

Learning together

How education providers promote social responsibility and community cohesion

The survey was conducted to evaluate how a sample of local authorities and education providers knew and understood their local communities and how they helped learners to become responsible citizens and make a positive contribution to society.

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Executive summary

This survey was conducted to evaluate how a sample of local authorities and education providers knew and understood their local communities and how they helped learners to become responsible citizens who could make a positive contribution to society.

From September 2007, schools have been required to promote community cohesion and, since September 2008, Ofsted has judged schools' contribution to this during school inspections.¹ The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) published *Guidance on the duty to promote community cohesion* to support schools.² This defined community cohesion, in the context of schools, as meaning 'working towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community'. Although colleges are not required to promote community cohesion, they are expected to promote tolerance and respect within their student communities.

The survey findings are based on visits made between June 2008 and February 2009. The seven local authorities visited identified educational settings where effective leaders were succeeding in developing learners' sense of their contribution to society. Inspectors visited nine children's centres, 15 primary schools, 14 secondary schools (including one pupil referral unit and one residential centre) and nine further education colleges. The leaders of these settings, in turn, identified learners who, often against the odds, were successful in contributing positively to their communities. To gain additional evidence beyond the seven local authorities, inspectors visited a further 20 post-16 providers in February 2009. At the time of their previous inspection, all these had been judged to be good in terms of equality of opportunity.

The first section of the report focuses on strategic leadership in identifying communities and their needs and describes how successful partnerships with a range of agencies ensured that provision was tailored to need.

The second section describes how the educational settings visited provided opportunities for learners of all ages to develop the skills and knowledge they needed to be effective members of different communities: in their own institutions, locally, nationally and globally. It describes curricular provision which supported them

¹ *Inspecting maintained schools' duty to promote community cohesion: guidance for inspectors* (090165), Ofsted, 2009; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Forms-and-guidance/Browse-all-by/Education-and-skills/Schools/Supplementary-guidance-and-resources/\(language\)/eng-GB](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Forms-and-guidance/Browse-all-by/Education-and-skills/Schools/Supplementary-guidance-and-resources/(language)/eng-GB)

² <http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00598-2007&>

as they matured, made progress and gained confidence, both in their own identity, and in their knowledge and understanding of how they might contribute to society. While good practice was found across sectors and age ranges, its consistency and effectiveness varied.

The final section of the report focuses on barriers: of prejudice, unemployment, isolation, crime, intergenerational misunderstanding, conflict and low aspirations. It describes how good providers were tackling these. For example, educational settings promoted an understanding of local history to develop a sense of identity, but they also broadened the horizons of children and young people, helping them to develop positive attitudes about the wider world. All the local authorities and education settings visited recognised the barriers that isolation presented, not just in terms of prejudice and misunderstanding but also economically, socially and culturally.

The case studies illustrate how providers' curricular and extra-curricular activities encouraged learners to become responsible citizens and to contribute confidently to their communities. The views of learners were paramount throughout the survey, and this determined which elements of good practice were included in this report.

Key findings

- Strategic leadership was strong in five of the seven local authorities. Their successful coordinating role helped to bring communities together. Individual settings were given clear direction and were able to provide more effectively for their learners. The other two authorities, less experienced in this work, were making good progress towards being effective in this coordinating role. All the local authorities and settings visited demonstrated a firm commitment to community cohesion and social responsibility.
- The schools were in a stronger position to respond to their communities when they received information and data showing their performance in relation to others. Where this work was more advanced, local authority officers were able to use the information to challenge them about the achievement and behaviour of specific groups of learners and about their response to promoting equality.
- In the best practice observed, local authorities and individual educational settings shared information effectively and worked together to support transition for learners. Expert nurturing of learners and their families in early years settings was not always built on and, as learners moved on, there was often a failure, particularly between secondary schools and colleges, to forward information about them.
- Successful strategic, multi-agency partnerships brought improved support for learners. These partnerships had extensive knowledge of their communities and were able to allocate expertise promptly. However, the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of such focused support were often insufficiently developed.
- The local authorities visited were at different stages in analysing demographic data to identify emerging trends and to anticipate what provision might be

needed for particular groups. Planning to meet the linguistic and cultural needs of newly arrived learners, as well as those from established communities, was vital, but the provision of essential language programmes was sometimes hindered by the speed of change, insufficient coherence and by a lack of clarity over funding.

- A rich curriculum in many settings helped learners to become active and informed citizens; it fostered a sense of shared values, while developing their understanding of different cultures, faiths, languages and backgrounds. There is no statutory requirement for citizenship education beyond the age of 16, however, and across the colleges visited the nature and quality of provision varied considerably.
- Despite good international and local links, very few providers had developed links with other schools in the United Kingdom that were different from their own. As a result, learners sometimes held limited or stereotyped views of other parts of the country.
- Initiatives to bring different groups of learners together to break down barriers often changed learners' views and challenged entrenched prejudices. However, providers did not evaluate these initiatives systematically.
- The best providers offered explicit training in advocacy skills to enable children, young people and adults to participate better in the world of work, their local community and democratic processes, but such training was not provided universally.
- Teachers in some of the settings visited undertook training to develop their self-confidence in tackling sensitive and controversial issues and in challenging learners' entrenched views. However, in settings where such training had not been provided, staff were less confident or skilled, and so learners missed out. The quality of training for governors in relation to community cohesion also varied.
- Two priorities emerging for providers were to improve relationships between younger and older people and to work with transport agencies to overcome barriers to travel beyond the immediate neighbourhood.

Recommendations

The Department for Children, Schools and Families should:

- evaluate the impact of existing guidance, training and support materials to enable education providers to meet the requirements to promote community cohesion.

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills should:

- continue to encourage the post-16 sector to build upon best practice to develop citizenship for all learners up to the age of 19.

Local authorities should:

- share their analyses and knowledge of local communities more systematically
- monitor and evaluate the contribution and impact of key partners to specific initiatives designed to promote social responsibility and community cohesion
- promote and coordinate partnership links between educational providers in different contexts and areas
- develop ways of improving learners' confidence in travelling outside their immediate neighbourhood
- share good practice between schools so that, at each point of transition, learners build on previous good practice.

School and colleges should:

- understand local community needs and opportunities for promoting social responsibility and community cohesion
- explore ways to improve the transfer of information between schools and colleges about young people's attainment and previous achievements
- monitor and evaluate participation rates in specific programmes and activities intended to promote social responsibility and community cohesion, and the impact they make
- ensure that governing bodies have appropriate training so that they can discharge their duties to the whole community
- provide regular opportunities for staff training, including for senior leaders, to develop their confidence in dealing with sensitive, topical and controversial issues with young people
- develop learners' advocacy and representative skills to support them in making a positive contribution to their educational setting and the wider community

- promote intergenerational activities that foster mutual understanding.

Strategic leadership and strong partnerships

1. All the local authorities, and the educational settings which they identified for this survey, had good knowledge and understanding of the communities they served and, for the most part, appreciated communities' diverse needs and the potential barriers to achieving community cohesion. They demonstrated successful practice, from the early years onwards, in promoting active citizenship and social responsibility. Clear-thinking leadership ensured that staff understood how they could contribute to this. They enabled children, young people and adults to achieve highly and make a positive contribution to society.
2. The key role of local authorities emerged early on in the survey. Local authorities' roles were central to effective community cohesion in:
 - providing leadership and establishing expectations
 - coordinating coherent strategies across their area
 - getting to know their constituent communities
 - importantly, keeping this knowledge up to date
 - identifying needs
 - meeting those needs.
3. In five of the seven local authorities, strong direction, high expectations and a determination to make a difference to the lives of children and young people had a clear impact on the settings visited. They were clear about how their work contributed to the broader vision and fitted into provision as a whole. There was consistency in the attitudes of staff, the use of resources and the approaches taken to promoting social responsibility and community cohesion.
4. The diversity of staff appointed, at local authority and institutional levels, reflected a clear commitment to community cohesion. Staff were drawn from a range of backgrounds and heritages, often providing a valuable link to their communities. Publications and displays highlighted the mix of gender, age and ethnicity among staff and learners, communicating clearly that the provision was open to all.
5. Strong strategic leadership in many of the post-16 settings visited also actively promoted community cohesion and helped to create inclusive, safe environments that were sensitive to the learners' educational, social and cultural needs. In the very best colleges, strong links with the Every Child Matters outcomes ensured that the provision supported learners in developing the skills needed to be active and responsible citizens.

As part of its strategy to develop equality of opportunity, one of the colleges visited had run an annual 'celebrating diversity' competition for the last 11 years. The competition is judged by senior college managers and external representatives, including from the local authority's interfaith forum. The competition challenges students to look at diversity in depth and then to take the skills and insights gained into their adult working life.

6. All the authorities recognised that the recruitment and training of governors could be important levers in promoting community cohesion. Although many school governors had benefited from challenging and supportive training, senior officers in the authorities recognised that recruitment strategies had not yet ensured that governing bodies consistently reflected the diversity of the local or wider community.

