

Extended services evaluation: The role of local authorities. Thematic review

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The views expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department for Education.

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Executive summary

Key findings

- Local authorities adopted a wide range of approaches to leading extended services. There was no evidence that any one approach is inherently superior to any other.
- The approaches adopted by local authorities often changed as the authority learned more about what worked in their situation and as the extended services agenda evolved.
- In order to facilitate swift and easy access to specialist services, authorities were replacing traditional referral procedures with systems which gave schools access to multi-agency teams. These new systems were widely seen as more equitable and reliable.
- The extended services agenda was viewed very positively by both local authority and school personnel.
- Despite authorities' efforts to take into account planned and anticipated funding changes, there were widespread concerns about the sustainability of the extended services agenda.
- The future sustainability of the agenda may depend on a partnership approach to school-authority relationships, where there is *both* a high level of autonomy at school and cluster level *and* strong central support for collaboration and for building consensus around a shared strategic approach.

Background

- The previous government expected that all schools in England would offer access to a wide range of extended services (ES) from 8am - 6pm, 48 weeks a year, including school holidays, by 2010. Schools were expected to provide these services on-site or to provide access to such services offered by other schools or centres. Local authorities have played a key role in ensuring that this target was met in their areas, and in aligning the development of extended services with their wider policies for children, families and communities.
- This review is part of a multi-strand evaluation of the extended services initiative. This review asks what kinds of arrangements local authorities have made for the development and delivery of extended services, and how they have aligned them with their wider policies and strategies. It considers the full range of services, but explores in more depth arrangements for swift and easy access to specialist services as a test case of the wider extended services agenda.
- The review draws on case studies of extended services arrangements in 8 local authorities, selected to reflect the range of local authority types and contexts,

as well as a range of patterns of provision. These case studies were based on interviews with a cross-section of local authority officers, and with head teachers, extended services coordinators, cluster coordinators and other relevant personnel in and around 4 schools in each authority area. Fieldwork took place between March and September 2010. At that time, there was uncertainty about the level of funding that would be available in future to support extended services as outputs from the Comprehensive Spending Review were awaited, and about the direction of policy in this field.

Local authority responses

- In response to the immediate task of ensuring that schools were able to make what was then called a full core offer of extended services, local authorities appointed or designated one or more Extended School Remodelling Advisers, usually supported by a small team of personnel. The support offered by these personnel appears to have been widely appreciated by schools.
- In response to the longer-term task of establishing structures and practices to ensure the sustainability of extended services and their alignment with broader strategies and policies, authorities adopted a wide range of different approaches. These responded to local circumstances and emerged from local histories, so were not transferrable in any straightforward way to other contexts.
- There was no evidence from this review that any one set of arrangements was inherently superior to any other. Authorities were usually in the business of making trade-offs between advantages and disadvantages in deciding on the best structures and processes in their circumstances.
- The arrangements established by authorities were often somewhat fluid in the first instance. It was common for them to change as the authority learned more about what worked in their situation. This was particularly the case as the emphasis shifted from the initial start up phase of the extended services initiative to a focus on longer-term sustainability.
- Despite this fluidity and the variation in arrangements between authorities, a common underlying pattern did indeed begin to emerge. Its main components were:
 - a. A strategic lead from local strategic partnerships (area-based bodies with local statutory, voluntary, community and private sector representation) and children's trusts (partnerships between local organisations focused on improving outcomes for children), often with some sort of feedback loop so that practitioners at the more grass roots levels of the system could inform strategy.
 - b. The designation of a senior officer as having overall responsibility for extended services. This officer was located in one or other section of the children's services directorate, but was typically expected, in response to the holistic nature of expectations at that time around extended services, to make links with other sections.

- c. The organisation of schools into clusters, very probably matching the area organisation of other children and family services, and sometimes of a wide range of community services.
 - d. The appointment or designation of personnel to lead extended services in each cluster and/or area.
- Authorities had to manage multiple funding streams in complex ways in order to support these arrangements. This typically involved a range of mechanisms for devolving funding from the centre to areas, clusters and schools whilst at the same time developing accountability mechanisms to ensure the efficient use of that funding in ways that were aligned with central strategy.
 - Authorities were aware of the need to realign funding in order to take into account the reduction in government support that was planned into the initiative under the last administration, and uncertainties arising around a new financial and political context. Despite this, there were widespread concerns about the extent to which extended services would be sustainable in future.

Swift and easy access

- Swift and easy access to specialist services was managed in ways that were compatible with structures and processes of this kind. A system in which individual schools referred direct to central services in the authority was being replaced by one in which schools had access to multi-agency teams. These teams might work with individual schools or at area or school cluster level. In this way, lower-level interventions could be handled locally, leaving only the most serious cases to be referred on to specialist services organised on an authority-wide basis.
- The former system of referral to centralised services was widely seen as being cumbersome and inefficient. The new systems were seen as facilitating speedier intervention on a more equitable and reliable basis. Perspectives on the Common Assessment Framework¹ (CAF) were mixed. It was seen in some places as a key facilitator of swift and easy access to specialist services. However, there were some concerns that schools were carrying too much of the burden for making the process work and that it acted as a bureaucratic obstacle to effective intervention.
- Extended services in general and swift and easy access in particular relied heavily on the establishment of partnerships of various kinds, and brokering these was a key role of the local authority. Few fundamental difficulties were reported in these partnerships, except, in some places, in the case of Health, where different organisational structures and cultures presented barriers to collaboration. There was, however, evidence of efforts to integrate these

¹ The Common Assessment Framework is a consent based early intervention tool for assessing children and young people or family needs. This leads to the forming of a multiagency team by a Lead Professional (usually a team around the child (TAC) or family (TAF) to meet the needs identified. The children and young people or families play a full part in the decisions made with in the TAC/F.

structures in many authorities, and in at least one case these were very far advanced.

Implications

- The financial and policy context in which this review was completed were significantly different from that in which extended services had been initiated in 2005. Nonetheless, there are some important lessons that can be learned from these findings. Specifically:
 - Extended services were viewed very positively both by the local authority officers and by the school personnel who participated in this review. There was a sense that much had been achieved in recent years, and that much would be lost if, as was being perceived by many respondents, there started to be less momentum behind the maintenance of these services. There was a strongly held view that there had been many benefits to children and families, especially to those in more challenging circumstances. Whilst, therefore, the former central steering of extended services might come to an end, local authority officers and school personnel reported that there are good reasons why such an approach to education and service delivery should be maintained.
 - Uncertainties at the time of the fieldwork around the sustainability of extended services in the context of a new financial and funding situation was a major concern. In this context, promising strategies might include: the establishment of a light-touch and low-cost authority-level centre, with funding lodged with schools and clusters; the brokering of robust, trust-based partnerships between schools, local authority services and non-authority agencies so that existing resources can be coordinated in collaborative action; and the alignment of different levels of the system (for instance, through commissioning processes and involvement in decision-making), so that services are delivered efficiently, and available resources can be used effectively to support a consensual strategy.
 - Local authorities had played a key role in developing collaborative structures, brokering partnerships and leading a process of cultural change amongst services and in schools. Given the current policy emphasis on school autonomy, the most promising way forward, may lie in a partnership approach to school-authority relationships, where there is *both* a high level of autonomy at school and cluster level *and* strong central support for collaboration and for building consensus around a shared strategic agenda.

Extended Services Evaluation: The Role of Local Authorities

1. Introduction and background

1.1 *Policy context*

1.1.1 Definition of extended services

In 2005, the then Government made a commitment that all schools would offer children, families and local communities access to extended services (ES) by 2010 (DfES, 2005). The range of services to be made available was a matter for schools and their partners, but included a minimum ‘core offer’ comprising:

- a varied menu of activities (including study support, play/recreation, sport, music, arts and crafts and other special interest clubs, volunteering and business and enterprise activities) in a safe place to be for primary and secondary schools;
- childcare 8am-6pm, 48 weeks a year for primary schools;
- parenting support including family learning;
- swift and easy access to targeted and specialist services such as speech and language therapy; and
- community access to facilities including adult learning, ICT and sports facilities.

It was envisaged that these services would be available from 8am - 6pm, 48 weeks a year, including school holidays. Schools might provide these services on-site or signpost to services offered by other schools or agencies, and would work collaboratively with a range of statutory, community and voluntary partners.

1.1.2 The roll out

At the launch of the initiative in 2005 some schools were already in a position to offer access to a range of extended services. However, rolling the core offer out to all schools required a rapid development of school capacity, partnership arrangements, and local services. The Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) took the lead role nationally for ensuring that the 2010 target was met, monitoring progress, and producing a range of tools and resources to support developments on the ground. 4Children and ContinYou also offered technical support to schools and local authorities.

At local level, a key role was played by local authorities who received additional central government funding to promote development in their areas – expected to amount to some £1 billion by 2011. In addition to ‘start up’ funding through area based grants, there were specific grants available for capital expenditure, sustainability and study support, and for tackling disadvantage. The then Government expected that authorities would devolve the large majority of funding to schools and school clusters. Although the overall level of funding increased year on year from 2008-09 to 2010-11, there was an expectation that extended services would become self

sustaining over time - either through charging for some activities, or through configuring funding strands at local level.

Each local authority was expected to appoint an extended services remodelling adviser (ESRA), who would work closely with TDA in supporting and monitoring school developments. Beyond this, however, authorities had considerable flexibility in terms of how they supported schools and their partners, and how they linked developments in and around schools to their own patterns of service provision and to their wider children, family and community strategies.

1.1.3 The broader ECM agenda

The development of extended services was located within a broader policy framework set out in the *Every Child Matters* (ECM) green paper (DfES, 2003) and enacted in the Children Act 2004. The *Every Child Matters* agenda emphasised the need for all those offering services to children and their families to work closely together in pursuit of a common agenda. At the heart of this agenda were five key outcomes for children:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic wellbeing

The Children Act 2004 had significant implications for local authorities. They were encouraged (and subsequently required) to establish children's trusts, bringing together key partners in the provision of children's services locally, including relevant primary care trusts (PCTs). They were required to develop a children and young people's plan, setting out a common strategy for all those working with children, and to monitor the delivery of key objectives. They were also required to appoint a director of children's services, to be accountable for the delivery of education and social services for children in addition to leading the local children's trust arrangements.

The emphasis in all of these developments was joined up and integrated working and putting the needs of the child at the heart of decision making. This approach was further cemented by the introduction of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) with the system of lead professionals, who set up multi-agency teams that collaborated in planning and providing services to those defined as in need². In many localities these teams were organised on an area basis.

1.1.4 The broader local authority role

Local authorities' work with children and families is in turn set within the context of their wider responsibilities towards the areas they serve, and these too have been seen in recent years as requiring the development of collaborative arrangements between all service-providers and stakeholders at local level. With this in mind, local strategic partnerships (LSPs) were established

² The *Every Child Matters* green paper proposed (DfES 2003: 4.13) that separate assessments conducted by different agencies working with children and families should be combined within a common assessment framework, widely known as the 'CAF' (see footnote 1 above). It also formulated a distinction between three levels of service for children and families – universal services for all, targeted services for those with known difficulties or risks, and specialist services for those at highest risk (DfES 2003: fig.6, p.21). This is similar to the distinction commonly made in Health between four 'tiers' of service. Local authority personnel frequently use the term 'tiers', but tend to think in terms of the three levels of *Every Child Matters*. It is in this sense that the term 'tiers' is used in this report.

from around 2000 and now operate in nearly every local authority area. They have a responsibility to develop strategy and allocate funding at local level, and comprise a range of partners from statutory, voluntary, community and private organisations. In 2007, legislation and guidance (Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007) was introduced which gave local authorities and LSPs responsibility for ‘place shaping’. Place shaping prioritises the needs and aspirations of local people in the economic and social development of communities. In order to achieve this, LSPs must encourage closer collaboration and partnership working between key stakeholders in localities. Local area agreements set out a framework for these partnerships and local sustainable community plans outline longer term visions and objectives.

