instance by acting as a voice for local people, or by facilitating or undertaking a more direct consultation personally.

More broadly, informal, opportunistic consultation is key as a starting point for this process, and there is also considerable evidence to indicate that this is the most powerful approach to community consultation over the longer term as well (Cummings et al, 2004 p 31). As noted above, in many schools this has been embedded over time and is supported by a wide variety of approaches.

In contrast, many schools report mixed experiences of more formal approaches to consultation. For instance, while externally commissioned surveys have frequently provided useful information, they are generally expensive and may not necessarily build capacity within the school or community. In contrast, open days and consultation evenings hosted by the school are more cost-effective and may build expertise within the school. Moreover, there may be difficulties in promoting broader engagement beyond those parents who already have an established relationship with the school.

Indeed, a particular challenge for schools is to engage with a broader group of parents, beyond the 'usual suspects'. Part of this challenge is inspiring greater confidence and trust in the school amongst parents and others locally. Schools have adopted a range of strategies to engender this support. At the heart of this is the attempt to develop personal relationships that break down real and imagined barriers between the school and local people. Establishing trust and creating a genuine sense that the school is for and owned by the community are critical. Flexibility and openness are also core to this.

"Our parents now know that the door is open always. And it can be difficult sometimes, but to encourage that you have to go with the flow. It has changed completely. Three years ago, seven or eight people came. Last year we had 50. This year, we were in the middle of a torrential downpour and put 50 chairs out just in case. We stopped counting after 120 came in."

Informal events, coffee mornings and drop-in sessions have all proved effective for schools. Craft, arts and skills are also helpful levers. As many school leaders will know, simply standing by the school gate or being in the playground at the start and end of the day increases the extent to which a school is viewed as welcoming.

In any event, an underlying principle behind this work for many schools has been a desire to make all of those it connects with feel special. One manifestation of this is making every effort to avoid cancelling a local group's room booking on occasions when it clashes with the needs of the school. Another is ensuring that a local person does not feel abandoned once they have plucked up the courage to enrol on an adult learning session.

In some instances, a designated individual has been given responsibility for supporting this work and developing such links. This will often be a part-time post or form part of a member of staff's broader role. This staff member has generally not been a teacher and has often been someone from the local area, who may already work at the school. A key part of the rationale for this is that such an individual will often have a deep affinity and existing relationships with the parents and other members of the community the school intends to help. Moreover, they will help reassure local people that they have a key part to play in shaping the services and support being offered and that this support will address their needs and priorities, not just those identified as important by professionals. Ensuring that children's views are taken into account when developing services to meet their needs is also crucial.

"If you've allocated a space to them it's important they have that space. If there's a group that has a room every Tuesday but the school needs it one week, I can't just say: "You can't have this room, the school needs it" … if you're giving a commitment to the community, that commitment has to be just as strong as if it were to the school, otherwise they'll feel like you're just putting up with them. If you felt like that you wouldn't go into someone's house, would you?"

Margaret Carter, Deputy Head, Thomas Hepburn School

Advocacy

Furthermore, all schools employ people from the local area, in a range of different functions. Such individuals often play a powerful role as links between the school and the broader community. Developing these advocates is a potentially powerful approach to promoting extended activities and developing trust amongst individuals who otherwise may be suspicious of the motives behind such support. Some schools have adopted a strategic approach to employing local people. This may include targeting those parents who are seen to have potential for development, as a means of building capacity within the school at a range of different levels, and not restricted to auxiliary and support functions. Others have sought proactively to engage those parents who are viewed as more challenging ("those parents who shorten my life"), recognising the significant roles such individuals can play in informing broader local opinion.

In many schools, members of the local community play a key role in delivering extended services and support. This serves to increase the sustainability of such support, both in terms of the degree to which it protects it from the vagaries of political policy and in reducing the overall cost to the school of such activity.

This approach is also important in helping to increase the sense of ownership and take-up, and reducing allegations of empire-building made against the school. In any event, though, establishing strong relationships is likely to take considerable time and patience.

Vignette of practice

Wychall School employed Tracey, a local parent, to act as community engagement worker.
Core to this post is encouraging local people to trust the school more and getting people through the door. Initially much of Tracey's work was simply talking to people informally, to break down barriers and foster the belief that the school is there to serve them.

