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Extended services in schools and children's centres

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This survey aims to inform the expansion of extended services through identifying and assessing the factors which contribute to effective provision of these services in schools and children's centres. This follows the Government's pledge that, by 2010, 'all children should have access to a variety of activities beyond the school day' and that these will give them 'the opportunity to keep fit and healthy, to acquire new skills, to build on what they learn during the school day or simply to have fun and relax'.

Of particular interest to:

Education and childcare professionals working with children and young people aged 0-18.

Age group
All

Published
July 2006

Reference no.
HMI 2609

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Document reference number: HMI 2609

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Executive summary

This survey aimed to inform the expansion of extended services through identifying and assessing the factors which contribute to effective provision of these services in schools and children's centres. These services include access to childcare outside the school day; swift and easy referral to services families may need, for example health services; use of the settings' facilities by the community; a varied menu of activities and parenting support. This follows the Government's pledge that, by 2010, 'all children should have access to a variety of activities beyond the school day' and that these will give them 'the opportunity to keep fit and healthy, to acquire new skills, to build on what they learn during the school day or simply to have fun and relax'.¹

The survey was carried out between April 2005 and March 2006 and included 20 settings in 16 local authorities. Seven settings were children's centres, four were secondary schools, one was a special school and eight were primary or junior schools.

It found that almost all the provision was effective in meeting the range of needs of children, young people and adults in the local community. In half the settings visited, the impact of extended services on most outcomes for participants was good or better. Leadership and management of the provision were at least good in over half the settings, and all the schools and children's centres visited were committed strongly to providing inclusive services.

The report identifies good practice and the difference it made to those involved in the extended services. It also shows the ways in which agencies and individuals worked together to provide effective services. Examples of good practice and identification of barriers (and possible solutions) are included to inform the roll-out of the extended services programme into all communities. Discussion of cross-agency working practices to set up and run programmes of extended services is included to inform cross-inspectorate inspections of extended schools, children's centres and training providers.

The major benefits of extended services were the gains children, young people and adults made in their self-confidence and the development of more positive attitudes to learning and to what they might achieve. However, the possible impact of services on standards and achievement was not always monitored. Services were effective in meeting the Every Child Matters outcomes for children, increasing their awareness of healthy eating and the importance of taking regular exercise as well as enjoying a range of activities and achieving greater confidence in their abilities. Many communities benefited from the good quality services they received, such as on-site access to a range of

¹ *Extended Schools: access to opportunities and service for all – a prospectus*, DFES, 2005.

professionals and health advice. Settings worked hard to take into account the differing needs and abilities within the community when organising provision.

Leaders and managers of settings offering effective extended services were very committed and had a clear idea of what they wanted to achieve for their communities, including raising standards and improving children's progress. They liaised appropriately with local groups and agencies to ensure a coordinated approach to provision. Good planning built on the outcomes of consultations with children, young people and adults, and with other agencies. However, very limited spending periods for some grants constrained the breadth and depth of these consultations. They also affected significantly the sustainability and success of some services. Skilful planning also took into account the ways in which managers could ensure value for money, affordability and sustainability of services. The most effective leaders and managers developed a programme of services gradually to suit the particular needs of their community, building on what had been successful.

Local authorities played an important role in developing comprehensive strategic plans which took account of extended services and the five outcomes for children. They did not always provide consistent guidance to settings or evaluate thoroughly their individual plans for developing the services. The systems for measuring the impact of extended provision on children and young people were not usually in place in local authorities or in most of the settings. Local authorities were also important in helping settings in a cluster to work together to provide services for a shared community.

Key findings

- ❑ The major benefits to children, young people and adults were enhanced self-confidence, improved relationships, raised aspirations and better attitudes to learning.
- ❑ Strongly committed leaders and managers were key factors in successful provision. They had a clear understanding of the features of extended provision and how it would work in their contexts. They involved the whole senior management team as extended services were considered integral to improving outcomes for children.
- ❑ Services were most effective when there was a plan which considered standards, value for money, affordability and the long-term sustainability of the services.
- ❑ The most successful providers shaped the provision gradually to reflect their community's needs and wants in collaboration with other agencies. They gave sufficient time to gather information on local requirements before setting up any provision. There was no single blueprint for success.

Regular consultation by services was vital. Successful services fulfilled the community's needs, were of high quality and maintained interest.

- ❑ Short-term funding made it difficult for services to plan strategically. This influenced significantly which services were provided and the extent to which they could be sustained.
- ❑ Agencies worked together most effectively when there was a lead co-ordinator in the setting and agreed protocols for working practices.
- ❑ The role of local authorities was important in establishing effective, well coordinated plans and support structures. Authorities used effective settings and agencies fully to disseminate good practice.
- ❑ The strongly inclusive approach seen in most of the settings visited enabled a wide range of age groups to access services. However, there was a lack of continuity in services and interventions once children moved from children's centres on to school.
- ❑ The impact of services on pupils' standards and achievement was recognised by all providers, but rarely monitored.

