

Governors' policy briefing

June 2007

Issue 1



Planning and funding extended schools

This policy briefing is intended to help governing bodies support their schools as they develop extended services.

It summarises DfES policy as outlined in 'Planning and Funding Extended Schools: a guide for schools, local authorities and their partner organisations' [DfES, June 2006]. Go to www.teachernet.gov.uk for the full guidance and a range of other resources.

A wide range of additional support for governors can be found at www.tda.gov.uk/extendedschools, including the new ES Toolkit for Governors – a diagnostic and planning resource designed to guide governing bodies through the process of developing extended services.

Extended services in and around schools are an evolving area of practice and we recommend you keep abreast of the latest developments.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

When planning and funding extended services, the DfES has the following key messages for schools:

personalised learning:

Study support activities and swift and easy referral to wider support services can help children overcome barriers to learning. In addition, extended opportunities can positively influence pupils' motivation, behaviour and attendance. Therefore, schools need to design new activities and services in ways that support school improvement and in consultation with their School Improvement Partners (SIPs).

partnership working:

Extended services cannot be developed by schools alone - schools need to develop them in partnership with their local authorities, other schools, the private and voluntary sectors and other organisations.

workload:

Extended services should be developed in ways which support the school and minimise burdens on headteachers and staff – the Training and Development Agency for Schools provides support on remodelling for extended services.

consultation:

Schools are legally required to consult on any extended services they plan to offer and about any proposed charging arrangements.

sustainability and charging:

Families need to be able to base important decisions, such as returning to work, on the reliability of services offered through schools, particularly childcare and holiday provision. It is crucial that the services should be well-researched, robust in their business planning and realistically costed. Charging enables schools to enhance the quality and frequency of the extended opportunities they offer. If services are sustainable families can rely on them in the long term.



FUNDING EXTENDED SERVICES

The Government is supporting the development of extended services with 'start-up' funding of £680 million allocated for 2006-08.

Some of this funding is being routed via local authorities through the Standards Fund and the General Sure Start Grant.

There are also funds going direct to schools through the School Standards Grant and the Dedicated Schools Grant – some of this is earmarked to support personalised learning during and beyond the school day. Schools have received detailed information about their allocations up to 2008.

None of the money going direct to schools is ring-fenced, but by earmarking it for extended schools and personalised learning, the Government is encouraging schools to use it for these purposes. The funding can be used flexibly – to appoint a manager to work across a cluster of schools to develop extended services, for example. Most of this is revenue funding, but there is some capital funding for primary schools (secondary schools can also benefit from the 'Building Schools for the Future' programme).

Many schools also secure funding from other sources – such as Neighbourhood Renewal, charitable sources, Lottery, private sponsorship – to support access to breakfast clubs and study support activities, for example. This funding is often timebound, so services will need to be made sustainable by other means in the longer term.

The Government's Comprehensive Spending Review is now coming to an end – full details of funding allocations for extended services for 2008-2011 will be announced in late Summer 2007.

LA ROLE

Every local authority is responsible for producing a Children and Young People's Plan, in consultation with all key partners, which will include strategic planning for the development of extended services. Local authorities also have responsibility for the strategic co-ordination of study support activities. All local authorities have Extended Schools Remodelling Advisers (ESRAs) and business support officers.

Local authorities can provide:

- information about existing provision and service gaps in their areas
- advice about how to use the funding available
- training, skills, advice and support on all aspects of extended schools, including planning, funding and accounting issues, and costing sustainable activities and services
- advice on the current demand for, and provision of, childcare in each local community
- information about other children's services / providers willing help deliver extended services
- model policies on charging for services, and advice on health and safety
- advice on working with third party providers and model contracts, and
- advice on how to consult effectively / resources to support consultation.

In addition, £1.3 billion is available (2006 - 2008) to schools to support personalised learning during and beyond the school day, which can be used to help disadvantaged families to access extended services.

The core offer

By 2010, all children should have access to the core offer of extended services in or through their school.

- Primary schools provide access to high-quality childcare, 8am-6pm, five days a week, 48 weeks a year, in accordance with their communities' needs, combined with a varied menu of activities (study support) to enhance achievement and broaden interests
- Secondary schools provide access to a varied menu of study support and enrichment activities which provide fun and stimulating activities for young people as well as a safe place to be
- Schools provide access to parenting support including: information sessions for parents of pupils joining reception and on transfer to secondary school;

- signposting sources of information, advice and support; access to parenting groups and family learning sessions to allow children to learn with their parents, where there is demand shown through consultation with parents
- Swift and easy referral: working closely with other statutory services and the voluntary and community sector, schools ensure that children with additional needs are identified as early as possible, and are well supported through integrated working with other services
- Community access: schools ensure that where they have appropriate facilities – such as ICT suites, sports and arts facilities – they are opened up to the community to make the most of them. Schools also provide access to adult learning



CONSULTATION

The Education Act 2002 requires schools to consult widely before providing extended services. As a minimum, schools must consult parents of children registered at the school, the children and young people themselves, the staff, and their local authority.

