

Extended Services Evaluation Reaching Disadvantaged Groups and Individuals

Thematic Review

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Executive summary

1. By 2010, all schools in England will be expected to offer access to a wide range of extended services (ES) from 8am - 6pm, 48 weeks a year, including school holidays. Schools may provide these services on-site or may provide access to such services offered by other schools or centres.
2. The provision of these services is an example of 'progressive universalism'. Services are available to all, but the assumption is that differential take-up and/or impact will bring greater benefits to disadvantaged groups than to more advantaged groups. However, there is some evidence that disadvantaged groups may be less willing or able to access services than their more advantaged peers.
3. The purpose of this thematic review was to increase our understanding of how schools in a range of circumstances were defining and responding to 'disadvantage' in their development of extended services. In particular, it explored how they were targeting disadvantaged individuals and groups for particular services, and how they were encouraging take-up of services by those groups. It did this through small scale case studies of extended services in and around a sample fifteen schools in the North West and North East of England.
4. All of the extended service leaders in the sample were aware of the presence of disadvantage in the populations they served, and of the need to target at least some of their extended services towards the most disadvantaged groups and individuals. All of them, therefore, gave considerable thought to how this targeting could be done and how they might ensure that those who might benefit most from services would, in fact, access them.
5. Although these leaders were aware of disadvantage, they defined it differently, in relation to their own views and to local circumstances. These definitions tended to include but extend beyond notions of socio-economic disadvantage. Instead, leaders tended to operate with a broad concept of 'vulnerable' children, families and adults, many of whom might live in (relative) poverty, but some of whom at least faced difficulties not directly related to their economic circumstances.
6. In this situation, identification procedures based on socio-economic indicators (such as entitlement to free school meals) were useful, but were not adequate in themselves. A range of other quantitative and 'objective' indicators were also used, therefore, and schools also relied very heavily on their staff's knowledge of individuals and families.
7. Some schools formalised the process of collating different kinds of information about children, families and adults and/or involved other agencies. However, decisions for the most part rested on a professional judgement about who needed which services, and this decision could be relatively informal.
8. Schools tended to have a range of procedures and practices for engaging with 'hard to reach' groups in order to encourage them to access services. As with identification procedures, these practices relied heavily on individual contact and relationships. Building trust between the school and the children and adults who might benefit from services was seen as crucial.
9. Extended service leaders typically had a sense of how successful their targeting strategies were in engaging with and benefiting service users. In some cases, formal monitoring procedures were in place. However, this was not always the case, and judgements about effectiveness in particular relied heavily on what school staff knew about impacts on individuals.

10. The targeting and monitoring undertaken by schools were informed by the strategies they typically had in place for consulting children and adults. These generated useful feedback and ideas for further development. However, in some cases, such strategies did not appear to reach much further than a 'customer satisfaction' approach, and there was little evidence of the involvement of disadvantaged groups in strategic planning.
11. Given the emphasis on personal knowledge and contact, schools relied heavily on the availability of personnel in and around the school who could engage successfully with individuals and groups who might otherwise be hard to reach. Often these personnel were not teachers, and their 'approachable' status in this respect was seen as important for their ability to engage potential service users.
12. School and extended service leaders appeared keen to develop their provision further, and there was no evidence that they saw this as an unwanted burden. However, they often faced practical problems in doing this, and were concerned about the instability of funding on which their provision - including their additional staffing - depended.
13. Although extended service leaders were committed to the development of their provision and were aware of the importance of targeting disadvantaged groups (however defined), much of what schools were doing in this respect relied on a somewhat personal approach. Whilst this enabled schools to respond to local and individual circumstances, it carried dangers insofar as it was not triangulated against other kinds of evidence or other perspectives - not least, those of service users.
14. It might be necessary, therefore, for the next stage in the development of schools' targeting strategies to take the form of an increase in formalisation. This might mean placing the personal knowledge and contacts of individual staff members in the context of a more wide ranging use of evidence, a more structured approach to targeting, and a more systematic approach to evaluation. In particular, schools might develop:
 - A clear picture of the needs, perspectives and wishes of children, families and others in the populations they serve. Such a picture should certainly draw on individual knowledge, but this should be set against area and population statistics, the views of the school's partner agencies, and the views of potential users of extended services.
 - A pattern of provision planned to meet these needs and wishes, based on the schools overarching extended services strategy, informed by other local strategies, for instance, from the extended services cluster, the Children's Trust and the Local Strategic Partnership.
 - An identification strategy, aimed at identifying those who might benefit most from services, and drawing on personal knowledge, but also on more formal assessments themselves informed by inter-agency information-sharing and joint assessments.
 - Strategies to promote take-up, using the range of approaches outlined in this report, and including personal contact, publicity and approaches through other agencies.
 - A monitoring and evaluation strategy, again drawing on the sort of anecdotal evidence gathered through personal contact, but supplemented by detailed record keeping and analysis, and by formal evaluation procedures.

1. Reaching disadvantaged groups and individuals: the issue

1.1 Extended services

There is a long history in England of schools extending their work beyond their 'core business' of teaching within the curriculum in order to offer a wider range of services to their pupils, to pupils' families, and to communities in the areas served by the schools. Recent years have seen a renewed interest in extended approaches of this kind, beginning with the *Schools Plus* report (DfEE, 1999a) under the aegis of the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, and moving through a series of 'extended schools' initiatives, culminating in the Full Service Extended Schools Initiative between 2003 and 2006 (Cummings et al., 2007, DfES, 2003b). At the same time, similar initiatives have been under way in other parts of the UK, notably the Extended Schools initiative in Northern Ireland (DENI, 2009), the New (latterly, 'Integrated') Community Schools initiative in Scotland (The Scottish Office, 1998), and the Community-focused Schools initiative in Wales (National Assembly for Wales, 2003).

The launch of *Every Child Matters* (DfES, 2003a) created a new context for approaches of this kind in England. This new agenda located the work of schools' within an overarching framework of intended outcomes for children - be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and achieve economic well-being - seen as the shared responsibility of a range of collaborating or fully integrated children and family services. This changed context seems to have had three major implications for the extended schools agenda:

- First, it was clear that schools offered an important focal point for the delivery of new-style integrated services, not least because of the access they offered to children and their families.
- Second, it was also clear that if schools were to act as focal points in this way, they must all develop, to some extent at least, the kinds of extended approaches that were characteristic of schools in the various extended schools initiatives. Put simply, if *every child matters*, then *every school* must offer children access to the services they need.
- Finally, once schools were able to work within a framework of integrated services, the emphasis shifted from the provision they were able to make directly, to the access they could offer to a wide range of local services for children and families. As a result, the term 'extended schools' is giving way to the term 'extended services in and around schools' (or simply, 'extended services'), emphasizing the role of the school as a focal point for access to services wherever, and by whichever agency they might be provided.

In 2005, the Government made a commitment to offer all children access to extended services through their schools (DfES, 2005) In practical terms, this means that, by 2010, all schools in England will be expected to offer access to a wide range of services from 8am - 6pm, 48 weeks a year, including school holidays. Schools may provide these services on-site or may provide access to such services offered by other schools or centres. The range of extended services that must be offered are outlined in the 'core offer' which consists of the following:

- a varied menu of activities (including study support, play / recreation, sport, music, arts and crafts and other special interest clubs, volunteering and business and enterprise activities) in a safe place to be for primary and secondary schools;

- childcare 8am-6pm, 48 weeks a year for primary schools;
- parenting support including family learning;
- swift and easy access to targeted and specialist services such as speech and language therapy; and
- community access to facilities including adult learning, ICT and sports facilities.

It seems clear that the development of this wide array of extended services is not viewed by Government simply as an add-on to schools' core business of teaching and learning. Not only are extended services seen as crucial to the *Every Child Matters* agenda, but it has also become apparent recently that they are a key component of the Government's vision of 'Twenty-First Century schools' (DCSF, 2009) and are indispensable to the guarantees offered to pupils and parents about the activities and service to which they should have access. Not surprisingly, then, the expectations of what this approach can deliver are high. As Beverly Hughes, as Minister of State for Children, Young People and Families, put it:

Extended schools are at the heart of the delivery of Every Child Matters, improving outcomes and raising standards of achievement for children and young people.... We have increasingly strong evidence showing the positive impact of extended services on children's motivation, behaviour and engagement with learning. This is beginning to yield real improvements in attainment, particularly for the most disadvantaged pupils. And families and local communities are benefiting too, through access to a wider range of opportunities which, in turn, raise aspirations. Extended schools and Sure Start children's centres, working together, are providing a new network of community services for children aged 0 to 19 and their families, helping to lift children out of poverty and to promote social mobility.

(HM Government, 2007: Foreword)

The question of whether extended services in and around schools can fulfil these high ambitions is at the heart of the evaluation of which this report forms part. Past experience suggests that some schools will be confident that, not only can they manage access to services effectively, but that doing so brings significant benefits to the children, families and communities they serve (Cummings et al., 2007). Others - perhaps the majority - will find themselves in relatively unexplored territory, and they and their partners will have a good deal of learning still to do. It is to this learning process that this report seeks to contribute.

1.2 Extended services and disadvantage

In their early forms, extended schools (as they were then known) tended as often as not to be associated with efforts to overcome educational and social disadvantage. The *Schools Plus* report (DfEE, 1999a), for instance, was very much about how schools could contribute to overcoming social exclusion in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Likewise, full service extended schools were chosen for the most part because they served disadvantaged places and people (Cummings et al., 2005).

In its current form, the development of extended services in and around schools to some extent continues this trend. Schools and their partners are, for instance, free to develop an array of services appropriate to their circumstances, and it is reasonable to suppose, therefore, that schools serving areas of disadvantage will develop services to address that disadvantage. Similarly, it is clear that some services are likely to be used more heavily by children and adults facing difficulties than by others - swift and easy access to specialist services being an obvious example. Nonetheless, the focus of extended services is on *all* schools and *all* pupils, whether or not they are in some sense disadvantaged.

To this extent, extended services in and around schools constitute a form of 'progressive universalism'. Services are available to all, but differential take-up and/or impact might be expected to bring greater benefits to disadvantaged groups and to help narrow the gap in educational and other outcomes between more and less advantaged groups. It is for this reason that Beverley Hughes saw extended services as an important strategy for 'lifting children out of poverty' and 'promoting social mobility'. With this in mind, DCSF has introduced an Extended Schools Subsidy Pathfinder¹. This provides additional ring-fenced funding to a sample of local authorities so that clusters of schools in their areas can trial approaches to subsidising access to extended services activities for economically disadvantaged children and young people and children in care. The Pathfinder is being evaluated in the expectation that a subsidy of this kind will be available to all schools in 2010-2011.

1.3 The thematic review

The extended services initiative is currently being evaluated by a team drawn from BMRB, Tecis Ltd., and the Universities of Manchester and Newcastle. The evaluation began in the 2008-9 school year and is expected to complete its work in 2013-14. It aims both to identify outcomes for children, families and communities from the initiative, and to explore process issues which might promote or inhibit the development of extended services in and around schools. With this in mind, the evaluation comprises a number of strands:

- a panel survey of a sample of schools, pupils and parents, focusing on the provision, take-up, and perceived impact of services;
- an impact evaluation using the panel survey data in combination with school performance and other data to identify outcomes from the initiative;
- a series of longitudinal school case studies to understand process issues and to explore outcomes in greater depth; and
- a cost effectiveness and cost benefit analysis.

In addition, the evaluation will include a series of 'thematic reviews', which are intended to be relatively small scale and short term, and to probe specific issues within the overall initiative, particularly where an understanding of these issues can usefully inform the immediate development of extended services. It is the first of these reviews that is the subject of this report. Given the centrality of the issue of disadvantage to the extended services initiative, this such review sought to increase our understanding of how schools in a range of circumstances are responding to disadvantage in their development of extended services. Specifically, it explored:

- the pattern of services and activities provided by schools and their partners (what is provided, how long it has been established, where it is provided);
- the pattern of take-up of those services and activities;
- the extent to which services are designed to be universally accessible and attractive, or are targeted on particular (especially disadvantaged) groups;
- the strategies used by schools to consult with, and encourage and enable access by, disadvantaged groups, and the facilitators of and barriers to those strategies; and

¹ See <http://www.tda.gov.uk/remodelling/extendedschools/howtodeliveres/subsidy.aspx>

- the response of child and family users to services and activities (i.e. take-up, satisfaction and the reasons given for these).

These issues were pursued through small scale case studies of extended services in and around a sample fifteen schools, clustered in five local authority areas, in the North West and North East of England. To ensure that the fieldwork for the review was completed within the allocated timetable the selected local authorities (and associated schools) were strategically chosen to be in close proximity to the research team's bases. However, the sample selected reflects differences in terms of levels of disadvantage, and ethnic composition of, the school population, rural-urban context, and phase (primary / secondary). The sample size made it possible to ensure that each of these differences was reflected in the sample, though it was not possible to stratify the sample fully along each of these dimensions. Although there are important issues around how special schools respond to disadvantage, it would not have been possible to deal with the distinctive characteristics and diversity of these schools in sufficient depth, and therefore special schools were not included in the sample.

Cooperation in selecting the sample was sought from local authorities - specifically extended schools remodelling advisers (ESRAs) - because of their detailed knowledge on the contexts in which schools were working in, the offers made by schools, and the extent of any targeting and take-up strategies. All information provided by local authorities was verified independently using Ofsted reports, Edubase, Directgov, and school websites. ESRAs nominated a long list of schools (up to five primaries and five secondaries) with well-established extended services and activities, and reflecting a range of different contexts. They were also invited to indicate which of those schools they did or did not regard as having well-developed strategies for targeting and encouraging take-up.

