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The Origin, Concept and Principles of Multi-Agency Partnership Working

> **This chapter explains:**
>
> - **Where multi-agency partnership working originated from**
> - **The current terminology relating to multi-agency partnership working**
> - **The key principles of effective multi-agency partnership working in educational settings and children's centres**
> - **The skills and knowledge required by practitioners in the children's workforce for multi-agency working**

This chapter is useful to those who work directly with children/young people.

The origin of multi-agency partnership working

Multi-agency partnership working is not a new development. As early as the mid-nineteenth century, health and social services were working together to endeavour to reduce poverty in England. It wasn't really until the 1980s, during the Thatcher government years, that the foundations of multi-agency partnership working were laid. The Children Act 1989 established the statutory requirement for inter-agency collaboration and joint working in relation to children and young people, requiring professionals to 'work together better'.

The 1990s saw the development of multilateral partnerships where public, private and voluntary sector organizations joined together to tackle cross-cutting issues, such as social exclusion, community safety and neighbourhood regeneration. Partnership overload and fatigue began to occur, resulting in the need for practitioners from multi-agencies to begin to reflect upon where and when the partnership 'bandwagon' should stop.

The last two decades have seen several government-funded initiatives aimed at promoting integrated services and more co-ordinated partnership working. For example, Sure Start, Children's Fund, Youth Offending Teams, BEST and Connexions, have all promoted multi-agency working.

Despite the introduction of government legislation and initiatives during this time to promote closer multi-agency partnership working, there existed:

- a lack of information sharing across agencies and services

- duplicated assessments to identify needs and subsequent provision

- poorly co-ordinated integrated activities across agencies

- too much 'buck passing' and referring on of clients between agencies

- a lack of continuity and inconsistent levels of service provision

- unclear accountability.

As part of *Every Child Matters* (DfES, 2003), the Children Act 2004 strengthened the requirement for agencies to work together more closely in multidisciplinary teams in order to improve the five Every Child Matters well-being outcomes for children and young people. This important piece of legislation responded to the Lord Laming inquiry into the tragic death of Victoria Climbié, which was the result of poor co-ordination and the failure of inter-agency communication in sharing information across agencies.

In relation to multi-agency partnership working, the Children Act 2004 required local authorities (LAs) partnership arrangements, via Children's Trusts to:

- identify the needs, circumstances and aspirations of children and young people

- agree the contribution each agency will make to meeting the Every Child Matters outcomes

- improve information sharing between agencies

- oversee arrangements for agencies to work collaboratively in the commissioning, delivery and integration of services.

In terms of schools' engagement with multi-agency partnership working, it was largely community schools, full service extended schools, and special schools that had well-established practice. In mainstream schools it was variable, according to the context and complexity of the needs of their pupil populations, for example, locked after children (LAC), special educational needs/learning difficulties and disabilities (SEN/LDD) and other vulnerable 'at risk' groups. The government's recent extended school and children's centre initiative which builds on this existing good practice, are considered to make a significant contribution in responding to the Every Child Matters agenda, by acting as service 'hubs' for the local community: 'An extended school is a school that recognises that it cannot work alone in helping children and young people to achieve their potential, and therefore decides to work in partnership with other agencies that have an interest in outcomes for children and young people, and with the local community' (Piper, 2005: 2).

The government acknowledged the value of multi-agency partnership working with extended schools to address children and young people's problems: 'Having key professionals such as health workers, psychologists and youth workers based on school sites and working closely alongside teachers means that children's problems can be addressed more effectively, with less disruption to their learning' (DfES, 2002: 4).

Extended schools and children's centres enable professional boundaries to be redrawn through the adoption of greater interdependence between teachers and multi-agency front-line workers, where mutual respect, trust and collaborative team effort become regular practice.

One extended school co-ordinator commented: 'Without ECM, there is little that the services would have in common. Everyone is singing from the same hymn sheet and ECM has broadened their outlook. If it wasn't for the agenda it would have been a real struggle' (Wilkin et al., 2008: 9).

Children's centres

Sure Start children's centres are multi-purpose centres that bring together childcare, early education, health, employment and support services for pre-school children and families. Children's centres aim to help children, and particularly disadvantaged children, to improve their life chances through better educational achievement and healthy living, and to support families and help parents to return to work or find better employment opportunities. Public, private and voluntary providers work together in a children's centre. The services they provide include:

- integrated early education and childcare, available 10 hours a day, five days a week, and 48 weeks a year

- baby weighing and health visitors

- health checks

- links to Jobcentre Plus

- crèche

- antenatal and post-natal services

- speech and language development

- training sessions

- support networks for childminders

- play sessions

- baby massage

- signposting to employment opportunities

- support for children and parents with special needs

- pre- and post-natal classes

- home visits to families

- play sessions in community settings

- mobile toy libraries.

