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Collaborative Leadership in Extended Schools

Leading in a multi-agency

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Executive Summary

This report provides advice and guidance to leaders in schools on addressing the issues associated with multi-agency working. It draws upon the experiences and perspectives of a number of individuals in schools and their partner organisations with an established track record in collaboration, and also includes the main findings from a review of literature in this field.

Much of the current emphasis on multi-agency working comes from the move towards a greater focus on the needs of the whole child, outlined within documents such as *Every Child Matters* (DfES, 2003). It is also part of a broader ongoing emphasis on “joined-up thinking” in the delivery of support, which has been a hallmark of the current government’s approach. Many schools have a long-established record of collaboration, often based around the need to support vulnerable children or the broader community they serve. In any case, multi-agency working is generally driven by a desire to achieve *collaborative advantage*, ie an end result which is greater than the sum of the individual efforts.

Published literature on collaborative working within schools identifies a number of advantages associated with this approach. These involve improved outcomes for children and families, benefits for staff and services, and increased efficiency in the delivery of services. Potential disadvantages centre on the increase in human resources required to support collaboration in the short term, difficulties in establishing common areas of interest, and the danger of collaborative inertia, ie the collaboration resulting in a net reduction in the collective output of the partners involved.

This study found many parallels between the demands on leaders that stemmed from collaborative working and those associated with the broader leadership of change. Kotter’s change model provides a particularly helpful mechanism for considering these demands, by identifying three broad stages which leaders needed to address as part of the change process. These are:

- *creating a climate for change*
- *engaging and enabling the whole organisation*
- *sustaining change*

Creating a climate for change includes the processes through which the sense of urgency for collaboration is established and relationships with partners brokered. The introduction of the *Every Child Matters* agenda is important in the first of the respects, while identifying “win-win” scenarios where the aims of all partners are addressed has been a particularly successful strategy for the latter.

Engaging and enabling the whole organisation focuses on the ways in which leaders facilitate the development of a culture for collaboration. This includes promoting the culture of trust, encouraging greater flexibility, and challenging preconceived and long-established notions of professional identity, with a view to promoting the notion of a new professionalism that is more sympathetic to multi-agency working.

The final stage considers the processes through which leaders are able to *sustain change*. The different demands associated with multi-agency working mean that building leadership capacity and the effective distribution of leadership within the school are essential strategies for the long-term viability of collaborative working. Demonstrating impact and addressing the issue of funding are further essential steps in ensuring sustainability.

The report identifies a number of specific implications for leaders. Perhaps the most obvious of these relates to the increased complexity that multi-agency working brings to leaders' work. As significant, though, is the greater emphasis it places on dealing with the political dimension associated with any collaboration. Possessing and articulating a clear moral purpose is an important factor in successfully addressing this challenge.

Developing the ability to effectively diagnose and respond to the demands of the school at different stages of the change process is also extremely important. Elsewhere, promoting a culture of entrepreneurship is essential in realising both the anticipated and unforeseen advantages associated with collaboration.

Finally, promoting an open culture which embraces the ethos of partner organisations rather than simply focusing on the priorities of the school is critical to creating the environment necessary for partnership working to flourish.

This report ends by outlining a range of approaches which leaders may wish to adopt to support increased collaboration within the school.

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Introduction and Context

Introduction

The move towards developing joined-up solutions to the challenges faced by children in England is a hallmark of the current government policy. At the same time, many within schools view this move as a validation of work they have undertaken for some time, as they have sought to collaborate with colleagues on the ground to support the families and communities they serve. Furthermore, while recognising the enormous potential of such joined-up approaches to making a difference to people's lives, they are also only too aware of the range of challenges and obstacles that this new way of working presents.

Aims and background of the report

This report is intended to provide advice and guidance to leaders in schools on how to address the issues associated with multi-agency working. In doing so, particular attention is given to the implications of multi-agency working to individuals in extended schools, who, almost by definition, are particularly likely to face many of the challenges associated with this collaborative working.

This paper draws upon the experiences and perspectives of a number of individuals in schools and their partner organisations with an established track record of working in this way. Many of these were in schools which were amongst the first to provide extended services.

This report also includes the main findings from a review of the literature on multi-agency working. The school-based research and the review of literature were completed between November 2004 and January 2006. Further details of the method used is included on page 18 of this report.

Structure of the report

This report begins by providing an overview of the main drivers behind the adoption of more collaborative approaches to supporting children and their families, and the advantages and disadvantages associated with them.

It then turns its attention to a more detailed consideration of the challenges faced by school leaders in multi-agency working and the approaches they adopt to addressing these. This exploration is based upon the principle that multi-agency collaborations represent a fundamental change in working for many in schools, and as such, school leaders perform a critical role as change managers. While many models for change management exist, this section is structured in line with Kotter's model of change management (Kotter, 1995), which is widely used within public service reform generally. This model is described in more depth in the overview section of this report.

The third part of this report considers the implications for leadership from the themes which have emerged from this study, while the fourth section provides a number of recommendations which it is believed may contribute to improvements in multi-agency working more generally. The paper then offers a number of practical approaches for applying the main findings from this work to individuals' own context.

1. Drivers of multi-agency working

Promoting the interests of children and related legal imperatives

As noted above, many schools have well-established collaborations which date back many years. Staff in special schools are particularly likely to have experience of working collaboratively with colleagues from other services. This has often been based around the assessment of the needs of children with disabilities, promoted in the Sheldon Report of 1968 (Hall, 1997:88) and subsequently reinforced in the Court Report of 1976 (Yerbury, 1997:77). The requirement for a needs assessment for children with disabilities became legally binding as part of the 1981 Education Act (Cigno and Gore, 1999:325-6), while the 1989 Children's Act introduced a broader requirements for agencies to collaborate in the interests of all vulnerable children (Department of Health, 1999:viii).

Elsewhere, many community schools have a strong track record of collaborative working. This has generally involved both the community, voluntary organisations and other agencies, and has focused on raising *social capital* (see Text box 1 on pg 21) and increasing access to services and resources.

Promoting joined-up thinking and *Every Child Matters*

Since its election in 1997, the current government has demonstrated a strong commitment to addressing the issue of social exclusion. At the heart of this is the belief that in addition to its material element, exclusion and disadvantage has political and cultural aspects. Furthermore, all of these aspects are intertwined, therefore meaning that it is impossible to effectively deal with any specific issue in isolation. In the case of schools, factors relating to a child's domestic situation and their health inevitably have an impact of their learning. While schools are therefore able to adopt a range of strategies to address some aspects of a child's under-attainment, a more holistic approach is required if real improvements are to be achieved over the longer term. As Tony Blair argued at the launch of the Social Exclusion Unit in 1997:

“Everyone knows that the problems of social exclusion – of failure at school, joblessness, crime – are woven together when you get down to the level of the individual's daily life, or the life of a housing estate. Yet all too often governments in the past have tried to slice problems up into separate packages...and in many areas dozens of agencies and professionals are working in parallel, often doing good things but sometimes working at cross purposes with far too little co-ordination and co-operation. Joined-up problems demand joined-up solutions.”

Blair, 1997

This belief has underpinned a range of initiatives which have sought to promote a more cohesive and co-ordinated approach to tackling deprivation and social exclusion. Examples of these include the introduction of Education Action Zones, Health Action Zones, Sure Start, New Deal for Communities and targeted Single Regeneration Budget funds (Power, 2001:18). Perhaps most radically, these initiatives, and the drive to joined-up thinking more broadly, have been viewed by some commentators as an attempt to move beyond multi-agency working to a wider collaboration which goes some way to breaking down conventional boundaries between the state and society as a whole (Power, 2001:17). This strategy is important in promoting ownership of such interventions amongst those they are intended to support, which is in turn an important element in their longer-term success.

This focus on joined-up thinking is echoed in *Every Child Matters* (DfES, 2003). This outlines a vision for a system of child care in England that supports the achievement of five outcomes which matter most to children's lives. These are (DfES, 2003:11-12):

- being healthy: enjoying good physical and mental health and living a healthy lifestyle
- staying safe: being protected from harm and neglect
- enjoying and achieving: getting the most out of life and developing the skills for adulthood
- making a positive contribution: being involved with the community and society and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour
- economic well-being: not being prevented by economic disadvantage from achieving their full potential in life

The effective co-ordination of services is fundamental to the achievement of each of these and in turn, ensuring that children at risk of harm or neglect are no longer able to "fall through the cracks between different services" (DfES, 2003:5). *Every Child Matters* is also concerned with a more basis shift to placing children at the heart of service provision, which should be reconfigured around their needs rather than those of their provider organisations. Measures to introduce a lead professional for those most at risk, the development of a common assessment framework for reviewing service provision, and the merging of children's education and social services are all examples of steps which are intended to increase the overall cohesion of children's service delivery (DfES, 2003:8-9).

Collaborative advantage

Clearly the scale of ambition described in *Every Child Matters* is such that its achievement is not within the gift of one group of professionals, but rather requires a range of skills and powers, which have traditionally been dispersed over a number of agencies, are brought together (Tunstall et al., 2005:63). It is therefore envisaged that this co-ordinated approach is able to deliver results that represent more than simply the sum of the individual parts. Indeed, this idea of added value is core to any collaboration and can be termed collaborative advantage, ie

"To gain real advantage from any collaboration, something has to be achieved that could not have been achieved by any one of the agencies acting alone."

Paton and Vangen, 2004:2

This drive to achieve collaborative advantage has been seen as a hallmark of many of the current government's reform programmes. As noted, school-based initiatives such as Education Action Zones, Excellence in Cities, Beacon Schools and Specialist Schools have all contained strong elements of collaborative working within their design. This philosophy has not been confined to education, however. In health, the ethos of partnership working has been adopted in an effort to replace the pseudo-internal market arrangements that the NHS had previously been working under (Alexander and Macdonald, 2005:1). In economic development, the introduction of Regional Development Agencies is based upon the principle of collaborative advantage, with their existence posited on the benefits of adopting a more co-ordinated approach:

The aim (is) to help to ensure that regional opportunities are fully exploited, and that those responsible for economic decision-taking are working effectively together, with common goals and accepted priorities for regional development.

Department of Trade and Industry, 2006

The focus on collaboration has also extended to operations within government itself, with the Office of Government Commerce established to improve efficiency in internal administration and procurement (HM Revenues and Customs, 2005). This trend also extends beyond government and the public sector. In recent years the voluntary sector in particular has increasingly adopted co-ordinated, collaborative approaches (McCurry, 2001). Elsewhere, trends in organisational structures more broadly have been seen to drive the collaborative agenda as organisations promote greater adaptability and responsiveness in order to achieve their greatest competitive advantage (Paton and Vangen, 2004:6).

2. Models of multi-agency working

It is perhaps inevitable that the models of multi-agency working developed are as varied as the challenges they seek to address. Indeed, a key principle within successful approaches is that they should contain sufficient flexibility to address the specific contextual challenges they aim to tackle.

Nevertheless, in a review of multi-agency working, DfES identified three broad models of operation (DfES, 2005b:5-14). These are:

- the multi-agency panel
- the multi-agency team
- the integrated service

The key characteristics of these models, together with the main benefits and challenges associated with them, are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1 Characteristics, benefits and challenges of identified models of multi-agency working

	Key characteristics	Main benefits	Main challenges
The multi-agency panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panel is co-ordinated by a chair. There's usually a good mix of agencies represented. Members remain in own organisation. The panel meets monthly/ quarterly etc to review work. Most meetings are arranged by the panel manager. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No recruitment or HR issues. Practitioners remain fully involved in own agency's work. Opportunities exist for collaborative working. No need for a permanent base . Where working effectively, panels are supported by structures and protocols. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of formal contact can inhibit the development of strong partnerships. Panel members tend to identify more with their host agency than the panel. Panel members may be given insufficient time to carry out their work. Case meetings can be lengthy.
The multi-agency team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated team leader. Good mix of staff from different disciplines. There is a strong team identity. Work is undertaken with a range of groups and at different levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good sense of team identity. Co-operation is core to the approach. Communication is straightforward. Supports joint training. Supports preventative and intervention work in a range of settings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment and HR. Needs time and resources to set up. Not all teams are co-located. Good relationships are vital to success. Time for meetings and contact needs to be protected.
The integrated service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acts as hub for services, usually on one site. Partners share a common location, vision and principles. The management structure supports integrated working. It is usually delivered from a school or early years centre. Service-level agreements are usually present . A dedicated manager will often be present. Services will usually include health, specialist advice and guidance, outreach and adult learning. Collective training strategies will often be present. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The full range of issues can be addressed. Knock-on benefits exist for education standards. Greater co-working and cross-fertilisation of ideas between agencies. Opportunities for joint training. Shared base enhances communication. Members remain linked to their home agency. Members have access to training and development in their host agency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires fresh thinking around the concept of the school/ early years centre. Requires engagement through collaborative leadership. Needs a common sense of purpose. Time and pay issues can need careful handling.

Source: Developed from 'Multi-agency working, introduction and overview' (DfES, 2005b) pp 5–12

Yerbury also identifies three structures which dominate teamworking (Yerbury, 1997:81). The key difference between each of his classifications is the degree to which their management is based upon formal structures:

- Managed – with a team leader and external management group.
- Co-ordinated – with a team manager but considerable responsibility retained by professional members.
- Joint accountability – without a clear leader and ostensibly self-managed.

As such, Yerbury's work can be seen as complementary to the categories outlined above.

3. Advantages and disadvantages of multi-agency working

Benefits

As already noted, multi-agency collaborations are viewed as essential in addressing issues that require a multi-dimension, holistic response. Core to this is the notion of collaborative advantage, through which the collective response of a group of agencies is greater than the sum of their individual contributions (Paton and Vangen, 2004:2).

However, it is worth noting that the evidence base on the impacts of multi-agency working is somewhat patchy, partly because of the methodological problems associated with measuring the effectiveness of such approaches and partly because of the relative newness of many initiatives (DfES, 2005b:13). Some writers have also noted how the impacts of multi-agency working increase during the life of a project (Harker et al., 2004:183), meaning that the true impact and benefits of such work can only be assessed once such programmes have become well established. A further difficulty centres on the scale of the endeavour the collaboration is intended to pursue. For instance, the effectiveness of partnership-based approaches to promoting social capital and general social regeneration are notoriously difficult to assess (Riddell and Tett, 2001:7-8).

Nevertheless, in its overview of multi-agency working in response to the *Every Child Matters* agenda, DfES identified benefits in three broad areas (DfES, 2005b:13). These are:

- improved outcomes for children and families
- benefits for staff and services
- increased fit between the services offered and those required by young people and families

Further details on each of these is provided below.

Improved outcomes for children and families

Central to this is more convenient access to services for customers, including:

- improved co-ordination of services resulting in better relationships
- improved quality of life
- better and quicker access to services
- reduced stress
- better support for parents
- more appropriate addressing of children's needs
- better quality services
- reduced need for specialist services
- increased accessing of services

Other benefits have related to the objectives of specific programmes. For instance, evaluations of On Track have highlighted the programme's success in terms of improved behaviour and enhanced social well-being (Atkinson et al., 2003). Similarly, the evaluation of Sure Start Plus found that collaborative working improved the division of labour, resulted in the sharing of expertise, ideas and good practice; addressing joint targets; sharing resources and improved referrals (Wiggins et al., 2005:23).

“We benefit from having the experience of working with people from other backgrounds. We pick up other perspectives and others’ ways of doing things. We have skill-sharing workshops. All of this enhances the CVs of those involved and enables staff to give real-life examples. We can also share resources for training.”

Extended school co-ordinator,
secondary sector

Benefits for staff and services

These include:

- a higher level of satisfaction
- a sense of liberation as organisations work beyond traditional bureaucratic and cultural constraints
- cross-fertilisation of ideas
- increased flexibility for staff and enhanced career development opportunities
- improvements in staff retention, recruitment and workload
- opportunities for enhanced partnership working with other agencies and the wider community
- reduced duplication
- improved links and communication, resulting in enhanced understanding of partners’ activities

Increased fit between the services offered and those required by young people and families

Core to this is the greater likelihood that individuals will be supported by a single point of contact, thereby developing a deeper and more mutually informed relationship. This is a particular concern for families of children with greater areas of need, who have in the past been expected to deal with a wide range of professionals.

