

# 1

## What are extended schools and why are they needed?

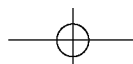
This chapter considers the following questions:

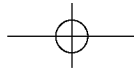
- What is meant by extended schools and how did they develop?
- What other educational developments link with it?
- What are the indicators of effective extended schools?

While extravagant claims have been made for various educational reforms as being the most important, none can have been as far-reaching as that for the development of extended schools, because its ultimate aim must be not to transform schools, or even education, but to *transform communities*. As West-Burnham (2006, p. 103) suggests:

Pivotal to the long-term development of extended schools is the notion of community-moving from schools in a community through community schools to communities which include schools as part of their educational provision. There is a very important symbolic and semantic point ... when we will stop talking about extending schools and start talking about developing the community.'

In one sense, this concept is revolutionary; in another, it is entirely logical, since what is the purpose of education if it is not to change, develop and improve the world in which we live? It is only revolutionary in terms of how we have come to perceive schools, as institutions separate from communities, with a specific purpose of preparing children and young people for adult life – especially through the gaining of qualifications.





## From separation to community awareness

In the UK, despite the pioneering efforts of Henry Morris in the 1920s with the Cambridgeshire Village College, and the building of Community Colleges in the 1960s, the widespread model was of schools separated from their local environment, except for the provision of formal Adult Education Classes. Tim Brighouse, in a speech in the 1970s, described the typical purpose-built community college as a castle, neatly situated *outside* the population centres and 'surrounded by a lovely green moat'. Clearly, the drawbridge could be drawn up if the community needed to be kept out!

It is interesting to note that earlier efforts in both the USA and the UK were more successful in rural contexts – Barnard's and Dewey's ideas of the school as an embodiment of a democratic community in the USA were perhaps more easily realized there than in the growing turbulence of modern urban life.

In this urban context, the Children's Aid Society (founded in 1853) was involved in the USA's first compulsory education laws, and was eventually responsible for the creation of New York's first vocational schools and first free kindergartens. Until the 1980s however, the Society remained focused on health services and the integration of these with schools did not emerge until the programme for community schools got under way in New York. In both the USA and the UK, schools were for teaching and not much else.

This perception of schools as separate educational providers was gradually accompanied in several developed countries by a narrowness of focus as to the purpose of schooling, with a massive emphasis on testing and examination results, shown most powerfully perhaps in England and Wales. This performance culture (for an overview, see Gleeson and Husbands, 2001) was accentuated by the marketization of education and competition between schools. While parental involvement in their children's education was increasingly acknowledged as important, it was usually seen in terms of parental support for schools, rather than in terms of any kind of partnership for learning.

By the late 1990s however, Fullan (1998, p. 2), using an image similar to Brighouse's, could describe the fences of the school in several countries as 'tumbling down metaphorically speaking ... as government policy, parent and community demands, corporate interests and ubiquitous technology have all scaled the walls of the school'.

Fullan was describing developments in school reform in countries such as Australia, Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom. In the last two countries in particular, there were a number of factors which made policy-makers, educationalists, public-service leaders and managers come to realize the dangers and impracticalities of schools operating in comparative isolation. These factors include:

- 1 A clear recognition that education alone could not be some kind of panacea for all of society's problems. In an increasingly globalized and competitive economy, the drive for a well-educated workforce as the key to economic success remained – and still remains – a central purpose, in developing countries as much as if not more than in developed ones. However, deficiencies in educational systems, including those of the United States and the United Kingdom, for a significant cohort of the future adult population and workforce, prompted Mortimore (1997) and Lewin and Kelley (1997) to suggest that the success of education in being effective in changing society was dependent on the complementary inputs from a variety of other areas.

The fact of the matter is that education is just one factor – albeit an important one – in an overall melange of conditions that determines productivity and economic competitiveness as well as the levels of crime, public assistance, political participation, health and so on. Education has the potential for powerful impacts in each of these areas if the proper supportive conditions and inputs are present. (Lewin and Kelley, 1997, p. 250)

- 2 An accumulation of research which showed that a huge variety of factors influenced the way in which humans learned effectively. Only some of these factors were possible for schools to utilize. An awareness of how the brain works, different styles of learning and of teaching, multiple intelligences, emotional intelligence, learning personalities and technological developments are all examples of 'new' knowledge which effective schools, looking beyond test results and wanting to see learning as central (Middlewood et al., 2005), have been able to use to a greater or lesser extent to improve learning and attitudes towards education.