1.1.5 A changing situation

At the launch of the national roll out of extended services, therefore, the part to be played by local authorities, and the resources available to them to support their work was relatively clear. There was an expectation from central government (via the TDA) that they would ensure that all schools were providing access to the core offer, and funds were made available to support this work. At the same time, local authorities, working with children’s trusts and LSPs, were invited to align the development of extended services with their wider strategies for children, families and communities. These strategies themselves were supported by multiple funding streams.

However, the period during which this study was undertaken (the first half of 2010) saw two significant changes in this situation. First, the economic situation was widely seen as being likely to lead to significant reductions in public expenditure, and therefore in the funding available to support public services. The details of these reductions were not yet known, but were expected to be made clearer when the results of the comprehensive spending review were announced in October 2010. Second, the general election in May 2010 led to the formation of a new coalition government. Again, the details of the Government’s policies, particularly in respect of extended services, were not fully known. However, there were clear indications that there would be reductions in centrally-driven initiatives. In particular, efforts to close the gap in outcomes between pupils from different social backgrounds were expected to be supported through a ‘pupil premium’ providing schools with additional funding in respect of their most disadvantaged pupils.

These changes were significant for extended services which – in their original form at least – took the form of a centrally-devised initiative, supported by additional centrally-provided and local-authority-managed funding, and expecting all schools to make a minimum core offer. Respondents in the local authorities reported that uncertainties arising around a change in political climate were having impacts already beginning to be felt at the time the fieldwork for this study was conducted, and, there was a widespread anxiety about the implications for the future.

1.2 This review

Individual schools are seen as key players in shaping extended services to meet the needs and wishes of the populations they serve. However, they are not expected to work in isolation in this task. Instead, they are likely to work in clusters with other schools, to draw upon and liaise with integrated child and family services, to benefit from developmental support offered by local authorities, and to develop their own plans within the context of local strategy. In principle, this ‘nested’ approach should offer considerable support to schools, give them efficient and effective access to a range of services, and ensure that their work contributes to and is enhanced by a wider strategic approach in the areas they serve.

The purpose of this review is to explore how these nested arrangements were developing in different places, how far they were delivering their intended benefits, and what factors made them more or less effective. Although it considered the full range of relationships between schools and the structures and services in their local authority areas, it examined one element of the core offer - swift and easy access to specialist services - as a particular focus to test the effectiveness of these arrangements. This was because referral processes and the interventions flowing from them bring schools directly into contact with arrangements made by local authorities (working with and through children's trusts and local strategic partnerships), and are likely to be key indicators of the relationship locally between the development of extended services in and around schools and the wider developments brought about by the *Every Child Matters* agenda.

1.2.1 The research questions

The review sought to answer the following questions:

- How have local authorities supported the development of extended services in and around schools, and in particular, how they managed funding and the nature of any support structures developed by local authorities?
- How have schools been encouraged and enabled to collaborate with each other on extended services, and the nature of cluster working to support this?
- How has the development of extended services in and around schools has been linked to *strategic decision making* by the local authority and its partners, and in particular to any children's trust and LSP arrangements?
- How have extended services in and around schools been linked to *integrated services* in wider ECM arrangements?
- How has the *management* of the development of extended services in and around schools has been related to the management of wider ECM arrangements, and within this, what has been the role of ESRA and schools?
- In what ways, if any, have extended services in and around schools been significant for BSF schemes³?
- How have schools related to these arrangements?
- How have the extended services arrangements worked in relation to swift and easy referral? And how effective have the partnerships been in terms of meeting the needs of children, parents and schools?

1.2.2 The research methodology

Eight authorities were selected to be the subject of case studies for this review. The sample was drawn in order to reflect diversity in terms of:

- local authority type (shire county, unitary, metropolitan, London borough);
- geographical distribution; and
- known arrangements for developing extended services (e.g. use of clustering, integration with other strategies, and degree of local authority versus school leadership).

³ The Building Schools for the Future programme provided funding for the renewal of school buildings. In drawing up plans for the use of this funding, local authorities needed to take into account the future role of schools, not least in respect of extended services (see <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/resourcesfinanceandbuilding/bsf/>).

In each authority, we approached the director of children's services (or equivalent) to secure participation, and took their advice on how best to gain an overview of the authority's approach to extended services. In the first instance, this involved the analysis of policy documents and deciding on a series of interviews with key informants. These informants were located at three 'levels':

- At strategic (e.g. director or deputy director) level, enabling us to explore the relationship between the development of extended services, child and family policy, and other aspects of the local authority's remit (such as regeneration).
- At a senior operational (e.g. deputy or assistant director) level where we explored the relationship between extended services in and around schools and the wider integrated services agenda.
- At a 'fieldwork' level (usually the ESRA or equivalent) where we explored how, in practice, the local authority supported schools in developing their approach to extended services.

In addition, within each local authority area, we identified a small sample of schools where we could investigate the relationship between the local authority's arrangements and the development of extended services – particularly swift and easy access – at school level. In most cases we identified one primary and one secondary in each of two different clusters serving demographically contrasting areas. We invited the local authority to nominate one secondary and one primary school where extended services were developing well. In order to avoid focusing exclusively on 'successful' schools, however, we then identified the remaining two schools ourselves. Where possible, these schools were in the same clusters or areas as the local authority nominees, so that their experiences could be compared more directly.

In each school, we interviewed personnel who could explain the strategic approach to extended services taken by the school, the operation of that approach in practice, and the interaction between the school and the arrangements in the cluster and local authority beyond the school. These personnel typically included the head or deputy head and the extended services coordinator. In addition, we interviewed other key personnel as appropriate, including family support workers, children's centre managers, and local partners. Our work in and around the school focused particularly on swift and easy access.

In total 97 interviews were conducted across the 8 local authorities. We also conducted a discussion session with delivery partners in one area, and attended a strategic board meeting in another. The topic guides used in these interviews are presented in Appendix A.

A case study report was produced for each local authority, setting out details of current strategic and operational arrangements, the history of extended services developments and future plans, arrangements for swift and easy referral, facilitators and challenges to the adoption of particular models, and the advantages and disadvantages of the particular way of working in each authority that were described by our interviewees. These case reports were examined in order to identify differences and similarities in approach. Three of these reports have been summarised and are presented in chapter 2.

1.3 Structure of this report

In the remaining chapters we set out the findings from this work and explore their implications for policy and practice. Chapter 2 presents a factual account of the arrangements made in the eight

authorities, focusing particularly on more detailed case study accounts of three of them. Chapter 3 explores local authority arrangements thematically, comparing and contrasting, amongst other things, where they located strategic leadership for extended services, how they managed funding, and what arrangements they made for swift and easy access. The final chapter draws together our conclusions and sets out some implications for local authorities, schools and central government policymakers.

2. Arrangements in the Local Authorities

2.1 Overview

This chapter provides a factual account of the arrangements made by the eight authorities for developing and managing extended services. In fact, these arrangements are complex and differ in important ways from authority to authority. The situation is complicated by the different structures of children's services departments, the tendency of arrangements to develop over time, and the different terminology used in different authorities. Table 1 summarises the arrangements for each authority in a way which facilitates comparisons, but which inevitably involves a good deal of simplification.

In order to capture some of this complexity, therefore, the table is followed by case study accounts of three local authorities – Shire 1, Metro 1, Metro 4. These give a flavour of how the management of extended services was nested within the wider structures and agendas within these local authorities on the one hand, and how schools were involved in their delivery and development.

Throughout this chapter, we report the arrangements and concerns as they were described to us during our fieldwork. However, it was clear that the situation in local authorities was a rapidly changing one. Subsequently, moreover, the policies of the new government in this area began to unfold. It is inevitable, therefore, that the situation at the time this report is published will be different in some respects from the one reported here.

Table 1: Overview of local authority arrangements for managing extended services

Local authority	Strategic management of ES	Operational management of ES	School organisation	Funding arrangements	Swift & easy access arrangements
Metro 1	<i>Was</i> located in Educational Effectiveness. <i>Now</i> located in family services so sits with early years, children’s centres, family learning etc.	ESRA – and there <i>was</i> team of four ES development officers (ESDOs). <i>Now</i> one and a half ESDOs.	8 clusters operating across four areas containing primary and secondary schools. Clusters have all recently recruited an activity coordinator (6.5 hours per week)	Local authority funds ESRA and ESDOs. Most money passported to clusters but some also passported to other services in local authority that support ES e.g. family learning	Schools operate multi-agency team meetings to support interventions including the team around the child in the CAF process; and for safeguarding issues
Metro 2	Located in the improvement team of the learning and achievement division	ESRA (although not called that) and a lead (not a cluster co-ordinator) for each cluster (1 day per week)	3 localities and 8 clusters comprising only primary schools. Each cluster has a lead – usually someone already employed in the cluster.	The majority of funding held at local authority (ESRA) level mainly to support staffing. Smaller amounts of funding devolved to lead schools in clusters.	Child and Family Support workers pick up cases and liaise with, and refer to, partner agencies with the support of child and adolescent mental health services. No area based teams.

Local authority	Strategic management of ES	Operational management of ES	School organisation	Funding arrangements	Swift & easy access arrangements
Metro 3	Located in family support & children's health section of children and family services. Strategic lead on ES and head of family support and children's health has a post jointly funded from the council and NHS (as are other roles in this section).	ESRA (who also has other duties) mainly working with primary schools, and consultant ESRA working with secondary schools.	Three areas in borough: primary schools working in partnership within each of these three areas; secondary schools aligning with clusters more gradually; and cluster coordinator for each of three areas, employed and recruited by schools in partnerships.	All primary funding devolved to the three partnerships, and the cluster coordinators are paid from this. Secondary schools receive their own funding directly.	All schools across the borough are expected to have in-house multi-agency team meetings. There have also been additional structures (currently on hold) called service allocation meetings where 'professionals' come together to discuss any further support can identify through informal contacts etc.

Local authority	Strategic management of ES	Operational management of ES	School organisation	Funding arrangements	Swift & easy access arrangements
Metro 4	<p>Located in the children, young people and learning directorate. The head of service for commissioning and resources leads on ES. He works closely with the school improvement service and also with other heads of service in the directorate for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. safe-guarding and preventative services ii. access and inclusion iii. education skills and innovation 	<p>There is no longer an ESRA. There are 4 cluster co-ordinators, 1 in each of the 4 main localities. There are ES steering groups, or the equivalent, in each locality. Area children's teams each have a manager. There are area children's strategy groups (multi-agency) in each locality.</p>	<p>4 main localities (although the largest has been subdivided so there are 5 localities in total). 5 main ES partnerships across the localities, each of which includes a full service extended school. In one of the case study partnerships the FSES leads on ES developments, but in the other case study partnership the schools work as a collaborative without a designated lead school.</p>	<p>ES partnerships in each locality are commissioned by the local authority to deliver set objectives (which they have helped to identify). Funding goes to the partnerships and ES co-ordinators, and heads decide how to use it to meet commissioned objectives. Some funding is used to support the work of area children's teams; some for provision across the cluster. There is also a pot of funding held by the ES co-ordinator which individual schools can access for specific projects.</p>	<p>Schools use the local authority's referral, assessment and management framework and also the CAF. Schools have their own structures for identifying vulnerable children and families e.g. welfare teams make referral to heads of year, SENCO or head (or other member of the senior leadership team) who will signpost to area children's teams (set up through children's trust) for tier 1 & 2 support or directly to other services including social services when the level of need is at its greatest.</p>

Local authority	Strategic management of ES	Operational management of ES	School organisation	Funding arrangements	Swift & easy access arrangements
London 1	Located within the Learning and Standards Directorate which forms part of a 'not-for-profit-organisation' responsible for education in the borough. Within this directorate, the management of ES (as of children's centres) is situated in the Early Years and Primary service area.	An ESRA and six cluster coordinators	Six clusters of schools, developed around strategic children's centres. In each cluster there are usually at least two secondary secondary schools and their feeder primaries (and special schools if any).	Cluster coordinators are funded centrally, and then remaining funds are allocated to clusters on formula basis. Clusters can then decide how to spend money though with guidelines on meeting areas of the core offer (as at the time of the fieldwork). Money may be used at cluster level and/or allocated to schools.	Established processes for referrals for tier 3 services continue as before. Schools are expected to access tier 2 services through in-house multi-agency team (MAT) meetings. Different approaches for MAT meetings are being piloted in primaries, including a cluster-level meeting and joint meetings with children's centres and secondary schools to cover all children aged 0-14.
Unitary 1	<i>Was</i> in the Early Years team which was located within the Early Intervention and Prevention Division. <i>Now</i> in Integrated Youth Support Team	An ESRA, and 7 cluster co-ordinators	Schools have formed 8 clusters, each with a cluster co-ordinator (one co-ordinator employed by another authority as the cluster crosses authority boundaries)	Local authority currently funds the ESRA from the ES budget. The remainder is given in equal amounts to each of the 8 clusters.	A pre-existing multi-agency panel that higher level cases are referred to has been retained. Individual clusters have worked towards creating capacity by establishing their own co-located multi-disciplinary teams or employing parent support advisers.

