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New Opportunities Fund

Term-time Schemes,

2000 – 2003

An evaluation of 39 schemes in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

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Executive Summary

1. Introduction

This report describes findings from a sample of 39 term-time schemes throughout the UK that had received funding from the New Opportunities Fund in the period 2000 to 2003 as part of the Fund's Out of School Hours Learning Programme (OSHL). An earlier report, submitted to the Fund in August 2003, was an evaluation of a sample of 30 summer school schemes throughout the UK in the period 2000 to 2002. This is an executive summary of both reports.

2. Background

Since 1999 the Fund has invested £180 million to term-time schemes and £25 million to summer school schemes under the OSHL programme. The stated objectives of the programme are:

- To set up, improve and develop OSHL activities encouraging innovation and diversity
- To provide learning activities that encourage and motivate young people and build their self-esteem
- To raise levels of achievement in school
- To benefit those who suffer from disadvantage and who would benefit most from help to raise achievement.

3. Methodology

The research on both term-time and summer school schemes was conducted through interviews with key providers, participants and others with an involvement in the schemes (e.g. parents, in-school scheme staff, Local Education Authority (LEA)/Education Authority (EA)/Education and Library Board (ELB) officers), and through observation of project activity. For term-time schemes, a researcher or researchers typically visited each project on three occasions during a school year, with the information gathered used in the writing of a case study report. For summer school schemes, each scheme was visited on two days, again with the research leading to a case study report. The set of case study reports formed the basis for the respective report. The amount of observation for all schemes was limited. As such, the content of the individual case studies and the two reports, including both sets of conclusions, are based on the views of providers, participants and others involved.

The sample of term-time schemes comprised 13 in England, nine in Scotland, nine in Northern Ireland and eight in Wales. Twenty-four term-time schemes were evaluated in their first year of operation, nine in their second year, and two in their third and final year, while four schemes were evaluated over their first and second years. The sample of summer school schemes comprised nine schemes in England, nine in Scotland, seven in Wales and five in Northern Ireland. Twenty-eight summer school schemes were evaluated in their first year of operation, while the other two were evaluated in their second year.

4. Scheme Aims

The aims of individual schemes, both term-time and summer school, were closely related to the particular circumstances of the schools involved and the identified needs of the young people participating in activity. Throughout the schemes, aims included: raising levels of achievement; providing enrichment/extension activities; improving young people's attitudes to learning; supporting transition from one phase of schooling to the next; providing cultural, identity and heritage experiences; and improving school and community links.

Providers used stated aims to guide their organisation, planning and delivery of the scheme. Good practice was evident in large schemes, both term-time and summer school, that had explicitly translated general aims for the scheme as a whole into specific aims for individual projects, and in term-time schemes, of all sizes, that had specified time-related aims and carefully considered the potential impact of their provision in conjunction with other initiatives (e.g. the Excellence in Cities (EiC) programme in England).

5. Types of Project

There was a variety of types of term-time project in each of the four countries. Most common in the evaluation sample were homework clubs, literacy and numeracy focused projects, sports and physical education projects, performance arts (i.e. music, dance and drama) projects, arts and craft projects, and IT/ICT projects. Less common projects included breakfast clubs, family learning projects, and individual subject revision sessions.

A relatively common type of summer school scheme was that focused on core subjects or key skills (i.e. support for numeracy, literacy and ICT). Other schemes included transition summer schools, usually for pupils in their final year of primary school, which provided 'taster' activities adapted from the secondary school curriculum. Other summer schools provided enrichment/extension activity usually in performance arts or arts and craft areas.

Term-time and summer school schemes that had aims relating to supporting transition from primary to secondary school were particularly successful in reassuring young people about aspects of the secondary school that most would shortly be joining. Participants gained from having the opportunity to visit the secondary school, meet some of the teachers, experience 'taster' activities in new subject areas, and work alongside pupils from other schools.

Overall, both term-time and summer school schemes of all types met the needs of the young people involved. For example, term-time projects provided a suitable environment for homework completion after school or allowed for a concentrated

period of time on key aspects of numeracy, literacy or ICT. Summer school schemes provided young people with an opportunity to try out a sport or an outdoor pursuit that they would not have otherwise experienced, or gave them more time to engage with activity that they were particularly interested in, such as in performance arts.

Generally, much activity across both term-time and summer school schemes was innovative in offering new experiences to young people. This innovative approach related to such aspects as activity provided at non-school sites, the use of a greater range and higher quality of resources, teaching and learning styles that were more informal than that of the school day, the employment of non-teacher professionals, the opportunity to work with others from a wider age range or from other schools, and course content that matched and developed participants' skills and interests.

6. *Partnerships*

The majority of schemes, whether term-time or summer school, were either LEA/EA/ELB schemes or multiple school schemes. A common model of schools working together was of a single secondary school providing both activities for its own pupils and activities for pupils from its feeder primary schools in the case of term-time schemes, or solely for pupils from primary schools in the case of summer schools. Other models included consortia of primary schools and consortia of secondary schools. The partnership arrangements for schools working together were generally successful, although there was often a considerable amount of liaison necessary to ensure that the scheme ran smoothly.

Most schemes had input from one or more partners from the private, public or voluntary sectors. The involvement of partner organisations in schemes varied. Some were lead organisations, having prepared the bid and were then managing the scheme. Others provided a direct input into scheme activity through providing employees to work as main providers or mentors. Other partner organisations supplied resources or additional funding.

The involvement of partner organisations added to the quality of schemes in all four countries. For example, the involvement of the Youth Service in some schemes was

particularly successful in responding to the needs of disaffected young people or those who were becoming disengaged with learning.

Some projects were entirely school-based, which was appropriate for the type of provision (e.g. transition summer schools). Others were partly or entirely based at non-school sites, such as community libraries, community centres, sports centres, outdoor education centres and youth centres. Providers regarded the use of these venues as helpful in widening the horizons of young people, and providing them with learning activity outside the formal school-site context. Young people appeared to be particularly motivated by being able to use up-to-date facilities and resources provided at these venues. However, there were difficulties for some young people in accessing provision at some non-school sites concerning the ease of travel to the venues or because they were perceived to be in areas outside their 'territory'.

7. Scheme Providers

A wide range of people were involved in managing, delivering or supporting project activity. These include scheme coordinators, school coordinators, teachers, non-teacher providers, adult mentors, peer mentors (usually older pupils from participating schools) and parents.

All schemes had a scheme coordinator, who had responsibility for the strategic planning and direction of the scheme. The scheme coordinator was an LEA/EA/ELB officer with responsibility for Out of School hours learning or a related area, or a senior employee of a partner organisation, or a senior teacher of a school, depending on the type of scheme and partnership structure.

School coordinators were responsible for scheme activity within their own school. Typically, these were teachers, with their duties including: acquiring resources; liaising with teachers and other providers; reviewing progress; publicising activities; monitoring the impact on young people; and dealing with problems on a day-to-day basis.

Many schemes employed non-teacher professionals. These included classroom assistants, play workers, youth workers, sports coaches, artists, musicians, dancers and drama providers. It was evident that young people appreciated their input into project activity, and these professionals acted as positive role models for many young people.

A small number of schemes recruited volunteers from the workplace to act as mentors, while some projects employed young people from schools to work as peer mentors. Relatively few peer mentors were employed on term-time projects compared with summer school schemes. Very few parents had a direct involvement in any of the schemes, apart from those operating term-time family learning projects, at which parents worked alongside their children.

8. Targeting

Most term-time projects within the evaluation sample were entirely open access for young people from particular year groups or key stages. A minority of term-time projects targeted young people who they had identified as underachieving and/or in need of support. While many term-time projects at the school level were open access, there had been some targeting of disadvantage through the selection of schools, especially by a number of the LEA/EA/ELB schemes. A small number of term-time schemes that had initially planned to target particular groups, in practice did not do so, believing that members of the target group might feel stigmatised or, on reflection, concluding that all young people had an entitlement to the provision.

In contrast, a minority of summer schools in the evaluation sample were entirely open access for young people. Most summer schools had a clearly-defined target group within a particular year group or range of year groups. Across the summer school schemes, the criteria used for targeting included underachievement, poor attendance at school, a lack of confidence, poor behaviour/disaffection and special educational needs.

Successful targeting frequently relied on a great deal of work from teachers in discreetly approaching potential participants, or their parents in the case of primary

aged pupils, and explaining the benefits that were likely to accrue from attending provision. For a small number of schemes, others, such as youth workers, Education Welfare Officers and Family Link Officers, were involved in promoting and recruiting participants from the target group.

9. Attendance

All schemes recorded attendance by young people as a requirement for the completion of the annual monitoring form for the Fund. The majority of term-time projects regarded the level of attendance as generally good. Those projects that had the greatest fluctuations in attendance were homework clubs. There were a small number of instances of attendance at term-time projects being poor, typically related to provision at non-school sites involving awkward journeys. Several term-time projects had replaced poorly attended clubs and activities with others, recognising that they needed to be flexible and willing to make changes to keep attendance at a relatively high level and thus maintain cost-effectiveness.

For the majority of summer school schemes in all four countries, coordinators reported that attendance had been disappointing, especially on the first day. The reasons given for low attendance included the timing of the summer school, poor organisation, a lack of publicity, perceived unattractiveness of activities to potential participants, and location. It should be noted that 28 of the 30 summer school schemes in the evaluation sample were evaluated in their first year of operation, that is, at a stage when difficulties with attendance for many had not been anticipated.

Some term-time projects examined the difference in take-up of provision between boys and girls. While there were some significant differences within individual clubs or activities, the view taken by these projects was that this was unimportant provided there was an equal balance between boys and girls overall in accessing some type of provision.

Activity across schemes in all four countries was open to all, regardless of ethnicity or special educational needs, apart from a small number of schemes that had particular target groups in these areas. It appeared that young people from minority ethnic

groups and those with special educational needs were accessing the provision at the same level as other groups and were gaining equally.