The school has also established a cohort of community support volunteers, who act as advocates for the school and its services. These are local people who have benefited from what the extended school is able to offer.

Establishing 'coffee stop' - informal drop-in sessions - has also helped.

Consultation is now a combination of informal and ad hoc conversation and more structured approaches such as questionnaires.

Questions for reflections: Community

- What opportunities exist to develop capacity based upon existing community groups?

- How can the school increase its perceived openness to the community?

- What opportunities exist for individuals in the school to act as advocates for the extended school?

- What mechanisms need to be developed to promote ongoing discussion and dialogue?

- What other approaches could help increase understanding of community issues and need?

2. Multi-agency collaborations

While all schools work with other agencies in a variety of ways, in the past this may have been mainly on a fairly superficial level, and there has been little tradition of genuine collaboration in many areas (Craig, 2004 p 15).

Establishing equal partnerships

A key issue relates to the focus of the partnership and the degree to which it is viewed as taking place on the school's terms, rather than addressing the collective priorities of all parties (Cummings et al, 2004 p 34; Smith, 2004). For instance, conflicts often revolve around the use of shared facilities, such as sports facilities. Indeed, in some cases, there may even be direct competition between the agendas of different partners. For instance, funding arrangements for the provision of childcare places led to one school and its onsite private nursery provider competing for the same group of three-year-olds. The onsite location of vending machines has been a further cause of concern in another school.

A contributing factor may be that schools are seen to have a natural tendency to exert control over other parties (Craig, 2004 p 26). A particular focus for tension relates to the perceived competition between the standards and pupil welfare agendas (Sammons et al, 2004 p iv).

There is a clear sense that the convergence in the agendas of several key areas of public services is supporting the move towards closer collaboration between schools and local partners. Relationships with healthcare providers and police services have benefited particularly from this move. However, variation exists in the speed with which different agencies are willing and able to connect more fully with schools. Issues of capacity are foremost amongst these. Cultural concerns also play a part. Furthermore, these will vary between and within organisations, with the views of senior and middle leaders and local operational staff not necessarily fully aligned.

Strategies for engaging with partners

A range of strategies have been adopted by school leaders to engage with other partner organisations. These have often involved making a direct approach to the most senior leaders to discuss issues of mutual concern with a view to developing a cohesive strategy for collaboration. Elsewhere, momentum has come from developing relationships with an individual professional, thereby taking more direct action towards addressing issues at ground level. More broadly, some schools have sought to work in collaboration, utilising the potential power of their local authority as a strategic facilitator of relationships between different areas of service. Building on existing relationships and collaborations has also often proved successful. Sure Start has often proved to be particularly powerful in this regard [see text box below].

Many schools have facilitated some form of visioning event to support the development of a collective vision. These have often been in a neutral venue with a neutral facilitator. Such days can draw attendance from a range of potential partners, including local community groups, and help to promote a sense of mutual ownership. They can also be instrumental in building relationships between the individuals involved. Other schools have established their own priorities and sought to gain support and buy-in from other potential partners. While the former is, at least in the first instance, arguably a simpler approach, the degree to which it engenders a more authentic relationship is questionable. In either instance, though, schools have to retain a flexible approach to such partnership working. Part of this is recognising that the vision and nature of the school are likely to change over the course of extension.

Developing a clear understanding of the ways in which different agencies can contribute to the achievement of each other's targets is a helpful strategy for promoting engagement. Establishing common, shared targets is one potential mechanism for promoting partnership on an ongoing basis.

Text box 2:

Ten key lessons from the Sure Start experience

1. Establish an environment that supports risk and avoids blame.

2. Be flexible to meet the real needs of the people services are intended to help.

3. Take steps to promote a genuinely shared vision for activities amongst partners.

4. Remain focused on what you really want to do.

5. Be sensitive to the ways in which change affects individuals.

6. Think about sustainability from the start. Introducing charges, however small, for services from day one will help to avoid the development of a culture of dependency.