However, diet (and health generally), inadequate parenting, endemic circumstances of poverty, unemployment, social attitudes such as racism, 'gang culture' in crime and drug contexts are all examples of factors which hugely influence learning but on which schools have only limited influence. This is partly because of the simple fact that, however good a school is, a person up to the age of 16 years spends only a small percentage of his or her life at that school.

- 3 The undeniable links between the significant proportion of the school population emerging from the system as failures and their later (sometimes simultaneous) susceptibility to an involvement in lives which includes unemployment, poverty, poor health (even lower life expectancy) and crime. The emergence of an 'under class' of a disaffected and detached section of society seemed to exemplify the gaps between the so-called 'haves and have-nots' in industrialized wealthy nations. Access to the professions, for example, was

automatically denied for those disadvantaged because of their failure to gain relevant qualifications.

- 4 The pressure on public-service systems, including education, caused by increasingly pluralist, multi-ethnic societies, as immigration to Western nations on a large scale increased significantly.
- 5 An awareness in those nations that legislation alone concerning equal opportunities for people regardless of gender, race, disability, religion, sexual orientation and age – however well intentioned – was proving inadequate in an attempt to develop harmonious societies.
- 6 The economic realization that the enormous financial resources given to supporting those at a disadvantage were failing to repay society through helping them to overcome their deprivations. In changing economic circumstances, especially of an ageing population, the need to move the focus to preventative and away from remedial measures became imperative.
- 7 Lastly, but by no means least, a number of extremely high-profile cases (notably in England, the Victoria Climbié Inquiry) focused public attention. While shocking the public into the acknowledgement that such things actually occurred, they equally significantly pointed out the explicit failures of the public services to prevent or alleviate them. In particular, the failures in communication and cooperation between social services, law and order, education and health authorities were stark in their weak accountability and poor integration (Gelsthorpe, 2006). As the Judge at the Climbié Inquiry noted:

We said that, after the Maria Caldwell case, it must never happen again. It clearly has. We cannot afford to let it occur ever again, without being aware that everything in our power was done to prevent it.

## **From community to integration**

For all its value, community education as known was essentially of a reactive nature. Communities and services waited to be called for by the schools and colleges to provide what they had to offer. Education still appeared to be incapable of proactivity in its relationships with its communities.

In the United States, a series of initiatives in the early 1990s – of family resource centres, full-service schools, youth service centres, Bridges to Success, etc. – were attempting to offer ‘school-based health, social service and academic enrichment programs’ (Dryfoos et al., 2005), and Community Schools with strongly integrated services began in 1994 in New York City. Dryfoos et al. (2005) identified the five elements of that community education provision as:

- early intervention

- parental involvement
- after-school enrichment
- individual attention
- social capital.

In 2001, the US Act, 'No Child Left Behind' (NCLB), attempted to enshrine rights and access to fundamental provision for all children in legislation. (But see Chapter 10 for important differences between NCLB and ECM).

In Scotland, New Community Schools began in 1998 with similar aims and the final evaluation report (Sammons et al., 2003) stressed the effectiveness of their multi-agency approaches amongst other benefits, as well as identifying many issues as yet unresolved.

In England and Wales, the Government's Green Paper of 2003 paved the way for the two seminal documents, Every Child Matters (2004) and the Children Act (2004).

## Every Child Matters (ECM)

The five envisaged outcomes for every child underpin everything that the provision of services for children should strive to achieve and would be assessed by:

- being healthy (physically, mentally, emotionally, sexually)
- being safe (from bullying and discrimination, from neglect, violence, etc.)
- enjoying and achieving (being 'stretched' at primary and secondary schools, supported by families)
- making positive contributions (developing enterprise, decision-making, supporting the community and the environment)
- having economic well-being (having continuing post-school education/training, decent homes, access to transport, reasonable income).

It is easy to relate these outcomes to the point made above about how far conventional schools, even effective ones, can impact on some and not on others. It is also clear that the fact that every *child* matters means of course that every *person* matters, as it is children who will be the future transformers of society.