Overall, it appeared that most young people attended and continued to attend projects, whether term-time or summer school, because they felt they were benefiting. For some, these benefits were mainly to do with developing particular skills, whereas for others, it was the opportunity for greater social interaction.

10. Internal Monitoring and Evaluation

All schemes used registers to record the attendance of young people. For a small number of schemes, attendance data formed the only measure of judging the level of success achieved, whereas in the majority of schemes it was one of several measures.

Some term-time projects with an explicit aim of raising levels of achievement analysed pupil performance in order to measure the impact of their provision. This was usually through an analysis of the young people's GCSE grades against their predicted grades. These projects were convinced that this showed that their provision was raising achievement levels. However, this conclusion should be treated with caution, mainly because their analysis was based on relatively few numbers of young people and difficulties were encountered with classifying participants according to the extent to which they accessed the provision.

Some summer schools that were focused on core subjects or key skills had initially identified their target group through pupil results on National Curriculum tests or on standardised tests. The intention of these projects was to measure the impact of the provision by analysing pupils' results on similar assessments at a future date.

Most term-time and summer school schemes devised and used participant evaluation forms to collect information on particular aspects of their provision. These forms would have collected more useful information if they had included a small number of questions about what participants felt they were gaining.

Other monitoring and evaluation methods employed by schemes included following the Quality in Study Support (QiSS) recognition scheme, holding regular project review meetings, sometimes with an input from participants, and the expert judgement by non-teacher professionals of the end-product of projects, such as a piece of pottery or a mural.

All term-time and summer school schemes reported notable successes or main benefits to participants as a result of the provision. These included improvements in homework completion and quality, the development of specific skills, and improvements in young people's attitudes to learning, self-esteem, confidence and motivation.

11. Sustainability

In the first year of provision by both term-time and summer school schemes, the majority of scheme coordinators reported that sustainability was not an issue for them at that time, as they were more concerned with getting activity set up and established. In the second year, the plans for sustainability for most schemes remained vague. A small number had identified possible sources for future funding, but there was little evidence of longer term planning.

At the time of the research (mainly in school years 2000/1 to 2002/3), the general view across both term-time and summer school schemes in all four countries regarding the likelihood of large-scale sustainability was relatively pessimistic. Some of the smaller schemes reported that they did not expect to be operating after the period of funding, or if they were then it would be in a greatly reduced form. A number of schemes thought that obtaining financial support from local companies was not possible, either because there were very few or no companies of a reasonable size to approach, or because where there were such companies they were already supporting other education initiatives.

12. Country Specific Element of OSHL

As an additional piece of research, discussions were held with representatives of the Fund in autumn 2003 on how in-country policy on OSHL had developed over the last two years, the future development of policy, and the provision made by country governments/assemblies to ensure the continued development of OSHL.

These discussions pointed up that the financial contribution of the Fund towards OSHL had made many positive contributions in each of the four countries. The financial commitment and policy provision committed by governments/assemblies demonstrated their political and financial support of OSHL activities. However, it appears that there is a degree of financial and political uncertainty and this will undoubtedly impact on future policy development. Specifically, in Northern Ireland and Wales, uncertainty remains in relation to specific OSHL policy development in the future. In England and Scotland however, funding has been allocated to support future OSHL activity, at least until 2006.

13. Recommendations

The NFER research team makes a number of recommendations for LEA/EA/ELBs, groups of schools and single schools who wish to set up or extend out-of-school-hours provision at a future date, whether funded through an organisation such as The Fund or other sponsors. These recommendations, as described in detail in Chapter 11 of this report, relate to planning schemes, the content of schemes, partnership working, scheme providers, participants, internal monitoring and evaluation, and other aspects of OSHL. These recommendations are for both term-time and summer school schemes, unless otherwise stated.

In addition to these recommendations, the research team points up several issues for The Fund, or any similar organisation, to consider should there be any future large-scale OSHL programme. The main issues are concerned with what were regarded by schemes as unnecessary delays in receiving the grant, the application process and subsequent annual monitoring process being unnecessarily bureaucratic, and a lack of

clarity and guidance about the criteria for scheme activity that qualified for staff payment.

14. *Conclusions*

The research evidence suggests that the level of success achieved by the Fund's Out of School Hours Learning Programme in meeting its stated objectives was mixed. On the positive side, there was much activity in evidence that was of value in meeting the needs of participants, leading to increased motivation and generally improved attitudes to learning. Also, it was largely through the involvement of partner organisations that many schemes addressed the stated objective concerning setting up and developing learning activities that encouraged innovation and diversity.

However, the extent to which substantial numbers of young people from the 'most disadvantaged' groups were involved was questionable. Furthermore, there was the issue of relatively low attendance at the majority of summer schools, which meant that these projects had less impact through operating well below capacity. The level of community participation in schemes was varied, but this appeared to be related to the amount of funding provided for each scheme. Some schemes made good linkage with local and/or national initiatives, but it was evident that many more had not.

With regard to the stated objective of raising levels of achievement, in an 'academic' sense (i.e. in relation to National Curriculum test scores or end-of-course examination results) there was no valid hard evidence to suggest that activity had led to this outcome in the lifetime of the schemes. It is possible though that changes in young people's attitudes to learning and increased motivation may well lead to raising levels of achievement in the longer-term. In a 'non-academic' sense (i.e. in relation to young people's skills in such areas as arts and craft and sports skills), many young people taking part in enrichment/extension activity had developed particular skills in these areas through their involvement in projects.

With regard to sustainability, it is doubtful whether much of the activity of the schemes in all four countries would be sustainable beyond the period of funding unless large-scale funding is earmarked for future OSHL by governments/assemblies.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background

Since the mid-1990s, the area of study support has attracted increasing interest from educationalists and others wishing to explore avenues by which levels of achievement might be raised, as well as how the challenges faced by poor motivation and disaffection amongst children and young people might be addressed.

The potential contribution of 'Out-of-School-Hours Learning' to school improvement was highlighted in the Government's White Paper *Excellence in Schools*, which stated: 'These activities raise pupils' motivation, improve social skills and encourage participation in other activities' (GB. Parliament. HoC, 1997a, para. 30). The White Paper went on to express the Government's aspiration that all young people should have access to a range of activity in addition to normal classroom teaching and learning.

Shortly afterwards, the Government published a further White Paper setting out its plans for the National Lottery (GB. Parliament. HoC, 1997b). This included proposals to establish the New Opportunities Fund (NOF) to support programmes in the areas of education, health and the environment, including 'out-of-school-hours activities'. The document set the following target for out-of-school-hours activities designed to raise pupils' achievement. 'By 2001, we want high quality programmes of regular learning activities established in at least half of all secondary and a quarter of all primary schools' (Paragraph 14).

The following year, the Government published a consultation document focusing specifically on the area of study support (DfEE, 1998). This set out the steps needed

to achieve a national framework of provision, and explained how various bodies (e.g. central and local government, library services, business, youth and voluntary organisations) could contribute.

The concept of study support at that time had much in common with that of 'extra-curricular activities', which schools and voluntary organisations had traditionally provided for young people. However, study support was seen as different in two key ways from what had gone before. Firstly, there was an explicit connection with raising achievement. Secondly, whereas extra-curricular activities had traditionally been dependent on the goodwill of individual members of staff, study support implied a planned programme of provision tailored to meet the needs of particular client groups.

Since that time, a number of research and development projects, such as those by the Prince's Trust, the National Youth Agency, Education Extra (now known as ContinYou since its merger with Community Education Development Centre (CEDC)) and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), have advanced understanding of the conditions that facilitate effective provision.

In April 1999, the New Opportunities Fund, a National Lottery distributor of good cause money to health, education and environment projects, announced that a total of £205 million was available for an Out-of-School-Hours Learning Programme throughout the UK. The policy directions from central Government stated half of all secondary and special schools, and a quarter of all primary schools should be involved in funded OSHL projects by 2001. Of the £205 million available, £180 million was specifically dedicated to term-time schemes. The stated objectives of The Fund's Out-of-School-Hours Learning Programme were:

- To set up, improve and develop Out-of-School-Hours Learning activities, encouraging innovation and diversity
- To provide learning activities that encourage and motivate young people and build their self-esteem
- To raise levels of achievement in school

- To benefit those who suffer from disadvantage and who would benefit most from help to raise achievement.

The funding was to be divided between England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland on the basis of population, weighted to reflect levels of deprivation. The Fund intended to support sustainable projects that would improve the quality of life of people throughout the UK, encourage community participation, and complement local and national strategies and programmes. Another key priority for the Fund was that the programme address the needs of those most disadvantaged in society. This was ensured by the Fund agreeing that fifty percent of the funding to primary schools should target the most disadvantaged fifteen percent of primary schools, and that fifty percent of funding to secondary schools should target the most disadvantaged twenty-five percent of secondary schools.

Organisations concerned with Out-of-School-Hours Learning, including Local Education Authorities (LEAs) in England and Wales, Education Authorities (EAs) in Scotland, and Education and Library Boards (ELBs) in Northern Ireland, consortia of schools and single schools, and public, private and voluntary organisations were able to apply for grants from the Fund. Potential providers were able to submit bids that included support for activities such as that for music, drama, art, key skills, sports and outdoor pursuits.

The first grants were awarded in October 1999. Deadline for applications for term time projects was March 2001 followed by the summer school activities in September 2001.. Funded projects were usually for a maximum of three years, with strategic bids, lead by LEAs/EAs/ELBs, lasting up to five years (for further information about the way the programme was set up see Shah, 2003). Some organisations were awarded grants for projects with both term-time and summer school components, while others had prepared bids and received grants for a summer school scheme only.