7. Involve parents at all levels.

8. Build relationships with key people.

9. Build on what you do well.

10. Identify shared targets and areas of mutual interest to promote partnership.

Creating a culture for collaboration

Flexibility is key in ensuring the success of collaboration on a day-to-day basis. A central challenge for the leader is promoting the development of a culture within which collaboration can thrive. This may involve a number of practical challenges, but those schools involved have shown that in most instances these can be overcome with some creativity and imagination. A common example relates to the timing and location of meetings to review a child's progress. School hours mean that such meetings have to be scheduled later in the day, otherwise teaching staff will be unable to attend. Open discussion with partner agencies is essential in providing a way through this.

At the heart of developing effective multi-agency working is establishing a shared view of what the collaboration is seeking to achieve. This may or may not be more difficult than it sounds, and local circumstances and relationships can play a crucial role in determining this. In any event it is important not to short-circuit this process and to provide time and space for the open and honest dialogue needed to achieve this understanding. Shared visioning days can be a helpful means of supporting this.

A greater test is likely to involve developing effective cross-agency collaboration at the individual level across the school. Differences in the identity and culture of professional groups are likely to have some negative effect on collaboration (Dryfoos and Maguire, 2002 p 152). A particularly common issue surrounds misunderstandings of the demands placed upon different professional groups. Elsewhere, differences in the level of autonomy afforded to headteachers and to leaders in other agencies can be disconcerting. Historical conceptions of roles, such as those amongst teachers of what it means to be a social worker and vice versa, are also likely to have unforeseen consequences that leaders will need to address. Issues of language and working culture are also likely to need some consideration.

Vignette of practice

At Beauchamp College, Leicester, the Vice Principal has developed a directory of potential partners that provides an overview of their remit, aims, scope and targets. This directory is used by the college to identify other organisations that may potentially be able to support it in fulfilling its strategic objectives. The fact that Beauchamp does not qualify for funding targeted at schools in disadvantaged areas makes this proactive and targeted approach all the more important. Creative use of the college's resources and staff is an important lever in meeting match-funding requirements.

Vignette of practice

Hengrove School has engaged in considerable ongoing discussion with its partners to establish their values and vision. This has been very time-consuming but essential in developing relationships that will work. Through this they came to realise that differences between agencies were not necessarily as great as they may have imagined. Understanding the aspirations of partners and the ways in which the school could support these has been core to developing collaboration. Setting realistic targets and identifying priorities, particularly in the early days, have helped provide clarity and focus.

Ensuring that students are involved in all initiatives is also important in promoting the longer-term viability of joint working.

Finally, celebrating success has provided the impetus for new work and helped to bring resisters within the organisation on board.

In most instances, the lead agency will identify the individual who works with the school, but headteachers will usually expect some degree of discussion to confirm that this person will be sympathetic to the school's ethos and values. Nevertheless, additional support will inevitably be required to ensure that the person becomes integrated into the school. Line management of such staff will normally remain with the lead agency. This is generally seen by school leaders as essential in protecting such individuals' ongoing professional development. It is also a signal of trust that reduces the demands on the school. Day-to-day support is provided by senior leaders within the school. It is their responsibility to facilitate ongoing support to ensure their effective integration into the school. Few welcome the idea of a cuckoo in the nest. However, it is perhaps to be expected that other professionals based in extended schools may experience some sense of isolation from time to time, particularly when such professionals are more used to working as part of a broader team. A comprehensive induction, work-shadowing, cross-team meetings and enforcing a policy of one staff room for everyone can all help promote a greater sense of oneness within the school.

However, of more concern is the prospect that such individuals may be seen by their peers to have 'gone native'. Tackling this promptly and effectively is clearly important. While the main

"A key principle was that I don't know anything about social workers – they had to be managed by their head office, with all the back-up and services they could offer. In her office that was great – she got a lot of support. But when she was talking to other officers, they'd say things like: "What are you poking your nose in here for?" and: "Didn't you used to be a proper social worker?" because she was based in a school and couldn't be a proper social worker."

Primary head

responsibility for doing this will rest with managers of the service concerned, school leaders may also be able to play a role, for instance by providing opportunities for others to work within the school or undertake awareness-raising visits.

The enhanced working relationships between agencies often lead to some blurring of professionals' roles. This is most likely to affect individuals from other organisations who are based in the school and require some give and take. For instance, as an adult working in a school, a social worker may be expected to deal with a behaviour-related incident, even though this may technically fall outside their remit. In contrast, a police officer may be expected to defer their authority to a senior leader in the school when breaking up a fight between students, enabling the school to follow its own policy for dealing with such an event, rather than bringing into effect the full force of the law.