One further important point is worth stressing here. Obvious though it may seem, the word 'Every' in ECM does include every child, regardless of background, socio-economic context, and therefore children from prosperous, even privileged, families are equally affected. Most of the political discourse and research has understandably focused on the need to improve the lot of children in deprived circumstances, reduce poverty and enhance future prospects. We must not forget

however that children from contexts that may not have economic or employment problems are extremely vulnerable in other areas. For example, rates of suicide and depression in young people in highly developed countries such as Australia, China, Japan, the UK and the USA are alarmingly high (80 per cent of these are girls in both the UK and the USA, and 70 per cent in Australia) and the greatest proportion of these come from 'middle class' families. Levine's research (2005) found that children from affluent homes were three times more likely to suffer from anxiety and depression during their teenage years in the USA. Ten per cent of 5–16 year olds in the UK were found to be suffering from emotional/behavioural problems, compared with between six and nine per cent of adults. In a typical secondary school of 1000 pupils, 50 are seriously depressed, 100 are suffering significant distress, 5 to 10 girls have an eating disorder and 10 to 20 pupils have obsessive compulsive disorders, according to Wilson (2008, p. 9).

A combining of research reports over the period 2002–2006 suggested that the five main reasons for this situation were:

- the pressure to perform well in examinations
- the constant pressure from families to be engaged in numerous activities that were seen as 'improving'
- a materialistic outlook that seems to value looks, wealth and clothes above happiness – 'chasing unattainable lifestyles' (Restemeuer, 2008)
- an embedded drink culture
- a fragmentation of family/support units.

The first two of these are most evident in families with no significant economic or employment problems. In this book, our research has encompassed extended schooling, not only in areas of extreme deprivation, but also in those of relative prosperity, and more than one school leader told us of the pressure that children from prosperous and 'upwardly striving' families were constantly under. They suggested that the right of these children to be happy and healthy was as great as anyone else and reminded us, as stated above, that *every* child matters.

Whatever their background, Britain's children were identified in a UNICEF report of 2007 as 'the unhappiest in the world', and the growth of mental health problems in the broadest sense was described by the World Health Organization (Troedson, 2005) as a time bomb ticking for the civilized world.

The Children Act (2004) provided the legislative framework for the reform of children's services, and included the establishment of Children's Centres, the appointment of a Children's Commissioner and various proposals for the integration of children's services, including the appointment of a Director of Children's Services at Local Authority level. These statutory changes – phased in – provide the structure within which ECM outcomes may be achieved. The provision for 'Extended Schools' is included here.

## Other indicators of integration

Since the Act and ECM, there has been an acceptance in the UK of the need to integrate services for children across the professional bodies concerned. For example:

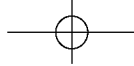
- The National Association of Education Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants became the Association of Professionals in Education and Children's Trust (ASPECT).
- The National College for School Leadership in England – described by Bush (2008, p. 73) as 'probably the most significant global initiative for leadership development' – now offers a National Professional Qualification in Integrated Centre Leadership (NPQICL).
- Most Local Government Authorities have appointed a Director of Children's Services – some of these are from education backgrounds, while some are from social services.
- All children's service provisions are inspected by the same authority.

Recognition at the highest level in the UK that it was unhelpful to see education as a separate process came in July 2007 when the national government's 'Department for Education and Skills' was replaced by the 'Department for Children, Schools and Families' (DCSF). We now need to examine the notion of extended schools and what it involves.

## The place of extended schooling

Given the aims of transforming community and the integration of those responsible for health, law and order and social welfare, it is worth reminding ourselves that we are concerned in this book with schools and the leadership and management of schools. It therefore needs to be acknowledged that schools are pivotal in everything described and discussed so far in this chapter. Dryfoos, one of the most important people in the United States' development of integrated services, was a researcher in adolescent behaviour, but she was clear that all coordinated support programmes 'had to be connected to the most influential institution in our society, public (i.e. state) schools.' (Dryfoos et al., 2005, p. 9). Wilkins (2005, p. 30), in defining schooling as the technology which socializes children in ways which lead them to develop a long-term desire for learning, suggests that schools 'stand at the meeting point of politics, scholarship and community'.

Schools then are central to communities; two obvious facts underpin this:



- it is statutory for children to attend school and
- children spend vastly more time at school than they are likely to in medical centres, social care, etc. (with a few exceptions).