Weaknesses

Many of the identified weaknesses of multi-agency working centre upon the specific changes in working arrangements that are needed to support this change in approach. Yerbury provides a useful summary of these (Yerbury, 1997:85), some of which require considerable resources. These include the need for:

- the establishment of an inter-agency strategic planning forum
- a team leader to co-ordinate activities
- regular operational team meetings to review policy and procedures
- parents to be fully involved in the partnership to promote its success

In addition, Yerbury highlights how advantageous the establishment of joint funding and budgetary arrangements is, but recognises that this is often problematic. Yerbury also notes that collaborative working is greatly enhanced in instances when it is co-located. However, this is not always practical for a range of reasons, many of which may relate to size and other factors. As a result of these, such integrated centres are more likely to be located in larger towns and cities rather than being in smaller, rural areas, resulting in different levels of access to services and concerns over equality of opportunity (Cigno and Gore, 1999:333).

A number of other concerns have also been identified. Firstly, Alexander and Macdonald have reported high levels of staff turnover in less successful health-based partnerships (Alexander and Macdonald, 2005:6). While the direction of any causal link related to this is not clear, it is possible to infer that:

- (a) the likely success of any multi-agency initiative may be increased if staffing remains stable, and
- (b) the additional stress resulting from unsuccessful attempts at multi-agency working may have an adverse affect on staff turnover.

Tett et al. also note that collaborative working places additional demands on staff time (Tett et al., 2001:109).

A further concern relates to the perception that the current emphasis on multi-agency working may even lead to a more dogmatic insistence on the adoption of such approaches in instances when they are not appropriate:

“There is a danger in the current climate that everyone is commanded to work in the multi-agency partnership groups, even when this level of formalisation of routine inter-agency communication is not necessary.”

Alexander and Macdonald, 2005:6

Thirdly, difficulties can be encountered in a range of areas in instances where the geographic unit of decision-making differs between schools and other organisations (Harker et al., 2004:182).

A final concern relates to the degree to which agencies are perceived to be closely linked and operating on a multi-agency basis, but in practice remain relatively disparate. Here the concern is that effective collaboration requires both formal and informal structures of support, and the absence of either can have a negative impact on the overall effectiveness of the initiative (Cigno and Gore, 1999:330).

Success factors

In its toolkit for multi-agency working, DfES identifies a number of factors important in the success of multi-agency working. These build upon the points raised by Yerbury, outlined in the previous section of this paper (DfES, 2005b:18). Other work describing factors important in multi-agency working include those by Craig et al. (Craig et al., 2004), Huxham and Vengen (2000), Atkinson et al. (2002), Tett et al. (2001) and Harker et al. (2004). Table 2 provide a summary of the various factors identified by these writers, based around a number of categories used by the DfES in its publication ‘Multi-agency working introduction and overview’. In doing so, it is recognised that several of these items are appropriate to more than one category, but have been placed in the one which is arguably the best fit.

Table 2 Summary of factors influencing the success of collaborations

Strategic	Operational
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a genuine commitment to joint working at the strategic level (including having shared aims and objectives and firm backing from elected members) • effective strategic leadership • ensuring democracy and equality between groups • the presence of shared goals and common targets • appropriate time frame • effective governance arrangements • existing partnership working • coincidental administrative boundaries • sufficient baseline and monitoring data • processes for regularly monitoring and reviewing these strategic drivers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strong operational leadership • clarity of vision and purpose • clearly-defined roles • effective management of human resource issues (incl. pay, joint training, line management) • actively recognising the existence of skills for multi-agency working and supporting their development • building on existing relationships and developing additional effective working processes • the presence of supporting structures (for instance service-level agreements, management boards etc) • having adequate resources to support the activities being delivered • good communication mechanisms • appropriate referral systems • having appropriate structures for managing risk • systems for information exchange • coherent exit strategies
Community and voluntary sector involvement	Evaluation-related
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mechanisms for consultation and feedback • the removal of external and internal barriers to third sector involvement • gaining and demonstrating legitimacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the completion of an effective evaluation of the programme, using a range of appropriate methods and with effective processes for introducing change which is sufficiently challenging to support future developments

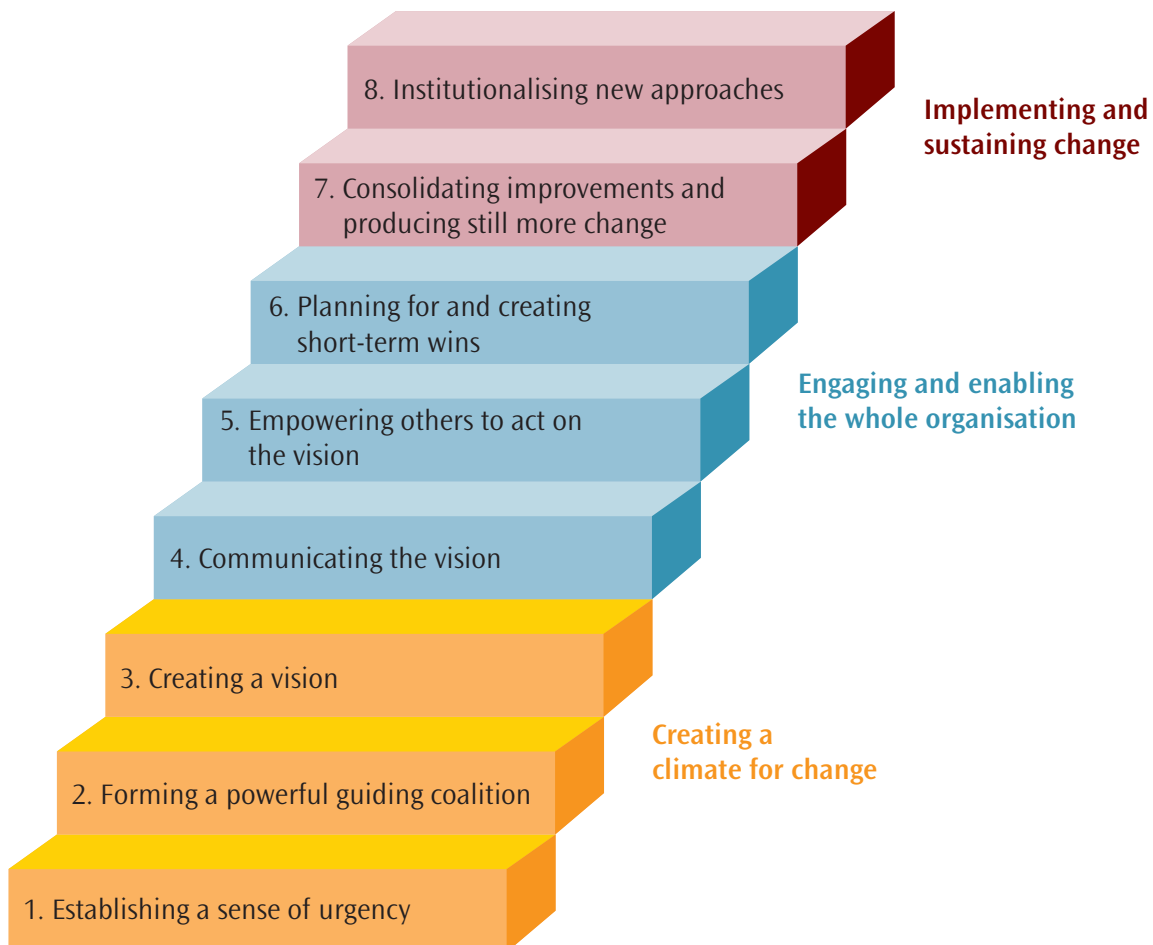
4. Developing a model of leadership in multi-agency environments

As noted in the introduction to this report, the key driver behind the development of most multi-agency collaborations is the desire to achieve collaborative advantage, thereby realising more significant results than would otherwise be achieved. A key focus of multi-agency leadership is therefore upon the process of change management.

A number of different change management models exist. Amongst the most popular of these is work undertaken by Kotter, which has been used widely in relation to public-sector reform and is included within the literature on multi-agency working produced by the DfES (DfES, 2005d:9).

In his work, Kotter identifies eight steps to organisation transformation (Kotter, 1995:61). These are summarised in Figure 1. The first three of these are concerned with creating the climate for change to occur, and include increasing the urgency for change, building the right team, and establishing the vision itself. Steps four to six focus on increasing buy-in to the change process and creating the momentum for change. This includes achieving broad commitment to the vision, the belief that people are empowered to act, and securing short-term wins. The final phase raises the importance of ensuring that change becomes institutionalised while retaining the prospect of further transformational action.

Figure 1 Kotter's change model (Kotter, 1995)



Method

As noted above, this report is based upon the findings from an exploration of multi-agency working in schools that provided a range of extended services. In particular this study sought to explore the ways in which leaders managed the process of change implicit within the move to more collaborative working styles, by reviewing the key facilitators and barriers associated with successfully working in this way. Particular attention was given to the role played by leaders in maximising the potential opportunity for collaborative advantage.

Data to support this work was obtained from two main sources. Firstly, a review of literature on multi-agency working was undertaken. This included a review of relevant academic databases, including the British Education Index and the Education Resources Information Centre. A Google search was also undertaken. In addition, key texts were identified from a review of the main policy documents in this field and through discussions with officials from DfES, NCSL, Continyou and other stakeholder groups. This review was conducted between September 2005 and January 2006.

Interviews were also undertaken with leaders in schools with high levels of collaborative working. This involved the production of six case studies of schools that were seen as demonstrating good practice in this respect. In each school the headteacher was interviewed. In five of the six schools, interviews were also conducted with colleagues from supporting services and other relevant school leaders (eg the extended schools co-ordinator, community engagement worker etc). Potential case study schools were identified through discussions with officials from DfES, NCSL, Continyou and other stakeholder groups, and their most recent Ofsted report was reviewed to confirm evidence of effective collaborative working. Fieldwork to support the production of these case studies was undertaken during the period September 2005 to December 2005.

In addition to data obtained in production of these case studies, the findings from a series of interviews undertaken with leaders of extended schools have also been drawn upon. These were completed between November 2004 and July 2005.

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Structure for the findings

In the next section of this report, the findings of this study are considered in relation to the key stages of change identified by Kotter in his model, described in Figure 1. These are:

1. Creating the climate for change.
2. Engaging and enabling the whole organisation.
3. Implementing and sustaining change.

Section 1: Creating a climate for change

In this first stage of Kotter's change management model, the emphasis is placed on establishing the sense of urgency, forming alliances and developing a vision for change.

(a) Establishing the sense of urgency and developing a vision for change

As noted above, *Every Child Matters* has been an important factor in supporting the move towards greater collaborative working between different agencies. Core to this has been the role it has played in establishing the common vision for supporting the development of children in this country, based upon the principle of supporting the whole child (DfES, 2003).

The existence of a common vision is critical in establishing the sense of joint purpose for the partnership. *Every Child Matters* provides a basis for this by firmly positioning the well-being of children as the starting point for collaboration (Craig, 2004, Department of Health, 1999). Furthermore, it represents a vision which is unquestionably moral in basis – an important fact in gaining even greater commitment to the overall mission (Huxham and Vangen, 2000, Charlesworth et al., 2003).

Another common theme in the vision of those involved in this study related to the wider efforts needed to support their local communities more generally. For some of those interviewed this was the notion of community or social capital, or the networks and common set of values and aspirations that bind local people together (Text box 1). Related themes concerned the need to raise the aspirations of local people for themselves and their children, promoting a greater commitment to lifelong learning, and promoting greater involvement in the school per se. The principle underpinning all of this, though, was that it was impossible to divorce the needs of the child from those of the community they live in:

“ECM is not just about every child, but also about every child within their community. It can forge some of the nice things that adults can share and that every child will appreciate.”

Headteacher

Text box 1 Background to social capital

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

The notion of social capital was refined and developed subsequently by Bourdieu (1983) and Coleman (1988). However, it was the work of Putnam from the mid-1990s onwards that really raised interest in this idea. Putnam defines social capital thus:

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

Putnam, 2000:19

Recently, social capital has been used as an organising principle by the World Bank, which sees it as follows:

“Social capital refers to the norms and networks that enable collective action. It encompasses institutions, relationships and customs that shape the quality and quantity of a society’s social interactions.”

World Bank, 2005

For writers such as Putnam, there is an absolute link between levels of social capital and success in the education system

However while *Every Child Matters* is helpful in providing the general overarching view, considerable work still needs to be undertaken to develop a more specific and grounded version of this overall aspiration, based upon what is needed at the local level. This is critical in increasing the overall sense of ownership individuals have for the vision and in developing a clearer understanding of how this broader aspiration translates into specific measures and developments at ground level. It also provides a basis for incorporating more local priorities into the mission.

In practice, a number of different tactics can be adopted to achieving a shared vision for the collaboration. One of the most important considerations, though, centres on the degree to which schools attempt to co-construct the vision with their partners, or opt instead to secure buy-in to ‘their’ vision from those they seek to collaborate with. In reality this is seldom a question of either/ or but rather a more iterative process which, to work effectively, requires an ongoing mutual informing of different perspectives. Schools and collaborations will seldom begin with a blank piece of paper upon which partners seek to describe their collective priorities and aspirations. However, neither will the vision leave the head fully-formed and as a fixed entity that partners are only able to put their signatures to. Instead, the reality is often that the headteacher will act as the initial visionary for the extended activity and a driver for its creation, seeking to engage others within and without the school in this collective endeavour.

One common and popular approach which supports early efforts to develop the local vision involves the facilitation of a “visioning day” for members of the school and partner agencies (Tunstill et al., 2002). This will typically involve representatives from the school, its governing body, the LEA, social services, health agencies, the police, voluntary sector partners and members of the local community coming together to discuss and review their aims and aspirations for the school and its local community. The intention is that such an event can provide a means of increasing awareness of each agency’s respective mission and priorities, and of identifying common ground that can serve as a basis for mutual collaboration (the concept of “win-win” situations is discussed elsewhere in this report). In most instances the event will take place in a neutral venue and have an independent facilitator. Usually the detail of delivery will be considered subsequently, and the day will represent an early starting point for the collaboration to follow. However, it should not be viewed as any less helpful for this. Indeed, additional momentum may come from repeating the event at a point in the future, when it can provide a means for celebrating the progress made and identifying priorities for further attention.

The need to prioritise the main areas of activity was consistently highlighted by those who participated in the study, for two main reasons. Firstly it provided the focus necessary to ensure that initial resources (which may be limited) were used to best effect and to tackle the areas that gave greatest concern. It also raised the likelihood that early interventions would be both successful and meaningful, thereby increasing the chances that these would provide additional momentum.

Moving forward, the need for focus and prioritisation remained important. As one respondent noted:

“Success breeds success. The challenge is finding a way to prioritise what to do.”

Extended school co-ordinator

(b) Establishing relationships with partners

Schools will often have existing and sometimes long-standing relationships with partner agencies. In such instances, these relationships can play an important role in supporting increased collaboration between partners (Tunstill et al., 2005:114). The presence of an existing Sure Start initiative can be particularly helpful in the primary context, given the strong synergies between this and the extended schools agenda (Wiggins et al., 2005:82). The emergence of *Every Child Matters* and the extended schools agenda therefore provide additional impetus to the development of these relationships.

In other cases, though, existing arrangements may be weak or non-existent. Concerns over territory and misunderstandings over the specific aims of the extended activity can be particular concerns which need to be overcome in developing relationships with partner organisations (Cummings et al., 2005).

In either case, increased collaboration between partners is likely to result in a degree of dissonance for staff as closer working relations disrupt existing practices. This presents an urgent need for leaders in schools and other agencies involved to help colleagues make sense of the changes being faced, not least by focusing on the broader benefits of the collaboration and its ability to impact on the lives of children and families.