Clearly, dealing with many of the issues involved requires patience and a measured approach. As part of this, school leaders must meet the demands associated with managing the expectations of all concerned.

In many instances, the presence of shared management boards will support the strategic leadership of the extended school. These can provide additional valuable capacity, drawing upon expertise from across different agencies and organisations. They also offer an important check for issues and concerns, while providing further protection on matters of accountability.

Distributing leadership

Many leaders in extended schools highlight the benefit of adopting approaches that support the broader distribution of leadership across the organisation. However, in doing so, they have also been quick to recognise the important role played by the headteacher and other senior leaders in the school in giving status to external relationships and connections. A related issue concerns the strategies adopted to challenge areas of concern in other organisations. The views of the headteacher are likely to carry more weight in such correspondence, even if the words used are those of others in the organisation.

3. Networks of schools

In addition to working with different agencies, extended schools frequently collaborate with their neighbours, to provide additional services and share expertise and resources (Grainger, 2003 p 35).

Such collaborations can be enormously beneficial, allowing schools to pool expertise and resources and helping to avoid duplication (Knowsley Council, 2005 p 21). However, they also bring with them a range of challenges to be addressed. Foremost is the need to overcome existing inter-school competition. Schools are also required to minimise any increase in bureaucracy stemming from such collaboration. Issues of accountability and governance will also need to be tackled (Craig, 2004 p 10).

Support for collaboration comes from the government's 2005 white paper *Higher Standards, Better Schools for All* (DfES, 2005b). This offers support for school federations, ie networks of schools that share a governing body and headteacher. Such federations promote greater sharing of resources and good practice. They may also support a more strategic and directed approach to the provision of intervention- and prevention-based support. Local authorities can play an important part in facilitating the strategic development of such federations.

Vignette of practice

Linton Village College collaborates closely with a neighbouring school to develop support and services for their respective communities. This collaboration is supported by the presence of a joint governing body sub-committee, responsible for managing adult and family learning. Ongoing dialogue between the respective principals promotes the development of a shared strategic approach and a prompt response to emerging operational difficulties.

Vignette of practice

Queens Park Neighbourhood Centre is part of a campus of extended schools, which will serve the needs of children aged 3 to 18. The initiative will be led by a partnership board, comprising the heads of the three schools, a children's centre involved in the initiative and leaders from key strategic partners. The campus is set to be launched in spring 2006.

4. Sustaining the extended school

The aims of *Every Child Matters* and the individual visions outlined by extended schools will not be achieved overnight. While some initial inroads can be achieved relatively quickly, challenges such as changing prevailing attitudes of low expectation and raising social capital in communities are likely to take far longer to realise. Furthermore, establishing a greater sense of trust in and ownership of the school is likely to be compromised if additional support is only provided for a short time before being withdrawn.

Workload

From a different angle, sustainability also refers to the ways in which leaders within a school approach the increased workload issues associated with extended activity.

In many instances, the headteacher acts as the initial driving force behind the extended school (Cummings et al, 2004 p 29) and plays a critical role as an agent for change (Stoll, 1995 p 52-3). This may arise in part from his or her belief in the *Every Child Matters* agenda and in part from a broader commitment to promoting the welfare of children. Indeed, in many cases headteachers in schools that were quickest to engage in extended activity demonstrate a clear moral purpose and fervent belief in the benefits of adopting this type of broader approach.

While this may to some extent be inevitable and even essential in the shorter term, it is unlikely to be tenable in the longer term as related increases in the pressure of work take their toll. Longer-term sustainability therefore depends upon the principles of extended schools becoming more firmly embedded within the school (Shaw, 2003 p 65; Holmes, 2005 p 49).

Instead, over the longer term the role of the headteacher is likely to move from one in which they are the main driver of extended activity and services, to one where they provide opportunities for others to develop the vision further. The role of the head as meaning-maker is important here, as their actions and speech reinforce the significance of the extended activity to the school as a whole. The head is likely to continue to play a major role in securing the buy-in and support of partner agencies and in communicating with the governing body. However, day-to-day operational activity will more usually be driven by other members of staff.