A short list was then constructed which was diverse in terms of phase, school contexts, starting date for beginning to offer extended services, and perceived robustness of targeting and take-up strategies. Head teachers or Extended Service co-ordinators in nominated schools were then contacted and asked to participate with non-participants replaced by other schools from the long list. Appendix A gives a picture of the context of each sample school.

The key leaders of the school's approach to extended services were interviewed in each of the fifteen schools. Typically, this included the head and/or senior leader with responsibility for co-ordinating extended services, and in some cases also included and in some cases also included 'parent support partners' (PSPs)², who tended to play an important role in the delivery of extended services and to have close contacts with service users. Interviews set out to identify the following information:

- the pattern of extended service provision in and around the school;
- any strategies in the school for consulting with, targeting provision towards, and encouraging take-up by, disadvantaged groups (and/or any rationale for not targeting and encouraging in this way);
- the definitions of disadvantage used by these strategies and any associated identification processes;
- the relationship between disadvantage and take-up, as understood by the school;

² This is the collective term we have used to refer to those individuals in schools whose main role is to work closely with parents. In the sample of fifteen schools, a range of titles was used in addition to PSP, including parental support adviser, parental involvement co-ordinator, and family support worker.

- the perceived successes or otherwise of these strategies, and the nature of the evidence underpinning these perceptions; and
- the factors which facilitate or inhibit the development of successful strategies.

All topic guides are presented in appendix B.

Schools were also invited to identify samples of pupils, parents / carers and community members (who access services) whom we might interview, asking that these samples reflect the range of disadvantaged groups served by the school, and including some who did not yet access services. The purpose of these interviews was to elicit users' views of consultation processes, services and activities accessed, and barriers to and facilitators of access. The numbers of parents and pupils accessed in each school varied, but in total 54 adults and 97 pupils were interviewed. Given the way these samples were accessed, there was a bias in the adult sample particularly towards those who engaged with the school and used its services. In the main, the views of these groups were elicited through face-to-face interviews in the school, group interviews and 'opportunistic' interviews (for instance, when family members drop off or collect their children at the school, or during extended activities).

Data were analysed initially in relation to individual school cases. Accounts were produced organising themes and salient issues from the data from each school in relation to the topics set out above. Then comparisons were made across these accounts to identify common themes and differences between cases.

1.4 This report

In the next section of this report, we set out briefly what is currently known about the targeting of disadvantaged individuals and groups by extended services, and draw on analogous initiatives to set a context for the present review. In section 3, we discuss the findings from our case studies in detail. In section 4, we draw some conclusions about the 'state of the art' in extended services, and make recommendations for the next phase in the development of the initiative and of its implementation in schools.

2. Extended services and disadvantage: setting the context

2.1 The extended services initiative

It is still early days to assess fully the extent to which extended services in and around schools will be able to address issues of disadvantage. However, it is clear that schools and their partners face significant challenges if the potential benefits of extended services for the most disadvantaged individuals and groups are to be realised. A recent survey of the provision and take-up of extended services undertaken by Ipsos MORI (Wallace et al., 2009), for instance, paints a generally positive picture in which a wide range of services is being provided and many families are enthusiastic about what is on offer. However, it also finds that take-up of services is uneven across social groups. In particular:

...pupils who are least likely to be using activities and childcare are those from more deprived backgrounds, those where parents do not work or only one parent works, those attending special schools and those where parents are dissatisfied with the school. (Wallace et al., 2009: 7)

The survey provides some indicative evidence as to why this might be the case. Some parents, for instance, cite lack of time, cost, lack of transport and inconvenient location as reasons for not participating in activities on offer in and around the school, with cost likely to be a particular barrier for lone parents and parents of children attending special schools (ibid.: 53). Those who are generally unhappy with the school, who feel their views are not taken into account or feel that they are not kept informed by the school are most likely to feel that the activities offered by the school do not meet their needs, whilst pupils from families where no parent works are likely to be least enthusiastic about the activities on offer (ibid.: 59). In terms of support services, a minority of parents (around 13%) say they would be unlikely to approach their school for help if their child had a problem. The reasons for this seem to be a combination of a lack of awareness of the services on offer and a general mistrust of schools - for instance, a sense that teachers lack expertise or are not interested, or a history of bad experiences with schools (ibid.: 67).

The report of the Ipsos MORI survey suggests that there is some cause for concern about the uneven taken-up of extended services, but also that the picture is complex. Whilst the social background of families - specifically, the level of 'disadvantage' they experience - may be a factor in low take-up, it is one which seems to interact with the ability of the school to communicate effectively about the activities it has on offer, to make those activities attractive, to overcome practical barriers to access, and to build up positive relationships with families. This more complex picture is confirmed by a re-analysis of the Ipsos MORI data undertaken internally by DCSF and made available to the research team. This analysis confirms the negative impact of income deprivation (as indicated by entitlement to free school meals) on the take-up of extended services. However, it finds that take-up also appears to vary by age, by special educational needs status, and by type of extended service. Moreover, variables such as these actually explain only a very small proportion (1%-7%, depending on the services and variables considered) of the variation in take-up. The implication is that other variables are equally or more important. It would, for instance, seem reasonable to suppose that personal preferences, the quality of school-linked services, the availability of high-quality services in community locations, and the efforts of schools to engage families might also play a part.

Interim findings from an evaluation of the Extended Services Disadvantage Pathfinder (Peters et al, 2009) confirm the challenge of ensuring that disadvantaged groups access services but also confirm that there is something that schools can do in response to this challenge. In particular, there is evidence that, where schools focus on disadvantaged

groups in the ways encouraged by the initiative, take-up by these groups does indeed increase significantly. There seems to be no single strategy which ensures take-up, but a combination of enhanced services, financial subsidy, careful targeting and perseverance in informing and engaging disadvantaged groups appears to be important.

Importantly, the evaluation of the pathfinder raises the issue of how 'disadvantaged groups' are defined. Some schools in the pathfinder project operate on a prescribed definition of disadvantaged pupils as those entitled to free school meals (FSM) and those who are in public care. Other schools have some flexibility to define disadvantage in ways which suit their circumstances. It would appear that schools are more comfortable with this more flexible approach, feeling that they are better able to identify all pupils who might benefit and to provide appropriate activities. In practice, it would appear that whilst such schools are likely to incorporate FSM eligibility and being in care as part of their criteria, they are also likely to use a wide range of other indicators of disadvantage, such as postcode data, being a carer, migrant status, low academic achievement, homelessness, and special educational needs status (Peters et al, 2009: 13-14).

Early surveys of extended provision by Ofsted also paint a somewhat complex picture. In a study of extended services and children's centres, for instance, Ofsted concluded that schools may:

...not do enough to reach out to particularly vulnerable individuals or families, or those living beyond the immediate neighbourhood.
(Ofsted, 2008: 6).

However, a later study of the most 'successful extended schools' serving disadvantaged communities reached a more positive conclusion (Ofsted, 2009). Such schools, Ofsted found, were having real impacts on pupils and their families. Having staff (specifically, learning mentors) who could win the confidence of children and parents, and offering enjoyable activities were important. So too was the role of the headteacher in recognising the importance of tackling disadvantage, identifying needs carefully, and offering targeted services. Despite this, even the most successful schools might face difficulties in terms of finding spaces to accommodate activities and, more fundamentally, bridging the gap between enhancing children's success inside the school, and transferring this success to their lives outside school.

2.2 Experience elsewhere

These findings from the early phases of the extended services initiative can usefully be set in the context of studies of similar developments in England and elsewhere. There is, in particular, a history of 'extended school' initiatives in England and of similar initiatives - often known as 'full service schools' - elsewhere in the world, and these initiatives have generated a substantial evaluative literature (see Blank et al., 2003; Cummings et al., 2006; Dyson, in press; Wilkin et al., 2003). Whilst it is not possible to report that literature in full here, some useful conclusions can be drawn from it.

For the most part, initiatives of this kind have been located in areas of high disadvantage, and have been designed specifically to meet the perceived needs of disadvantaged populations. As a consequence, rather than developing explicit strategies for targeting disadvantaged children and families, schools tend to have designed and managed their services on the assumption that *all* of their users will be disadvantaged in one way or another. Nonetheless, the evaluations report many examples of schools successfully engaging pupils, families and community members who might normally be supposed to be hard to reach. Insofar as it is possible to identify common patterns across a range of initiatives, it seems that success depends on a combination of the persistence of the school,

its willingness to meet people in places they find comfortable and in activities which they find attractive, and the availability of staff members (not necessarily teachers) able to spend time and interact positively with individuals who might otherwise be reluctant to engage. Our own evaluation of the full service extended schools initiative in England, for instance, is typical in this respect, finding that schools were offering a range of non-threatening activities (such as leisure courses, joint parent and child activities, trips out), developing easy-access services for child and family support, often with outreach into community settings, thinking carefully about the interests, wishes and cultural norms of potential users, and engaging para-professional staff who could relate easily to local people).

However, such approaches do not guarantee that all those who might benefit from services will necessarily take them up. Even amongst disadvantaged populations, and even where schools are energetic in their approaches to potential users, it seems likely that there will be some who will be harder to engage than others. As one US study of 'extended service schools' puts it, the users of services are likely to be those who are already 'joiners', and engaging those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds remains a challenge even where schools work hard at targeted recruitment strategies (Grossman et al, 2002: iii).

Given the somewhat embedded nature of targeting and take-up strategies in the extended schools and services literature, it may be useful to look at two initiatives in England - Sure Start and the Children's Fund - which have also sought to offer an array of services and have been particularly concerned to ensure take-up of these services by disadvantaged groups. In the Sure Start programme (DfEE, 1999b), in particular, targeting and take-up have been recurrent issues. Sure Start, in its original form, offered a range of community-based early education, childcare, health, and family support services targeted at the populations of disadvantaged areas. However, early findings from the National Evaluation of Sure Start (NESS, 2005) found that the most disadvantaged families - those, in the evaluation's terms, with least 'human capital' - were, in fact, least likely to take advantage of what was on offer, and that services were, therefore, in danger of being diverted towards those who were already doing relatively well (NESS, 2005). Significantly, however, later evaluations found that these differences in take-up had become largely invisible (NESS, 2008). Whilst the reasons for this change were not entirely clear, one possibility was that Sure Start Local Programmes (through which the initiative was delivered) had "matured over time" and were now "better organized and more effective" (NESS, 2008: 1).

Like Sure Start, the Children's Fund is a non-education specific initiative whose evaluation findings are of interest because it attempts to provide access to a range of services, particularly for disadvantaged groups (Social Exclusion Unit, 2001). In its first phase, the Children's Fund operated through local partnerships who were encouraged to target their 'preventative' provision towards groups 'at risk' through disadvantage and poverty. Partnerships were given flexibility in developing their own strategies and then were expected to identify how to direct provision once they had identified target groups. The evaluation of the Children's Fund (Edwards et al, 2006) found that local partnerships tended to operationalise the notion of 'disadvantage', and hence to target provision, in many different ways. Typically, they used some mixture of geographical area, school, theme, group, service-based, and individual focus (ibid.: iv). However, in many cases, the lack of appropriate data made precise targeting difficult, and partnerships lacked prior experience on which to base their targeting strategies. On the other hand, there was some evidence of the kind of 'maturing' of partnerships noted by NESS. Specifically, they became better at using data, understanding risk and prevention, and developing effective targeting strategies (ibid.: v).

One final issue is worthy of comment. Insofar as evaluations consider the issue of targeting disadvantaged groups, they tend to do so from the perspective of the professionals leading the initiatives. In other words, the questions they pose are why certain groups are 'hard to reach' and what more can be done to reach them. There is, however, another way of conceptualising the issue, which is to ask whether, as researchers on parental involvement have sometimes found, it might not be the schools themselves (and, indeed, other agencies) that are 'hard to reach' (Crozier & Davies, 2007) for certain groups of people (see Desforges & with Abouchaar, 2003: 42 for an overview). In other words, it is the cultures and practices of schools which discourage certain groups from engaging with the services they provide, and efforts need to be directed not simply to encouraging disadvantaged groups to take-up services, but also to making schools more approachable.

2.3 Overview

If we put together what we know from extended services and other similar initiatives, the following picture begins to emerge:

- Although 'disadvantage' is a useful commonsense concept (and is therefore used throughout this report), it has no agreed meaning. Schools may need to be more sophisticated, therefore, in thinking about different kinds of disadvantage, the different needs and wishes people might have, and the different strategies that might be effective with different groups and individuals.
- The take-up of extended services is likely to vary in complex ways. Schools cannot, therefore, assume that simply providing open access to services ensures that they will be taken up by all those who might benefit from them.
- It seems likely that children, families and community members facing the greatest disadvantages (however defined) might be amongst those least likely to access services. There is a danger, therefore, that services fail to reach those who might benefit from them most.
- On the other hand, many factors influence take-up, and it seems likely that schools can do something to minimise the effects of disadvantage.
- There seems to be no 'magic bullet' in terms of maximising take-up, but appropriately-designed services, personal engagement, and persistence on the part of the school seem important.
- It also seems possible that schools, like Sure Start Programmes and Children's Fund Partnerships, might be able to learn their way towards enhancing take-up more effectively. It may well, however, take time for this learning to happen.
- It seems likely that schools and their partners might need to understand not only why some groups seem 'hard to reach' but why they themselves might seem 'hard to reach' to disadvantaged groups.

