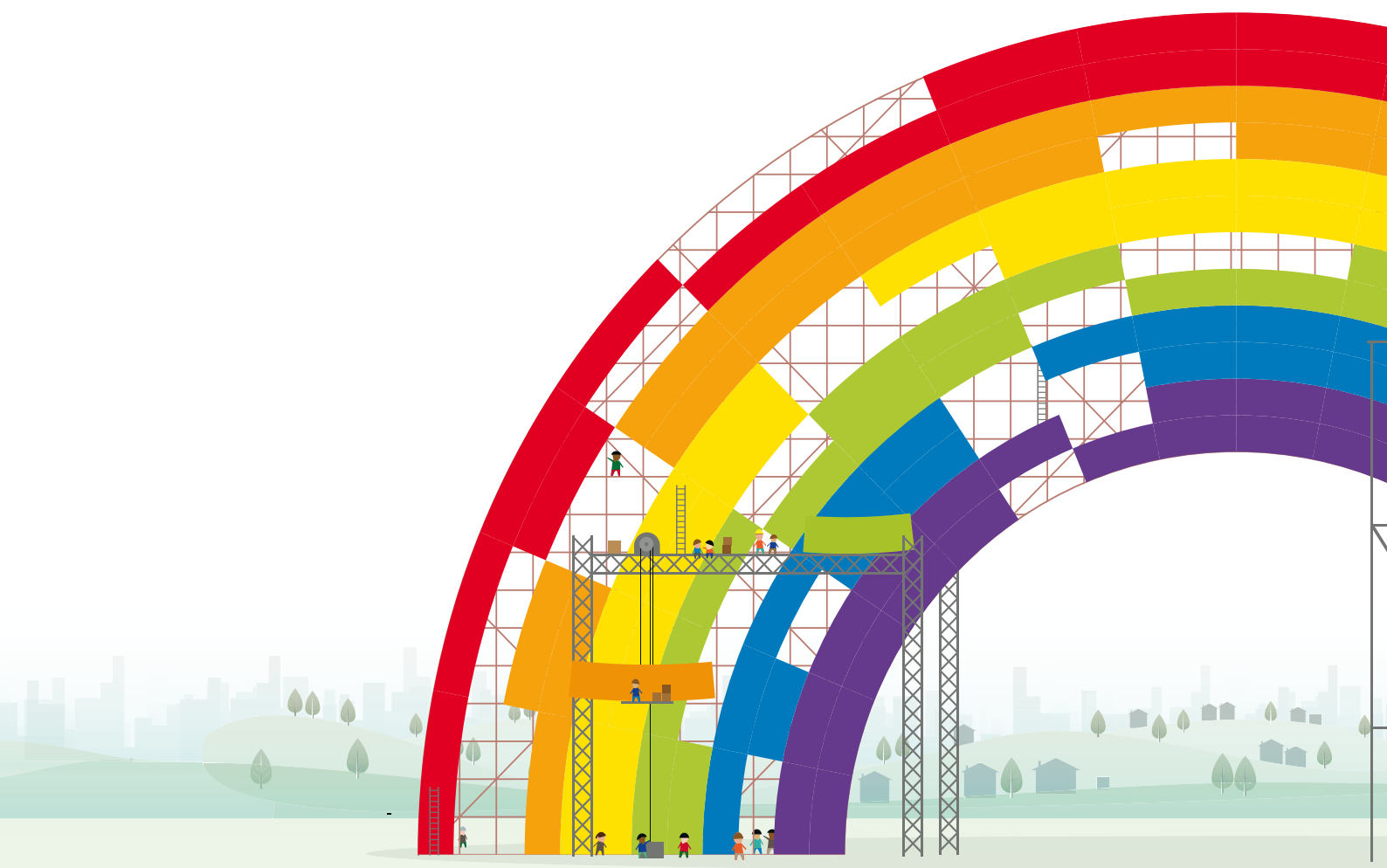
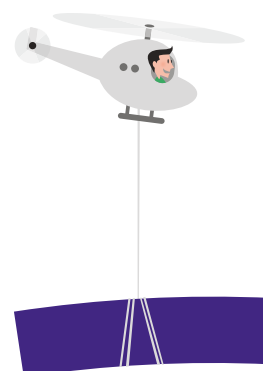


The Extra Mile

How schools succeed
in raising aspirations in
deprived communities







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1. Introduction

This project is the first of a series which will explore in detail the barriers which face the children from deprived communities at school and seek ways to improve their chances of success.

Every teacher discovers this simple truth in their earliest days in teaching: that children from poor backgrounds do not fare as well in school as the children whose families are comfortably off. It is obvious enough in most lessons.

We are not speaking of extreme poverty alone: reduced attainment can be seen among families who have enough to live on (but no luxuries) as well as those which are hard-pressed. Nor are we talking just about children on free school meals; some of them are professional people suffering temporary poverty. This project is focused on children whose families have been poor for generations. Families who often live in neighbourhoods characterised by high crime levels, educational underachievement, low skilled, poorly paying jobs and poor health.



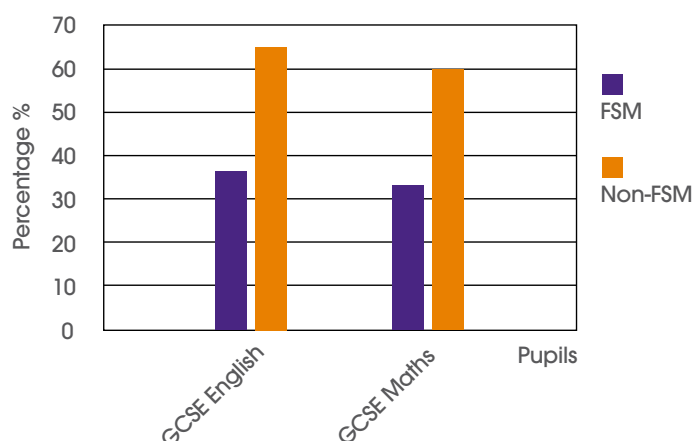
Generational poverty

All poverty is challenging, but generational poverty adds to material deprivation the weight of historical expectation and ingrained culture.

Firstly, deprived families have to contend with lack of money and all it can buy. Most people reading this booklet can refer to the educational benefits they have purchased for their own children: books from an early age, visits to interesting places, museums, theatres, exhibitions, experiences of the wider world. As their children got older maybe they purchased the set texts in English, a desk to work at, a computer of their own. These and thousands of other small privileges are the educational benefits that money can buy. The children addressed in this project do not have these benefits.

Secondly, children living in deprived communities face a cultural barrier which is in many ways a bigger barrier than material poverty. It is the cultural barrier of low aspirations and scepticism about education, the feeling that education is by and for other people, and likely to let one down. History has taught them this: friends, siblings, parents, even grandparents who failed in school have been living evidence that school doesn't work for families like theirs. They need only consult history as recent as last June to see that this is still, to a reduced extent, true.

Performance at Grade C or above (2007)



They are suspicious of the great promises of the twentieth century about the power of education to rescue them from poverty. This project will focus on this second, challenging issue about cultural attitudes.

Education or work

For the old 'working class', security came from work: sons and daughters valued steady money and looked to leave school as soon as possible to find jobs, often through family contacts. In the heyday of industry, this led many children into the same profession as their parents: the shipyard, the factory, the mine; unskilled jobs still offered security. But all that has changed. The competitive industries of 21st century England will require higher order academic, personal and vocational skills. A successful education in the sixth form and university will be the norm, not the alternative.

Some families are both cynical and suspicious of school. Parents may have had bad experiences of their own at school, and this rubs off on their children. Sometimes, the stresses of their situation are reflected in the behaviour of their children, who come to school troubled and wary, and not mentally prepared for learning. Seeking comfort, some children find school a haven of order and good counsel, but others who have

lost interest gang together in their rejection of education, and their bravado lends them a sort of status. They develop an anti-education culture.

Education offers a route out of poverty, but children do not always see that.

The work of the DCSF in combating the effects of poverty

This project is about raising the aspirations of children from deprived communities, and engaging them in their education. The government is already hard at work helping the hardest-pressed families to climb out of material poverty. The Child Poverty Unit looks for ways to combine the different government departments to deliver sustainable and long-term solutions to family poverty, and three particular education-based policies address the social and vocational needs of the group:

- The expansion of **extended schools** which will bring a rich mix of additional experiences and security to pupils before and after school.
- The **integration of children's services** as *Every Child Matters* is implemented, ensuring the best possible support, especially for needy children.
- The development of **14-19 curriculum** to offer new, more varied opportunities, so that pupils can benefit from more attractive, credible ways into further education and work.

This particular project addresses that other debilitating effect of poverty, low aspirations, and examines the cultural factors which inhibit the potential of children whose families have limited means.

4 The Extra Mile

Doing what good schools do

The first stage of work on this project was to visit 50 secondary schools working in the most deprived wards in England, but with a great track record of success with their pupils. Despite the material deprivation of their intake, they have created a culture of aspiration and achieved impressive examination results. Their pupils take confidence, pride and hope from school.

Unsurprisingly, they are all excellent schools, and they do all the things that good schools do:

- **They have dynamic leaders, who lead from the front, set the tone and establish a 'can do' culture:**
 - They provide the commitment, drive and determination which motivates their staff. They value all the staff, from the office receptionist to the most senior teacher, taking time to talk to them and understand their views and aspirations.
 - The progress of the pupils is paramount. They just won't give up on any pupil, no matter how challenging and time-consuming they are.
 - Leadership is distributed within the school. Middle leaders are expected to take responsibility, use their initiative and meet expectations.
- **They have strong systems for quality assuring the curriculum, teaching and pupil progress:**
 - Teachers are supported personally and professionally, both informally and through well structured line management and performance management.
 - Departmental reviews and performance management procedures are inextricably linked.

Focusing on subject leadership at Calder High School



Calder High School

Calder High has pioneered processes that have enabled it to develop, support and challenge its Faculty Leaders. A desire to create consistently high quality subject leadership led to the creation of a Faculty Leadership framework – a set of tasks with accompanying guidance – that have to be completed at set times during the year. From writing the Faculty SEF to work scrutiny, all tasks are coordinated and calendared.