Governors

The governing body represents an important source of sustainability for the extended school, offering long-term continuity and commitment to new initiatives (Holmes, 2005 p 62). Governors may also represent an additional valuable source of knowledge in areas that are uncharted waters for the school (Knowsley Council, 2005 p 36). However, some headteachers have reported mixed experiences when seeking to gain the commitment and support of governing bodies in relation to the *Every Child Matters* agenda. At the heart of this is the perceived tension between a greater focus on care and the demand to raise standards. Evidence suggests that schools in areas characterised by lower levels of social disadvantage may be more likely to experience this difficulty. Ongoing information-sharing and awareness-raising sessions are an important strategy through which heads have sought to address this challenge. This can take time and patience.

In-school buy-in and designated co-ordinators

As noted, increasing leadership capacity is a key part of establishing the longer-term sustainability of the extended activity. This is essential to creating a culture of social entrepreneurship, within which individuals are able to develop ideas and opportunities that may make a contribution to the life chances of children and their families.

A critical first step in this is creating a sense that individuals within the school have real ownership of the extended school initiative. This is important in helping to avoid the danger of 'two schools' emerging, where core and extended activities are seen to exist in parallel and operate in an unconnected way.

Commitment to the broader *Every Child Matters* agenda is likely to vary across the school, and senior leaders have an important role to play in addressing this. Their involvement is critical in highlighting the importance of this to the wider school.

Another strategy for longer-term sustainability in many schools has been the identification of a named individual who is responsible for managing the day-to-day demands of extended school activity. These co-ordinators are widely viewed as having a positive impact on the development of non-core activity (Cummings et al, 2004 p 25) and are likely to be most effective when they possess a range of skills and experiences that extend beyond schools into areas such as partnership-working, fundraising and community work (Shaw, 2003 p 20).

In many full-service extended schools and in some community schools, such extended schools co-ordinators are full-time employees. However, limited resources may make such an approach impossible for smaller schools and those with less opportunity to attract discretionary funding. It is important that providers of support to extended schools continue to monitor developments to identify some of the practical ways in which schools overcome these barriers.

In addition to promoting the distribution of leadership functions, the co-ordinator usually plays a major role in developing relationships and securing alternative funding, essential for the ongoing sustainability of extended schools (Cummings et al, 2004 p 26). They are also able to play an important role in building links between core and extended areas of activity. A further area where co-ordinators can support the development of the extended school lies in identifying quick wins that are able to highlight the benefit of the broader extended approach while at the same time contributing to the learning of children.

In addition to this, the co-ordinator plays an important role as an advocate for extended school activities amongst school staff. Many leaders have sought to establish a larger network of advocates across the school, to promote the approach to peers and colleagues. As with developing trust in the community, establishing buy-in across the school can take time and requires personal commitment. In some instances, individuals may feel unable to buy in to the change in ethos and subsequently leave the school, providing an opportunity to bring individuals who are more sensitive to these different aspirations into the fold.

Vignette of practice

At King Edward VII School, Melton Mowbray, the business manager is responsible for promoting the development of extended services. This post is funded from the core school budget, therefore being able to demonstrate success and evidence benefits from the introduction of extended activities for the school as a whole are critical to its long-term sustainability.

The business manager is a member of the school's senior management team, and this fact demonstrates the important contribution the broader extended activity makes to the school as a whole. Embedding this work into a post such as this is an important aspect of ensuring ownership and sustainability, particularly as this school does not attract discretionary funding associated with challenging circumstances.

Vignette of practice

Coleshill Heath Primary School has undertaken a range of extended services for 20 years. Initially many staff were sceptical and found closer working with parents and the community to be threatening. Considerable time was given to discussing these fears, often on an informal one-to-one basis. The aim of this was establishing sufficient trust in the vision of the head. Challenging the assumptions of teachers and seeking to raise their aspirations for local people have also been important. Developing services that have demonstrated value has provided momentum. Some staff have left, providing an opening for others more sympathetic to the aims of the school to join.

Funding

Accessing discretionary funding requires the development of considerable expertise that is unlikely to exist already within the school (Wilkin et al, 2003 p 43). As noted above, many extended schools co-ordinators bring additional capacity in this regard. Accessing this funding also requires discipline and the retention of a strategic focus to ensure that extended activity is not driven by the immediate availability of funding but rather by the longer-term vision (Cummings et al, 2004 p 22). This requires close co-operation between the key strategic leaders and the extended schools co-ordinator.

