

Meeting:	Cabinet
Date:	17 September 2009
Subject:	Scrutiny Review – Extended Schools as Community Resources
Key Decision:	No
Responsible Officer:	Paul Clark, Corporate Director of Children’s Services
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Anjana Patel, Schools and Children’s Portfolio Holder
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 - Overview and Scrutiny Review Report – Extended Schools as Community Resources  Appendix 2 - Minute of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.  Appendix 3 - Report considered by Overview and Scrutiny.

## Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out the response from Children’s Services to the recommendations of the scrutiny review of extended schools as community resources

### **Recommendations:**

Cabinet is requested to:

Endorse this report and the Children’s Services response to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Review Report – Extended Schools as Community Resources

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **Introductory paragraph**

Endorsing the Children's Services response to the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny final report acknowledges the work of extended schools in supporting the Council's following corporate priorities:

- Improving support for vulnerable people
- Building stronger communities.

### **Background**

The Extended Schools Review was carried out as part of the Overview and Scrutiny 2008/09 work programme to assess progress and identify gaps in the current level of extended services. The review also considered how successful schools were in providing access to the core offer of services and the objective for them to be a key community resource. Their long term sustainability was another area the review group considered as part of the review. The review was carried out between September 2008 and March 2009 and the full report is attached at Appendix 1.

The research methods used included reviewing a wide range of desktop research, evidence submitted from key officers, consultation with relevant stakeholders and actually going out to observe extended schools services and activities in practice.

The final report details the main recommendations arising from the review and this report responds to those recommendations.

### **Current situation**

Harrow is regarded as high performing, by the Training and Development Agency, the Government's monitoring body for extended schools.

Consistently, the target for the number of extended schools meeting the full core offer has been exceeded and, of as August 2009, 65 of 68 schools have demonstrated that they are meeting and sustaining delivery of the full core offer. The remaining three schools have a further year to achieve full core offer status and it is expected that these schools will fulfil this requirement well before September 2010.

This significant achievement places Harrow as one of the top ten London authorities.

Children's Services welcomes and values the Overview and Scrutiny review of extended schools and the recommendations set out in the final report.

## Recommendations and Response

**1. Officers ensure that robust systems of support, advice and challenge are in place for all clusters to help develop the knowledge and expertise of each cluster co-ordinator and their lead head teacher.**

### Response

A robust support, advice and challenge programme is in place for all clusters which includes:

- 1:1 meeting with cluster co-ordinator as and when needed
- A termly meeting between the lead head teacher and the linked advisor to the cluster
- A termly meeting with the cluster co-ordinators
- Shared annual performance monitoring of the cluster co-ordinator
- A termly meeting with the lead head teachers, linked advisors and senior officers from Children's Services
- The production of an annual cluster profile for all clusters to support the development of the annual cluster action plan.

Arrangements are in place with all clusters to agree further specific advice and support which ensures targets are met, action plans are developed and monitoring and evaluation support is provided.

*Continyou*, an external training provider for extended schools, have provided focussed training support for all cluster co-ordinators each half term for two terms. Marketing and promotional training has also been provided for all cluster co-ordinators.

**2. Clusters co-ordinators and head teachers to be encouraged to consider the introduction of the appointment of parent ambassadors for hard to reach communities in their local area/cluster to look at whether such a scheme would be beneficial to the community.**

### Response

It is acknowledged that the work of the parent ambassadors has been particularly successful in the Canons Cluster and the impact of their work on outcomes for children and their families is increasingly evident as set out in the Overview and Scrutiny Report.

All clusters have in place staff and strategies to provide targeted support to parents. The linked advisors, through their meetings with the cluster co-ordinators and the lead head teachers, will continue to explore the effectiveness and sustainability of the strategies they have in place and to support, where possible an increase in the number of parent ambassadors.

The parenting co-ordinator, works across the children's centre and extended schools agenda to strategically co-ordinate and develop parenting provision across the borough. All cluster co-ordinators are engaged with the work of the parenting co-ordinator.

**3. That cluster groups develop a termly pro-forma for publicising activities and ensure a copy goes home with each child in the cluster. The information should also be widely available through community venues such as libraries, children's centres, health centres and relevant websites.**

**4. Other ways of communicating with the community at large should be investigated so that members of the community not directly involved with schools are aware of the services and activities available.**

### **Response**

Preliminary discussions have taken place with lead head teachers and cluster co-ordinators about communicating cluster activities in a consistent way. The Marketing and Information Professional within Integrated Early Years and Community Services will be working with the clusters on this in the Autumn Term and ensuring that maximum use is being made of all media to publicise cluster activities whilst ensuring value for money.

**5. Elected Members who are also school governors should work to raise the profile of extended schools within the schools they govern, in their individual wards and in the community at large.**

### **Response**

Ofsted have issued a new evaluation schedule for schools which will be effective from September 2009. The new schedule places on schools and their Governing Body the responsibility to evidence how extended services are contributing to outcomes for children and young people.