In April 2000, The Fund commissioned the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) to evaluate the Out-of-School-Hours Learning programme in all four countries. Both term-time projects and summer schools were to be included in the evaluation. For schemes in Wales, the NFER used researchers from its Welsh

Unit, based at Swansea, some of whom were Welsh speakers, and for those in Scotland, the NFER recruited the Scottish Council for Research in Education (SCRE) to undertake case study work in that country. All other case studies (in England and Northern Ireland) were visited by researchers and research associates from the NFER offices in Slough and York.

This report mainly focuses on the research findings in relation to the term-time projects, although some recommendations relate to both term-time projects and summer school schemes or to summer school schemes only. A separate report on the summer schools was submitted to The Fund in August 2003 (Mason and Pye, 2003).

1.2 Aims of the Research

The main aims of the research into both term-time and summer school projects were:

- to complement the Fund's monitoring in assessing the degree to which the delivery of the programme is realising its stated objectives and priorities
- to focus, in particular, on the extent to which the programme is: meeting the needs of those who are most disadvantaged in society, promoting social inclusion; and encouraging the involvement of local communities
- to address issues of sustainability and the transferability of identified good practice.

1.3 Methodology

The evaluation design took the form of a comprehensive set of detailed case studies representing the range of term-time schemes funded through the programme. In cases where LEA/EA/ELBs had received a strategic grant from The Fund and were managing schemes comprising a number of separate projects, the evaluation typically focused on a single project or a small number of projects within the scheme. As mentioned above, there was also a separate sample of summer schools.

Each year a sample of term-time schemes was selected by NFER, in consultation with The Fund and the evaluation project Steering Group. The selection was based on information in the original proposal and Board papers submitted to The Fund, with a

focus on good practice. This selection reflected a number of important features described below, in order to ensure that the sample was broadly representative of the totality of funded schemes. Also, some schemes where particularly good practice was felt likely to be found, as suggested by the Fund, were included. Of the 39 schemes in the sample, 24 were evaluated during their first year of operation, nine in their second year, and two in their third and final year, while four schemes were evaluated over their first and second years. These four schemes were ones that had either experienced difficulties in implementing their plans during the first year or where it was expected that developing good practice would be evident during the second year. The list of schemes is given as Appendix 1. The features that guided the selection of case study schemes were such that the sample included those:

- in disadvantaged and less disadvantaged areas
- delivered by LEA/EA/ELBs, consortia of schools and single schools
- involving different types of partner organisation including careers service, youth service, private organisations, voluntary organisations, arts organisations and local communities
- involving different partnerships of schools (e.g. primary school partnerships, secondary school with feeder primary school partnerships)
- offering different types of provision in terms of curriculum content (e.g. basic skills, enrichment, extension) and teaching and learning strategies
- of different duration and starting dates
- in all four countries (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland), to identify any national issues
- in rural and urban areas.

Typically, a researcher or researchers visited each scheme on three occasions during a school year, with interviews held with key providers, participants and others with an involvement in the scheme (e.g. parents, in-school scheme staff, LEA/EA/ELB officers). Researchers at the NFER who were leading the evaluation prepared a set of semi-structured interview schedules to be used by researchers throughout the evaluation. Researchers were advised to add pertinent questions or to remove irrelevant questions from these schedules according to the particular circumstances of the individual scheme. The set of interview schedules covered interviews with the

scheme coordinator, school coordinators, teachers and others providing activity, adult mentors, peer mentors, parents and young people participating in activity. The set of interview schedules used for the term-time schemes is provided as Appendix 2. In addition, activities were observed, and relevant documentation collected.

For each scheme, a case study report was written by the researcher(s) who had undertaken the fieldwork visits to the scheme to interview providers, participants and others, and to observe activities. Also, relevant documentation for some schemes was analysed and, where informative, formed part of the case study report. The case study reports, along with detailed write-ups of the interviews that were conducted, formed the evidence base for this evaluation report. As part of evaluation report writing process, projects were classified into a number of different types (e.g. homework clubs, arts and craft projects, sports and physical education focused projects) and common patterns of successful practices or emerging thematic issues within these different types or across all types were identified. Completed case study reports were returned to scheme coordinators to amend any factual inaccuracies, prior to submission to The Fund.

A total of 39 term-time schemes and 30 summer school projects were evaluated over the research period, 2000 to 2003. For the term-time schemes, this comprised 13 in England, nine in Scotland, nine in Northern Ireland and eight in Wales. There were 18 LEA/EA/ELB schemes, 15 multiple school schemes, and six single school schemes (five of these were secondary schools, while the other was a middle school).

The 30 summer school schemes comprised nine in England, nine in Scotland, seven in Wales and five in Northern Ireland. See the August 2003 Summer School report for the evaluation of these schemes (Mason and Pye, 2003).

As an additional piece of research, staff at the Fund were interviewed in October 2003 regarding:

- how in-country policy had developed over the past two years with regard to Out-of-School-Hours Learning
- how in-country policy was likely to develop in future

- the likely future impact of this policy development on Out-of-School-Hours Learning

- the provision, if any, that country governments/assemblies have made to ensure continued development of Out-of-School-Hours Learning

- any other issues of note.

The information collected from these interviews forms a separate chapter (see Chapter 9 – Country Specific Element of OSHL) of this report.

Chapter 2

Scheme Aims

2.1 Chapter Summary

This chapter describes the aims that schemes had, which guided their organisation, planning, content and delivery of activity. These aims included:

- raising levels of achievement

- providing enrichment/extension activities

- improving attitudes to learning

- supporting transition from one phase of schooling to the next

- increasing the use of school facilities

- providing cultural, identity and heritage experiences

- improving school and community links

- improving links between schools.

Schemes that had aims to do with supporting transition from primary to secondary school were more common in England than in the other three countries. Schemes relating to culture, identity and heritage experiences were relatively more common in Wales and Scotland. Aims explicitly to do with raising levels of achievement were more common in Northern Ireland than elsewhere. A small number of schemes in Northern Ireland had the implicit aim of helping to bring about an improvement in community integration between the Protestant and Catholic communities in the area.

2.2 Scheme Aims

2.2.1 General comments

As highlighted, schemes generally had a series of aims, which guided their organisation, planning, content and delivery of the programme.   Though these aims covered such aspects as raising achievement, impacting on young people's attitudes to learning, making greater use of school facilities, and so on, schemes did not usually specify the period of time during which it was intended that their stated aims would

be met. It was apparent that those schemes that had specified time-related aims had carefully considered the potential impact of the programme, usually in conjunction with other initiatives (for example, the Excellence in Cities (EiC) programme in England), along with when it would be appropriate to attempt to identify the extent of this impact. The Cardiff Out-of-School-Hours Learning Programme in Wales was an example of a scheme that had distinguished between short and long-term aims.

The overall aims and objectives of the scheme were summarised by the coordinator of the Cardiff Out-of-School-Hours Learning Programme as being *'to raise achievement for the pupils in the NOF Cardiff schools… as is stated in our Education Strategic plan and in many different School Development Plans'*.

In the short-term, it was intended that the scheme will:

- attract children into study support

- increase positive attitudes to learning

- increase attendance at school.

In the long-term, it was intended that the scheme will:

- improve individual pupil's achievement in National Curriculum assessments and GCSEs

- help disaffected pupils re-engage with learning

- develop links with vocational qualifications and skills

- increase self-esteem and confidence

- improve key skills.

A typical picture for LEA/EA/ELB schemes was that at this level the stated aims were relatively general, while it was left for the individual schools to be more specific about what they intended to achieve through their own provision. The London Borough of Enfield Out-of-School-Hours Learning Programme in England, which led a programme for 18 primary schools, 14 secondary schools and one special school, is an example where the stated aims were general, and in this case, related to the borough's Study Support Framework for projects funded through The Fund. These aims were the:

- extension of the mainstream curriculum

- enrichment of the mainstream curriculum

- enablement of more effective learning within the mainstream curriculum

- enhancement of each pupil's learning capability such that, in each individual, an appetite for lifelong learning beyond compulsory schooling is established.

Some projects within LEA/EA/ELB schemes or multiple school schemes explicitly translated general aims for the scheme as a whole to specific aims for their own provision, which they used to plan and deliver activities. One such example was the Family Homework Club at Mandale Mill Primary School, in which parents worked alongside their children. This was part of the Stockton LEA Scheme in England. Each parent was given an information sheet, which included the particular aims of the club. These included:

- The improvement of literacy/numeracy skills according to the needs of each individual child.
- The provision of learning in a relaxed atmosphere with an element of fun.
- The provision of group activities and games to improve literacy/numeracy skills.
- The building of confidence and self-esteem of individuals.
- The supporting of parents in helping with their children's education.
- The informing of parents of methods of teaching used in schools as topics arise in individual work programmes and group activities.

In this case, the aims of the club operationalised the aims of the wider study support agenda for the borough. As such, this meant that both the authority and the school were working collaboratively towards the same goals, thus providing a structure in which both the authority and the school could develop their OSHL provision. Furthermore, making the aims clear to participants and their parents gave the club a clear purpose.

A criticism that could be made of some projects within larger schemes was that specific aims and objectives were not always explicit. It appeared that many

providers had internalised the general aims, and had gone ahead and organised provision accordingly. As a consequence, on occasions this led to difficulties when changes of project coordinator were made, and also meant that there was vagueness about the focus of monitoring instruments. For example, there were examples of projects where the coordinator had left the school with another member of staff taking up the post, and knowing very little about scheme aims and objectives and having insufficient in-school information, (especially with regard to what aspects of the provision required further development), to take the project forward.

2.2.2 Aims relating to raising levels of achievement

A common and explicit aim amongst the schemes in all four countries was to raise young people's levels of achievement. This aim was particularly relevant to those schemes that operated homework clubs or provided revision sessions for individual subjects, as activity was generally focused on specific preparation for public examinations or for National Curriculum assessments. Generally, this type of provision was more common for secondary schools, largely because public examinations were more prevalent in this phase than in the primary phase.