One of the primary schools visited had governors from the various communities that it served. The school initially enlisted the support of Bangladeshi mothers, then fathers. Some Somali mothers also joined the governing body. To encourage greater participation, new appointees were paired with 'buddy' governors from the same community. The headteacher also ensured that essential paperwork was clear and presented in a consistent format, so that it was less daunting for those who were inexperienced. The times for meetings and training were adapted to suit work and family needs. The local authority, recognising that training for governors could be overwhelming at times, made improvements that helped them to understand their role better.

7. Each authority visited had identified potential points of tension within and between communities and the factors that created them. All recognised, for example, that sudden or rapid inward movement of people, irrespective of cultural background, had a negative impact on social cohesion, often highlighting more sharply the tensions which already existed.
8. Identifying such tensions was better developed in five of the seven authorities. In the most effective ones, planning provision for diverse and socially complex communities depended on developing increasingly sophisticated systems of city- or area-wide monitoring. This had allowed them and their partners to identify demographic changes. Increasingly accurate information allowed the authorities and their partners to:
 - identify and respond to events and incidents
 - provide reliable evidence from specific interventions
 - plan for the provision of services.

For example, one of the authorities refined its monitoring of population movement to include movements across, rather than simply into or out of, the city itself. As a result, it was better placed to assess the shifting impact of population change on particular services in different localities.

9. Inspectors also found much good practice in the way local authorities helped schools to manage the children of new arrivals (such as asylum seekers and economic migrant workers). Often these schools were located in areas that served diverse populations. However, increasingly, schools which served traditionally more homogeneous areas called in support as their catchment changed. Because of a lack of experience, these schools were often ill-equipped to identify the needs of the newly arrived children and, at first, did not have the strategies to support them. The advice given reassured staff and helped them to respond positively. In general, however, monitoring and evaluation of the impact of any support given were weak.

The role of local authorities in coordinating services

10. By establishing strong multi-agency networks and strategic partnerships, responses to the changing needs of the population were better coordinated. In the past, authorities had often focused on particular groups or geographical areas. Working with partners, they were now able to take a broader view, considering how to help new and existing residents to adjust to each other, as well as how to meet the needs of new settlers.
11. To meet learners' needs, local authorities maintained effective partnerships with local service providers and agencies, and developed effective communication with learners, their families, governors and local employers. Clear expectations and explicit models of good practice also enabled individual settings to understand their role in the areas and communities they served.

One of the local authorities promoted social cohesion and racial equality effectively across schools, their communities and young people through a number of initiatives, such as the launch, in 2003, of the Stephen Lawrence Standard for Schools and Early Years. At the time of the survey, 130 schools and five children's centres had achieved the standard.

One local authority's race equality and diversity service provided helpful guidance for settings in developing policy and practice to promote cohesion, ensure equality and value diversity. It had developed an equality audit tool which helped settings to evaluate how well they were working towards a single equality policy. Expert guidance, support and training helped settings to assess progression from Key Stages 1 to 4, with an emphasis on diversity and citizenship, using a well-established framework.

12. Prompt access to funding enabled local authorities, with their partners, to have greater impact, particularly when they worked with the communities. When this occurred there was a greater sense of shared commitment, with local people taking pride in what happened.

Supporting transition

13. The seven local authorities visited had established effective links between primary and secondary schools. The children's centres they identified for this survey worked particularly well with primary schools to share information about children and their families. The schools they identified reported that parental involvement generally declined as children grew older and it was a challenge for larger institutions to replicate the close daily relationships with parents at children's centres, nurseries and primary schools. However, a number of the secondary schools and colleges visited were responding by developing projects, often from within their own resources, to maintain regular contact with parents and carers.
14. Settings serving the same area did not always share detailed knowledge of communities, and what had worked for individuals and specific groups.³ As a result, they missed opportunities to build on knowledge and expertise which was, in fact, available as children and young people moved between schools and colleges. Where 14 to 19 partnerships were strong, liaison between schools and colleges was better.

In one of the local authorities visited, two of the secondary schools were aware that many of their pupils joining Year 7 had had limited experiences of meeting others from different cultural backgrounds; pupils in their partner primary schools were from either predominantly Pakistani or predominantly White British heritages. At the age of 11, they transferred outside their immediate area to secondary schools with more ethnically diverse intakes. Consequently, a high priority for the local authority and the schools was to ensure that, from admission to primary school onwards, the pupils were gradually introduced, through visits, events and joint projects, to a new environment and to pupils from different cultures.

15. One college visited demonstrated very good knowledge of its local communities and had developed collaborative projects between students so that they could work together. Key Stage 4 students had opportunities to attend college taster courses, which increased their confidence. The courses were particularly valuable for students whose parents had little knowledge of further or higher education. A clearer understanding of the need to study grew out of work experience and other placements with local employers; these also helped to develop young people's understanding of the workplace and the skills needed to work with people of all ages.

³ *Good practice in extended schools – a short survey to examine effective practice in a small sample of the most successful full core service extended schools serving disadvantaged communities* (080242), Ofsted, 2009; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080242.

Analysing local data

16. Local authorities visited were at different stages in analysing data to identify emerging trends and to anticipate what provision might be needed for particular groups. For instance, meeting the language needs of new arrivals, whether they were young children or adults, maximised their chances of learning successfully and contributing fully.
17. The schools were in a stronger position to respond to their communities when the authority provided information and data that showed their performance in relation to others. Where this work was more advanced, local authority officers were able to use the information to challenge schools about the achievement and behaviour of specific groups of learners and about their response to promoting equality, as in this example.

Elected members and officers in the authority were acutely aware of the needs of the local communities and had a clear view of what they wanted to achieve. Education was seen as the key to enabling young people to participate in society. Therefore, narrowing the gap between the attainment of different groups was a high priority.

Senior education managers monitored the attainment and progress of all learners and groups, including those in care, and shared this information with schools. This helped the schools to identify priorities, such as focusing on the underachievement of pupils of Black Caribbean heritage and White British boys. Working closely with schools, children's centres and its own services, the authority encouraged a culture of openness to challenge, innovation and risk-taking. Effective planning, advice and support resulted in young people's levels of achievement being raised each year.

In discussions, education and childcare leaders reported that this had created an inspiring ethos in which to work. It was contributing to a culture of collaboration and a strong sense of a common identity.

One of the local authorities had focused on raising the achievements of its lowest achievers who included young people from Gypsy and Traveller communities. As a result of focused resourcing and support, the primary schools had been effective in improving the performance of these groups in national assessments. The local college used Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) to meet the needs of

Travellers not in secondary schools, as the learners and their families saw the award as valuable and relevant.⁴

18. Colleges also knew their learning communities well and some, but not all, had good links with secondary schools. A small number of them had analysed data about the electoral wards they served, in order to adapt provision or develop it to meet potential students' needs, but most had not.

Multi-agency partnerships

19. The early years providers visited had established strong partnerships with parents and their local communities. They helped children to settle in by providing a welcoming environment and drawing well on information about them. Children's home life, culture, ethnicity and religion were respected and valued through regularly updated displays and events designed to promote a positive approach to diversity. Parents and families were involved closely in designing and planning these.
20. Children's centres contributed strongly to community cohesion because they enabled education, health and social care professionals to work in multidisciplinary teams to identify and meet needs. The children's centres visited, and many primary schools, were particularly strong at reaching out to families and reducing isolation by providing services and support.

Local parents benefit from the 'one stop shop', located in a centre in an out-of-town estate with high levels of economic and social deprivation. In the first instance, adults are drawn to the centre by the quality of its services, but many stay for 'drop-in' advice sessions. Many also go on to take access courses in information technology, basic skills, and first aid and safeguarding, or train to work as part-time counsellors. A Parents' Forum develops experience and skills in the formal processes of democratic participation. The centre is managed flexibly by a voluntary organisation to meet changing circumstances and to ensure that the expertise is shared across three different children's centres. This secures valuable economies of scale.

The health team in a children's centre undertakes a universal needs assessment. Actions are taken to establish buddy links between, for example, families with different linguistic and ethnic backgrounds, and families with children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Links are also made between 'single dads' (with residency orders) to support access to services. One father who had recently moved to the

⁴ For further information on the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN), see: www.asdan.org.uk.

area said the community dimension was good: the groups provided a way to make friends and reduce isolation.

21. Involving parents at all stages helped to adapt services to real need. For example, when relocating services, consultation by a children's centre and nursery school led to the most convenient locations being chosen. Parents commented that being able to go to their own local community centre or school and meet familiar staff gave them the confidence to take up services.
22. As well as partnerships between early years settings and other agencies, the secondary schools and colleges visited had also worked in multi-agency partnerships to help them to meet the needs of young people better.

A liaison role in one of the schools had evolved to strengthen links between the school and the Pakistani heritage community. School issues were taken to imams at the three local mosques to develop understanding, and to reinforce school messages. Achievements were shared and celebrated at Friday prayers. The importance of sex education was discussed in order to reduce the concerns of parents. Through establishing regular opportunities for dialogue, the liaison sessions also introduced the benefits of participation in the school's enrichment activities.