3. The findings

It rapidly became apparent from our case studies that, as experience elsewhere suggests, the response made by schools to disadvantaged individuals and groups has to be understood in relation to how leaders of extended services understand 'disadvantage'. In the absence of a clear, consensual definition, and in the light of the varied populations and circumstances of schools, these leaders tended to view disadvantage differently from one another. Sometimes they were able to articulate an explicit definition. More often, their understandings were implicit in their actions. In each case, however, these understandings informed the approach the school then took towards targeting, consultation and encouraging take-up.

With this in mind, we present our findings in relation to three broad themes:

- what leaders of extended services in and around schools understood by 'disadvantage';
- which individuals and groups they identified as disadvantaged, and how the identification process worked;
- how they set about enhancing the participation of disadvantaged individuals and groups in terms of take-up of services and involvement in decisions about what services should be provided.

These themes, of course, tended to combine in different ways in different schools. Readers may find it helpful, therefore, to set the analysis which follows against the vignettes of a sample of schools presented in appendix C.

3.1 Understandings of disadvantage

In general leaders of extended services in and around schools seemed to be working with a broad, intuitively understood definition of disadvantage rather than with a clear and explicit one. To a significant extent, disadvantage was equated with the status of the school's population and the population of the area it served on standard indicators such as FSM entitlement levels, or Indices of Multiple Deprivation and ACORN (A Classification of Residential Neighbourhoods) data³. They therefore tended to describe these populations in terms relating to these indicators. The following are typical of such descriptions:

It's an area of quite high deprivation, we've got a lot of single parent families, we've got high levels of unemployment, we've got about 60% children on free school meals, there's a diverse range of cultures, ethnicity. (ES co-ordinator, Primary 4)

[This area] is probably in the bottom 1% of deprived areas in the UK, so a lot of our pupils come from third generation unemployment, a lot of them are migrant children, we have a large percentage of Romany Gypsy children, and we have an equal 50/50 split in terms of ethnic minorities and White British. Our lowest achiever group of children is White British children and 65% of our children are on free school meals ... We do have some working parents, but I wouldn't say they were from affluent backgrounds, they're low income parents. (ES co-ordinator, Secondary 3)

³ See <http://www.communities.gov.uk/communities/neighbourhoodrenewal/deprivation/> for further information on IMD, and <http://www.caci.co.uk/acorn/whatis.asp> for further information on ACORN.

As these examples illustrate, the proportion of the school and area populations from minority ethnic backgrounds was also commonly referred to as an indicator of disadvantage. In many cases, ethnicity and disadvantage were seen as intertwined:

I think we come from a situation where we assume that poverty levels are quite high rightly or wrongly and I think that we're in it for the most needy at first, and...we are very ethnic based. We're not based on class really as we don't really think we've got any middle class kids here...(ES co-ordinator, Secondary 4)

This last comment reflects a sense in a number of schools serving highly disadvantaged areas that targeting disadvantaged individuals and groups was unnecessary because, "All students are disadvantaged in some way" (Deputy head, Secondary 2), and, "They all need [extended services]" (Head, Primary 3).

Whilst, therefore, statistical indicators of population-level disadvantage were important for many schools, definitions of disadvantage was not entirely bounded by such indicators. In addition, they relied heavily on experiential knowledge of pupils, families and the area, and tended to feel that these gave them a more nuanced picture of local disadvantage. Many felt that standard indicators did not flag up all relevant kinds of disadvantage and could lead to the needs of some children and families being overlooked. Some working in schools in relatively socially mixed areas also felt that area based standard measures could mask pockets of extreme deprivation within ward level data.

As leaders talked about the children and communities they served, therefore, they began to give a richer account of disadvantage which linked the standard indicators to other factors. In particular, a strong theme of isolation from wider society emerged as a key factor understanding of the contexts schools were working in. the following comments were typical:

[The area is an] enclave of deprivation...a self contained and inward looking town...out on a limb...old fashioned...a lot of mental health issues...low parental aspirations. (Head, Secondary 7)

I know I'll come back after the summer holidays and there will be four or five children in my class who have not been out of [the immediate area]. (ES co-ordinator, Primary 1)

Some of the family and community members we interviewed confirmed this sense of isolation, and explained what this meant in terms of access to mainstream services:

We've got nothing round here, its either them across the road or them across the street, we get nothing...we get nothing, we're the forgotten land, it is true. (Parent, Primary 4)

For the professionals, the sense of geographical isolation was commonly seen to be associated with a kind of cultural dislocation, in which local people were held to become 'inward looking' and to fail to share the norms of mainstream society:

...one of the things with our estate is they won't go very far, they won't leave the estate. It's a bit bizarre round here, they're not very good at leaving (area/town), it becomes very insular, so a lot of this is one reason why you have to go out into the community or make sure it is provided within the community... (ES co-ordinator, Secondary 6)

This sense of geographical and cultural isolation offered leaders of extended services a powerful explanation of why some children and local people were 'hard to reach'. For some, the perceived dislocation of disadvantaged groups from mainstream cultural norms meant that attempts to engage them in the support and opportunities offered through extended services was a virtually futile exercise:

Parents are set in their ways, that's the biggest constraint... You have to resign yourself that there are some [parents] you will never reach and we can't do any more than what we are doing. (ES cluster co-ordinator, Primary 1)

In many cases, there was a sense that White British families in particular had disengaged from mainstream norms:

I just think it's parental attitude... I think certain groups are encouraged to take part in enrichment activities and White British groups, the parents don't take part in enrichment activities...[It is] the same in terms of attendance at parents' evening and that type of thing as well. (ES co-ordinator, Secondary 3)

Sometimes, this phenomenon was explained in terms of socio-economic factors that had produced a particular cultural response:

We have got an increasing issue with White kids, disenfranchised White kids which is probably employment-based now. I think a lot of the families are into second or third generation of people that haven't worked so there is certainly a bit of benefits culture there...(ES co-ordinator, Secondary 4)

Likewise, professionals often sought to explain the difficulty of engaging 'White working class' adults in terms of their previous negative experiences of schooling:

Initially, it was really difficult to encourage parents to come in school because they'd got, from their own experiences, you know, they didn't view school as important. They might have had negative feelings about school, so to actually get them to come into school, and to partake in something was really, really hard at first... (ES co-ordinator, Primary 4)

It's maybe because they've got a fear of school themselves from their own personal experience of school, I don't know. (ES co-ordinator, Secondary 5)

Children and adults from minority ethnic backgrounds were typically seen as having had different educational and economic experiences from White British people, and therefore as having developed different cultural norms and being easier to engage:

...I'm finding a lot of our workshops are now taken up by a lot of our ethnic minority parents. There seems to be a majority of those rather than our White British parents...I think its down to the network that it builds... (PSP, Primary 3)

The biggest take-up is from our Black and dual heritage children so Afro Caribbean and Black Other if you like is our biggest take-up of additional activities...It's usually recently arrived children that engage better, attend clubs, enrich themselves and achieve within the school...(ES co-ordinator, Secondary 3)

Where minority ethnic groups were reluctant to take up the opportunities provided by extended services, this was typically explained not in terms of an active rejection of mainstream values, but of language issues, or different cultural norms posing practical difficulties for participation:

I'd say sometimes it's the EAL [English as an Additional Language] parents, who are a...bit more wary, that their English isn't good enough, but once you kind of reassure them and they're in - so initially they're not likely to uptake courses...and they might not be able to read the leaflets... (PSP, Primary 4)

...Arabic kids' participation after school, not so much before school but after school, I think it's difficult...They are pretty much collected, you don't see too many Arabic girls walking home, yeah I'd say so, most of the kids who walk or bus to school are the mixed race, White kids, Black kids...A lot of the Somali parents don't drive which is another aspect of why it's harder to come in. (ES co-ordinator, Secondary 4)

What our data suggest, then, is that leaders of extended services did not, by and large, base their strategies for targeting, involvement and encouraging take-up solely on 'objective' indicators of disadvantage. Instead, they tended to develop their own multi-dimensional understandings of disadvantage by weighing together standard area and population indicators, interpretations of supposed local cultures, and perceptions of cultural and attitudinal differences between ethnic and social groups. This reliance on a cocktail of factors made it possible for leaders of extended services to be flexible in thinking about the disadvantages faced by children and families, and to be responsive to local circumstances. On the other hand, there was, as the examples above illustrate, a fine line on occasions between recognising the ways in which ethnic and social groups differ and painting a somewhat stereotypical picture of those groups.

3.2 Targeting disadvantage

Not surprisingly, schools typically used this 'cocktail' approach in deciding how to target their extended services. There was considerable variation between schools in terms of the factors that were taken into account, but the following were used frequently:

- Pupils and families who:
 - met the standard socio-economic indicators of disadvantage (e.g. FSM entitlement, being looked after, those on the child protection register);
 - were viewed as disadvantaged through experiential knowledge of child's circumstances and using more 'informal' indicators (regularly do not have breakfast, do not go outside immediate area, have hygiene / behavioural problems, knowledge of family circumstances);
 - needed help for reasons not relating to socio-economic disadvantage (e.g. death of parent, disability, shyness, anger, low academic attainment).
- Issues seen as being associated with socio-economic disadvantage and as being endemic across school and area populations (e.g. obesity, sexual health, alcohol / drug abuse, parenting skills).
- Increasing the general 'flourishing' of populations where no specific problems were identified but where there was a sense that things might be better (e.g. building confidence, providing opportunities, supporting academic achievement, building social capital).

In practice, these foci were not entirely separate, and leaders of extended services tended to use them in combination to meet what they understood to be local circumstances. Crucially, in moving from characterisations of disadvantage at the population level to decisions about which children and families to target for particular services, they brought to bear their more or

less detailed knowledge of individuals. For instance, a PSP (in Primary 4) used such knowledge to target individuals and families within wider initiatives to tackle issues that were seen to be endemic in the school population as a whole:

...if say for example there are some children having difficulties with their behaviour in school, then I would try to get their parents to come on the survival course like Webster Stratton to try to see if we can at least give them a bit of support with sorting their children out at home, because that then impacts on the school majorly. It might depend. If it was something like the healthy packed lunches, and you know a child in your class has not got the healthiest packed lunch then you might target them...If the nurse is in doing stuff about nits and you know that some families would really benefit from going to that kind of thing, obviously keep it open, but try and get the people in who'd really benefit from that specific one to go. (PSP, Primary 4).

This flexible approach meant that, as in the example above, schools tended to offer a range of open-access services, based on the perceived needs and characteristics of the populations they served, but then target individuals and families who they thought might benefit particularly from these services, and/or offer additional services to these children and adults. As one ES leader put it:

...if there are parents I really want to be involved, if there's a child who seems to be really struggling or if I know, as I do with some of our parents for example that the parents can't read, then I specifically target them, which will either be that I will ask [staff member name] who does a lot of our parent work to go and speak to them or I'll ask to speak to them and say I 'really want you on this course because...' So it does depend. (Deputy head, Primary 5)

There were two consequences of approaching targeting in this way. The first was that, within the broad foci outlined above, particular individuals and families could be targeted for a wide range of reasons. Amongst those that we encountered were:

- low family income (e.g. as indicated by entitlement to FSM)
- being on the child protection register
- being in care
- being the child of a teenage mother
- being a victim of abuse
- having hygiene issues
- having eating issues
- obesity
- having 'additional needs' (e.g. SEN)
- displaying behaviour and risky behaviour issues (bullying, alcohol, drugs, crime)
- having sexual health issues (including teenage pregnancy)
- having emotional / mental health issues (e.g. bereavement of parent)

- having emotional literacy needs (e.g. shy and reserved, passivity and low self-esteem)
- low attainment
- poor attendance (and punctuality)
- being disabled
- having a serious illness
- being a carer for parents
- transitioning from one school to next
- being isolated because of rurality
- having language issues (EAL)
- experiencing problems with housing,
- needing help in navigating official systems (such as the benefits system)
- needing educational assistance, from basic numeracy and literacy to more formal qualifications

The second was that 'disadvantage', at least understood in largely socio-economic terms, was an inadequate characterisation of what it was that was being targeted, since extended services tended to be aimed not just at the 'disadvantaged' but at those who were regarded as being 'needy' in a range of other ways. Sometimes, leaders talked about these individuals and groups as 'vulnerable':

*...vulnerability for us at [this school] does link to things like attendance, but basically if a child is not happy or where there is concern of quite a wide/broad brush, anything that we have a worry about, we'll term that child as vulnerable. At which point we work out then which provision is needed.. [This might include] those on the edge of being excluded, those on the edge of needing extreme intervention either academically or the fact that they are vulnerable children socially and emotionally.
(ES co-ordinator, Secondary 6)*

Inevitably, this meant that the net of extended services could be spread very wide, and some leaders - particularly in areas of high disadvantage - were not always sure that this was a good thing. In these cases, two considerations seemed to weigh on their minds. They were concerned about the sustainability of services if they encouraged very high levels of demand, and they were also concerned that responding to every demand might undermine the very families that they were trying to support. For instance, in Primary 1, 67% of children were believed not to have breakfast at home. Yet the school's breakfast club offered only 16 places and charged £1.50 per session. The ES co-ordinator explained the decision to charge in these terms:

[If it was free] there would be too many children, we would be inundated and it would be abused, it would be totally unsustainable.

She went on to argue that, where possible, children should be having breakfast in their own home, on the grounds that, “part of me feels we would be taking away people’s parenting skills.” Similarly, the ES co-ordinator in Secondary 6 explained that the school ran targeted after school activities rather than an open access after school club because:

...in a school in a deprived area, we’d be quite concerned that the children would want to be here rather than being at home...or the fact that parents may well like them to be at school rather than at home so we’d think we’d be generally quite overrun with a situation of a lot of kids hanging around in school, but also not in clubs. [They] just may want to be around in school...