Local authority	Strategic management of ES	Operational management of ES	School organisation	Funding arrangements	Swift & easy access arrangements
Shire 1	A dedicated extended services unit, based in the directorate of children, schools and families	13 extended school development managers (ESDMs); some clusters have cluster co-ordinators, but not all.	Schools are organised into 12 ES 'programmes', each consisting of several clusters.	The ES unit is funded from central local authority funds. The ESDMs are funded from the ES budget. The remainder of the ES funding is devolved to the 23 local children's services partnerships. Varying amounts of funding are devolved to clusters, and sometimes to ESDMs	Swift and easy access is primarily through the use of the CAF process. Family liaison officers also develop key relationships with families so that they can ensure swifter access. Cluster working has enabled information sharing about available services to which referral can be made.
Shire 2	Located in Childhood Support Services alongside responsibility for children's centres, in the Learning and School Effectiveness service area in the Children, Schools and Families Directorate.	ESRA (not called ESRA and does other duties). 38 ES coordinators, 38 integrated practice workers (IPWs) (to support all CAF and multi-agency team working) and 38 parent support advisers (though IPW and PSA may be same person as each consortium decides the nature of posts).	38 consortia each with 8-26 schools.	All funding for schools goes to the consortia rather than direct to individual schools. Some ES funding goes to district partnership teams set up in each of the ten districts to oversee local developments, including extended services, children's centres and integrated practice working.	Swift and easy access includes the CAF process which is supported through IPWs. SEA is usually managed at the school level but is supported by the consortia. Multi agency working is supported currently by virtual team around the child in terms of both referral to specialist services and early intervention/prevention work.

2.2 Shire 1 case study

2.2.1 Context

Shire 1 is a large county and consists of a mix of rural communities and urban areas, with no dominant centre of population. Children and young people aged 0-18 make up twenty-four percent of the population and 3.5% of the population are of ethnic minority background. There are over 500 schools within the authority, serving approximately 200,000 children.

2.2.2 Strategic management of extended services

The local authority is organised into four directorates, and extended services is led from the children, families and education directorate. In 2003 a dedicated extended services team was created from core directorate funds, in order to encourage the development of integrated working across the county. At the time of the fieldwork, this team was responsible for extended services, study support, out of hours learning, family liaison officers, parent support advisers, Healthy Schools, and the parenting strategy. There is a head of unit and she is supported by an extended schools remodelling advisor (ESRA). However, in contrast to the remit of this position in some other authorities, the ESRA has a strategic rather than an operational role, due to the size of the county. The ESRA sits on the child health commissioning group (a joint council/primary care trust [PCT] group), is responsible for the strategic direction of the Healthy Schools initiative, and links with the child measurement programme, thus helping to cement strategic links with health services.

A children's trust was established in 2006 and published the first children and young people's plan (CYPP) the same year. In 2008, 23 'Local Children's Service Partnerships' (LCSPs) were launched in order to support commissioning and front line delivery of services. Each LCSP now produces its own CYPP. The grant funding for extended services is devolved to the children's trust, and in turn, to the LCSPs. The LCSPs are responsible for the management of 13 extended services development managers (ESDMs) covering 12 extended services programmes across the county. Future plans are to create 12 local children's trusts to replace the existing 23 LCSPs, and to replace the 13 ESDMs with 3 area support staff.

2.2.3 Operational management of extended services

Because the local authority is so large, the ESDMs play a key role in ensuring that extended services are delivered at area level. The role of the ESDM is rather like that of an ESRA in a smaller authority. The expectation of the authority is that they will develop extended services that are appropriate to each local area, by working closely with the LCSPs to fulfil the core offer. Part of the work of the ESDM has been to integrate the extended services into the local CYPPs and support the priorities that are developed there. To facilitate this ESDMs sit on the LCSP board.

A large part of the ESDM role has been to engage schools and other partners. Some LCSPs have employed co-ordinators to help establish extended services on the

ground, as ESDMs do not have the capacity for practical project work (for instance, the ESDM for the area we studied in depth is responsible for extended services in 52 schools). The 13 ESDMs meet monthly to share practice across the county. In addition, some clusters of schools have employed their own co-ordinators, where one has not been provided by the LCSP.

LCSPs vary in how they devolve funding, and how much they decide to pass on. Some LCSPs pass all funding directly to schools or clusters. Some LCSPs hold some funding centrally for specific projects that will benefit all schools, and/or give responsibility for some of the extended services budget directly to ESDMs for local projects.

We studied one of the 12 extended services programmes in depth. This programme consists of four clusters of collaborating schools. There is a cluster-wide secondary head teacher's forum, in addition to a primary school forum. Each cluster has its own action plan, produced with support from the ESDM. The forums enable schools to: support each other; have access to other programmes of work; plan programmes that are relevant to all; enable a range of provision; market provision; and share ideas and practice.

In the clusters we studied, nominated staff take part in regular programme meetings. At these meetings, they share information and good practice, and discuss priorities for budget allocation. Ideas are raised for individual projects and planning undertaken. Although the structure enables and enhances information sharing, no school is pressured to participate in anything that it feels is not suitable for its community. Rather, extended services are seen as a menu from which individual schools can select for their own benefit.

2.2.4 Management of swift and easy access

There are four key strands supporting swift and easy access in this authority: the CAF process; creating capacity; identifying gaps in provision; and better partnership working. The CAF, the lead professional role, and team around the child have been adopted as the main vehicle for swift and easy access to local services. In addition, extra capacity to identify and respond to need has been created by means of a network of approximately 240 family liaison officers. Schools and support workers who identify gaps in provision can relay their concerns via the CAF co-ordinator or the ESDM who both sit on the LCSP board and thus feed into to the children's trust, which is responsible for commissioning. By working in partnership, schools and clusters are able to share information about a wide range of local providers that they would not have known about otherwise.

2.2.5 Key issues

The local authority officers we interviewed were concerned that, due to the focus on providing the core offer, not enough attention had yet been paid to establishing impact and evidencing outcomes. In addition, they felt that schools were working to a variety of outcomes, and often take differing foci with respect to child wellbeing and school standards. Some LCSPs have developed their extended services provision and interagency working more quickly than others. The autonomy of approach has meant that some areas have been more successful in meeting the core offer than others.

There is a concern among the senior leadership team that, because of the level of support given to schools in the past, and the heavily resourced structures that are in place, schools have become too dependent. Schools themselves have expressed uncertainty about the new structures being proposed, feeling that they will be distanced from the local authority and experience a lack of support. In addition, there was a concern at the time of our fieldwork that gains would be lost if funding for extended services were to be withdrawn. An output from the Spending Review has since clarified future funding (see page 28).

Engaging all schools with extended services has not been easy, and this was explained in terms of the different priorities and views of head teachers. They are often dealing with very different issues in their schools and have different ideas about how these issues can be tackled. A shared vision was therefore considered to be an important success factor in the successful implementation of extended services for a cluster.

Some clusters have been successful in attracting external investment from local delivery partners. Working in clusters is felt to have facilitated identifying opportunities for additional resources. In addition, cluster working is felt to benefit smaller schools, who may not have the capacity in isolation to provide the breadth of services that are possible to provide at a cluster level. One school felt that it had been able to reduce the number of referrals to social care, due to the help and support it was able to offer through extended services.

2.3 Metro 1 case study

2.3.1 Context

Metro 1 is a relatively small borough serving approximately 190,000 people. The borough is diverse in nature with both rural and urban areas, highly affluent and socio-economically disadvantaged areas. A large town within the borough acts as the main commercial, cultural and administrative centre. In total there are just over 100 schools with 14 secondary schools, including two selective grammar schools and two faith schools. Many children cross authority boundaries (in both directions) for their schooling.

2.3.2 Strategic management of extended services

The local authority is organised around five directorates, one of which is children and young people's services. Within this directorate, there are four service areas including the children's trust, children's social care, learning services and family support services. Extended services are located within Family Support Services. The strategic lead of extended services is the head of family support services, supported by a principal officer.

The authority has recently split the borough into four distinct geographical areas. Each of these areas has an area manager. Each of these area managers has a cross-authority portfolio of responsibilities. One of these area managers (who is also the deputy principal officer for family support services) has the senior operational responsibility for extended services. The ESRA is line managed by this person and, until recently,

led a team of four extended service development officers (ESDOs), one for each of the four geographical areas. The ESDO role has recently been streamlined however and there are now only 1.5 (full time equivalent) officers working across all the four areas.

The authority has taken seriously the *Every Child Matters* agenda. The children and young people's plan has the five ECM outcomes as its main outcomes and the children's trust role is to ensure ECM outcomes are the key focus of services across the borough. The authority sees extended services as a central means of delivering the five ECM outcomes. In addition, the authority has taken a decision that a focus on ECM outcomes needs to be embedded within existing structures rather than 'bolted on', and that this will also contribute to the sustainability of this agenda. In terms of extended services, therefore, it has decided to draw on existing skills across the authority rather than creating lots of centrally-funded extended service roles.

2.3.3 Operational management of extended services

All schools in the borough are expected to work in extended service clusters. Clusters contain between five and twenty-six schools, though most have around eight. The largest cluster with 26 schools is most likely to divide into two in the near future. The ESDOs initially supported schools and clusters to get up and running with extended services and focused on ensuring all schools were meeting the core offer. However, as schools came on board with extended services, the focus of the ESDOs and the ESRA moved from compliance towards quality assurance and more strategic and effective extended service provision.

There are no cluster coordinators as such, and the expectation instead has been that schools will be proactive in running and managing their own clusters. Each school across the authority was therefore asked to identify a lead person for extended services to coordinate with the authority and collaborate with other schools in their cluster. The authority however has recently asked all clusters to appoint a part-time cluster activity coordinator for an average of six and a half hours per week, with the expectation that these hours will be distributed flexibly over the year.

There are currently 12 full-time equivalent parent support advisers (PSAs) in the borough, three in each of the four localities. Their work is directed by the ES team to support extended services in schools, but they are offered professional supervision by the family support manager in each locality, who is an experienced social worker.

The borough is moving in the direction of more area-based working. This will also apply to extended services. Therefore, there is an expectation that services will be delivered more locally whilst also being more responsive to local needs.