Prior to the formal establishment of extended schooling – and community schooling in, for example, the USA and Scotland – there had been various issues in education, and in society in these countries and several other Western nations, which impacted on schools in ways which complemented for effective schools their readiness for what extended schooling was to involve. These emerging issues, some specific to education, some in society at large, were inextricably linked with extended schooling, in that proposals for this initiative were natural developments from these issues, so that no extended or full-service school could be effective without consideration of them. Some of these are now briefly considered.

## Diversity

As societies become increasingly pluralist, the focus has moved forward from ensuring equal opportunities by addressing inequities in access to achievement, status, etc. There is a recognition that the strength of a society or organization lies in its ability to acknowledge and utilize capability wherever it exists. 'Equity in difference' is a phrase widely used to describe this. Thus in education, a school staff which is at least as diverse as the community it reflects will have the strengths of a whole range of capabilities, probably drawing on the variety of these that exist in different ethnic cultures. Bush and Middlewood (2005, p. 96) suggest that, allowing for stereotyping, the potential for utilizing the strengths of, for example:

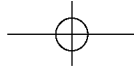
- a Japanese group ethic
- a Chinese work ethic
- African collaborative approaches
- Western problem-solving activities

is considerable, as well as of course the particular strengths associated with both males and females.

## Inclusion

Closely related to diversity is the notion of inclusion, that is the right of all citizens





to be included in society's or an organization's provisions and activities through a consideration of what people *can* do and not be prevented from so doing because of what they *cannot* do. Originally, in education in particular, this emphasis was especially on disability, those designated as having Special Educational Needs (SEN). The pressure to ensure SEN children were not missing out on opportunities by not being included in mainstream schools led to the closure of large numbers of special schools in England and Wales. However, the over-emphasis on SEN gradually led to a broader interpretation of inclusion, so that an inclusive school is seen to be one which has both a structure and an ethos within which SEN, gifted and talented, those with English as a second language, males, females, etc. have the opportunity to achieve their potential. For schools, this also means that no learner should be penalized by an inappropriate curriculum provision, and therefore the need for a range of appropriate learning and teaching styles is inevitable.

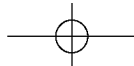
## Personalized learning

This is perhaps the key element, in the UK in particular, in the change in the educational world from expecting learners to fit into the structures and systems as best they can to a provision which meets the individual's personal and specific needs. West-Burnham (2005, p. 23) emphasizes that the personalization of learning is underpinned by 'a deep respect for learners, based on trust and recognition of their value as unique human beings'.

He proposes some core principles, including:

- services designed in response to the defined needs of clients
- clients as partners in the design and development of future provision
- the primary accountability of providers to clients
- clients' ability to make valid, self-directed choices. (2005, p. 16)

Substitute the word 'learners' for 'clients' and these principles illustrate the challenge personalized learning presents to systems which depend on centralized curricula and/or progress according to age. However, the much greater use of individualized data and innovative uses of Information Technology have meant that forward-looking schools have been able to make considerable progress in personalizing learning, even within the above structures. A particular emphasis on learning to learn has liberated many students to be able to determine their own progression routes, supported by trained mentors or coaches. We should also note that for many learners, collaboration will be vital in achieving that (Leadbeater, 2005), because of the need to share resources, human and otherwise.



## Workforce reform

This issue is a very specific one to education in England and Wales. The considerable growth of support staff employed in schools in the 1990s, linked closely with the need for teachers to focus on their specialist roles and concern with a general societal anxiety about work-life balance, led ultimately to the strategy (DfES, 2002) enabling schools to reform and restructure the workforce. The implementation of this strategy has enabled schools to examine and develop more creative staffing structures and a report (Ofsted, 2003) found that these included the development of services involving provision before and after the traditional school day. Middlewood et al. (2005, p. 54–60), in writing about the Learning School, give various examples of these new structures, all based on new approaches to contract design and flexible use of the individual's skills, regardless of official status. Chapter 4 of this book expands on this.

Similarly, in Children's Services, ECM proposed that everyone working with children, young people and families should have a common set of professional skills and knowledge. The common areas of expertise were:

- effective communication and engagement
  - the development of children and young people
  - the safeguarding and promoting of children's welfare
  - the supporting of transitions
  - multi-agency working
  - the sharing of information
- (DfES, 2005b)

and these would be assessed via a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) (DfES, 2006).