Extended schools

Extended schools provide a range of services and activities beyond the school day, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., to help meet the needs of its pupils, their families and the wider community. The extended school core offer includes:

- **high-quality wrap-around childcare** available from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. all year round

- **a varied menu of activities** which can include homework clubs, study support, sport, music tuition, dance and drama, arts and crafts, special interest clubs such as chess and first aid courses, volunteering, business and enterprise activities, visits to museums and galleries, and learning a foreign language

- **parenting support** which includes information sessions for parents at phase transfer, information about national and local sources of advice, guidance and further information, parenting programmes and family learning sessions

- **swift and easy referral** to a wide range of specialist support services such as speech therapy, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), family support services, intensive behaviour support, and (for young people) sexual health services. Some of these services may be delivered on or near the school site

- **providing wider community access** to information and communication technology (ICT), sports and arts facilities, including adult learning.

The concept of multi-agency partnership working

Multi-agency partnership working is where practitioners from more than one agency work together jointly, sharing aims, information, tasks and responsibilities in order to intervene early to prevent problems arising which may impact on children's learning and achievement. Multi-agency working involves the joint planning and delivery of co-ordinated services that are responsive to children and young people's changing needs. As one practitioner comments: '[Multi-agency] Inter-agency working is about making sure that people are regularly talking about their work, understanding each others' roles and sharing with other agencies and

service users. It is about working together towards commonly agreed aims and objectives' (McInnes, 2007: 5).

There are a number of related terms and concepts that are used interchangeably in documentation, which reflect a range of structures, approaches and rationales to multi-agency partnership working. These are as follows:

- **Inter-agency working** is where more than one agency works together in a planned and formal way.

- **Integrated working** is where practitioners work together adopting common processes to deliver front-line services, co-ordinated and built around the needs of children and young people.

- **Multi-professional/multidisciplinary working** is where staff with different professional backgrounds and training work together.

- **Joint working** is when professionals from more than one agency work together on a specific project or initiative.

- **Partnership working** refers to the processes that build relationships between different groups of professionals and services at different levels, to get things done. It entails two or more organizations or groups of practitioners joining together to achieve something they could not do alone, sharing a common problem or issue and collectively taking responsibility for resolving it. Partnership therefore refers to a way of working as well as to a form of organization.

In relation to multi-agency working with educational settings to improve pupils ECM outcomes, collaborative partnership working must add value to the efforts of the educational organization, as well as provide services outside the realm of school staff expertise. Teachers will begin to understand, recognize and accept that practitioners from other services can address pupils' well-being needs best, thus allowing them to focus on their core role of teaching and facilitating learning.

The five degrees of multi-agency partnership working

- **Coexistence** – clarity between practitioners from different agencies as to who does what and with whom.

- **Co-operation** – practitioners from different agencies sharing information and recognizing the mutual benefits and value of partnership working, that is, pooling the collective knowledge, skills and achievements available.

- **Co-ordination** – partners planning together; sharing some roles and responsibilities, resources and risk-taking; accepting the need to adjust and make some changes to improve services, thus avoiding overlap.

- **Collaboration** – longer-term commitments between partners, with organizational changes that bring shared leadership, control, resources and risk-taking. Partners from different agencies agree to work together on strategies or projects, each contributing to achieving shared goals.

- **Co-ownership** – practitioners from different agencies commit themselves to achieving a common vision, making significant changes in what they do and how they do it.

In particular, good co-ordination, co-operation and collaboration produce efficient multi-agency working, which adds value for educational settings, that is, it increases the organizations skills and capacity to improve and meet children and young people's Every Child Matters well-being needs.

The five stages of participation

David Wilcox (2000) produced a ladder of participation, which he had adapted from Sherry Arnstein's 1969 version, which had eight stages, and related to the involvement of citizens in planning processes in the USA.Wilcox's ladder comprises five stages. Stage one has the lowest degree of participation and control. Stages three to five have the highest degrees of participation and control, and are examples of substantial participation and true partnership working. Table 1.1a provides an overview of David Wilcox's ladder of participation, which has great relevance to multi-agency partnership working, and Table 1.1b is the partnership ladder offered by Gaster et al.

♱♱♱♱ Ladder of participation multi-agency task

Each member of the educational setting's multi-agency team is to answer the following questions individually, and then discuss their responses collectively, with other team members, in order to compare and contrast findings.

- Where are you on the ladder of participation in relation to your mutli-agency partnership?

- How inclusive is the multi-agency partnership?