2.3.4 Management of swift and easy access

CAF is in use across the borough and has been widely promoted through extended services, with training carried out by ESDOs. All schools across the borough are now expected to be holding in-house multi-agency team meetings (MAT) for tier 2 and 3 issues. Prior to April 2010, the Extended Service Team supported schools in setting up these teams and in securing access to services. The onus has now been put on schools to take the lead, though with support in an advisory and facilitative capacity

from the local authority. There is an authority-wide multi-agency team to help support schools with MAT meetings and with the CAF process. The extended services team also acts as a broker for services as and when needed by schools. In order to support swift and easy access the authority is setting up a directory for schools which will provide contact information for all services. MAT meetings often focus on planning provision for children, developing locality provision or finding ways to meet individual schools' requests for services. At a case-work level, PSAs play an important role in delivering services and liaising with other agencies. Schools across the authority are also expected to call team around the child meetings when there is a safeguarding issue.

The authority recently piloted and evaluated a project around making extended services more accessible for the most vulnerable children in the borough, often those regarded as having special educational needs. The project was seen to be very successful and has now been rolled out across the borough. The rationale for this is that if extended services can be made accessible for the most vulnerable, then access should be easier for all children and young people across the borough.

The authority also has an integrated youth support and early intervention panel (called 'targeted youth support panel') where a range of community safety representatives and young people's services representatives attend to deal with local issues of anti-social behaviour, and other youth-related issues in the community.

As the authority is moving towards locality working, it is envisaged that area-based support teams located within the four areas will in future support swift and easy access.

2.3.5 Key issues

The officers we interviewed felt that the development of extended services had required the authority to learn rapidly. They thought they might have developed their quality and effectiveness of their provision further had they worked on establishing an appropriate infrastructure earlier, rather than focusing on compliance with the core offer. However, this was not something that could have been known in the early stages of development. For instance, the development of extended services and use of the CAF led to a rise in referrals, but the services to deal with this rise were not in place.

There was a concern that the CAF process in particular and multi-agency working in general require a change of culture in schools and often create, at least initially, an increase in their workload – particularly it was reported for head teachers. However, though there were continuing concerns about capacity, the benefits of these ways of working were seen to outweigh the costs. Strong support from a centralised extended service team and the small size of the authority were seen as critical facilitating factors.

2.4 Metro 4 case study

2.4.1 Context

Metro 4 is a metropolitan authority where thirty percent of children and young people live in areas that are amongst the twenty percent most deprived in the country. The authority has placed an emphasis on narrowing the gap between the most and least advantaged areas in relation to education, employment and health indicators, and sees the integration of services for children, driven by locality working, as key to this aim. Its involvement in both the extended schools pathfinder and full service extended schools (FSES) initiatives has been particularly influential in terms of the development of multi-agency partnership working at locality level.

2.4.2 Strategic management of extended services

The leadership of extended services is located in the children, young people and learning directorate, one of five directorates in the authority. Within the directorate, the head of service for commissioning and resources leads on extended services. He works closely with the school improvement service and with other heads of service for safeguarding and preventative services, access and inclusion, and education skills and innovation. The heads of service are appointed at assistant director level. There have been some recent major staffing and structural changes within the directorate as part of efforts to provide high quality and cost effective services, particularly in the light of anticipated reductions in available funds.

The four heads of service for the directorate are represented on the children's trust, which has an overarching strategic role to ensure that services are secured that directly benefit children young people and their families, especially those who are disadvantaged and that integrated provision remains focused on key issues – namely: prevention; early intervention; reducing inequalities; inclusion in mainstream and universal services and securing better outcomes for all. The authority adopts a commissioning of services model and the targets that they set and give to schools reflect identified need in the localities. The health focused targets mirror those that the children's trusts are working towards. The objectives also take into account data provided to the local authority and children's trust by locality based area children's strategy groups who, as part of their remit, analyse and assess locality data to inform the requirement for and the development of ES provision. Schools are commissioned to deliver on these objectives and they work collaboratively with a range of statutory and community services to do so. In particular they work closely with the children's area teams in each locality to ensure that the swift and easy access strand of the core offer is being met. Clusters of schools will also, on occasion, commission other services to deliver certain aspects of the core offer.

2.4.3 Operational management of extended services

There are four main locality areas in Metro 4, although the largest of these has been subdivided into two. Each of the localities has a FSES and an extended services partnership of schools. Schools in each of the case study partnerships we studied have

formed a soft federation (comprised of 17 and 16 schools respectively), and are managed by an extended services co-ordinator. The intention was that the FSESs in each locality would provide the lead role in planning and delivering extended services locally, with additional capacity to support other schools in developing their core offer of services. In one of the partnerships we studied, the FSES leads on extended services developments, but in the other the schools work as a collaborative and have not designated a lead school.

Area working is underpinned by integrated governance arrangements. There are extended services steering groups, or the equivalent, in each locality and each of the four main locality areas has an area children's strategy group (ACSG) comprised of key personnel from a range of agencies and chaired by a head teacher. The ACSGs work within the framework of priorities established by the children's trust in the children and young people's plan, assessing locality data to inform the development of extended services.

Extended services funding is devolved to the extended services partnerships of schools (in the case of one of our case study partnerships the funding goes directly to the full service extended school for the cluster as the lead school). Extended services coordinators and head teachers, along with key delivery partners, decide how to most effectively use funding to meet the objectives that the local authority has commissioned them to meet. Some of the extended services funding is allocated to appoint support staff (or in the case of one lead school, a school based extended services coordinator) in partnerships of schools, and some of the allocation is used towards the cost of cluster wide provision to meet the objectives that have been commissioned by the local authority. Of the funding provided, ES cluster coordinators retain a proportion that individual schools can then bid for in order to support their work. Since recent restructuring, and in the light of this area structure, Metro 4 no longer designates an ESRA.

2.4.4 Management of swift and easy access

Schools are expected to use the CAF process and to work within a referral, assessment and management framework (which offers guidance about tiers of need, thresholds and appropriate referral pathways) in providing swift and easy access to specialist services. They have their own in-house structures and procedures for identifying vulnerable children and families. They can offer support in-house, or refer directly to tier 1 and 2 services, or to the area children's teams (ACTs). Schools can additionally refer direct to children's first call (a speedy link to social services) when the level of need is at its most acute.

ACTs were established in each of the four localities to operate as a local point of contact to provide early help and support and coordinate specialist referrals. They are funded through the children's trust and were set up in order to a) enhance responsiveness of services and b) in response to disparity between localities in Metro 4 (whilst some of the more deprived localities had benefited in the past from area based initiative, others had not). ACTs undertake an assessment of need and if necessary provide a team around the child (TAC) so that vulnerable children are receiving a co-ordinated and multi-agency response to their needs. The teams, which are based in schools or work closely with schools, are multi-disciplinary, comprising an area team leader, social worker, early intervention support workers and

administrative support, with input from the educational psychology service, educational welfare service and youth service. A range of associated services also work with the teams including, for example, health visitors, school nurses, community police officers and the youth offending team. Borough-wide tier 3 specialist services also interface with the teams.

2.4.5 Key issues

The work of the area children's strategy groups in each locality feeds directly into the commissioning process in the authority and schools and partners feel, therefore, that they are informing strategic decision making. When the FSEs and wider partnerships of schools receive commissioning objectives from the Local Authority on a yearly basis, therefore, the objectives that they are given tend not to come as too much of a surprise. The ACSGs also feed directly into the joint planning and commissioning unit of the children's trust.

There is also a sense that extended services are closely aligned with key strategic agendas in the authority. In particular, much of the authority's work is focused on its 'narrowing the gap' agenda, which is concerned with reducing inequality in academic attainment, employment, health and economic well being. Whilst, therefore, there are uncertainties over future funding, there is also a strong commitment to see this agenda through.

3. Themes and issues

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, we presented accounts of three of the eight case study authorities. These accounts indicate the diversity of arrangements made by local authorities and the complex interfaces between the extended services agenda, local authority organisational structures, and their other key agendas and responsibilities. These complexities mean that, to some extent, each authority's arrangements are unique. However, by looking across the sample as a whole, it is possible to detect some common patterns, and to identify some common themes. That is the task, therefore, of this chapter.

3.2 Strategic leadership of extended services

Local authorities have needed to find a way of providing strategic leadership for the extended services agenda, linking developments 'on the ground' – at school, school cluster and area level – with other relevant aspects of local authority policy. This is particularly challenging because the extended services agenda is one which cuts across traditional organisational boundaries within the local authority (and, indeed, beyond) and potentially has contributions to make across a wide range of policy areas. It is, for instance, clearly relevant to school improvement and school standards, but also to child and family well-being, to adult learning, to community safety and cohesion, and to economic regeneration.

One way of responding to this situation was to ensure that the officer with lead responsibility for extended services was in a position to link that agenda with wider strategic concerns. In each of the authorities we studied, therefore, the designated lead officers were at second tier level within the Children's Services directorate (or its equivalent). Whilst this increased the likelihood of strategic links, however, it was still necessary to locate extended services within some particular arm or section of the directorate. Different authorities made different decisions about this. Metro 1, for instance, located it within 'Family Support Services', London 1 placed it in 'Early Years and Primary', Shire 2 within 'Childhood Support Services', and Unitary 1 within 'Integrated Youth Support'. These decisions sometimes separated responsibility for extended services from other closely-related responsibilities – for instance, for children's centres (as in Metro 4), or for secondary schools (as in London 1).

Authorities were aware of the dilemmas they faced in having to find a specific home for such a cross-cutting agenda. Their response was that the specific location of lead responsibility was relatively unimportant, given the strenuous efforts towards integrated approaches that were being made across children's services (and the wider local authority) more generally. The lead for extended services in London 1 explained the situation as follows:

We have lots of areas that are cross-phase responsibility so the fact that it sits within the primary and early years division doesn't mean it's just within that phase... The thinking behind it was ultimately... we're trying to integrate and align the work with extended services and integrated working with the under 5s. So the thinking was about alignment around the integrated working, extended services and the children's services agenda really, some sort of coherence across that as well, for families more than anything else.

In this situation, it is perhaps not surprising that there was a good deal of fluidity in authorities' arrangements for leading extended services. It was not unusual for that responsibility to be located initially in one section of the authority, but to be moved elsewhere after a relatively short time. This trend was increased by the level of corporate reorganisation that was evident in authorities as they sought to respond to changing local and national priorities. More particularly, it was increased by the dynamic nature of the extended services agenda itself. In the start-up phase the priority was mainly to ensure that all schools made the core offer available by 2010. As this goal came nearer to being achieved, however, the focus shifted to more strategic concerns with long-term sustainability and the alignment of extended services with wider strategies for children, families and communities. As the lead officer for extended services in Shire 1 argued:

It's got to move from core offer to 'this is the way we do things around here and this is why we do it, this is our evidence base, and this is what we're hoping to achieve', so that it's more of an approach than a programme... [W]ithout that there is the danger (which might happen anyway with all the financial pressures we are facing) of end of grant – stop!

Whilst this fluidity was in one sense unsettling, it also seemed that a genuinely developmental process was at work. In almost every case, the local authority officers and school personnel we spoke to reported that arrangements that had recently been put in place or were planned were more appropriate than the authority's initial efforts. Rather than there being one obviously best way to lead extended services, it was clear that local authority arrangements needed to evolve as the context changed and as the authority learned what worked best in its area. However, it was also clear that this evolution needed time. Our visits to these authorities took place some five years after the national launch of the extended services agenda (DfES, 2005), and in some cases (Shires 1 and 2 being examples) recognisably similar initiatives had been in place some time before this.

3.3 Operational management of extended services

In addition to leading extended services strategically, local authorities also needed to ensure that services were provided in some coherent and effective way on the ground. This meant, in the first instance, ensuring that schools were able to make the 'core offer'. In the longer term, however, it meant creating sustainable delivery structures that are aligned with the authority's strategic aims.