Undoubtedly, raising levels of achievement was an aim for all types of scheme, but it was an implicit aim for some. It should be noted that any firm evidence showing that this type of aim has been met is only likely to emerge in the longer term. For example, some projects had aims relating to raising young people's confidence and motivation and developing more positive attitudes to learning, through participation in such activity as sports and performance arts. Any significant improvements in such areas, while likely to impact on learning and achievement, are unlikely to emerge in the short term.

Though there is the issue of the longer-term impact, it is worth noting that schemes had not apparently considered this. It appeared that a small number of schemes expected significant improvements in achievement to happen quickly, while others had no view on when such an impact might be identified. Furthermore, few schemes appeared to have ideas about valid methods by which to judge the extent to which these aims had been met.

Exemplars of scheme aims concerned with raising levels of achievement, taken from different schemes, are shown below:

- to improve attainment in mathematics, writing and language skills
- to offer help and support to club members in completing and understanding homework set by the school
- to improve literacy and numeracy skills, and thus maximise opportunities for achievement for the children involved.

Whilst these are laudable aims, it is illustrative of the fact that they are very general and there is little in terms of measurability. There is little in these aims that highlight how these will be measured – rather they appear as 'catch-all' aims that provide a strategic vision but lack an operational focus. This had the effect that projects had aims and objectives that looked good on paper but actually meant little in reality in that they could not be easily measured and therefore could not be used as success criteria, even though this is how they were used by many schemes.

2.2.3 Aims relating to providing enrichment/extension activities

In general, clubs and activities that were designed to provide enrichment or extension content in such areas as the performance arts (i.e. music, drama and dance), arts and craft, and sports and physical education were the most common throughout all four countries. A common view shared by providers was that these were subjects that had received less emphasis in recent years because of the requirements of their respective National Curriculum (or National Guidelines for 5-14 in the case of Scotland). Schemes recognised that the grant could be used productively to provide some activity in these areas, which would help to give young people new experiences or to develop further an existing interest. Furthermore, some projects saw this type of provision as helping to motivate young people who were less academically inclined. In this way, the schemes were attempting to engage with young people for whom the 'homework club' approach for Out-of-School-Hours Learning activity had less appeal. This widening of participation (and engagement) was something that was a key element of provision for many of the schemes, as it was in this way that schemes

were operationalising one of the aims and objectives of provision, in that they were viewing this as the way in which they could involve disadvantaged pupils.

One project with content that was about enriching the curriculum was the Fiddle Playing Club held at St Agnes' Primary School, which was part of the Glasgow City Council Scheme in Scotland.

The Fiddle Playing Club was for pupils in the first three years of primary school, and entailed them working with a professional musician one hour a week after school. The stated aims of the club were:

- to provide children with an opportunity which can not be catered for in the teaching of the normal school curriculum
- to provide children with an opportunity that they would not normally access
- to enhance the children's awareness of music
- to enhance the children's awareness of the stringed instrument
- to promote violin music in an area where it would not usually happen
- to provide these children with the opportunity to register with the National Youth Orchestra when they reach an appropriate age, i.e. in five years time.

A small number of projects at a primary level provided foreign language clubs as part of their provision. The majority of these were for French, although there was one example of a German Club. One such club was 'Le Club Francais', which was held for young people from Cwrt-yr-ala Primary School, as part of the Cardiff Out-of-School-Hours Learning Programme in Wales. The lead teacher of the club felt that it was extremely helpful for foreign languages to be seen as fun and to be promoted in primary schools, especially for those young people preparing to go on to secondary school.

2.2.4 Aims relating to improving attitudes to learning

Particular aims relating to improving young people's attitudes to learning were not generally a main aim for most schemes. These schemes, where this was a sub-aim, were not necessarily targeted at particular groups of young people, such as the disaffected. Instead the schools involved recognised that having an impact on all

young people in such areas as self-esteem, confidence and motivation was likely to have a positive effect on raising levels of achievement across the school.

A small number of projects appeared to have unrealistic expectations that there would be a significant effect in the short-term. For projects such as these, along with the fact that many only attracted a few young people from the intended target group (see Chapter 6 - Participants), it is likely that the aims and objectives will not be achieved in such a time period. In addition, it is becoming increasingly difficult to disaggregate the impact of one specific education intervention amongst several different interventions. Generally, the impact is not seen in an immediate development in attitudes to teaching and learning for example, but in activity that cannot easily be measured and does not always have a measurable outcome.

However, there were a small number of schemes or projects within schemes, which had been set up to meet the specific needs of young people who were disaffected or becoming disaffected with learning, where these were the main aims (for example, some projects within the Merthyr Tydfil Scheme in Wales). Although young people from these groups were attending, providers typically thought that it was too early to judge whether a significant positive effect on attitudes to learning, motivation, self-esteem and related areas had resulted.

Some examples of aims concerned with improving attitudes to learning, taken from different schemes, are shown below. The first aim corresponded to provision that was open access to all young people, while the next two corresponded to projects that had targeted particular disaffected groups.

- to increase children's motivation and promoting the idea that learning is beneficial.
- to tackle potential disaffection and motivate less academically able pupils.
- to re-engage disaffected young people, and to meet the requirements of forthcoming legislation concerning issues such as listening to young people, extending entitlement and developing the learning country [Wales].

Generally, projects with aims such as these relied mainly on anecdotal evidence as to whether they had been successful or not.

2.2.5 Aims relating to supporting transition

A small number of schemes in the evaluation sample had aims relating to supporting transition from one phase of schooling to the next. These schemes had identified that there was a general lack of progression for many young people during their first year of secondary schooling, either academically or in personal development, or both. The view taken was that if these young people, before joining the secondary school, could have some 'taster' experiences of subjects at the school, meet some of the teachers, and gain some familiarity with the school environment, then this would allay their initial concerns and help support future learning. As such, the funding was seen as an ideal source to meet this need. One such project was the Hillhead Cluster After-School Programme, which was a part of the Glasgow City LEA scheme in Scotland. This project was open access for young people in Primary 7 (i.e. 11 - 12-year-olds) from seven primary schools associated with Hillhead High School. 'Taster' sessions in Art, ICT, Music and PE were held at the high school. The project aims were:

- to act as an introduction to secondary school
- to bring together all Primary 7 pupils in the associated primary schools, thus introducing them to one another
- to let pupils see the buildings they will be working in
- to broaden pupils' experiences
- to act as an introduction to subjects/activities that pupils will experience at secondary school
- to give associated primary school teachers the opportunity to come to the secondary school and to provide them with the opportunity to exchange views
- to support primary and secondary liaison
- to introduce primary pupils to secondary school staff
- to promote greater harmony amongst the various diverse primary schools
- to provide pupils with a fun experience.

This project had very focused aims, which could be easily assessed in the short-term. The fact that the focus was on the transition of young people from primary to secondary school, meant that judgements could be made on the efficacy of this approach and the extent to which aims had been achieved. The secondary school was able to judge if young people were better equipped to deal with the challenges of moving to the secondary phase. It is worth noting that providers felt that the scheme had been a success as the transition experiences of young people had been enhanced, by them having the opportunity to see the secondary school and to work alongside pupils from other primary schools.

2.2.6 Aims relating to increasing the use of school facilities

Another aim for many schemes was for young people to make greater use of school facilities. In some cases, schools had recently undergone major refurbishment or had new facilities built, such as a new ICT suite or a gymnasium, which schools wanted to make more use of. Understandably, the grant was seen as an appropriate way of meeting this aim.

Our research highlights that there is evidence to suggest that schemes in Northern Ireland planned to make greater use of school facilities, as there were concerns about young people not being safe (or not feeling safe) in the wider community. As one teacher who worked on a school-based scheme in Northern Ireland explained:

> *Some of the pupils leave school, where they've been working all day in a controlled environment, and they go home and they stay inside, because they're not in a position to go outside and feel safe. In my opinion, that's totally unnatural for young adults to have to do that. So the After School Club meets their needs and it gives them somewhere where they can engage in other activities and do so in a safe environment.*

This quote is illustrative of the importance that many schemes placed on the idea of 'location' and 'ownership' of the location by young people. There is a realisation that young people must feel safe in the environment in which they are learning (this especially being an issue in Northern Ireland) and schemes had tried hard to ensure that this was the case. The issue of 'ownership' also links directly to issues relating to

transition where the onus of the schemes had been to ensure that young people felt secure moving from a school that they knew well to somewhere unfamiliar.

2.2.7 Aims relating to culture, identity and heritage experiences

The aims for some schemes related to the culture and heritage of the country or region. These schemes tended to be less prevalent in England, where there appeared to be less of a focus on 'English' identity and heritage as a learning concept. The Urdd Gobaith Cymru scheme in Wales was illustrative of schemes that focused on national identity and heritage. For this scheme, one aim was to provide young people (who rarely spoke Welsh outside of school) with the opportunity to use the language and develop their proficiency in its use. To meet this aim the programme included a wide range of cultural and sporting activities where the Welsh language was used. As one provider explained: *'We want to overcome the impression that Welsh is something that is only spoken in school and to encourage a view of it as a social phenomenon'*.