Table 1.1a   Ladder of participation

Stage on ladder	Features
5. Supporting	Helping others to do what they want within a supportive framework which may offer resources as well as advice
4. Acting together	The different interests together decide what is best, forming a partnership to carry it out
3. Deciding together	Encouraging team practitioners to provide additional ideas and options, and jointly decide which is the best way forward
2. Consultation	Identify problems, offering a number of options, solutions, and listening to the feedback from others
1. Information	Telling the team and other stakeholders what is planned

Source: Wilcox, 2000: 4–5

Table 1.1b   Gaster et al. ladder of multi-agency partnership working

Stage on ladder	Features
5. **Collaboration and full partnership**	Involving separate and distinct roles but shared values and agenda. Pooled resources blurred boundaries, continuously developing to meet changing needs. Less powerful partners are supported to play a full role
4. **Co-ordination and co-operation in practice**	Involving active co-ordination processes; co-ordinator knows what is going on, draws on each (autonomous) partner as appropriate, helps to nurture developmental and co-operative culture and involve and support new partners
3. **Implementing projects and service plans**	Joint or separately taken action on agreed plan, identify monitoring methods and review processes, mutual feedback on success/failure
2. **Planning action**	Involving identifying local and service needs where cross boundary working is needed and could be effective. Debate of local needs and priorities, agree different partners contributions, decide actions and processes. Identify (the need for) new partners
1. **Information exchange**	Involving mutual learning, knowledge of what each partner does and could do, openness about decision-making processes, new methods of access to information (including IT)

Source: Percy-Smith, 2005: 28–9

- How do you ensure practitioners from the voluntary sector joining the team feel valued as much as public sector practitioners?

- How is the multi-agency team you work in developing its partnership capacity?

Key drivers of multi-agency working

There are three main key drivers of multi-agency working in any educational setting, according to Andy Coleman (2006):

- **Promoting the interests of children and related legal imperatives** – for example, collaborating to meet the needs of children with disabilities, SEN, children in public care (LAC), vulnerable children whose welfare is at risk and who need safeguarding.

- **Promoting joined-up thinking and Every Child Matters** – which focuses on well-co-ordinated services meeting the needs of the whole child through responding to the five ECM well-being outcomes: being healthy, staying

safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution, and achieving economic well-being.

- **Collaborative advantage** – requiring a range of skills and expertise existing among different practitioners to be brought together in order to add value and be more responsive to preventing children's problems arising, which create barriers to learning.

Parton and Vangen (2004: 2) comment: '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.'

Coleman (2006: 9) refers to Tony Blair's speech of 1997 when he commented: 'Joined-up problems demand joined-up solutions.'

Models of multi-agency working

There is no blueprint for multi-agency working. The Department for Children, Schoolds and Families (DCSF) offer three different models for setting up multi-agency services to support educational settings, in improving ECM outcomes for children and young people. Table 1.2 describes the characteristics of the three models which are the multi-agency panel; the multi-agency team; and the integrated service.

Atkinson et al. offer five models of multi-agency activity. These are:

- **Decision-making groups**, which provide a forum in which professionals from different agencies meet and discuss issues and make decisions, largely at a strategic level.

- **Consultation and training**, whereby professionals from one agency enhance the expertise of those from another, usually at an operational level.

- **Centre-based delivery**, gathering a range of expertise on one site in order to deliver a more co-ordinated and comprehensive service. Services may not be delivered jointly, but exchange of information and ideas is facilitated.

- **Co-ordinated delivery**, whereby the appointment of a co-ordinator to pull together disparate services facilitates a more cohesive response to need through a collaboration between agencies involved in the delivery of services. Delivery by professionals is at an operational level, while the co-ordinator also operates strategically.

- **Operational team delivery**, in which professionals from different agencies work together on a day-to-day basis forming a cohesive multi-agency team delivering services directly to clients (Atkinson et al., 2002: 11–23).

Figure 1.1 illustrates the eight essential building blocks needed for effective multi-agency working.

Table 1.2 Characteristics of the three models of multi-agency working

Multi-agency model	Key characteristics
Multi-agency panel	• Panel is co-ordinated by a chair • Most meetings are arranged by the panel manager • There is usually a good mix of agencies represented • Practitioners remain employed by their home agency • The panel or network meets monthly or every term to discuss children with additional needs who would benefit from multi-agency input, and to review their work • Panel members may carry out case work themselves, or employ key workers to lead on case work • An example of this type of model is a Youth Inclusion and Support Panel, or Team Around the Child
Multi-agency team	• There is a dedicated team leader who works to a common purpose and common goals • There is a good mix of staff from different disciplines who are seconded or recruited into the team • There is a strong team identity • Practitioners may maintain links with their home agencies for supervision and training • There is scope to engage in work with universal services and at a range of levels – not just with individual children and young people, but also small group, family and whole-school work • An example of this type of model includes Behaviour and Education Support Teams (BEST), and Youth Offending Teams (YOTs)
Integrated service	• Acts as a service hub for the community, usually on one site • Usually delivered from school/early years settings • A range of separate services share a common location, vision and principles in working together • Commitment by partner providers to fund/facilitate integrated service delivery • Services usually include health, specialist advice and guidance, outreach and adult learning • Collective inter-professional training strategies are often present • Examples include children's centres and extended schools offering access to integrated, multi-agency services