The school has broken free of the limitations of traditional line management structures and now teams of 3 subject leaders meet with 2 senior colleagues each half term in Faculty Improvement Groups. At each meeting the subject leaders answer a set of tough questions about performance and the impact of their improvement strategy. These meetings have become a forum for challenge, support and the sharing of developing practice. Termly leadership conferences also bring middle and senior leaders together to review progress, identify actions to be taken and to decide on the allocation of resources.

The new approaches have generated enthusiasm, built partnerships and harnessed the creative energy of the middle leadership team. Results at all levels have improved markedly and there is confidence that the approach has built capacity for long term sustainable improvement.

- **They are passionate about the quality of the classroom experience, about teaching and learning:**
 - Learning is the priority rather than teaching, with a sharp focus on the pupils, the progress they make and the outcomes they achieve.
 - The schools are 'learning organisations' and engage in action research both within and outside the school. Debate and development about the pedagogy of the classroom is facilitated through whole-school CPD and often reinforced at subject level through scheduled, 'protected' and regular meetings which focus on teaching and learning issues and sharing developing practice.
- **They shape the curriculum – to serve the needs of their intake:**
 - The curriculum, both basic and extended, is specifically tailored to the needs of the pupils, rather than based on historical or staffing considerations.
 - Schools are flexible in their approaches, both in terms of the way they group pupils and also by offering different curriculum options to different year groups in order to meet the specific needs of a year group.
- **They track the progress of pupils with ardent regularity and intervene immediately if anyone falls off trajectory:**
 - Pupils are set ambitious targets, often based on a minimum of two levels progress or equivalent during the key stage.
 - The pupils' prior attainment from Key Stage 2 is valued and not used as an excuse for slow progress at Key Stage 3.
 - Data is seen as a means to an end and not an end in itself. It is used to identify the pattern of progress of individuals and groups and to highlight areas for further exploration.
- **They are unusually creative about recruitment and retention (this is particularly key for good schools serving deprived communities):**
 - Staff are often expressly recruited from the local community (and in particular ex-pupils), whether as teachers, learning mentors, teaching assistants or meal supervisors.
 - The schools often act as training schools for ITT students. They provide a particularly supportive and inclusive environment for the students and nurture them as potential recruits.
 - The success at retaining staff is often put down to the quality of the teamwork that exists in the school or department.



The extended curriculum as exemplified by a Science Day at Bacon's College

6 The Extra Mile



What do these eight teachers at Robert Clack School have in common? They all attended the school as pupils.

Going the *extra mile* for deprivation

As well as doing all the things that good schools do, these schools also go the *extra mile* for the children of their community. They implement some **deliberate extra measures** specifically targeted at the most disadvantaged. These measures are designed to turn local school culture from suspicious boredom to upbeat aspiration:

- They go out of their way to bring in local heroes, characters, and successes as role models, so that pupils can see that success is possible for people from their walk of life.
- They teach pupils what they need to know about ways of talking, writing and behaving in the wider world, so they have the repertoire to succeed in formal and unfamiliar environments. They educate for equality.
- They define non-negotiable standards of behaviour and a culture of mutual respect, something which plays well with local parents who value the twin traditions of discipline and personal caring. They apply this culture to teachers as well as pupils.
- They provide cultural opportunities beyond the budget of local families so that pupils get a taste of sports, arts and activities from which they are otherwise excluded.
- They are socially attuned. New teachers tour the catchment area before they start to teach, they take time to talk about local concerns with pupils each day, and learn how to meet, greet and converse in ways that are not patronising. They empathise with the local community and local values.
- Knowing that poverty can induce feelings of emptiness and hopelessness, they work harder than other schools to provide rewards and incentives to pupils. Their notice boards are invariably plastered with honours, rewards, mentions, certificates, prizes. They are always praising positive behaviour, small steps forward and extra effort.
- Teachers assume that they have to earn the pupils' respect and attention. They work to gain natural – rather than forced – attention and make children associate school with learning that is fun, interesting and action packed. They use interactive teaching techniques, play to topical and local interests, and they are skilled in 'holding in' weaker learners.
- The schools do more outreach work than most. Some offer out of hours support because their pupils come to seek the support from sympathetic staff. Most work with families. Some have workers dedicated to the neediest pupils and some target well-networked pupils who are opinion leaders in their cohort.
- No-one gets away with not working, not behaving, not co-operating, not trying or not attending. Avoidance and disengagement are seen in the same light as disruptive behaviour: as something to be resolved. Resilience, in fact, is one of the key characteristics they seek to inculcate in children who sometimes lack other support to fall back on. The 'no excuses' culture maintains high expectations. Ultimately, it insists on success.

Kings College

Working in a school going through its second Fresh Start in a 10-year period will always require a special kind of teacher. At Kings College a policy has been developed which is based around only recruiting those teachers who 'buy into' the special ethos of the College, have a real empathy for young people and who offer a vibrancy and enthusiasm in their teaching. These staff tend mainly, but not exclusively, to be in the early stages of their career and are clearly committed to developing an effective learning environment, raising aspirations and enabling all to succeed.

Within a climate of difficulties in recruitment a significant proportion of time has been allocated to recruiting the right staff. Close work with agencies, both at home and abroad, with other heads through a network of schools is balanced against the more traditional recruitment processes. Every applicant teaches a lesson and experiences a rigorous interview as well as touring the school. Induction includes a full programme of support as well as short conferences both residential and non residential where external speakers are used to stimulate thought and investigation.

The impact of this policy is that Kings College is developing into a school where raising attainment and aspirations are central to everything it does. Lessons are busy, exciting and interesting for the students and they develop their learning in a modern, vibrant and forward thinking environment where new ideas are welcomed and embraced.



There is no substitute for collaborative working

2. The 'extra mile' trial

This compelling picture of schools which succeed in deprived communities is distilled from data analysis, structured visits and the testimony of the heads, staff and pupils.

Our next step is to spread some of these extra mile practices to other schools, and to **evaluate** which of them are most influential in raising attainment. They are marshalled together under four 'development areas':

- Securing attention, engagement and mutual respect.
- Raising aspirations.
- Equipping pupils with skills for the future.
- Holding them to it; no-one fails.

We are looking for nominations from local authorities that will lead to **20 schools that will trial these approaches**. Schools will work on those areas which best serve their local needs, and they can devise them to suit local circumstance. Each school will also be allocated a 'partner school'. These are excellent schools visited during the original investigation which have succeeded in some or all the measures outlined in this document. The project will run between **July 2008 and summer 2009**.

It is anticipated that the trial will generate the following outputs by **summer 2009**:

- A common account of the benefits, limitations and practicalities of implementing the extra mile practices.
- An assessment of the potential to transfer some of these school improvement techniques more widely.

Participating schools

Trial schools are asked to:

1. Consider which of the activities offers them best value in developing the aspirations and attainment of children from deprived communities. (A brief self-evaluation checklist is offered on p.52).
2. Identify someone in school with sufficient seniority to lead and manage the project.
3. Draw up a brief action plan, integrated into the school improvement plan rather than being an 'add on'.
4. Identify how they might draw on partner schools to support their efforts, e.g. by visiting or being visited.
5. Give an account at the end of the trial of the benefits, limitations and practicalities of implementation that we might pool and share with other schools in the future.
6. Evaluate the outcomes for pupils (See p.48 for details).

In return the school will receive:

- Access to *partner schools* who have successfully introduced similar measures.
- £10,000 each.
- A launch and a debrief meeting at the DCSF to share experiences and ideas.
- National credit for leading innovation.
- Travel, subsistence and supply costs to attend national meetings.

Partner schools

Partner schools are asked to:

- Host a half day meeting with one or more trial schools.
- Attend a launch and a debrief meeting at the DCSF in Autumn 2008.

In return partner schools get:

- £1,000.
- Travel, subsistence and supply costs to attend national meetings.
- National credit for leading innovation.

Local Authorities

Local authorities will be asked to:

- Identify **up to 3** trial schools with a substantial catchment area in deprived communities, which are keen to be involved, have the capacity to lead the project and are alert to the economic, social and cultural issues being addressed. It is recommended that the schools chosen are secure in terms of their leadership and teaching and learning; this will allow a firm base on which to develop the 'extra mile' activities.
- Offer support to each participating school and attend visits (if desired) to the school by DCSF School Standards Advisers.

In return the LA get:

- £10 000 of additional funding for the selected schools in their local authority (see under funding for participating schools).
- Invitations to national meetings (if desired).

Conditions of funding for trial schools

- Funding is intended to help cover set up/one off costs of the new activities selected, e.g. to establish a peer and self assessment system.
- Schools should not utilise funding for on-going expenses.
- If schools do start activities that have ongoing cost implications, they should only do so if they are willing to sustain these from their own budget in the future.

3. Going the 'extra mile'

This section outlines the 'extra mile' practices commonly found in the successful schools visited. They are presented as activities with development aims.

There is also an **overview** of the 12 activities and the benefits that can be derived from adopting these approaches.

A. Securing attention, engagement and mutual respect

Development aims	Benefits
1. To increase interactive and participatory learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater interest in lessons leading to increased learning. • Better attention and behaviour in lessons. • Association between a pupil's personal investment and learning.
2. To develop a listening campaign which responds to pupil and parent perceptions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils and parents feel empowered and respected and, in turn, respect and value the school. • Increased awareness of how the school appears to the local community. • New information about aspects for improvement for the school.
3. To promote a culture of respect for local people, local culture and local values.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better rapport between school, parents and pupils. • Increased support from parents. • School identified as a part of the community.

B. Raising aspirations

Development aims	Benefits
4. To broaden pupils' horizons by offering experiences and opportunities they would not otherwise get.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced sense of deprivation. • Raised morale and interest levels. • Social, cultural and physical value.
5. To develop a culture of achievement and 'belonging' in school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased expectations of success and self-belief. • Pupils accept school and feel part of it. • Pupils make the link between effort, attainment and future prospects.
6. To offer a more relevant curriculum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils work harder because they enjoy lessons and see why they matter. • Pupils make the link between school and work. • Increased motivation.