Recommendations

In order to improve the provision of extended services in schools and children's centres, the following recommendations are made.

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) should:

- set timescales which give leaders of settings enough opportunity to liaise with agencies and members of the community in gathering information on local learning and leisure needs
- ensure that funding allocations and timescales allow sufficient time for consultation and the carefully considered introduction of extended services.

Local authorities should:

- provide a strategic overview of provision to ensure that services are developed coherently within a community
- use the expertise and experience of effective providers when planning for expansion into all communities

- establish systems for measuring the impact of extended services on the standards and achievement of children and young people, particularly the most vulnerable
- ensure a continuity of provision of support services between children's centres and schools.

Schools and children's centres should:

- measure the impact of extended services on children's learning
- plan to sustain services through funding, maintaining interest and encouraging good take-up, and be flexible enough to adapt to changing needs
- be accountable for the quality, effectiveness and suitability of the extended services they manage
- work with other settings to provide for the community's wider needs.

Benefits of the extended services provided

1. The majority of children, young people and their families stated that the main benefits of the services were enhanced self-confidence and improved relationships. Children and adults had heightened aspirations and developed more positive attitudes to learning.
2. The services had a strong influence on participants' health and safety. Enjoyment was an integral part of provision. Although not monitored consistently, improved achievement and standards were identified in some settings, particularly in English and mathematics. Participants usually felt their views were listened to and had a significant influence on establishing services.
3. Where settings identified and measured the outcomes expected, for and by, participants from the range of extended services, they used existing electronic monitoring systems to simplify the process.

Impact on children and young people

4. Increased consultation, usually through a school council, enabled pupils in the large majority of the schools visited to contribute to the way services worked. This developed a mutual trust between pupils and adults. Pupils felt they had a say within the school community and appreciated the respect accorded to their opinions. They enjoyed the variety of opportunities offered by study support, breakfast clubs, family learning, sports and leisure, and were able to engage with pupils from other year groups. Study support sessions provided the opportunity for pupils to work in a calm, secure environment where they could receive one-to-one help

from teachers, especially if they had particular difficulties or if they were more able.

5. There was considerable qualitative evidence that attitudes and dispositions towards learning had improved significantly as a direct result of participation in extended services. In the majority of schools, sports and leisure activities encouraged pupils to take part in other extended services aimed at raising attainment, such as study support and family learning. A minority of schools included the pupils' involvement in services as part of their monitoring of progress and attainment. Where this took place, records showed significant improvements in GCSE results. In one school the number of pupils gaining five A* to C grades doubled over two years. Some older pupils in primary schools also made gains of up to three National Curriculum sub-levels in a year.²
6. Settings which monitored attendance, punctuality and behaviour saw signs of improvement. There were also early indications that providing extended services contributed to an increase in the number of children on roll because of the breadth of services offered, including extended childcare. Activities at breakfast clubs, which included conversation with adults and literacy work, enhanced children's language development and developed their interest in reading. Through the range of activities provided at breakfast clubs and the level of adult support, many pupils developed a more positive approach to their school work and gained a greater awareness of the leisure activities available to them. However, this depended on staff and organisers having a good knowledge of the factors which influenced achievement.
7. There was considerable evidence that pupils were keen to remain after school to work and relax. Pupils enjoyed the organised team games and opportunities for active play which the clubs provided. In most schools, the breadth of services offered was tailored to different needs and levels of motivation. This helped pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities to access more opportunities for learning and leisure. For example, sports activities were open for all to gain skills and play for fun and were not just an opportunity for coaching the school teams.
8. Pupils gained self-confidence through their involvement in extended services. They became used to working with a range of different course and club leaders from a number of agencies, including local universities, sports organisations, and police and community wardens. Girls joined associations such as Brownies and Guides which gave them the opportunity to be more independent, for example when they went on residential camps. These associations also encouraged pupils from under-

² The expected rate of progress is three sub-levels over two years for pupils aged seven to 11 (equivalent to one National Curriculum level).

represented groups to join, supporting cultural integration and enhancing their confidence.

9. Pupils had a greater sense of ownership of what went on in their school. When they chose the activities, the services were sustained, varied and innovative. Pupils enjoyed meeting adults and pupils from the wider community who shared the facilities and took part in activities in their school. In all the secondary schools visited, pupils were able to access additional services, ranging from health advice to sport and leisure, on their own school site. Where there was a range of extended services, pupils were proud that their school was a centre for community activities. When parents were seen as co-learners, the value placed on education rose and they, too, were proud of the school.

Young people making a contribution

A secondary school for 11–16 year olds opened a common room for all students in response to their request. It provided a wide range of activities as well as the opportunity to relax. Following students' representations, one session a week was designated for girls only, as they were outnumbered three to one by boys, and one day a week for Year 7 students. This was proving extremely successful.