In this way, leaders of extended services found themselves making judgements, not just about what services were needed and by whom, but also about what the limits of service provision should be and where the school should encourage families to take responsibility for themselves. In both cases, they were making judgements about how families should function and what lay in their best interests, relying heavily on their personal knowledge of the populations with which they worked.

3.3 Identification strategies

The implication of this broad and flexible approach to targeting was that identification strategies also tended to be flexible, and to rely heavily on staff’s knowledge of pupils, families and communities. In some cases, this meant that identification was seen as largely unproblematic:

...targeting is not the problem... (ES co-ordinator, Secondary 7)

We have a perception of need in school...on a day-to-day basis we come up against a lot of children with a lot of problems. (Head, Secondary 7)

However, this reliance on staff knowledge did not necessarily mean that the identification process was entirely informal or ad hoc. Rather, schools were likely to have set up systems which enabled staff’s knowledge of individuals to be fed into some kind of in-house identification processes, and, quite possibly, to be set alongside other more ‘objective’ indicators such as individual pupil records or screening instruments. In several schools, the ‘inclusion team’ - typically, SENCOs (special educational needs co-ordinators) and other senior staff with safeguarding responsibilities - played a strong role in identifying pupils. Often, schools designated a specific staff member whom teachers with concerns could contact, and had in place clear procedures for upwards referral if child protection issues arose. One primary school (Primary 2) used a secure site on the school intranet to record individual concerns about children, for example behaviour, hygiene issues, tiredness or anxiety. Any member of school staff could add to this if they noticed some problem. These ‘trackers’ were reviewed weekly to identify early warning signs. As the school’s business manager explained:

It’s a secure area on the virtual learning environment, so it’s all electronic...We have various trackers...So if we notice someone hasn’t eaten their lunch or someone comes to school and they’ve got hygiene issues, it could be anything, someone has a bruise, anything like that, and this is tracked and it’s all online...So all teachers just record and obviously it builds a picture and we regularly review it and obviously if things start building up we say ‘Right, lets have a look at this’...

Other schools had also developed in-house recording and identification procedures. One ES co-ordinator (in Secondary 6) explained how he had developed a system which made it possible to bring together the data that schools routinely collect, or easily could collect, on their pupils in order to identify which children were particularly 'vulnerable':

*What evidence is out there already that all schools have?...[E]very school has a behaviour policy and a way of recording it. Every school has progress, you know, an internal system that follows results. Every school has attendance. Every school has...a simple tick box about does a kid do after school activities, you know, you go and ask the PE department. Things like that, that you can put in place very quickly and you can track children that way, that actually help indicate about what they need...[W]e have a spreadsheet and a database that we use and it's uploaded every six weeks and then we have meetings around that to actually identify vulnerable children - which children are dropping, which children aren't, why is this child dropping, is there a reason behind it. So it's not just based on perceptions and one person's observations and anecdotal stories. It's actually based on hard evidence that you can measure and judge, and if you do put in an intervention, you can then see the success or failure of it and then find out whether its worked or not and then know when to withdraw it.
(ES co-ordinator, Secondary 6)*

Many schools also drew upon information from other agencies and organisations. As partnerships developed, it became possible to pool information, and identification became a shared process. Sometimes this meant sharing information with other schools, particularly at the point of primary-secondary transition. In some places, teams were in place which included behaviour support workers, social workers, educational psychologists, social inclusion workers, speech and language therapists and other professionals. This inevitably raised issues about the confidentiality of information available to individual agencies. One school reported that it was able to share information at a non-individual level, but that agency confidentiality rules meant they were unable to share and discuss individual level data. However, these issues seemed to be resolvable. Two of the schools in the sample, for instance, had signed protocols with police and other agencies to share information in order to target pupils with alcohol issues. There was also evidence that the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) was beginning to be used, but it was not yet fully functional in all areas.

It was not necessary for formal multi-agency teams to exist in order for there to be collaboration between schools and their partners in identifying children and adults. Many schools were developing more informal links with other agencies and organisations which were primarily directed at extending the services that could be offered to pupils and their families, but which inevitably involved some information sharing and joint targeting. These included youth workers, private parent support organisations, children's centres, and alternative therapists.

3.4 Promoting take-up by adults

Whilst leaders of extended services felt reasonably confident in their ability to identify children and adults who might benefit from extended services, they were less confident in their ability to ensure that these people would actually take up the services on offer. The widespread perception was that, particularly in the case of adults, it was, despite many attempts to encourage wider participation it was still predominantly the same, small number of people accessing activities:

...we do tend to have, if I'm honest, the same set of parents attending the majority of the courses, at the moment, I've probably got a really good set of 25 parents that will attend most of the courses... Its hard really, sometimes we do get a mixture but on the whole, it tends to be those 25 but it's because I've built up that relationship with them and just talking to them. (PSP, Primary 3)

In this situation, schools were engaged in a variety of activities designed to encourage take-up of services in general, often with the idea that such efforts would impact on disadvantaged groups or individuals in particular. Amongst those strategies in place, letters and leaflets, often sent to parents via children, were widely used. However, some parents were quick to point out that this was often an ineffective method of communication since letters did not arrive home, or their meaning was not clear to them, or they were quickly forgotten about. Parents in primary schools in particular were also notified of activities on offer through the use of 'extended service noticeboards' and posters placed on entrances to schools so that they could see them when bringing and collecting children to and from school. This was a less viable strategy for secondary schools, though one secondary school located on a large main road into a busy city centre put up large posters advertising community activities to all passers by. Other strategies included leaflets sent out to the community, taster sessions, advertising on school website, newsletters and enlisting other agencies and organisations to signpost families to extended services available through the school. Several schools also talked about sending information out to a wide range of agencies including children's centres, local community centres and other community based organisations so that they could spread the word of what was on offer. Other schools in the same cluster were likewise seen as a good channel for information to the wider community.

However, without question, the most effective strategy for promoting take-up by disadvantaged families was considered to be direct contact by PSPs. These workers were seen as having a key role in enabling schools to build positive and productive relationships with parents and carers, and these relationships in turn were seen as the principal determinants of whether families would take up services or not. As one ES co-ordinator explained, PSPs are able to build up trust with parents who might otherwise be wary of the school:

*Initially, it was really difficult to encourage parents to come in school because they'd got, from their own experiences, you know, they didn't view school as important, they might have had negative feelings about school. So, to actually get them to come into school and to partake in something was really, really hard at first and [the PSP] worked hard to build some really strong positive relationships with the parents.
(ES co-ordinator, Primary 4).*

PSPs tended to work predominantly with the families considered to be most disadvantaged and 'hardest to reach'. Because they were relatively informal in their approaches and were willing to meet families on their own terms (for instance, in their own homes and at times that suited them), they were able to form a trusted link between them, the school, and other agencies. As one head teacher explained:

We support parents through the parent support partner...she draws in other experts. Information is given to parents and schools can refer. The PSP works more than most with the disadvantaged and has done a lot of intervention work and getting in agencies.(Head, Primary 7)

It seemed to be important that PSPs (and some other paraprofessional staff in and around schools) came from a range of backgrounds, many of which were outside of education, such as the voluntary sector and youth work. This was also the case for one ES co-ordinator in our sample (Primary 6) who was a youth worker rather than a teacher by background. One PSP (Primary 7) explained that most of the ES support staff they worked with came from the voluntary sector and that they have 'a very different approach' from teachers. They were, she felt, used to working in the community and did not experience some of the concerns that teaching staff had about lone working and entering people's homes. This was also true of the ES co-ordinator who came from a youth service background, and who operated in many respects more akin to the PSP role in other schools (the school had only recently acquired a LA funded PSP). She said:

So I'll even do that as well, knocking on doors...yeah, I'll go with the parents and parenting worker [from the children's centre] and we'll hit the street, we'll be out and about trying to get people in. (ES co-ordinator, Primary 6)

One secondary school (Secondary 6) had employed a PSP who was from the local area. The PSP was the school's only strategy for trying to engage hard to reach families, and the ES co-ordinator explained why this was the case:

...because all the other strategies don't work, that's why they are hard to reach. You can go out with a flyer, you can go out with a letter. And you can do all that and it won't make a blind bit of difference. You need the one to one personal touch with people that they can trust. [PSP's name] lives on the estate, [she] knows the estate and she knows a lot of people on the estate. She is trusted on the estate. That's one reason why we got her. And the fact that she's as well qualified as anyone you know up to her eyes in all sorts of letters and degrees. She's one of the few people that's made it and because she is trusted, she is the main voice. So if we need to go and get someone, she will go and get them.(ES co-ordinator, Secondary 6).

One reason that PSPs were seen as so valuable was the belief that parents in disadvantaged circumstances lacked confidence in dealing with institutions such as schools:

I mean it is a very deprived area, it's the bottom 2% nationally and you know that's a barrier, people are not confident. (Head, Primary 3)

Again, this view was confirmed by some of the adults targeted by schools. In Primary 3, a course for adults was being planned which was focused on activities intended to build self-esteem. Two friends who had signed up for the course commented:

*Its like improving your confidence I think.
We both need it.*

This view placed a considerable premium on the 'personal touch' designed to win people's confidence. Often, therefore, PSPs and others working with parents would seek to engage with them in informal, non-threatening settings before suggesting any more demanding work. Some PSPs organised subsidised trips as a way of getting to know parents and their needs, informing them of ES services, and encouraging take-up. Similarly, ES co-ordinators and PSPs often set great store by going out each day and engaging with parents in the school yard and at the school gates:

I do 'meet and greets' when I'm in so I stand at the corridor in the morning and in the evening just to say hello to parents, make myself known. I send out a letter every half term, its called 'need a chat' letter so that parents know I'm here if ever they need me, it has my photo on so they know who they are looking for. (PSP, Primary 3).

This kind of approach demanded a great deal of perseverance and patience on the part of school staff as they built up relationships and overcame doubts over time. As one ES leader explained:

...I tend not to grab [targeted parents] and launch into the whole thing in one go. I tend to say that I've got something I'd like to discuss with them and would they come and see me. Three years in they will now come and see me. When we first got here, I mean [parent's name] is an example, it took a lot of going back and back and back and you know, basically being in their face I suppose, but also being very open to discussions and making that real effort... (Deputy Head, Primary 5)

However, there was evidence that this kind of gentle persistence paid dividends in the long term:

I now go out and ask parents to fill in the forms (for activities and events) in the school yard, they are getting used to it... There has been a big shift, now parents actually come to me and ask what's going on and some come to the playground armed with money. (ES co-ordinator, Primary 1)

Whilst informal personal contacts could achieve much, this apparent lack of confidence and trust in schools meant that schools sometimes found it more effective to rely on informal networks amongst family and community members to encourage the take-up of services:

We also use [parents] to help canvass things as well, as obviously if it comes from another parent, it's better. (ES co-ordinator, Primary 4)

That's really strong, that's better than us talking to the parents. They're more likely to take, believe another parent than they are to me as they know we're trying to sell it to them, but for the other parents, there's no reason to sell it to them, they're just saying to them. (PSP, Primary 4)

3.5 Promoting take-up by pupils

Since most schools offered open-access activities to their pupils, many of the strategies they employed for promoting take-up were aimed at the whole school population. They included promoting activities in assemblies, setting up extended service noticeboards, distributing leaflets, and ensuring a range of attractive and flexible activities were on offer.

Not surprisingly, in this context, the issue of activities being accessed by a small group of those who were fully engaged raised its head in respect of students as it did with adults:

It's a difficult one that... It's normally the same pupils, that's the annoying thing... (ES co-ordinator, Secondary 6)

In response, many schools were trying to build up a trusting relationship with pupils through support staff, in the expectation that this would encourage pupils to come forward for help. It seemed to be less important what the title and role of these support staff were, than that they were seen by children and young people as trustworthy and approachable. In one school (Secondary 7) children self referred to an 'emotional literacy support worker', because, as the head explained:

They feel safe with her and they can talk to her. They know where she has her coffee... Lots of kids self refer to her.

In another school the learning mentor was described as "the person all the kids go to... she gets all the horror stories" (ES co-ordinator, Primary 1). Pupils from one secondary school (Secondary 8) pointed out the distinctive approach of the behavioural support worker:

...teachers just tell you off... she finds out what's wrong and let's you speak and let's you tell the full story.

I see [her] at the pastoral centre... I can come here anytime I want... If she can't help, she'll tell you someone else to go to.

This sense of a distinctive, non-teacherly approach was often reinforced by locating pupil support services in a space of their own:

...it's a different kind of atmosphere, it works really well. We have a nurture room there, it's a whole different approach. (ES mentor, Secondary 1).

In another school the ES support worker was based in a mobile classroom in front of the school that had open access to pupils. She told us:

It is always full of kids...they can drop in anytime, within reason. (ES support worker, Secondary 2)

Elsewhere, a 'Student Services Desk' acted as an open access contact point:

We have a Student Services Desk here that's manned all the time, that parents can go to as well as pupils to express concerns about anything really, and a lot of the concerns that come in there have happened outside of school. It's not necessarily anything that goes on within school, so you know things like got nowhere to live or need help with uniform or that type of thing, and we have permanent members of staff who are there to assist and guide the community with the right and appropriate action that they need to take... (ES co-ordinator, Secondary 3)

In another school the ES centre was separate from the student support services centre. They performed distinct but related roles and worked together very closely:

There are now at least four people on site whose regular day job is to care for the students. They help us work in a variety of ways...and look at targeted support as well as general support...I feel that the development of the workforce has been helpful as we can work with colleagues who are not qualified teachers. This is a significant revolution, a cultural change...you don't have to be a qualified teacher to have a major role in educational establishments in helping young people....' (Secondary 8)

The same head explained that their links with an off site youth service (funded by local authority but managed by the school - devolved budget) which he felt was valuable, 'as they can work in a different way'.