C. Equipping pupils with skills for the future

Development aims	Benefits
7. To build pupils' repertoire of spoken and written language.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils have ability and feel confident to talk and write in a wider range of situations. • Pupils acquire social confidence.
8. To develop pupils' social, emotional and behavioural skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils can manage themselves better in a wide range of social situations. • Pupils can deal with conflict and negotiation more effectively. • Increased self-esteem.

D. Holding them to it; no-one fails

Development aims	Benefits
9. To cultivate traditional values of respect, good behaviour and caring.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better behaviour in lessons. • An improved, calmer climate for learning. • A community which respects itself.
10. To track pupil progress and intervene promptly if they fall off trajectory.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More apt, focused teaching based on up-to-date assessments. • Earlier intervention to prevent pupils going 'off track'. • SLT is better able to respond to cohort needs.
11. To develop effective rewards and incentive schemes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils feel acknowledged and noticed. • Pupils are more motivated. • Achievement is promoted and valued.
12. To support pupils at important moments in their lives, especially transition points.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils maintain their progress during challenging periods. • Stress is minimised. • Pupils learn resilience in coping with adversity.

For each activity the following structure is used:

a) **A rationale**

This explains why this feature is so important with pupils from deprived communities.

b) **Case study material**

These capture some of the effective approaches used in the schools visited.

c) **Possible areas for development**

These provide a list of possible objectives for the development work. The lists are not exhaustive and are provided to indicate the type of activity that could be undertaken and would be an appropriate use of the funding provided in the trial.

Activity 1: To increase interactive and participatory learning

Rationale

Schools which succeed in deprived communities recognise that their pupils often have low tolerance levels to passive approaches to teaching and learning: just sitting and listening in order to absorb information does not lead to effective learning for these pupils.

The pupils respond to lessons that are clearly focused, well-structured and paced because they understand the idea of being 'inducted' into new learning. Interactivity in these classrooms has several benefits for these pupils; it not only facilitates pupils' learning by stimulating a greater interest in lessons but is essential for effective behaviour management.

Respect for the teacher as a subject specialist is earned through the provision of engaging, exciting lessons. Pupils like to be involved and to be able to express their views through the use of talk partners, structured group work and well organised whole-class discussions. Developing independence is also a key focus and a number of schools are using a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) to achieve this end. In terms of recording information, pupils like it best if they are shown how to record their own notes or key ideas, annotate diagrams or make use of homework or revision booklets to access basic information for revision.

The pupils like to be able to express their ideas and opinions and schools might be the only forum where this is encouraged. They also like to know precisely what they have to do to improve and they like regular feedback on how they are progressing. They want to be clear that there is no 'hidden agenda' or set of rules that might influence their progression: fairness and the associated clarity are paramount values for them. Assessment for learning (AfL) approaches, including peer and self-assessment, can be very powerful and the pupils respond to the openness and honesty that such approaches encourage.

Moorside Community Technology College

The College's success is down to a simple combination of determined hard work and an unrelenting emphasis on what happens in lessons. In 2003, a Teaching and Learning Focus Group was formed and chaired by the headteacher. A small number of priorities for improving classroom practice were identified and, crucially, a 'house style' of Moorside teaching was agreed. This provided a common standard based on a three-part lesson, but also took account of the students' need to receive challenging teaching and inspirational AfL. In order to raise the quality of teaching significantly professional development was vital. The emphasis for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) shifted from attending courses to training one another on site. This resulted in a bespoke programme of in-service training and a network of individual coaching for staff.

To make the next breakthrough the College is seeking to make students more independent. The Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) is seen as a good context for individualised learning, especially when combined with Independent Study (IS). Independent Study is a replacement for homework in Key Stage 3 and is a key part of the College's overall approach to assessment for learning. Students follow a weekly subject rota of extended project work which is intended to increase their autonomy and ownership of their own learning. Independent Study is available on the VLE with accompanying resources, often presented with sound and vision to appeal to the young audience.



Supporting learning at Moorside Community Technology College

Possible areas for development

The objectives below are not exhaustive and are intended to indicate the type of development activities which would be possible and appropriate within the trial. These objectives reflect the approaches taken by schools participating in the original investigation:

- To strengthen AfL in the classroom.
- To develop Assessing Pupil Progress (APP) in English and mathematics and extend the approaches into science and the foundation subjects (as materials become available from QCA).
- To develop a system of 'teaching triads' across a range of departments to support peer planning, lesson observation, coaching and development.
- To develop resources and procedures to support independent learning, for example making use of a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).
- To extend the use of Interactive White Boards (IWBs) by teachers and pupils to motivate pupils and enhance their learning.

Activity 2: To develop a listening campaign which responds to pupil and parent perceptions

Rationale

Pupils and parents from deprived communities often feel they have little to contribute to their school; school could seem like an alien environment governed by rules and conventions which they don't understand or relate to. It's important to align the school culture to their community experience so that it is not sidelined as 'other'. To give real meaning to the term 'my school' pupils need to be given opportunities to make a contribution which is recognised and valued by the school. Showing the pupils and parents that their views are respected has the effect of building their respect for school.

Typically, effective schools establish systems of year and school councils so that pupils can have some input into their school experience. Inevitably these systems only directly involve a relatively small number of pupils. Ensuring that these councils are seen by the pupils to represent their views, and have outcomes that are judged to be 'worthwhile', is one of the keys to success. To augment these approaches effective schools develop a range of complementary strategies and these prove to be particularly effective. For example, house systems are

used to create a 'smaller school identity' and proportionately increase the significance of the 'pupil voice'; prefect and monitor systems are used to provide opportunities for the pupils to take on responsibilities within 'their school'. Questionnaires are used on a regular basis, with pupils and parents, and often as part of a subject review, to elicit pupil views on their teaching and learning experiences. Some schools go even further: pupils are involved in teacher appointments, both in acting as school guides for the candidates and as part of formal interview process and pupils are engaged as 'learning detectives' so that they can comment on aspects of learning, and when asked, teaching, across their year group.

When implemented well and with real integrity, these strategies can have a dramatic and significantly positive effect on pupils. The challenge is making sure that the pupils recognise that their views have some influence and are acted upon – if they are not they will become cynical about the school's motives and disengage from the process.

Samuel King's School

'Pupil voice' is an important area of teaching and learning at the Samuel King's School. Personalising learning has been seen as a high priority in developing the 'whole' pupil. It is an interactive process that has benefits for teachers and pupils. The pupil voice is used actively in a number of areas including within departmental subject reviews where pupils can even critique the delivery of teaching directly to the Head of Department. These comments form the base for further planning of teaching and learning across the subject areas.

Subject questionnaires are used to elicit pupils' views on aspects such as homework, extra curricular activities, the level of help available from staff, the quality of guidance from staff, target levels and on their individual views on their progress on the school's 'learning platform'. All answers are handed to Heads of Department for discussion.

Pupil participation on teaching staff interviews is an important part of the selection process. In addition, pupils regularly report to the governing body on issues raised through the school council.

The benefits to the school of these approaches are enormous. 'Ownership' is important in developing a strong working ethos throughout the school and is particularly effective when pupil comments are seen to have a positive effect in their classrooms.



Listening to the 'pupil voice' at Samuel King's School

Ashcroft High School

Poor student behaviour was a major factor in the school being placed in special measures in October 2003. On removal from special measures in November 2005, 'student voice' became a key driver as the school moved from 'good' to 'outstanding.' It was imperative to develop student ownership of the new school motto, 'a learning community, driven by high expectations and respect for all.' Students had to be key players in establishing the 'Ashcroft Family' and the 'Ashcroft Way' if our motto was to ever become a daily reality.

The School Council shifted its focus from fundraising to the School Development Plan priorities of improving learning and behaviour for learning. A Student Learning Forum (SLF) was set up and given training on lesson evaluation and feedback. They now regularly observe lessons and feed back on the quality of learning, rather than the teaching unless they have been asked to do so by the teacher. They observe and interview candidates for teaching posts.

The students elected to set up a Student Behaviour Panel (SBP) to address low-level disruption in lessons. Classroom behaviour monitors report any incidents of disruption to their learning and regular 'miscreants' appear before the panel. Following training, SBP members are now confident in interviewing students, setting behaviour improvement targets and sanctions. In addition, 25 well-trained peer mentors work with vulnerable students.



The student behaviour panel in session at Ashcroft High School

The Roseland Community College

The 'Learning Detectives' project was initiated in 2006 by two Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs) from partner Leading Edge schools – The Roseland Community College and Penair School. Their proposal was to investigate learning from the students' perspective. The original group of Year 8 students from The Roseland were a pilot group for a cross-school and cross-phase project. The 2007-8 'detectives' are from both Penair School and The Roseland, and work in partnership to observe learning in both schools.

The students are selected through an application and interview process, trained and then, in pairs, they observe lessons, compare findings and feedback to the rest of the detectives.

The impact has been mainly on teachers so far, although the first group chose to share their findings by teaching a PSHE lesson on learning to Year 7. This year's detectives are initially presenting their findings to teachers.

Some of their findings have already had an impact on classroom practice:

- learning objectives are most useful when on view and frequently referred to;
- targets with differentiated outcomes are popular providing that they don't exclude some pupils from striving for the highest outcomes;
- students are more likely to be engaged by power point presentations that are in colour and include funny captions.

'Learning Detectives' have had a real impact on students' understanding that they are partners in learning not just recipients of teaching.



A group of 'learning detectives' from The Roseland Community College and Penair School

Possible areas for development

The objectives below reflect the range of approaches taken by the schools visited. They are not exhaustive and are intended to indicate the type of development activities which would be possible and appropriate within the trial:

- To establish a regular and systematic approach to collecting direct feedback from pupils and parents on whole-school issues and developments.
- To incorporate pupil and parental perceptions as a key aspect of subject and departmental reviews.
- To involve pupils in the review of learning in the school using a 'learning detectives' approach.
- To extend the involvement of pupils in staff appointments and induction.
- To develop opportunities for a wide range of pupils to take on responsibilities for their class/year group/school.