Impact on families

10. The majority of parents interviewed spoke positively about the impact of family learning sessions on their relationships with their children. They were able to learn together and had the opportunity to talk and interact in a context other than home. Parents' aspirations for themselves and their children were raised. They had a greater readiness to learn and contribute to their child's learning. Family learning sessions with younger children enabled parents to appreciate the value of learning through play. Many found sessions on childcare and child development helped them to relate more positively to their children to help them learn. Parents of school-aged children believed that their children gained from attending extended services. Before- and after-school care and holiday provision helped parents feel secure because their children were in a safe environment.
11. The vast majority of parents who participated in training or used the support services were highly satisfied with what was provided. However, there were a few settings visited where it was unclear whether parents were seen as integral to creating services or were simply consumers of them. In the best examples, families had a well determined and respected role in developments. Most were consulted about the courses or services they needed or wanted. They appreciated greatly being asked to evaluate the sessions. The majority of settings had good take-up of their extended provision, but there were still groups of parents who were hard to reach. Some settings were succeeding by approaching individual parents and inviting them to taster sessions and family learning activities, emphasising

the benefits to their children. Informal approaches, being responsive to parents' needs and providing flexible arrangements for attendance were the most successful ways of involving the widest range of parents. Parents' use of extended services helped to build stronger relationships with staff in the settings. This was often achieved through informal contacts when parents came into the setting for drop-in sessions or to meet other professionals.

12. All the family members who were interviewed during the survey commented on the impact of extended services on their self-confidence, particularly mothers with pre-school children. They were able to mix informally during drop-in sessions and at other courses. They benefited from the support of others in similar circumstances and recognised that these sessions provided opportunities for them to meet people from other cultures within their community.
13. The self-assurance gained from attending sessions helped parents to feel more confident about approaching staff to talk about their children and also to take further accredited courses to prepare for employment. Some parents progressed from attending activities at their child's school or children's centre to becoming a volunteer in the setting or with a community group. Others moved on to further vocational training or paid employment. Parents reported that sessions on basic skills and courses for those learning English as an additional language had made the greatest impact on their lives. All were very proud of the certificates and awards they gained.

Support for parents of young children

A drop-in centre provided 'Chatterbox' language play sessions run by a speech and language therapist and senior support practitioner. The activities were fun and encouraged parents to communicate with and respond to communication from their children aged 0–4. The group used strategies from 'circle time' for listening, looking, copying, understanding, talking and singing.³ They developed 'play-talk' bags that parents could borrow to continue the fun at home. Staff at the centre had observed the improved speech of many of the children which would give them a better start with reading and writing. Many parents reported that they had gained a great deal as they had not known what they should be doing with their very young children.

Impact on the community

14. Schools and centres which actively encouraged the local community to become involved in the extended services found that the setting became

³ 'Circle time' has been described as 'carrying out activities, games and the practice of speaking and listening, often in a round.' www.circle-time.co.uk.

the hub for many people to meet and mix. Parents of young children, particularly mothers, benefited especially through access to health and other services available on one site close to their home. Those who felt isolated were also able to access support. In small remote communities, settings took supportive services for families, such as childcare and advice and guidance, directly to them. Establishing a number of successful educational and leisure opportunities at a setting made a significant impact on the local people, especially where these were open for full days and at weekends. A major benefit was that schools and centres gained a higher profile and, as a result, were seen as a very positive feature of the community. Involving people in the provision and thereby creating a sense of ownership helped to reduce vandalism in one setting, as did extended opening throughout the year in another.

15. Agencies reported that the services provided employment opportunities for local adults and ex-pupils, as well as giving them skills for wider work opportunities. The services helped adults to become more conscious of their community and often produced volunteer workers and school governors. In the most successful settings, leaders saw being a provider of extended services as a community role, supporting, for example, arts and play projects.

Involving young people

A primary school with a floodlit, all-weather football pitch hired it out to local young people after the school clubs had finished using it. The cost was 50p for an hour. It provided the teenagers with useful facilities and helped the school by providing an on-site presence out of school hours. The low cost was subsidised by the fees paid by amateur football clubs at sessions later in the evenings.

Working in partnership

16. A high level of commitment from leaders and managers was vital for success, as was their ability to develop the principles of extended services into good practice in their setting. The most effective providers ensured that services developed gradually, working with other agencies and settings to provide what the community said it wanted and needed.
17. Services were most effective when comprehensive plans existed to improve standards and promote value for money, affordability, flexibility and sustainability. It was vital for settings to establish clear communication between agencies and agreed protocols for working together.
18. Local authorities had a major role in providing the strategic overview and the infrastructure to support the development of extended services. The majority supported settings effectively by establishing a partnership

approach to providing extended services and using existing expertise to support new providers, but there was limited evaluation of the quality of settings' planning.