A small number of schemes were for young people from minority ethnic groups whose first language was not English, with the main aim of developing their English language skills. One such scheme was the Chinese Welfare Association Scheme, Belfast, in Northern Ireland, where the provision was an after-school club for primary-aged Chinese children. The Chinese community is the largest minority ethnic group in Northern Ireland, with a population estimated as around 8,000. The Chief Executive of the Chinese Welfare Association explained:

> *In Northern Ireland we're not very good in helping children whose first language is not English. They are by and large left at the back of the classroom to sink or swim and learn with other children ... so far in Northern Ireland with the Department of Education there isn't a single policy to tell schools or boards or Education Boards how to deal with a child whose first language is not English ... let alone specific resources for them ... so our after-school club is very much with this in mind. We want our children to reach their potential. We don't want them to be hampered at the very early years when they start school, when they don't have English and they're left behind.*

So here, the focus was on generic language skills that would be of use to young people both within and outside the context of the school. Not only would this enable

them to engage more fully with their learning, it was hoped that it would also help them in terms of becoming more active participants within the wider population of Belfast. This said, there was also an understanding that there was a need for the unique culture of the Chinese population in Belfast to be preserved, and this related to the secondary aim of the scheme. This aim was to ensure that the scheme helped the participants to become more aware of their own culture, as it was felt that minority cultures were undervalued in Northern Ireland. As the Chief Executive explained:

> *Culture is not talked about anyway, it's too big a political issue ... culture is taboo to talk about. So Chinese children's culture is not recognised in our schools. Their culture is not celebrated, it's not valued and they don't feel valued ... we teach them about their culture ... we give them that sense of cultural identity.*

The European Club at Banchory Primary School, Clackmannanshire in Scotland, was an example of provision that aimed to help young people gain some understanding and knowledge of aspects of the culture of other European countries, rather than specifically their own country. In some respects, the stated aims addressed the citizenship agenda. The particular aims were:

- to introduce children to the language, food and culture of a range of European countries
- to increase their knowledge about Europe and develop an understanding of what being in Europe and being European means;
- to broaden horizons and create interest in and respect for the culture of other countries;
- to enjoy activities that are not always possible in the classroom.

Again, this scheme had recognised the importance of celebrating the cultures that young people brought with them, but also enabled them to learn about other cultures and experiences. Whilst this scheme addressed the citizenship agenda, it also sought to provide a more comprehensive picture of other cultures in terms of food, beliefs and customs.

2.2.8 Aims relating to improving school and community links

A small number of schemes had aims that were specifically concerned with the wider world than only school life. Whilst many schemes did have an element that was focused on issues external to general schooling and learning, a small number had this as a key feature. Typically, such schemes were led by non-school organisations. It is likely that particular non-school organisations may be in a better position than schools themselves to lead schemes with such aims, especially in cases where the organisation has strong links with local businesses or is well known on the community, or both. Shown below are two such aims, the first concerns a scheme in Wales led by Business in the Community (North Wales), while the second concerns a scheme in England led by Grimsby Town Football Club.

- To establish stronger business and school links generally.
- To broaden the horizons of the children, and to form better links between the football club and local schools.

Another scheme with aims relating to improving school and community links was the Leicestershire LEA Scheme in England, which operated a homework club at a community library in Melton Mowbray serving a number of primary schools in outlying villages. One of the aims for this project was for the homework club to become an integral feature of the service the library offers young people.

This particular scheme therefore had the purpose of widening the level of service-delivery and learning resource options offered to young people. Rather than only being able to use school resources, young people became aware of the possibility of the library service as a learning resource.

A small number of schemes that had projects or clubs focused on enterprise activities, or were guiding young people to consider career possibilities after leaving school, had aims that related to employment opportunities in the area. For instance, the Midlothian Council Education Division Scheme in Scotland operated an Enterprise Club as part of its provision. One of the aims for this project was for participants to explore local employment opportunities. An expectation of this project was that young people would develop a more positive view of working life, which would have

benefits for both the young people and employers. It should be noted that the extent to which this intended outcome might be achieved is only likely to emerge in the longer-term.

2.2.9 Aims relating to improving links between schools

A small number of schemes included aims generally concerned with improving links between schools or introducing an amount of collaborative work amongst a group of schools. Whilst, as has been previously noted, a number of schemes were concerned with the transition of pupils, these schemes were about enhanced linkage between schools in terms of exchange of practice and complementary approaches to teaching and learning. Interestingly, this appears to be more a feature of schools in Northern Ireland, which may in some way relate to the social and political context of the country in that traditional patterns of school collaboration have been solely within the Protestant or Catholic community. One scheme that had this as one of their aims was the Patrician Youth Centre Out of School Hours Learning Project, Downpatrick in Northern Ireland, which was a partnership between the youth centre and three primary schools, two of which were single-sex schools. One of the aims for this project was:

- To enhance the self-esteem and confidence of the children by opening up opportunities for mixing with children from other primary schools and by involvement with other children in wider youth club activities.

The Belfast Education and Library Board Scheme, which involved around 70 schools in the city, had a similar aim that was:

- To increase partnership working through the involvement of the Partnership Boards and the planned setting up of 'cluster groups' of schools to share ideas of good practice and problems encountered.

Both these schemes were illustrative of the focus on partnership working that some schools hoped to develop, using the funding as a catalyst for this type of activity. Whilst such partnership developments in each country were being encouraged by both local and central government, it did appear as if the funding had provided at least some schools with the opportunity to focus more on partnership related activity.

However, it is worth noting that effective partnership working entailed a great deal of time and effort on the part of coordinators and main providers, and, in some cases, significantly more time and effort than had initially been anticipated.

2.3 Discussion

The research evidence suggests that while most schemes were aware of the aims of their particular scheme or the aims of projects within the scheme, they were unclear about how they might decide whether or not certain aims had been met. Clearly, aims about providing enrichment/extension activities were either met or not met, depending on whether or not the provision, as planned, had been put into operation, and appropriate numbers of young people had accessed it. However, for aims about improving young people's attitudes to learning, increasing their confidence, self-esteem and motivation, many schemes were unclear about what constituted evidence that these aims had been met. Most schemes relied on anecdotal evidence regarding such aims.

Furthermore, for most schemes that had aims about raising levels of achievement, there was a general vagueness about how to judge whether or not these aims had been met for those young people accessing the provision (see Chapter 7 – Internal Monitoring and Evaluation for further discussion). It is certainly the case that any significant impact on young people's achievement cannot be attributed to the scheme alone, but to a constellation of factors, of which the scheme is just one. Also, any significant, lasting, impact on achievement is only likely to be evident in the longer-term, which for many schemes may be after the period of funding.

A small number of schemes experienced difficulties in putting their plans, as outlined in their bid to The Fund, into operation, or had made alterations to their planned provision, so making certain aims no longer relevant. Generally, schemes viewed these difficulties as resulting largely from factors beyond their control. Most difficulties stemmed from a failure to recruit suitable staff. For instance, the recruitment of volunteers to work on certain activities proved problematic for some schemes, while for others some clubs or activities did not take place because a key provider with the particular expertise required had left the school. There were other

difficulties for some schemes, such as arranging transport for young people to take them home after after-school activity, not being able to use particular facilities or not being able to recruit the intended target group (see Chapter 6, Section 2 – Recruiting Participants), which meant that parts of the scheme did not take place.

A small number of schemes in the evaluation sample experienced delays in receiving the grant from The Fund, with the result that certain clubs or activities were delayed, altered or cancelled, and so some of the initial aims of the scheme were no longer relevant. Though the delay in funding allocation was made more complex by funds being distributed to schools via LEA/EA/ELBs, it was The Fund that was generally perceived to be lacking in this respect. In addition, as previously noted, this did have an impact on whether schools perceived that their aims had been fully met.

Chapter 3

Types of Project

3.1 Chapter Summary

This chapter describes the wide range of different types of project evident across the schemes in the four countries. These types of project ranged from the more traditional individual subject revisions sessions and homework clubs based at school to new and sometimes unusual activity in such areas as sports and performance arts, sometimes provided at non-school sites.

Homework clubs were more common in England and Northern Ireland than in Scotland and Wales. Almost all the family learning projects were in schemes in England. There were examples of sports and physical education focused projects in Northern Ireland that included sports that were popular in the region, such as Gaelic football and camogie (a version of hurling for females). Similarly in Scotland, there were examples of projects that offered young people the opportunity to participate in Scottish sports, including curling skiing and snowboarding.

3.2 Types of Project

There was a variety of different types of projects provided by the schemes in each country. More common in the evaluation sample of schemes were homework clubs, literacy and numeracy focused projects, sports and physical education projects, performance arts (i.e. music, dance and drama) projects, arts and craft projects, and IT/ICT projects. Less common projects included breakfast clubs, family learning projects, individual subject revision sessions and projects for 'more able' young people. Some schemes included projects outside of these categories. These projects included gardening clubs, first aid courses, enterprise clubs, conservation activities, and foreign language clubs for primary age pupils. This highlights the wide range of provision that had occurred. To illustrate this, it is worth focusing on the different types of project that were included in this evaluation.

3.2.1 Homework clubs

Most clubs simply offered young people the opportunity to complete homework or coursework after school, with some assistance, often from non-teaching staff. Other homework clubs combined this provision with other activities, such as sports or recreational activities, which young people were encouraged to participate in once they had completed their homework.

Many homework clubs were held in school classrooms where there were ICT resources, so that the young people were able to use the computers to search for relevant information on the internet. Homework clubs typically had a relaxed atmosphere, with the young people able to direct the pace of their learning. For example, providers encouraged a level of social interaction that put participants at ease, but also ensured that activity was purposeful and learning objectives were met. For example, young people were typically allowed to work when they wanted and to chat to their friends, provided that this did not disturb others.

For some clubs, young people were free to attend whenever they chose and could leave once they had finished their work. However, for a small number of homework clubs at schools in isolated areas, attendees had to occupy themselves with other activities after they had completed their homework, often playing on computers, until the end of the session because the transport arrangements home were not flexible. It did not appear that this had any detrimental impact on the enjoyment of the scheme.

A few homework clubs were held at community libraries. In these cases the provision was for young people from a number of schools in the immediate area. Generally, the clubs were well equipped with state-of-the-art computers and a wide range of appropriate software for young people to use. At some community libraries, the young people went home first after school before going on to the homework club, whereas at others the young people went straight from school.

One scheme that provided a homework club at school as part of its provision was the Chulmleigh Community College Scheme, England.