Officers from Children's Services have been developing a support tool for school leaders and managers and their governors to support their preparation for Ofsted and the completion of the Self Evaluation Framework. The support tool will be available in draft from the 14 September.

The Training and Development Agency have developed a toolkit for governors on extended schools. Training on the use and implementation of this toolkit is provided annually. The next training date is 20 October 2009 at 7pm at the Teachers' Centre. General information and further support for governors is available from Integrated Early Years and Community Services.

**6. Steps should be taken to ensure that strategic working was ongoing to bring together expertise from the clusters and local authority officers together in the integration of extended schools and children's centres. As further children's centres are established and opened full advantage should be taken of working together.**

### **Response**

The support, advice and challenge programme for cluster, lead head teachers and the cluster co-ordinators will continue ensuring that expertise is maximised.

The children's centres and extended school clusters are now aligned which ensures the potential for planning and working together to improve outcomes for children, young people, their families and the local community.

Strategic partnership working between the clusters and the children's centres is a sustainability strand which will become more developed as the remaining children's centres become operational.

**7. All agencies involved in extended schools needed to develop an overall vision of how all schools and cluster groups develop plans for mainstreaming and in turn sustaining extended schools activities across clusters post 2011.**

**Response**

Providing Extended School services is the responsibility of individual schools. The cluster approach ensures that schools can:

- prioritise services that are shown as needed by their pupils, their families and the local community
- provide effective signposting to services provided by other schools in the cluster
- can provide services such as holiday childcare on a cluster wide basis

Increasingly the funding for Extended School services rest with schools and the Extended School Clusters. All indications are that the funding for these services will be targeted directly at schools and not at or through local authorities.

Children's Services and in particular Integrated Early Years and Community Services have lead responsibility for supporting schools and partner agencies and sustainability as a key theme is now part of the cluster action planning process with the 2009/10 cluster action plans requiring all clusters to set out the activities they would be looking to sustain and the actions they would be putting in place to achieve sustainability.

The Head of Integrated Early Years and Community Services meets regularly with key officers from partner agencies to discuss service planning beyond 2011. This work is supported by the strategic work of the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership.

**8. A challenge panel/ further review should be held in six months time to address the progress of the recommendations that had been put forward from the review group and to also explore the community lettings and community resources element of extended schools.**

**9. In line with the recommendation above, schools should be examining services they can provide to the community including making their premises available at a reasonable cost.**

**Response**

Community and Cultural Services are leading the development of the Third Sector Strategy. The Head of Integrated Early Years and Community Services is a member of the working group representing Children's Services.

The working group is required as one of its streams of work, to look at community lettings of schools. It is planned to produce a document for consultation during the Autumn Term 2009.

A challenge panel to review progress against the recommendations is welcomed.

### **Financial Implications**

In 2009/10 funding of £1,277k is available for the extended schools programme. This is financed from a ring fenced Standards Fund Grant of £597k and Area Based Grant of £680k. Any costs associated with the recommendations will be met from within these resources.

### **Performance Issues**

The extended schools programme and actions to address the recommendations from the scrutiny review will contribute to the achievement of NI 88 Extended Schools, which is an LAA target:

	<b>2008-9</b>	<b>Q1 2009-10</b>	<b>LAA target</b>	<b>Comparator data</b>
<b>NI 88 Extended Schools: % of Harrow schools providing full core offer</b>	88%	96%	2008-9 – 70% 2009-10 - 85% 2010-11 – 100%	Not yet available

Current performance is significantly above target.

### **CAA Impact**

Success in the extended schools programme will provide evidence for the following key question in the Area Assessment:

- How well are the outcomes and improvements needed being delivered?

It will also have a positive impact on the Use of Resources Assessment and in particular the following key line of enquiry:

- 3.2 Does the organisation manage its assets effectively to help deliver its strategic priorities and service needs?

### **Environmental Impact**

There are no environmental considerations specific to this report.

### **Risk Management Implications**

There are no risk management implications arising from the recommendations or the responses from Children's Services.

### Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Emma Stabler



on behalf of the\*  
Chief Financial Officer

Date: 26 August 2009

Name: Matthew Adams



on behalf of the\*  
Monitoring Officer

Date: 26 August 2009

### Section 4 – Performance Officer Clearance

Name: David Harrington



on behalf of the\*  
Divisional Director  
(Strategy and  
Improvement)

Date: 26 August 2009

### Section 5 – Environmental Impact Officer Clearance

Name: John Edwards



on behalf of the\*  
Divisional Director  
(Environmental  
Services)

Date: 26 August 2009

### Section 6 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Wendy Beeton, Head of Integrated Early Years and Community Services

Background Papers:

**Appendix 1: Overview and Scrutiny Review Report – Extended Schools as Community Resources.**