There was no consensus amongst those interviewed as to “one best way” to approach potential partners in collaborative working. Instead, two broad strategies could be identified, distinguishable as “top-down” and “bottom-up”. In either instance the aim of identifying win-win scenarios was an important guiding strategy.

Finding the win-wins

The idea that relationships should be founded on areas of mutual interest is important for several reasons.

Firstly this makes the initial engagement easier by establishing a more equal footing to the prospect of future work. The ‘win-win’ reduces the extent to which partners are seen to act as a mechanism for addressing the concerns of the school, establishing instead a more egalitarian relationship in which each party supports the work of the other. The basis for the initial contact therefore moves away from “Can you help us with this?” towards “How can we help you achieve your aims?” or “How can we help each other to achieve our aims?”

Establishing this principle at the outset helped the schools in the study to reduce suspicion between agencies and individuals by highlighting the areas of mutual interest and reducing the extent to which the school is seen to be empire-building. The fact that the school is seen to offer a mechanism for supporting such work is helpful in providing a lever in additional expertise. Access to students and parents is a particularly valuable resource the school may be able to share:

“We help others to reach their targets. For instance, the Scarman Trust does preventive health care. Well, we have a captive audience of 800 children they can work with to reach their targets.”

Extended school co-ordinator

Building work on areas of mutual interest also helps promote the longer-term sustainability of the collaboration and the extended activity, as agencies are clearly more likely to continue to commit resources to areas that contribute to their core activity than those which are of more peripheral interest:

“A key driver for our relationship is that we’re able to offer them some help in meeting their targets, because it is a target-driven world, unfortunately.”

Headteacher

In some instances, schools have taken an even more proactive approach, identifying potentially important partners in addressing their own objectives and then seeking to establish the specific aspects in which the school can offer support. For instance, one secondary school has developed a directory which provides details of the core aims and objectives of potential partners and the support they are potentially able to offer.

The notion of win-win is also important in promoting the sense that schools and partners have joint ownership of the issues being faced (Craig, 2004).

Top-down vs bottom-up

As noted above, discussions with schools and partners identified two broad strategies for engaging partners in collaborative working.

The first of these, top-down, involved individuals from the school making direct contact with senior leaders from potential partner agencies, with a view to establishing a strategic relationship for collaboration. Such approaches are potentially helpful in establishing the commitment of senior leaders of partner organisations, which may be essential in promoting longer-term and more integrated approaches to collaboration. This approach can be highly effective:

“I just called up the head of social services and said ‘we’re going to be a full service extended school’. And they were really good, really considered. I had a meeting with their head of services and discussed this. At the time social services were fire-fighting like mad, and they were brave enough to stop, step back and ask what the possibilities were, if we’re looking at really trying to do some early intervention.”

Headteacher

Without question the publication of *Every Child Matters* has played an important part in increasing the degree to which partners are open to such approaches. However, cultural barriers continue to exist and can influence the degree to which such direct approaches are welcomed by others. For instance, differences in the levels of autonomy afforded to leaders in different agencies can present some challenges:

“I went to a meeting with the PCT, and talking to these managers I could feel the sense of animosity – they saw this agenda as education trying to take over the world. This was articulated by a senior member of the PCT who then said to me ‘You’re only a headteacher, who’s told you to be here at this meeting?’ So I said ‘No one.’ And they said ‘So how can you do it?’ And I replied, ‘I’ve decided it’s the best thing to do, so I’m doing it’. He just could not get his head around the fact that I had the autonomy to make those decisions.”

Headteacher

In other instances, school leaders have sought to convene a broader dialogue with several partners on approaches to addressing shared areas of concern. These have often formed the basis for collaborative “visioning days”, in which different stakeholders will discuss the specific challenges facing an area with a view to developing a strategic, co-ordinated approach to addressing them.

An alternative approach adopted by schools in some instances is to develop existing relationships or initiate new relationships with individual professionals. The principle behind this is the realisation that it is these professionals who will ultimately have to make sense of collaborative working and that they may be best placed to identify the specific operational priorities to be addressed. Often the development of such relationships can provide the impetus for discussion at a more strategic level:

“Initially we set up an implementation group and started to invite some local groups with a view to build things up. But what I found was there’s a whole number of strategic groups that make decisions, some of which you just don’t know about. And there’s so many of them. So I started to work on the Michael Fullan basis – let’s get people on the ground together and share what we’re doing. And it’s interesting that that’s had a major impact. So I got together with the local youth service worker, and the local nurse and the local social worker and in no time at all this started to cause a bit of a stir – ‘Who are these people? Who said they could get together? What are they talking about?’ – which has been good. I think sometimes you just have to drive it from where you are. And what’s happened is this group no longer meets, and instead we’ve been invited on to a large number of key strategic groups instead.”

Deputy head

While there are considerable merits to adopting the bottom-up approach, it is important to recognise that structural constraints will still need to be addressed. As a Sure Start manager noted:

“It’s about challenging different cultures and values that we come across in our organisations. And I think that it is not just what we do at this level – it has to be done as well at a strategic level. Sometimes the structures that are in place at a higher level make it almost impossible... With the introduction of the Children’s Act and ECM people have been motivated to work together, but as far as service delivery is concerned people have been working together for quite a long time really.”

Sure Start project manager

The role of the local authority

A related aspect to consider in approaching partners is the role that a local authority (LA) has as a facilitator of multi-agency work. Indeed, authorities potentially play a vital role in supporting the development of relationships between partners in a number of ways.

Firstly, the establishment of Children's Service Authorities provides a mechanism for them to model the benefits of closer working relationships and improved collaboration. In doing so, they must be viewed as seamless, rather than being two separate entities that continue to operate on a largely independent basis despite the introduction of a single Director of Children's Services.

The LA can also play an important role in promoting strategic collaboration between schools and other partners (Cummings et al., 2004:v). In some instances this has seen LAs play an instrumental role in developing clusters and networks of schools which collaborate with partner agencies on a broader basis. In others, it has required LAs to act as the driver or facilitator of an area-wide strategy for extended schools. On a more basic level, it can involve the authority using its influence to encourage reluctant partners, and those who have been slower to engage, to collaborate with schools:

"I see LAs as the key driver because hopefully they can crack a few heads together and force schools and social services to work more closely together, because they provide both of them, don't they? They can force closer work and make strategic links with health, decide on clustering of resources, and hopefully ensure that services don't become duplicated or stretched."

Headteacher

Local authorities can also play an important role in promoting the development of working relationships among professionals, between professionals and political representatives, and between professionals and the communities they serve (Ofsted, 2005:9). In doing so they help support the development of a joint agenda for the provision of local services (Lownsborough and O'Leary, 2006).

Schools face a particular challenge in instances when their boundaries differ to those of other potential partners (Craig et al., 2004:54). In these cases the LA can play an important role in facilitating collaborations between local schools to help achieve the critical mass sometimes needed to support partnership working with other agencies (Huxham and Vangen, 2000:11,60).

Addressing external constraints

A further key role of the local authority involves helping schools to tackle some of the external constraints on extended activity. This can be achieved in part through the provision of pertinent guidance and also by proactively lobbying other agencies to make changes in policy where necessary. Examples of such external factors include funding, inspection and accountability (Craig et al., 2004, Charlesworth et al., 2003, Cummings et al., 2004, Morton, 2004). Data sharing is another area of particular sensitivity (Kronick, 2002).

Section 2: Engaging and enabling the whole organisation

In the second stage of Kotter's model, leadership is concerned with engaging and enabling the whole organisation, seeking to translate the initial enthusiasm and shared understanding into tangible outcomes. This involves exploring the ways in which individuals will work with colleagues from outside their normal professional sphere as part of the broader collaboration.

This section therefore starts by exploring the implications of multi-agency collaboration on the internal and external organisational cultures.

(a) Understanding “professionalism” and creating trust

As already noted, establishing trust between agencies is a critical element of developing collaborative working. However, while increasing the commitment to trusting and working with partner organisations may be achieved relatively easily at an organisational level, mistrust between professionals from different organisations is often harder to address. Therefore effective engagement and multi-agency working cannot be achieved without developing a sense of trust between individuals on a personal basis. As one head noted:

“At the end of the day you can put all the structures in, but if the relationships aren't there they don't mean a thing. It's how it's done on a one-to-one basis that is absolutely paramount.”

Headteacher

At the heart of this challenge are traditional and well-established conceptions of what it means to be the member of a professional group. At the same time, misconceptions over the culture, ethos and values of other professions are often just as deeply engrained. In most instances such misconceptions will be rooted in our earliest assessments of what it means to be a teacher, a nurse or a social worker, before being shaped and refined in initial professional training and then subsequently reinforced through professional socialisation. The fact that many professionals will have had little exposure to alternative professional cultures means that these perceptions will also often have been further reinforced through interactions with peers (NB the issue of organisational socialisation is covered later in this report).

Much of this suspicion and mistrust is based upon a lack of awareness of the environment and constraints individuals work in:

“There's often misunderstanding of people's roles. For instance a lot of heads complain that when social workers call a case conference, they're expected to up sticks and go. But it's not always that easy, because they perform a range of roles, and therefore if there's a case conference it's not just a case of leaving your desk and going, you've maybe got a class of 30 children you've got to leave with a colleague, and you've got to leave work for them and pick up with them again when you come back. Or they'll call something and you make all these complicated arrangements and get there and they say 'Oh, it was cancelled'. The number of year heads I've heard complain about that. Very often people forget that. It's not just teachers being precious, it's the hard reality.”

Deputy head

Similarly, reflecting upon the differences between the culture within school and that within the police service, one head commented:

“The education culture is that you’re working for the kids and whatever it takes, you do. If it means you stay here until 7 o’clock at night you do it – in most cases. It means if you’re a bit under the weather you come in because, if you don’t, one of your colleagues has got to do your work for you. Police culture is completely different. If you’ve got a cold you stay off. If you work past four o’clock it’s overtime. And if you don’t feel like coming in, then basically you won’t.”

Headteacher

A Sure Start manager provided an alternative perspective on this:

“If you are trying to do a multi-agency approach there are practical issues. For instance, the availability of teaching staff is often different to the availability of social services staff, which is often different to the availability of health staff etc because of the demands that those professions have at different times of the day. It’s about breaking down the behaviours that we have known for a long time.”

Sure Start project manager

A particularly challenging aspect of this whole area is that such cultural differences are often extremely subtle and remain uncodified. Providing opportunities for dialogue and sharing experiences is critical in overcoming this issue:

“If they don’t tell us and we don’t tell them about cultural differences, how are we ever going to learn? It would have been nice if someone had given me a book which said ‘this is the way social services work, these are their protocols, this is its culture’, so I could see where we meet. But we’re having to do that ourselves.”

Headteacher

A further consideration is the fact that the roles of teachers, social workers and health professionals share many similarities and are on one level so close, but differ so markedly in other regards. Misunderstandings over language are a particularly good example of this:

“What schools call a code of conduct or a set of rules, youth workers would run a mile from. But they always have ground rules. So long as you can say the code of conduct is, in a way, an agreed set of ground rules which parent voice and pupil voice have already been heavily involved in, they’ll say, ‘ah lovely ok we can work with that’. Similarly, if you use the term ‘confidentiality’ across different groups of teachers, health workers, youth workers and social services, it means hugely different things.”

Headteacher

Establishing a shared language and common conception of each other’s role is therefore a critical factor in achieving successful collaborative working (Children’s Aid Society, 2001:72) (Tunstill et al., 2005). Core to this is establishing agreement over issues of confidentiality, codes and protocols (Tunstill et al., 2005, Dryfoos and Maguire, 2002, Calfee et al., 1998, Ofsted, 2005).

As noted, increased dialogue is a key aspect in promoting greater understanding of different professional roles (Dryfoos and Maguire, 2002, Calfee et al., 1998) and the use of multi-agency away-days is a popular strategy for addressing this. These are often hosted in a local hotel or conference centre and facilitated by an individual unconnected with any of the agencies concerned, thereby providing space for individuals to develop connections with partners on neutral ground. Ongoing shared professional development, for instance on *Every Child Matters* or on specific aspects of work, can also support this improved dialogue (Department of Health, 1999, Harker et al., 2004). Some schools have hosted joint learning sessions on a non-work-specific subject with broader appeal to increase take-up. In some instances participation in such sessions has been opened up to members of the broader community, which brings the added benefit that it can help break down barriers between these groups too.

A further strategy in promoting trust with individuals from other agencies involves leaders within the school modelling the behaviour they want to encourage (Craig et al., 2004). Modelling the desired approaches to information-sharing, avoiding hierarchy, networking, openness and sharing of resources is particularly important (Craig et al., 2004). A related and perhaps more tangible approach sees the clear articulation of expectations in instances where professionals from different agencies work within the school.

Recognising that mistakes and misunderstandings are inevitable and that these should not get in the way of collaborations is also hugely important:

“We came to a very clear mutual understanding that we were going to misunderstand each other, we were going to speak different languages, but we had very similar philosophies of what we wanted and what we were trying to achieve. It was just different ways of going about it, and different management structures. All that nonsense can get in the way, so we made a promise that our dialogue was going to be very open and very honest – non-blaming but very honest.”

Headteacher

Similarly, acknowledging that improved relations won't come overnight and being patient over the length of time it will take for them to be developed is also important (Smith, 2004). A related theme centres on the need to create realistic expectations of what the initiative will be able to achieve early in its development (Cummings et al., 2005).

(b) Developing a common culture for working – the emergence of a new professionalism

As noted, many of those involved in this study highlighted the importance of establishing clear protocols and understandings of how individuals should work with and within other organisations. Part of this therefore involved establishing a core set of principles as a basis for a common culture of work.

The importance of a common culture is highlighted within the *Every Child Matters* and developed further in *'The common core of skills and knowledge for the children's workforce'* (HM Government, 2005). This paper also highlights a number of common values for practitioners which may form the basis for broader collaboration around the development and delivery of children's services. These centre on promoting equality, respecting diversity, challenging stereotypes, helping to improve the life chances of all children and young people, and providing more effective and integrated services (HM Government, 2005:4).

The common core also highlights a range of specific skills and knowledge that are particularly important within the context of multi-agency working. These are summarised in Text box 2.

Text box 2 Common core of skills and knowledge for multi-agency working

- communication and teamwork skills
- assertiveness
- knowledge of own role and remit
- understanding of the value you bring to a team as an individual
- the skills and expertise needed to minimise the need for referral to specialist services
- general knowledge of the different organisations and individuals working with children
- knowledge or relevant procedures and working methods
- knowledge of relevant law, policies and procedures

HM Government, 2005:18-19

In establishing this set of principles and skills, the individuals interviewed in the study were quick to point out that their aim was not to turn professionals from other organisations into pseudo-educationalists, “training” them in the ways of the school, but rather to head off potential clashes of culture that could have an adverse impact on the smooth running of the school. In some instances these protocols related to areas where there was potential confusion over the jurisdiction of agencies, for instance in relation to discipline between the school and the police:

“There’s a potential problem with the police which we spotted early on. If for example a student pushes a teacher, that is in principle an assault and a criminal offence. However, we had to agree that the school’s procedures override the police in that instance, unless it’s not resolved satisfactorily and then it steps up a gear, much the same as if the police weren’t here.”

Headteacher

In others they were concerned with processes for working:

“It’s not conforming to the culture of the school, but rather understanding the reasons why we do certain things and reinforcing their importance. So for instance, if a group of students are working with a youth worker for two hours, that session is actually two lesson periods. So while the atmosphere in the room may be different, it’s still part of the school day and students can’t just wander off or go outside for a cigarette.”

Headteacher

In both these instances, schools worked effectively with partners and were quick to respect the value other agencies brought and the benefits that could come from their different approaches to working:

“It’s a balancing act between how many of the processes and protocols of the school a partner has to embrace and how much they can actually deviate from this. If we turn them into the same animals, they’re neutered.”