3.3.1 The role of the ESRA

In all of the authorities, operational management was initially the responsibility of a designated extended schools remodelling adviser (ESRA), though the particular title used might vary from authority to authority. Typically, the ESRA worked with a team of other officers and/or with cluster coordinators on the tasks of supporting schools as they developed their core offer, and brokering relationships between schools and other service-providers. This support was widely acknowledged both by the authorities and by schools as being central to getting the extended services agenda running. In this respect, the knowledge, skills and personality of the ESRA and her/his team were seen as crucial. As a head teacher in Metro 1 put it:

[I]f we didn't have that support from [the ESRA] and other people within the authority it would be a different picture. So the resources and the right people who are committed to it I think are the things that are the real 'pro' for it ... I think again it comes down to personalities, but [the ESRA] particularly seems very supportive and she will drop anything and come and help... I am sure that's one of the reasons why it has been so successful here.

Another head teacher, this time in Metro 2, emphasised the 'hands-on' nature of the ESRA's work:

What I like about [the ESRA] is that she is a very much 'bottom up'. So she's not some lead body who sits in an office and you have to pick up the phone to talk to, she's there... so that part I find really useful, that she's in school.

Important as ESRA's were, however, they did not in themselves constitute a sustainable strategy for managing extended services in the long term. In one authority (Metro 4) the ESRA role had been discontinued, and in all authorities, other management structures had also been developed.

3.3.2 Area structures

In each of the authorities, these structures included some form of area organisation. There were differences in how these areas were constituted and in the range of services and strategies for which they were responsible. In some authorities, the areas were based on clusters of schools, or children's centres, and tended to focus on children and family services. In other authorities, however, they were based on 'natural' communities or on administrative areas, and this opened up the possibility for a wider range of services to be managed at area level alongside extended services.

In the case of geographically large authorities, area approaches brought obvious advantages in terms of efficiency and manageability. However, practicability seems rarely to have been the only consideration. Metros 3 and 4, for instance, are both geographically small and demographically homogeneous authorities. However, both saw area planning and delivery as crucial across a range of services and strategies. So, Metro 3 had established a structure of area partnership boards (effectively, area LSPs), was actively seeking to locate services at area level, and expected schools to work with these boards in developing extended services. Likewise, Metro 4 had established four area children's strategy groups, responsible for assessing locality data in their area to inform the development of extended services.

In all authorities, claims were made that incorporating extended services within some kind of area structure enhanced the effectiveness of what could be provided to children and other service users. As the head of a school in Metro 4 put it:

It works well at locality level... We have shared priorities, share thinking and intelligence, and share some resources, and it all remains a real strength.

These claims were echoed elsewhere. An officer in Metro 1, for instance, stressed the importance of an area approach in moving from a school-centred view of extended services to a better-resourced and more wide-ranging approach:

... I started on this agenda from 2003 and we focused very much on schools [but] after probably about eight, nine months we realised that we needed to concentrate as much on the partnership working to build the infrastructure in our own services as well as in the schools. So it is now, I would say well on its way to be dove-tailed with other agencies and that's crucial because we have been very clear right from the word go that schools can't do this alone.

As with the location of strategic leadership for extended services, there was no clear evidence that any one model of area organisation was superior to others in all circumstances. It again seemed likely that there would be trade-offs between the relative advantages and disadvantages of different models.

3.3.3 School clusters

In each of the local authorities, there were school clustering arrangements in relation to extended services. These varied significantly in terms of their size, their composition (as between schools of different phase and type), and whether they were established as a response to the extended services agenda or pre-dated it. Again, there was no evidence of a single 'best' model, but rather of trade-offs between advantages and disadvantages.

Similarly, clusters were led in different ways. This might involve designating a lead school, setting up a cluster steering group, employing a cluster coordinator (funded by the schools or directly from the authority), designating a coordinator to work across more than one cluster, or some mixture of these. There were a number of tricky balances to be got right in making these arrangements. Some coordinators, for instance, were senior professionals, employed by the local authority, and taking a high level of responsibility for organising services in their clusters. This was likely to ensure a high level of activity and good alignment of extended services with other policies and strategies. However, it might also raise questions about value for money and about the extent to which the extended services agenda was owned by the schools. On the other hand, some coordinators were part-time staff with a somewhat limited role. This raised different, but equally troubling, questions about whether they could sustain an appropriate level of activity and how strategic that activity would be.

Even if the role of the coordinator was formulated satisfactorily, cluster working was by no means trouble free. Whilst schools were expected to work together on the

extended services agenda, there were varying levels of enthusiasm amongst them (specifically, amongst their head teachers) for that agenda, and strong incentives for them to work separately to protect their individual interests. As a cluster coordinator in London 1 reported:

...although, on the face of it, it can look like things are all brought together in an action plan, it's very much...certain schools within the cluster that drive it and I wouldn't have said it was a cohesive cluster by any means, I mean the head teachers are having a bit of a challenge all working together. I think the cluster model in general is quite difficult for them to handle, but I think it's also about different leadership styles...

There was some evidence that clusters needed time in which to develop trust and learn how to work collaboratively. Head teachers, for instance, needed time to move beyond what one lead officer (in Shire 2) characterized as “the mindset of paddling their own canoe”. Not surprisingly, therefore, there were indications that where clusters had a relatively lengthy history (as in Shire 1) and/or were not restricted to a narrowly defined extended service agenda (as in Metro 4); problems were likely to be fewer.

Regardless of the nature and state of development of clusters, there was a widespread view that cluster working brought many advantages. Some of these were to do with gains in efficiency and practicability. Not only did the collective provision of services reduce the burden on individual schools and increase the scope of what could be offered, but clusters provided convenient units for the allocation of funding, the deployment of resources (such as specialist personnel), and the involvement of front-line providers in strategic decision-making. Some advantages, however, were to do with the kind of broadening of perspective that collaborative working brought. As a cluster coordinator in Metro 3 observed:

I'd say it works a lot better with schools working collaboratively than in silos, because you address those wider agendas. Otherwise it's very internal-looking and just an individual need of a given school rather than what are the bigger issues around the neighbourhood...

This view was confirmed by head teachers, some of whom spoke enthusiastically about the impact clustering had had on their work:

From my point of view, the opportunity to work with other heads makes a huge impact...just the opportunity to meet with other people, the ideas you get, and the support you get.

(Head teacher, Metro 3)

3.4 Funding arrangements

3.4.1 The arrangements

Arrangements for managing the funding (and more widely, the resourcing) of extended services by local authorities were invariably complex. This was for a number of reasons:

- Authorities were required to manage a number of separate dedicated funding streams from central government, each with its own terms and conditions (see DCSF, 2009).
- They could choose (whilst abiding by the relevant conditions) to treat these dedicated funding streams as independent or as linked, and could also see them as linked (or not) with other forms of funding related to the children's agenda.
- They could potentially divide available funds between (at least) three levels of activity – the local authority directorate, clusters, and individual schools.
- They could distribute funds that were not centrally retained in a number of ways – by simple passporting, or by delegating with conditions, or by commissioning, or by devolving to another body (such as the LSP or an area steering group), or by means of a bidding system, or by some combination of these. They could also decide in different ways the criteria on which this distribution should be based – for instance, at a flat rate, or on pupil numbers, or on some assessment of need.
- Where funds were distributed to schools via an intermediary level (such as the cluster) they could decide whether or to require the intermediary to pass on the funding through particular mechanisms, and what those mechanisms should be.
- They could keep their arrangements constant over time, or they could adjust them in accordance with changing circumstances – not least the planned reduction in dedicated funds from central government.

In practice, local authorities typically operated some mixed, and more or less complex, set of arrangements which enabled them to maximise funding and sustainability. In these circumstances it was – as with other aspects of the extended services agenda – impossible to identify a single 'best' model. However, it was clear that funding decisions were closely bound up with two other issues: the ownership of the extended services agenda and the location of decision-making within it; and the long-term sustainability of the agenda.

3.4.2 Ownership

Distributing funds to particular points in the system entailed allocating responsibility for their use – and therefore the formulation of strategy – to the same point. In London 1, for instance, funds had originally been distributed to schools individually, but latterly they had been distributed to clusters. As the ESRA explained, this was a deliberate attempt to locate responsibility for decision-making at this level:

...it's about trying to say to clusters and schools and children's centres that they've got other money that they can add to that, that is not all there is for ES – so get that money, decide how to spend it, and it's up to them. So long as it's

in the remit of full core offer, SEA [swift and easy access] or varied menu then fine, and cluster coordinators look after that.

A similar view emerged in the very different context of Shire 2, where funding had been directed towards 'District Partnership teams'. As the lead officer for extended services explained:

...the choice was either that I had a large central team that could do all [the development work] centrally or that something went out locally, and we took the decision to do more of that work at a local level.

Metro 4 had developed a commissioning system that seemed particularly powerful in building this sense of ownership, but which nonetheless retained some central strategic control over extended services. The authority had developed an area approach to service delivery, with a cluster of schools in each area. The children's trust commissioned services from these clusters, but in turn schools played a role in formulating the priorities that underpin the commissioning process. They were, in the words of a senior officer, "the eyes and ears of the process to help inform strategic planning". So, for instance, the head teacher of one cluster's lead school chaired the area children's strategy group and fed ideas and information directly to the children's trust and local authority. As he explained:

...we influence those plans...I come up with the intelligence that we've picked up, and we influence the board around the sorts of things that we believe should be happening...What that does is, on an annual basis that creates the commissioning backwards. So I'm never surprised when the commissioners say, 'we want you to do the following things and have the following outcomes', because we've fed these things in, we've been party to how they've emerged across the year. So it doesn't come as a surprise and actually it then closes the loop and provides the commissioning and the support and the finance, but obviously the accountability to then make the things happen.

3.4.3 Sustainability

A major issue in the management of funding was the long-term sustainability of extended services. All the authorities were aware that they needed arrangements that would survive at the very least the reduction in funding that was built into government plans prior to the election, and perhaps even greater funding constraints thereafter. This was likely to be a problem for authorities that had opted to set up relatively expensive centrally-funded structures for developing services. In Metro 1, for instance, the authority had offered schools lots of formal and informal support. The problem, as the ESRA explained, was not simply the sustainability of centrally-funded posts, but the lack of ownership at school level which this level of support had engendered:

One of the disadvantages I would say is that we're possibly not as sustainable as other local authorities so that if we went for the cuts at the centre and the team wasn't here, some schools would continue and be very haphazard, some would continue, some wouldn't, so it's less ... [T]hey rely on us a lot I think

to organise and support it and keep it going and if we weren't here, they'd probably stop.

Indeed, this fear that extended services might falter as a consequence of coming financial constraints was widespread. There were particular problems where the authority had invested heavily in extended services and schools had come to rely on externally-funded resources. As a head teacher in Shire 2 told us:

[C]learly it is not sustainable as otherwise we wouldn't all be so worried about it, we would have built that into it but I know if you take [the extended services coordinator] out, nothing will happen, nothing will be developed and things will gradually go back to where we were before.

Whilst local authorities could do something by way of becoming 'leaner' (as some put it) and encouraging schools and clusters to take ownership of the agenda, they reported they could not rush the process of culture change which this involved, nor could they make good the absolute loss of dedicated funding. For example one ESRA (in Metro 3) suggested that a spiral of decline was likely to be initiated, whereby cluster coordinator posts would disappear, clusters would lose the capacity they offered to generate additional funds, and therefore activities would cease:

Everything will stop. The fact is that people won't have the capacity to do it and it is sadly one of the things that will go...I think one of the co-ordinators for example has sort of brought in about £30K, you know, as part of his role and remit to deliver to particular areas...So they bring the money in and deliver and work within the services, so they have made it sustainable, but the *salaries* aren't sustainable...[B]ut then if you didn't have a person in post they wouldn't get the funding in.