In the context of these approachable support workers and open-access contact points, some schools were able to encourage pupils to self-refer to services, and leaflets, information boards, and designated staff offered them information on how to do this.

Similarly, some schools used pupil-to-pupil contact to encourage take-up, just as they used networks of adults. In at least two schools, for instance, pupils were being trained as peer supporters to offer help during breaks and also run drop in sessions as well as support in transition activities.

3.6 Consultation

Most of the schools in the sample participated in consultation with pupils and families about extended services. This took a variety of forms, including questionnaires (for both pupil and families), focus groups (particularly for pupils) and informal 'chats' or coffee mornings for parents to find out what services they wished to see available. In some schools, parent groups were in operation who were able to feed back the views of other parents as well as their own. Feedback forms completed at the end of activities were used widely and suggestion boxes were also used by some schools. In some cases, pupils were consulted through pupil councils and in some areas where extended services offered through schools were part of a more strategic local authority approach, 'pupil voice' conferences had been held with representatives from each school in the area. In addition, informal consultation mechanisms took place at events such as summer fairs and family fun days, and in many cases parents were approached informally when they were in the school for other reasons - dropping off and collecting their children, for instance, or attending parents evenings.

For the most part, these consultation processes took the form of a kind of 'consumer' survey. In other words, pupils and adults were asked about what services they wanted to see, and what their opinion was of the services currently on offer. Whilst this gave useful feedback to schools, there was little evidence in the sample of pupils and adults taking more direct control of service provision, or participating in the strategic development of the schools' extended services work. Neither was there much evidence of strategies to involve the hardest to reach groups in consultation. There are, however, two caveats to enter here. The first is that the extensive engagement between support workers of various kinds and children and adults facing difficulties offered a more in-depth form of feedback, albeit one that was informal and filtered through the perceptions of these workers. The second is that some schools were exploring more structured and searching forms of consultation. For example, Secondary 1 had held two annual 'World Café' events, with young people, to consult with them about the themes that they see as important in delivering the youth service. This is one of the few examples of involvement of young people at a more strategic level. This schools is also using 'social networking', the delivery of activities off-site from the school, to attract families, and, when they attend such activities to consult more widely with them about other possible activities and services.

3.7 Measuring take-up

Most schools measured take-up of extended services in the form of attendance at activities. Some schools were also seeking to cross refer this attendance to some criteria of disadvantage. One secondary school (Secondary 1), for instance, had started to identify a 'cohort' of children who were not accessing any services and was trying to characterise this cohort in relation to a series of criteria - area disadvantage statistics, FSM entitlement, 'gifted and talented' status, absenteeism, looked after status - in order to identify those who were 'falling through the net'. Similarly, one of the primary schools kept very detailed records and could cross refer children's access to extended services to a range of disadvantage criteria:

*I know who are not accessing services. They have a black dot next to their name!
(ES co-ordinator, Primary 1)*

However, although there were other examples of this kind, it was not clear in most schools either that take-up was being monitored systematically in relation to disadvantage, and/or that such monitoring was being used to inform the development of better targeting strategies.

3.8 Evaluating effectiveness

In most cases, the success of extended services provision was judged by the level of take-up and user feedback. There were some attempts to assess the effectiveness of services in relation to the difference they made to users, and, specifically, the difference they made to disadvantaged groups. For instance, one PSP worker (at Primary 7) evaluated the effectiveness of her interventions, by identifying tangible signs of change, such as when members of the families she worked with gained employment, accessed benefits, or began to participate in new activities. Likewise, schools were able to report individual 'success' stories usually resulting from interventions or support and guidance offered to particular families and/or children. For instance, one school (Primary 5) reported their intervention with two siblings and their mother. One of the siblings, 'Jamie' was identified through the school's screening procedures as having low self esteem, and work with him led the school to believe that the mother had similar issues. As the ES support worker told us, she:

...wouldn't ordinarily come and volunteer anything, you know. She's very quiet, introverted person, her children are, but I think I built up the relationship with Jamie because Jamie was in the class at the time I was working with, and through that, mum tended to come and volunteer. She'd come and speak to me... I mean there is no

issue at all with Jamie's behaviour, no issue whatsoever. He would never do anything that you would suggest was badly behaved, but there were other things and you could tell. He was very quiet, he was introvert and found it difficult to make friends, and because of the screening, he was immediately identified as being an issue and we were able to work on his self-esteem and building that.

Researcher: Does that seem to have been successful with him?

Absolutely, he's really come out of himself because we gave him jobs, and he's not on his own, there's other children as well. We gave them jobs being librarians. They were given responsibilities, because we had the play leaders, and a lot of the children that are the play leaders are children who were screened initially and came out as being you know, quite low self-esteem, but you know immediately they felt that they'd be given something to do and all of a sudden, they were brilliant and were coming to you and saying 'oh I've done such and such a thing' and 'can I do this?'

Other schools were able to report how their personal knowledge of children and families had enabled them to target those whom standard measures of disadvantage might not have highlighted:

[We have] a huge range of abilities and a huge range of students, some of whom have issues and some haven't and when you are talking about the criteria for selection, there was one student who belonged to a group and these students weren't G&T [gifted and talented] students, but could have been, but just weren't...but they weren't the type of student who would be targeted for something else. They were just, like, in the middle, and I asked them to take part in a project and I have watched them just grow and develop and have the confidence - sorry, I'm just indulging myself now, I do actually get a lot out of it - but I have watched them, you know, talk about what they have been involved in and one of the projects it has all been out of school hours, you know, so they've given up the holidays, Saturdays, after school...So, there is a lot of commitment.' (ES mentor, Secondary 1)

Other examples underlined the importance of relationships of trust in encouraging children and adults to self-refer. For instance, the ES co-ordinator in a secondary school (Secondary 6), reported the school's work with an ex-pupil, 'Susie' who had previously been NEET (not in education, employment, or training):

She missed a lot of year 11, had a child very early. She came in school last year with her little one and said...'I would like some help on trying to do secretarial courses and become a secretary', so we ended up putting together - and there's no reason why we needed to do this, she's nothing to do with school, she's absolutely nothing to do with us, but because she's part of our community, and there's a golden rule, a principle I learnt from one of our community governors at this place, it says, 'a problem at school is actually a problem in our community'...[W]e took her down to the [community learning centre]. We were able then to put her with the young mums and toddlers group, and get her a place on to that, that was the first stage. While that was going on, she then came into the learning centre and we were able to start to put her on to courses, and got her back on to the school system. She was able to do the adult literacy and numeracy courses. We just so happened to have down at the time...[the area's] adult literacy co-ordinator who was teaching some of our other children and we made sure it coincided when Susie was there so Susie got also the teachings as well. We were able then to put her on to secretarial courses through funding that we are able to get with young mum's associations and youth service...and this is all blitzed within six weeks. So by the end of it, she had passed her adult literacy and numeracy, which was the equivalent of getting grade Bs at GCSE. She was able then to have the

beginnings then of a secretarial level courses whatever they were...but we were able within six weeks to give her enough and enough confidence for her to then move on to the next stage at college.

Accounts such as these were frequently confirmed by pupil and adult users of extended services. For instance the mother and two children in the first example (from Primary 5) confirmed how happy they were with the services provided by the school. The mother in particular reported how her initial reluctance to approach the school had given way to a high level of involvement:

I just enjoy doing everything with the school, well I go out of my way to support them in any way that I can.

Some parents felt strongly that the ES workers filled gaps left by statutory services and so made a big difference to families' ability to cope. One mother (in Secondary 7) explained that when two of her children were diagnosed as being on the autistic spectrum she was 'left pretty much to get on with it' and the PSP was 'absolutely invaluable' both for the practical information and personal support. Another (in Secondary 8) told us about the difference the PSP had made:

I found [name of the PSP] a great support. When she first got involved I couldn't even go out of the house...Then [my husband] lost his job and then I felt I couldn't cope if [he] goes back to work...[Name of PSP] has been my brick and she is only at the end of the phone...No-one else has helped...I can't face the school yard but [name of PSP] would meet me and walk me to the school yard...Now I always go to the gate...and come here for arts and crafts.

Such accounts are undoubtedly impressive, not least because they demonstrate what can be achieved through the personal contact and trust-building by which schools set such store. It is not surprising, then, that ES leaders tended to use accounts of this kind as indicators of the effectiveness of the services they offered. However, this did not quite amount to the systematic monitoring of effectiveness. ES leaders knew how popular (or otherwise) the activities they offered were and knew about individuals and families who had benefited, but did not by and large then go on to collect data on impacts over time, much less to use this to shape the future development of services.

3.9 Facilitators and barriers

Schools were able to identify a long list of factors which, in their view acted as facilitators and barriers in their development of extended services overall. These factors tended to appear in different combinations in different schools and were not tied specifically to work with disadvantaged groups. However, some themes can be identified within them which have particular relevance to the issues of targeting and take-up.

Not surprisingly, perhaps, schools valued particularly the resources - notably, the human resources - which they could control directly and which expanded their capacity to engage with children and adults. In this respect, PSPs and other non-teacher adults were consistently seen as key resources in schools' development of extended services and in the targeting of those services on those held to be most in need. The corollary of this was that schools' capacity to target tended to depend heavily on the personal contacts and trusting relationships developed by these workers. Since, however, they were typically employed on the basis of unstable funding and short term contracts, schools sometimes found it difficult to retain them. The experience of one school - that they had a PSP who 'was very good at contacting families and drawing in other services...but she got a job elsewhere' (Head, Secondary 7) - was a concern other schools had to face.

Similarly, the strength of relationships with other agencies was clearly important for effective referral process and for providing coordinated services to children and families facing difficulties. In this respect, a somewhat mixed picture emerged. Some schools reported excellent relationships with some services. Where this happened, not only was the referral process easier, but the school was able to draw on information for other agencies to support its own knowledge of the local population, and to enlist other agencies in the targeting process. As one ES co-ordinator put it, 'There are very few barriers because of the strength of the partnership' (Secondary 1). In these cases, the strong relationships seemed to depend on some mixture of the energy of individuals, the length of time over which relationships had been built up, and the extent to which the local authority and its partners had succeeded in developing an effective structure for integrated services. However, in other places, relationships were less positive. Child and family services were reported as fragmented, over-bureaucratic in terms of referral procedures, and unable to respond effectively to the demands placed upon them.

Finally, most schools were concerned about how many of the services they had developed - including those that were targeted on disadvantaged groups - would be sustainable in future as designated funding disappeared. As one ES co-ordinator (Primary 6) succinctly put it, the perennial problem was:

...money, yeah just money really...it's a long hard slog to stay in things, to keep thing going...

As this comment indicates, ES leaders found that the constant quest for funding was labour intensive, uncertain of outcome, and delivered at best only short term success. Local authorities were seen as helpful in alerting schools to funding sources, but the situation was seen as likely to become more difficult as national funding for extended services ceased. In addition to funding difficulties, some ES leaders reported very practical problems in trying to develop a pattern of services that met local needs - the inadequacy of local transport facilities, for instance, or the lack of facilities in the school building, or the overwhelming demand for services that they uncovered when their targeting strategies worked. The complaint from ES leaders, therefore, was not that they saw providing access to extended services as an unwanted additional burden (though some admitted there was work to do to convince all of their teachers), but that they were frustrated by not being able to do more and by the uncertainties of the future.

4. Overview and recommendations

The review we report here is, in effect, an exploratory piece of work, aimed at uncovering some of the issues around extended services and disadvantaged groups and individuals. Given that we were not in a position to investigate the relationship between schools' strategies, the take-up of services, and the impact on service users in any depth, it is appropriate to be cautious about what it tells us.

Nonetheless, there do seem to be some patterns in our data, and it is possible to reach some conclusions, however tentative. Our confidence in these is increased by the fact that we found a remarkably similar picture in all of the schools we studied. Although these schools were selected because of their diverse characteristics, their approaches to extended services and to the issue of targeting were surprisingly similar. Whilst we certainly found that some schools had more fully developed services than others, and that different schools faced different levels and kinds of demands for services, we did not find any overall differences of approach by phase, by rural-urban location, or by levels of disadvantage. The themes we list below, therefore, derive from the sample as a whole:

1. All of the extended service leaders in the sample were aware of the presence of disadvantage in the populations they served, and of the need to target at least some of their extended services towards the most disadvantaged groups and individuals. All of them, therefore, gave considerable thought to how this targeting could be done and how they might ensure that those who might benefit most from services would, in fact, access them.
2. Although these leaders were aware of disadvantage, they defined it differently, in relation to their own views and to local circumstances. These definitions tended to include but extend beyond notions of socio-economic disadvantage. Instead, leaders tended to operate with a broad concept of 'vulnerable' children, families and adults, many of whom might live in (relative) poverty, but some of whom at least faced difficulties not directly related to their economic circumstances.
3. In this situation, identification procedures based on socio-economic indicators (such as entitlement to free school meals) were useful, but were not adequate in themselves. A range of other quantitative and 'objective' indicators were also used, therefore, and schools also relied very heavily on their staff's knowledge of individuals and families.
4. The process of collating different kinds of information about children, families and adults was sometimes formalised in school and/or through links with other agencies. However, decisions for the most part rested on a professional judgement about who needed which services, and this decision could be relatively informal.
5. Schools tended to have a range of procedures and practices for engaging with 'hard to reach' groups in order to encourage them to access services. As with identification procedures, these practices relied heavily on individual contact and relationships. Building trust between the school and the children and adults who might benefit from services was seen as crucial.
6. Extended service leaders typically had a sense of how successful their targeting strategies were in engaging with and benefiting service users. In some cases, formal monitoring procedures were in place. However, this was not always the case, and judgements about effectiveness in particular relied heavily on what school staff knew about impacts on individuals.