## Partnerships and networking

Since the 1980s, various developments have placed requirements on schools to ensure that they entered into new relationships with stakeholders, so that these became part of the process itself. This opened up ways for new relationships to emerge.

In England and Wales, the Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners (DfES, 2004) underlined the importance of partnerships between schools, communities and parents. In fact, since the early days of the marketization of education and the intense individual competition between schools that followed, collaboration had been endorsed by various initiatives. These included Leading Edge (where a 'successful' school could be linked with ones that needed support) and federations of

schools to offer combined services. NCSL's initiatives such as Networked Learning Communities likewise encouraged joint ventures to develop collaborative learning projects at a local level. All these gave official endorsement to what many see as natural to educationalists in the public sector, collaborating for the benefit of the child. In a world of increasing mobility for families, such a notion of collaboration is an important shared value for all concerned.

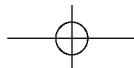
All the above developments were in place and proceeding at the time when the first proposals for extended schools appeared. We shall see that they are all important elements for any school which is offering effective extended or full-service provision or is aspiring to do so. Along with issues such as environmental sensitivity, sustainability, student/pupil voice and many others which effective schools are already addressing, they form the basis of trying to build integrated relationships with partners and communities which reflect many of these same issues. Without this need to share being acknowledged, any school will always be seen as trying to impose its own values upon communities and partners which may, in a few cases, be directly opposed to them. As our chapter on leadership examines, this is what can make leadership of these schools so risky, even dangerous, and why a new kind of leadership is therefore essential.

## The UK proposals and implementation progress

The proposal for extended schools was part of the 2006 paper setting out a ten-year strategy for Sure Start Children's Centres and childcare, as well as for extended schools. This Sure Start initiative closely mirrored the US one – Head Start – as in the USA, it had been clearly acknowledged also that if there were to be 'No child left behind' for future generations, then babyhood, infancy and early childhood were at the heart of effective reform. Family satisfaction, with a particular stress on early intervention, is becoming a measure of effectiveness, with family satisfaction surveys being practised in Belgium (Lanners and Mombaerts, 2000) and piloted in Greece (Kaderoglou and Drossinou, 2005). By 2010, a Sure Start Children's Centre is intended to be in every community in England and Wales, with every school open from 8.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. and offering easy access to childcare activities for children, young people and the community, and quick referral to specialist health and social care services.

Additionally, all local early years childminders are to be part of a network linked to a school or Sure Start centre. According to Carpenter (2005), such universal childcare programmes helped the Nordic nations to abolish child poverty by catching potential problems early.

Some of the early reactions to the requirement for schools to be open until 6.00 p.m. were predictable:



'Our members remain committed to the ECM agenda but what we have not signed up to is a national babysitting programme.' (NAHT, April 2006)

'What we can't have is a situation where schools are providing breakfast clubs and after-school clubs on the cheap.' (NUT, April 2006)

Views on progress range, depending upon the 'half-full or half-empty glass' perspective of the person concerned. A survey of headteachers found in April 2006 (Headspace, April 2006) that 'only 26% were running or planning to run by 2007 a service till 6.00 p.m.; 37% had no plans in place at all; 35% had plans for an unspecified future time'. The Chief Executive of the National Children's Bureau described the progress in England and Wales by 2006, in the context of a ten-year programme, as remarkable and the Chief Executive of 4Children said that with 4000 schools 'signed up', 5000 by 2007, and a further 5000 in hand, the 'critical mass of forty-fifty per cent was near' and there 'will always be thirty per cent who are slow or reluctant but that's only to be expected.'

By 2007, a survey found that 72 per cent of all schools were offering some form of extended schooling – this is evidence of continuing progress towards the target.

What is undeniable therefore is that there already exists a large number of schools in England and Wales offering extended or full-service provision, and an equally large number keen to begin or develop the small starts they have made into better provision. Examples are given throughout the chapters of this book, as well as practical advice drawn from their experience on how to develop further. Drawing on the many excellent examples, from the UK and several other countries, it is possible to highlight some common factors in their effectiveness.