As a head in Shire 2 pointed out, any reduction in the level of extended services on offer would be damaging not just for the professionals, but for the families which had come to rely on extended services, and on the trust that had been built up between them and schools:

...our real problem is that if that is whipped away, it is going to leave the community wanting, worse than that even, not only is it taking those services away, it is putting the schools in a position where they could potentially lose a lot of trust from those very vulnerable families...The fact there is no funding for it is totally insignificant. Their need is now.

At the time of our fieldwork, it was not clear what the future arrangements for funding extended services would be, and therefore whether such concerns would prove to be justified⁴. Nonetheless, the anxiety about the future of extended services and about the impact any potential decline in services might have on children, families and communities, was widespread. More positively, what these concerns indicated was a high level of consensus (at least amongst the professionals we interviewed) about the importance of extended services. As a school coordinator in London 1 put it:

⁴ Extended services capital funding was reduced during 10-11 and subsequently it has confirmed that this will not continue from April 2011. Also from 2011 extended services sustainability and subsidy grants will be mainstreamed into the dedicated schools grant.

I mean I suppose if I ever wanted a key message from a [school] point-of-view would be ...the whole extended services thing around community engagement, this is the only way that it does work and it does join up public services, it puts out a mandate for youth service to work with education, to work with health, to work with housing... Without that, we will go in silos again and you'll have exactly the same problem as in the 1960s... [A]lthough we have our challenges and we moan about not being joined up, we have a mandate with this type of thing of absolutely doing it, it is policy and it is written down that this is something that all schools and local services need to do, without that, you won't have it, it will just turn inward looking.

3.4.4 Accountability and funding

Local authorities' management of extended services funding was closely bound up with their ability to hold schools to account for, and ensure the strategic alignment of, the services to which they offered access. In distributing funds to particular points in the system, they could impose conditions on the use of those funds and require their recipients to account for that use. Part of the development process in authorities seems to have been a shift from simply distributing funds in order to stimulate activity, to a more considered approach in which funding came with accountability for quality and effectiveness. In Metro 2, for instance, an extended services board had latterly been established to offer support and challenge to the ESRA. As one of its members explained:

When extended services became part of my remit, I said 'Hang on a minute [ESRA], who is monitoring what you are doing? Is [the ESRA] spending the money in the right way?' To all intents and purposes, yes she was, it was out there, it was developing capacity, but we never said, 'Well why did you put that family support worker there?', and if I was the head in this school, and saw that was there, I'd be saying 'Why have they got that and I haven't?'... So what I wanted for [the ESRA] through the board was the transparency, so there was somebody that was questioning what they were doing...

Not surprisingly, perhaps, it was sometimes possible for accountability mechanisms of this kind to be perceived by the recipients of funds as over-bureaucratic and even legalistic, and this did indeed generate some resentment. Often, however, the accountability mechanisms were light touch – a simple expectation, as in the case of London 1, that, "So long as it's in the remit of full core offer... then fine", or a broadly-formulated service level agreement. Alternatively, Metro 4's system of involving schools in the commissioning process, but then holding them to account for the services that were delivered, produced what seemed to be an effective mechanism for accountability without alienating schools.

3.5 Making sense of the agenda

Decisions about how to lead, manage and fund extended services could not be divorced from questions about how that agenda should be defined. In one sense, this was relatively straightforward, particularly during the start-up phase. Local authorities had responsibility for ensuring that schools complied with the requirement to make a

core offer of services available. However, this inevitably begged the question of what this core offer was intended to achieve, and how it sat within the authority's other strategic aims.

One key question of this kind was whether extended services were to be seen primarily as a response to disadvantage, or as a universal provision. As a senior officer in London 1 argued, this was a difficult issue to resolve even where an authority served a somewhat homogeneously disadvantaged area:

[It] would be good to be thinking about a national statement on that – that's if extended services continue of course after the present time...[W]e've got more to do about what and who extended services are for fundamentally first of all. Now there is the universal part of it and there also are those children who need the additionality, you know the children who need the additionality around poverty and disadvantage...[S]ome further clarity would be helpful. I know we've got quite strong views about it and we're sort of, we're not sure there's a voice out there saying how we should use that funding really.

A further question that was raised across a number of authorities was the extent to which extended services should be seen as a school-focused agenda concerned primarily with raising standards, or as wider social agenda. For the professionals we spoke to, there was no doubt about the compatibility of these two agendas, and the implication was that the local authority had to come up with a formulation which made that compatibility clear. In Metro 4, for instance, the extended services agenda was closely aligned with strategies for 'narrowing the gap'. However, as a primary head teacher pointed out, the 'academic' and social agendas were in fact closely intertwined:

Primarily it is about standards but the core purpose isn't *just* standards. It's about wellbeing. Schools can't deal with issues in challenging circumstances on their own... You have to work more collaboratively.

Similarly, a secondary head teacher predicted dire consequences if there was any rowing back on this holistic approach:

[I]f we as a nation find that we end up squeezing what we do in education to a very, very short term view of, 'We just need to raise this year's results, we know how to do that at schools, and we will focus all of our attention on the academic progress of those children'... I guarantee that that will have a knock on effect to the longer term stability of what we're talking about here. So at best what will happen is those young people will leave with some results that will in some way support their economic wellbeing, but not long term...

However, although such views were widespread, the complexity of local authorities as organisations, their multiple roles, and the need to involve many organizations and stakeholders in the extended services agenda meant that it was difficult for them to build consensus around these views. Occasionally, tensions broke to the surface as different arms of the authority undermined each other's work. The strategic lead officer for extended services in Shire 1, for instance, told us how:

We were doing lots of work in school improvement, planning so gradually we were getting schools individually and in small groups to see the use of [extended services], but then they had their SIP [school improvement partner] come in, or an local authority adviser who'd be saying, 'You need to stop doing all of this', 'You need to be concentrating on boys' writing', or this, that and the other, and would see extended services as this kind of bolt-on programme...

Such tensions were not all one way. There were particular issues of this kind in authorities' relationships with schools. Without exception, the school personnel we spoke to were supportive of the extended services agenda and articulated the kinds of holistic views of it that we have cited above. However, there were reports that not all schools shared these views. Some were seen as having agendas of their own – not least in relation to driving up standards of attainment – which did not necessarily coincide with the way that the local authority saw extended services. The lead officer for extended services in Unitary 1 had some sympathy for their situation:

I know they feel – because I'm a governor at a school as well – that they've become like a glorified social services. They're not there just to teach and everything else, they are there to find out the backgrounds of their families, to find out who's taking drugs and everything else, and get the support in.

The consequence, particularly in the start-up phase, could in some cases be open conflict between schools and authority officers. However, the idea of embarking on a 'journey' with schools seems to capture how authorities had responded to this situation. By and large, authorities had avoided confronting doubtful schools. Instead, they had preferred to develop a more collaborative approach based on developing shared agendas. As the lead officer for extended services in Metro 2 put it:

Their children are my children, their outcomes are my outcomes, and mine are theirs, so unless we work together and it's mutually supportive, we are not going to get anywhere!

This was not simply a matter of accepting schools' objections at face value, but about acting as critical friends to schools, articulating a holistic vision of extended services and challenging schools' assumptions, whilst at the same time involving them in decision making and building on the work of the many supportive head teachers. The lead officer in Unitary 1 described this process as being one of cultural change:

We work in a context where schools are conscious of league tables and having pupils performing...[C]ulturally I think there's a big shift that's needed and I think at its core, extended services has been about creating that shift...I believe it sits better outside of the schools so there's an impartiality of challenge as opposed to within the school because its easier to change a culture through partnership with a healthy challenge and a nurture and supporting role.

3.6 Swift and easy access

This review looked specifically at arrangements for swift and easy access to specialist services, both because of the intrinsic importance of these arrangements and as an example of how local authority leadership and management of extended services worked in practice.

3.6.1 Types of arrangement

Although the detail of arrangements in different local authorities – and, particularly, their current state of development – varied, there was a common pattern. Typically, authorities were moving, from a system whereby individual schools referred on to other agencies, to one in which many referrals were first handled locally, and were only passed on if there was insufficient capacity at local level to carry out an effective intervention. ‘Locally’ in this sense might mean teams of professionals from other agencies working with individual schools, or working at area or cluster level. Such teams were often able to marshal a multi-professional response to children’s difficulties, obviating the need to refer onwards.

Unitary 1 was typical in this respect. At the time of the fieldwork for this review, it was operating a central multi-agency group to handle referrals. However, its schools were organized into area clusters for extended services purposes, and it intended, therefore, to create cluster-level groups as a first level of intervention. In Metro 1, by contrast, panel meetings were organized on a school-by-school basis. In these authorities as elsewhere – and indeed, as we have seen across the extended services agenda – arrangements were often undergoing a process of transition as authorities worked their way towards the most locally-appropriate model.

3.6.2 Advantages

A number of advantages were claimed for the new sets of arrangements, and surprisingly few disadvantages were reported. It was clear that traditional referral processes were widely seen to have been inadequate, on the grounds that they were cumbersome, led to inconsistencies between schools and across cases, and frequently failed to yield any effective intervention. As an ESRA in Shire 1 put it, the attitude in schools was:

Yes, we’re very capable in schools of doing swift and easy referrals. It’s what happens to the referral once it’s made, and the capacity to be able to deal with that.

By contrast, the new arrangements were variously seen as ensuring greater consistency and allowing schools to access a range of local services for their children. As a deputy head teacher in Metro 4 reported, these arrangements (he was referring specifically to the area children’s team):

...bring everything together and they use CAF to bring in ‘multi-agencies’...It doesn’t lack coherence or a uniform approach.

An explanation for these positive experiences seems to be that the localization of services meant that schools could access support for children rapidly and without the need for protracted referral procedures. As a senior officer in London 1 put it:

[W]hat we want to do is bring a consistency to how all the schools access [services], so it's not a referral process its how you access additionality for a family or child in tier 2...The referral routes at tier 3 are very well established, it's really that bit in the middle that we're doing a bit more thinking about.

This officer was not alone in emphasizing the importance of the 'bit in the middle', nor in associating this with tier 2 services. Indeed, there seemed to be an emerging consensus that schools themselves could provide universal, tier 1 services, that tier 3 services (specialist services for those with the highest levels of need) properly required traditional referral processes, usually to a central service, and that tier 2 services, targeted on those at risk, could best be provided by a multi-agency team, handling cases at school or area level. However, it was also clear that this model could only work effectively if the services at local level were sufficiently well-developed. Where this was not the case, the system was unlikely to function effectively. As the lead officer for extended services in Shire 2 explained:

[T]he county council has an issue with children's services. In [this authority] we still have a very high rate of referrals into social care, much higher than our statistical neighbours. Whilst that is starting to come down a bit, the feeling is that we really need...[an] early intervention level, that things aren't robust enough to respond to need at that stage...[T]oo much work is escalating into the specialist services.

Likewise, some concerns were expressed that non-specialists working at tier 2 could unwittingly find themselves dealing with issues that required more specialist intervention.

3.6.3 Common Assessment Framework

Within these emerging models, the common assessment framework (CAF) process was playing an important role. At its best, CAF provided a mechanism for schools to assess the needs of children and their families, take their concerns to area panels, and secure rapid intervention. Not surprisingly, given the difficulties of traditional referral processes, a deputy head teacher in Shire 1 reported his successful use of this process in enthusiastic terms:

To me it was like I'd died and gone to heaven! I could never have done that in any other way.

There was a widespread view that the CAF had formalised what had in the past been a somewhat ad hoc process, and that it was an important tool in the development of area-based interventions. However, there were also some significant concerns. In some cases, the CAF process was seen as cumbersome and time consuming – a barrier to swift and easy access rather than a facilitator. As a head teacher in Unitary 1 commented somewhat ironically:

Swift and easy access? Yes! Let's put it on a CAF form – you know, three days and 30 hours later when you've finished filling the form in – it's not easy, is it?

