

Extended services: a quick guide for governors



Extended services: a toolkit for governors

To help governing bodies support their schools in developing effective extended services, the Training and Development Agency for Schools has developed a new 2009-10 edition of its toolkit for governors. To order a copy or for more information, go to www.tda.gov.uk/extendedservicesforgovernors

What are extended services?

By 2010, all schools will be expected to provide access to a 'core offer' of extended services – and governing bodies have an important role to play in making sure these services are designed to meet the needs of children, young people, families and the community.

Extended services can help you deliver the vision for your school and your school cluster. They increase the school's capacity to meet children's needs and can be a powerful mechanism for improving life chances.

Extended services are a key building block for the Government's vision of a 21st century school that develops the talents of all children and young people and equips them for the future. This will support further integration of extended services, high-quality teaching and learning, a skilled workforce and effective partnership working.

The core offer comprises:

- a varied menu of activities (including study support and play) plus childcare in primary schools
- swift and easy access to targeted and specialist services
- parenting support to help them engage with their children's learning, and
- community access to facilities such as playing fields, sports halls and ICT suites.

The role of governors

Governing bodies must ensure that extended services help to promote high standards of education.* The schools that see the greatest benefit are those that ensure extended services have explicit objectives that are linked to the school improvement plans and pupils' learning needs – for example, improving literacy, communication skills, confidence and team working. Provision is often most effective when targeted to particular groups of pupils to achieve specific outcomes and planned across a locality where possible. Appropriate governance arrangements are an essential element of setting up extended services.

*For more information on duties related to extended services, go to www.governornet.co.uk and search for the Guide to the Law for School Governors 2009.

Important to note

The core offer requires all primary and special schools with primary-age pupils to offer access to high-quality childcare from 8am to 6pm (depending on demand), five days a week, 48 weeks a year.

Secondary schools do not have to offer formal childcare, although some choose to do so. They should ensure that their before- and after-school activities provide a 'safe, secure place' for children and young people.

Services should be set up to meet identified needs and demand, and should be aligned with the local authority's strategic plans for the locality and the Children and Young People's Plan. Schools do not need to set up services where there is existing high-quality local provision and evidence that demand is being met. However, schools may need to stimulate demand for some services by demonstrating the benefits of these over time.



developing people, improving young lives

Partnership working

Schools are not expected to provide access to extended services on their own. Instead, they should work with local partners, including other schools, local authority statutory agencies, voluntary and community organisations and the private sector. Partnership working can maximise the use of available resources and facilities and avoid duplication of provision. Clusters of schools working together, for example, by sharing an extended services coordinator, can be an effective way of providing access to extended services in many localities.

Funding

The Government has allocated funding of more than £1bn to local authorities between 2008 and 2011 to support the planning, development and implementation of sustainable, coordinated extended services. This includes funding for the extended services disadvantage subsidy. The funding will help schools to provide a comprehensive range of exciting, high-quality extended services and ensure that these are accessible to all children and young people, particularly those in care or disadvantaged by economic circumstances.

"The advice, support and activities provided through the extended services programme make a real difference to the pupils and their families." Primary school inspection report, May 2008

"Extended services and increased partnerships with parents have had a major impact on improving the outcomes and aspirations of the most vulnerable pupils, including those with complex learning needs." Secondary school inspection report, January 2008

The benefits



High-quality childcare can enhance learning and give parents more time to work or study.



A varied menu of activities gives children and young people opportunities to excel outside the classroom and benefit from new experiences, which can transform their attitudes to learning and build their self-esteem.



Swift and easy access to targeted and specialist services can help overcome barriers to learning and enable children and young people to achieve their potential.



Parenting support can help fathers, mothers and carers engage with their children's education, help remove barriers to learning, raise attainment and improve attitudes and behaviour.



Community access can strengthen a school as the 'hub' of community life and increase opportunities for local people.

Ofsted and extended services

As part of its inspection procedure, Ofsted examines the contribution made by a school's extended services. It considers, for example, the rationale for offering the services and the evidence that they are making a difference.

The provision of effective extended services can help to meet two statutory duties on governing bodies – to promote community cohesion and to promote pupil well-being.

"The majority of the schools visited had compelling case-study evidence that extended services had made life-changing differences to pupils that had led to better attendance and attitudes."

"The schools with the most effective services had integrated the development of extended provision within their school improvement plans, with a clear focus on improving positive outcomes for children and young people."

Quotes taken from How Well Are They Doing? The Impact of Children's Centres and Extended Schools (Ofsted 2008), a survey of 30 children's centres and 32 schools in 54 local authorities.

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