23. The survey found that the colleges, which were chosen because they had been judged to be good or outstanding for their work in educational and social inclusion, had good knowledge of their students' community backgrounds. Their increasing understanding of the learning needs of the wider communities meant that provision was directed accurately. Many of their courses were attracting higher numbers of young people from backgrounds which had been under-represented previously. Successful partnerships helped the colleges to meet a wide range of needs.

One of the colleges visited played a key role in developing new opportunities and aspirations for the local community through partnership. Its Centre for Innovation and Partnerships was well established and it had also set up a range of partnerships with local authorities, a local airport, the National Health Service, a local football club, schools, higher education institutions and a wide range of voluntary and community organisations. A purpose-built support service, the Women's Business Centre, was helping many women develop new businesses. It was also an important partner in local regeneration activity, with an annual budget of £8 million. Thirty projects offered provision from entry level to higher-level management support and training. The college supported the local community through employability training and jobs, as well as supplying business support services, English language training and preparation for the 2012 Olympics.

An inclusion programme, aimed at young people aged 14 to 16 who had been excluded from school, enabled a college to work successfully with learners in disadvantaged circumstances and gave them access to a further education programme. Transition was well managed and students succeeded in progressing to other further education courses. Work with agencies, such as the police and youth offending teams, was effective, as were most links with parents. The inclusion programme focused on social concerns such as knife crime, and the students received advice about voluntary community work.

24. The colleges visited were aware of their responsibility to promote tolerance and develop inter-faith dialogue and understanding.

A local authority's community cohesion officer invited a college to work with the city's imams. The aim of the project was to facilitate community cohesion and integration between the different mosques in the authority, as well as enabling the imams to gain qualifications in English for speakers of other languages, and information and communication technology. Success rates were high and the courses also provided a lively forum for open discussion.

25. Multi-faith chaplaincy teams in two of the colleges visited provided for students' spiritual and moral development, actively promoting citizenship and community cohesion. They worked effectively and collaboratively to create harmonious, tolerant communities and to challenge extremism.

A multi-faith chaplaincy had been established because a single chaplain could not meet the needs of all learners. Despite the secular nature of the college, both staff and chaplains in the chaplaincy recognised that not all learners held secular views. For many of the students, faith or belief was an important part of their lives, as well as for those who were seeking to make sense of faith and belief systems. Recognising that some students had no religious belief system, the college ensured that the Humanist Association was represented as part of the chaplaincy team.

The team helped the college to understand the latest developments within the various traditions and tried to respond to the needs of a diverse student population. Its work offered opportunities to challenge and counter social and cultural intolerance, prejudice and extremist views. This was done through individual contact, working with groups and college organisations and through tutorial programmes. The team also worked with students to celebrate all major faith events throughout the year.

26. Much of the best work seen derived from well-organised multi-agency local partnerships, often involving employers, the police, and agencies for health, housing and transport. The range of specialist expertise and local knowledge helped settings to respond effectively to problems and to learners' needs.

The Youth Offending Service in one of the local authorities had developed a strong mentoring team, working with young offenders across all local communities, developing reparation schemes involving 'community payback', that is, work in the community by those who had committed offences.⁵ Faith organisations supported and participated in the scheme. Mentors working with Black parents had helped to reduce incidents of breaches of probation, which had been high in the past. The scheme placed a strong emphasis on working with parents of all offenders as a means of preventing crime. Over time, the scheme's use of positive activities for young people resulted in a reduction of the number of anti-social behaviour orders given to young people.

27. Children, young people and adult learners appreciated the benefits of collaboration. For example, a major annual community festival in one local authority brought around 25,000 young people together to share and enjoy a wide range of musical, performing and sporting experiences.

An international five-a-side football tournament and fun day drew over 17 teams in a local authority. Such community days were used to share music, food and information on local services, and to gather views. Initiatives designed to tackle bullying and racism by focusing on shared interests included a trip for pupils from the recently settled and established community to watch a basketball match.

Although there were incidents of racism, the diversity team in the authority was active in its approach by raising awareness, such as through the local youth club. A successful holiday scheme took place on a disadvantaged estate and drew pupils from White British and Polish backgrounds to involve them in creative activities and trips. The project has contributed to reducing anti-social behaviour and is now part of a sustainable programme.

The effectiveness of an interfaith group, working closely with a local authority, was put to the test at the time of a violent incident, the first of its kind in the authority. Efforts by organisations on the political far right to exploit the incident to promote intolerance against a minority ethnic community were firmly countered, and held in check by the concerted action of the group and local partners.

⁵ The aim of 'community payback' is to make the unpaid work done by offenders more visible to communities and more representative of their needs. For further information, see: www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk/output/Page332.asp.

Developing responsible citizens

28. The following section of the report discusses the key elements which constituted education for life as a citizen in the settings in the survey.
29. Through the organisation of training and professional development, local authorities in the survey actively supported the development of effective provision to counter negative attitudes and to promote social, emotional and economic skills.
30. Effective settings provided a broad and flexible curriculum, taught by confident and knowledgeable teachers. They prepared learners well to participate actively in society. The learners that inspectors spoke to had high aspirations for future education, training and employment; they were confident, ambitious and enjoyed their learning. Through it, they wanted to do well and saw that they could develop their futures in a wider setting than their immediate environment.

Developing literacy and language skills

31. All the local authorities visited understood the vital role of language in ensuring that learners achieved and could contribute fully to their communities and to society. The educational settings, in all phases, worked hard to identify and meet learners' linguistic needs in order to develop their self-confidence in expressing themselves and their sense of identity.
32. Specialist services for English as an additional language were well-established in all the authorities visited. They reviewed and updated their language monitoring regularly to allocate the resources of such services effectively, particularly where there were frequent changes in the languages spoken as new groups moved in to the area. The people working in these language services were skilled in responding to change and recognised the need to improve young people's English while also helping to maintain their home language.
33. Meeting the language needs of new arrivals, such as the children of economic migrant workers or asylum seekers, increased their chances of learning successfully, settling and contributing effectively.

In one of the authorities visited, the language and cultural needs of new arrivals were identified promptly and effectively. Induction programmes, using translators, helped to gain the necessary information about their previous learning and personal circumstances. Students in schools were supported by bilingual community workers. A secondary school worked closely with the established Bangladeshi community. It also experienced high levels of mobility and identified a sharp increase in new arrivals from Afghanistan, many of whom were young, unaccompanied asylum seekers.

Working with the local authority, a link worker was recruited from the Afghan community to help them settle into the wider community.

34. The local authorities that were more experienced in settling new arrivals helped schools establish systems to meet young people's needs quickly. They were also able to draw on expertise from the New Arrivals Programme managed by the National Strategies.⁶

A successful induction programme in a secondary school supported newly arrived students to the United Kingdom to learn English quickly. Staff were aware that new arrivals needed to feel at ease and make friends and that, in many cases, their previous experiences had often been in areas of conflict.

Other students acted as bilingual buddies, providing continuous language and social support. The school monitored the new arrivals and their buddies through its 'bilingual club'. Many new arrivals were placed with higher ability pupils who had an extensive English vocabulary. As a result many young people learnt basic English quickly and were soon able to participate in the general curriculum of the school.

The school also provided sessions for parents to help them understand the English education system.

35. For settled and established communities, language development focused on helping to maintain opportunities for learners to develop and extend their home or heritage language, as a potential asset for working life. Bilingualism, or plurilingualism, was seen as a strength, with security in the first language helping in acquiring English.
36. Children who began their education at an early stage of acquiring English were given priority in order to help them develop fluency and confidence as rapidly as possible. All the early years settings and primary schools visited worked to enrich young children's language development. For example, a teaching assistant was often assigned to new arrivals to provide an intensive programme of phonic work and to teach high frequency words. In primary schools, both the first language and English were promoted through structured work involving a range of 'talking partners'.⁷ The following exemplify good practice in two different local authority areas:

The schools (an infants school and nearby junior) served a mainly White British area, attended by generations of the same families. In a short time, the number of pupils who spoke English as an additional language

⁶ Guidance and materials can be found at www.nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/node/97335.

⁷ 'Talking partners' is a term used when identified pairs of learners work together on specific tasks and develop their understanding through dialogue.

increased. School leaders successfully developed a culture in which pupils' differences were valued. They planned carefully for this and involved parents and extended families. As a result, the pupils had very positive attitudes to each other's languages and cultures. They listened to each other very well and talked enthusiastically about how they welcomed new arrivals. They were keen to learn about different parts of the world. They were encouraged to use their home language, where useful, to access the curriculum.

The schools also welcomed secondary-aged students. For example, 'cultural champions' visited to share their diverse languages and cultures with the pupils. The initiative, organised by the local authority's service for speakers of English as an additional language, showed the authority's leadership in supporting schools to improve education for diversity.