Activity 3: To promote a culture of respect for local people, local culture and local values

Rationale

Teachers in effective schools put building positive relationships with pupils and parents, based on mutual respect, as their highest priority. When pupils bring to the school an additional implicit distrust of 'authority' it is vital to be able to prove to pupils that the school is working with them and not against them, in order to establish this constructive relationship. Respect between teachers and pupils is achieved through constant dialogue. Respect is also achieved by establishing and celebrating joint cultural references with the pupils, e.g. to local football teams. Successful teachers not only understand and respect pupils' cultural references but also provide a context for their relationship outside of the classroom.

Many parents and carers don't have fond memories of their own experiences in secondary school. Even parents and carers who have been regular attendees at the 'primary school gates' often find that secondary schools are less inviting and there is much more of an obstacle to overcome before their active participation can be secured. Effective schools adopt a range of strategies to ensure that they can form a fruitful partnership with parents and carers; in some cases this extends to the provision of family learning.

In this way the family's presence is valued in the school and, by the same token, the family values the school.

Some schools use parents' evenings and progress 'review days' to facilitate face to face engagement and insist on handing over school reports rather than using pupils to take them home. Others maximise the use of cultural evenings to attract those parents and carers who will be less likely to attend curriculum events.

Structural changes to the school entrance and reception area can do much to make the school more welcoming; outreach activities in the local community, employing parents as staff members, 'walking the estate', using the school as a venue for local celebrations and events and featuring local people in assembly, are other strategies that schools have found have made a big difference in their own particular circumstances.

The Wordsley School

In 2001 The Wordsley School was under-subscribed and attendance at parents' evenings stood at about 40%. As a consequence the school initiated a number of strategies:

- A house system and vertical form groups were introduced. This meant that brothers and sisters were in same form group and consequently there was just one point of contact for parents/carers.
- The traditional parents' evening was replaced by twice-yearly review and guidance sessions. Parents see just form tutors, although appointments can be made with subject teachers if required. (Parental attendance in February 2008 was 78 %.)
- Letters are posted to specific homes in connection with the school's awards system. Parents and carers get good news through the post.
- Following each review and guidance session the headteacher sends personal signed letter to parents/carers of all pupils whose behaviour was excellent or good in every subject. (In February 2008, 444 letters sent out of possible total of 721).
- Parents are invited to key events, e.g. to a revision conference, to enable them to support their children more effectively.
- An externally managed parental survey is conducted every three years to ascertain parental perception. Priorities are identified and included in the School Improvement Plan.
- To help overcome some parental misconceptions about the school a new school reception area was built. The brief to architect was "Make us welcoming like a hotel". The receptionist is viewed as a key member of staff and special care is taken in recruiting to this post and then retaining the member of staff.



Welcome to The Wordsley School



Sir Henry Cooper School

The school operates two off-site units, one each for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 pupils. The aim of these units is to help pupils to maintain contact with the school during times of difficulty and to help them to re-engage in their education. The units follow the programmes of study for the respective key stages, as well as providing a range of additional activities, such as those relating to the Prince's Trust Award. Each unit can take up to 10 pupils and five teachers are allocated to work across the units.

In the Key Stage 3 unit it is a requirement that a parent or guardian accompanies the pupil and stays with their child during the day (at least for the first three days). This has tremendous benefits through allowing the parent or guardian time and space to work with their child. Dramatic improvements in attendance, behaviour and achievement have been achieved.

Possible areas for development

The objectives below reflect the range of approaches taken by the schools visited. They are not exhaustive and are intended to indicate the type of development activities which would be possible and appropriate within the trial:

- To develop a way of introducing new staff to the community of which the school is a part.
- To actively build staff/pupil relationships, using pupil pursuits or 'learning walks' to gather evidence and then spread good practice.
- To develop ways the 'hard to reach' parents and carers can be more actively engaged in the life of the school and, in particular, their contribution to supporting their child's progress.
- To establish a 'parents forum' as a means of gaining more effective feedback from parents.
- To extend the role of the school in supporting community events.

Activity 4: To broaden pupils' horizons by offering experiences and opportunities they would not otherwise get

Rationale

Pupils from deprived communities often have a restricted view of the opportunities available to them, particularly those offered through further and higher education pathways. Many of their parents have not had such opportunities and are not aware of the possibilities. The pupils are not often convinced by persuasive rhetoric from their teachers. They are much more likely to be influenced through contact with young and talented role models who can illustrate what can be achieved and explain what to do. Providing the pupils with role models, often young people who have been successful in developing their careers, can provide a powerful message, and particularly so if the young people come from backgrounds which the pupils can readily relate to. Student ambassadors from local colleges and universities can be hugely influential, as can be using ex-pupils.

Effective schools provide a wide range of activities to broaden their pupils' horizons. Effective use is made of external agencies, such as museums and outdoor learning centres. Some of the activities are targeted at specific groups of pupils, such as those identified as gifted and talented, but many are more generally applicable to whole groups or cohorts. In some localities the pupils have a very insular experience and rarely travel beyond the immediate area in which they live. Broadening horizons may even start with a simple trip on the London Underground, an important first step to enable pupils to feel they are able to access opportunities outside of their immediate community.

Although career exhibitions provide a useful function, successful schools go way beyond such events and use them as only a part of a well-co-ordinated strategy. Although the schools in the case studies that follow use their London location to access high status business support, other effective schools visited found ways of eliciting support from local businesses. Not every pupil sees themselves in 'college' after school. In many communities work has more cache. For this reason, visits to and from local commerce and industry, as well as exploring links with the school curriculum, focus on people and the work they do.

Harris Academy, Southwark

Now in its seventh year, the 'Mentors from Business' scheme brings mentors from leading London companies (such as Pricewaterhouse Coopers, Morgan Stanley, Ernst and Young, Deutsche Bank, The Times, The Financial Times and Reuters) to work on a one to one basis with the Academy's students during their final year. There are two clearly defined aims which are understood by everyone involved:

- to help each girl prepare for GCSE examinations;
- to provide guidance about progression to further education.

Meetings take place before and after the school day.

Students in the Harris Academy are keen to have a mentor and priority is given to girls who will use the opportunity effectively. At the Academy it is seen as 'smart' to have a mentor. The scheme has won the DfES Excellence in Mentoring Award and was judged as 'outstanding' in the Academy's 2005 Ofsted inspection. There are at present some 130 mentors from business working with girls in the Academy.

An undergraduate mentoring programme for girls in Years 9 and 10 complements the main mentoring programme.



Looking beyond the test tube – what lies in store for me?

Bacon's College

At Bacon's College a range of activities are used to enrich and extend the curriculum. For example, in 2007 a science day was supported by 60 staff from Accenture, a local accountancy firm. Each group of pupils had their own 'consultant' as they worked on designing, building and marketing toys. From a science perspective the choice of toys (balloon buggies, elastic band rollers, air boats and zeotropes) illustrates the range of scientific ideas and concepts underlying the tasks. In addition, the involvement of the 'consultants' was an important ingredient in a highly successful day. It enabled the pupils to have an extended contact with potential role models who were able to put their own experiences of school in the broader context of their current careers and aspirations.



Staff from Accenture support pupils during a science day at Bacon's College

Possible areas for development

The objectives below reflect the range of approaches taken by the schools visited. They are not exhaustive and are intended to indicate the type of development activities which would be possible and appropriate within the trial:

- To extend the opportunities for pupils to have direct contact with local industry, commerce and institutions of further and higher education.
- To develop contact with adults who can act as role models, 'student ambassadors' or visiting speakers.
- To review the level of pupil participation in external trips and cultural experiences and then extend the reach of such activities to include pupils from deprived backgrounds.
- To develop a programme of activity days or weeks, such as a mathematics or science week.

Activity 5: To develop a culture of achievement in school

Rationale

Often pupils come to school with a 'lid' on their own aspirations. In some families the culture is fatalistic – parents pass on the idea that their status is relatively fixed. Effective schools help their pupils to break free of these limitations; so that they can have higher and realistic aspirations for the future.

In effective schools education is seen as the key to future success. A 'can do' and 'will do' culture pervades and pupils are encouraged in a range of ways to aim high. Assemblies often play a key part and provide a regular mechanism for promoting achievement and celebrating success. Displays around the school reinforce these messages and provide visible reminders of those who are being successful by celebrating the achievements of current pupils, as well as those of past pupils. In some schools TV monitors in the reception and social areas publicise the achievement of pupils across a range of different contexts such as 'scientist of the week' or 'sports team of the week'.

In these successful schools all staff 'buy into' this culture of achievement. Aspirations are not 'dumbed' down, the staff are positive and upbeat and expectations are invariably high.

Blackfen School for Girls

At Blackfen School for Girls the Aimhigher Co-ordinator noticed teachers' frustration with under-aspiring bright girls, typically wanting to be hairdressers or beauticians. Instead of changing the girls' interests the strategy was to present higher goals such as aspiring to study for a degree and then run their own salon!

The University of Greenwich 'Aspire' team was approached to find student ambassadors to come into the school and talk to the students. At the same time Year 11 and 12 form tutors were asked to identify students interested in a career in health and beauty. This returned 60 names. Aspire found three excellent ambassadors; one a former hairdresser who was taking a Complementary Therapies degree, another studying Midwifery and another former Blackfen student studying Business.

The ambassadors talked about their subjects and avenues into health and beauty such as foundation degrees in beauty therapy and hairdressing, salon management, and how important it was to work hard to get good GCSE grades. They acted as brilliant role models and helped to dispel some misconceptions about university, since some girls thought that they would be in lectures every day from 9 to 5 and have to live away from home.

Feedback was excellent with many girls saying that they would now consider university and were more motivated to achieve success in their GCSEs. Further success was achieved when eight of the students undertook work experience at a nearby Visage School of Hair and Beauty.