7. The targeting and monitoring undertaken by schools were informed by the strategies they typically had in place for consulting children and adults. These generated useful feedback and ideas for further development. However, in some cases, such strategies did not appear to reach much further than a 'customer satisfaction' approach, and there was little evidence of the involvement of disadvantaged groups in strategic planning.
8. Given their reliance on personal knowledge and contact, the targeting of extended services towards disadvantaged individuals and groups depended heavily on staff in the school who could engage with these individuals and groups. Often these staff were not teachers, and their 'approachable' status in this respect was seen as important for their ability to engage potential service users.
9. School and extended service leaders appeared keen to develop their provision further, and there was no evidence that they saw this as an unwanted burden. However, they often faced practical problems in doing this, and were concerned about the instability of funding on which their provision - included their additional staffing - depended.

Looking across these themes, it would appear that the development of extended services in general, and of targeting those services in particular, is very much a work in progress. Certainly, there appears to be no lack of commitment, awareness, or activity on the part of extended service leaders. The issue of 'disadvantage' (however interpreted) is an important concern for them, and they all have strategies of some kind for identifying and targeting 'disadvantaged' groups, and for encouraging them to take up services. Interestingly, we found this to be the case across all of the schools in our sample, even though some were initially identified by ESRAs as not having particularly well developed targeting strategies.

It is striking, however, that much of what schools are doing in relation to disadvantaged individuals and groups relies on a highly personal approach. It is dependent on proactive individuals, personal knowledge, personal contact, and a somewhat impressionistic assessment of needs. Moreover, the staff on which schools depend for this personal approach are often not the 'core' staff of teachers, but extended service workers of various kinds, sometimes employed on short-term contracts and dependent on short-term funding. In some respects, this relatively informal and personalised approach has strengths. The school personnel we spoke to were able to give convincing accounts of who they needed to target and why, and of how they judged the effectiveness of their interventions. Given the very diverse circumstances in which schools find themselves, and the diverse populations they serve, it seems highly desirable that they should draw to a significant extent on their local knowledge and retain the flexibility to target as they see fit.

However, it also seems clear that individual judgements of this kind can only ever give a partial picture of what children, families and communities need, and how those needs are best met. If properly-informed decisions are to be made, it seems important that the views of school personnel should be triangulated against more 'objective' data, the views of other agencies (who might have very different understandings of individual and local needs), and, in particular, the views of children, families and community members themselves about what they need and how it is best provided. It is clear that in some cases schools had begun to appreciate this need for triangulation, and had begun to robust strategies through which this could happen. However, this did not seem to be the case everywhere.

It might be necessary, therefore, for the next stage in the development of schools' targeting strategies to take the form of an increase in formalisation. By this we do not mean the abandonment of the personal approach with all its strengths. Nor do we mean an increase in bureaucratisation - extended service leaders made it abundantly clear that they sometimes found existing systems of form filling unnecessarily burdensome. Rather, we mean that

schools should be able to set the personal knowledge and contacts of individual staff members in the context of a more wide ranging use of evidence, a more structured approach to targeting, and a more systematic approach to evaluation.

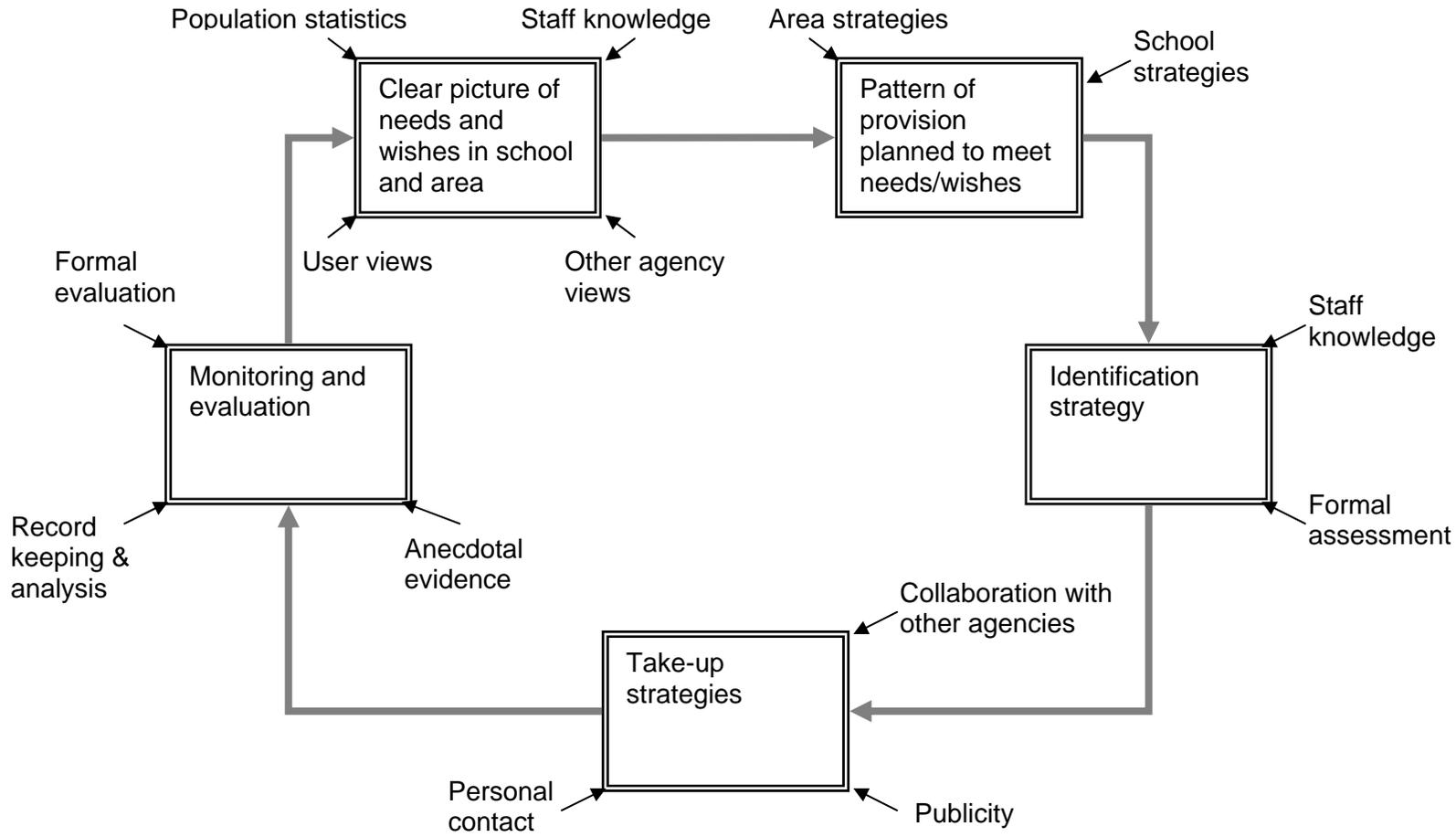
Many of the practices that are needed are already present to a greater or lesser extent in the schools in our sample. We did indeed find schools that were able to combine personal knowledge with other kinds of data about their populations, or that had a clearly articulated approach to targeting, or that were attempting to monitor their provision systematically. The task now would be to ensure that such practices become more widespread so that all schools, in the context of their clusters and the other service providers in their areas, have robust strategies for identification, targeting, and evaluation.

Whilst the detail of these strategies will undoubtedly vary from place to place, it is not difficult to extrapolate their principal features from the examples in our sample. In figure 1 (on page 34), we indicate what these features might be:

- A clear picture of the needs, perspectives and wishes of children, families and others in the populations they serve. Such a picture should certainly draw on individual knowledge, but this should be set against area and population statistics, the view of the school's partner agencies, and the views of potential users of extended services.
- A pattern of provision planned to meet these needs and wishes, based on the schools overarching extended services strategy, informed by other local strategies, for instance, from the extended services cluster, the Children's Trust and the local strategic partnership.
- An identification strategy, aimed at identifying those who might benefit most from services, and drawing on personal knowledge, but also on more formal assessments themselves informed by inter-agency information-sharing and joint assessments.
- Strategies to promote take-up, using the range of approaches outlined in this report, and including personal contact, publicity and approaches through other agencies.
- A monitoring and evaluation strategy, again drawing on the sort of anecdotal evidence gathered through personal contact, but supplemented by detailed record keeping and analysis, and by formal evaluation procedures.

In developing this more systematic approach, it may be important to bear in mind the experience of Sure Start and the Children's Fund (see section 2 of this report) that services need to 'mature' in order to become more effective at targeting disadvantaged groups. It is not surprising if, in the first phase of the development of extended services, the focus has been on generating activity and ensuring that the core offer of services is indeed available. It seems likely, however, that a second phase may shift the focus to a more reflective and evidence based approach, where schools and their partners will become more thoughtful about the purposes and working practices of their extended services. No doubt many schools will find their own way towards such an approach - as some of the schools in our sample were already doing. However, there may be something that DCSF, TDA and local authorities can do by way of guidance and support to hasten such developments and ensure that they are evident in all schools.

Figure 1 - A systematic approach to targeting services



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Appendix A - Information on case study schools

1. Summary of contexts of sample schools

School	Extent of provision (1=wide range of services under all components of the core offer; 2= wide range of services under some components of the core offer; 3= limited range of services under each component of the core offer)	Proportion receiving FSM (1>30%; 2= 10-30%; 3<10%)	Proportion of minority ethnic groups (1>30%; 2= 10-20%; 3<10%)	Urban (U) / rural (R)	SEN: % with statements of SEN or at School Action Plus
Primary 1	1	2	3	Semi-rural	4.7
Primary 2	1	2	3	U	5
Primary 3	1	1	1	U	5.3
Primary 4	1	1	1	U	10.1
Primary 5	1	2	3	U	12.1
Primary 6	1	1	3	U	6.7
Primary 7*	2	3	3	Semi-rural	Not available
Secondary 1	1	2	3	U	9.7
Secondary 2	1	1	3	U	13.5
Secondary 3	1	1	1	U	11.3
Secondary 4	1	1	1	U	5.3
Secondary 5	1	2	3	U	9.7
Secondary 6	1	1	1	U	13.2
Secondary 7*	2	2	3	Semi-rural	10.4
Secondary 8*	2	3	3	Semi-rural	7.5

Information provided by ESRAs and verified against Ofsted, EduBase, Direct.gov.

*Primary 7 is a first school, Secondary 7 is a middle school, and Secondary 8 is a high school.

2. Summary of research activity in sample schools

School Name	Who participated in research
Primary 1	Interviews with ES Co-ordinator; ES Cluster Co-ordinator
Primary 2	Interview with Business Manager (manages ES)
Primary 3	Interviews with Head Teacher also responsible for ES activity; PSP
Primary 4	Interview with Assistant Head who is also ES Co-ordinator and PSP
Primary 5	Interviews with Assistant Head who is also ES Co-ordinator; ES Mentor (responsibility for all aspects of ES Family / Adult learning, supporting children with problems)
Primary 6	Interview with ES Co-ordinator (NOT teaching staff, half the week school ES Co-ordinator plus half the week as ES Cluster Manager)
Primary 7	Interviews with Head Teacher who manages ES activity; ES Cluster Co-ordinator and PSP
Secondary 1	Interviews with ES Cluster Co-ordinator; ES Mentor
Secondary 2	Interviews with ES Co-ordinator (Assistant Head also Co-ordinator role in LA); PSP; Community Worker
Secondary 3	Interview with ES Co-ordinator (also 'Campus Director and on SMT)
Secondary 4	Interviews with ES Co-ordinator; PSP
Secondary 5	Interview with ES Line Manager (acting ES Co-ordinator to cover maternity but with all ES responsibility and part of SMT)
Secondary 6	Interview with ES Co-ordinator
Secondary 7	Interviews with Head Teacher; Assistant Head (part-time ES Co-ordinator); ES Cluster Co-ordinator; PSO for the ES Cluster; School Counsellor
Secondary 8	Interviews with Head (strategic lead for ES cluster); ES Co-ordinator (Assistant Head); PSP

Appendix B - Topic guides

Topics for heads and extended services co-ordinators

- What extended services does the school provide, or offer access to?
 - Which of these are provided on site and off site?
 - Which services are open to all, and which are available on a targeted basis?
- What are the characteristics (in terms of ethnicity, poverty, forms of disadvantage) of the populations of pupils, families and local residents served by the school?
- How, if at all, are the services offered in and around the school shaped to take account of the characteristics of the populations it serves?
- What strategies (if any) does the school have in respect of disadvantaged groups for:
 - consultation
 - targeting provision
 - encouraging take-up?
- If the school has strategies for consultation, targeting provision and/or encouraging take-up, what is the rationale for these:
 - Why are particular groups or individuals targeted?
 - How are the targeted groups defined?
 - How are members of these groups identified?
 - Are the strategies peculiar to the school, or shared across a cluster or across partners in the provision?
- If the school does not have any strategies for consultation, targeting provision and/or encouraging take-up, what is the reason for this?
 - Is this a conscious choice or has the development of strategies not been a priority?
 - Are there any factors that prevent the school developing strategies?
- How has the school come to develop its strategies?
 - What has supported this development (e.g. LA guidance, work with experienced partners, aspects of national policy)?
 - What problems has the school encountered in developing strategies, and what hindrances have there been?
- What is the take-up of services by disadvantaged individuals and groups?