Source: CWDC, 2007: 1–2

The key principles of multi-agency partnership working

Different agencies work at different speeds; for example, education works at a rapid pace, while health services take more time working with clients. Listed below are the key principles for effective multi-agency partnership working within any educational setting.
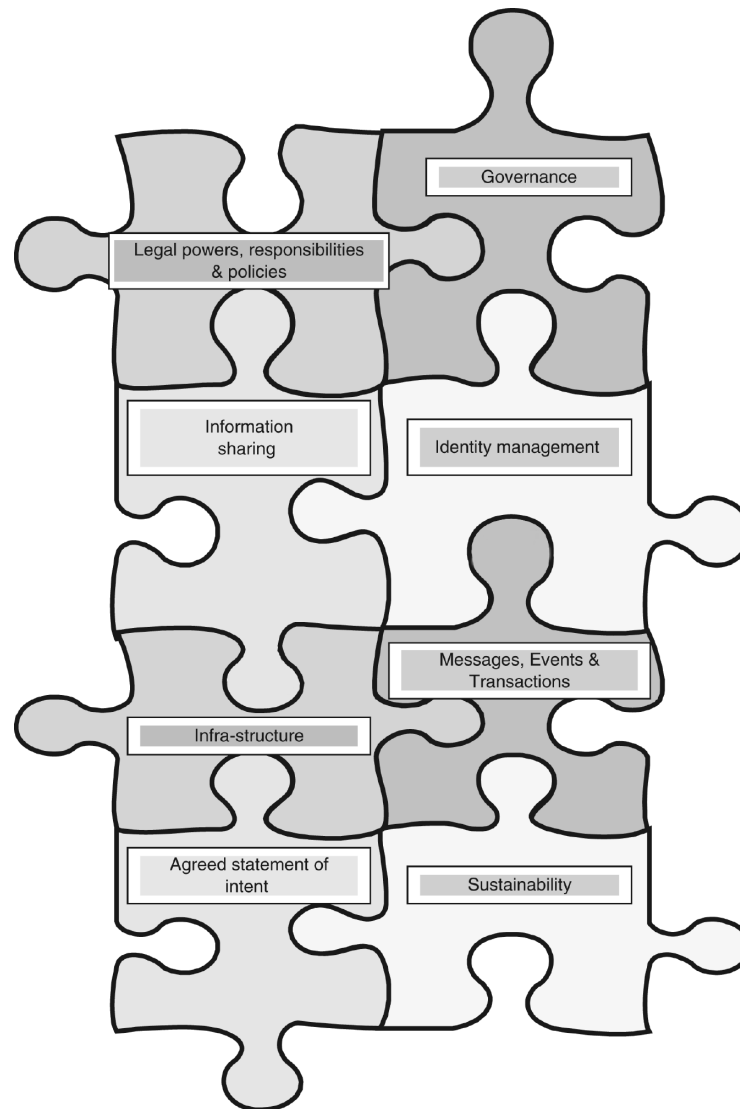
Figure 1.1   Framework for working in a multi-agency partnership.

The eight essential building blocks of the framework for working in a multi-agency environment.

- Adequate lead-in time has been provided to establish multi-agency partnership working within the educational setting.

- Existing good practice in multi-agency partnership within the setting has been built upon.

- There is an agreed, shared partnership principle based around the underlying aims and philosophy of Every Child Matters.

- A common professional language and terminology is utilized between different agencies and within the educational setting.

- Practitioners respective roles and responsibilities are clear and understood.

- The contributions of all practitioners working directly with pupils to remove barriers to learning and improve their well-being are valued.

- Procedures and protocols for multi-agency referral, assessment, interventions and service provision are clear.

- Regular opportunities are provided for ongoing joint inter-professional training and development.

- A comprehensive induction programme exists for any new practitioners joining the educational setting.

- Regular meetings, at least once each half term, are held between key staff in the educational setting and the multi-agency practitioners to monitor, evaluate and review impact and outcomes of provision on targeted pupils.

- Multi-agency practitioners are able to contribute to the educational settings improvement planning, self-evaluation and decision-making processes in order to inform future developments.

- Practitioners from multi-agencies are represented on the senior leadership team (SLT) and/or on the governing body or the management board of the educational setting.