The issue of funding remains one of the most contentious in the area of extended schools. For some, the absence of direct funding for services has been massively important in promoting an entrepreneurial approach and avoiding the emergence of a dependency culture. For others, it represents a significant challenge and ongoing worry. There is unquestionably a wide variety of potential funders for extended activity at present. However, it is also worth noting that it remains relatively early days for extended schools and that as greater numbers enter the fray, it may become more difficult to access such discretionary funding.

Many schools are therefore seeking to protect the sustainability of extended activity through the development of relationships and partnerships with other providers in the field, including other public sector agencies, not-for-profit organisations and private sector companies. There are a number of benefits to this approach.

Developing shared targets embeds partnership work more fully and promotes shared ownership of the issues being faced. As noted above, local authorities have a critical role to play in facilitating relationships in general, and in particular, in instances where agencies may be slower to engage in collaborative working.

Increased collaboration is also essential in avoiding duplication of services. Some schools play a major role in supporting local groups in delivering support. In instances where this is provided directly by members of the local community this strategy may be particularly empowering.

Additional financial support is usually provided by partners in the delivery of services (Holmes, 2005 p 68). Furthermore, partners may be able to provide additional support in bidding for discretionary funding.

Charging for services is a further area that influences longer-term sustainability. However, schools report mixed experiences of this. Part of this variation depends upon the group that is accessing the service. For instance, many community schools have long-established connections with local sports and interest groups, who access services and facilities from the school on a fee-paying basis. In contrast, in instances where the school has only recently begun to offer support to younger parents, cost may be a hurdle. Similarly, some schools have found that when they have introduced a cost for services such as their breakfast club, they have experienced a marked reduction in take-up. Often discretionary funding may be available to support activities at the start, but over the longer term is likely to end at some point. Establishing a minimum cost from the outset is helpful in reducing the danger of dependency and can also increase the perceived value of such services.

Questions for reflection:
Promoting sustainability

What funding streams exist that can be used to support the development of extended services?

What approaches can be adopted to avoid the development of a dependency culture?

What shared local plans and strategies etc can be used to develop shared partnerships that can support initiatives over the longer term?

What structures and additional capacity are needed to ensure that extended school activity is more widely embedded across the school?

Which services and activities does the school want to undertake over the short term, and which are seen as requiring a longer-term commitment to be effective?

Conclusions

Conclusions

Leadership of extended schools is highly complex and concerned with overcoming a number of significant challenges.

Foremost amongst these is the ongoing debate as to what the aim of the school should be. The *Every Child Matters* agenda means that it is almost impossible to limit the focus of schools purely to raising educational attainment and concentrating upon the child as a learner. Instead schools are forced to take a wider view, considering the whole needs of the child. While many in schools welcome this change in emphasis, it is by no means universally popular, and headteachers in particular must meet the challenge of ensuring buy-in into this agenda across the school and broader community.

Secondly, the move to this broader role calls upon the head and other senior leaders in the school to demonstrate a broader range of skills and attributes than ever before. This can be addressed in part through the development of greater leadership capacity within the school. Identifying a specific individual to lead on this challenge is a particularly helpful strategy. Elsewhere, supporting the distribution of leadership more broadly outside the school, to the local community and other agencies, is a further valuable step in building capacity and promoting the longer-term sustainability of the support.

The 'political' dimension of leadership is often more marked in extended schools. This has particular implications for the head. Central to this are the issues of status and the role the head plays in determining the key priorities of the school. Externally, too, connections are easier to form, in the early days at least, if they are seen to have the full weight of the headteacher behind them.

Identifying the needs of the local community and developing approaches to address these needs requires greater collaboration between professional groups and the lay people who may be best placed to articulate the needs of these communities. Furthermore, the increased emphasis on multi-agency working raises a wide range of challenges in relation to the development of a shared culture for working. Central to these are issues of professional and organisational socialisation.

However while such challenges are marked, the potential impacts of extended schools are greater still. At the heart of this is the inextricable link between children's wellbeing and enhanced educational attainment. Considering these issues together rather than in isolation is essential for schools to drive up standards and improve the life chances of all children, regardless of their personal and socio-economic background.

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