



**Annual Conference,
'Building Capacity through Future Visions'.**

Community Engagement for Inclusion

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During this session I will...

- **Consider how school relationships to local communities and families may assist in delivering the inclusion agenda.**
- **Look at a model of school based service delivery which has been developed in England**
- **Consider the impact of this model on the lives of teachers, families and students.**

The UK Government Core Services Agenda

- High quality child care
- A varied menu of activities
- Parenting support
- Swift and easy referral
- Community access to school facilities

The Extended Schools Approach

In England the Department for Children Schools and Families describes an extended school as one which provides activities and services, often beyond the school day in order to address the needs of its pupils, their families and the wider community.

Such schools, it is anticipated, will address critical issues in providing a more collaborative service across agencies from differing disciplines in order to assure that the needs of young people and their families, many of whom perceive themselves as disenfranchised in respect of education and welfare are met.

Extended School aims for addressing the Core Agenda

- To bring services closer to the community
- To facilitate multi-agency working
- To establish a community-based approach to schooling
- To integrate the Extended School approach into established school systems
- To develop core work with vulnerable students and at-risk families and
- To work with partner agencies to develop non-core work.

Research brief

- To evaluate the efficacy of two full-service Extended Schools within a Local Authority Extended Schools Pilot Scheme.
- To construct case studies of interesting and innovative practice for dissemination to other schools within the Local Authority.
- To gauge the perception of the Extended Schools from service agencies and service users.
- To provide commentary for the Local Authority with regards to continuation and possible expansion of the scheme.

The two schools

The two secondary schools upon which the research was focused are situated in areas which include pockets of considerable deprivation and where educational aspiration has traditionally been regarded as low. Both schools provide education to students between the ages of 11 and 16 years and are similar in size, each with approximately 900 students. Within the Extended Schools Pilot Project the schools had established a clear set of aims, these being:

- To bring services closer to the community
- To facilitate multi-agency working
- To establish a community-based approach to schooling
- To integrate the Extended School approach into established school systems
- To develop core work with vulnerable students and at-risk families
- and
- To work with partner agencies to develop non-core work.

In School Professionals

Family Liaison Worker

Counsellor

Nurse

Mental Health Worker

Education Welfare

Careers Officer

Social Worker

Police Officer

Sports Co-ordinator

Community Service

Delivery

Parenting classes

Adult literacy

Homework Clubs

Sports Clubs

Arts Club

Holiday Clubs

Quit Smoking Club

Sexual Health Clinic

Community Led Services

Youth Service

Church Group

Sample of interviewees

Students	N = 14
School staff	N = 26
Parents/carers	N = 14
Professionals from other agencies	N = 16
Head teachers	N = 2
Local Authority Education Officers	N = 1

Total number of interviews conducted = 73

In addition, meetings were held with student representatives from the school councils.

**Family
Liaison Worker**



**Family Liaison Worker
Counsellor
Nurse
Mental Health Worker
Education Welfare
Careers Officer
Social Worker
Police Officer
Sports Co-ordinator**

The role of the family liaison worker

" Well what it was is my son, he wouldn't open up to no-one, he wouldn't talk to no-one. But (the family worker) managed to get through to him and it did, although it took a while with him, she did get through to him and he did find it helpful with her... I mean, you know, he wasn't seeing her like every week but she was there if he needed her and he did seem to open up to her, and at the moment one of my other children sees (the family worker) just on – it could be every month or so, just to see that she is alright, if she has got any problems in school. And (the family worker) has helped her to sort out a few things as well. So to me the whole project was really helpful because without it I didn't know where else to go."

Parent/carer

"(The family worker) has actually stopped me from going around the bend, you know, she has phoned me and sat and listened to me yawn on, you know about all my worries and I have felt 100% better after, just knowing there is somebody on the other end of the phone who will give me an ear, you know? And that is brilliant."

Parent/carer

The role of the family liaison worker

School looks upon me as a very manipulative person and I can understand why they are saying it because I have been. But (the family worker) has helped me to open my eyes and realise just what it is that everybody has been saying to me, they have made me really question everything I do. I have a social worker that is really, really too hard. I can understand why she is doing what she is doing because I do need a shove, but not to the extent that my social worker has made me. (The family worker) has been there to support me with that. She puts it in a different way but still gets the message across, where I felt with my social worker I am some sort of criminal. (The family worker) has put that differently, so she has made me understand that I am not actually opening my mouth for my social worker to see it, she is not there at home with me so I have never... when she says to me is everything OK, I say yes, everything is fine, but I don't tell her of the achievements I have done. (The family worker) I can speak to. I can tell (the family worker). I know that I can trust her.

Parent

The role of the family liaison worker

She (student) now fits in and she is a lot happier and she attends well. And it has just changed her whole life in that sense, because she was going down the route of non attending and that school held nothing. So by (the family worker's) work, she has actually been able to speak to mum. Her mum wouldn't speak to me and she wouldn't speak to any teachers because in her eyes we are a waste of time, you know? So just the different aspect and (the family worker) being ... that knowledge from the social services background meant putting mum in touch with other things that she can access or ways in dealing with it.