Leading and managing the provision of extended services

19. Extended services were most effective when the senior leadership and management team in schools and children's centres was committed totally to providing extended services and shared a vision for the five outcomes for children, and for improved standards. In particular, these leadership teams had very clear plans, the best of which integrated extended services into the setting's overall improvement plan. They had a good understanding of issues relating to affordability and sustainability. Effective leaders and managers coordinated and facilitated the planned delivery of services and enabled others to move the provision forward.
20. In the majority of settings, the coordinator of the provision was employed by the school or centre and was part of the senior staff team. This raised the profile of the extended provision and helped it to be viewed as integral to the work of the setting. Where coordinators for extended services were in place, headteachers reported no significant increase in their workload as a consequence of providing extended services. Good managers recognised the value of qualified play leaders and sports coaches and incorporated them within the staffing of the setting. These managers used their local expertise and experience to ensure that the setting became a genuine community resource.
21. Improved sustainability and a greater impact on participants were evident when services built steadily on successful provision and did not depend on short-term funding. Few settings, however, appreciated that they were accountable for the quality and reliability of the services they provided and they rarely assured the quality of the provision.
22. Although managers thought there were clear links between extended services, standards and achievement, only a minority of the settings visited had established effective systems for monitoring pupils' progress and attainment. Not all settings understood clearly what they wanted to assess or the criteria for measuring success. Consequently, they did not use existing data management systems fully for recording improvements linked to the extended provision.
23. Continuity of provision and joint monitoring of the impact of services were promoted when senior managers of children's centres and local schools worked together, for example to share information on continued progress and attendance. However, opportunities to sustain the parents' involvement in speech and language programmes when children transferred from a children's centre to school were often missed. The

continuity of services and interventions once children moved on from children's centres was inconsistent.

24. Creative leadership and an innovative approach to managing and developing extended services enabled staff to have more involvement with other settings and agencies. As a result, they gained a shared sense of purpose and an enhanced appreciation of the different roles and responsibilities of the range of service providers. They developed a greater understanding about how to consult a range of groups in the community and how to inform them of decisions. This created more openness and willingness to work with a wide range of different agencies.

Involving children and young people, and their families

25. In all the schools visited, and more so in secondary schools, pupils had a say in deciding on the services they wanted. Parents also had a voice in settings through consultation or representative groups, for example an area forum for parents. However, although consultation often took place when extended provision was being set up, it became more limited once the services were established.
26. Settings often found that the limited period between planning to set up a range of services and the start of the funding did not always allow sufficient time for effective consultation. Finding out the views of those who did not use the services was often difficult. A few settings used other agencies that were skilled in consulting groups who were hard to reach, including teenagers and young adults.
27. All parents had suggestions regarding relevant new provision. In one primary school, parents wanted a homework club for their children. However, before setting this up, they wanted to be able to attend sessions on what their children were learning in English and mathematics so that they could help them more effectively. In another school, family members were used effectively as volunteers, helping with or running activities.
28. Adults and children commented that those responsible for the extended services always came back to them if they made a suggestion; their views were respected and never ignored. All appreciated the opportunity to comment on the effectiveness and appropriateness of what was offered and acknowledged that changes were often made as a result.
29. Parents and other users welcomed opportunities to meet a range of professionals, for example from the mental health service, on one site. Where such on-site services were provided, all settings had worked with adults and agencies to devise protocols for ensuring confidentiality. In the best cases, adults and children decided what could be shared with other agencies after each session and this became accepted practice for all services on the site.

30. The impact of outside agencies on families' well-being was greater when the agencies visited the settings rather than expecting parents to travel further to access their services. In one school, a health action plan was devised to support parents and their children, and all services were provided on site. Through having greater access to agencies on one site, parents felt more confident and their anxieties were reduced when approaching, for example, social care services.

Involving parents and family members

In a primary school, several parents had developed their own interests and expertise to set up extended services for pupils. They had trained to gain the appropriate accreditation as coaches in football and cross-country running. The sessions were self-funding and extremely popular. An older sister of one of the pupils also came from her secondary school to help with a netball club after school.

Working with parents and pupils

A good partnership had developed between parents, pupils and 'healthy schools' initiatives to establish a healthy eating culture at a secondary school. The school had its own kitchen and control over suppliers and purchases. There had been some work with parents in producing a healthy eating recipe book. Healthy eating was also a standing element of the Key Stage 3 curriculum in technology, and the DfES engaged the school in its national programme. Vending machines did not provide chocolate, sweets or fizzy drinks; instead, they provided water, fruit, sandwiches and home-made snacks and were described as 'healthy eating machines'.