Headteacher

The importance of respecting the relative strengths of different partners is also a well-established theme in the literature. For instance, as Cigno and Gore note:

“Diversity and choice should be respected and even deemed an essential part of a service which attempts to meet all the varying needs of the family...each team could present periodic seminars aimed at enhancing mutual understanding among agencies and providing a basis on which creative solutions could be established.”

Cigno and Gore, 1999:333-334

Individuals who were working within schools found their roles changed in other ways too. Foremost amongst these was a general sense that, as an adult working within a school, it was only proper that they subsume certain conventions in the ways they dealt with children. For instance, reflecting on the approach that made one social worker integrate so successfully into her school, one head commented:

“She’s taken a role almost like mine on occasions. There was one awful time when she heard a parent screaming and swearing at her little girl, and off she went and said ‘I want you to come into my office, I am a social worker and I need to talk to you now’. And she sat her down and said ‘You cannot talk to your child like that’. If I’d have been there I’d have dealt with it, but she just saw it as part of her remit and did it.”

Headteacher

As noted elsewhere in this paper, the most effective multi-agency working was built upon a culture of genuine collaboration and a willingness to work together to increase effectiveness. Implicit within this is a common understanding of the issues to be addressed and the overall aims of the collaboration (Ofsted, 2005:17). This culture of collaboration also involves schools adopting more flexible approaches to meeting the needs of the individuals concerned. There is a caveat with this – clearly a major benefit of extended schools is the principle that improved referral processes and multi-agency working can reduce the burden on teachers and school leaders to perform non-school tasks, acting as social workers, health workers etc. Indeed, for some this was a fundamental driver behind the desire to collaborate more fully with others:

“I was a headless chicken really. I was doing LPSH and taking some time out to reflect and looked at one week – any old week – and 60 per cent of my time was spent dealing directly with social services issues. I thought, this is crazy. We had bright intelligent kids who weren’t attaining at the levels they should be and I thought, we’ve got to do something.”

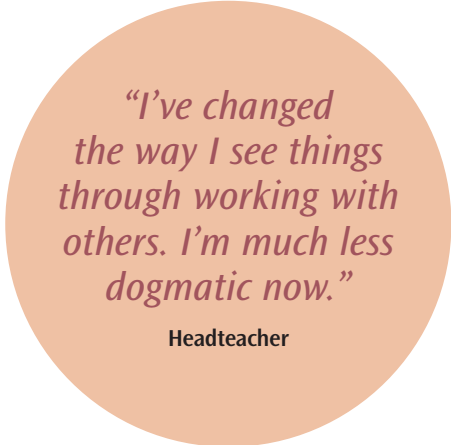
Headteacher

However, it is also crucial to recognise that there are instances when individuals from other agencies require immediate support, and in the absence of peers and other team members, this may place additional demands on individuals within the school. As one head noted:

“Flexibility is needed from both sides. There were times when our social worker needed help. There was one night she had to remove this family, there was no support, but she had to do it. She didn’t have a car but I did so I ended up doing it with her.”

Headteacher

More broadly, increased multi-agency collaboration forces school leaders to take a wider view and consider the relative demands, issues and priorities of partner organisations:



“I’ve changed the way I see things through working with others. I’m much less dogmatic now.”

Headteacher

While this is to be encouraged, it can present the danger of role strain for individuals as they seek to reconcile conflicting demands and responsibilities between the school and their own organisation (Atkinson et al., 2002:iii). Retaining strong links with colleagues is important in mediating these concerns (Cummings et al., 2005:67). However, there is some evidence in the literature that the overriding loyalty for many in extended schools is in relation to the children and community they serve rather than to one institution or another (Craig et al., 2004:21).

(c) Creating the internal culture for collaboration

One challenge in creating the culture for collaboration is preparing other staff within the school for the presence of external professionals. As noted above, traditional conceptualisations of professional roles frequently need to be challenged as part of this process. Failure to do so can result in attempts at changes to organisational culture and working practices being undermined and ultimately neutralised by behavioural norms and professional identities (Lownsborough and O’Leary, 2006:13).

A further aspect relates to practical elements of sharing resources. One well-documented concern centres on the reluctance of some teachers to share “their classrooms” with colleagues from other organisations. In the past this has generally centred on the delivery of adult learning in schools by local FE providers. However, in extended schools the demands will almost certainly be wider.

The main strategy for addressing this involves clearly establishing the principle that all resources are corporately owned. At the same time, though, the expectation has to be introduced that individuals who share these resources will respect the conventions of the school. As one head noted:

“The key thing is that people understand the school is corporately owned. Then the next thing is that the people who come in to use the territory understand the philosophy and what the rules and regulations are about the use of resources and respect for children, child protection and so on. So it’s about ensuring that everyone knows the territory is owned by everyone and shared by everyone. It comes from communications and trust – we invite staff from other agencies to come to our staff meetings. It’s being clear about those expectations.”

Headteacher

(d) Mutual support and respect

A common theme running through the published literature on multi-agency working centres around the issue of isolation and the extent to which individuals from a different discipline feel removed from the main body of the school (Cummings et al., 2005, Craig et al., 2004). This is a particular challenge for those who are used to working within professional teams, such as social workers.

Strategies for addressing this often centre on two main areas. Firstly, ways in which individuals can be made to feel a greater part of the school and secondly, approaches which ensure that they continue to receive the vocational-specific support that they require.

Line management

In terms of the appointment of professionals from other organisations, the schools concerned were clear that it was essential that such individuals were sympathetic to the ethos of the school and willing to work in partnership with different providers. The idea that schools would adopt a more formal selection process was seen as unnecessary. Heads were equally clear, though, that they had the authority to ask for individuals to be replaced in instances where they did not appear to display a sufficiently sympathetic outlook:

“If you’ve got the wrong person in post they will play one off against another. I’ve seen that in different organisations where they say ‘I’m going to...’ and been in neither place. And that happened with our first policeman, and he didn’t last very long.”

Headteacher

Similarly, most recognised the advantages of staff continuing to be line-managed by their own agencies rather than seeking to integrate them more heavily into the school's staffing structure. The underlying consideration that drove this was the need for these individuals to receive the support and development appropriate to their profession – something that heads were often quick to acknowledge they were not best placed to provide:

“A key principle was I don't know anything about social workers – they had to be managed by their head office, with all the backup and services they could offer.”

Headteacher

This approach was seen as more effective in reducing the extent to which professionals felt isolated in the school, as it protected their relationship with their peers and their own employing organisation. This was important in promoting their ongoing development and careers, but also significant in protecting their professional identity. For instance, one head noted how a social worker at her school had suffered a degree of rejection from her peers, who saw her professional status as compromised by her work in the school. Retaining line management responsibilities within the host agency was important in addressing such misconceptions.

While formal line management most commonly remained with an individual's own agency, there was nevertheless a need for day-to-day supervision of staff. A key aspect of this centred on supporting the process of organisational socialisation, required when staff from other agencies begin work within a school. This process centres on increasing understanding of the different professional cultures and language (more is written elsewhere in this paper). Additional issues relate to practical concerns that may arise and areas where there are potentially conflicting priorities. Supervision is undertaken by a member of the senior leadership team, in some instances the headteachers themselves, but more commonly a deputy or assistant head or the extended school manager.

Importance of induction

Professional development is therefore a potentially invaluable approach to increasing understanding between professionals and supporting the emergence of a shared culture. Shared opportunities focused on specific issues are often used to great effect to encourage dialogue, understanding and the development of a common culture. A particularly important element of professional development centres on the means by which staff from other agencies are inducted into the school.

The nature and structure of induction varied between the schools involved in the study, and many recognised that this was an area where they were continuing to learn and develop better practice. Induction and professional development are not areas which are governed by employment law (ACAS, 2005), and as such considerable variation will inevitably exist in organisations' commitment to and use of them. However, some areas of good practice could be clearly identified in the schools that participated in this work. Considerable guidance is also available from a range of organisations on designing effective induction programmes.

Induction provides the basis for introducing new staff to an organisation and the colleagues they will work with. Advice on induction programmes therefore recommends that it covers four elements (Social Care Institute for Excellence, 2006):

- **Legal**, which relates to specific information that all new employees must know such as the health and safety arrangements
- **Organisational**, which relates to generic information about the organisation, such as the organisation structure, team structure, ID protocol, dress code policies etc
- **Vocational**, which relates to specific information about the job and may be role-related, such as manual handling and lifting, risk assessing and accident reporting
- **Occupational**, which relates to specific information about the sector eg social care

Information on all of these aspects will have been covered by individuals' employing agencies. However, as noted already, a fundamental principle within effective multi-agency working is increased flexibility amongst the professionals involved. This represents a key distinction between professional and organisational socialisation, best conceived as the difference between "this is how we do things" and the more specific "this is how we do things here". Induction within the context of the extended school will therefore focus upon developing a clearer mutual understanding of the above elements in relation to each professional's role. It will also cover the customs, practices and conventions that exist within the school, thereby increasing the extent to which individuals are effectively assimilated into the organisation and their overall sense of belonging.

One example of a particularly good induction programme included provision for new staff to:

- spend one-to-one time with the headteacher and other senior leaders to get a clearer sense of the issues facing the school, the vision for the future etc
- meet colleagues from the teaching staff, shadowing a teacher for a full day in the classroom, to improve their understanding of the specifics of teaching
- meet colleagues from other partner agencies working in the school, also shadowing key professionals for a day
- meet community members informally at coffee mornings etc to increase awareness of their role in the school and their own understanding about the needs of parents
- spend time with colleagues from their own agency, to discuss issues arising, identify additional support that may be required etc

This was scheduled over a two-week period at the start of an individual's attachment to the school.

While it may not always be possible to facilitate such a comprehensive programme at the outset of an individual's attachment, the broad principles of building mutual awareness and understanding are clearly critical and need to be addressed as quickly as possible once new members of staff are in place. Work shadowing in particular has been found to be a beneficial approach to increasing understanding of others' work roles and responsibilities (Harker et al., 2004:187).

Increased integration

One commonly adopted approach involved establishing the principle that the staff room is a shared resource, to be used by all individuals within the school. This has been found to provide a safe environment where colleagues from different agencies could come together and discuss a range of issues in an informal way. Part of this contributes towards the development of improved personal relationships and enhanced professional understanding.

"It can be very daunting for someone who's not a teacher to come into a school – very daunting, almost frightening. But in our staff room we have a policeman, a fireman, a youth worker, learning mentors, a learning support assistant, an attendance officer, an ex-social worker, Connexions staff, health professionals. The staff are used to, and welcoming to, other agencies. It is a staff room, not a teaching staff room but a staff room."

Headteacher

Section 3: Sustaining change

The third stage of Kotter's model relates to the process of implementing and sustaining change. Central to this is establishing the structures and culture needed to ensure that the changes introduced to the organisation are sufficiently embedded.

In his model, Kotter identifies two key errors that leaders may make in their efforts at transforming the organisation (Kotter, 1995:66-67). The first of these sees leaders declaring victory too soon. According to Kotter, this often happens after the first clear signs of performance improvement, when in reality the cultural change process can take 5 to 10 years to complete (Kotter, 1995:66). Instead, premature declaration of victory can result in the improvements secured unravelling within as little as two years as the organisation returns to its starting position. This comes from the fact that declaring victory reduces the sense of urgency that exists and provides an opportunity for change resisters to highlight any remaining difficulties, thereby undermining the entire endeavour. Instead, then, a preferred approach sees achievement celebrated as early wins which provide a platform from which further efforts can be built.

The second error sees leaders failing to anchor changes in the organisation's culture (Kotter, 1995:67). Kotter notes that change sticks "when it seeps into the bloodstream of the corporate norm (becoming) rooted in social norms and shared values" (Kotter, 1995:67). Many estimate that this takes at least a decade to achieve (Lownsborough and O'Leary, 2006:12). Kotter identifies two specific aspects which support this. The first of these involves leaders demonstrating to followers the ways in which changes made have improved conditions and overall organisational performance. The second centres on taking sufficient time to ensure that the next generation of top management has truly embraced the new approaches (Kotter, 1995:67).

In reflection of this, this final section focuses on the approaches leaders in the schools studied adopted to develop the leadership capacity needed to promote the longer-term sustainability of the vision across the organisation. This section also addresses the importance of demonstrating impact and the ways in which this supports the longer-term change process. Finally, two other issues of sustainability are considered. These relate to embedding multi-agency working through improved connections with the local community, and the ongoing funding of collaborations.

(a) Building leadership capacity

As noted elsewhere, in many instances the head plays a fundamental role in promoting the move to becoming an extended school. The vision will often initially have been theirs. In all instances, the restructuring and organisational changes needed for the vision to come to fruition will not have been possible without the proactive support of the head.

However, it is equally true that the scale of the endeavour is such that it is impossible for one individual to carry it forward on their own. Rather, then, it is critical that the head quickly develops a team of like-minded individuals who can also drive the pursuit of this vision:

"You need somebody who feels passionately enough to drive it and then to get a team around you that feels equally passionate to continue it."

Deputy head

Each of the schools studied had taken steps to promote the distribution of leadership of extended activity. In all instances the head provided a strong strategic and symbolic lead for this area, but the day-to-day operational management was dealt with by another member of staff. In bigger schools there was often a dedicated extended schools co-ordinator or equivalent. However, in some instances it formed part of the bursar's broader responsibilities or was spread more evenly across a number of individuals. By adopting strategies inspired by the broader workforce reform process, the impact on the workload of teaching staff was largely kept to a minimum, although more broadly, teachers often played an invaluable role by supporting a range of different clubs before and after school.

Evidence of the benefits of adopting this approach comes from Ofsted research on the early developments of extended schools. This found the combination of strong leadership from the head and effective management from an extended schools co-ordinator was invaluable:

“The leadership of the headteacher is crucial to the success of the extended provision...when such leadership is supported by very good strategic management, it leads to effective practice.”

Ofsted, 2005:3

However, for the extended school to really become truly embedded, leadership needs to be distributed far more broadly than simply across the organisation (see Text box 3). Instead, the aim is to create a wider, more empowered community of individuals who are able to initiate and develop activities that address the common aim. Such individuals will be from the school, partner organisations and the broader local community. Indeed, many heads were quick to note the

considerable capacity that existed in the local area and the role they could play in providing services. Encouraging and collaborating with partners to release this potential is critical in the longer-term sustainability of the extended school from a workload and funding view. As one head noted:

“When DFES first put forward the pilot they said we couldn't spend any money on buying the service...and I kicked up a stink about that. But it did us a real favour, because we had to go out there and look at what was about, and there's loads, people are falling over themselves to offer support, and it's just making those relationships and building bridges to host them – we don't do all this, it's done by others, we just host what goes on. There's lots of heads that are very anti, who say 'Well, I haven't got the time to do all that'. It's because we haven't got the time that we did it...We've got people spilling out all over the place. What we're doing is now we've got a little centre of expertise we can offer advice on governing boards and stuff like that, but it's about getting rid. All I've had to do as a head is really look at my site management.”

Headteacher

This greater distribution of leadership presents a number of challenges for the headteacher. Not least amongst these are developing mechanisms for ensuring the strategic development of extended activity and, where necessary, addressing issues of accountability, and managing risk.

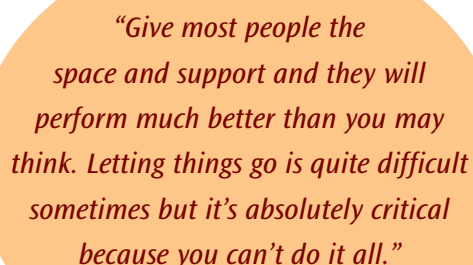
A particularly important factor, though, in the distribution of leadership is identifying an individual who is able to really drive the extended school forward. In some instances, such individuals have been employed to support this work on a full-time basis; in others it represented one aspect of their role. However, in either case the extended school co-ordinator was viewed as critical by the heads and partner agencies involved in the work. Critical to this was the practical role they took in promoting the development of links between collaborators, and maintaining momentum in the development of the extended school.