Even where CAF was viewed positively, there was concern that schools carried an undue burden in the process. As a primary head in London 1 commented:

I think the expectation on head teachers is just too great for them to understand everybody else's job which is what you are asking them to do. So if you do...CAF, who is going to be the person responsible? Is it always going to be the schools? I don't think that head teachers have got the capacity or the knowledge to do everything

In response to such concerns, some authorities had deployed workers within clusters to support schools with the CAF process, and this support was generally welcomed.

3.7 Partnership working

3.7.1 The local authority role in partnership working

Both swift and easy access and extended services more generally require a high degree of partnership working at school, cluster and local authority level. There was an acceptance at each of these levels of the importance of developing partnerships. At school and cluster level, partnerships were, as an assistant head in a Shire 1 school explained, a powerful way of enhancing the resources that would otherwise be available:

Through the partnerships that we have built up, we have access to many more groups than I think we'd ever realised were available. Because they come along to meetings and they tell us about all the things they can offer, then our swift and easy access goes far beyond what would normally be available within a school with a SENCO with a child who is perhaps having problems.

At the cluster and area level, a key task for coordinators and ESRAs, therefore, was to broker partnerships between schools and other services and organisations. As a coordinator in Shire 2 explained, this meant that a shift in the pattern of her work once the start up phase of extended services was complete:

Now we've kind of got to full core offer and it has moved on quite a lot since then I think. I don't do the same stuff I did, like I don't deliver services at all, I work with partners. I mean you hear that little thing about partnership working, but actually it is the way it works because the heads really want to do it and you're the link person, and the partners want to work with schools.

More generally, the brokering of partnerships was seen as a vital role for the local authority at all levels. This was not simply a matter of making contacts between schools and whatever other services happened to be available in order to satisfy the requirements of the core offer. Rather, it was seen as a proactive role in which the

authority had to develop and configure services in such a way that they supported the work of schools. As a senior operational officer in Metro 1 explained, this marked a shift from the start-up phase of extended services where the emphasis had been simply on fulfilling the core offer:

[T]he whole agenda relies completely on partnership work and I think it is really important that we've got the infrastructure right across the Council and with partners such as the PCT with the police, with the voluntary sector from an early stage and I think we probably should have done that earlier rather than later... The big focus was – and I'm thinking back now to 2003 – was to get the schools on board because the targets were by September 2010, every school will have to deliver this, and I think most local authorities went straight in to getting schools on board... I think in hindsight we should have concentrated on the partners and its infrastructure in the local authority first and then developed that out to school.

This shift from seeing extended services as an initiative needing to be managed to seeing it as integral to the wider policies and strategies of the authority also meant that it could be integrated into the authority's responsibilities for supporting school improvement. As a senior officer in Metro 3 argued:

What I am trying to envisage is that the school has a school improvement plan and extended provision is an important way of actually supporting improvement in schools as well as satisfying the core offer, and the authority has a responsibility to support that by provision of services and should co-ordinate those where it is necessary to do so. But I can't see any effective school improvement plan being done without some kind of partnership approach at school level or across the levels.

In this context, local strategic partnerships (LSPs) and children's trusts were widely accepted as part of the infrastructure needed to support partnership. All authorities had developed arrangements through which these bodies formulated overarching strategy. Through the kinds of funding and accountability mechanisms reported above, this then guided the work of area teams, clusters and schools. However, there were some indications that perceptions of their work in schools were influenced by how successful they were at relating their strategic decision-making to what was happening on the ground. In Metro 2, for instance, we encountered a view that the children's trust was remote and out of touch with school realities. In the words of one head teacher:

I think it's far too up in the clouds. I think it's overly strategic... The people who work for and with the children's trust are the people who existed in previous roles within local authorities and other statutory and non-statutory organisations, but it wasn't connecting what was going on, on the ground.

On the other hand, in Metro 4, as we have seen, there were mechanisms whereby 'lower' levels of the system could feed back into the strategic bodies, and this seemed to build a strong sense of ownership of the strategies that were then developed.

3.7.2 Partnership with Health

The National Health Service – specifically, in the form of primary care trusts (PCTs) and their services – constituted a major partner for local authorities and for schools at the time of our fieldwork. Unlike education- and social care-related services, health services were not within the control of local authorities and were likely to operate, therefore, within different organizational frameworks, different administrative boundaries, and different sets of priorities. Although the central policy emphasis on cross-sectoral working and the establishment of children’s trusts had done much to break down barriers between services, the potential for mismatch and misunderstanding remained. We therefore asked specifically about how partnerships with Health were progressing.

Not surprisingly, perhaps, the responses we received were mixed. At school and cluster level, there were examples of highly promising partnerships. A secondary school in Unitary 1, for instance, was hosting a weekly GP surgery, which was, in the view of the head teacher, a great success:

In terms of the partnership between the health service and the education service etc., it’s a brilliant example of what you can do.

Similarly, in Metro 1 there were reports of good working relationships with health at all levels, stemming particularly from joint working on the children’s centre agenda. In the words of the strategic lead officer for extended services:

[A] lot of [the successful partnership] comes back to the children’s centres, so those relationships are already there in the localities – school nurses, health visitors. And the health visitors are linked in with the children’s centres, school nurses linked in with schools, so all the teams are coordinated together and they come to all locality based management meetings.

However, these positive examples were matched by equal numbers of problematic examples, often in the same authorities. A senior officer in London 1, for instance, reported the same sorts of good relationships with the PCT as in Metro 1, but drew attention also to some significant barriers:

We’ve been quite lucky as we’ve had a good relationship with PCT since the children’s centres which started a long time ago, so when we agreed our strategy for children’s centres, it was a three way process with health, social care and education. So we’ve built a relationship around the under 5s which we are extending... [B]ut it’s still a challenge... [I]t’s still a different culture. That’s where the cultural differences are in how they are set up and run really.

A range of problems of this kind were reported. Sometimes, as here, the difficulties were attributed to cultural differences. However, they were also variously attributed to personality differences, different supervision practices, the need in larger authorities to negotiate with multiple PCTs, the reported reluctance of Health personnel to engage with extended services, perceptions of bureaucratic processes in the PCT, and the differences in accountability mechanisms between the two services. It seems likely that there was no single explanation for the difficulties that were evident.

Organisational differences between Education and Health are complex and diverse and can mean that collaboration is challenging.

Local authorities were responding to this situation in two main ways. One was the process, reported above, of starting from specific instances of successful collaboration and building on these to develop trust and encourage collaboration more widely. This was a long-term strategy, but nonetheless one that appeared to be having some success. The assessment of a senior officer in Shire 2 was typical:

Yes, it's getting better... It is slow, but it is starting to work better...I would say there's still quite a long way to go, but there has been quite a lot of movement over the last couple of years... It is moving in the right direction.

The second response was to hasten this gradual process of change by looking for ways to promote structural integration between Health and the local authority. Children's trust arrangements were one obvious way in which this was achieved. However, authorities were typically going beyond this by ensuring that Health was represented on area decision-making bodies and that local authority personnel were represented on the steering groups of health initiatives.

This integration of decision-making had taken a particularly interesting form in Metro 3. There, a single PCT served the same population as the local authority, and there was recognition across the organizations that the overall wellbeing of the area was intimately bound up with health issues. As a result, the chief executive of the PCT held the position of executive director of 'wellbeing' in the authority, and there were a number of joint posts in the tiers below this level. One of these was the director of family support and children's health services, who had responsibility amongst other things for the strategic leadership of extended services. She argued that this highly integrated approach was particularly appropriate to the needs in this borough:

[C]hildren's health in the borough is one of our most challenging areas that we're not showing the impact we should. So the other issue is around using the extended services as leverage around health outcomes ... Obviously it is the whole core offer of extended services [that matters] but I think we have, because of our partnership with the PCT, we've been able to show real benefits of delivering health things through, through extended services.

She also suggested – and this was not the only authority in which we heard such an argument – that the relatively small size of the authority and the fact that the areas served by the local authority and the PCT were coterminous, made the development of collaborative arrangements much more straightforward than the might have been elsewhere.

3.8 *Extended services and other initiatives*

Metro 3 was also particularly interesting in that it had been involved in an early phase of the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme. It had used this not simply to replace inadequate buildings, but as the basis for a fundamental restructuring of secondary education and an alignment of schools with service provision on an area

basis, and with council strategies for community development and regeneration. This restructuring was not without its teething problems, but the intention was that the new school buildings would offer opportunities for extensive community use, for the co-location of services, and for the development of extended services to meet the needs of local communities.

The building programme in Metro 3 was completed before our fieldwork began, and the bulk of our interviews elsewhere were completed before the BSF programme was halted. Nonetheless, at that time other authorities were also, in the words of Shire 2's director of children's services, "using it as a vehicle to reshape the public offer". More specifically, having school buildings which could accommodate community access, family support and integrated working was seen as a crucial factor in delivering the extended services agenda.

In much the same way, some authorities were beginning to see the 'Total Place' initiative (launched in 2009 to explore how public services in a given area might be reshaped) and extended services as mutually supportive. The underlying principle in both cases is that services can be reconfigured to avoid duplication, to enhance their joint effectiveness, and, particularly, to meet the needs of users rather than the preferences of service-providers. As the ESRA in Shire 1 saw it, this was part of a wider movement away from separate initiatives towards a more holistic approach:

They [initiatives] have all come along at different times so they've all been seen as different initiatives...The number of times I've worked in schools to hear them say 'We're doing healthy schools this year, we will do extended schools next year!' or 'We can't think about extended schools because we are concentrating on Building Schools for the Future.' And it's like 'No! Please! If you look at it all together you can do it all in one – don't design your school building this year and then discover next year that what you needed was to offer community access and you didn't think about that!'

4. Conclusions

In the period between the announcement of the 'roll out' of extended services in 2005 and the beginning of the fieldwork for this study in early 2010, local authorities were involved in a complex change management process. This process required them, as an immediate task to ensure that schools were making available the core offer of services, but in the longer term to ensure that their strategy for extended services was aligned with their wider strategies for children and families, for communities and for economic development. The complexities of this process (but also the opportunities it opened up) were increased by the fact that the large scale reorganisation of children's services ushered in by the 2004 Children Act and the move towards partnership working across a range of local government responsibilities were still bedding down.

In this chapter, we will try to make sense of this complexity, summarising first of all the key features that seem to characterise how authorities managed the development of extended services, and then exploring what might be learned from their experiences.

4.1 *Managing the development of extended services*

It is possible to summarise how local authorities responded to the challenges of the extended services agenda in the following way:

- In response to the immediate task of ensuring that schools were able to make a full core offer of extended services, local authorities appointed or designated one or more ESRAs, usually supported by a small team of personnel. The support offered by these personnel appears to have been widely appreciated by schools.
- In response to the longer-term task of establishing structures and practices to ensure the sustainability of extended services and their alignment with broader strategies and policies, authorities adopted a wide range of different approaches. These responded to local circumstances and emerged from local histories, so were not transferrable in any straightforward way to other contexts.
- There was no evidence from this review that any one set of arrangements was inherently superior to any other. Authorities were usually in the business of making trade-offs between advantages and disadvantages in deciding on the best structures and processes in their circumstances.
- The arrangements established by authorities were often somewhat fluid in the first instance. It was common for them to change as the authority learned more about what worked in their situation. This was particularly the case as the emphasis shifted from the initial start up phase of the extended services initiative to a focus on longer-term sustainability.