- How effective are any targeting strategies in maximising take-up?
- What evidence is there to support this view?
- Which individuals and groups might benefit from services but do not take them up?
- How does this situation arise, and what can the school do about it?
- Would the school like to do more in terms of strategies, and, if so, what would it need to make this possible?

Topics for service users (pupils, families and residents)

- What services do users currently access?
 - How do they find out about these services?
 - What makes them decide to use these services?
 - How satisfied are they with the services?
- What services do they not use?
 - How much do they know about these services?
 - What makes them decide not to use them?
- What factors influence users in deciding whether to access a service:
 - Cost (direct and associated)?
 - Accessibility (time, place, physical access)?
 - User-friendliness (e.g. staff attitudes, perceived level of demand, nature of participating group)?
 - Quality and appropriateness?
 - Views of friends and family?
- How does the school let users know about the services that are available (e.g. newsletters, web sites, personal contact)?
 - How happy are they with the amount and type of information that is provided?
 - Other than providing information, does the school do anything to encourage potential users to take-up these services?
- Are the services you use open to all, or restricted to particular groups?
 - If they are restricted services, how do they become involved?

- Do they know why they were asked to become involved - and how do they feel about this?
- Are they aware of other people who might benefit from these services but who do not use them - and why this might be?
- Does the school provide the kind of services that users would like and in the way they would like?
 - Are they the right services, and what else might be useful?
 - Are the services easy to access (e.g., right place, right time)?
 - Are the services provided in a user-friendly way?
 - What else would they like to have provided?
 - Do they use any services elsewhere (e.g. community centre, private providers, FE college) that are better than those provided by the school, or that the school could learn from?
 - Does the school provide anything that would be better provided elsewhere?
- Does the school consult users about the services they would like?
 - How does this consultation happen?
 - Do they respond - if not, why not?
 - Are they aware of whether other people respond - and why / why not?
 - How satisfied are they that you are properly consulted?
 - What form of consultation would they like to receive?

Appendix C - School vignettes

Primary 2

Primary 3

Primary 5

Primary 7

Secondary 6

Secondary 8

Primary 2

Background and contextual information

Primary 2 is a school with approximately 360 children on its roll situated in a deprived urban area. Three quarters of families are classed as 'hard pressed'⁴. The pupil population is predominantly White British. Approximately 30% of children receive FSM. In 2008, 5% of pupils had statements of SEN or were supported at School Action Plus. 67% of eligible pupils were achieving Level 4 or above at KS2 in English, 57% in Maths, and 74% in Science. The Contextual Value Added (CVA) score for KS1-2 was 98.5.

Managing extended services

The school is part of an ES cluster of seven primaries and a secondary school, led by a cluster co-ordinator. ES provision in the school is led by the Business Manager.

Core offer

Varied menu of activities - there is a wide variety of after school activities including sports, dance, music, film club, magic club, IT club, homework club and swimming run by teachers or external providers. A variety of activities are on offer during school holidays, with flexible registration meaning children can attend for half days or full days. In addition regular trips take place to local attractions, involving children, parents and teachers. Some residential trips are also provided, aimed at those children who would not normally get a family holiday.

Childcare - there is a daily breakfast club, and an after school club running until 4.20pm, at which point children are collected by youth workers and taken to a local youth club, which runs until 6pm. A Sure Start nursery also operates on the school site.

Parent support and family learning - The school commissions courses targeted towards female lone parents or disabled parents, and offering life and employment skills. The school works closely with the local children's centre to provide Triple P parenting courses, and provides in-house courses on helping to prepare children for school and encouraging children to read. Regular coffee mornings for young parents are run by the school nurse during which parents can seek help and advice.

Wider community access to facilities and community links - the school runs a computer course for grandparents and grandchildren, and there are current plans to develop community use of the school field. Children are involved in litter picking out in the local area.

Swift and easy access to specialist services - the school works with other local agencies to provide support for children who need it. Children can be referred by school staff to a variety of services including a local young carers project, and a Barnardo's specialist club for children with little confidence. Children requiring emotional support are supported directly by a trained TA, who can refer on to specialist services if necessary.

⁴ Using the Classification of Residential Neighbourhoods Index (ACORN).

Reaching disadvantaged groups and individuals

A variety of methods are used to target children and parents. Universal information about what is on offer is cascaded through letters to all, newsletters and notice boards. In addition, more specialised targeting takes place. An electronic 'welfare tracker' used within school by all teachers provides a weekly picture of a child's progress and any concerns that may be flagged up. By monitoring the data on each pupil, school staff can make any referrals or mention support options directly to parents and children at an early stage. Children are also targeted where attendance falls to below 92%, and if their BMI measurement indicates obesity. The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) has been adopted locally, and two members of staff have been trained in its use so that assessment and referral can start to happen through this route. Concerns are also flagged up to school staff by the nursery. Children who are on FSM or who are looked after can receive discounted or free rates for activities and parents / carers are made aware of this. However, the school takes care not to stigmatise parents and deal with all requests discreetly.

Consultation with parents primarily consists of a survey and a suggestion box at the entrance to the school. Parents are asked about what provision is needed, and then also asked for feedback after ES activities to inform future planning. Evidence suggests that parents feel that the school listens to them and responds to their suggestions, and that they appreciate the amount of choice, the ease of access and the flexibility in provision. Children are also consulted regularly, by means of surveys, and can also deposit suggestions in the box. The school parliament acts as a further means of consulting with children, and students are encouraged to generate and record ideas for new activities.

Barriers and challenges

The organisation and management of extended activities is seen by the school as time consuming, and extra staff time has had to be provided and paid for. The school has decided that the breakfast club will operate free of charge simply because of the administrative burden that charging would bring. However, this, in turn, threatens the sustainability of ES provision. The school is concerned about how it will sustain its provision and, particularly, its subsidised provision, in the future.

Primary 3

Background and contextual information

Primary 3 is a larger than average community primary school located in a large city with almost 350 pupils on roll. The school is situated approximately three miles from the city centre and serves an area with high levels of social and economic disadvantage with the head suggesting the school is in the 2% most deprived areas in the country. The area has recently seen an influx of families from minority ethnic backgrounds and this has altered the intake of the school drastically in the past three-five years with numbers of BME pupils still rising. A significant number of pupils have EAL and FSM is over 50%.

In 2008 approximately 5% of pupils had statements of SEN or were supported at School Action Plus. 76% of eligible pupils were achieving Level 4 or above at KS2 in English, 67% in Maths and 84% for Science. The CVA score for KS 1-2 was 100.2 for this period.

Managing extended services

Overall responsibility for ES in the school lies with the head teacher. The school employ a family support worker three days per week who has been in this role for three years (though has been at the school for 11 years) and was initially funded as the school was a Behaviour Improvement Programme school. In addition, a social work student is based in the school and works closely with the family support worker.

The school has a good relationship with the local authority ES team and works in a cluster with three other schools. Work in this cluster involves sharing good practice within the group drawing on different areas of specialism. The cluster also have access to a parent support adviser from the local authority

Core offer

Varied Menu of activities - the school has extended its provision beyond the school day with pupils having access to a range of after school clubs and activities which take place over three afternoons a week. Activities include drama, computers, street dance, arts & crafts and sports such as football. The school is part of the Sporting Schools Programme and visiting sports coaches provide opportunities for pupils to be involved in competitions. In addition, the school offers other activities such as circus skills workshops, 'sing-around' and an Irish music workshop day. Residential are offered in outdoor activity centres and there are frequent trips to galleries, museums and other cultural facilities. The school provides a breakfast club each day free of charge to all children with nominal charging for food items (e.g. 20p for toast) which they suggest is very 'popular' amongst the pupils. The school also provides homework clubs for Year 6.

Childcare - the school does not provide its own childcare facilities but offers access locally and provides a walking bus service. Parents / carers are also signposted to local Children's Centres and the family support worker also has a list of local childminders which she makes accessible to parents / carers with a view to giving parents the information to enable them to be independent.

Parental support including family learning - parents / carers are offered individualised and often targeted support via the family support worker operating in an outreach role, particularly for vulnerable pupils and their families / carers. A six week intervention programme is then

offered based around needs. Parents are also offered drop-in sessions to discuss issues and they are regularly informed that they can call in any time to discuss any issues with the family support worker. Every new parent is offered a home visit prior to their child starting the school. Parenting courses have been run at the school, and family learning sessions have taken place in English, Maths and 'creative partnerships. In addition, a course based around parent / carer self-esteem and confidence is about to commence. Parents are encouraged to become more involved in the school and volunteer and a few parents have obtained employment in the school through this route.

Wider community access to facilities and community links - the school offer a range of courses, mainly for parents, and these have included rolling courses for learners of English, adult education courses including a residential course for parents, a Bodyshop (the retail outlet) session, learning French, and computer classes. The school has also previously invited other agencies such as the job centre to help parents get back to work. In terms of wider community access, the school building and facilities currently present structural barriers and limit the potential for open access. However, the school is looking for possible sources of funding to build a new building on its playing field to house community activities and childcare facilities.

Swift and easy access to specialists services - the family support worker acts as the frontline contact with other agencies/services, though where child is classed as needing social work/social services intervention, the head is responsible. Much of the FSW's role in parental support is about facilitating access to specialist services. The school has access to a variety of services e.g. specialist health services, speech and language therapy, CAMHS, family support services and intensive behaviour support.

Reaching disadvantaged groups and individuals

Primary 3's main area of expertise is in providing family support work to individual families, identified through observations of the children at school by the whole school staff (including attendance, punctuality, in-class behaviour / work). Children and families are generally identified through their behaviour at school, the known involvement of social workers, and/or staff's becoming aware of any issues or traumas being experienced by families (such as illness or bereavement). Parents can also approach the school for support. Following an assessment of needs (led by the family support worker and head, in some cases with help from other relevant agencies), a programme of support may be developed by the school, or children and families may be referred to other appropriate services. Much of the support offered in the school is via six-week, preventative programmes tailored to needs of individual children and/or families. Parents / carers are directed towards the in-house parenting, self-esteem building, or adult learning courses as appropriate. The provision of courses and individualised support are tailored around the needs of families - for instance, many families receive support with housing issues in the form of help to fill in forms, and liaison with the relevant local authority department.

The main strategy for encouraging take-up of services is to build strong and positive relationships with parents and carers, including 'meet and greets' most mornings and regular open invitations to parents to come in and chat. When individual parents / families are identified as likely to benefit from targeted provision, the family support worker approaches parents in the playground to discuss issues and provision on offer.

Despite all of this, though the school had good attendance at most activities, there is still a concern that those attending appear to be the same, relatively small group of parents / carers.

Barriers and challenges

Barriers to further targeting and increasing uptake amongst groups that would benefit from the services included getting the crèche up and running (to enable adults to attend provision when have younger children), staff capacity and limited time. In addition, the existing school building was seen as a hindrance to increasing take-up amongst disadvantaged groups due to its 'intimidating' exterior and inability for zoning off classrooms to have open-access building. A further barrier (or at least, dilemma) experienced by the school was the loss of trust that happened when child protection issues were raised in respect of families being supported by the school, and other agencies therefore had to be involved.

Primary 5

Background and contextual information

Primary 5 is a community school with approximately 200 children on roll, situated in a town within a Metropolitan Borough. The town is socially mixed but the area where the school is located is classified as one of the more deprived areas in the borough. The local population is generally stable and the pupil population is mainly White British with a small but increasing number of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Approximately 30% of children are entitled to FSM. The school has recently undergone some refurbishments and there is a children's centre on site. The school has an increasingly good reputation and is viewed positively by the local community. Pupil behaviour is generally regarded as good with pupil attendance above average.

In 2008, approximately 12% of pupils had statements of SEN or were supported at School Action Plus. 75% of eligible pupils were achieving Level 4 or above at KS2 in both English and Maths with this figure being 96% for Science. The CVA score for KS1-2 was 101.5.

Managing extended services

ES provision in the school is managed jointly between the head and deputy head, though the ES agenda is integrated into all aspects of the school. The school has a part time family worker supplied by the local authority, with other teaching and support members also contributing to extended services as appropriate.

The school is part of an ES cluster with regular meetings. However the school is relatively autonomous, choosing to offer the full range of services itself or through the use of signposting. The cluster operates mainly as a knowledge sharing network.

Core Offer

Varied menu of activities - a range of activities is run by the school including football, cricket, hockey, tennis, judo, gymnastics, dance including cheerleading, 'Bollywood' and rock climbing, with outings for sailing and kayaking. Also on offer are art, computer and drama clubs, choir and brass instrument lessons. A breakfast club is run during the national curriculum assessment test period for extra support. Children are also signposted to activities offered locally and the school usually runs play schemes during holidays. In terms of study support, homework club and reading clubs run with the school also being linked with some local high schools to run Science clubs and Maths enrichments. Saturday morning club also run in the lead up to national curriculum assessments to help prepare and support pupils.

Childcare - the school signposts to the children's centre for the private nursery on offer there and for the activities run there. The school used to run a before or after school club but it was making a heavy losses so it now signposts to local organisations who can collect the children.

Parent support and family learning - a member of support staff offers parents an accessible point of contact. The family worker also works with families identified as needing additional support, often on the grounds of their children's persistent absence or lateness. The school has run a dads' club. Parents can access courses such as, Dinosaur club, 'stay and play', and parenting classes through the onsite children's centre. Family learning sessions target both specific academic needs identified in school and more arts / craft based interests. The school has sponsored a number of parents to undertake basic teaching assistant training.