The school served a culturally diverse area and worked hard to meet the needs of differing groups. Diagrams and photographs were used with new arrivals to communicate school rules and subject-specific concepts, labelled in different languages. This was helping pupils to understand ideas faster than using previous methods that depended on accumulating vocabulary.

37. Examples of effective provision for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) were seen in most of the colleges and in the local authority adult and community learning provision visited. However, information about the availability of courses sometimes failed to reach the communities for whom it would have been most relevant. The most successful provision was where local community development officers not only worked closely with established community groups to identify needs, but also used their local knowledge to engage with the most recent arrivals. In the providers visited, the support they had received had enabled many learners to progress to vocational training courses, often leading to permanent employment.
38. The colleges visited reported that changes to ESOL funding had resulted in a reduction of the number of adult learners enrolling on these courses. Automatic remission of fees had been removed, making free tuition available only to priority groups such as jobseekers and those receiving income-based benefits. The providers had responded to this by charging lower fees for ESOL or offering free tuition by subsidising the courses using income from other courses. However, many potential learners, often in low-paid jobs, were not able to encourage their employer to pay. All the providers visited expressed concern regarding the funding changes.

Using other areas of the curriculum to develop responsible citizens

39. The early years settings visited were central to developing children's understanding, social skills, attitudes and behaviour. Adults supported them in forming strong relationships with each other, and in developing a positive view of themselves, their communities and the wider world.
40. Children's centres and nurseries helped very young children to see that living in a diverse society was part of everyday life. Resources and posters in different languages were often displayed. A wide range of experiences developed strong relationships and many of the children talked enthusiastically about their friendships across different groups. They celebrated a range of religious festivals, visited different places of worship and took part in curriculum events such as Black History Month. Food, music and sport were ways of sharing an understanding and appreciation of diversity. Children's centres invited parents to come and read in different languages to the children. A grandparents' day in one setting was popular with the children and ensured that, from an early age, they learned to respect and relate well to older people.
41. Helping children to develop a secure identity within the geography and history of their locality was essential, as the following example illustrates:

In one local authority visited, two settings with increasingly diverse communities enabled young children to identify features of the rural area which were important to them. Using local materials, they began to build a traditional cob house.⁸ This became an intergenerational project as local parents, grandparents and even great-grandparents shared their memories of the community and children were involved in the building project. It very quickly became a focal point for social meetings and interactions, such as when dads cooked there, and adults of all ages interacted with the younger members of the community. The project helped develop a sense of time and place.

42. Developing opportunities to debate and express views was a strong feature in the work of the nurseries, schools and colleges surveyed. Discussion was encouraged, with the language of debate taught explicitly, so that children could express themselves from an early age, listening to one another and respecting different views and beliefs. Older pupils and students were able to listen, interpret ideas and form judgements about what others said, as well as

⁸ Cob is an ancient technique of building with a mixture of earth, straw, sand and water, sometimes with the addition of crushed flint or sand. The mix is formed into lumps or 'cobs' which are pressed together to form the walls of a building on a stone foundation.

identify where people spoke from experience, opinion or prejudice. This was firmly rooted in their nurturing experiences from the early years.

43. Primary schools in one of the local authorities were very positive about the use of 'philosophical' approaches.⁹ The pupils were given early training in advocacy and debating skills to take forward their work in promoting social responsibility, including citizenship, behaviour and social cohesion.

One of the primary schools visited used philosophical enquiry throughout the school. The staff believed it was important to help young people to develop, express and share their ideas and to learn from each other. The pupils enjoyed debate: 'It builds up my confidence'; 'It helps me to say my opinion'; 'You talk to the whole group and you are able to agree and disagree'.

It was also enabling pupils to develop a sense of responsibility, both in relationships with one another—'You have to be responsible for listening as well as talking'—and on a wider social front: 'You have to learn to care for people. Helping them is important.' They also discussed controversial issues, such as 'drugs and how they affect you'. In this ethnically diverse school, staff commented: 'Every time we do a lesson, it brings up a cultural issue which children can then explore.' The school fostered a strong spirit of working together to identify barriers to inclusion and worked well with parents from the different communities.

44. Four of the secondary schools and three of the primary schools visited used the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning programme very effectively.¹⁰ Through using 'circle time' and this programme's activities, children and young people talked openly about their feelings, listening to each other and valuing the contributions of others. They recognised the importance of collaborative learning and this instilled a strong sense of personal and social responsibility. In this context, they understood their rights and responsibilities.

⁹ A growing number of schemes support work in primary schools to enable young children to develop their thinking and their understanding of the world through structured speaking and listening and through pursuing topics of philosophical enquiry. See, for example, 'Philosophy4Children': www.philosophy4children.co.uk/.

¹⁰ The Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning programme was developed in the context of the National Strategies. Curriculum resources were published in 2005. See the 'Further information' section.

45. All the schools visited gave citizenship, religious education, and personal, social, health and economic education a high priority in terms of their importance in preparing pupils to become responsible and informed citizens.¹¹ This contributed effectively to developing shared values, positive relationships and a strong sense of responsibility. Pupils were helped to develop a clear sense of their own identity and the value of tolerance, so that they could work confidently and harmoniously with those from different backgrounds.

A religious education lesson on stereotypes enabled a group of lower-attaining students in a secondary school to give their views, listen to others and change their initial opinions. They were shown pictures of a range of people from different backgrounds from recent newspaper stories, including a baby and an older woman. The students were asked to list the five people they would value the most and to explain their choices. The teaching assistant answered first of all, to provide a model. The students joined in enthusiastically, offering opinions and listening carefully to those of others. The teacher skilfully made sure that all the students were included and encouraged them to understand other viewpoints, without suggesting that there was a right or a wrong answer.

Using excellent story-telling techniques and dramatic pauses, the teacher then gave more information. Students listened intently as it was revealed, for example, that the baby was in fact an early picture of Barack Obama and that the elderly woman was someone who had attacked a group of boys who had been stealing from a shop. The students were encouraged to see the stories from several points of view, coming to understand that, as they said, 'you need quite a lot of information' to decide whom you value, that it is possible to change your mind, and that people will not always agree.

46. The religious education curriculum in schools visited for the survey covered world faiths, as well as questions raised by the diversity of faiths in England.

A faith school ensured that all its students—those of the dominant faith group, as well as those of other faiths and those who had no faith—understood and appreciated diversity. The school compiled a calendar covering all the main religions and, every year, Year 7 students were asked to identify, with their parents, any special days to add to the calendar. It reflected the cultural diversity of the students and their families, instilling a sense of pride and ownership, and was now a

¹¹ In *Towards consensus? Citizenship in secondary schools* (HMI 2666), on the first four years of National Curriculum citizenship in secondary schools, Ofsted reported patchy provision overall, with around one quarter of schools judged inadequate: www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/2666a. A follow-up report was published in 2010: *Citizenship established? Citizenship in schools 2006/09* (090159), Ofsted, 2010; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/090159.

reference point for celebration, displays, assemblies and activities during the year.

The students were very positive about this. It extended their awareness of cultural diversity, and they were keen to report on recent festivals which they had celebrated.

47. A strength in the majority of settings was teachers' willingness to incorporate topical events in the curriculum, particularly in citizenship programmes; for example, the democratic process at election time by holding hustings and voting; commemorating national events such as Remembrance Day; and exploring international events. This helped learners to understand that national and international events affect everyone's lives.
48. Although the number of secondary schools visited for the survey was small, half of them had adopted 'vertical' tutor groups, enabling younger and older students to mix in carefully planned communities.

Students from Years 7 to 13 were placed together in carefully selected vertical groupings of about 20 to represent the diversity of the school. They mixed formally in tutorial sessions and informally through enrichment activities. A strategically placed tutorial session, just before lunchtime, provided opportunities for socialising later. Buddy teams were established across Years 7 to 13 to work together on Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning activities, adapted for the age range. Opportunities for leadership and academic mentoring were a natural feature.

Students said they would not want to go back to the previous system. The new system had led to more friendships with students in other year groups and provided ready-made sources of help and guidance. Sixth form students valued the vertical tutorial system highly and saw it as 'forcing mixing, in a good way'.

Initially, introducing such groupings had often not been popular with students or parents, but all the schools visited in which these arrangements were in place provided convincing evidence of their eventual success. Although 'horizontal' tutor groups can be very successful, an added advantage of the vertical groupings was that, as the example illustrates, younger students felt protected by their older peers and older students valued the opportunity to act as role models.

49. There is no statutory requirement for citizenship education in colleges and the emphasis given to promoting citizenship and social responsibility was more variable in the colleges surveyed. Although inspectors found many examples of colleges celebrating diversity, often through tutorial provision and specific

relevant courses, very few of those visited offered a coherent programme of citizenship education for young people aged 16 to 19. The following shows how one college moved towards this.¹²

The college created a programme related to the five outcomes of the Every Child Matters agenda, promoting social cohesion and supporting the tutorial and enrichment programmes. This covered topics related to sexual and mental health, the environment, personal safety, drugs and alcohol misuse, religion and belief, hate crime and abuse, and the importance of volunteering. Students regularly discussed topical national and international events. Liaison with the student council gauged the students' response to it.

