



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

1 JULY 2008

SUMMARY OF CHILDREN AND LEARNING SCRUTINY PANEL'S FINAL REPORT ON EXTENDED SCHOOLS

Purpose of the scrutiny investigation:

“Extended schools” is a concept which ensures that schools - which are typically at the heart of local communities - offer a range of services, often in partnership with others and outside the normal school day, which are aimed at having a positive impact on children, young people and families.

The extended schools programme has been identified as a key means of assisting delivery of the outcomes of Every Child Matters as part of a wider transformation of the way different children’s services work together.

Terms of reference:

The terms of reference of the scrutiny investigation were as follows:

- *To explore the background to the development of extended schools, including the impact of any relevant national guidance or directives.*
- *To investigate the key issues relating to the extended schools programme, including the Council’s responsibilities and how the programme is being developed in Middlesbrough.”*
- *To assess the impact of any relevant performance indicators or performance measures.*
- *To investigate resource and funding arrangements and to examine any associated issues.*
- *To examine links with other education initiatives and programmes.*

Findings:

The scrutiny panel heard details of the background to the establishment of extended schools, Council responsibilities and developments in Middlesbrough. The programme was found to be generally highly developed across the Borough and is operating very well, with a number of examples of good practice having been developed locally. Approximately 85% of Middlesbrough schools currently provide the full extended schools "core offer," - which is a favourable position, given that the deadline for all schools to do so is 2010. There are also excellent examples of close co-operation between partners and there is widespread community use of school facilities.

Although the scrutiny panel's findings were generally very positive, it was considered that there is a need to identify schools where work is needed to ensure that the full core offer is made available by 2010 and to share good practice in order to achieve this.

Conclusions:

Based on the evidence considered during its investigation, the panel made five conclusions. These are shown in full in the final report and relate to:

1. The extended schools programme being generally very highly developed across Middlesbrough. Work is ongoing to ensure that all schools meet the requirements of the core offer by 2010.
2. Good examples of close co-operation between partners working in education, childcare, children's centres, health, social care and other children's services. This ensures quick and easy access to services and means that problems affecting children's learning can be more easily dealt with.
3. The need to encourage involvement of the wider community with schools. People without school age children in particular are unlikely to have any involvement with a local school.
4. The widespread benefits of ensuring that all schools become extended schools.
5. The need to recognise school security as an important element of extended schools.

Recommendations:

The scrutiny panel's final report contains five recommendations. These are shown in full in the report and relate to the following:

1. The excellent progress being made in implementing the extended schools agenda across Middlesbrough.
2. Undertaking an audit to ascertain the number of schools which are not yet providing the full extended schools core offer; how any shortfall in provision is to be addressed to ensure that all schools meet the requirements of the core offer by 2010; and updating the scrutiny panel on progress.

3. Sharing examples of good practice among schools.
4. Promoting the community-use element of extended to encourage the involvement of, not only local parents, but local people without school-age children.
5. Recognising school security as an important issue given increased levels of community usage.

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