## **Clear understanding and commitment to purpose**

Those committed to providing true extending schooling need to be absolutely clear about its ultimate purpose. We earlier described this as 'transforming communities' and each community served by a particular extended school will be unique. However, all communities are part of wider society and extended schooling should be seen as part of a 'strategy for working towards equity and social justice' (West-Burnham, 2006, p. 102). Grandiose as this may sound, it needs to be embodied in the values and vision established by every individual extended school, because, without an awareness of the ultimate aim of the school, there is a definite risk that some schools will simply have 'extended practice'. This means that they will be open from 8.00 a.m. until 6.00 p.m., and will offer facilities and activities in the extra time. This may be worthwhile in itself and for some schools, it will be a development of current provision but it will remain no more than a

school with an 'add-on', unless the values which underpin the additional provision are ones which reach out to the community and engage with its members in that provision.

Whatever new emphasis is given to community engagement, the extended school never loses sight of the fact that its first focus and its daily 'bread and butter' concern remains the child and the child's learning and achievement.

This understanding needs to permeate the school's ethos. This permeation of course takes time but, for example, all those appointed to the staff of the school, in whatever role, need to be able to understand and accept the guiding principles of school and community being wholly integrated. Mitchell (2005, p. 6) suggests one of the descriptors of a quality extended service school: 'a situation where involvement by school and community are virtually indistinguishable'. The elements in the evolution of such an ethos will be determined by the needs of the pupils/students, staff, and the community (i.e. all learners). Those teachers appointed to the school staff in specialist roles will have the opportunity to continue to develop their expertise to the greatest degree possible, but they will also recognize that:

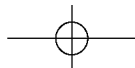
- other people contribute to each person's learning, including families
- equal but different expertise exists in those working in other fields, which impacts significantly on the individual's development
- only in partnership with these other contributors can progress in effective learning occur.

## **A willingness to devolve and share responsibility**

Within the school, this will be reflected in a commitment to

- distributed leadership (this and other leadership aspects are dealt with in Chapter 3)
- pupil/student voice.

This is because the school itself is a community for its learners, and as such is an important agent of socialization. The messages received within this community about shared values, social behaviour, norms and attitudes, rights and responsibilities are ones which are carried from school and form part of the crucial interaction between school and community. Learners' rights and responsibilities as useful citizens are an integral part of the ECM agenda, and children and young people need to be much more involved – and see and feel that they are involved – in how their daily lives and learning are managed. While it is true that older



students are a more obvious group to participate in school decision-making, our research – and that of others – shows clearly that even very young children are willing and capable of much greater ownership of their learning at school. As far as young people are concerned, the UK paper 'Youth Matters' (2005) produced a huge response in its consultation, showing that young people were interested and furthermore had a host of good ideas for the provision offered to them.

## **Community empowerment**

Reaching out and listening to the community are essential and later chapters deal with this in more detail. We should note that it is very tempting for schools to impose their views as to what is needed upon the local communities, but it needs to be resisted as firmly as the school resisting every single thing the community says it wants it to do! Using community liaison officers, community development workers, focus groups, surveys and community conferences are all ways in which community needs can be more realistically identified. The notion of 'learning champions' has been effective in several areas of England, to the extent that any centralized adult learning team in some areas has been dispensed with and only those services or programmes which the community learning champions have identified as being needed or requested 'out there' in the community are provided.

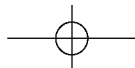
## **A relentless flexibility**

Because of the constant changes in education and society as a whole, extended schools need to be prepared all the time to adapt current practice to new needs and priorities and, where necessary, to make some wholesale changes. These adaptations or wholesale changes can include:

- flexibility in people's roles
- flexibility in structuring school days and terms
- flexibility in the organization of learning groups
- flexibility in curriculum provision
- flexibility in the use of technology.

## **Flexibility in people's roles**

With a focus on personalized learning firmly at the centre, the principle for everyone employed in developing pupil/student learning is that everyone is



working *with* each other, not *for* each other. The recognition of individual employees comes via a respect for the specialist skills and knowledge they possess. The starting point, as Middlewood and Parker have suggested (2001, p. 202) is '... not "How can I make the teaching more effective here?" ... but rather "How can learning be most effective here?"'. Individual specific roles develop from the answer to that question.