The Wordsley School

Wordsley School has a simple mission statement which underpins its efforts to promote an achievement culture. It is literally a formula for success:

High Expectations + Challenge = Success

The school uses a wide range of strategies, some of which are listed below:

- A clear rewards system including attendance badges and merit awards. Pupils are presented with their badges in assemblies and letters signed by headteacher are posted to home.
- Students of the month are photographed and the photograph is then displayed in school foyer. Individual photographs, in presentation covers, are posted home for parents or carers.
- Photographs of subject prize winners are framed and displayed near to the relevant subject department.
- Copies of photographs of pupils who appear in the press are obtained, whether for school based activities or not, and are framed and displayed in the dining hall.
- The TV screens in the reception area, school and dining halls are used to celebrate pupils' achievement, including the information and photographs described above.
- Photographs of ex-pupils who have come back to the school, either to teach or as part of their training, are framed and displayed.
- The Annual Presentation Evening has been moved from the school hall to local Town Hall. (Attendance has risen from 180 to over 500 people.)
- An annual revision conference is held for each year group. This focuses on the importance of achieving and why revision is an important aspect of this overall ambition. In addition, the pupils have to formulate a revision plan and look at a range of techniques for revision.



Pupils wear their badges with pride at The Wordsley School

Bitterne Park School

Bitterne Park School believes that an achievement ethos is central to everything that the school does. The culture is developed to raise personal levels of self-esteem and this in turn promotes high levels of learning. This is achieved by a range of strategies, some of which are listed below:

- A constant focus is maintained on progress, learning and students doing the best that they can.
- A calendared programme of Performing Arts events so students take part and grow in confidence, e.g. Stars in Their Eyes, Dance Fusion, Winter Tales, and a range of small and large shows. Production values of these events are high – the school employs two media technicians who develop videos, lights, etc. This adds to the professionalism of the events. (This has raised engagement and participation and noticeable differences can be seen in the classroom.)
- Coffee mornings are held by the headteacher, whilst informal, they allow her to reward and discuss school and related issues.
- Progress Leaders' weekly assemblies are reward-based and achievement focused. Attendance, effort and progress are all rewarded. 'Top 100' lists and 'Hotter than Hot' (Top 10) are used to identify students. Assemblies use high production techniques such as music, PowerPoint and lighting to give a professional look.
- Two celebration assemblies take place during the year. One at Christmas, one in the summer. Rewards are presented and students/tutor groups perform. Teachers' present spoof music videos and songs.
- Symbols of success are scattered around the school and they are manipulated to give meaning, e.g. headteacher reward pens have messages written on them pertinent to a particular year or event.

- Staff are praised and rewarded with gifts. Contributions are recognised and praised during whole staff briefings. Weekly letters of thanks are written for staff.
- The headteacher's open door policy encourages students to share good work which is then rewarded with a letter and a school pen.



Formal recognition of peer mentor achievement at Ashcroft High School

Possible areas for development

The objectives below reflect the range of approaches taken by the schools visited. They are not exhaustive and are intended to indicate the type of development activities which would be possible and appropriate within the trial:

- To develop the use of ex-pupils to act as role models and exemplify what pupils from the school community can achieve.
- To extend the use of assemblies and celebration events to promote and celebrate achievement at all levels to pupils and their families.
- To develop display and systems such as video loops in order to celebrate achievement in discrete or less overt ways.
- To develop a range of events for different year groups, such as 'revision conferences', to highlight the importance of particular times of the year.

Activity 6: To offer a more relevant curriculum

Rationale

Pupils from low income families place a lot of their aspirations and hopes into future employments and have a clear sense of what they see as relevant to their future and are not particularly persuaded by the 'this will be good for you in the long run' argument made by teachers. In many instances, because pupils are usually well aware of their strengths and weaknesses, they are good judges of whether the curriculum is serving their needs. In effective schools there is a real sense that the curriculum, both basic and extended, is specifically tailored to the needs of the pupils and is aware of local industry and commerce, rather than based on historical or staffing considerations.

Effective schools in deprived communities go out of their way to provide enriching extra-curricular and extension activities. Intervention programmes are often highly structured and differentiated to cater for pupils across the full ability range and are occasionally combined with off-site experiences such as activity weekends. Some schools adjust the timings of the school day to ensure that all pupils can access enrichment and extension activities; others give a very high status to extra-curricular involvement. In addition, options such as early entry for Key Stage 3 tests or GCSE are carefully evaluated and the expansion of the 14-19 curriculum is being given a high priority.

Typically in effective schools the pupils show high levels of commitment to their schools, albeit that this is implicit rather than explicit in their behaviour. This characteristic, together with their genuine appreciation of the high levels of commitment shown by their teachers, means that they are often ready to give their time to out

of lesson activities, whether in connection with early morning sports training, lunchtime booster sessions or weekend or residential consolidation/enrichment sessions.

Oaklands Community School, Southampton

The Leadership Team had significant concerns with a Year 8 cohort. The year group comprised almost two thirds of boys, a significant minority of whom were already showing signs of disaffection within aspects of the curriculum. The need to personalise the curriculum along with staffing changes led to a re-evaluation of the core entitlement of the upcoming Year 9 curriculum and to the introduction of an Electives Programme.

Some subjects such as dance and music were taken out of the core curriculum and were included in the electives menu. This was supplemented by a range of other options including sporting qualifications, introductions to option subjects and early entry GCSE in Statistics.

A menu of choices was presented to Year 8 students, very much as in the Year 9 options booklet, and they were able to choose either one elective to run throughout the year or three electives, one per term. As Year 9 students, they now spend two hours per week in their elective area.

The outcome of this is that students feel listened to, attendance on 'elective' days is the highest in the week and the number of behaviour referrals from elective lessons is the lowest in any subject area throughout the school.

Sir Henry Cooper School

The Key Stage 3 curriculum is regularly reviewed to support effective transition, teaching and learning and attainment. The key issues of attainment in literacy and by gender are very much to the fore.

In Years 7-9 identified students are taught by one teacher in the core subjects and selected foundations subjects. The approach is tailored to enable the pupils to make progress in small steps and it also provides a bridge from the single teacher approach at primary school to the multi-teacher approach at secondary school.

The Key Stage 4 curriculum has been developed with increased participation rates post-16 as a priority. There are three flexible pathways with appropriate accreditation routes. Work-related learning is expanding and there are currently nine different elements. An IT Diploma will be introduced from September 2008.

Possible areas for development

The objectives below reflect the range of approaches taken by the schools visited. They are not exhaustive and are intended to indicate the type of development activities which would be possible and appropriate within the trial:

- To improve the match of the basic curriculum to the needs of the pupils, extending the range of curricular pathways available.
- To review and improve current approaches to the extended curriculum, including the range of intervention programmes available and pupils' engagement with them.
- To extend the range of support offered to pupils and their parents when they are choosing their options in Year 9 and Year 11.
- To review and then extend the level of engagement of all pupils with the extra-curricular opportunities provided.

Activity 7: To build the pupils' repertoire of spoken and written language

Rationale

Effective schools in deprived communities recognise that their pupils may start school with limited language repertoires, relying for the most part on non-standard, informal modes of talk and writing. There may be little in the way of a reading culture in their homes and research suggests that extended conversation may be limited. In less formal contexts, and amongst their peers, these more informal models generally serve them well and can prove incisive and persuasive. However, they may be disadvantaged when more formal or challenging situations (such as public speaking) require conventional forms of language which are outside their day to day experience.

Effective schools provide pupils with a range of formal and informal language repertoires, both spoken and written. Teachers share good examples, explain their features, model their use and define their conventions. They give pupils opportunities to try them out in 'real' situations, scaffolding and evaluating their use as appropriate. They expose pupils to a range of reading material, taking pupils outside of their 'comfort zone' in order to challenge and extend their thinking and broaden their vocabulary. In this way, pupils understand that they have choices, that there is an appropriate way to speak or write depending on purpose, context and audience. They are able to access the linguistic currency of more formal situations, which may otherwise be denied them.

Park High School

Opportunities to support the development of a formal language repertoire at Park High School are planned for in the curriculum through specific units of work. For example, Year 8 pupils follow a unit entitled: 'Language Study: does where you are and who you are with affect your language?' This unit involves pupils literally auditing their language experiences around school. A language map is created by the pupils and 'scripts' and 'transcripts' of the language encountered in these daily situations are analysed. The differences in register, from formal to informal, and the vocabulary choices involved are explicitly considered.

This work extends pupils' vocabulary and phrasing in addition to establishing an understanding of the ability to move between different language repertoires.

Pupils need to appreciate the ability they have with language. The intention is to ensure that pupils feel positive about their abilities to 'switch' styles and not to be undermined by their everyday language.

As part of the renewed Framework, a new unit in Year 7 entitled 'News Reporting' is being developed to include work which uses newspapers to make a news broadcast. This

continues...

will involve watching and listening to news broadcasts. Pupils will video themselves and then broadcast to the class; they will write scripts and considering the register of their broadcasts.

As writers, pupils are taught to 'PAFT' rather than to 'write'. Purpose, Audience, Format and Tone underpin the writing; pupils are actually told they are 'PAFTING' rather than writing! This may seem a simple statement but the idea is rooted in highlighting the real reasons for writing. To PAFT relies on the idea of choosing the repertoire for the task and therefore different repertoires are regularly taught.

In addition to opportunities to practise language in different formats pupils are constantly encouraged to read. This is vital to the development of language and therefore independent reading is a key strategy employed by the department.

Possible areas for development

The objectives below reflect the range of approaches taken by the schools visited. They are not exhaustive and are intended to indicate the type of development activities which would be possible and appropriate within the trial:

- To establish a system involving pupils as 'talk trackers' to evaluate the range and quality of talk across the curriculum.
- To plan structured speaking and listening opportunities into the curriculum and introduce APP for better assessment of it.
- To enhance the opportunities for pupils to experience formal situations, such as interviews and preparation for work experience.
- To extend the use made by pupils of magazines, journals and newspapers in the library.

Activity 8: To develop the pupils' social, emotional and behavioural skills

Rationale

Effective schools in deprived communities recognise and address the fact that their pupils may lack regular counsel, feedback, support and praise for their personal skills and some may be exposed to poor role models. Pupils may also be bereft of a sense of 'belonging' to authority and adopt a 'them and us' outlook. Expressing emotion may be a cultural taboo, especially for boys, and unless they acquire strategies for dealing with their emotions they often fall back on instinctive responses such as lashing out, fight or denial.