Involving outside agencies and the wider community

31. Schools, children's centres and local authorities made intelligent use of the local networks of statutory and voluntary services when setting up extended services across an area. In the best cases, settings ensured that they complemented and enhanced what already existed, taking full account of what was already being provided locally.
32. A large majority of the 13 schools visited found it easier to meet the needs of their community more effectively by working as part of a cluster. In children's centres, the extended provision was often part of their core services, especially if they were in a Sure Start local programme. However, in a small minority of the schools, there was no common, shared vision for the extended school agreed by teachers, managers and governors, or in collaboration with the wider community. Schools were very aware that the services should support their core purpose of educating the pupils. They saw extended provision as a significant factor in raising standards. Where it was difficult to engage some primary schools in developing extended services, this was often because they did not believe there was a need for

providing longer opening hours, holiday schemes or family learning programmes.

33. In the most effective settings, agencies had good channels of communication, often through the coordinator or extended services manager. When they worked together, agencies planned courses or activities in the most efficient and complementary way. Agencies offering similar courses were able to share or refocus to avoid duplication.
34. Assessing existing provision in relation to the needs and desires of the community was strong in the majority of settings. Successful provision made good use of existing groups and facilities such as health centre noticeboards, libraries, health visitors and outreach vehicles travelling around small rural communities, providing both information and services. Involving the wider community was often the last aspect of extended provision to be developed in a minority of cases. Community provision which was well integrated into the work of the setting ensured greater cohesion and reduced isolation. Settings gained from the expertise in their wider communities to support the extended services. This included the work of agencies involved in local regeneration, family support and neighbourhood management. This local intelligence often led to a clearer grasp of what was required, for example, whether people needed support for family learning or mental health issues. Finding out the key issues from people working in the locality produced services which were better tuned to the community.

Cross-agency working

In one setting, training providers worked cooperatively to identify overlaps in the courses they offered. They liaised closely, building on feedback from parents and the wider community to develop a programme of sessions at varying levels, for example introductory sessions in basic skills and City and Guilds qualifications in English and mathematics. The agencies also decided on a range of venues to enable wider choice for adults without spreading participation too thinly; this worked very effectively. Some parents commented on how useful it was to attend some courses at other settings, thereby meeting a broader range of people.

The role of the local authority

35. The majority of local authorities provided a strategic overview within which schools and children's centres could identify their role and what they could provide. This made for greater coherence and avoided ad hoc planning. It also provided an infrastructure for administering the development of extended services, templates for contracts and service agreements, support and guidance for innovative approaches and accountability. Over half of the local authorities carried out detailed assessments of what services were provided and where, in order to inform

strategic planning for future expansion. Introducing a coherent approach to providing children's services created a better context for developing extended schools and centres.

36. In a very small number of the authorities, strategic guidance lagged behind the development of services and there was sometimes poor planning to sustain them. The appointment of officers to coordinate extended services had yet to have an impact more widely although, where they were effective, schools were helped to define success criteria and clear goals to inform their plans for services and funding.
37. A large majority of the local authorities visited had strategic plans which included extended services and the five outcomes for children. However, financial planning did not always take into account the resources necessary to support and sustain extended services. Where there was a community improvement partner, the local authority coordinated the establishment and expansion of provision and its sustainability across networks of schools. In the best practice seen, education advisers in local authorities discussed extended provision and its impact on pupils' learning during their regular contacts with schools.
38. Few of the local authorities visited had set up any systems for settings to monitor the impact of extended services on learning or whether parents' involvement in them made a difference to their children's progress. They also did not monitor the impact of services provided in children's centres on the progress children made throughout school.

Supporting the roll-out of extended services

39. The majority of leaders in the settings visited were not given sufficient time, before setting up extended services, to liaise with residents and those agencies working in the area in order to understand the specific needs of their community. Funding was often time-limited; this ran counter to the principles of engaging communities, consulting them and planning for sustainability.
40. A few of the local authorities visited did not support settings enough by defining what core services they were expected to provide or through offering enough guidance on how they could be developed. The majority of the authorities were sensitive to existing partnerships between settings, clusters and networks when trying to develop a collaborative approach to providing extended services.
41. Many of the settings had been part of the DfES pilot to develop full-service extended schools. They had developed considerable knowledge of what worked and had gained expertise in providing services for their community. Children's centres were set up to provide a core of extended services to support young children and their families in the local

community. The settings with longer experience of such provision were invaluable to local authorities when planning to expand extended services in schools and children's centres.

42. Very good coordination by effective leaders led to good networking and the building of partnerships. The coordinators communicated successfully and consulted widely, with the result that people believed they were listened to.