The KS3 homework club was held in a computer suite, equipped with around 25 computers, a printer and related resources, on Tuesday nights from 3.40 to 5.00pm. From 3.40 to 4.00pm, young people were able to have refreshments in another school room. This helped to make a break between the work of the school day and the more informal atmosphere of the study support provision.

The homework club was staffed by four of the school's Learning Support Assistants (LSAs), with the team leader of learning support working as the coordinator. They were paid at their normal rate. The attendance at the homework club fluctuated between 15 and 20 pupils. Some attended every Tuesday, while a minority attended when they had a particularly demanding piece of work to complete.

At the time of the second visit by the NFER researcher (June 2003), there were 15 young people in attendance. Most were working individually using the internet to research information for set homework. A few were working in pairs. Most young people spent the entire time up to 5.00pm working on homework, while a few, who finished early, then played computer games up to the finish time. A relaxed, informal atmosphere was evident, with the LSAs providing support when asked. Most attendees said they generally had two or three pieces of homework each evening. Several said that they did not have a computer at home so they welcomed being able to attend the homework club.

One Year 7 girl, who was a regular attendee, said: *If I didn't come here then I would be at home helping my mother, and I wouldn't be able to do my homework so well.*

Another scheme that provided homework club provision was the Barnardo's After-School Project, Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Fifteen pupils who were in their second year (Year 9) at St Joseph's College attended the school's homework club. An NFER researcher visited a session held as part of the provision. It was held in a main classroom and was staffed by a teacher and two sixth form students. The activities for the session were clearly displayed on the white board at the front. These were to:

1) Complete all homework

2) Write up work in diary

3) Complete worksheets – maths, English

4) You have a choice of activities – painting; geo safari; educational games.

The teacher moved around the room, helping the pupils with their work where necessary, while the sixth formers worked with pupils at different tables. The atmosphere was relaxed with a low buzz of conversation, but all pupils were on task. After they had finished their set homework, they moved on to the worksheets, two maths ones and one English one on the topic of 'happy and sad'. Some pupils who had finished before others played educational games. Whilst waiting for the minibus to arrive, the teacher engaged the pupils in a quiz. The sixth formers helped the teacher to tidy up before leaving.

These examples are illustrative of the inventive ways in which homework clubs have developed under the auspices of The Fund. For example, in the Barnardo's After-School Project, even though the session was relatively formal, in that it had a series of in-school and lesson type activities, there was scope for extending learning through the use of games and quizzes. Also, the use of sixth formers is something that had a positive impact on all concerned (see Chapter 5, Section 7 – Peer Mentor). So even though this might have looked like a traditional after-school homework club, additional elements had been included to make the learning experience more stimulating.

The homework clubs were clearly meeting a need for the young people making use of this provision. Many did not have a suitable place at home where to do homework, or would have been expected by their parents or carers to help around the house as a main priority, or would have had other distractions, such as playing out of the home with friends or watching television. Teachers at many of the schools operating homework clubs commented on how the standard of completed homework had improved, and there had been fewer instances of non-completion. This suggests that schemes focused on the completion of homework, though not necessarily entirely fulfilling the initial intended focus of The Fund's Out-of-School-Hours Learning

Programme, were meeting a need within schools and, as far as the teachers judged, were having an impact on the quality of young people's work. Again, this was anecdotal evidence, but it does suggest that such activity is enabling advances in learning (or at least the quality of homework) to take place.

3.2.2 Literacy and numeracy focused projects

A common type of project in all four countries was one that aimed to develop young people's literacy and/or numeracy skills. This type of provision was at times targeted at those who were performing relatively poorly in relation to their peers, but there were a small number of examples where projects had either abandoned targeting or regarded it as inappropriate for a variety of reasons (see Chapter 6 – Participants).

For some schemes, there was a concern that the young people for whom this type of provision was mainly intended might feel stigmatised, with the possibility that this might add to their underachievement. The young people involved were typically those in the last two years of primary schooling or their first two years of secondary education. Literacy and numeracy support was regarded as important for specific groups of young people in this age range, as projects viewed improvements in these areas as impacting on their learning in the wider curriculum for the remainder of their schooling. Several of these projects concentrated on young people's reading skills, with a focus on encouraging them to read different types of fiction and non-fiction.

One such project was the Books.fun: Reading is Fundamental, Education Extra and Dundee Education Authority Scheme, Scotland.

Books.fun was a partnership between Reading is Fundamental, Education Extra (now known as ContinYou) and Dundee Education Authority. Reading is Fundamental is an organisation which coordinates projects throughout the UK to enable young people to have regular opportunities to choose books of their own, free of charge. Education Extra promotes Out-of-School-Hours Learning, with one aspect of their work being the setting up of reading clubs for pupils in their first year of secondary school. Eleven schools (all ten secondary schools and the special school) in Dundee were involved in the scheme, which had two strands:

- Book-it! Lunchtime clubs for a group of S1 pupils in each school, coordinated by the school librarian. The weekly club was a place for pupils to read and engage in book-related activities (e.g. find out the meaning of unfamiliar words).
- A termly book distribution for the whole year S1 group. The librarian ordered books with input from the book club members. S1 pupils then had a choice of a book each term.

In one school, a core of about ten pupils attended the club, which was open access. More boys than girls attended, a situation that had surprised both the school librarian and the pupils themselves. Before activities began, the pupils ate lunch in the library and shared social time with the librarian and other teachers involved. The club had good support from teachers across the curriculum, who tended not to take a key role in the activities, but attended the club, talked to pupils and often just sat and read. As one said: *'They* [the pupils] *see that other people find books and reading fun.'*

A wide range of activities had been included during the year with the highlight perhaps being a successful production of a play which had toured local primary schools. Other activities included craftwork, puppet shows, word games and reading poetry on tape. One activity commented on by several pupils was the 'Book in a Bag' activity where they were given a mystery book to read. This had encouraged them to read something they might not normally have read.

The three book distributions for the whole S1 group had also incorporated a library activity, such as a book trail. The distributions had taken place during Social Education, which was seen to encourage a wider view of the library.

This was an example of a scheme that had achieved a positive impact, largely through the relationship between the librarians and the young people in an informal yet purposeful setting. This highlights that non-teacher professionals can take a major role in leading Out-of-School-Hours Learning activity (see Chapter 5, Section 5 – Non-teacher Providers).

A number of literacy and numeracy focused projects had decided that they needed to make the project content more enjoyable than typical school work in order to attract young people. For instance, one secondary school provided 'fantasy football clubs', in which the content involved basic arithmetic skills of working out the number of points obtained by individual players and particular teams. These clubs were very well attended. Whilst it is difficult to state with complete certainty why this provision was popular, it is possible that the success of this type of project was because the content was focused on something the participants could relate to, football in this instance, and through this the learning concepts were introduced.

3.2.3 Sports and physical education focused projects

For some schemes, the entire focus was on sport, whereas other schemes included sports clubs or physical education activities as one part of a larger programme. An example of the former was the Grimsby Town Football in the Community Project in England. This project was led by a professional football club, which worked with 15 primary schools in the surrounding area. The club supplied football coaches (both male and female) and all the necessary equipment, and took the project to the schools on particular evenings, with the focus on developing football-related skills. A main advantage to this arrangement, as described by the schools, was that the organisation, and monitoring and evaluation, was mostly undertaken by the football club, so not proving to be an additional task for teachers. This illustrates one of the benefits of partnership working in that not all the administration work has to be conducted by the schools.

There was a wide range of sports covered by the schemes. These included rugby, football, cricket, tennis, golf, table tennis, basketball, gymnastics, athletics, hockey, judo, badminton, swimming and chess. Some schemes provided adventurous or

outdoor pursuit activities, such as canoeing, rock climbing, hill walking, scuba diving, horse riding and orienteering. There were also activities like weights/strength training and aerobics in some schemes. A small number of schemes in Northern Ireland provided sports that related to their particular culture, such as Gaelic football and camogie (a version of hurling for females). Likewise, one scheme in Scotland offered young people the opportunity to participate in curling, skiing and snowboarding. Some schemes, especially those for young people from secondary schools, organised separate provision for boys and girls for particular sports. The impact of this was that schemes could provide sports (football and gymnastics for example) that would appeal to both genders.

It was evident that these schemes were giving young people the opportunity to try out a sport, a physical education activity or an outdoor pursuit that they would not have otherwise experienced. A key benefit of this type of project was that young people were able to gain a sense of achievement, which for some was a relatively rare experience.

An example of a sports focused project was the Youth Sport North East Scheme, Northern Ireland.

Youth Sport North East provided a variety of sports activities to primary schools and post-primary schools, in rural areas, which had few sports facilities. Each of three areas in the scheme had a Regional Coach Development Officer (RCDO) who delivered the programme, recruited coaches from the community and set up junior clubs. Cloughmills Primary School in Ballymena was one of the schools involved in the scheme.

The research indicated that there had been an expansion of out-of-school-hours activities in sports, progressing to community events and local sports clubs. As part of the research, a football session, from 3.00 to 4.00pm, was observed. This session involved around 20 children (both male and female) from Primary 6 and 7. The coach brought all the necessary equipment – balls, bibs and cones –and a range of activities involving both fun and skill development were organised. The children

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were all engaged and highly committed.

The principal of the school praised the scheme and explained that the programme for the school that year would include football, rugby, short tennis, hockey and netball.

> *This is an ideal facility brought to us after school. It gives new opportunities to many who otherwise wouldn't experience such skill development and it has also led to the setting up by the Community Action Team of a village soccer team from both village schools – they are now part of the Friendship League at the Ballymoney LC on Friday evenings. I couldn't praise this scheme highly enough.*

A parent who was interviewed said:

> *Tennis was a new sport for my son, he really enjoyed it, and he also played in the Friendship League on Friday evenings and now plays for Ballymena United Under 10's.*

Generally, sports and physical education projects were more than just young people participating in matches or the particular activity, with many projects including elements concerned with skill development, and information about health, diet and safety. This is illustrative of the aims that this type of project had – both to engender specific sporting skill in participants, but also to consider general approaches to a healthier lifestyle. According to some providers, a few participants were showing a high level of skill, although the main aim of such provision was to provide a 'taster' of the sport or activity and/or the development of healthy living.