Effective schools address these issues by encouraging pupils to articulate and manage their emotions, learn strategies for building relationships and managing conflict. Programmes such as Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) support these approaches. In addition, these schools provide opportunities in the curriculum to compensate for the pupils' inexperience by addressing social and emotional issues through English, e.g. speaking and listening; drama, e.g. conflict; citizenship, e.g. negotiation; and Personal Health and Social Education (PHSE), e.g. circle time. To increase pupils' awareness and understanding of different conventions, teachers and other adults model and practise these conventions, but without denying or attempting to diminish the pupils' respect for their families and communities. The knack is to signal respect for the home and family whilst presenting school norms as additional and appropriate for their context. Successful schools are those which reflect local community values.

Oaklands Community School, Southampton

As a community school specialising in the Arts, drama plays a decisive role in shaping the lives of all students at Oaklands. The attributes of confidence, cooperation, listening, active participation, risk taking, negotiating... the list is endless, learnt and honed within drama lessons, is transferred to all areas of the school and is widely recognised as an essential element to the success of the students.

There are strong links between drama and citizenship, not only in subject matter but intrinsically through the methods of delivery. A key priority of the drama curriculum is to provide as much relevance to real life as possible. To achieve this, much of the curriculum is based on reality/documentary style theatre, with students studying, researching, writing and presenting pieces inspired by primary source materials, often news stories and, ideally, of local origin. The real people involved in the stories are often invited into the school to observe the performances. These have included the parents of 'Missing Dan Nolan' and of Simon, the subject of 'Suicide.com'.

The exploration of these topical and social issues forces students to move beyond their own experiences and the heightened empathy has a significant impact on their engagement, confidence and expression and produces highly charged responses from the performers and the audiences.



Social and emotional issues can be effectively addressed through drama

St Mary's Sports College

St Mary's Sports College is committed to deliver a high quality personalised pastoral care and support for learning. The College appointed two pastoral mentors per year group and freed them from administrative tasks by the creation of two further dedicated pastoral administrator posts. The additional salary costs amount to £15,000 plus on costs per post, term time only for 37 hours per week.

The brief of the pastoral mentors is to provide a direct, localised, easily accessed and flexible response to the range of pastoral care, attendance and learning issues facing children from this comprehensive school challenged by significant local deprivation. Under the direction of a Head of Year, and informed by a range of data, mentors typically check attendance at lessons, support coursework, homework and catch-up programmes, make time to talk to the students and offer general guidance including career and progression planning. Each year group has a social area with a year office for ease of access. Pastoral mentors are classroom focussed wherever possible, supporting learning and implementing appropriate interventions.

The impact of the changes has been very significant:

- In 2007, pastoral care and guidance, personal development and well-being were judged by OFSTED as outstanding. "Young people are exceptionally well prepared for life".
- In 2008 HMI reported that pastoral structures have led to a reduction in disengagement and that pastoral interventions were good, old-fashioned, individual, and illustrated a genuine care for the students.

Possible areas for development

The objectives below reflect the range of approaches taken by the schools visited. They are not exhaustive and are intended to indicate the type of development activities which would be possible and appropriate within the trial:

- To evaluate and strengthen 'wrap around' support, mentoring and guidance.
- To review and strengthen the development of specific social and emotional skills in the subjects and through extra-curricular activities.
- To extend the use of peer and personal/pastoral mentors.
- To review and develop the use of 'pupil support centres/withdrawal units' within the school.

Activity 9: To cultivate traditional values of respect, good behaviour and caring

Rationale

Conventional behaviour in the school context may be very different from that practised in the home or tolerated on the streets. In effective schools in deprived communities, staff establish productive relationships with pupils and model the expected or 'appropriate' behaviour both in the way they relate to the pupils and in the way they relate to each other. Teachers have to earn respect and show how cooperative conventions can be enabling.

Pupils in these communities often have a strong sense of 'fairness' and will respond negatively if they think they are being treated differently from their peers. They respond best to clearly defined boundaries of behaviour.

Behavioural systems are most successful when underpinned by a plain and obvious approach to discipline, straight talking alongside honest and direct praise. This chimes well with families where traditional values such as honesty and respect are paramount. The pupils know that they have a choice – if they choose to misbehave then they can have no complaints, sanctions which they know about, and which have been explained to them, will be applied. In many of the effective schools visited restorative justice approaches

are well established and encouraged pupils to take responsibility for the consequences of their actions. Schools increasingly providing 'wrap around' care through the effective use of full service support teams, often located in the school.

In effective schools staff are consistent in the way they establish expectations, model behaviour and implement sanctions. Even experienced and senior staff, who may not think that they need to use the formally prescribed procedures, do so to ensure consistency. Line management and monitoring procedures operate at middle and senior leadership levels to quality assure the process.

Wright Robinson Sports College

At Wright Robinson Sports College there is a clearly defined Behaviour for Learning policy. It is based on the premise that students have clear boundaries based on what is and what is not acceptable behaviour. In some instances these boundaries may be different to those in place at home. However as a school a great deal of emphasis is placed on educating the individual and this frequently involves both student and parent.

The 'consequence system' deployed at Wright Robinson ensures a centrally managed, consistent and fair approach to discipline based around the philosophy of choices and chances. Students are provided with an opportunity to make the right decisions. When this does not happen the level of consequence is stipulated within the policy guidelines and these guidelines are made clear to staff, students and parents/carers.

A full uniform policy has been adopted. Students who arrive in trainers are given replacement pumps to wear and jewellery is confiscated until it can be collected prior to the start of the next half term. The school operates within the 'Safer Schools Partnership' and where problems persist students can be placed on 'acceptable behaviour contracts' with targets specified by both the school and the police.

In addition to consequences there is an extensive rewards system. However, for every consequence there is a negative counter and for every reward there is a positive counter. A simple mathematical sum is therefore completed to determine the overall merit profile of particular students. Students are aware that every time they disrupt their own or others learning it is affecting their chances of reward. The school works in partnership with a wide range of outside agencies to provide additional support for their students. These include: Parent Partnerships, Family Intervention teams, Developing Integrated Solutions to Community Safety (DISCUS) Teams, Youth Offending Teams (YOT) and Educational Psychologists from the local authority. This 'wrap around' care, coupled with appropriate curriculum provision, provides students with the perfect foundation to succeed.



At Wright Robinson Sports College learning is the focus for the behaviour policy

Newall Green High School

At Newall Green High School each year team has a learning mentor who works with targeted students who, for a variety of reasons, are experiencing emotional upheaval in their lives. This support is wide ranging but continually emphasises the importance of academic success, attendance and progress.

In addition to the five learning mentors a full service school team consists of a school health worker, who also manages the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) programme, a school based social worker and assistant social worker who also work in the partner primary schools, an attendance officer, five heads of year, two assistant Headteachers, the SENCO and a senior manager for administration and finance. This team meets once a week to consider referrals from the heads of year and to plan a bespoke personalised programme of support.

Parents and carers are crucially involved and the team has a drop in facility whereby they can visit and meet with appropriate support agencies. The school health worker co-ordinates the provision and through the health authority is able to make referrals to additional agencies such as clinical psychologists.



A pupil enjoying working with a learning mentor

Possible areas for development

The objectives below reflect the range of approaches taken by the schools visited. They are not exhaustive and are intended to indicate the type of development activities which would be possible and appropriate within the trial:

- To audit and then strengthen consistency in the implementation of the behaviour policy.
- To develop the school's approach to rewards and incentives (see also activity 11).
- To develop approaches associated with restorative justice.
- To improve links with other community services to provide 'all service' support, especially for pupils for whom behaviour management is a priority.
- To review the contributions made by the pupils to the development of the behaviour policy and related issues such as the care and maintenance of the school environment.

Activity 10: To track the pupils' progress and intervene promptly if they fall off trajectory

Rationale

Pupils from deprived communities often like to take ownership of their targets as it means they are not subject to any perceived 'hidden rules' of authority– they like to talk about their strengths and weaknesses and the progress they are making. They work more willingly if they know what they are aiming for and what they need to focus on in order to get there. It is particularly important to share targets with these pupils in order to reinforce the notion that the teacher and pupils are working in partnership to achieve success and that the school does not have a hidden agenda or set of rules that the pupil is not privy to. These pupils also respond well to being given clear, simple and measurable steps to progress. Achievable goals are very important because they are realistic and within reach. Pupils experience a sense of personal progress in a 'small steps' system which is harder to achieve in a deferred gratification model.

Progress is monitored on a regular basis and identification of slow progress is rapid. This allows for early intervention to keep pupils on track. The choice of intervention approaches for those who need support is a collaborative process involving both senior and departmental leaders and the impact is regularly evaluated. Achieving a good fit of solution to need is key, for example, mentoring provides significant support to particular groups of pupils and senior leaders are often directly involved in this mentoring. Revision sessions prior to external test and examinations are well structured and targeted to pupils who would most benefit from this support.

Bitterne Park School

Bitterne Park School sets rigorous targets across all departments at both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. These are agreed by the School Improvement Partner (SIP), the senior management team (SMT) and the Governing Body. Once these targets are set a rigorous programme begins and is underpinned by the following actions:

- Setting minimum and challenging targets for all departments and Progress Leaders (year groups).
- Using a grade reporting system to generate achievement, behaviour and effort grades.
- Monitoring of pupil progress, and especially those pupils at risk of not making 2 levels of progress (or equivalent), by the Progress Leaders and SMT.
- Holding 'Information and Guidance' days during the year. This involves a 30 minute meeting with each pupil and their parents/carers led by the tutor in which targets are agreed.
- Active line managing of subject departments by the SMT, with regular meetings focusing on progress towards targets and corresponding intervention programmes.
- Identifying at KS4 critical groups of students who are on track to achieve a grade C or better in mathematics but not in English, or vice versa.
- Mentoring of these critical groups of students by the SMT, Progress Leaders, Assistant Progress Leaders and relevant tutors.
- Allocating 'specialist days' for particular groups of students. These days often take place 'off site' with food and refreshments provided.