Building on strengths

43. The success of extended services depended on settings knowing what they wanted to achieve from the provision for their whole community and how they might support its development and sustainability. Experienced settings recognised that sustainability was not just about grants, but about maintaining interest, encouraging involvement, and anticipating and adapting to change. Good settings understood and developed ways to include extended activities in their overall work. Excellent continuing communication ensured that participants had a say in developments and a well defined and respected role. Children, parents and other adults developed a sense of ownership of the services provided and wanted more.
44. Successful services grew steadily from actual needs within the community. This meant that settings were able to establish formats and timings which worked best for the children and adults. Establishing 'one stop shops', which provided adults and young people with a broad range of services on one site or guided them towards other local provision, were particularly successful. The most effective services were drop-in sessions with visiting professionals, for example with health visitors, and a room provided for parents to meet informally.
45. Taster sessions were particularly effective in encouraging children, parents and others to sample the courses on offer. There was considerable evidence that, if adults attended sessions about children's learning, they were more likely to enrol on courses at their own level. Many settings provided excellent opportunities, particularly for women, to develop the necessary confidence and skills either to take up employment for the first time or return to work.
46. The most successful settings worked closely with schools and centres to offer a more comprehensive range of services than they could provide alone. Whilst still recognising their unique contribution to such a partnership, effective settings often worked to facilitate activities run on another site. Collaboration enabled a pooling of resources and efficient use of staff and time. Through working together and sharing experience and expertise, settings were able to develop more robust long-term plans. These were based appropriately on ways of ensuring sustainability of the

services wanted or provided, and on ongoing evaluations from participants.

Overcoming obstacles

47. Of the 13 schools visited, seven of them understood the cultural shift which was required for setting up extended services and the new set of skills needed. Local authorities had a major role to play in establishing the infrastructure for supporting schools and centres through this process. The majority of authorities in the survey supported settings by providing services centrally to help them access a wide range of grants and to bid for funding. They also provided standardised packages covering agreements and contracts with outside agencies, protocols for financial management, insurance and police checks, as well as the management of additional cleaning and caretaking.
48. A particular area where schools required support was managing provision for 48 weeks a year. This was usually done by contracting the work out to play and sports providers. Often, extended provision was part of a local authority's strategic plan, but the commitment, knowledge and understanding of senior officers were not always shared with or accepted by those dealing with settings regularly. In a few instances, local authorities showed a great interest in short-term projects, rather than working with settings to secure longer-term extended services.
49. Financial accountability was made more complex by the requirement to account for each service separately even though the provision may be fully integrated. This limited the efficient use of resources, particularly staffing. The short-term nature of many of the grants, and the limited time between notification of the funding and the required spending period meant that there was often insufficient time for consultation; this threatened the sustainability of services offered. Settings often had a narrow view of developing sustainable services, based solely on the length of the grant period. There was merit, therefore, in promoting sustainability through routes other than financial ones. Such routes included partnership working, improved networking or moving the management of projects to an outside agency. One school helped to maintain a service on benefits advice by training all staff, so that parents could get information from whoever they asked, and only the more complex queries required professional advisers. Another route to sustainability was supporting or nurturing suitably skilled volunteers from the community to take forward some of the out-of-school sports activities. At one secondary school visited, local adult teams used the playing fields and facilities for their own training in return for offering sessions with approved coaches for the school's pupils.
50. Quality assurance of the extended services was sometimes difficult where the agencies providing them were not directly accountable to the setting,

yet used their facilities and were seen by the community as part of the school or children's centre. Accountability for staff from different agencies and their particular terms and conditions of work therefore required skilled management. Where successful, the working practices and protocols were clear and agreed.

51. Fathers were more willing to participate in activities where male personnel or a local support worker for fathers were linked to the setting. Some settings ran very successful sessions just for fathers in order to overcome concerns or embarrassment about joining female-dominated groups. A few schools and children's centres were working to overcome stereotyping by involving people in non-traditional roles.
52. There was sometimes a lack of collaboration in meeting the childcare and parental needs, such as having seamless childcare available for children once they started school. In good settings, links were developed between early years' education, play and childcare so that there were consistent strategies for managing children's behaviour and play.
53. Parents wanted consistent provision of a crèche for adult training. This was an important factor when they were deciding which sessions to attend because they wanted the crèche to be at the same venue as the course. This sometimes created problems for organisers who tried to provide crèches economically for a number of courses running simultaneously across an area.
54. A major aim of extended services is to raise the standards and achievement of children and young people. The survey showed that schools and children's centres found it difficult to measure the impact of the services: many interventions and developments were expected to provide considerable impact over time, but not in the short term. There was a danger of measuring impact by considering only those things which could be measured easily. A few settings had included the involvement of children and their parents in extended services as a criterion when monitoring progress, using the local authority's existing data management systems. One headteacher said that improvement was about 'creating a learning climate and community regeneration'. A few settings felt restricted by national expectations about establishing and managing extended services and were trying to challenge the boundaries which they perceived as limiting innovation.