The students received very good training to be course representatives, student council members and student governors. Following professional training, they took on responsibility for providing peer support to victims of hate crime or bullying; for furnishing fellow students with information on sexual health and safety; or for supporting their peers through a confidential helpline. The college monitored participation in these activities closely.

The programme was particularly successful because it used partnership and collaboration and enabled students to make a positive contribution, both in the college and in the local community, through volunteering, charitable fundraising and local projects.

50. Levels of discussion and debate in student and pupil councils benefited when young people had been coached in committee procedures and how to debate:

Pupils in one of the primary schools visited were trained for their role on the school council. They were able to explain clearly how they had reached decisions and how these had been implemented. When talking to the inspectors during the visit, the pupils listened carefully and encouraged each other to listen, saying, 'Let her talk now'. When inspectors asked a question, the pupils said, 'Let's see what the survey said', referring spontaneously to their evidence.

51. However, training to participate in student councils was not a common feature in all the settings. In a minority of the secondary schools and colleges visited, learners were asked to take on democratic roles without sufficient preparation;

¹² Post-16 citizenship programmes, run as part of a pilot supported by the Learning and Skills Development Agency (now Learning and Skills Network), were inspected in 2005. See *An evaluation of the post-16 citizenship pilot 2004/05: a report from Ofsted and the Adult Learning Inspectorate* (HMI 2440); www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Education/Providers/Sixth-forms-in-schools/An-evaluation-of-the-post-16-citizenship-pilot-2004-05-a-report-from-Ofsted-and-the-Adult-Learning-Inspectorate.

this sometimes led to disillusionment. A major factor in successful preparation was the effective training of staff. If staff were not fully committed or lacked confidence, the learners often did not understand the importance of participating and contributing, and were not confident in their institution's democratic processes. The following illustrates the positive influence of committed staff:

A secondary school had a very strong school council, with clear democratic processes. Students talked with great enthusiasm to inspectors about the procedures for joining both year group and school councils. A member of staff had specific responsibility for developing this work and all the students spoke glowingly of her commitment. In order to be elected, candidates had prepared manifestos and conducted campaigns. All the students interviewed were excited about this process. It provided rich opportunities to prepare young people to understand the processes of democracy and therefore feel confident enough to take part later.

In 2008, the Year 10 council had gone to the local town hall to participate in the local authority's annual schools debate. They chose community cohesion as their topic with the aim of promoting multicultural activities in all schools in the authority. The students said: 'We think that bringing the community together is a very important issue within our schools today. We hear too many times in the papers nowadays that a teenager has been stabbed because of their colour, or been hurt because of who they are, what they wear or what music they listen to and our school council feels that we should all do something to help stop this.'

52. In one of the local authorities visited, a highly successful exercise in democracy resulted in almost half its young people participating in the annual vote for the Young Mayor, representing a higher turnout than that for the adult elections. The successful work of the Young Mayor and team of Young Advisers had drawn, over time, from a range of secondary schools and a college. Children and young people were given opportunities to develop their understanding of democracy and to hone their advocacy skills. During the survey, groups of Young Advisers talked about how they had made key decisions about funding. These opportunities had clearly had a significant impact on some previously disenfranchised young people, changing their attitudes both to learning and to participating in democratic processes.
53. Wider opportunities also enabled children and young people to develop an understanding of their role and responsibilities within communities. Through the YouthBank UK initiative, for example, young people gained understanding of

how funding decisions influenced their lives and those of others.¹³ Student members of one YouthBank talked about how much they had learnt through participating and taking decisions. They were enthusiastic about the day on which they had contributed to discussions about whether the sale of their local airport might lead to improved services. In another local authority, YouthBank members received accredited training to determine grants to support local projects. These projects targeted communities which were otherwise perceived as hard to reach with innovative activities to engage and interest young people. One grant funded a bus with computer facilities to visit a Traveller site. The Jam Van, as it was called, provided young people with the chance to create music and animated films.

54. Ensuring that children who are looked after are involved in democratic processes is a key responsibility for local authorities. The authorities visited consulted these young people and encouraged them to be involved in planning services and listened to their views. Where this was effective, young people developed confidence and felt that their opinions mattered. The following examples from two authorities in the survey show how they were continually looking for ways of developing this involvement.

The young people were involved in the local authority's 'Total Respect' programme of training for staff, where they offered a young person's perspective on being in care. They were also trained to take the lead on 'agenda days': they agreed the content of the days, supported discussion and provided regular feedback to local authority officers. The best provision raised aspirations and encouraged children and young people to speak out and join others, so they did not feel alone. One young woman confidently said, 'If you live in the past, you won't have a future'.

The looked after children and young people were enthusiastic about opportunities to put democracy into practice. They were particularly proud of their part in a new initiative designed to increase access to leisure activities for disadvantaged young people. A g2g ('got to go') card allowed them to spend up to £40 a month on a range of council-approved educational and leisure activities. Young people were very positive about its impact, as it made them feel 'just like anyone else'. They attended meetings of the Strategic Partnership to present their views, which had given them confidence that their ideas were taken seriously.

Looked after children in another authority had lobbied successfully for an increase in their care-leaving allowance, paving a way for future groups to

¹³ YouthBank UK, a registered charity, was formed in 2001. It has branches across the country and provides small grants to enable young people to run schemes which benefit their community. For further information see: www.youthbank.org.uk.

understand how to present and carry through a concern to a successful conclusion.

Another group, with the support of peer mentors to prepare them for the event, raised a significant sum of money, with the help of staff in the authority, to travel to Africa. They spent time in two projects: one where children were cared for, and an animal sanctuary. The project was filmed and presented on television. The young people who took part described this as a 'life-changing' opportunity. It helped them to develop their self-confidence and personal skills, such as working on their own initiative, working together, planning and raising funds. It also developed their awareness of how children are cared for in other parts of the world and their understanding of other communities and cultures. One of the young people took the initiative to return to one of the projects and spent three months there.

55. The providers visited capitalised on learners' passions for sport and the performing arts to bring students together from different social and cultural backgrounds through shared enthusiasm. Activities were designed to maximise opportunities to work in mixed teams.

Children and young people often developed their confidence and understanding of challenging contemporary topics through the performing and visual arts. In one local authority, young people personally affected by the police's 'stop and search' routine worked with a local theatre group and took part in role-reversal activities with police officers. They talked eloquently of how they felt this had contributed towards improved relationships and fewer incidences of knife-carrying, conflict and crime. One young man affirmed: 'This really changes minds.'

In the same authority, college students performed a pantomime to audiences of primary school pupils which challenged gender stereotypes.

The visual arts were also used well to explore and celebrate contemporary issues. Contributions to exhibitions by young people and adults meant that their work was seen by wider audiences from other settings and the local community.¹⁴

Broadening horizons

56. All the settings visited were involved in international charity and fund-raising projects which helped to broaden horizons and supported an appreciation of global and environmental issues. Learners talked about how these activities had

¹⁴ Further examples can be found in *Drawing together: art, craft and design in schools 2005/08* (080245), Ofsted, 2009, especially in the section, "'Drawing together" the community'; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080245.

changed their thinking about the lives of others and influenced their own decisions, for example as consumers. Students who had participated in visits and exchanges abroad spoke enthusiastically about their developing friendships with young people from other countries.

57. Of the 15 primary schools identified by the local authorities and visited as part of this survey, seven used international themes across the curriculum and three had specific links abroad. Three of the 14 secondary schools had International School status, three had international links and a further four made effective use of global themes to enhance learners' understanding of the wider world.¹⁵ For instance, one of the primary schools visited had developed ideas of global citizenship through the British Council's 'Connecting Classrooms' project, linking the school to others in the Czech Republic, Botswana and Zimbabwe. Exchanges of letters between pupils had helped them to learn about others, as had hosting children from the Czech school.
58. Learners were proud of their international links and their own diverse communities. One secondary student said: 'Because we are international, we are a stronger, more friendly school. We get on well with each other, and learn from each other.' Regular events with an international focus fostered cultural exchange in the great majority of settings visited. Such events, with food, music and dance cementing relationships, also provided valuable opportunities for involving parents, governors and the wider school community.
59. Individual settings also organised visits designed to raise awareness and aspirations and break down stereotypes. For example, a group of Bangladeshi-heritage girls from a primary school went to a local university to meet medical students from the same heritage. Following this visit, their parents spoke of their daughters' enthusiasm to study hard to become doctors. Providers believed that it was equally important to widen horizons for parents and to involve them in initiatives, and therefore did so whenever possible. Where young people and their families had been given the opportunity to work and socialise with others from different localities, races, faith groups, ages and nationalities, their attitudes towards those who had previously been considered superficially 'different' were very positive.