A further consideration in this relates to the degree to which the head feels “naturally” inclined to share the leadership of this work. For some, the amount of personal investment in the issues being addressed can make letting go a real challenge:

“I struggled big-time with delegation in the early days, and would see someone doing something and think ‘Hmm, I wouldn’t do it like that’ but you have to think ‘OK, just let it happen’, and I’ll pick the pieces up at the end if I have to. But hopefully I’m a lot better than I used to be. There’s people who now work at the school who I hadn’t met but who had contracts with my name at the bottom and who are having an impact and making a difference, and the only input I had was approving the finances. And some of the finances are self-managing and I have no involvement in that now. I couldn’t have done that two years ago.”

Headteacher

The potential benefits of doing so made this worthwhile, however:



“Give most people the space and support and they will perform much better than you may think. Letting things go is quite difficult sometimes but it’s absolutely critical because you can’t do it all.”

Deputy head

Governance, accountability and risk management

The Audit Commission describes corporate governance as:

“...the framework of accountability to users, stakeholders and the wider community, within which organisations take decisions, and lead and control their functions, to achieve their objectives. The quality of corporate governance arrangements is a key determinant of the quality of services provided by organisations.”

Audit Commission, 2005

Text box 3 Distributed leadership

Distributed leadership considers leadership as a pluralist rather than individual activity (Southworth, 2004:3). Within this, authority to lead comes not from the occupancy of a designated organisational role, but is rather based on one’s knowledge, understanding and ability to lead within a specific context. Leadership is therefore a form of behaviour and not a position. As a result, all members of the organisation are likely to perform as leaders and followers at different times (Gastil, 1997:158).

The main advantage of distributed leadership is that it increases the level of skills and expertise available (Harris, 2002). It is particularly desirable in large organisations where the scale of activity is so broad it is difficult for any single individual to retain an overarching view of the big picture, and is seen as particularly effective in promoting organisational change (HayGroup, 2004:5). Positive effects have also been identified in terms of employee motivation and job satisfaction (Daft, 2002:44).

Despite this emphasis on openness and the ability of all being able to lead, the formally designated leader remains key to the development of this culture of shared authority and responsibility. The formal leader also plays a critical role in ensuring that, as leadership becomes ever more shared, the group stays on-task, all members of the group are able to contribute to its progress, and that the agreed cultural norms are respected (Gastil, 1997:162).

Terms closely related with distributed include: delegated leadership, democratic leadership and dispersed leadership (Bennett et al., 2002:4). These alternative models can be differentiated in the extent to which they place different degrees of emphasis on consultation, delegation and empowerment.

Effective governance involves a mix of hard and soft measures. Core to these within schools is the governing body, which fulfils a number of specific roles and responsibilities. Together with the head and the senior management team, the governing body is an equal partner in the school's leadership, and its endorsement of extended school activities is essential before such approaches can be introduced (DfES, 2005a). More specifically, section 27 of the Education Act 2002 cedes governing bodies the power to provide or enter into contract to provide facilities and services that "further any charitable purpose for the benefit of pupils at the school, their families or people who live or work in the locality in which the school is situated". Governing bodies are also required to consult prior to establishing extended services and support (DfES, 2005a:3).

Extending schools increases the demand on the knowledge of governing bodies, requiring them to make strategic decisions on a broader range of areas than in more "traditional" school models. It also introduces additional pressures in terms of the sheer scale of areas which call for their attention and consideration. In response to this, many extended schools decide to introduce sub-committees and associate members to support this broader work.

In 'Governor's Roles and Governance', DfES outlines four main models for arranging the governance of extended schools (DfES, 2005a:4-6). While these differ in many ways, they are consistent in their inclusion of a sub-committee or governors and partners from other agencies who act as a management group, tasked with supporting the strategic direction of the extended school.

In terms of "soft" structures, a number of factors can be summarised as key in developing effective governance. These include (DfES, 2005c:24):

- leadership that establishes a vision, generates clarity and fosters professional relationships
- an open and honest culture in which decisions and behaviours can be challenged and accountability is clear
- supporting accountability through systems and processes, such as financial management, performance management and internal controls
- an external focus on the needs of service users and the public

More generally, there are indications that collaborative working is enhanced by the presence of a management board whose membership is drawn from across partner agencies. Management boards and steering groups are important in helping to develop and maintain strong and effective inter-agency child protection procedures and protocols, and in ensuring that local child protection services are adequately resourced (Department of Health, 1999:35). While their membership should be determined locally, there is broad consensus that it should include representation from all key strategic partners and where possible, the local community (Cummings et al., 2004:27). In this way the board is able to raise awareness and increase the broad ownership of the collaboration amongst partners and local people alike. They also provide a mechanism for increasing ongoing dialogue between partners, a particularly important factor in instances when channels for communication are not already in place:

“Crucially, we set up a management committee outside of the school governors. The headteacher was on it, I (the extended school co-ordinator) was on it, representatives from other funders were on it. But most crucially the Borough Council had a representative sitting on a committee that decides on pricing and the access policy of a county council school facility. That had never happened before and it brought the council on board. And it helped us to quickly access other important opportunities.”

School business manager

Management boards provide a basis for the ongoing development of a shared strategic vision for the extended school. They also offer a forum for reviewing day-to-day operational issues. Evidence from the Sure Start experience has also highlighted the important role that management boards play in offering support to leaders of multi-agency collaborations (Tunstall et al., 2005:67).

In many instances collaborations are further supported by the presence of formal agreements and Service Level Agreements (SLAs) which outline in more detail the specific focus for collaborative working and the respective commitments made by each side.

SLAs play a major role in the delivery of commissioned support. Their function is to regulate the provision of a specific intervention or service, usually – but not always – provided in return for financial support. SLAs should show how resources can best be used to deliver improvements in performance, and will usually contain a series of specific targets and measures against which the effectiveness of the intervention can be judged. They should detail what is required rather than how it is delivered. They should therefore be comprehensive enough to meet the needs of the commissioning organisation, but flexible enough to allow for innovation (National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse, 2002).

The recent emergence of Community Service Agreements is an acknowledgement of the greater role communities are playing as partners in the delivery of public-sector support. Community Service Agreements differ from SLAs in the fact that they are potentially more reciprocal in nature and highlight the assistance public organisations will provide (Strickland and Knight, 2005).

(b) Demonstrating impact

Discussions with individuals involved in the development of extended schools highlighted a number of issues concerning the demonstration of impact.

Firstly the scale of ambition behind the development of the extended school is such that it will often take considerable time before many of the impacts desired are realised:

“We can see differences now but I think it’s going to be five to ten years before you can see the real differences, and people don’t like that because they’re putting money in and want results quick, quick, quick.”

Headteacher

For some this raised a concern over the extent to which this agenda may be affected by changes in political priorities that may occur during that time:

“I think there’s an acknowledgement that any shift will take five to ten years, but politically, nothing works on that sort of time scale. Politically we don’t give things that sort of time to happen. By the time the initial funding stops we’ll have only just started our job.”

Extended school co-ordinator

Furthermore, in some instances the challenges were seen to be so great that even the introduction of the extended school was insufficient to support children with the most complex problems. In these cases school leaders were keen to establish more realistic expectations of what the extended school could achieve and to highlight the importance of other support. Implicit within this was the ongoing tension between the need to focus on raising standards and providing intensive, individualised support for children.

A related point centres on the ways in which the impacts of extended schools can be measured. Indeed, there was an almost universal recognition that current approaches that centre upon academic attainment were, on their own, inappropriate for judging the effectiveness of the extended school. Instead, the added value of extended schools was generally seen as more likely to come from their ability to help address issues of deprivation and in relation to caring for the child as a whole. Given that extended schools are one of a number of initiatives aimed at supporting families and children, this presents a philosophical challenge to the desire for attribution – ie determining which intervention resulted in which impact. Instead it was generally felt more appropriate to consider the effect of extended school activity as part of the “sum of the whole” rather than as an individual element:

“The only organisation that’s said ‘Are they impacting on your 5 A–Cs?’ was the local government office. No one else expected any impact in that time frame. I think the government office also know how it is, but they just hope they can quote that the school has moved 20%. But if we did, some of it would be due to healthy schools, some due to GNVQs, some gifted and talented, some nothing to do with extended schools. So how can you unpick what it relates to?”

Extended school co-ordinator

While recognising these difficulties, demonstrating impact was nevertheless highlighted as important in promoting the development of the extended school. Celebrating success was seen as a helpful strategy for maintaining interest and promoting buy-in to the broader initiative. It also offered an opportunity to reflect on what had already been achieved, something which is often lost as focus is placed on tasks in hand and the challenges yet to be overcome:

“What I say to colleagues is that we’re often only looking at our present situation and thinking there’s a million things going on. But if we look back, we can see the advances we’ve made. And then we look forward and think if we can ever get there, that will be brilliant. But your head is often only in today. The danger is you forget where you’ve come from and reflecting on that. And I think we’ve already made major differences to young people.”

Deputy head

Several heads and extended school co-ordinators noted the importance of being able to demonstrate the contribution that interventions by partners make as a strategy for promoting the provision of these resources subsequently:

“When you get someone, you really have to use them and demonstrate what a difference it makes. And hopefully they’ll continue to fund them.”

Extended school co-ordinator

While highlighting the need to celebrate success, it is important to ensure that this is done in a measured way. As Kotter notes, declaring the victory too soon is a major danger in the change management process, and one which may potentially undermine the considerable achievements secured to that point. Instead, such early successes and victories should be promoted as positive staging points on the journey towards a longer-term destination.

(c) Increasing understanding of professional roles amongst the community

In addition to improving understanding of the role of other professionals amongst the school staff, schools where multi-agency working is seen to be most successful will also have undertaken a proactive approach to raising awareness amongst the community they serve. This is particularly important in the case of those professional groups whose roles are more likely to bring them into conflict with parents, such as police officers and social workers.

As with broader community engagement per se, many schools highlight the advantages of adopting a range of strategies to tackle this. For instance, formal structures such as newsletters provide a mechanism for announcing the appointment of such workers and disseminating the “official” message concerning their function, focus etc quickly and easily. However, the greater challenge of establishing personal trust on an individual basis will take more time and effort. This often centres on taking advantage of openings for personal engagement, for instance using coffee mornings or informal drop-in sessions as opportunities to discuss their work and to reassure parents and community members that they are there to help and have the interests of children and families at heart. In doing so, this is not meant to “soften” their role, but rather to provide a clearer understanding of what they hope to achieve:

“A part of our social worker’s induction was in the school going to the coffee mornings. It was absolutely key that parents knew she was a social worker from day one. There would be no hiding this. They knew what she was. Yeah, she can remove your children if they’re at risk, but that’s not what it’s about. It’s about offering you support, helping you make the best job you can of a very difficult job. And people believed her. It changed perceptions. They didn’t used to let social workers through the doors – they’d think ‘they’re gonna take me babbies off me’, that’s what they’d say. And that’s changed, even though she has removed four families since she was here.”

Headteacher

(d) Funding

The issue of funding is clearly central to the longer-term sustainability of extended services.

Several of the schools that participated in this research were designated full-service extended schools that had attracted funding to support the development of services. In most instances, leaders of such schools reflected that they had initially been frustrated by restrictions on the use of this funding which prevented them from using it to directly fund services. However, on reflection they had often come to realise that these restrictions had been beneficial, as they had forced them to consider the longer-term sustainability of the support from the outset. Furthermore, they had forced them to take a more inclusive approach to the provision of support than may otherwise have been the case. For these leaders, the development and maintenance of such partnerships were central to their longer-term sustainability.

Furthermore, by adopting such a collaborative approach, the onus for resourcing services and support is positioned within the partner agency, rather than within the school itself. As an extended school co-ordinator observed:

“We’re trying to put the ownership of activity within another agency or organisation. So for instance, it’s not about us getting money and employing a youth worker, but rather us talking to the youth service and having a youth worker seconded across service areas.”

Extended school co-ordinator

As noted above, demonstrating the benefits accrued from having such support in school is an important factor in encouraging partners to fund this activity on an ongoing basis.

A more pressing concern for many schools is the way in which they are able to build capacity to manage the development of the extended school over the longer term. Indeed, a relatively common practice amongst full-service schools has been to use the initial pump-priming funding to resource a dedicated extended school manager. As already noted, such individuals are often instrumental in the successful development of the extended school, and maintaining their ongoing presence has frequently been a high priority. In some instances, schools have identified alternative external sources of funding to support their work. However, more commonly schools have used workforce remodelling as a means of maintaining this role over the longer term.

In addition to partnership working, maintaining an entrepreneurial approach is important in securing extra funds, as the school may need to develop additional complementary services. Such an entrepreneurial ethos is also important in promoting an openness to partnership activity and a willingness to engage in unexpected and opportunistic openings. One school described the importance of developing a culture of “magnificent failure”, whereby staff were encouraged to pursue stretching targets for potentially valuable ideas they may have, with the implicit understanding that they may not be able to fully achieve these. In this school, the belief was that even limited success justified taking the risk, as unexpected benefits may subsequently be realised. For instance, this school’s Director of Community Sports had sought to develop relationships with local sports clubs to gain support for a bid which was ultimately unsuccessful. However, in doing so he had forged strong links with a club whose membership was drawn predominantly from members of minority ethnic groups, which in turn opened the door to alternative sources of funding centred on tackling racism.

Co-ordinators are often pivotal in identifying and securing such discretionary funding – a process which can require considerable time, expertise and effort. Moving forward, as more schools develop extended services, gaining discretionary funding is likely to become ever harder as schools find themselves fishing in an increasingly crowded pond. In such a scenario the importance of strong partnership working becomes greater than ever.

Implications for leadership

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Implications for leadership

In describing the main findings from the fieldwork supporting this work and the review of published literature on multi-agency working, this report has identified a number of recurring leadership themes and issues. In this section, the implications of these themes are explored further. In this discussion, the primary focus is on the role of the headteacher, although attention is also given to the work of extended school co-ordinator and others in similar roles who play a major part in the overall development and sustainability of such schools.

Complexity and creativity

Perhaps the most obvious starting point for this discussion is to recognise the additional complexity multi-agency working brings to the life of a school leader. While headship per se has increased in scale and become more complicated (a trend, incidentally, observed in other comparable roles outside of education too), the additional scope of the extended school means that leadership in such schools is particularly multi-faceted.

That there is no template for the development of an extended school is at once both attractive and daunting. Much of its appeal centres on the fact that schools are free(r) to develop a model of extended provision that meets the needs of their children and local families. In doing so, school leaders have a greater opportunity to develop and realise their own vision for their school and its study as part of a broader community of support. Many of those interviewed in this work clearly relished the opportunity that the work gave them to move beyond the traditional confines of the school and to address instead many of the broader issues which impact so greatly on the ability of their pupils to learn. In many instances, steps had already been taken to begin to address some of these concerns. In these instances the extended schools initiative now played an important part in legitimising these efforts.

The lack of a prescribed model for extended schools requires schools to effectively create their own reality for their extended provision.

As indicated above, this presents a major challenge for individuals in schools to work in ways which are markedly different to those that have dominated in the past. It also calls for considerable flexibility, as school leaders must quickly develop an understanding of a range of areas which will usually have been previously unfamiliar to them. These include the professional cultures of partner agencies, closer working with community groups, parents and families, legal issues concerning the provision of additional services, and the wide variety of funding sources and models. This theme is returned to later in this section.

The literature also identifies a number of other demands on leadership stemming from the greater focus on multi-agency working. These include the increasingly complex management of health and safety, VAT, insurance and security (Cummings et al., 2005:67-68) and the greater restrictions that involvement with other agencies places on the autonomy of leaders to lead (Huxham and Vangen, 2000:1167). More broadly, in the evaluation of Sure Start, Tunstill notes a high turnover of managers which is felt likely to be a reflection of the challenging nature of the job (Tunstill et al., 2005:64). Similarities between Sure Start and extended schools mean that this is a potential concern in extended schools also.