Similarly, in terms of pupil or student personal welfare, a truly inclusive extended school tries to see every situation as a learning situation and staff's life experiences, e.g. as family members, can be used – with training – to give support to a learner, whether their designated role is that of teacher, technician or receptionist. The notion that only subject teachers are able to act as personal tutors to students has already been rejected in many secondary schools in the UK. Specialist support services need to be available and easily and quickly accessible but for the majority of learners, the flexible roles of staff enable everyday needs to be met.

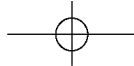
### **Flexibility in structuring school days and terms**

The 'factory model' of start school, lessons, break, lessons, lunch, lessons, etc. is widely seen as completely hostile to the needs of pupils and students in schools committed to personalizing learning. Even within the conventional school day (say 8.30 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.), a number of schools operate a continuous learning day. Simply by staggering break times, not only is learning occurring during formal settings through the day, but the pressure on spaces, on the need for regimented behaviour, for 'crowd control', and on staff placed with the out of class learners are all reduced significantly. Equally, the learning of the need to develop a calmer ethos outside the class out of respect for those still learning is a clear example of learning with others, as those outside will be inside at some point and need the same respect!

Likewise, the structure of the school year is increasingly being determined by what are relevant and appropriate 'blocks of effective learning time' rather than by historical precedents, dating back to the nineteenth century in some parts of the UK.

### **Flexibility in the organization of learning groups**

Many educationalists – and increasingly politicians also – are suggesting that certainly in the UK, we shall at some point this century look back with bewilderment at times when our schools were organized around the chronological age of the children, with all those of a certain age moving together from year to year! Personalized learning and



assessment for learning all promise an escape from the tyranny of examinations at prescribed ages to assessment at a time when the individual is ready. Thus, groupings will be endlessly flexible; sometimes single gender, sometimes mixed gender, sometimes large numbers, sometimes small numbers, sometimes common interest, sometimes mixed adult/children and sometimes solitary. The extended school offers increased opportunities for some of these possibilities because of the exciting mix of its clients and its recognition of their priorities.

### **Flexibility in curriculum provision**

In personalized learning in inclusive extended schools, the goal is to motivate all learners 'to become active investors in their own learning' (Leadbeater, 2005, p. 9). The key includes improving skills as a learner, and gaining the qualities of responsibility, resilience, resourcefulness and reflection. To this end, the organization of groupings and periods of time spent on a learning activity (above) need to be flexible so that *how* the learning is occurring becomes more central than *what* is being learned

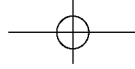
### **Flexibility in the use of technology**

The 'ownership' principle in extended schools referred to earlier is particularly relevant here, as learners in this century take responsibility for the tools when they regard them as their own. Information technology 'creates a shared platform for learning, linking school, home and community' (Leadbeater, 2005, p. 14), encouraging both personalized and collaborative learning. Technology puts the tools in the learners' hands and so makes them more able to participate. The huge success of the provision of computer classes for senior citizens throughout the developed world is a notable illustration of this.

These factors, along with clear policies and strategies, a realistic timetable for achieving them, and the ability to forge strong effective partnerships with external agencies of all kinds, give a flavour of what an effective extended school is. One final and crucial point must be made in this chapter, however. It is the need to remember that there is no one single model for an extended school – they come in all shapes and sizes! These may include:

- clusters of schools
- a school or schools with agencies and other services close at hand
- the full-service extended school – a 'one-stop' supermarket of services where everybody will find something to suit their needs.





The actual model will depend on many factors, including capacity, location, local community composition and, perhaps above all for leaders and managers, where the school is *now*, so that development can build from that point.

### Further reading

- Dryfoos, J., Quinn, J. and Birkin, C. (2005) *Community Schools in Action*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Piper, J. (2006) *Schools Plus to Extended Schools*. Coventry: ContinYou.

#### Points to consider

- How confident are you of the degree to which there would be/is support for extended schooling in your organization?
- How well do you really know your local community, its needs, and its potential contribution?
- Using the list given in this chapter, is it possible to do an analysis of where the school is currently in each of the areas dealt with in this chapter?
- Could there be a value in nominating 'learning champions' in the school and/or the community? That actual title does not have to be used. They will need a clear brief but also a free hand to spot opportunities wherever they are for the school or network to contribute to some form of learning.