Pupils from a more homogeneous school linked with a culturally diverse school elsewhere in the same authority. A visit enabled pupils from differing communities to dispel myths and assumptions about each other by working and playing together, learning about each other and recognising similarities and differences. Their teachers reported the visit

¹⁵ The International School Award scheme is an accreditation scheme, supported and funded by the DCSF. It provides a framework for schools within which to form and develop international partnerships through curriculum-based international work. For further information, see: www.globalgateway.org.uk/default.aspx?page=5057.

was a great success in helping pupils to recognise that, despite differences, they had much in common.

60. Very few of the providers visited, however, had developed links with schools further afield in the United Kingdom where children and young people lived in different locations and came from different economic backgrounds, faiths or cultures. As a result, learners sometimes held limited or stereotypical views of groups from other parts of the country. The same point was made in Ofsted's report on art and design, *Drawing together*:

Schools that had developed connections with their locality or worldwide community had rarely extended their focus to include other, contrasting parts of the country. Therefore, students' knowledge about cultural diversity in the United Kingdom was often limited.¹⁶

61. *Drawing together* provided a valuable example of good practice:

An inner-London local authority and an authority in the north of England had collaborated on planning and delivering their in-service training programmes. At the end of the year, each authority organised an exhibition of children's work. Teachers attending these were able to learn a great deal about different techniques and approaches to teaching from looking at work produced by pupils in other schools in their area. Their level of understanding was further enhanced when they were then given the opportunity to see work by pupils from the authority with which they had been twinned, where the historical and cultural contexts and traditions, in many respects, were very different from those in their own locality.

62. Where such links had been established, the survey found that young people clearly benefited. Where local authorities nominated children and young people for local and national events, these broadened their horizons, raised aspirations and enabled them to experience diversity.

Members of a youth group in one local authority spoke of attending conferences in other parts of the country, giving them the opportunity to meet young people from different traditions, cultures and religions. One talked movingly of her initial anxieties about meeting people from very different backgrounds. She discovered how easily her anxieties were dispelled once she was able to share her appreciation of music with other enthusiasts. As her confidence developed, she felt able to challenge her peers when they made negative comments. Attitudes had been changed as a result of these experiences.

¹⁶ *Drawing together: art, craft and design in schools 2005/08* (080245), Ofsted, 2009; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080245.

Students in an urban secondary school were encouraged to participate in the Greater Manchester Challenge. Two students of Asian heritage talked enthusiastically to inspectors about how they had worked on a collaborative art project on the edge of the moors with primary pupils from predominantly White British backgrounds. They talked about how the primary pupils had been very shy at first and then 'came out a bit'. A bonus of the scheme for the students was to discover the area beyond their local authority. They said that they had not realised that there was beautiful countryside on the doorstep of the city.

In the same local authority, inspectors also met some very confident young people who had benefited from a youth service project. A young member of Asian heritage now leads an initiative for Year 10 students. The very positive influence of the youth service in initiating or supporting such opportunities was clearly essential to their success.

63. All the survey schools used visits and other opportunities to enrich children's experiences. However, very few of them monitored and evaluated specifically how these benefited children and young people by changing their attitudes or which experiences contributed most to their understanding.

Tackling barriers to community cohesion

Tackling prejudice

64. Across local authorities and educational settings, the survey found a wide range of good practice designed to promote social responsibility and community cohesion, and to tackle barriers, dispel myths and eliminate prejudice and misunderstandings.
65. However, in contrast to localities where there had been a long tradition of mobility and change, frequently in urban areas, established communities often experienced fear, or even showed hostility in the face of demographic change. The local authorities visited recognised that some communities had been established over many generations. To develop a sense of identity, educational settings rightly promoted an understanding of local history. However, they also took seriously their role of educating children and young people about the wider world by broadening their horizons and helping them to develop positive attitudes to newcomers.
66. Education leaders were aware of entrenched views held by some learners, and their families, and worked hard to promote understanding and respect. The survey found many good examples of local authorities working in targeted localities, developing initiatives designed to promote inclusion and a sense of belonging. These often focused on sport or the performing arts. In one local authority, for example, pupils from both the recent and settled communities were involved in a visit to watch a basketball match. The visit was designed to

tackle bullying and racism by focusing on shared interests. Initiatives such as these also enabled communities to share food, music and information on local services and, importantly, to give their views on services. They provided 'good news' stories for local media, helping to break down negative stereotypes.

In one of the local authorities visited, the race equality council and cohesion board brought together key partners to promote interfaith and intercultural dialogue and, specifically, to tackle issues relating to migrant workers. The Unity Youth Project was launched in 2002 to reduce tensions between ethnic groups and to improve outcomes for young people. The Unity philosophy of celebrating what young people have in common attracted public interest, providing positive media images of young people. Unity projects went beyond traditional activities in terms of their design and impact on young people.

Unity Peacemakers brought together peer leaders from various social groups to participate in mediation training and team-building exercises. The scheme was successful in engaging and empowering young people who had been identified by the police and youth workers as influential community leaders. Unity Peacemakers supported conflict resolution in a school setting by working closely with young people to mediate and reduce tension.

The Peacemakers project was also taken up by the local college and was supported by one of the college's youth workers. The staff involved talked of their role in helping students from different backgrounds to work together to organise sporting and social events for other students. The Unity Football Club brought together young people with a common interest in football from different areas, cultures and backgrounds. The club joins the local football team to promote greater mutual understanding and respect across diverse communities. A more recent development was the weekly music session at a city centre nightclub, bringing together young people to share their passion for music.

Tackling unemployment

67. Across the age range, all the local authorities and educational settings visited recognised the importance of working closely with local employers to increase opportunities for young people and adults and to improve their employability. Cohesion between partners is a prerequisite for achieving this essential outcome. For colleges, at a time of economic downturn, this was taking on a new urgency. For example, three of the colleges visited towards the end of the survey in the winter of 2008–09 had set up a 'rapid response' unit. The aim of this, in collaboration with employers, was to train employees who were at risk of being made redundant.

68. In one of the local authorities visited, the authority and its settings exemplified good practice in providing work experience, thereby 'growing its own'. Corporate parenting was seen as an opportunity to prepare children who were looked after for the world of work. One of the colleges visited talked of these young people 'coming to work in the family business'. A children's centre offered work experience for school and college students for whom it was hard to find a place in other contexts. In the college, adults at a relatively early stage of learning English were given internal work placements in departments where they could use their previous skills in the context of their new language.

Tackling isolation

69. All the local authorities and education settings visited recognised the barriers that isolation presented to community cohesion, whether this arose in urban or rural communities. Gaining access to services in rural areas sometimes meant travelling long distances. In contrast, in major conurbations, young people sometimes felt isolated within a small area, feeling their safety to be at risk when travelling across parts of the city. Such concerns led children and young people to limit their travel; this, in turn, limited their access to opportunities. Despite the best efforts of providers, lack of transport or fear of using it were barriers to social inclusion and community cohesion for many children and young people.
70. In a large, predominantly rural county, long bus journeys were an everyday feature for many children and young people. While young people talked about the importance of cheap travel in securing educational experiences and social opportunities, they also acknowledged that long bus journeys could lead to misbehaviour. A training programme for bus drivers had led to less confrontation and better behaviour from students.

A college ran an annual recruitment campaign for 'buddies' to help students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities develop the confidence and skills to travel independently on public transport. The college also located some of its provision in skills centres in remote towns and villages to engage local learners and reduce the risk of learners not involving themselves in education, employment or training. This also reduced their dependence on local public transport links.

For older learners, the college maintained and expanded its provision for adult and community learning to ensure that those aged 19+ had local access to courses. It also re-established provision in another area of the county.

71. A local authority in London was facing new challenges in youth gang culture and developed considerable experience in a short time. Many institutions were working to allay the fears of parents, carers and young people. This involved dispelling the prejudices around moving between different neighbourhoods and

'territories' defined by postcodes, and enabling young people to overcome their fear of travelling. Secondary school staff supervised students as they arrived and left by bus, and some used private buses to avoid clashes during travel. A post-16 establishment worked with a local train operator on a business studies project. This raised students' awareness of the possibilities of rail travel and gave them greater confidence to venture outside their immediate locality.

72. In another urban authority, providers were aware that students and their parents were often reluctant to use public transport to visit other areas of the borough or other parts of London. They recognised the importance of countering the often entrenched view that 'it's a long way to travel', despite the travel distances being relatively short in reality. Staff of a primary school worked hard with parents to ensure that families had better access to London's opportunities, for example, by arranging a day trip to the British Museum for fathers and children and therefore helping parents to become more confident about using public transport.