Political and moral leadership

A particular demand within multi-agency leadership centres on the increased political dimension of this activity. Within this context, the notion of politics is concerned with the ways in which decisions are made within groups (Wikipedia, 2006). As already noted, multi-agency working creates a number of particular demands for leaders in relation to the approaches they use to establish and develop relationships with partner agencies. These include developing an effective understanding of different professional cultures and stimulating a collective understanding of the priorities to be addressed.

Of course, in most instances this will not be the sole responsibility of the headteacher, and a number of factors have helped to create a broad appreciation of the need for wider, more tightly co-ordinated support to improve outcomes for children and families. Included amongst these is the publication of *Every Child Matters*. However, multi-agency working increases the demands on headteachers in particular as their involvement is critical in providing the status needed to help secure the overall success of such collaborations. This is especially true in the early stages of multi-agency working, when heads are often more able to secure access to leaders in partner organisations, which may not be afforded to less senior colleagues in the school. Elsewhere the head plays a major role in supporting others in understanding the necessity of extended schools and recognising the benefits that moving to more complex ways of working will bring. More is written on this later in this section.

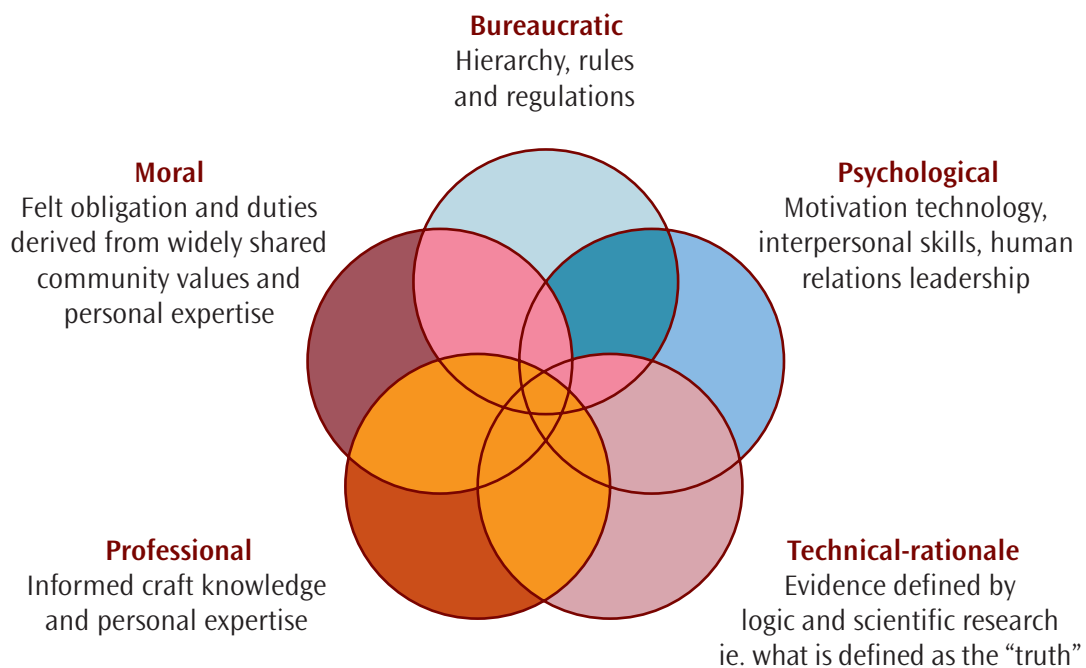
Political leadership forms an important element of Paton and Vangen's notion of *collaborative thuggery* (Paton and Vangen, 2004:3-4), which they view as an important element in the leadership of effective partnership working. According to Paton and Vangen, collaborative thuggery is concerned with the pragmatic actions that, on the face on it, appear to be anti-collaborative but which are nevertheless essential to the overall health of the partnership. Examples of these included holding individuals to account, manipulating agendas, and playing the politics game. Vangen and Paten highlight the importance of this type of "tough love" in gardening, noting that sometimes weeding rather than nurturing is the only way to protect the health of the garden as a whole. In describing this concept, Vangen and Paten are quick to highlight the importance of being able to identify which approach is appropriate in any given situation, and change behaviour accordingly. Therefore the development of strong diagnostic skills is important to effective leadership in a climate of collaboration.

In reflecting on the political aspect of leadership, it is important to give some consideration to the basis for leaders' power and authority in this context. Many discussions on power centre on its three faces, ie the degree to which individuals or groups possess power in relation to *decision-making, agenda-setting and preference-shaping* (Wikipedia, 2006) (Bratton et al., 2005:133-134). In terms of extended schools and multi-agency working, the political dimension of leadership is primarily concerned with the first two of these three areas, ie the development of the actual services themselves, and informing the broader discourse within which decisions on extended services are made. As noted above, the overtly moral dimension to the *Every Child Matters* agenda underpinning much of this is an important source of power and authority in multi-agency working.

In his work on change, Fullan highlights the significance of morality in school leaders' attempts to increase the extent to which schools support broader change to families and communities (Fullan, 2001a:30). The sense that leadership of extended schools is implicitly moral in nature therefore helps to increase its legitimacy within this context and extend the degree of influence its leaders enjoy with collaborating agencies.

Sergiovanni provides further insight into the importance of moral leadership (Sergiovanni, 1992) His work starts by identifying the five main sources of authority for leadership, summarised in figure 2. He notes that more 'traditional' hierarchical models of leadership draw authority from bureaucratic and psychological sources which emphasise the transactional nature of the leader/led relationship. In this traditional arrangement, subordinates are primarily motivated to follow leaders' requests by a desire to receive rewards and avoid sanctions, which the leader is authorised to apply through recourse to their formal status.

Figure 2 Sergiovanni's sources of leadership authority

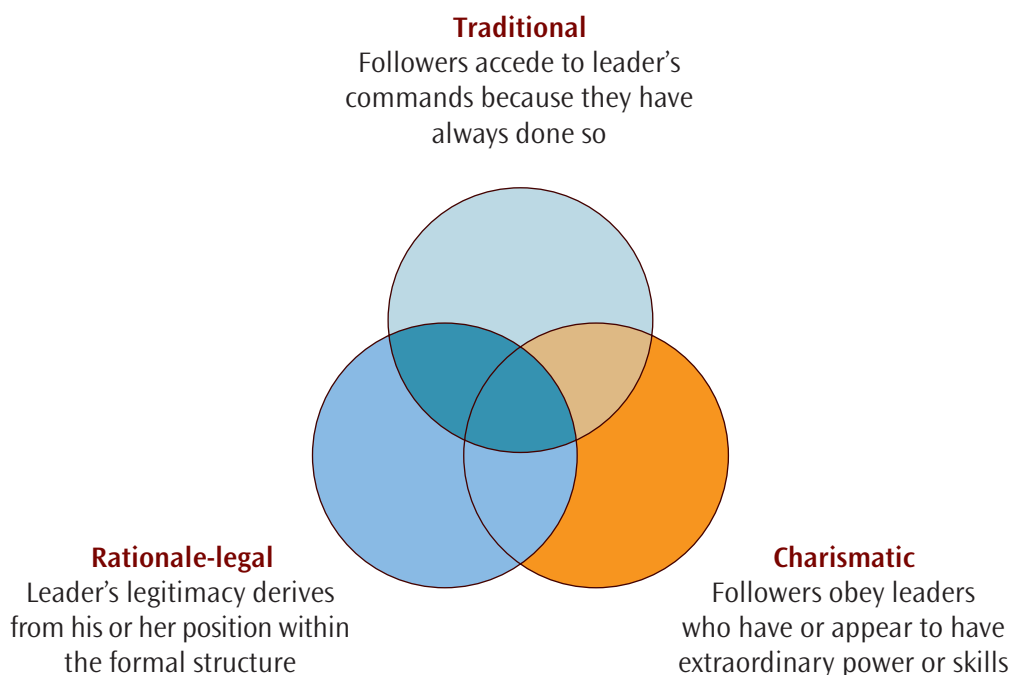


Sergiovanni states that more recent changes in organisational type and structure, coupled with a greater focus on collaboration, have resulted in leadership becoming increasingly stretched across organisations and the broader community. As a result, leaders are less able to resort to bureaucratic sources of authority and the impositions of sanctions and rewards. Instead, authority is more likely to come from appealing directly to a strong sense of moral purpose and a core set of values and principles held by individuals (these are also encompassed to some degree within the notion of professionalism).

This focus on moral leadership is further reinforced through a range of behaviours and actions. For instance, the emphasis on developing win-win relationships is important in placing attention on the ways in which partners collaborate in order to achieve a common, moralistic goal. Similarly, the broader modelling by leaders of behaviours which support partnership working is also important, for instance valuing partners, promoting open communications etc.

Weber's tripartite classification of authority offers an alternative approach for considering the basis for a leader's authority. It is particularly helpful in focusing attention on the ways in which leaders can ensure the sustainability of their services over the longer term. According to Weber, authority is based on three different sources: these are tradition, charisma and legality/rationality (Bratton et al., 2005:132). These are summarised in Figure 3. At any one time, a leader will draw his or her authority from a combination of these sources. In the case of a school leader working across organisational boundaries, greater emphasis will be placed on the first of these two sources, ie tradition and charisma, than rationale-legal.

Figure 3 Weber's typology of authority



Weber's model is helpful in highlighting the important role that individual characteristics can play in securing buy-in to a vision. Certainly all of those individuals included in this study demonstrated a strong and passionate belief in the importance of the extended schools, and in several instances colleagues in their schools described these heads as charismatic.

However, while charisma can be important in initially gaining support and trust by encouraging personal commitment in the short term, any reliance upon the personality of a single individual over the longer term presents issues for the initiative's sustainability. In such instances a key challenge for headteachers is to quickly move from a position where the initial momentum and impetus for extended activity comes from the head to one of a broader collective moral endeavour, in order to promote the longer-term viability of the work.

Transformational leadership

Bass's study of transformational leadership (Bass, 1998, Bass and Avolio, 1994) provides a mechanism for considering some of the ways leaders included in this research addressed the need for this shift.

In his work, Bass differentiates between two broad types of leadership, these being transactional and transformational. While transactional leadership operates on broadly economic principles, transformational leadership draws its authority from a strongly held moral, ethical and even spiritual conviction (Bryman, 1996:280). Transformational leadership is particularly significant in the study of extended schools as it is concerned with a fundamental reconsideration of the relationships, behaviours and attitudes which underpin an organisation. Within this context, therefore, it provides a means of understanding the reasons why individuals would be willing to support what may represent a radical reappraisal of what the function of the school is and their purpose within it.

In his work, Bass identified four key aspects which supported transformational leadership. Collectively these are known as the "Four I's" (Bryman, 1996:281). These are:

- Idealised influence (the presence of charismatic leadership and the modelling of desired "citizenship" behaviours).
- Inspirational motivation (the communication of high expectations and development of a shared vision achieved through the alignment of personal and organisational values).
- Intellectual stimulation (challenging followers to review their motivation and beliefs).
- Individualised consideration (supporting and developing followers according to their specific needs).

Evidence within this study is consistent with many of Bass's ideas. For instance, the importance of modelling in developing the culture necessary for collaboration has been highlighted elsewhere in this report. Examples of this include promoting openness and valuing the contribution of other partners.

A commitment to high expectations is central to many leaders' belief in the importance of raising social and community capital. This was epitomised in the notion that the communities served should expect more for themselves and their children, and work together to create the future they wanted to see.

The development of the extended school saw many leaders challenge their staff to reflect on their beliefs on a range of different things. In the context of multi-agency working, though, the main challenge came through a fundamental reconsideration of what the school stood for and who it was intended to serve. By seeking to extend the degree of multi-agency working, many of these leaders also challenged their staff to reconsider their understanding of different professional groups and agencies.

Bass's fourth "1" concerns the delivery of individualised consideration and support to followers to meet their needs during the transformation process. Some evidence of this was found during the study, although in truth it did not form a central focus of the research and therefore would require further investigation at some stage.

Leading change

The significance of being able to lead in a climate of change has been a recurring theme throughout this report.

In his work, Fullan highlights the relentless focus on change as a major reason for the complex nature of leadership in schools. The need to achieve a fundamental "re-culturing" of the school to support lasting change is a key part of this, while the lack of hard and fast models (an issue covered elsewhere in this paper) also adds to this complexity (Fullan, 2001b:147).

Both Fullan and Goleman stress the importance of being able to vary the style of leadership used to reflect the challenges the school faces during different stages of change (Fullan, 2001b:148) (Goleman, 2000). The need for strong diagnostic skills has already been highlighted in Paton and Vangen's work on collaborative thuggery, and clearly connects again here.

Goleman's description of the six main leadership styles is summarised in Figure 4.

Goleman stated that four of these – *Authoritative*, *Affiliate*, *Democratic* and *Coaching* – had positive impacts on climate. The remaining two influences, *Coercive* and *Pacesetting*, were negative influences. The latter of these is particularly noteworthy for, as indicated already, many of the heads interviewed in this work had effectively driven the development of collaborative working in the early days, partly through modelling. There appears to be a need, then, to ensure that pacesetting is undertaken in a way which is seen as positive to the overall organisational culture rather than becoming a negative drain.

Figure 4 Summary of Goleman's six leadership styles

	Coercive	Authoritative	Affiliative	Democratic	Pacesetting	Coaching
The leader's modus operandi	Demands immediate compliance	Mobilises people toward a vision	Creates harmony and builds emotional bonds	Forges consensus through participation	Sets high standards for performance	Develops people for the future
The style in a phase	"Do what I tell you"	"Come with me"	"People come first"	"What do you think?"	"Do as I do now"	"Try this"
Underlying emotional intelligence competencies	Drives to achieve, initiative, self-control	Self-confidence, empathy, change catalyst	Empathy, building relationships, communication	Collaboration, team leadership, communication	Conscientious, drive to achieve, initiative	Developing others, empathy, self-awareness
When the style works best	In a crisis, to kick-start a turnaround or with problem employees	When changes require a new vision, or when a clear direction is needed	To heal rifts in a team or to motivate people during stressful circumstances	To build -buy in or consensus or to get input from valuable employees	To get quick results from a highly motivated and competent team	To help an employee improve performance or develop long-term strategies
Overall impact on climate	Negative	Most strongly positive	Positive	Positive	Negative	Positive

The school leaders included in this study repeatedly highlighted approaches and strategies consistent with the authoritative and affiliative leadership styles. Core to these were establishing broad sign-in and ownership of a people-centred vision and relationship building. The democratic style was also evidently important in creating consensus over the focus for the collaboration.

Although not observed directly within this study, the potential danger of adopting the coercive and pacesetter approaches is nevertheless worth highlighting. In their way both are appealing, as in the extended schools context they potentially provide a mechanism for short-cutting processes that may be viewed as cumbersome and time-consuming, and as such delaying the move directly into action. The danger of excessively using the pacesetter approach is particularly great as, on the face of it, the characteristics associated with this are admirable. However, excessive use of this strategy encourages an over-dependence upon the leader, and over the longer term can prove demotivating and unsustainable.

Bonding and bridging

One of the most consistent themes running through the fieldwork undertaken in this project centred on the importance of an open and inclusive approach to leadership. This principle is central to the notion of “bridging” rather than “bonding” relationships, processes and actions (Farrar and Bond, 2005:6). In essence, bonding is concerned with developing highly coherent organisational structures with a strong sense of shared purpose and mutual dependency. While such a model is highly attractive in many circumstances, it can lead to a degree of introspection and a sense of exclusivity. In contrast, bridging focuses more on connecting with other agencies and networks who are able to support the achievement of the shared aims and vision. Both kinds of activity are important, but bridging is particularly important for reconciling democracy and diversity (Putnam, 2003:279-280). Within the context of extended schools, bridging activities are essential for increasing a genuine commitment to address areas of common concern.