Teacher (Head of Year)

The role of the family liaison worker

"She gave me lots of support when I needed it when my mum was in hospital – shopping, transport with taxis and all that, and she helped me really, gave me advice and stuff, she helped me."

Student

"Well, something she said to me, it stopped me being naughty, she was saying that there is no point in shouting back at teachers, 'cause at the end of the day you are going to go home and you are going to be right up set with thinking about it, but they are going to go home and laugh about it, sit down nice and warm and forget about it next morning. Just going to be laughing about it. It is you that is going to get into trouble for it, so that stopped me mouthing back at teachers, 'cause I don't want teachers to feel good about having a go at me."

Student

**Family
Liaison Worker**



**Other In-School
Professionals**

- Family Liaison Worker**
- Counsellor**
- Nurse**
- Mental Health Worker**
- Education Welfare**
- Careers Officer**
- Social Worker**
- Police Officer**
- Sports Co-ordinator**

Other in-school professionals

“ I mean, certainly one of the benefits of the Extended Schools that I can see is the fact that it gives you the ability to develop relationships with key members of staff, where you can happily exchange information knowing that it’s not going to be misused.”

Community Police Officer

“For me the difference has been it has been being part of a team in the sense of the planning and feedback is much more thorough, much smoother and the ease of communication is obviously there both through regular planned meetings but also through accidental contact that when I am in school I will walk past somebody from one of the other agencies and we have got common concerns”.

Behaviour support teacher

Other in-school professionals

Researcher: Has being located within the school made a difference to support for children and families?

“Yes, it has really because you could argue from a cold education and welfare point of view that I have been present at many meetings when children are being discussed who are not actually on my caseload. But my argument is that by getting to know the school as a whole and particularly the most vulnerable students I am pre -preparing myself for if any of the problems that they may be facing spill over and become attendance problems so I know a lot of students who are within the cohort of those who are being, who are accessing the Extended Schools system, who are not attendance problems but who know me because I have been part of that team and I think that is valuable because it is helping to take a more holistic view of problems rather than just seeing myself as attendance in isolation because it is never isolation.”

Education Welfare Officer

**Family
Liaison Worker**

**Community
Service Delivery**



**Other In-School
Professionals**

- Parenting classes**
- Adult literacy**
- Homework Clubs**
- Sports Clubs**
- Arts Club**
- Holiday Clubs**
- Quit Smoking Club**
- Sexual Health Clinic**

Community Service Delivery

He goes to homework club and that. I mean when he first come to school he was getting lots of homework and I couldn't deal with it, I couldn't help him because he gets stressed, therefore it makes me stressed and we end up shouting and crying at each other. And it got to the point that his homework built up that much then and at one of the meetings, because I have to come to school to do and I mentioned this and they said did you know there is a homework club? And he goes to this homework club now and he does the homework, I mean he doesn't do it all but he does a lot and it does help ease the situation at home because I am not he is not getting angry, I am not getting angry and he is, you know, he is like others, he does music lessons and that is through school, he does guitar and he is really enjoying that.

Parent

Community Service Delivery

I mean the six week holidays, any school holidays, they are a long time for the children and I know that he has particularly enjoyed the last six week holidays.

Although he wasn't attending this school because he hadn't started, he got involved in an event down at Christchurch where they had the Sure Start football training, rounders, and also there was facilities there for my younger daughter who is five, she could come along. So we went down as a family. Since then he has been on various events and, ice skating, and I just think its important that there are things for children to do out of school as well as in school, because it keeps them out of trouble, its good for them, you know, its character building and that's really helped him. It's built his confidence.

Parent

Community Service Delivery

There is always courses, things to do after school, the teachers are dedicated to you, they like gives you work on the plate, it is not like some teachers where they are just not really bothered about your education, most of these teachers are bothered about your education.

Student

I actually went to the trip along with my friend from Cambridge. He was coming down for the next day, he was coming over the Friday, so we rang my friend up, see if he wanted to come and he said yes, I would like to go quadding for the first time.

Student

**Family
Liaison Worker**

**Community
Service Delivery**



**Other In-School
Professionals**

**Community
Led Services**



Community Led Services

Involvement of local community services are seen as critical and the schools have established a good working relationship with:

- Local Volunteer Bureau
- Local Churches
- Youth clubs
- Youth Opportunities Board

What the case studies show?

- The early identification of student difficulties by the school
- Intervention of a family worker who maintained links and often worked as an intermediary between all parties.
- Direct contact with the family worker by students and families often precluding the necessity for direct contact with other professionals (though indirect support provided by these was also important).
- Swift response of professional agencies and their ability to channel support through the school.
- Flexible school systems which recognised family and student stress and could be amended to accommodate difficulties over issues such as attendance
- Professionals from other agencies willing to use school as a meeting place with parents/carers as opposed to (for example) social services offices.

National Indicators

Progress in full service extended schools was around double the rate of the national average between 2005 and 2006. At Key Stage 4, the percentage of pupils achieving 5+ A*-Cs at GCSE increased by just over 5%, compared to 2.5% increase nationally over the same period.

References used in this presentation

A Report of this research is available from the CeSNER web pages accessed via

<http://www2.northampton.ac.uk/education/home1/cesner>

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