Tackling crime

73. Partnership with the police was strong in all seven local authorities visited, and viewed as central to building safer communities. The partnership in one was typical of others seen. A system of city-wide monitoring identified and responded to incidents. Community intelligence was collated to establish a ward-by-ward profile of changing situations, identifying potential or actual tensions across the city. This helped officers and others plan responses to minimise risk.
74. In one of the local authorities, the partnership with the police had contributed to reducing levels of crime which involved children and young people. Officers' understanding of the factors underpinning this success was being built on effectively through extending police support in schools, including an on-site presence. The headteachers valued this and were clear that it had enabled many young people and the police to work more closely together. It had also made young people feel more confident about their own safety.
75. Settings visited in other authorities also strongly supported police involvement at school and community levels. There was a recognition that officers were becoming well-known within communities, providing a ready point of contact and a strong visual presence. In one of the authorities, police officers made efforts to communicate in languages other than English.
76. Students and staff in the secondary schools and colleges visited valued close working relationships between themselves and the police. Initiatives such as

restorative justice¹⁷ and contributions to provision for personal, social and health education, and citizenship, were developing young people's self-confidence and their sense of responsibility towards others.

A college set up a 'Safe and Proud' campaign to respond to students' needs, following the murder of a local teenager. Students expressed concerns about violence relating to gun and knife crime in their peer groups outside the college, and the college identified a need for mentoring. Meetings were attended by 170 learners. Each session lasted two hours and included a presentation from Trident, talks and performances from two former gang members, and a question and answer session.¹⁸ Learners reported that they appreciated being able to discuss their concerns in the safety of the college.

Tackling intergenerational misunderstanding

77. Misunderstandings and prejudice often result from poor relationships between younger and older people. Although the local authorities visited recognised this as a potential barrier to community cohesion, the educational settings visited did not routinely build in opportunities for older people, young people and children to collaborate in projects and activities. Where this did occur, it tended to be a by-product of community festivals and events, and family learning. Inspectors, however, found good examples of older people providing information and insights to support research tasks, such as in history, and becoming involved in the performing arts. For example, young people following a Key Stage 4 performing arts course at a community school were involved in arts projects with older residents of day centres and community theatre groups. One such project involved drama activities related to interviews exploring life histories.

A college worked closely with a group of local actors whose average age was 85. Young apprentices joined them to work on the theme of generation, as part of a BTEC First Diploma in performing arts. This intergenerational project enabled both groups to consider stereotypes and work towards mutual understanding. The young apprentices developed their acting skills as they created stereotyped characters of old people, and the older people created stereotypical characters of young people. From these cameos, the themes developed into individual monologues that celebrated both youth and old age and the benefits of both to

¹⁷ Restorative justice provides victims of crime with the opportunity to tell the offenders of its impact, to have questions answered and to receive an apology. For further information, see: www.restorativejustice.org.uk/.

¹⁸ Trident Operational Command Unit is the response of the Metropolitan Police Service to gun-related activity within Black communities in London; www.met.police.uk/scd/specialist_units/trident_trafalgar.htm.

society. The show was then produced and performed to a variety of audiences across the borough.

78. In one local authority visited, a particularly strong feature was the commitment of secondary schools and the local college – as well as children’s settings – to involve students’ wider families in order to secure success. A key element of this work was to tackle intergenerational prejudices and fear.
79. College leaders understood that fostering positive attitudes, tolerance and better mutual understanding was particularly important where unemployment contributed to tensions within communities. Increasingly, the colleges were recognising the need to challenge students about their attitudes to older adults and younger people.

One of the colleges visited provided very effective vocational opportunities for 14–16-year-olds from a range of local secondary schools to work alongside younger and older people. In an imaginative construction project with a primary school, the young people were given a brief to create a quiet reading area in the playground for the pupils. The primary school acted as the client and the students were advised on health and safety requirements by adult students on trade union studies courses. On a similar course, beauty therapy students were involved in a ‘pamper day’ project with older people from a residential home.

Course evaluations showed how the young people’s views of older people, and those of their clients, changed as a result.

Tackling the roots of conflict

80. In the best primary and secondary schools and colleges visited, children, young people and adults were able to discuss sensitive and controversial topics through tutorials, citizenship lessons and enrichment opportunities. These, together with the best subject lessons, enabled them to discuss and debate in various groupings, contributing to their skills of listening to others, evaluating what was said, and questioning their own and others’ views. They found ways of challenging others without resorting to aggression. This helped them to deal with topics that can provoke strong reactions, such as countering prejudice, discrimination and problems relating to gang culture.
81. Work of this nature makes considerable demands on teachers and other professionals, requiring high-level teaching skills, commitment and confidence. The following example shows how sixth-form students benefited from outstanding tutorial teaching.

Tutorials and lessons enable students to discuss topics, such as Remembrance Day, in a mature, thoughtful way. A skilful tutor managed such a session excellently to enable students to talk about what the day meant to them. After the teacher’s historical presentation, discussion

focused on the impact of military action on families. One student of North American origin talked about her military family and her support for many war situations. Others in the group disagreed but a young woman of Caribbean heritage said movingly at one point: 'I never realised before that Caribbean men fought in World War 2...'

82. The best schools and colleges visited took good account of different faiths and cultures within the community. Staff responded confidently to events and incidents as they occurred and worked with their students to explore solutions. For example, following the bombings in London in July 2005, a Muslim student in a sixth-form college visited had addressed an assembly to present Islam as a religion of peace and tolerance.

In the secondary schools visited in one local authority, the personal development curriculum included work on refugees and their backgrounds; sexual and mental health; disability; and gender and homosexuality. The planning, however, was sufficiently flexible so that, for example, the Police Education Unit could contribute to a module on bullying to give updated information on safety and street crime, including knife crime. Students valued the specialist input and the opportunities to discuss concerns which were important to them.

83. Discussions held during the survey with a range of school leaders, and with children and young people, confirmed that not all staff were sufficiently confident and competent when teaching such issues. However, there were clear benefits in promoting understanding and tolerance when teachers were able to raise and discuss topical issues which were important to young people, including those arising from local, national and global events.

Tackling low aspirations and promoting learning

84. The providers visited recognised that, for some learners, fractured home lives and social or geographical isolation had an impact on their ability to take up opportunities and participate fully in society. Some parents' low aspirations, unhappy experiences of their own education or lack of familiarity with the educational system presented formidable barriers to the educational success of many learners.
85. All the local authorities visited understood this well. They worked hard to establish networks and support agencies which had a direct impact on the lives of children, young people and adults, and their families, by reaching out to those at risk of being excluded from society.
86. Inspectors found that extended services, children's centres and family learning were central to local provision. They were designed to engage the wider community and to bring together different generations. Although these were emerging features in many of the localities and individual settings visited, they were generally identified as a key area for further growth and development.

The children's centres visited were particularly effective in involving parents and families, encouraging participation in relevant education groups and involvement in community projects.

87. Parents interviewed during the survey said that educational opportunities made them feel more confident to talk to teachers and develop an understanding of how to learn. Parents were encouraged to volunteer, and often progressed to working in schools and education-based organisations.

One of the secondary schools visited launched outreach centres in particular areas to offer courses in mathematics, English, and information and communication technology, using funding from its specialist technology status. Its senior and middle leaders understood the importance of going out into the community, not waiting for parents or carers to come to the school. It was aware of the need to engage parents and, in some cases, provide education opportunities for them in order to raise their children's aspirations and participation.

88. Colleges supported local authorities effectively in working with wider family groups, including parents. Classes for adults in literacy, numeracy and information technology skills enabled parents to support their children better and to contribute more effectively to their own communities.

Through a range of activities to engage parents, a college successfully ran courses to help them to support their children at home and at school. For example, coffee mornings with crèche facilities attracted many parents and enabled outreach workers to identify those who needed help with particular skills, especially English for speakers of other languages, literacy and numeracy. Since 2005/06, the college had run such courses at the school and the number of parents enrolled had increased since then. Most of the learners had been Bangladeshi women, with low levels of skill in English, living in the United Kingdom for many years and often isolated in their homes. As a result of the courses, many learners progressed to further learning. Some took courses to become teaching assistants and were now employed in that role. Many spoke of having increased their confidence in their daily lives and of feeling empowered.

89. In one of the local authorities, the secondary schools, the college and other settings worked very closely together to break down the barriers between different generations.

A college collaborated with schools to provide very effective opportunities for students aged 14 to 16 to work alongside younger and older people. Adult learners spoke warmly, and often very movingly, of the ways in which the college had supported them and various family members, in some cases as recent new arrivals and in others over several years. They were confident that their ESOL course was increasing their employability.

The college had arranged work placements for them, in most cases within the college itself, building on their experience in jobs before they came to England. They spoke about how this raised their self-esteem and led to a sense of 'giving back'. One student, an expert cook, had completed her placement in the canteen and another worked in the print department, bringing his previous experience as a printer to good use.

90. In two colleges visited, the Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities fund for adult and community learning providers was used to support projects that reached out and involved people who would not normally attend adult education courses or community learning activities.¹⁹ These examples show the nature and impact of these projects, as well as the diverse groups that benefited.

In one authority, the fund supported voluntary and community sector organisations in developing learning opportunities for residents of neighbourhoods or groups who were in disadvantaged circumstances. The projects involved a range of groups in contexts which made them hard to reach, including minority ethnic groups, older or isolated learners, adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, adults with acquired brain injury, Romany Gypsies, homeless people, and vulnerable or isolated parents. Some 19% of learners were from minority ethnic groups and 32% had declared a disability or learning difficulty. Overall, the projects involved learners from 39 of the authority's 46 wards.