Putnam notes that bridging is implicitly more challenging than bonding because it demands an openness to alternative cultures and perspectives which may challenge the accepted wisdoms and givens of a particular group. Indeed he is quick to emphasise that bridging is “not about Kumbaya cuddling” (Putnam, 2003:278) but rather is a process concerned with uniting groups with alternative perspectives in a full and genuine debate, focused upon addressing a common concern. Much is written elsewhere in this paper on the different professional cultures of teachers, social workers and others, and the ways in which these often lead to conflicts between groups. For leaders, bridging requires confidence and expertise in dealing with interdependence and meaning-making as increased demands are placed on them to help colleagues understand the necessity for collaboration and the alternative perspectives offered by different groups. As already noted, the strong moral purpose for extended schools provides an important source of authority for leaders in this context. Modelling an openness to collaboration and valuing all partners is also extremely valuable. Communication skills are clearly at a premium in this context.

In terms of the leaders included in this study, practical steps in moving from bonding to bridging included the development of shared management boards, visioning days, shared training, the establishment of a shared staff room, and the introduction of induction programmes that included all partners. More broadly, leaders sought to establish a common will to work together, with the implicit expectation that individuals would collaborate and operate flexibly to meet the needs of the children and families they served. Explicitly adopting the common values outlined in “The common core of skills and knowledge for the children’s workforce” is one potential way of increasing this sense of collective purpose and supporting the induction of staff from other agencies into the school.

Distributed leadership

Openness to collaboration is also implicit within a leader's willingness to promote the ethos of distributed leadership within the school, an imperative described elsewhere in this paper. In the extended school, a commitment to shared leadership is fundamental to dealing with the increased demands the extension places on the head, and also in protecting the longer-term sustainability of the school per se. As noted elsewhere, the contribution of individuals such as community engagement workers and extended school co-ordinators is particularly important in this. However, within the extended school the distribution of leadership moves further, beyond the confines of the school itself to individuals in partner agencies and the wider community as a whole.

Many of the leaders included in this study adopted a strategy of distributed leadership not just in response to increased workload but also out of a deep-seated commitment to building leadership capacity and developing individuals. Often this was viewed as part of the broader desire to raise social capital.

As noted elsewhere in this paper, adopting distributed leadership approaches can be challenging for leaders, and necessitates a high degree of trust. Gronn identifies a number of other demands relating to distributed leadership, including (Gronn, 2003:71):

- the ability to make explicit previously implicit elements of individuals' roles
- a greater openness to reciprocity and interdependence
- a higher tolerance of impermanence
- openness to change and different ways of working
- tolerance of ambiguity and uncertainty
- strong negotiation skills

Each of these is covered in some form or other elsewhere in this section of this report.

The need for reciprocity is particularly great, as any leader's attempts to increase the degree to which others are empowered to lead is doomed to failure if attention is not given to creating a climate in which others are inspired to seek out opportunities for leadership themselves (HayGroup, 2004). Indeed, Bush has written of instances in which teachers and others have shied away from increased leadership opportunities for a range of reasons (Bush, 1995). Furthermore the distribution of leadership can call into question traditional notions of professionalism (Gronn, 2003:69) and the nature of the leader/led relationship. In times of broader change, such as the move towards extended schooling, concerns relating to areas such as these can require sensitive handling. They also demand that the leader gives considerable attention to creating a culture in which individuals embrace opportunities to lead.

Entrepreneurialism

Entrepreneurship is the final essential ingredient within the overall success of extended schools. Indeed, behavioural studies of entrepreneurship highlight a range of characteristics, many of which can be readily identified within leaders of extended schools. Blawatt for instance highlights the significance of risk-taking and independent and innovative thinking in entrepreneurialism (Blawatt, 1998), all factors which are important in developing new relationships and services. In contrast, Lownsbrough notes that many professionals involved in the broader provision of children's services are inherently risk-averse, as the predominant culture is one centred on the prevention of harm rather than on maximising the potential for enrichment. The fact that part of the current impetus for change and closer collaboration comes from high-profile failures within the provision of care to children is likely to further reinforce a risk-averse culture (Lownsbrough and O'Leary, 2006:17-23).

Fillion (Fillion, 1997) provides a useful summary of characteristics associated with entrepreneurship which are shown in the table below. Only one of these behaviours – aggressiveness – was not readily identified within the leaders included in this study. In contrast, several behaviours were seen to have been exemplified particularly strongly by those interviewed. These are highlighted in bold in Table 2, and include resourcefulness, tenacity, high levels of energy, and a tendency to trust people.

Table 2 Summary of entrepreneurial behaviours

Innovators	Leaders
Moderate risk-takers	Independent
Creators	Energetic
Tenacious	Original
Optimistic	Results-oriented
Flexible	Resourceful
Need for achievement	Self-awareness
Self-confidence	Long-term involvement
Tolerance of ambiguity and uncertainty	Learning
Use of resources	Initiative
Aggressive	Sensitivity to others
Money as a measure of performance	Tendency to trust people

Source: (Fillion, 1997)

Blawatt and Fillion both highlight the desire for wealth creation as an integral part of the entrepreneurial spirit. However, within the context of extended schools and multi-agency working this is more likely to relate to the desire to build social, rather than financial, capital – an ethos consistent with the notion of social entrepreneurship (Community Action Network, 2003).

Specific examples of entrepreneurial behaviour in the schools included in the study included identifying alternative sources of funding, establishing areas of need, developing service provision and building relationships with partner agencies.

Application

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Application

This final section is intended to help school leaders further their thinking on the leadership issues covered in this report. In doing so it describes a number of tools and approaches that leaders may find it helpful to use with colleagues in their school and other organisations involved in the development of their extended school. In each instance a protocol is described which may provide a basis for reflecting on the issue under review and to support further discussion and planning.

Further information on the tools outlined can be obtained from NCSL's *'Self-evaluation: a guide for school leaders'* (NCSL, 2005) and *'The Self-evaluation File'* by John MacBeath (MacBeath, 2005b), each of which has been drawn upon in developing this section.

Example approaches are provided for considering the following key issues outlined in the report:

- developing relationships with other agencies
- assessing priorities for collaboration
- encouraging entrepreneurship
- considering the head's leadership style
- assessing the extent of distributed leadership
- moving to a culture of bridging rather than bonding

Considerations in using the protocols

As noted, each of the protocols outlined is intended to provide a basis for reflection and further discussion. A critical first step in their use is for leaders to consider what they hope to achieve through this dialogue, and who needs to be involved in order for this to be possible. For instance, assessing the priorities for collaboration will certainly involve drawing upon the opinions of colleagues from other organisations, parents, students and the wider community. In contrast, considering the head's leadership style may be a more solitary activity, or involve reflective conversations with peers and colleagues. Similarly, the anticipated outcomes from these activities are also likely to vary. While the former may focus on developing a list of specific actions to address, the latter may be more concerned with encouraging deeper reflection and self-awareness.

The use of these tools and any subsequent discussions will also be helped by ground rules being explicitly established at the start of the process and the assurance of confidentiality. One potential way of doing this is to position the related discussion as dialogue rather than debate, by highlighting the characteristics of this approach as described in Table 3.

Table 3 Debate vs. dialogue

Debate	Dialogue
arguing to win a point assuming that there is one right answer (and that you have it) combative: attempting to prove the other side wrong about winning listening to find flaws defending your assumptions criticising the other side’s point of view defending one’s views against those of others searching for weaknesses and flaws in the other person seeking an outcome that agrees with your position	aiming for consensus assuming that others have pieces of the answer collaborative: attempting to find common understanding; about finding common ground listening to understand bringing up your assumptions for inspection and discussion re-examining all points of view admitting that others’ thinking can improve one’s own searching for strengths and value in the other’s position discovering new possibilities and opportunities Source: (Creasy and Paterson, 2006:30)

Ground rules are particularly important in instances when those present may feel especially vulnerable or uneasy, for instance parents, or colleagues from other organisations. Therefore posting ground rules in a visible location, modelling the desired behaviour, and challenging any breach of these rules early are all important strategies. In addition to this, school leaders may wish to give consideration to the benefits of using a neutral facilitator and venue for the discussions, which may put participants further at ease. This strategy has often been used to good effect by many schools in their “visioning” days, as noted elsewhere in this paper.

An example set of ground rules, based upon those used by the Mental Health Foundation, is shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5 Example ground rules (Mental Health Foundation Conference Centre, 2006)

Please

- Listen to what other people are saying
- Respect the views of other people, even if you disagree with them
- Tell us what you think – your views are as valuable as anyone else’s
- Use plain English
- Keep your contribution to the point
- Be positive and concentrate on what can be done rather than what can’t

Please do not

- Feel you have to say something
- Breach others’ confidences
- Criticise individuals, organisations or seek to disparage them
- Use abusive or offensive language
- Concentrate on past failures

Adapted from Mental Health Foundation Conference Centre “Ground Rules” at www.mentalhealth.org.uk/conferences/main.asp?showitemID=169%codeitemID=

(1) Developing collaborative relationships with others – using force field analysis

Background

The importance of developing strong relationships at all levels with partner organisations has been highlighted throughout this paper. A number of issues are barriers to these, including differences in language, suspicions between different professionals, variations in the aims and objectives of organisations, and problems in establishing initial contact.

At the same time a number of factors can act as effective facilitators and a basis for building relationships between agencies. Examples of these include the contribution *Every Child Matters* has made to setting the broader policy agenda for collaboration, the role of Sure Start in promoting collaboration, and the establishment of Children's Trusts to support collaboration at the strategic level.

A key step for leaders in extended schools is to review these relative strengths and weaknesses and develop a strategy for addressing them or building on them as they look to move the collaboration forward.

How does it work?

Force field analysis is used to examine the conditions which inhibit or facilitate development of a culture, approach or behaviour. Its main advantages centre on its simplicity and speed of completion. It provides a means for considering the challenges that need to be overcome, and works well as a basis for further discussion over the priorities for subsequent action. On the flipside it can be perceived as threatening if insufficient context is established for its use, and can potentially over-simplify the issue under consideration.

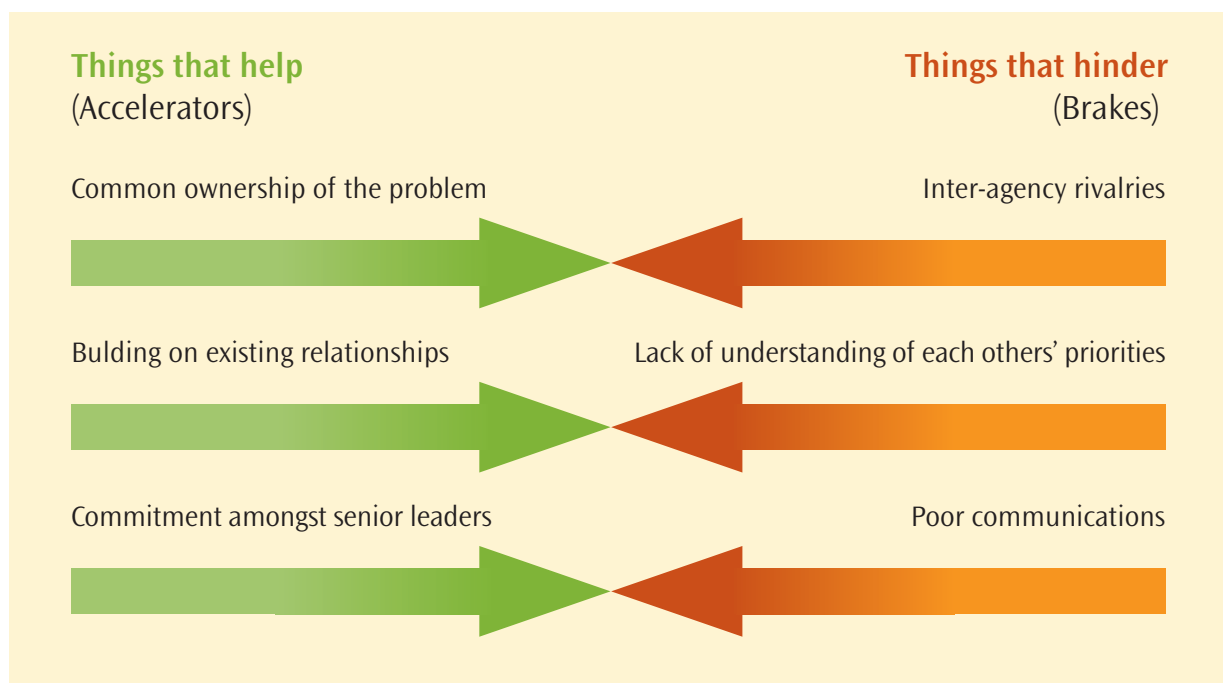
The force field consists of one sheet with two sets of three arrows pointing in opposite directions. These arrows represent the different counterforces, ie factors which act as brakes or serve as accelerators. Individuals are given a short period of time to summarise the three key accelerators and brakes in their context. This can be done either individually or as part of a collective task. Responses are then collected and shared more broadly as a basis for further discussion and action planning.

An example of how a completed force field analysis may look when used to explore the potential for collaboration with another agency is provided in Figure 6.

Questions for reflection

- What are the factors which help us work with partners?
- How can these be developed further?
- What are the main barriers we face?
- How can these be removed or their significance reduced?

Figure 6 Example force field analysis of multi-agency working



(2) Assessing priorities for collaboration – using the Extended School Evaluation Profile

Background

The issue of establishing shared priorities for the extended school is critical to promoting its longer-term sustainability and ensuring a genuine sense of collaboration. As noted elsewhere in this paper, accusations of empire-building and using other agencies to address their priorities have been thrown at schools in the past and the development of a shared vision is vital in addressing these.

How does it work?

The Extended School Evaluation Profile is a modified version of the School Evaluation Profile, originally used in the European Project on Quality in Education. It provides a means of considering the relative strengths for the school and whether or not it is felt to be improving each area.

The main advantage of this approach is that it provides a basis for broader involvement across different agencies. The use of a quantitative-based questionnaire ensures consistency in the collection of data across different groups, thereby supporting subsequent analysis. Its structured nature can be inhibiting for some individuals however. Finally, some consideration needs to be given to the process by which the items listed in the left-hand column are identified, to ensure that they are not viewed as simply representing the school's agenda.

In this approach, a number of small groups are established, each of which consists exclusively of members of a specific stakeholder group. Within the context of school improvement, stakeholder groups will typically comprise teachers, parents, pupils and governors. However, for the purposes of developing extended school provision and multi-agency collaboration, alternative groupings may be more appropriate, for instance school staff, social services staff, PCT staff, youth workers, voluntary groups etc.

Groups work collaboratively to complete the Extended School Evaluation profile, aiming to reach a consensus on the relative strengths and weaknesses of the extended school in a range of areas. This can be done through discussion.

The responses from different stakeholder groups are then collated for consideration, usually by a single, smaller sub-group of approximately 8 to 12 individuals from different agencies charged with progressing this area of work. This group will then review the answers given and seek to establish a small number of agreed priorities which will then be taken further over the short term.

An example of how an Extended School Evaluation Profile may look is provided in Figure 7.

Figure 7 Example of an Extended School Evaluation Profile

	Consideration of current position				Direction of progress		
	Very strong ++	Strong +	Weak -	Very weak --	Improving ?	Static ?	Deteriorating ?
Aims							
The extended school's aims are clearly expressed							
These aims are shared by all staff							
The aims have been developed in partnership							
Aims are owned by partner staff							
Aims are clearly understood by key target groups							
Collaborative culture							
Staff appreciate the demands of partner agencies							
Staff have a good understanding of partners' language and culture							
Staff understand the need for collaboration and are committed to it							
Colleagues from other organisations are valued							
Environment							
The environmental needs of staff from other agencies working in school are understood							
Adequate resources are provided to enable colleagues to work effectively							
Environmental constraints to collaboration have been addressed							

Questions for reflection

- What are the main strengths and weaknesses identified by stakeholder groups?
- What agreement is there over the areas for improvement?
- Which relate most closely to the school's improvement plan?
- Which can be addressed most easily?
- Who needs to be engaged to support these activities?