Good consultation supports sustainability by:

- mapping services already available and identifying needs for additional services
- ensuring the best use of resources
- ensuring that all parents are able to contribute
- identifying charging schemes and methodologies appropriate to each school community and identifying which services parents are able and / or willing to pay for
- shaping what form services should take, and
- identifying where services should best be located

THE LAW ON CHARGING

Schools providing activities directly must comply with the law, as follows:

Every school governing body must devise and publish a charging and fee remission policy, in consultation with parents. A school cannot make any charges to parents unless this policy is in place. (The relevant regulations are summarised in the Guide to the Law for School Governors and in Guidance on Charging for School Activities.)

School governing bodies have powers to provide any facilities or services that further any charitable purpose for pupils, their families and for people who live and work in the local community. This includes childcare.

Any profits made by a school from providing facilities or services must be reinvested in the school or in the service.

Schools may use their delegated budgets to subsidise a child's access to chargeable extended activities, where they consider that the activities are provided for the purposes of the school, because they are of educational benefit to the child.

Schools may not charge for any study support activities provided during the school day, except for music tuition, or for provision before or after the school day which delivers the National Curriculum or prepares a child for a public examination.

Schools may lawfully charge for other study support (for example, additional sport, drama and music clubs, holiday activities, visits, and additional courses, such as first aid), following consultation.

[Some schools will offer extended activities through third-party providers from the voluntary and private sectors, whether on the school site or elsewhere. The legal constraints summarised below apply only to schools and not third-party providers.]

CHARGING SUMMARY

Schools should charge for:

- all childcare whether it is provided by a school direct or through partner providers
- community access – schools should charge the communities for using their facilities, and
- study support: additional sport, drama and music clubs, and other activities.

Extended schools offer particular benefits for the vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people – they often have the least opportunities for enrichment out of school hours. Schools will wish to ensure that there is free access to some study support and affordable services for low income families and other groups – and many schools operate a separate tariff for such groups, often based on charging services at cost.

For children who have disabilities or special educational needs, schools will need to develop suitable provision by working in clusters and with the children's trust.

PLANNING AND FUNDING STUDY SUPPORT

Study support can include homework clubs, 'catch up' provision, Gifted and Talented provision, sport, music tuition, dance and drama, arts and crafts, special interest clubs, cultural visits, language learning, volunteering, and business and enterprise activities.

Study support may take place at school or elsewhere, and may be provided by schools direct or by third-party providers.

The DfES expect all schools to offer some free study support to support personalisation. Activities designed to support the attainment of children who have fallen behind, such as literacy and numeracy 'catch up' provision, should also be provided free of charge.

After appropriate local consultation, schools can fund other study support activities by charging parents.

Schools may use their delegated budgets, including their School Development Grant and the School Standards Grant, to fund access to 'catch up' study support activities, and to study support generally for the children and young people in low income families.



PLANNING AND FUNDING CHILDCARE

Developing high-quality childcare which is locally accessible can help parents get back to work or allow them to increase their working hours and so make an impact on family income.

Schools already offering 8am-6pm, year round provision find that childcare located either in school, or on another site with secure transfer arrangements, is very attractive to working parents. Parents are accustomed to paying for childcare and welcome the availability of reliable, trustworthy, convenient, high-quality provision.

Some schools have found that introducing charges has actually increased take-up, as they have been able to enrich their offer by using their new revenue to provide additional resources, such as new play materials, and extend their hours of opening.

Parents on lower incomes may be eligible to reclaim up to 80% of the costs of childcare through the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit. Many parents miss out on this and other benefits because they are unaware of them, or do not know they are eligible or how to apply.

The DfES encourages all local authorities, schools and their partner organisations to organise support for parents to access the benefits to which they are entitled.

Local authorities have a duty to ensure sufficient childcare for children aged 0-14 (17) years. Activities for older children may not be seen as traditional childcare. So if your school offers out of school activities of more than an hour please liaise with your local authority representative for extended services to ensure this information is known.

PARENTING SUPPORT

Many schools already provide innovative opportunities for parents to become involved in their children's learning, such as cookery clubs, parent and child football competitions and ICT clubs. Such family learning opportunities can have a powerful effect on children's attainment.

In addition, many parents say there are times when they would welcome more support in their parenting role – and schools can provide access to information, advice and support for parents.

Funding for parenting support can come from schools' delegated budgets, or from the overall resources available to children's trusts, or other external sources. Where schools are providing or facilitating services themselves, they may ask some parents to contribute towards costs.

SWIFT AND EASY REFERRAL

Schools should work closely with other statutory services and the voluntary and community sector, to help children with behavioural, emotional, health or other difficulties – with the aim of providing early identification, support, and appropriate intervention.

Parents should not be charged for access to appropriate specialist support – including speech therapy, child and adolescent mental health services, family support services, intensive behaviour support, and (for young people) sexual health services.

Schools offering access to services on the school site find that children and young people and their parents feel more confident about accessing them, benefit from the savings in travel time and costs, and are more likely to keep appointments – meaning needs are met more quickly and less school time is missed.

COMMUNITY ACCESS

Schools are often the only local community resource and many of them already offer their local communities access to sports, arts, ICT facilities and adult learning. Schools can also benefit from better engagement and improved health and qualification levels in their local communities.

Schools should charge the communities for using their facilities, and will need to ensure that their charges include adequate cover for additional and 'hidden' costs such as site management, heating and cleaning.

However, schools will also wish to ensure that access is affordable for lower income families, other individuals and groups. Many schools operate a separate 'tariff' in these cases, charging at cost.

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Training and Development Agency for Schools
151 Buckingham Palace Road, London, SW1W 9SZ
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