- Pupils and their parents/carers receiving multi-agency support and interventions, have opportunities to review their own progress and comment on service provision.

- Pupil level attainment and ECM well-being data is analysed and used to inform multi-agency provision.

- Protected time is guaranteed for multi-agency joint working.

†††† Inter-professional development tasks

Invite a group of representative key staff from the educational setting as well as practitioners from the multi-agencies/VCS organizations that are working directly with pupils in the setting, to get together to form a working group. Undertake the two developmental tasks together, in the mixed working group. Bring together the findings from the two activities, to form an overall agreed joint statement of purpose, common goals, a mission statement and a partnership agreement.

Task 1.1: Agreeing a common purpose and goals

1. On flip-chart paper draw a large circle in the centre, and then draw an outer circle.

2. Ask each member of the group to write down on Post-it notes **three** statements about what they think the multi-agency team's main purpose and goals should be.

3. Participants place their statements in the inner circle on the flip chart.

4. The whole group reads through all the statements and moves any it considers not to be relevant or important to the outer circle.

5. The facilitator of the task asks the group to consider the remaining statements in the inner circle.

6. The working group writes down the agreed main purpose and the agreed goals for the multi-agency partnership, working within the educational setting or children's centre.

For Task1.2 use Table 1.3.

The skills and knowledge required for multi-agency working

Members of the wider children's workforce includes: police officers, doctors, nurses, teachers, teaching assistants, learning mentors, nursery staff, social workers, therapists, youth workers, leisure and recreational workers, housing staff and those practitioners who work in criminal/youth justice, mental health or drug and alcohol services. All these practitioners work together to provide services that fully meet the needs of children, young people and their parents or carers.

All these practitioners (colleagues) from public, private and voluntary sector services have to meet the common core of skills and knowledge required for effective multi-agency working, which is one of six areas of expertise.

Table 1.4 provides an overview of what the common core of skills and knowledge for multi-agency working are.

The joint statement on inter-professional work with colleagues

The General Social Care Council (GSCC), the General Teaching Council for England (GTC) and the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) produced a joint statement in summer 2007, which sets out the values and dispositions underpinning effective inter-professional work with children and young people. The joint statement can be viewed at www.nmc-uk.org/interprof.

Table 1.5 shows the inter-professional values of the joint statement.

Professional Standards for Teachers

The Training and Development Agencies for Schools (TDA) in September 2007 indicated that the Professional Standards for Teachers are underpinned by the five Every Child Matters outcomes as well as the six areas of the common core of skills and knowledge for the children's workforce. Table 1.6 provides an overview of the relevant Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and the core professional standards for all teachers, which relate to multi-professional/inter-professional working.

Table 1.3 Joint inter-professional visioning and development activity

Multi-agency aspect	Education perspective	Health perspective	Social Care perspective	VCS/Other e.g. police, YOT, perspective	Overall joint inter-professional agreed statement
In this educational setting multi-agency partnership working means …					
The mission statement for multi-agency partnership working in this educational setting should be …					
Together, in partnership with the educational setting, multi-agency practitioners will improve the Every Child Matters outcomes for children and young people by …					
In order to ensure multi-agency partnership working is effective in this educational setting and meets the agreed aims, I/we will need to …					
The barriers that may prevent effective multi-agency partnership working taking place are …					
These barriers can be overcome by …					
By the end of one year I/we hope to have achieved through collaborative multi-agency partnership working, the following …					

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Effective Multi-Agency Partnerships, Sage Publications © Rita Cheminais, 2009

☐ A joint visioning and awareness raising event/workshop has taken place on ECM and collaborative partnership working in the educational setting.

☐ The aims, goals, principles and purpose of partnership working are clear.

☐ It is clear what all practitioners/partners bring to the joint activity and team.

☐ Realistic expectations exist as to what the partnership can hope to achieve.

☐ Careful consideration has been given to practitioners' diversity, culture, sensitivities, and professional background.

☐ Realistic agreed targets, objectives and milestones have been set.

☐ Respective roles and responsibilities of members of the joint partnership are clear.

☐ Partnership working is based on shared values, trust and mutual respect.

☐ Good, open two-way communication exists between practitioners.

☐ Appropriate accommodation and ICT within the educational setting for multi-agency service delivery, facilitate information sharing.

☐ Opportunities exist for joint inter-professional team building and solution-focused problem solving.

☐ Line management and accountability procedures are clear for multi-agency practitioners working in the educational setting.

☐ Clear procedures exist for the joint monitoring and evaluation of outcomes

☐ Sufficient quality time is provided to staff within the educational setting as well as to multi-agency practitioners to enable them to meet jointly together to review progress and plan future improvements and developments.