Wider community access to facilities and community links - a sexual health clinic is located in the school for the local area, targeted specifically at teenagers because of high teenage pregnancy incidence in the area. The school has run a project with the local authority on housing for the local community and pupils are involved with local sheltered accommodation.

Swift and easy access to specialist services - the school uses CAF and the deputy head is the lead person for this. Signposting to other agencies usually involves the family worker. A social worker is soon to be appointed and the school refer to CAMHS as need arises. There are also police community support officers based in the school who work with the children and can also be accessed by parents and the wider community. As a legacy of the behaviour Improvement Programme, the school has a 'think room' available for therapy and an inclusion unit which all children can access.

Reaching disadvantaged groups and individuals

The school believe that most of their students and their families can be seen as disadvantaged in some way, and a wide range of activities and services is available to all. However, the school also ensures that some services and provision is targeted to those most in need. Children are identified as requiring additional support through a range of factors including attendance, lateness and/or results, and both persistent 'underperformance' and marked changes are taken into account. Teachers are encouraged to observe the general physical and mental appearance and wellbeing of children, bringing any concerns to the attention of the deputy head. The child protection registers are checked regularly to ensure children those children who are 'at risk' socially but not presenting educational issues do not slip through their net. Each month the deputy tracks assessment results from classes and then discussions are had at school level about the children's progress and barriers to learning.

The school has developed a specialism in dealing with behaviour. Some children are targeted because of their troublesome behaviour, but attention is also paid to overly 'passive' children. Self-esteem is seen as a key issue with both children and their families. The school use the Southampton Screening system to identify those seen as having low self esteem and requiring additional support. Responses may include giving children additional responsibilities to build self esteem, running friendship and peer support groups and ensuring supportive relationships are built between support staff and pupils.

Having identified pupils in this way, parents may then be identified as requiring additional support too. Contact with the family worker is targeted, but families may seek support on issues they have and where appropriate, this may lead to a referral to services either inside or outside of school, including family learning activities. Similarly, efforts are made to target parents to participate in appropriate adult learning activities, usually by means of a personal approach from support staff.

Barriers and challenges

The schools feels that the paperwork involved in referrals is a barrier to offering more support to families, though there was a hope that CAF would simplify this process in time. Generally, the lack of time to engage with sometimes sceptical parents is seen as a problem.

Primary 7

Background and contextual information

Primary 7 is a first school serving approximately 170 3-9 year old children and classed as outstanding by Ofsted. The school has a very diverse catchment serving a variety of new housing and experiencing low crime rates, and a good environment. However, part of the catchment covers an area in the bottom quartile of deprivation and a third of the children at the school come from this area. 8% of children receive FSM, and most pupils are of white British heritage, and there are low levels of SEN. Pupils enter the school with broadly average standards and make excellent progress.

Managing extended services

The head manages ES provision within the school supported by the cluster co-ordinator and a parent support partner (PSP). The ES partnership of 17 schools is managed by the Head of the special school co-located on the school site.

Core offer

Varied menu of activities - a broad range of activities take place during lunchtimes and after school, including choir, drama, sports clubs, dance, film club, art and first aid. In addition, a breakfast club focused on sports runs once a week and music lessons are available for a charge. Holiday activities are provided by a private organisation and include swimming, arts and craft and cooking. Residential holidays are also available. The children at the school also have use of facilities and activities at other schools in the partnership including subsidised swimming, fishing and magician's club.

Childcare - there is an on-site nursery and Children's Centre, and a private organisation runs a childcare facility at the Children's Centre for 48 weeks of the year, 8-6pm weekdays. Holiday provision is also available at the school.

Parent support and family learning - a parent support partner is employed across the partnership, who can work with vulnerable families on a one-to-one basis, and who focuses particularly on supporting children with SEN. Heads refer to the PSP and the PSP can refer onwards to other services. The school offers parenting courses, and activities targeted towards fathers and their children, as well as family day trips, and fun family days.

Wider community access to facilities and community links - students are involved in various community projects and an intergenerational project involving community members and students working together takes place on site. The special school on site runs a film club for community members and offers swimming facilities for local people.

Swift and easy access to specialist services - the school has a good range of links with outside professionals and will signpost families to these where necessary. The school also refers children to the local integrated children's team, consisting of health workers, education welfare officers, social workers, and nursery nurses. The PSP also has a key role to play in making referrals.

Reaching disadvantaged groups and individuals

Most provision is universal and open to all, although certain key groups (such as fathers) are targeted when particular activities are advertised. In school, if any member of staff has a concern about a child, they approach the head who can then make a referral to the PSP who is responsible for assessing the child and either working with them, or making onward referrals to specialist services. The head can also refer to a locally-based multi-agency team, or directly to specialist services, e.g. social services. The school nurse is aware of the health needs of students and can target specific children and families for health-related programmes.

Leaflets are sent out with all prospectuses detailing the provision on offer, and setting out a variety of ways in which parents can access support. These leaflets are widely distributed in the local area, in GP surgeries, Sure Start centres, and to a variety of local professionals. Parents are encouraged by the PSP to make their own referrals. Much of the provision which was traditionally targeted at particular groups has been made universal, in part because spare capacity is available, but also because other parents hear about the service and want to benefit. The school has also started to use the CAF as a referral mechanism to ensure services are tailored to need.

Parents are consulted via questionnaires and informal coffee mornings, in addition to informal consultation by the PSP. Consultation does not take place at parents' evenings as there is a feeling that parents simply want to talk to teachers about their child's progress, and that the vulnerable parents that the school want to reach often do not attend parents evenings anyway. A termly newsletter invites parents to call the head to offer ideas for development, and students are consulted via the school council and by the use of feedback forms.

The PSP uses subsidised trips and coffee mornings to get to know parents and uses a personal approach to encourage take-up of services, and this is felt to be effective in breaking down barriers.

Barriers and challenges

The school has faced challenges in the implementation of the ES core offer, particularly as the cluster is spread very wide geographically and each school has different needs. There have been difficulties in the past in engaging partner agencies, but having the multi-agency group has facilitated integrated working.

An issue for the school, and for the partnership has been that of capacity. The PSP plays a pivotal role in the provision of ES services, but works very long hours and is often responding to immediate need rather than working in a more preventative way, which is what she would like. There are also concerns about sustainability, and how the current level of service can be maintained if funding ceases to be available in future.

Secondary 6

Background and contextual information

Secondary 6 is an 11-16 foundation school with approximately 650 students on roll. The school is situated in a large town which forms part of a metropolitan authority. The town is socially mixed but the school serves a community that experiences high levels of social and economic disadvantage. The student population is approximately two thirds BME with those of Pakistani background constituting the largest group. The school estimates that over half of their children have English as an additional language and FSM numbers are currently at just over 50%.

In 2008, approximately 13% of pupils had statements of SEN or were supported at School Action Plus and well under a fifth of students achieved five A*-C grades or above at GCSEs including English and maths. The CVA score for KS 2-4 was 1028.8 for this period.

Managing extended services

Most ES activity in the school is organised through an assistant head. Much of the school's ES agenda is delivered through the building good relationships with outside agencies and occasionally the school applies to charities and available funds. The school have also employed a family support worker full time to target harder to reach groups.

The school has good contacts with the local authority ES team and works in a small ES cluster organised geographically. This cluster consists of Secondary 6 and three primary schools alongside the onsite children's centre. The cluster is very active and Secondary 6 takes an active role in offering activities and services the primaries are unable to provide.

Core offer

Varied Menu of Activities - a range of activities is on offer including: chat groups, EAL, singing, cookery, computer and newsround clubs / groups, and English as an additional language. Sporting clubs include football, rugby and badminton. Community courses are offered in areas such as DIY, household electrics, woodwork, and social networking. The school runs many study support clubs after school until 6/7pm.

Childcare - the school, signposts to cluster primaries for formal childcare, but offers a safe environment to all students via range of activities on offer.

Parental support including family learning - the school run parenting courses and the family support worker offers support and guidance to individual families. There are some family learning activities.

Wider community access to facilities and community links - the school offers adult courses in English as an additional language, Maths GCSE classes for unemployed adults, ICT classes, and intergenerational ICT (16-25 year olds teaching older people basic social). The school sports hall and athletics track is open for community use until 10pm weekdays and at weekends. Community courses are open to all local children and the Duke of Edinburgh scheme runs from the school. One evening per week the sports facilities are opened to primary schools. The school also offers adult education in community facilities to encourage take-up from those not comfortable using school facilities.

Quick and easy access to specialist and targeted services - the school has own attendance officer and health practitioner and shares them with the cluster. The school has close relationships with the youth service and operates targeted youth support in the school with outside agencies (including other youth organisations and the police).

Reaching disadvantaged groups and individuals

At Secondary 6, the main aim of the ES provision is to raise the aspirations of students, families and community members. Going out into the community to offer services (rather than just offering these on school premises) is one strategy for engaging harder to reach groups, alongside 'word of mouth' about the provision on offer. The family support worker, as part of a wider strategy for building relationships with trusted support staff is also key to engaging harder to reach groups.

Targeted youth support is central to the school to help ensure disadvantaged young people's needs were being met. Regular meetings are held identify and target particular 'vulnerable' students and agree on appropriate courses of action.

The school also runs a an early intervention pregnancy group where they identify children as young as Year 7 who may potentially become pregnant as a teenager. There is also an early intervention programme for those seen as at risk of becoming NEET (not in education, employment, or training).

In terms of identifying students to target, school data are used, in an attempt to 'quantify' the ECM outcomes. A number of indicators are used including: school attendance, grades, behaviour, progress within subject areas, and whether individuals are actively engaged in extended school activity after school. Data relating to these indicators are held in database that is updated every six weeks. According to the ES lead, this system is useful both for identifying disadvantaged pupils and for assessing whether interventions had worked and deciding when to withdraw provision.

The school carries out web-based surveys of parents and pupils on a regular basis, though these are mainly aimed at identifying the kinds of activities users would like to see offered.

Barriers and challenges

The school is confident about its provision and sees no major barriers to its work with disadvantaged groups. It does, however, have some concerns about the potential for activities and services to be overwhelmed by high levels of demand and has to bear this in mind when deciding what to offer.

Secondary 8

Background and contextual information

Secondary 8 is a secondary school with approximately 925 children on roll. The school is situated in a small town and serves a predominantly rural area. Although there are pockets of deprivation in the area, the area generally is not seen as disadvantaged or deprived. Less than 3% of pupils have an ethnic minority background. 5% of children receive FSM. In 2008, 7.5% of pupils had statements of SEN or were supported at School Action Plus. 54% of young people achieved 5 or more A*-C GCSEs, including English and Maths, in 2007, and the CVA score was 1008.8.

Managing extended services

The assistant head manages ES provision with the support of an ES co-ordinator. He line manages the parent support partner. The Head of the school is the strategic lead for ES for a cluster of 11 schools.

Core offer

Varied menu of activities - after school and lunchtime clubs are provided by local agencies on the school site and mainly focus on sports and dance. Other activities, including a youth club are provided off-site at a community centre near to, and managed by, the school.

Childcare - there is a daily breakfast club.

Parent support and family learning - A parent support partner is employed across the cluster, but her main focus is on parents at the first and middle schools. Nevertheless, parents of older children can receive general support, and can access parenting classes and family focused activities such as trips. She also runs courses such as food hygiene and first aid, and can give parents information about local services.

Wider community access to facilities and community links - there is a programme of adult education classes at the school, and at the community centre. Local people and groups can access sports facilities at the school.

Swift and easy access to specialist services - the ES cluster is integrated with a multi-agency team that accepts referrals from the schools and can facilitate access to specialist services. The school also works closely with the police, and has good relationships with voluntary sector services through the community centre. Young people have a variety of places within school to seek support including a student support service, a school nurse, and Connexions, all of whom can facilitate referrals.

Reaching disadvantaged groups and individuals

The school, along with its cluster, focuses on early intervention. A multi-agency team made up of representatives from services such as Connexions, education welfare, the inclusion team, behaviour support, the youth service, educational psychology, school health, crime prevention, children's centres, and social care, meet weekly to discuss individual children. If a specialist referral is needed, the head will do this on behalf of the team. The heads of the cluster schools meet six times a year to discuss ES provision, and identify individual pupils

who are causing concern. In addition, students needing additional support can be identified through the student support unit and students are able to seek support themselves from a range of professionals working in and around this unit.

The parent support partner is considered to be a key way of reaching vulnerable families and supporting parents. Her services are advertised widely and external agencies can refer families to her if their children attend the cluster schools.

Families are encouraged to offer suggestions for ES activities through invitations in leaflets and newsletters. Feedback is also collected by the parent support partner on any activity that takes place to aid planning for the future. In addition, annual student and parental surveys take place. There is a biennial event bringing young people and policymakers together with a focus on student voice.

Many of the after school activities provided are free, which enables young people to access them where their parents cannot or will not pay.

Barriers and challenges

The school has found that there is the potential for inter-professional conflict as the parent support partner role expands whilst other services are contracting. Partnership working can be difficult under these circumstances. The limited funding available for ES means that there is a need for much more creative thinking about how to use it. This is often not easy to do. At a school such as this, additional funding is hard to obtain, as the demographics of the catchment reflect a relatively affluent majority. The uncertainty of how long funding will be available for, and short term contracts for staff introduce an instability in provision and concerns around sustainability.

A particular issue due to the rurality of the school catchment is that transport can be problematic, especially in winter when the weather is very bad. This limits the ability of some children to participate in ES activity.

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