- Despite this fluidity and the variation in arrangements between authorities, a common underlying pattern did indeed begin to emerge. Its main components were:
 - i. A strategic lead from LSPs and children's trusts, often with some sort of feedback loop so that lower levels of the system could inform strategy.
 - ii. The designation of a senior (usually second-tier) officer as having overall responsibility for extended services. This officer was located in one or other arm of the children's services department, but was typically expected, in response to the holistic nature of extended services, to make links with other arms.
 - iii. The organisation of schools into clusters, very probably matching the area organisation of other children and family services, and sometimes of a wide range of community services on an area basis.
 - iv. The appointment or designation of personnel to lead extended services in each cluster and/or area.
- Authorities had to manage multiple funding streams in complex ways in order to support these arrangements. This typically involved a range of mechanisms for devolving funding from the centre to areas, clusters and schools whilst at the same time developing accountability mechanisms to ensure the efficient use of that funding in ways that were aligned with central strategy.
- Authorities were aware of the need to realign funding in order to take into account the reduction in government support that was planned into the initiative under the previous administration, and uncertainties associated with the new financial and political context, especially ahead of announcements following the Comprehensive Spending Review. Despite this, there were widespread concerns about how much of the extended services agenda would be sustainable in future.
- Swift and easy access to specialist services was managed in ways that were compatible with structures and processes of this kind. A system in which individual schools referred direct to central services in the authority was being replaced by one in which schools had access to multi-agency teams. These teams might work with individual schools or at area or school cluster level. In this way, interventions at tiers 1 and 2 could be handled locally, leaving only the most serious cases to be referred on to specialist services organised on an authority-wide basis.
- The former system of referral to centralised services was widely seen as being cumbersome and inefficient. The new systems were seen as facilitating speedier intervention on a more equitable and reliable basis. Perspectives on the CAF were mixed. It was seen in some places as a key facilitator of swift and easy access to specialist services. However, there were some concerns that schools were carrying too much of the burden for making the process work and that it acted as a bureaucratic obstacle to effective intervention.

- Extended services in general and swift and easy access in particular relied heavily on the establishment of partnerships of various kinds, and brokering these was a key role of the local authority. Few fundamental difficulties were reported in these partnerships, except, in some places, in the case of Health, where different organisational structures and cultures presented barriers to collaboration. There was, however, evidence of efforts to integrate these structures in many authorities, and in at least one case these were very far advanced.

4.2 What can be learned?

When the extended services agenda was launched in 2005, it was as a centrally-funded initiative in which government placed a set of specific requirements on local authorities and schools. However, the findings of this review will be used in a situation where centrally-funded initiatives are likely to be replaced by a pupil premium made available to schools, and where the policy emphasis is likely to be on local (particularly, school-level) decision making rather than on government direction. In this context, there are a number of important lessons that can be learned:

4.2.1 The value of extended services

Given the degree of central direction that had been associated with developing extended services, it is striking how positive interviewees at all levels of the system were about its achievements. To some extent, no doubt, this is explicable as an artefact of our sampling procedures. Despite the care we took with these, it was always likely that the most negative views would escape the sample. It is certainly true that we were told anecdotally of less than enthusiastic schools, and that many interviewees had concerns about particular aspects of the management of extended services in their areas. Nonetheless, the overwhelming view from both school and local authority personnel was, as we have seen, that the development of extended services had brought significant benefits, not only in terms of the supportive services that could be provided to children and families, but also in terms of enhancing children's learning and attainments. There was a correspondingly strong sense that something important would be lost if the agenda disappeared, and that the expectations of, and relationships of trust with, families and communities would be seriously damaged. However, it should be noted that the aim of this thematic review did not include evaluating outcomes arising from provision of extended services.

The implication is, therefore, that while the former central steering of extended services might come to an end, there are good reasons why such an approach to education and service delivery should be maintained. The essence of that approach, as it emerges in this review, is that schools and local authorities set up sustainable structures and practices which facilitate collaboration and coordination across institutions and services. This in turn enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of services and, above all enhances children's learning. As a result, the structures and practices, once fully bedded down, are more likely to be experienced by schools and their partners as supportive and empowering rather than as burdensome.

This shift, from a funded extended services initiative to a set of sustainable arrangements not heavily dependent on central funding is, of course, a difficult one. In essence, however, it is precisely the shift in which schools and local authorities have been engaged over the past few years. The task will be to continue that shift without at the same time undermining everything that has been achieved in that period.

4.2.2 Sustainability

The sustainability of extended services in the context of a new – and, at the time of the fieldwork, uncertain – financial and funding situation was, as we have seen, a major concern for many of our interviewees. In view of the complexities in funding that we encountered, however, it is worth disaggregating the different issues within ‘sustainability’. In particular, there are important distinctions between:

- the funds that have been devolved to school and cluster level so that they can employ staff and support services and activities;
- the funds retained by local authorities to lead the development of extended services (especially in the start-up phase) and to support the work of schools and clusters; and
- the wider resources drawn upon to offer services to children and families (in the form, for instance, of specialists in local authority services, health personnel, police time etc.).

Given the likely financial constraints in future, and the shift of available funding to school level, the developments in some authorities seem to hold out the best hopes for sustainability, namely:

- the establishment of a light-touch and low-cost authority-level centre, with available funding lodged so far as possible with schools and clusters;
- the brokering of robust, trust-based partnerships between schools, local authority services and non-authority agencies so that available resources can be coordinated in collaborative action without the need for additional funding;
- the alignment of different levels of the system (for instance, through commissioning processes and involvement in decision-making), so that services are delivered efficiently, and available resources can be used effectively to support a consensual strategy.

Interviewees were clear that reductions in funding would weaken the commitment of some partners (notably, some schools) and, beyond a certain level, would jeopardise the overall extended services approach. Concerns were particularly focused on the loss of key personnel who could support schools, broker relationships and access external funding. The strategies outlined above would not avert these dangers entirely, but they might do something to defer the point at which they materialised.

4.2.3 Leading change

It is clear from this review that local authorities had in recent years been engaged in a complex process of change management. Both the immediate task of ensuring that schools were making the core offer and establishing viable structures for delivering

children and family services were formidable tasks. If there were still remaining issues to resolve and remaining dissatisfactions with current arrangements, there was also a widespread sense that authorities had learned quickly and adapted well to a constantly changing environment.

What is striking about these tasks is that they were in many ways about cultural change. At heart, they involved taking institutions, services and organisations that were accustomed to working independently of one another, and persuading them that a more collaborative approach was in the best interests of them and of the children and families they served. Local authorities appear to have achieved this by offering a clear strategic lead, brokering partnerships, offering hands-on support, involving stakeholders in the decision-making process, and maintaining high levels of flexibility and adaptability in their own practices.

In terms of how the extended services initiative of 2005-2010 might give way to a more embedded extended services approach in future, this role of the local authority gives rise to some interesting questions. It is clear that the initial driving role which characterised the start-up phase will not be necessary now that extended services are substantially established in most places. However, it seems likely that there will still be much to do in terms of brokering new partnerships and maintaining old ones, providing practical support to schools and their partners, ensuring that what happens in and around individual schools is aligned with broader area and authority priorities and strategies, and guaranteeing that arrangements across localities are equitable and meet high standards. Given the financial constraints under which public services are now operating, there will be a particular role in managing resources in such a way as to eliminate duplication and ensure maximal effectiveness for minimum expenditure.

All of this implies the kind of strong strategic role for local authorities outlined in the recent white paper, *The importance of teaching* (Department for Education, 2010). At the same time, however, this strategic role will need to be exercised in respect of extended services with due regard to the emphasis on school autonomy in the same document. The most promising way forward, therefore, may lie in the kinds of partnership approaches that were emerging in some authorities in our sample. In these approaches there was *both* a high level of autonomy at school and cluster level *and* strong central support for collaboration and for building consensus around a shared strategic agenda. When they worked well, such approaches enabled schools to draw on the resources of their partners and on the strength of joint action on matters where this was appropriate.

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Appendix A: Topic guides

Extended services and local authorities: topic guide for local authority representatives

NB In all questions, use swift and easy access as a test case where appropriate (i.e. 'how does this work in respect of swift and easy access?').

1. Aims and strategy
 - To what, if any, strategic aims in the local authority are extended services expected to contribute?
 - *Probe for aims in respect of children, families, communities, regeneration*
 - *Probe for relationship between educational and non-educational aims*
2. Policy formulation
 - Where is policy for extended services formulated?
 - *Probe for which individuals and organisations are involved*
 - *Probe for the role of LSP/s and the children's trust in this process*
 - What role (if any) do schools play in extended services policy formulation?
 - *Probe for how feedback and data from schools are obtained and used*
3. Management structures
 - What are the structures for managing children's services within the local authority?
 - Where does the management of extended services sit within these structures?
 - *Probe for whether extended services are aligned with the management of schools, or of other parts of children's services*
 - Where and how do schools relate to these structures?
 - What economies of scale, scope, and procurement are achieved by managing extended services in this way?
4. Delivery structures
 - What are the structures for delivering children's services in the local authority area?
 - *Probe for area based structures and integrated delivery teams*
 - Where does the delivery of extended services sit within these structures?
 - Do these structures relate to other delivery structures outside children's services (e.g. regeneration teams, neighbourhood teams)?
 - Where and how do schools relate to these structures?
 - *Probe for school clusters*
 - *Probe for extent of school autonomy*
 - What economies of scale, scope, and procurement are achieved by delivering extended services in this way?

5. Swift and easy access
 - How are these structures expected to work in respect of swift and easy access?
 - *Probe for role of PCT*

6. Support for schools
 - How has the local authority supported schools in developing extended services?
 - *Probe for structures and personnel providing support*
 - *Probe for management of funding*
 - *Probe for relationship-brokering (between schools & between schools and other organisations)*
 - *Probe for rationale and aims*
 - *Probe for perceived effectiveness*

7. History
 - How structures and policies in relation to extended services developed over time?
 - *Probe for recent responses to ECM and extended services versus longer-established structures and policies*
 - *Probe for reasons for any developments/changes of direction*
 - *Probe for expected future developments*
 - *Probe for lessons learned*

Extended services and local authorities: topic guide for school representatives

NB In all questions, use swift and easy access as a test case where appropriate (i.e. 'how does this work in respect of swift and easy access?').

1. Aims and strategy

To what, if any, strategic aims in the local authority does the school understand that extended services expected to contribute?

Probe for aims in respect of children, families, communities, regeneration

Probe for relationship between educational and non-educational aims

How do these aims relate to the school's aims for extended services?

2. Policy formulation
 - What role (if any) does the school play in extended services policy formulation?
 - What feedback, data, and other information does the local authority require.

3. Management structures
 - What does the school understand to be the structures for managing extended services within the local authority?

- Where and how does the school relate to these structures?
- What economies of scale, scope, and procurement are achieved by managing extended services in this way?

4. Delivery structures

- What structures does the school relate to in providing access to extended services?
 - *Probe for area based structures and integrated delivery teams*
 - *Probe for school clusters*
 - *Probe for extent of school autonomy*
- How helpful/unhelpful are these structures?
- What economies of scale, scope, and procurement are achieved by delivering extended services in this way?

5. Swift and easy access

- How do these structures work in respect of swift and easy access?
 - *Probe for specific cases where the structures have/have not worked well*
 - *Probe for advantages/disadvantages in relation to previous means of accessing services*
 - *Probe for use of CAF process*
 - *Probe for role of health professionals, challenges in working with Health, and links with Healthy Schools initiative*

6. School organisation

- How has the school organised itself to relate to these structures (specifically in relation to swift and easy access)?
 - *Probe for roles (e.g. extended services co-ordinator, inclusion co-ordinator)*
 - *Probe for internal structures and processes (e.g. internal referral processes)*

7. Support for schools

- How has the local authority supported the school in developing extended services?
 - *Probe for structures and personnel providing support*
 - *Probe for management of funding*
 - *Probe for relationship-brokering (between schools & between schools and other organisations)*
 - *Probe for rationale and aims*
 - *Probe for perceived effectiveness*

8. History

- How structures and policies in relation to extended services developed over time in the local authority and in the school?
 - *Probe for recent responses to ECM and extended services versus longer-established structures and policies*
 - *Probe for reasons for any developments/changes of direction*

- *Probe for expected future developments*
- *Probe for lessons learned*

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