Banbury School

Many students at Banbury School are from deprived communities. Many come from homes with no educational 'capital' at all and, particularly during exam seasons, are disadvantaged by a comparative lack of support from home. To ensure that the vast majority of Year 11 students are prepared well for their exams, a number of different short (and last minute!), medium, long term strategies are implemented, two of which are set out below:

1. Breakfast revision lectures for Year 11 during the examination period

Several years ago the school acted upon research findings which suggested that last minute revision did impact positively upon Year 11 achievement.

Historically, many of the students arrived at exams unprepared mentally. Many would not have revised at all and would not come to school thinking about the paper they would be about to sit.

To remedy this 30-45 minute revision lectures are organised to take place at 7.45am daily before each GCSE exam, led by either the Head of Faculty or Head of Department. During these lectures the key content, skills and concepts for the examined subject are covered, moments before students take the exam. As a result, students now enter the exam room with greater knowledge, focus and confidence.

As an incentive breakfast is provided for all students who attend the revision sessions, which now includes about 75% of each cohort.

continues over...

2. "7UP" mentoring of Year 11 students by senior leaders and peer mentoring by A/A* students.

In an attempt to improve the proportion of students achieving 5 A*-C grades at GCSE, and to provide some 'headroom' the target group was based on those at risk of not achieving seven A*-C grades. Based on 'working at' grades, collected in November, 75 students were identified. Approximately 10 students were assigned to each member of the Leadership Team (including the Principal) for mentoring. The purpose of this mentoring was to ensure that each individual achieved at least 7 C+ grade passes at GCSE.

Over the next few months, each member of the Leadership Team met with the students on an individual basis, reviewing termly data collected and helping the students to prioritise subjects and organise their workload. During this process of individual planning, students were offered a range of tailored programmes and opportunities.

One of these was to choose a mentor from a list of 40 students, all of whom were on line for Grades A*/A. Students were advised to pick another student in their year group who they thought would bring out the best in them. The students paired up after school for up to three hours each week in order to revise together. The job of 'student mentor' was to help their 'mentee' improve to grade C standard in a range of agreed subjects. This had a positive knock-on effect on the mentors too – by helping their peers, they were also helping themselves.



Working with a student mentor at Banbury School

Possible areas for development

The objectives below reflect the range of approaches taken by the schools visited. They are not exhaustive and are intended to indicate the type of development activities which would be possible and appropriate within the trial:

- To develop the systems for tracking the progress, particularly of underperforming students, to improve the focus on specific groups (e.g. those pupils on FSM).
- To evaluate the impact of current approaches to intervention and develop strategies to get pupils rapidly back 'on track' (see also activity 6).
- To evaluate and improve the impact of tracking systems on pupil effort and motivation, e.g. by using personal targets.
- To develop and extend the use of guided work in lessons.
- To refine the approach to academic mentoring and the use of 'pupil review days'.

Activity 11: To develop effective rewards and incentive schemes

Rationale

All children are naturally motivated by rewards and incentives but they can be particularly effective with pupils from deprived communities because they make achievement real, short-term and achievable rather than relying on the distant concept that 'education will be worthwhile, someday'. Rewards are not necessarily financial. Older children are often harder to engage or tempt with a reward or incentive system and so approaches may need to be more subtle in presentation and promotion for this target group. Simply increasing the value of the reward may not be the answer. The 'wrap around' commitment shown by the staff and the ways they celebrate and publicise pupils' achievement are likely to be more important factors than the monetary value of the ultimate reward. For example, a simple reward system which provides priority in the lunch queue can provide a very significant motivation!

The knack to a successful rewards and incentives scheme is providing a reward that pupils will strive to achieve, will maintain motivation and does not rapidly diminish in currency by being judged to be too easy or too 'out of reach'. Pupils will expect an equitable system which doesn't disadvantage either those who are already motivated or discriminate against those whose attitudes are potentially more negative at the outset.

Effective ideas include: sending postcards or headteacher commendations directly to the home or making telephone calls to parents or carers at one end of the spectrum, through to providing significant monetary rewards at the other end. These systems aim to improve a wide range of behaviours including: attendance, behaviour, organisation, effort, progress and attainment. Success is often linked to making the appropriate match between the reward and the response required.

The Holly Hall School Mathematics and Computing College

At Holly Hall School the rewards system is based on 'personal best'. Pupils are competing against themselves and are rewarded when they produce their best work, in any aspect of school life.

- Each Year Group has its own reward system. For example, in Year 7 – merit, in Year 8 – Gr8 (Great) and in Year 9 – SATs Busters. Pupils collect rewards in their planners which convert into Bronze, Silver, Gold and Diamond badges when individuals reach a particular level.
- 'Shooting Stars' certificates are awarded to the person in each of the teaching groups in Year 10 who makes the most progress each month.
- Pupils in Year 11 are awarded points for attendance, coursework completion and meeting or exceeding target grades as part of the 'Commitment to Excellence' scheme.
- Other rewards include 'Good News Postcards' (any member of staff can send one), 'Student of the Month' (one per year group per month nominated by staff), Attendance Awards, 'Sports Ambassadors', Performing Arts Colours and headteacher's Commendations (the headteacher meets individual pupils in his office and discusses their work).
- All the rewards are presented in celebration assemblies and the winners' names are published in Megabyte, the school's weekly newsletter.
- Governors' Presentation Evening is the highlight of the school year and an annual celebration of success and achievement with pupils, families, staff and Governors sharing in the presentation of certificates and trophies.



At Holly Hall School effective rewards don't need to be expensive

Great Yarmouth High School

The rewards programme at Great Yarmouth High School is designed to recognise and motivate the vast majority of students who always work hard and encourage the others to do the same. The programme has a number of elements:

- The 'student of the fortnight' – one from each tutor group – wins a "Q Jumper" ticket for the dining hall which is valid for two weeks. They also get a letter home and their photos are displayed around the school. Exceptional effort also results in a personal hand written postcard from the headteacher being sent home.
- A competition between tutor groups to encourage correct uniform and equipment (the 'Dizzy Dummy' competition) sees the ½ termly winners going on an evening trip.
- Year 11 students must achieve 90% attendance to go to the Prom; students on 95% go for half price and those on 100% go for free. The names of the 100% attendees also go into a draw and the winner has their transport to the Prom paid for them.



Part of the rewards programme display at Great Yarmouth High School

Possible areas for development

The objectives below reflect the range of approaches taken by the schools visited. They are not exhaustive and are intended to indicate the type of development activities which would be possible and appropriate within the trial:

- To improve current reward and incentive schemes, drawing extensively on pupils' views and paying particular attention to:
 - the key benefits and limitations;
 - the range and purposes;
 - implementation issues including fitness for purpose and fairness;
 - the impact of different rewards.

Activity 12: To support pupils at important moments in their lives, especially transition points

Rationale

Effective schools in deprived communities recognise that some of their pupils may lack resilience and may be easily knocked back by adversity as they do not always receive the emotional support they need. Because of this, effective schools recognise the move from a primary environment to a new secondary situation can be even more daunting for their intake than for other pupils. All too easily, pupils can become demotivated, particularly if they have been nurtured in their current school.

Effective secondary schools often appoint a 'transition leader', usually with strong primary experience, to ensure pupils' progress is secured in the transition from primary to secondary school. They coordinate the induction process and work collaboratively with partner primary schools to plan and teach transition modules which act as a bridge between Year 6 and Year 7.

Increasingly primary pupils visit the school from Year 5 onwards giving them regular access to an extended range of specialist teachers and facilities, for example experiencing mathematics master classes, drama in a drama studio and science in a laboratory. 'Buddy' systems are used where Year 7 pupils have mentor support from a pupil in another year group. Secondary teachers make professional links with colleagues in primary partner schools and spend time together in each other's classrooms. In some schools, especially those in rural locations, there is an interchange of teachers and pupils so that each can experience teaching and learning in different schools.

Schools also manage other transitions, including from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 and from Key Stage 4 into the 16-19 phase. Typically schools in providing links to the 16-19 phase offer support to students through mentoring schemes with local businesses, industry and higher education.

Heaton Manor School

A review in 2004 of the school's pastoral provision concluded that the tracking of academic progress and guidance needed further development.

A Deputy headteacher, who is responsible for achievement, progress and progression, now works with Progress Leaders for KS3 and KS4 and a Progress Manager. The KS3 Progress Leader is responsible for KS2-3 transition which focuses on the use of data and interviews with Year 6 pupils and their teachers to initiate the process of academic target setting and tracking which continues to the end of KS4. The KS4 Progress Leader leads on KS3-4 transition, including identification of student pathways and options, continued academic tracking and KS4-5 progression. Every pupil has a Progress Coach who is a specifically trained member of the non-teaching staff, who provides academic coaching throughout the year and for the duration of the pupil's academic career.

As all siblings have the same coach, pupils and parents appreciate the access to personalised academic tracking and guidance. Teachers appreciate the support the Progress Team provides as this very much underpins their work in the classroom.



At Heaton Manor School the role of the Progress Coach is central to its approach

Wright Robinson College

At Wright Robinson College the Transition Team works in partnership with Key Stage 3 and Year 7 pastoral teams to provide the best possible start for each Year 7 cohort and to offer support throughout their first year at school. The team is led by an experienced teacher who is Transition Manager and is supported by a Transition Administrator. The Transition Team now consist of eight Transition Learning Co-ordinators who are responsible for delivering their subject specialism during the transition phase. A Transition Learning Mentor is also part of the team and works with vulnerable pupils in Years 6 and 7. Individual and group mentoring sessions, combined with a "Lunchtime Club" are used to raise the self esteem of pupils who have been identified as socially or emotionally vulnerable.

The Transition Team work in a network with staff from 9 local feeder primary schools. Strong links with these primary schools means that high quality data is available to inform the College's curriculum, pastoral and attendance teams. Network initiatives between feeder schools and teachers can build effective working relationships.

A major aspect of the team's work focuses on teaching and learning, delivered through the Transition Curriculum. Collaborative planning and delivery between Wright Robinson College and primary school colleagues is key to the success of the Transition Curriculum. Transition Learning Co-ordinators in each subject area develop a transition unit and this is taught during the last 4 weeks in primary schools and the first 4 weeks at the College. There are also a number of other subject based initiatives for Years 5, 6 and 7.

continues...