Implications for different inspectorates

55. The wider introduction of extended services in schools and children's centres has important implications for inspectorates. The breadth of such integrated provision is currently inspected by several inspectorates on one site. The creation of the new Ofsted which will include adult and children's

services will reflect the aspects of extended provision which have been the subject of this survey.

Cross-sector working

56. Good teamwork between health, education, social services and other agencies, together with good capacity for leading and managing extended services, led to effective cross-sector working. The agencies were able to share information about roles and responsibilities, linked with all aspects of a child's life. Collaborative working also gave a qualitative view of the impact each agency had on a child's life. Cross-sector working enabled a coherent programme of interventions and services to be developed to support children, parents and those in the wider community. However, this was not recorded or measured systematically to identify its impact on raising standards and improving lives.
57. A community improvement partner or a person with responsibility for developing and managing extended services led to greater efficiency in cross-sector working. Such staff were able to build on local knowledge from agencies about community needs and, in some cases, to broker services for more than one setting.
58. Schools with very limited involvement in the services provided on their sites found considerable difficulties in sharing information and making services match the needs of the community.
59. Cross-sector working was most successful when those responsible for managing and developing extended services were well informed of the remit of different agencies and how the impact of their joint working might be judged. In contrast, weak understanding and a lack of such appreciation had a profound effect on the level of commitment and the rate of progress in developing coordinated services.

Cross-sector working

The school matron was employed full time by a secondary school. Her job was concerned with the physical, mental and emotional health of students. She was involved in teaching first aid; contributing to personal, social and health education and sex and relationship lessons; contributing to the Nursery Nursing vocational course (Health and Social Care), and the A level physical education course. She had informal links with the Primary Care Trust and with local doctors and could quote examples where there had been successful referrals, for example relating to anorexia. She was a member of the referral panel dealing with individual young people's cases. It included the special educational needs coordinator, Connexions, the learning support unit and mentors. The matron was clearly well placed to be aware of health issues and students were willing to use her services. Boys were as receptive to visiting her as girl students.

Working practices

60. The most effective settings required agencies to liaise and collaborate in setting up courses, advertising and staffing them. This often produced greater cost effectiveness. This was especially relevant given the short-term nature of some grants and the tapering of longer-term funding. Facilities were often provided free of charge. Shared offices for service providers at the setting also reduced costs. To improve efficiency further, agencies evaluated outcomes systematically.
61. Collaborative work in developing drop-in taster sessions helped the children, parents and the wider community to understand what was on offer, and that the sessions and courses were part of a coherent, well organised package. Joint working helped to provide balanced provision covering education, support, guidance and leisure.
62. Establishing working protocols and clear contractual arrangements was necessary to ensure that parents and other users trusted and had confidence in the agencies concerned. Maintaining confidentiality was important. Where this was successful, parents and other users were confident that their views were respected.
63. Extended services were planned to incorporate the five outcomes for children in the Every Child Matters agenda. Many of the services focused on developing healthy lifestyles through sports and support from health workers including the cessation of smoking and drugs misuse, fostering sexual health and weight management. Clear protocols and expectations of agencies and their staff helped them to provide a secure and safe environment for children during after-school activities and in the holidays. Most of the extended services attended by pupils and their families aimed to make learning fun and support their progress, for example one school held out-of-school study support sessions and Saturday sessions led by university staff. Children and young people knew that they could contribute to what went on in their lives, and expected to do so. The link between the extended provision and children's achievements, although not monitored carefully in all instances, was perceived by parents and young people to give them a better chance to do well once they left school. Amongst other things, most children improved their skills in English and mathematics and gained greater self-confidence.

Local authority planning and practice

64. Data from joint area reviews and consultations were analysed effectively to identify what was needed and establish priorities. Local authorities were effective in identifying where extended services were working very effectively, and they used such settings effectively as exemplars for others. This was particularly true of settings in difficult circumstances which were achieving greater success in many areas of school life, such as

improving attendance and behaviour. Staff were invited to speak at conferences to encourage other schools to participate more enthusiastically in the extended schools' programme. Some local authorities appointed very effective extended schools' coordinators who did not always come from a background in education. They were adept at holding schools to account for their extended schools' budget, although accounting systems for the different sources of funding were often complex and bureaucratic.

65. In preparing for Children's Trusts, local authorities were collaborating more fully across departments and gradually including extended services in their strategic planning, evidenced by a move from school improvement plans to community improvement plans.

Notes

The survey, including a pilot in three settings during the summer 2005, involved 20 settings across 16 local authorities: seven children's centres, eight primary or junior schools, one special school and four secondary schools. It built on earlier work carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) on full-service extended schools.⁴

The settings were selected to represent the range of schools which had been funded to provide extended services. All the children's centres include extended services in their provision.

The survey was conducted by four HMI and three childcare inspectors. It focused on identifying good practice and possible barriers to success in order to support the roll-out of the programme of extended services. The survey evaluated partnerships and networking between schools and other agencies. It also identified where aspects of extended provision were currently inspected by different inspectorates, even though their work was integrated.