Sports and physical education focused projects were successful in attracting young people from different backgrounds and with a wide range of academic ability, according to providers. For example, some projects reported that this type of provision had attracted those who were becoming disaffected with school as well as young people who were particularly motivated by their school experiences - this widening the appeal of such activity.

Several non-school providers, such as professional coaches, were surprised at the relatively poor fitness level of many of the young people participating in the activity. These non-school providers felt that the provision was, in a small way, helping to address poor fitness, and they hoped that the participants would continue to be

involved in the sport or activity after the project had finished. For some projects, there was a hope that the success evident would encourage schools or authorities to continue such activity through funding obtained from other sources.

3.2.4 Performance arts projects

The content of performance arts includes dance, drama and music. Performance arts projects were relatively common within the evaluation sample, which was selected broadly to reflect the range of different schemes that had received funding. A number of providers expressed comments that this was an area receiving less emphasis in the school curriculum since the National Curriculum had become established. As such, this probably explains its popularity within the bids to the Fund, as providers wished to restore its place in the experiences of young people. It is worth noting that since the start of The Fund's Out-of-School-Hours Learning Programme, considerable development has taken place with regard to creativity in schools with the funding of initiatives focusing on the creativity of young people. For example, in England, the Creative Partnerships programme has been introduced. Initially in 16 partnership areas (with around 25 primary and secondary schools and other educational organisations involved in each partnership), this programme is currently being expanded to new areas. Originally focused on OSHL activity, the emphasis is now on the development of creative learning within and outside of the formal school timetable. The development of programmes such as this, in England at least, will have altered the context in which Fund OSHL activity is located. Despite initial developments such as this, performance arts schemes were popular within the case study sample used for the evaluation.

The Stonelaw High School Multi-Cultural Project, South Lanarkshire in Scotland was one scheme that focused on performance arts, within the theme of multi-culturalism.

The funding was used for three 10-week projects, one each year for three years. The participants were Primary 7 pupils in six primary schools and Secondary 1 and 2 pupils at Stonelaw High School, the lead school. All seven schools are in the Rutherglen area on the outskirts of Glasgow.

The project comprised a programme of arts activities within the context of multi-culturalism. The activities comprised:

- African drama, dance and rhythms, with participants developing a story based on the theme of welcoming a new baby into the community, and celebrating the naming ceremony
- Lebanese belly dances
- Khabaddi, an energetic Asian wrestling game
- Ceramics, with participants designing and making a tiled plague depicting the many different faiths in Scotland
- Indian henna printing and traditional Indian floor painting
- Dramatic presentations exploring the consequences of exploitation and discrimination.

This project was of interest to the young people involved as it enabled them to experience new cultures of which they had little or no prior knowledge.

As highlighted in the individual projects, there was a clear benefit for many young people participating in performance arts projects of having more time in which to engage with the activity. Some of these young people were clearly frustrated with the limited amount of time spent during school time on such areas. As one young person participating in an after-school drama project at Chulmleigh Community College in England explained:

> *We only get one period of drama each week* [at school]*, and there are people there who really don't want to do drama and they can spoil it for others. Here, everyone here wants to be here, so everyone is enthusiastic, and you can do good work. Having two hours means you can focus on the little plays and actually make them good.*

The projects that had focused on the performance arts gave participants a range of experiences that they otherwise would not have had. In addition, young people have developed both generic and specific skills that will be useful both within school and outside.

3.2.5 Arts and craft projects

Those schemes that provided arts and craft projects generally did so because of the view, held by teachers and other providers, that arts and craft areas, like those in performance arts, had received less curriculum time in recent years.

West Grove Primary School was one of 30 schools in the London Borough of Enfield Out-of-School-Hours Learning Programme, England. West Grove Primary School provided an art club, amongst other types of project.

The sessions at the Art Club at West Grove Primary School combined creativity and purpose to produce objects suitable for display. In a 30-minute after-school session at the school, children from Reception to Year 2 worked together in the Art Club, organised by three teachers. In one of the art rooms used, furniture was moved aside and the children sat around in groups of three or four continuing work based on shape and colour, gluing tissue paper to fill the shapes created the previous week. In another room, the children were still finishing their previous piece of work – individual self-portraits based on the work of Picasso.

Projects undertaken at the Art Club usually lasted two or three weeks, and had entailed a considerable range of skills: clay work, collage, junk modelling, marbling, batik, using pastels and charcoal, and still-life and figure work. The children had clearly enjoyed participating in activities that might usually be associated with much older age groups. Children were asked to make a commitment to attend regularly, and any who were absent for three sessions lost their place at the club. Parents who had waited to collect their children expressed enthusiasm for the school, and the work produced was excellent.

The content of arts and craft clubs was very varied, including such activities as pottery, kite-making, photography, T-shirt design, screen-printing, mosaics, painting with different materials, and model making. Throughout the projects of this type, it was evident that the participants were enthusiastic about being involved and appreciated having more time to work on their own creations. Those from primary schools, in particular, welcomed the opportunity to try something new and creative.

3.2.6 IT/ICT projects

Within the evaluation sample, IT/ICT projects were relatively common in England and Northern Ireland, but rare in Scotland and Wales. Most projects were held using the computer suites of secondary schools, with some involving young people from feeder primary schools, while a few were held at community venues, usually involving providers bringing all the necessary equipment and taking it away afterwards.

The Swanage Ahead Regeneration Agency Out-of-School-Hours Learning Scheme in England was one scheme that was entirely focused on the development of young people's ICT skills.

A qualified teacher, who had support from a paid helper, as well as unpaid help from the project administrator, led the ICT provision. Each session was held in the computer suite at the middle school and ran on one day of the week from the end of school to 5.00pm. Year 5 and 6 pupils attended the sessions.

Since participants arrived from different classes and at slightly different times, they played games on the computers until everyone settled. A snack was provided, though there were problems with having food in the ICT suite. The participants were then drawn together as a group, and introduced to the content of the session. All three sessions that were observed as part of the research involved a mix of teacher-centred explanation or instruction followed by ample time during which participants worked principally on their own, referring to the adults present or each other for guidance where necessary.

Activities were practical and carefully planned, and participants were able to build up a portfolio of completed pieces of work. In early sessions, the young people selected words and pictures to complete an illustrated chart identifying different pieces of ICT equipment and describing their use, and completed a sheet about themselves and their interests, illustrating these with digital photos they had taken of each other. They also used the internet to find maps and aerial views of the school and their homes.

In a session towards the end of term, participants used PowerPoint to present their own versions of the fable of *The Hare and the Tortoise*, using illustrations they had found for themselves on the internet, and used either their own words or key sentences supplied to them. Christmas, Easter and other occasions offered the opportunity to the young people to use their ICT skills to make their own cards.

Another example was the Chulmleigh Community College Scheme in England, which ran an ICT club for one of its feeder primary schools. This example is an interesting one as it is illustrative of the partnership working that had developed between a secondary and primary school using monies from The Fund to facilitate this. It is not known the level of partnership working prior to this additional tranche of funding, but whatever the case, this additional funding had enabled activity to be developed and operationalised.

The High Bickington Primary School ICT Club is held every Monday evening from 4.00 to 6.00pm at the Meeting Point in High Bickington. The Meeting Point is a recently refurbished village building that had fallen into disrepair. It is currently used by the community, including the primary school, for a range of activities, such as bring and buy sales. Children from Years 3 - 6 of the primary school attend the ICT club on a voluntary basis. At the time of the second visit by the NFER researcher (June 2003), there were ten in attendance, including a boy whose family had recently moved to the area, and who had started attending the school. According to the club leader, a part-time teacher who lived locally, the attendance fluctuated between ten and 14 each week.

The room at the Meeting Point was equipped with three networked computers. These were supplemented by a small number of laptops that the club leader brought in for the evening, supplied by Chulmleigh Community College and High Bickington Primary School. There were also headphones in use. Some young people were observed playing games that they had brought in (e.g. 'Millennium Race', 'Doom'), while other were working on pieces of work related to school work. This included some children writing their 'autobiography', which comprised stories about some of

their experiences at school and at home. One boy from Year 6, who was writing his 'autobiography', said: *'I really enjoy this. It's a fun place to hang out and do homework. Sometimes I stay for two hours and sometimes for just one hour. The best thing is going on the internet'.* Some of the others were using the computers, including clip art, to design posters for stalls they were intending to set up for the school fayre to be held in July.

From about 5.00pm onwards some participants left the club, being picked up by their parents or grandparents, while one or two other young people joined the club for the last hour or so. An orderly atmosphere was apparent throughout the two-hour session with the children displaying appropriate behaviour, having respect for each other and the club leader.

An unusual project was the Merthyr Tydfil Youth Access Bus, which was part of the Merthyr Tydfil Scheme in Wales. The Youth Access Bus, known as 'the homework bus', enabled ICT and other learning media to be taken to communities where existing learning resources were limited. The project was aimed at young people 14 to 18-years-old who were in danger of disengagement and were not taking part in any form of education, training or employment.

Throughout projects of this type, it was evident that young people welcomed the opportunity to use a computer at their own pace, particularly as some had felt pressurised in this subject area during school time. At some projects, young people were able to use equipment such as digital cameras and a range of software they previously had not had access to. According to many participants of projects of this type, their involvement had helped them with their school work, as one young person remarked: '*I have also found what I do here* [at the ICT club] *helpful in lessons. As I haven't got a computer at home I found things really hard.'* In addition, the fact that for the Merthyr Tydfil Scheme at least, the hardware, software and activities came to the participants was a benefit. Furthermore, issues relating to ownership and sense of security and location were addressed. Participants engaged with ICT in their own location and therefore had ownership of the site even though it was transient in that it moved around from place to place.