The Advanced Learning Centre is a cross-curricular Saturday morning club for gifted and talented pupils. Each Saturday approximately 40 Year 5 and 6 pupils come to the College for two hours to participate in lessons in ICT, PE, Dance, Science, Mathematics, English and Modern Foreign Languages – all with an ICT focus. Other projects include a joint Art/Literacy scheme for Year 5 pupils and their parents and pre-SATS booster sessions for Year 6 groups.



Getting ready for a change of school at Wright Robinson College

Possible areas for development

The objectives below reflect the range of approaches taken by the schools visited. They are not exhaustive and are intended to indicate the type of development activities which would be possible and appropriate within the trial:

- To strengthen current induction approaches at key transitions (between school years or key stages).
- To increase the active involvement of existing pupils to support the induction process, developing 'buddy' or mentor systems which are sustained well beyond the transfer period.

4. Information for trial schools

Benefits of participation in the trial

All the development activities outlined in the prospectus are used by schools that are doing exceptionally well with intakes from some of the most deprived wards in England. This trial will give schools with a similar intake the opportunity to capitalise on this best practice and improve outcomes for their own pupils and school.

Each school will receive:

- Access to partner schools which have successfully introduced similar measures.
- £10,000 each.
- A launch and a debrief meeting at the DCSF to share experiences and ideas.
- National credit for leading innovation.
- Travel, subsistence and supply costs to attend national meetings.

Outputs

The trial will generate the following outputs by summer 2009:

- A common account of the benefits, limitations and practicalities of implementing each of the development areas.
- An assessment of the potential to transfer some of these school improvement techniques more widely.

Reporting Requirements

We will expect trial schools to report on the progress and the outcomes of the trial and share examples of any emerging approaches with other trial schools.

At the beginning of the project each school will be required to develop a short action plan, aligned with the school improvement plan, which:

- a. identifies someone in school with sufficient seniority to lead and manage the project;
- b. provides a baseline position with current strengths and weaknesses identified;
- c. considers which of the activities offers them best value in developing the attainment of children from deprived communities;
- d. establishes objectives for the development that clearly identify the nature of the approach to be developed, the target group of pupils, the desired outcomes and how the approach will address current priorities;
- e. identifies how they might draw on partner schools to support their efforts, e.g. by visiting or being visited;
- f. describes the development process and provides an associated timeline;
- g. identifies the monitoring and evaluation procedures to be employed during the development period so that the impact of the work can be ascertained;
- h. specifies how the funding will be used to support the development.

We intend to establish a network of trial schools which could be used to disseminate good practice between themselves and at a later stage with other schools. We will expect trial schools to participate fully in all network meetings.

Evaluation

It is essential that we gather good quality evidence, both qualitative and quantitative, to enable us to assess the impact of using the development activities outlined in the prospectus. We will expect each trial school to:

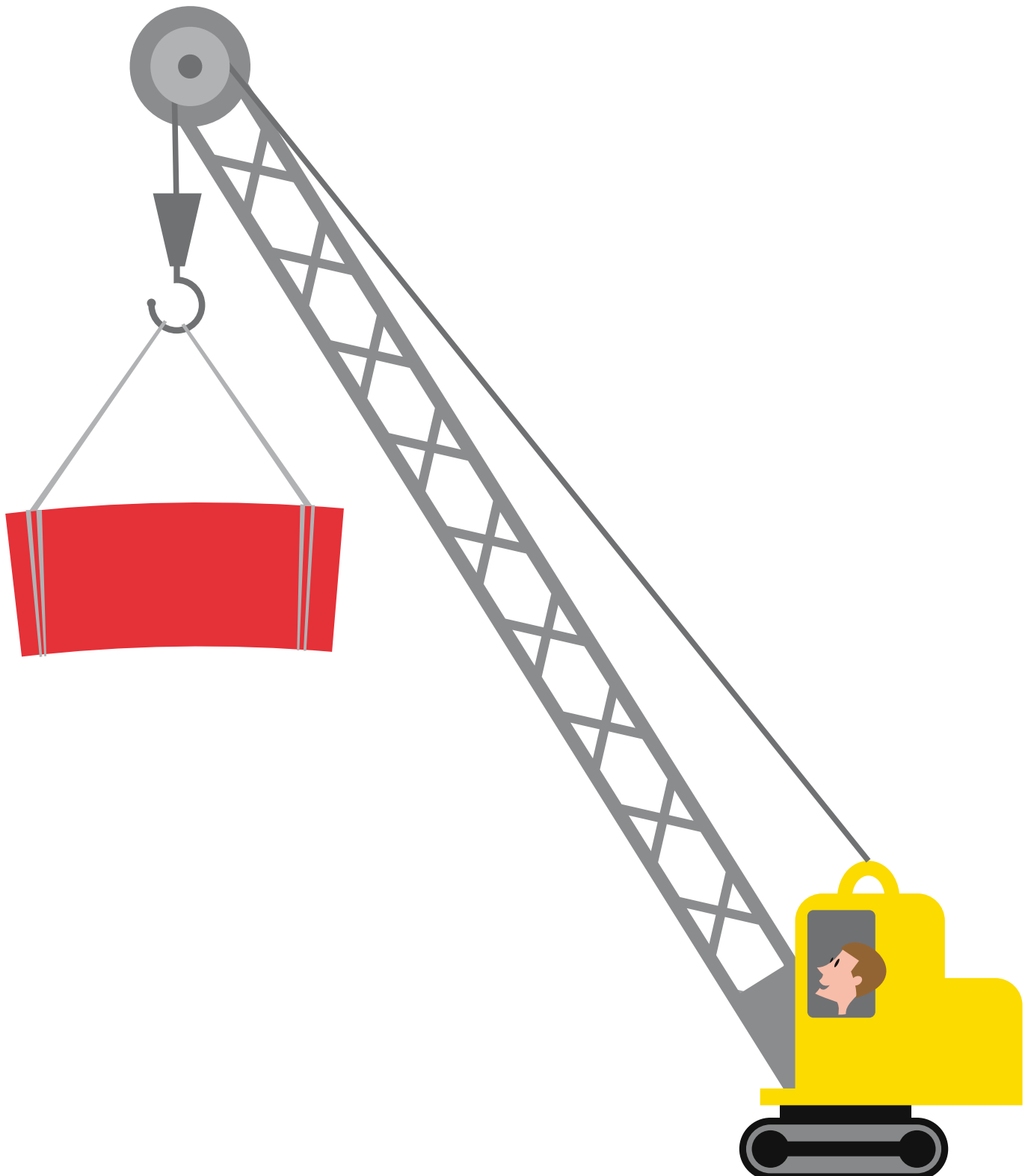
- Use teacher assessment data to monitor the impact of the trial on pupil progression/attainment.
- Distribute and analyse pupil and teacher perception surveys.
- Contribute to the development of case study material.
- Provide a brief interim report in January 2009 and then a short final report at the end of the development process in July 2009.

Project Management

Project management arrangements are to be set up by each trial school. We do not prescribe any particular system but arrangements should be such that they encourage 'buy-in' across the school. Each school should appoint a lead coordinator for this project.

The project will be managed by the Narrowing the Gap team in DCSF. Marie Costigan is the named contact for the project on **marie.costigan@dcsh.gov.uk**

Annexes



Annex 1

Project timeline

Project Timeline

Month	Day	Activities
June	9	LAs receive initial invitation and expression of interest proforma
By June	25	Deadline for receipt of expression of interest for LAs
June	27	Schools and LAs informed if they are to participate in project and grant letters issued
July	2	Initial briefing day for all trial schools and LAs at the DCSF
By July	22	Schools submit to DCSF overview of development activities
July 08 – September 08		Schools plan for implementation (accounting for summer holidays)
September 08 – July 09		Schools trial development activities
By September	26	Schools submit a short action plan and baseline analysis of pupil performance
November		School Standards Advisers visit trial schools and distribute pupil and teacher perceptions surveys and commission case studies

Project Timeline

Month	Day	Activities
January 09		<p>Network meeting- Lead coordinators from trial schools meet and share initial findings</p> <p>Schools submit case studies and pupil and teacher perception surveys</p>
February 09		Interim report produced by DCSF and circulated to stakeholders and National Strategies
April 09		School Standards Advisers visit trial schools and distribute pupil and teacher perceptions surveys and commission case studies
End May 09		Schools submit case studies and pupil and teacher perception surveys
End June 09		Schools submit analysis of end of year pupil progression/attainment data
July 09		Feedback and development workshop for trial schools
July 09		DCSF produce final report and recommendations for future development

Annex 2

Extra Mile: Identification of development priorities

Priorities for Development					
KEY	1 = a strong feature of current practice 4 = an aspect needing significant development	1	2	3	4
1	To increase interactive and participatory learning.				
2	To develop a listening campaign which responds to pupil and parent perceptions.				
3	To promote a culture of respect for local people, local culture and local values.				
4	To broaden pupils' horizons by offering experiences and opportunities they would not otherwise get.				
5	To develop a culture of achievement in school.				
6	To offer a more relevant curriculum.				
7	To build pupils' repertoire of spoken and written language.				
8	To develop pupils' social, emotional and behavioural skills.				
9	To cultivate traditional values of respect, good behaviour and caring.				
10	To track pupils' progress and intervene promptly if they fall off trajectory.				
11	To develop effective rewards and incentive schemes.				
12	To support pupils at important moments in their lives, especially transition points.				

From the development priorities identified above which are not adequately covered by your 2008-09 School Development Plan?

List the top two development priorities you would like to support through the 'extra mile' trial.

1.

2.

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Harris Academy, Southwark

Heaton Manor School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

Holly Hall School, Dudley

Kings College, Surrey

Moorside Community Technology College,
Durham

Newall Green High School, Manchester

Oaklands Community School, Southampton

Park High School, The Wirral

Robert Clack School, Barking and Dagenham

Roseland Community College, Cornwall

Samuel King's School, Cumbria

Sir Henry Cooper School, Hull

St Mary's Sports College, Hull

Wordsley School, Dudley

Wright Robinson Sports College, Manchester

Notes

Notes

A commitment from
The Children's Plan



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