A full list of local authorities and settings involved in the survey is at Annex 1. A list of services provided by the settings in the survey can be found in Annex 2.

The survey began with a pilot in April 2005 and finished in March 2006.

⁴ *Extended schools: a report on early developments* (HMI 2453), Ofsted, 2006.

Further information

Publications

A national evaluation of school breakfast clubs: evaluation summary, Part 1, University of East Anglia, Norwich, 2002.

Extended schools: providing services and opportunities for all (EXSG), DfES, 2002.

Childcare in extended schools: providing opportunities and services for all (EXSGCC) DfES, 2002.

Cummings, C, Todd, L. Dyson, A. 'Extended schools pathfinder evaluation: issues for schools and local education authorities', *Research brief* (RBX18-03), DfES, 2003.

Cummings, C, Dyson, A. and Todd, L. *Evaluation of the extended schools pathfinder projects* (ISBN 184478 221 2) Research report 530, DfES, 2004.

Forrester, M. 'Extended Schools Survey', *Research Foundation 4 Children*, 2005.

Jackson, P. 'Extending the remit', *Community practitioner*, Vol. 77, No. 7, July 2004.

Extended schools: access to opportunities and service for all - A prospectus, DfES, 2005.

Evaluation of the childcare taster pilot and extended schools childcare pilot programmes: qualitative research into initial implementation, *Policy Studies Institute*, Sure Start, January 2005.

Extended schools: a report on early developments (HMI 2453), Ofsted, 2006.

Extended schools – a guide for governors, I (NRT/0103/2006), National Remodelling Team, 2006.

Websites

www.4children.org.uk

<http://www.continyou.org.uk/>

<http://www.remodelling.org/>

These websites provide information on extended schools.

www.surestart.gov.uk

This site covers the aims and latest developments of the children's centres programme.

www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/extendedschools/

This site contains a wide range of research and guidance on extended schools.

www.communitycare.co.uk

This site provides a number of articles on social care, including extended schools.

Annex 1

Local authority	Setting
Bradford	Victoria Primary School
Cambridgeshire	Spring Common School The Fields Early Years Centre
Cornwall	Delaware Community Primary School
Dudley	Beauty Bank Primary School Queen Victoria Primary School
Gateshead	Kibblesworth Primary School
Hartlepool	Dyke House Comprehensive School
Middlesbrough	Easterside Primary School
Milton Keynes	Leon School and Sports College
Norfolk	Downham Market High School
Northampton	Camrose Neighbourhood Nursery
Peterborough	Dogsthorpe Junior School
Portsmouth	Portsdown Primary School
Redcar and Cleveland	Whitecliffe Primary School Sure Start East Cleveland Children's Centre
Slough	Slough and Eton CE Business and Enterprise College
Somerset	Hollies Centre of Quality for Families The Gardens Children's Centre
Swindon	Goddard Park Primary School Goddard Park Centre of Early Excellence

Annex 2

Range of extended services provided

For children and young people

Crèche; day-care; breakfast- and after-school clubs; Saturday activities, including drama, music, mathematics, literacy; holiday activities including trips; health services including speech and language therapy, health visitor, paediatric clinic and sexual health advice; language development; book-start; story telling; family learning; family play; toy library; Saturday club for disabled young people; study support; common-room facility; sports clubs; Girl Guides; induction activities in the summer holidays; prayer room for Muslim group; service improvement group for vulnerable students; Streetwise Kids days run by police; Brownies; Children's University on Saturdays; 'up for it' courses run by local university; development of a business and community resource; and a counselling course for Key Stage 4 students.

For parents

Courses or sessions on parenting, healthy cooking/eating, play and learn, dads' football; a wide range of ante-natal and post-natal classes including breast feeding; family support; dads and tots group, social contact drop-in sessions; childminder drop-ins; 4wards2work; tots and twos; legal drop-ins; Credit Union; Citizens Advice Bureau; parents' forum with interpreters; family fun days; family learning including: pottery, information and communications technology (ICT), Bhangra dance, and jewellery making; Somali group; community assistants training in equality services; 'Thinking of Training to Teach Adults' course; keep-fit; sexual health advice; smoking cessation; social care, behaviour support and drugs awareness; English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses; Relate; 'Time for You' parents' support group; City and Guilds English and mathematics courses; counselling course; and sessions to help parents of children with special needs.

For the wider community

Adult education (some accredited); Jobcentre Plus; Citizens Advice Bureau drop-in sessions; health input on fitness, smoking cessation and sexual health advice; teenaged parents, yoga; baby massage; lunch clubs; health centre services with a practice nurse; access to other services and professionals; translation services; family fun days; family learning; ICT; yoga and keep-fit; ESOL; and 'Thinking of Training to Teach Adults' course.