☐ Key review and developmental multi-agency meetings have been scheduled in advance for the next 12 months.

Figure 1.2   Checklist for developing effective multi-agency partnership working

Table 1.4   Common core of skills and knowledge for multi-agency working

Skills	Knowledge
Communication and teamwork	**Your role and remit**
• Communicate effectively with other practitioners and professionals by listening and ensuring that you are being listened to	• Know your main job and responsibilities within your working environment
	• Know the value and expertise you bring to a team and that brought by your colleagues
• Appreciate that others may not have the same understanding of professional terms and may interpret abbreviations such as acronyms differently	**Know how to make queries**
	• Know your role within different group situations and how you contribute to the overall group process, understanding the value of sharing how you approach your role with other professionals
• Provide timely, appropriate, succinct information to enable other practitioners to deliver	• Develop your skills and knowledge with training from experts, to minimize the need for referral to specialist services, enabling

Table 1.4   (Continued)

Skills	Knowledge
their support to the child or young person, parent or carer • Record, summarize, share and feed back information, using IT skills where necessary to do so • Work in a team context, forging and sustaining relationships across agencies and respecting the contribution of others working with children, young people and families • Share experience through formal and informal exchanges and work with adults who are parents/carers	continuity for the family, child or young person while enhancing your own skills and knowledge • Have general knowledge and understanding of the range of organisations and individuals working with children, young people those caring for them, and be aware of the and roles and responsibilities of other professionals
Assertiveness • Be proactive, initiate necessary action and be able and prepared to put forward your own judgements • Have the confidence to challenge situations by looking beyond your immediate role and asking considered questions • Present facts and judgements objectively • Identify possible sources of support within your own working environment • Judge when you should provide the support yourself and when you should refer the situation to another practitioner or professional	**Procedures and working methods** • Know what to do in given cases, e.g. for referrals or raising concerns • Know what the triggers are for reporting incidents or unexpected behaviour • Know how to work within your own and other organizational values, beliefs and cultures • Know what to do when there is an insufficient response from other organizations or agencies, while maintaining a focus on what is in the child or young person's best interests • Understand the way that partner services operate – their procedures, objectives, role and relationships – in order to be able to work effectively alongside them • Know about the Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People (CAF) and, where appropriate, how to use it **The law, policies and procedures** • Know about the existence of key laws relating to children and young people and where to obtain further information • Know about employers' safeguarding and health and safety policies and procedures, and how they apply in the wider working environment

Source: Hei Mayesty's Government, 2005: 18–20

Table 1.5   Joint statement of inter-professional values

Inter-professional work with colleagues

- Children's practitioners value the contribution that a range of colleagues make to children's lives, and they form effective relationships across the children's workforce. Their inter-professional practice is based on a willingness to bring their own expertise to bear on the pursuit of shared goals for children, and a respect for the expertise of others. Practitioners recognize that children and families, and colleagues, value transparency and reliability, and strive to make sure that processes, roles, goals and resources are clear
- Practitioners involved in inter-professional work recognize the need to be clear about lines of communication, management and accountability as these may be more complex than in their specialist setting
- They uphold the standards and values of their own professionals in their inter-professional work. They understand that sharing responsibility for children's outcomes does not mean acting beyond their competence or responsibilities
- They are committed to taking action if safety or standards are compromised, whether that means alerting their own manager/employer or another appropriate authority
- Children's practitioners understand that the knowledge, understanding and skills for inter-professional work may differ from those in their own specialism and they are committed to professional learning in this area as well as in their own field, through training and engagement with research and other evidence
- They are committed to reflecting on and improving their inter-professional practice, and to applying their inter-professional learning to their specialist work with children
- Work with children can be emotionally demanding, and children's practitioners are sensitive to and supportive of each others' well-being

Source: Nursing Midwifery Council, General Social Care Council and the General Teaching Council for England, 2007

Table 1.6   Professional Standards for Teachers and multi-professional working

Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)	All teachers – core
Professional attributes	**Professional attributes**
Communicating and working with others	**Communicating and working with others**
Q4. Communicate effectively with children, young people, colleagues, parents and carers	C4(a) Communicate effectively with children, young people and colleagues
Q5. Recognize and respect the contribution that colleagues, parents and carers can make to the development and well-being of children and young people, and to raising the levels of attainment	C5. Recognize and respect the contributions that colleagues, parents and carers can make to the development and well-being of children and young people, and to raising their levels of attainment
Q6. Have a commitment to collaboration and co-operative working	C6. Have a commitment to collaboration and co-operative working where appropriate
Professional knowledge and understanding	**Professional knowledge and understanding**
Achievement and diversity	**Achievement and diversity**
Q20. Know and understand the roles of colleagues with specific responsibilities, including those with responsibility for learners with special educational needs	C20. Understand the roles of colleagues such as those having specific responsibilities for learners with special educational needs, disabilities and other individual