(3) Encouraging a culture of entrepreneurship – using Ethos in a Word

Background

The spirit of entrepreneurship is a key ingredient in ensuring that extended schools take advantage of the range of opportunities open to them. Examples of these include accessing alternative sources of funding and developing mutually beneficial partnerships to promote the longer-term sustainability of initiatives.

As noted elsewhere, a number of behaviours are synonymous with entrepreneurship. These include risk-taking, trustfulness, resourcefulness and flexibility. While heads may be able to embody these personally, the demand for increased leadership capacity means a broader culture of entrepreneurship is needed for the overall success of the school. Therefore, important actions for school leaders include reviewing the extent to which the culture within the school can be seen to support entrepreneurship, and identifying those areas which need to be addressed to promote this further.

How does it work?

Ethos in a Word is used to establish an understanding of the school culture, based upon the views of different stakeholder groups.

Under this approach, a series of descriptors are listed alongside their polar opposite. Respondents are required to consider each aspect in turn, indicating on the numerical scale the degree to which they feel each description applies. To avoid bias, the columns of descriptors should not consistently be arranged as either “good” or “bad” but rather should be a combination of both.

The instrument can be completed individually or by groups of professionals from a similar background.

Ethos in a Word supports the completion of a statistical analysis and can provide a clear indication of the areas of culture that require further attention. However, its closed format can be inhibiting to some respondents, and as such a further open discussion will usually be desirable, rather than using the instrument on its own.

A generic example of the Ethos in a Word instrument can be found in NCSL’s self-evaluation materials (MacBeath, 2005a:24). An example of a modified instrument, focusing more specifically on entrepreneurship, is provided in Figure 8. In this instance, the characteristics in the left-hand column are closely associated with an entrepreneurial culture.

Figure 8 Example “Ethos in a Word” modified to focus on entrepreneurship

	1	2	3	4	5	
Innovative						Constraining
Risk-taking						Risk-averse
Creative						Unimaginative
Optimistic						Negative
Flexible						Inflexible
Aspirational						Unaspirational
Self-confidence						Nervousness
Encourages independence						Culture of despondency
Energetic						Energy-sapping
Original						Unoriginal
Results-oriented						Process-focused
Sensitivity to others' needs						Insensitive to others' needs
Trusting						Suspicious
Liberating						Based on fear
Imaginative						Unimaginative
Empowering						Restrictive
Reflective						Unreflective
Clear aims and objectives						Imprecise aims and objectives
Responds well to conflict						Avoids conflict
Long-term perspective						Short-term perspective
Democratic						Authoritarian

Questions for reflection

- In what ways is the school's ethos seen to be entrepreneurial?
- What potential exists to develop these areas further?
- What aspects of culture discourage entrepreneurship?
- What steps can be taken to reduce their influence?

(4) Considering the head's leadership style to change – using Pi chart

Background

It is difficult to overstate the importance of effectively leading change to the overall success of the extended school, particularly in its early stages of development. Goleman and Fullan have both written of the importance of adopting alternative leadership styles, while Paton and Vangen have highlighted the importance of different leadership styles to the overall success of collaboration.

Heads and other leaders therefore need to develop a clear understanding of different leadership strategies and better awareness of the extent to which they adopt these various approaches in alternative contexts. Self-awareness and the ability to adopt alternative strategies are especially important in addressing the increased political and outward-facing dimension to leadership in the extended schools context.

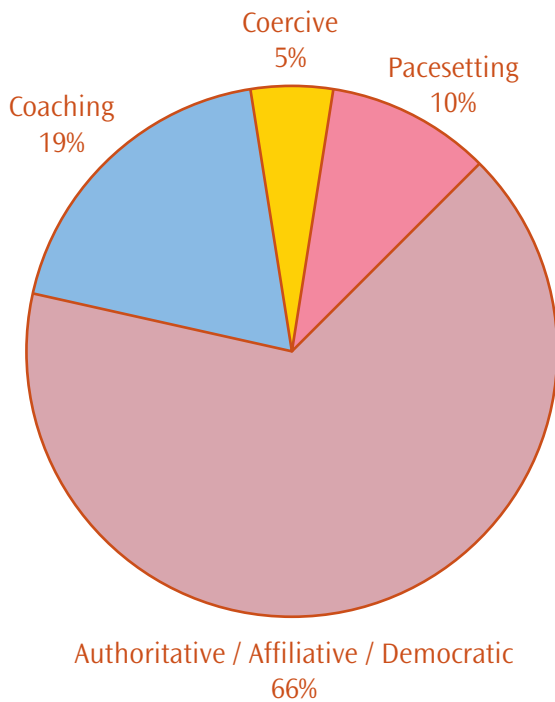
How does it work?

The Pi chart stimulates a potentially very quick assessment but one that can generate an extremely powerful discussion. The aim of the Pi is to get a broad understanding of the relative emphasis given to different leadership styles. Often this has centred on a broad three-way split between *consensus*, *command* and *consultation*, and research into the effectiveness of leadership styles recommends a 20/10/60 per cent split along these lines. However, within the context of the extended school, it may be more helpful to use an alternative classification, based upon the styles Goleman identified, outlined on page 48 of this paper. To simplify this process, it is suggested that four categories be used:

- 1. Coercive**
- 2. Pacesetting**
- 3. Authoritative/affiliative/ democratic**
- 4. Coaching**

An example of how this may appear is provided in Figure 9. The completed Pi chart can form a useful basis for personal reflection on one's own approach. Generally, the leader him- or herself completes the analysis. However, further benefit may come from asking their colleagues to also produce an analysis of the leader's style. Where possible a more powerful use of the tool may involve a comparison of the findings with other leaders in extended schools, thereby providing a means of comparing and contrasting one's own experiences. A comparison over time may also prove illuminating, particularly during the early stages of collaborative working.

Figure 9 Example of completed leadership styles Pi chart assessment tool



(5) Assessing the extent of distributed leadership – using the distributed leadership matrix

Background

Developing additional leadership capacity is critical in addressing the increased demands which result from extended schools and a greater focus on collaborative working. This is for several reasons. Firstly, the greater scale of activity may often be simply too much for one person or a small team to handle, and as a result a greater distribution of responsibility is required to ensure workloads remain manageable. Secondly, developing a greater sense of shared leadership and empowerment is an important ingredient in establishing the culture of entrepreneurship described above. Elsewhere, longer-term sustainability requires a collective commitment to the vision of collaborative working. Increasing leadership capacity is therefore an important step in promoting this greater sense of ownership and protecting the commitment to collaboration against changes in leadership.

Questions for reflection

- What is the leadership style most often used? Is this the right one for the stage of the school's extended development?
- What opportunities are there to model alternative, more positive approaches to collaboration more consistently?
- If you completed this again in a year's time, what difference would you expect to see and why?

How does it work?

The formal and informal leadership matrix provides a simple way of focusing on the location of leadership within an organisation. It does this by encouraging individuals to consider more closely and more critically the ways in which leadership of activities is realised on a day-to-day basis. At its simplest this can just be a broad list of individuals who demonstrate formal and informal leadership of specific areas of activity within the school.

One approach to its use is for the head to invite a number of colleagues to complete this matrix within the context of extended school activity. Ideally, these individuals will come from a range of levels and, potentially, organisational backgrounds. Subsequent discussion may centre upon differences and similarities in who is recognised as a leader, with the aim that the overall level of informal leadership may increase and be valued more. Again, repeating this exercise after a set period of time (eg 12 months) may provide a basis for reflecting upon the ways in which this aspect of organisational culture changes as the school develops.

An example of a completed distributed leadership matrix is provided in Figure 10.

Questions for reflection

- To what degree is formal and informal leadership shared across the school?
- Is leadership shared in the right areas?
- Is leadership shared consistently, or only in a limited number of areas or with a small number of people?
- Are there opportunities to promote the sharing of leadership further?
- What are the barriers to sharing leadership more broadly?
- What more can be done to create a culture where all are encouraged to lead?
- Is leadership more shared in the formal or informal domains?

Figure 10 Formal and informal leadership matrix

Formal	Informal
MB, Extended schools co-ordinator FP, headteacher SLT KE, ICT co-ordinator – runs excellent computer club AC, chair of extended schools management board PM, librarian who runs bookworm club CC, community engagement worker who runs coffee stop	SC, caretaker AH, LG – year 6 pupils who volunteer to help IB, – learning support assistant who supports computer club WH – AH’s mum who supports the bookworm club JK – local parent who has encouraged other parents to attend coffee stop mornings

(6) Moving to a culture of “bridging” rather than “bonding” – using the organisational priorities triangle tool

Background

The move to a culture of bridging rather than bonding involves a greater openness to alternative perspectives and cultures (a fuller discussion on the notions of bridging and bonding social capital can be found on page 49 of this report). Indeed, this is essential in developing a sense of shared purpose and common values, and fundamental to the longer-term success of any collaborative endeavour. Without this change in culture, organisations may work in tandem but not necessarily develop the genuine synergy needed to achieve the maximum collaborative advantage required to address the complex challenges at the heart of ECM.

A key step in moving towards bonding is making explicit one’s core priorities and aspirations, and gaining a meaningful understanding of those held by partner organisations.

How does it work?

The triangle provides a basis for individuals to reflect on the core values of their different organisations. Individuals are asked to position themselves at the place in the triangle that best reflects the relative emphasis given to each of the three priorities. Only in extreme instances will an individual place themselves on the actual point of the triangle, although the differences between organisations will often still be clearly evident. This instrument can be used as a paper-based exercise or, preferably, involve the identification of a triangle in the room within which individuals will be asked to physically move. This has the advantage of introducing a more physical aspect to any discussion, which can increase energy levels and provide a break from seated discussion debate. As with the other instruments described, this tool is most effective when used as an introduction to further debate.

Questions for reflection

- How consistent is the emphasis that different organisations place on social justice, well-being and standards?
- What are the reasons for these differences? How widely are these differences understood?
- What common ground exists which can be built upon further?

Figure 11 Organisational priorities triangle

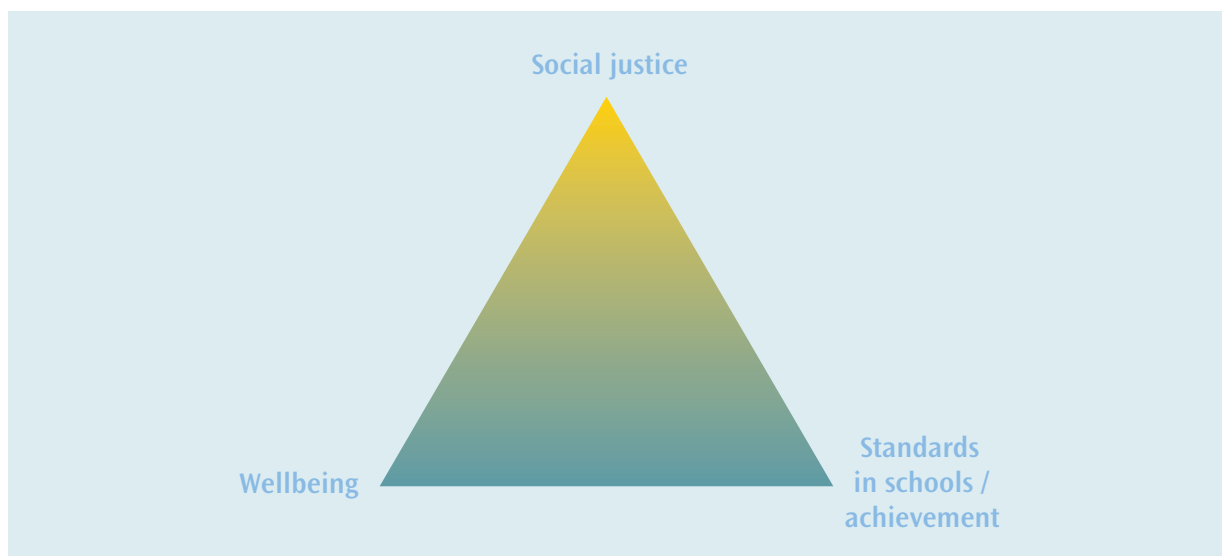


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Conclusions

Conclusions

This work represents an initial exploration of the complexities of multi-agency working within extended schools. Despite its relatively small scale, a number of clear findings can be identified which are summarised in this, the final section of the report.

The first of these is that, if leading a conventional school is complex, leading an extended school working with different agencies is even more complicated. A number of factors contribute to this, but it is arguably the “soft” issues of culture and interpersonal relationships that are the most demanding. Further challenge and complexity comes from the degree to which the move to extended schools working in a multi-agency context calls into question core understandings and assumptions as to what the school is for and the nature of professional roles. Indeed, a significant finding from the work is that multi-agency working requires individuals to work more flexibly, developing skills and approaches which meet the specific demands of the school.

Almost by definition, extended schools are organisations in a permanent state of flux. The absence of a prescribed model for their development is at once both a blessing and a curse. It means such schools must reconcile themselves to a perpetual state of evolution as the needs and demands of the local communities change. Arguably it is through the use of change leadership models that we are best able to consider the nature of leadership needed for the collaborative working intended to meet these demands.

The scale of this change and the different demands on leadership in this context require new and exciting ways of thinking and working. At the same time, a genuine commitment to the distribution of leadership is fundamental to the sustainability of the extended school. Sharing leadership and empowering others to act is also one way in which the head can model approaches which build capacity. The fact that, within this context, leadership is distributed not just within the school but more broadly across partner organisations and the wider community means that it also makes an important contribution to the development of social capital.

A further key element to leadership in this context is the importance of morality. Indeed, reflections on the work of Sergiovani and others highlights the importance of a clear moral purpose in building authority, given the absence of other more traditional sources. The contribution of *Every Child Matters* to this should not be underestimated, as it provides a strong drive towards collaboration in all key areas of child welfare provision. Similarly, local authorities often play a major role in facilitating relationships between schools and other partners locally. Within the context of these schools, a strong commitment to the development of social capital is also significant.

A range of different leadership qualities and attributes can be seen as essential in this collaborative environment. The ability to deal with the political dimension is particularly key. Many of the attributes associated with entrepreneurship are also essential. Similarly, a general commitment to move towards an ethos of bridging rather than bonding is important in establishing a more open organisational climate conducive to collaboration. Professional development for collaboration is more likely to be effective if it focuses on nurturing and developing these and other key attributes than if emphasis is placed on skill-specific training.

In conclusion, the demands multi-agency working places on school leaders are great. However, as highlighted at the start of this report, the scale of ambition set out in *Every Child Matters* and elsewhere is such that no single organisation or individual leader is able to realise it on their own. Moreover, such approaches are not entirely new to schools, many of which have accumulated considerable expertise in collaborative working, often over many years. Building commitment to this partnership activity and sufficient leadership capacity to support its delivery is essential if the full potential of extended schools is to be realised.

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Further NCSL Resources

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Further NCSL Resources

Reports

NCSL has produced several other reports in relation to collaborative leadership. These include:

Working together: helping community leadership work in practice (2006)

This publication aims to support school leaders in engaging more effectively and authentically with their communities, and with other agencies and organisations. It examines why this approach is important for schools and what this means for future practice.

Lessons from extended schools (2006)

Extended schools are intended to ensure improved access to a range of services for children and their families, moving towards a focus on the needs of the whole child. This document explores in more detail the implications of extended schools for their leaders, drawing upon a Leading Practice seminar undertaken in 2005.

ECM: why it matters to leaders (2006)

This publication outlines the importance of the ECM agenda for all school leaders, and shares opportunities for your leadership development in this area. In it, school leaders talk about their direct experience of leading schools offering access to extended services as part of their commitment to *Every Child Matters*.

Taking the wide view – the new leadership of extended schools (2005)

This report outlines the challenges faced by headteachers in building an extended school culture.

Copies of these publications can be downloaded free from the publications section of the NCSL website: www.ncsl.org.uk/publications.

Programmes and seminars

NCSL also offers several programmes to support leaders involved in collaboration. Further details can be obtained from the Community Leadership section of the College's website www.ncsl.org.uk/communityleadership/index.cfm.

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