An adult and community learning service developed a successful project, in priority neighbourhoods, to engage parents and carers in learning with their children. The project, which aimed to build and race a kit car, was jointly funded through both private and public finance.

Families which met the criteria were selected to take part in the 10- to 12-week project. Through the work of learning champions, the service carefully selected specific primary and secondary schools, in such a way that pupils could continue with the project when they transferred to a secondary school. Headteachers commented that parents' involvement in the school had risen as a result of participating in the project.

Over the last three years the project had recruited 135 families and, while most of those taking part were fathers or male carers, other family

¹⁹ Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities is a national programme. It includes projects designed to provide learners with the opportunity to develop workplace skills that contribute to their social and economic well-being, as well as developing the so-called softer skills such as assertiveness. A toolkit for project leaders helps them to run the project. This contains examples of schemes of work, session plans, records of evidence and assessment activities, as well as information on teaching qualifications in the lifelong learning sector, health and safety and Skills for Life support.

members had also joined in. Attendance had been excellent throughout. Building the car had involved a wide range of learning, including communication, aerodynamics, numeracy, measuring, timing and team work. Parents and children had developed stronger and closer relationships. Many pupils had produced detailed weekly diaries of the car's progress and some had achieved a level of literacy that might not have been possible through everyday lessons. They said that, although the project itself was fun, the best aspect was being able to work with their parents constructively. Many also said that they did not normally take part in practical projects and had learnt new skills such as using tools correctly.

The project had helped parents to participate in their own child's learning and to help them consider first steps to returning to learning themselves.

91. Initiatives such as these demonstrate the strong impact of projects and provision which:

- focus on need
- extend opportunities and experiences
- strengthen social relationships
- enhance learners' skills and confidence
- bring people together from different backgrounds.

Widening opportunities for people to contribute to communities and social development is an important way of overcoming barriers and supporting growth and cohesion.

Notes

The report is based on survey visits to seven local authorities between June and December 2008. Pilot visits were made in June 2008 and six further visits in autumn 2008 to test the methodology for the survey. The local authorities were selected to provide a range in terms of geographical location, size and provision. In the course of the week-long visits, inspectors visited a total of 47 educational settings: nine colleges, 14 secondary schools (including one pupil referral unit and one residential centre), 15 primary schools and nine children's centres. Senior leaders in the seven local authorities were asked to select educational settings where they had already identified good practice in promoting social cohesion. The local authorities also gave inspectors contextual information about their work in this field.

Additional visits took place in February 2009 to gain evidence beyond the seven local authorities. Inspectors visited 20 post-16 providers, including two providers of adult and community learning, which were running projects funded specifically to promote neighbourhood learning. At the time of their previous inspection, all the colleges had been judged to be good or outstanding for their work in educational and social

inclusion, and the adult and community learning providers had been judged to be good in terms of equality of opportunity.

During the visits inspectors met a range of learners, support staff, teachers, senior leaders and parents in educational settings; local authority leaders and officers; and representatives from partner agencies, including voluntary bodies. Where possible, inspectors also observed learners in their classrooms and other education venues.

Further information

Ofsted publications

An evaluation of the post-16 citizenship pilot 2004/05: a report from Ofsted and the Adult Learning Inspectorate (HMI 2440), Ofsted, 2005; www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Education/Providers/Sixth-forms-in-schools/An-evaluation-of-the-post-16-citizenship-pilot-2004-05-a-report-from-Ofsted-and-the-Adult-Learning-Inspectorate.

Race equality in further education – progress and good practice in colleges in the further education sector in response to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 (HMI 2463), Ofsted, 2005; www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Post-16-learning-and-skills/Read-about-this-new-section/Race-equality-in-further-education.

Towards consensus? Citizenship in secondary schools (HMI 2666), Ofsted, 2006; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/2666a.

ESOL in the post-compulsory learning and skills sector: an evaluation (070229), Ofsted, 2008; www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Documents-by-type/Thematic-reports/ESOL-in-the-post-compulsory-learning-and-skills-sector-an-evaluation.

How colleges improve: a review of effective practice (080083), Ofsted, 2008; <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Documents-by-type/Thematic-reports/How-colleges-improve>

Reducing exclusions of black pupils from secondary schools: examples of good practice (070240), Ofsted, 2008; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070240.

The role of adult learning in community renewal: Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities programmes (070228), Ofsted, 2008; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/070228.

Engaging young people: local authority youth work 2005-08 (080141), Ofsted, 2009; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/080141.

Inspecting maintained schools' duty to promote community cohesion: Guidance for inspectors (090165), Ofsted, 2009; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Forms-and-guidance/Browse-all-by/Education-and-skills/Schools/Supplementary-guidance-and-resources/\(language\)/eng-GB](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Forms-and-guidance/Browse-all-by/Education-and-skills/Schools/Supplementary-guidance-and-resources/(language)/eng-GB).

Publications by others

Social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL): improving behaviour, improving learning, Curriculum resources (DCSF 0110-2005), DCSF, 2005; <http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/primary/publications/banda/seal/>.

Our shared future (07ELMAT04655), The Commission on Integration and Cohesion, 2007; www.communities.gov.uk/archived/general-content/communities/commissionintegration/.

New arrivals excellence programme: guidance (00650-2007BKT-EN), DCSF, 2007; <http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/node/97335>.

Websites

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills:

The role of further education providers in promoting community cohesion, fostering shared values and preventing violent extremism;

www.dius.gov.uk/consultations/violent_extremism.aspx.

Preventing violent extremism;

www.dius.gov.uk/further_education/guidance_and_good_practice/preventing_violent_extremism.aspx.

Primary and Secondary National Strategies:

New Arrivals Excellence Programme;

<http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/node/97335>.

The Schools Linking Network;

www.schoolslinkingnetwork.org.uk/network.org.uk/.

Guidance on the duty to promote community cohesion;

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00598-2007>

Annex: Providers visited for this survey

| Individual educational settings within the seven local authority areas |
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| Abbey Manor College, Lewisham |
| Braunton School and Community College, Braunton |
| Bushfield Community College, Orton Goldhay, Peterborough |
| Cambridge Regional College, Cambridge |
| Carr Manor Primary School, Leeds |
| Crossways Academy, Lewisham |
| Eleanor Palmer Primary School, Camden |
| Exeter College, Exeter |
| First Steps (Acorn) Children's Centre, Welland, Peterborough |
| Heritage Park Primary, Park Farm, Peterborough |
| Huntingdon Town Children's Centre and Nursery School |
| Isca College of Media Arts, Exeter |
| Jack Hunt School, Netherton, Peterborough |
| John Stainer Community Primary School, Lewisham |
| Kiddi Caru Nursery, Exeter |
| Kilburn Grange Children's Centre, Camden |
| La Sainte Union Catholic Secondary School, Camden |
| Ladywell Children's Centre, Lewisham |
| Leeds College of Technology |
| Lewisham College |
| Nene Infant and Nursery School, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire |
| Netley Primary School, Camden |
| New Bewerley Community School and Children's Centre, Leeds |
| North Devon College |
| Notre Dame Catholic Sixth Form College, Leeds |
| Orton (Jigsaw) Children's Centre, Peterborough |
| Otley Prince Henry's Grammar School Specialist Language College, Leeds |
| Peterborough Regional College |
| Rifford Road Community Home, Exeter |

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| Sandhurst Junior School, Lewisham |
| Shirley Community Nursery and Primary School, Cambridge |
| South Camden Community School, Camden |
| St Chad's CofE Primary School, Oldham |
| St Peter's School, Huntingdon |
| Stanley Road Primary School, Oldham |
| Stoke Hill Infant and Nursery School, Exeter |
| Stoke Hill Junior School, Exeter |
| Sydenham School, Lewisham |
| The Duchy Pre-School, Exeter |
| The Hathershaw College of Technology and Sport, Oldham |
| The Netherhall School, Cambridge |
| The Oldham College |
| The Radclyffe School, Oldham |
| West Exeter Children's Centre |
| West Town Primary, Peterborough |
| Westminster Kingsway College, Camden |
| Withycombe Raleigh Church of England Primary School, Exmouth |
| Working Men's College, Camden |

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| Additional visits to post-16 providers |
| Blackburn College |
| Bradford College |
| City and Islington College |
| City of Bristol College |
| Ealing, Hammersmith and West London College |
| Greenwich College |
| Hull Group of Colleges |
| Joseph Chamberlain College, Birmingham |
| Knowsley College |
| Lambeth College |
| Lincoln College |
| Newham College of Further Education |
| North Warwickshire and Hinckley College |

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| Norton Radstock College |
| Somerset Adult and Community Learning |
| South Gloucester Adult and Community Learning |
| South Leicestershire College |
| The College of North East London |
| West Nottinghamshire College |
| Wiltshire College |