Table 1.6   (Continued)

Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)	All teachers – core
and disabilities and other individual learning needs	learning needs, and the contributions they can make to the learning, development and well-being of children and young people
Health and well-being Q21(b) Know how to identify and support children and young people whose progress, development or well-being is affected by changes or difficulties in their personal circumstances, and when to refer them to colleagues for specialist support	C21. Know when to draw on the expertise of colleagues, such as those with responsibility for the safeguarding of children and young people and special educational needs and disabilities, and to refer to sources of information, advice and support from external agencies
Professional skills **Team-working and collaboration** Q32. Work as a team member and identify opportunities for working with colleagues, sharing the development of effective practice with them Q33. Ensure that colleagues working with them are appropriately involved in supporting learning and understand the roles they are expected to fulfil	**Health and well-being** C25. Know how to identify and support children and young people whose progress, development or well-being is affected by changes or difficulties in their personal circumstances, and when to refer them to colleagues for specialist support
	Professional skills **Team-working and collaboration** C40. Work as a team member and identify opportunities for working with colleagues, managing their work where appropriate and sharing the development of effective practice with them C41. Ensure that colleagues working with them are appropriately involved in supporting learning and understand the roles they are expected to fulfil

Source: TDA, 2007b

The term 'colleagues' used in the professional standards refers to all those professionals with whom a teacher might work, that is, other teaching colleagues and the wider workforce within the educational setting, as well as other practitioners from external agencies working in the children's workforce.

The National Occupational Standards for supporting teaching and learning in schools

In June 2007 the TDA published the National Occupational Standards for supporting teaching and learning in schools, which were relevant to teaching assistants and other members of the school's children's workforce, other than teachers. These

provide statements of competence relating to the skills and knowledge required to
support teaching and learning in schools and other educational settings. They
cover working with colleagues, as one of the five key areas of responsibility. These
are outlined in Table 1.7

Table 1.7 National Occupational Standards for Supporting Teaching and Learning in
Schools – working with colleagues

Unit number	Unit description
STL4	**Contribute to positive relationships** – with children, young people and adults, valuing people equally
STL5	**Provide effective support for your colleagues** – contributing to effective teamwork and maintaining working relationships with colleagues
STL20	**Develop and promote positive relationships** – communicate with adults, children and young people
STL21	**Support the development and effectiveness of work teams** – by being an effective member of a work team contributing to effective team practice
STL60	**Liaise with parents, carers and families** – facilitating information sharing while ensuring professional integrity in communications with parents, carers and families
STL62	**Develop and maintain working relationships with other practitioners** – doing what you can to support other practitioners work, utilizing your strengths and expertise in partnership working
STL63	**Provide leadership for your team** – provide direction to team members, and motivate and support them to achieve the teams and their own personal objectives. Allocate and check work in the team
STL64	**Provide leadership in your area of responsibility** – providing direction to colleagues in a specific programme, initiative or policy, motivating and supporting them to achieve the vision and objectives for the area
STL65	**Allocate and check work in your team** – fair and effective allocation of work to team members, checking on progress and quality of the team's work
STL66	**Lead and motivate volunteers** – briefing volunteers on their responsibilities and requirements, helping them to resolve any problems during volunteering activities, giving them feedback on their work and respecting their needs and preferences
STL67	**Provide learning opportunities for colleagues** – support colleagues in identifying their learning needs and provide opportunities to address these needs. Encourage colleagues to take responsibility for their own learning wherever possible
STL68	**Support learners by mentoring in the workplace** – plan the mentoring process, set up and maintain the mentoring relationship and provide mentoring to colleagues and trainees in the workplace
STL69	**Support competence achieved in the workplace** – assess staff performance in the workplace against agreed standards, and give them feedback on their performance

Source: TDA, 2007a

Points to remember

- Everyone brings skills, knowledge and expertise to multi-agency partnership working, which should be valued, respected and acknowledged.
- Do not reinvent the wheel, but build on existing good multi-agency partnership working practice.
- Ensure service users (pupils, parents/carers) have a 'voice and choice' in multi-agency provision.
- Every Child Matters provides the 'gel' and moral purpose that holds multi-agency collaborative partnership working together within the educational setting or children's centre.

Further activities

The following questions, based on aspects covered in this chapter, are designed to enable staff from within the educational setting or children's centre, in partnership with front line practitioners from multi-agencies working directly with pupils, to discuss and identify ways fo ward in establishing agreed collaborative partnership working principles and practice.

- What do practitioners understand the term 'shared culture' to mean?

- What is the agreed vision, direction and approach on which multi-agency partnership working in the educational setting is based?

- What principles of inter-professional working have you jointly agreed upon to ensure effective multi-agency partnership working occurs?

- How have you ensured that the vision, aims and principles, jointly developed for multi-agency partnership working meet and match the identified needs of pupils with additional needs?

- How do you intend collectively to make the aims, purpose and principles of joint multi-professional/inter-professional partnership working explicit to a range of stakeholders in the educational setting or children's centre, and within the local community?

- What joint marketing campaign will you develop to help raise awareness among the teaching staff, teaching assistants (TAs), governors, pupils, parents/carers and local community members about the rationale, purpose and role of the multi-agency team working with pupils in the educational setting?

- What are the key ingredients' identified by stakeholders, of effective multi-agency partnership working and provision within the educational setting or children's centre, and what does it look like?

- What are the expectations of what multi-agency partnerships should achieve within the educational setting or children's centre?

Table 1.8   Roles of some key multi-agency practitioners in schools

Police	Social care worker	School nurse	Housing officer
• Help to reduce truancy and exclusions • Reduce victimization, criminality and antisocial behaviour within the school and its community • Help to identify and work with children/young people at risk of becoming victims of crime and bullying, or offenders • Support school staff in dealing with incidents of crime, victimisation or antisocial behaviour • Promote the full participation of children/young people in the life of the school and its wider community • Provide educational inputs for pupils in the classroom on aspects of citizenship and personal safety as part of PSHE, e.g. covering topics such as drugs, alcohol and bullying • Work in partnership with other agencies such as the Youth Offending Team (YOT), Youth Justice, and Connexions	• Rapid response case work • Parent/carers and family support, e.g. parent drop-ins, family learning classes • Supporting transition from nursery to primary and from primary to secondary school • Anger management • Supporting the CAF process • Supporting the school's PSHE programme • Signposting to specialist services • Counselling and mentoring • Relationship-building between schools and families • Group and one-to-one support for children and young people • Pupil support for bereavement, self-esteem, behaviour and attendance, depression, self-harming, school anxiety/phobia, family violence, substance abuse, bullying, suicidal threats • Act as an advocate for children, young people and their families	• Provide confidential advice and guidance on a range of health related issues including nutrition, exercise, smoking, mental health, drug abuse, sexual health • Promote good health and support children and young people to make healthy life choices • Contribute to the school's PSHE programme and the Healthy Schools initiative • Help to develop and update the school's health and safety policy and the sex education policy • Provide advice on healthy school meals, and access to drinking water for pupils • Contribute to the school's extended services provision by running an after school	• Help to reduce antisocial behaviour among young people in the community by contributing to providing youth activities • Provide funding, buildings and land for youth, community and environmental projects • Help to build greater understanding and positive relationships between the old and the young in the community through joint local history projects • Work in close collaboration with other services, e.g. police, youth service

Table 1.8 (Continued)

Police	Social care worker	School nurse	Housing officer
• Build positive relationships between the police and young people	• Deliver workshops and seminars to teachers and other school staff, related to social-emotional and risk issues such as: how to manage pupils' behaviour in the classroom • Help to identify school staff and other agency practitioners who can help to maximize pupil success	healthy eating cookery club • Provide a drop-in clinic for children, young people and their parents on, or near the school site • Support individual pupils with long term medical needs health plans • Support the safeguarding work of the school by advising staff • Provide immunisation to pupils, where appropriate • Run parent groups	to inform provision for young people in the community • Consult with children and young people on the facilities and services they want in the local community • Provide inputs to the school curriculum on housing education and homelessness • Help school staff to prepare pupils for leaving home and finding a home of their own • Provide information and advice to young people on housing choices, housing benefits, getting a mortgage, how to choose the right property • Advise school staff on how to support the learning of pupils who are in temporary accommodation

Further information

The following websites have downloadable resources that support the aspects covered in this chapter.

www.partnerships.org.uk   This website has a good range of resources linked to partnerships, which has been put together by David Wilcox.

www.cwdcouncil.org.uk   This website provides a useful fact sheet on multi-agency working.

www.ecm.gov.uk/multiagencyworking   This website contains a great deal of information about establishing multi-agency working, and offers a took kit for managers and practitioners. The web-based resource 'Getting started in multi-agency working' covers the following aspects: the benefits, challenges and success factors of multi-agency working; practical advice for setting up services; case study examples, and a common language glossary for practitioners.

http://lmscontent.ncsl.org.uk/ECM/   This website provides a range of useful documents and resources about ECM and multi-agency partnership working from a school leadership perspective.

Do not forget to also visit the Sage website for downloadable resources to use with this chapter.