3.2.7 Breakfast clubs

Breakfast clubs were relatively rare in the evaluation sample, and were typically a small part of a large overall programme of clubs and activities. Some breakfast clubs asked young people for a small payment, to go toward the cost of food and drinks, each day they attended. Alternatively, some were funded by monies from other organisations (for example the John Lyon Trust), with Fund monies being used to provide for example, staff cover, and ICT facilities.

The St Comgall's College Scheme, Larne in Northern Ireland operated a breakfast club as part of its provision.

At the Breakfast Club, young people had access to national and local newspapers, magazines and the television news (although later in the year, the television was no longer on, at the request of some participants who wished to have quieter mornings to read). Young people tended to use this time to read, do competitions and crosswords, chat to friends and discuss homework. Pancakes, toast and other breakfast food freshly prepared by the kitchen staff were available for sale at low prices, with a ban on chocolate or crisps.

Generally, the breakfast clubs were attractive to young people, with most taking the opportunity to have some food and drink before they started the school day, and allowed for some social time for groups of friends. This provision was also helpful to some parents, who were able to get their children to school at an earlier time before going on to work. In providing this type of activity, schools were extending the period during which their facilities were available for use by young people. Also, this enabled some, who may have been unable to attend after-school activities, to have the opportunity to engage in valuable learning and social experiences before the start of the formal school day.

3.2.8 Family learning projects

There were only a small number of family learning projects within the schemes in the evaluation sample. This was perhaps unsurprising as such projects are likely to be

difficult to organise and maintain, as they require the participation of both young people and their parents/carers.

The schemes that made this type of provision had identified that in order to have a positive effect on the achievements and attitudes of young people it was necessary to have some direct contact with their parents. Family learning projects were held at primary schools with parents working alongside their children, either for entire sessions or the latter part of sessions, with the intention that parents would gain skills themselves in addition to them being better informed about how they might support their children's learning. There were no family learning projects at secondary schools in the sample, which suggests that this approach was not prevalent in the secondary phase. There could be a number of reasons for this, but it is likely to be due to the fact that secondary schools generally do not have as close a relationship with parents/carers as do primary schools.

The Stockton Borough Council LEA Scheme in England operated family learning projects, called Family Homework Clubs, at two of the primary schools in the borough, with input from the Stockton Adult Education Service. Some details of one of these projects are described below.

The Family Homework Club at Mandale Mill Primary School was held on Thursdays from 3.15 - 4.45pm, and was for children from Year 3 upwards and their parents. It ran for ten weeks in each of the spring and summer terms, 2003. The club was run by an adult education tutor from Stockton Adult Education Service, who was responsible for preparing all the materials to be used at the club, having first identified the children's and parent's needs. Parents were targeted by the school to attend the club with their children. A letter was sent to these parents inviting them to participate, but making it clear that their children would not be able to attend if a parent did not accompany them. Some parents took up the invitation, while others did not. The head teacher of the school explained that this had to be handled very sensitively, because while the letter spoke about the emphasis being on children's learning and how parents could help them, the reality was that there would be considerably more emphasis on developing parents' skills during the sessions. Six children, each with

one of their parents (all mothers), were recruited for the club.

Each session followed a similar pattern. The first ten minutes or so was spent welcoming the children and parents and having refreshments. This was followed by a number of short games designed to improve literacy, numeracy and communication skills, and to build confidence and self-esteem. The main part of the session, lasting around 45 minutes, focused on activities and worksheets that the adult education tutor had prepared on literacy and numeracy. For the final 10 minutes or so there was 'winding down' games activities, sometimes played in teams. However, the tutor explained that she always had a degree of flexibility built into the sessions so that she was able to respond to any difficulty a child, or parent, was having regarding a piece of school work.

The tutor had prepared an individual programme for each child and had drawn up detailed work plans, which included sections addressing assessment opportunities. The tutor explained that one or two of the children were *'high achievers'*, and so the parents of these children had found it particularly challenging to support their learning. At the time of the visit by the researcher, some children were finishing off stories they had begun writing the week before, others were completing 'Book Bugs', on which they were writing key details of a book they had recently read, while others were doing work on homophones (e.g. to/too/two). There had also been some mathematics work done prior to this on number patterns and mental arithmetic skills. The parents present, when interviewed by the researcher, commented on how useful the sessions had been for them in giving them ideas on how to support their children's learning at home, as well as enabling them to better understand how teaching and learning had developed since they had attended primary school.

Generally, the nature of family learning project provision was that it entailed small numbers of parents with their children. Predominantly, the parents who were recruited were mothers. The young people, all who were primary aged, appeared positive about attending such sessions, and the parents who were interviewed as part of the research expressed comments highlighting that they now felt more confident about supporting their children with homework. Though this type of project is probably more difficult to develop, the research suggests that there are real benefits,

as far as the parents, young people and teachers were concerned. Though again, the evidence for this is largely anecdotal.

3.2.9 Individual subject revision sessions

This type of provision had the aim of raising the achievement level of young people, often in relation to National Curriculum Assessment at the end of a key stage or GCSEs in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (or Scottish Certificate of Education Standard Grades in Scotland). Generally, these sessions were led by the young people's usual or main teacher for the subject, and were held in a period leading up to the assessments or examinations. Typically, it was left to the young people themselves to decide whether or not they would attend, although there was some encouragement from teachers to particular young people about the benefits to be had from attending. Across the schemes, there were examples of after-school sessions over a period of several weeks and more intense sessions held during the Easter holiday.

The Whiston StARS (Striving for Achievement and Results) Project, Knowsley in England was one project that provided individual subject revision sessions, in this case at Higher Side Community Comprehensive School. The sessions included young people from Year 11 accessing a GCSE website entitled 'Know it All', and online E-mentors offering support in specific subject areas prior to the examinations. This was a rare example within the evaluation sample of a more innovative approach to this type of provision, which in most cases was quite traditional.

This type of provision with smaller numbers of participants than would be the case during the school day clearly had the advantage of individual young people having the opportunity for more focused learning time. Whilst this was more like Out-of-School-Hours Learning activity before The Fund, it did provide the opportunity for young people to develop their subject specific knowledge, and to support them in preparation for their forthcoming examinations or key stage tests. It appeared that much of this type of provision was for mid-attaining pupils, for example those who schools felt could be helped to achieve a grade C at GCSE in the particular subject. While this type of provision was not what The Fund had primarily intended to have

been developed within the programme, in that it did not specifically focus on young people who were socially disadvantaged, it did nevertheless address the needs of the individual schools and young people concerned.

3.2.10 Projects for 'more able' young people

There were very few schemes in the evaluation sample that made some provision for young people who had been identified as 'more able' or 'gifted and talented'. This was not surprising as the emphasis from The Fund was that the grant should be used to meet the needs of the most disadvantaged pupils. Furthermore, it may be the case that providers generally do not associate the 'more able' as belonging to socially disadvantaged groups.

However, a small number of the larger schemes felt that young people who were 'more able' or 'gifted and talented' also had needs that should be met through part of the grant. For example, one large scheme in Wales made provision for young people who were able readers at some primary schools, and also established 'accelerated learning groups'. Another large scheme, in Scotland, as part of their programme provided Masterclasses in Science, Technology, Mathematics, Art and Sport for secondary aged pupils who had a high level of aptitude in such subjects.

It should be noted that, in England at least, the provision for young people designated as 'gifted and talented' was undergoing considerable development at the time of this evaluation. The EiC programme, as well as other initiatives such as Excellence Challenge, provided ring-fenced funding for activity focusing on the specific needs of 'gifted and talented' young people. This said, EiC is based in urban areas of England rather than having coverage over rural areas and the other three countries.

3.2.11 Other projects

There were some other types of project not covered by the above categories. These included gardening clubs, first aid courses, enterprise clubs, conservation clubs, cookery for boys, team building/problem-solving activities, and foreign language clubs for primary age pupils. These projects were usually developed around the interests or expertise of the member of staff leading the activity, and provided young

people with the opportunity to learn about different topics that either did not form part of the standard curriculum or were not introduced until later.

3.3 Discussion

Homework clubs generally appeared to meet a need for many young people in providing a suitable environment for them to complete homework. It was evident that many of these projects had endeavoured to create an informal yet purposeful setting for this type of provision. However, there was a view across the schools that this provision was only attracting mid- or high-attainers, as low-attainers regarded it as 'uncool' to attend a homework club. It may be the case that schools wishing to attract low-attainers might do so through increased efforts in promoting the facilities of the homework club and emphasising its informal environment. This suggests that in those schools where homework club activity was being offered, a need was being met, but it was not that as originally envisaged by The Fund.

It was evident that many sports and physical education focused projects gave young people the opportunity to try out a sport, a physical education activity or an outdoor pursuit that they would not have otherwise experienced. A few schemes of this type had made links with local sports clubs so that young people could continue their interest in the sport after their involvement in the scheme had ceased (or funding for the scheme had ceased). However, these schemes were in a minority, with most schemes reporting that there were no inexpensive local clubs or facilities for the young people to access. This is illustrative of one of the key challenges of provision such as this – when it finishes there are not always the systems and structures in place locally to enable young people to continue to develop their strengths and interests.

Many young people participating in performance arts projects and arts and craft projects clearly benefited from having more time to engage with the activity than they had during school time. Those teachers involved in these projects welcomed the opportunity to provide such activity for highly motivated young people outside of the confines of the school timetable. Much of the work was reported by teachers to be of a high standard.

In the performance arts projects, there were some examples of projects in Scotland and Wales with content that corresponded to the respective country's cultural heritage. For example, one project in Wales focused on activity that was intended to lead to young people participating in the annual Eisteddfod, which celebrates the culture of the nation. This was an example of a project, not focusing on homework completion, which provided participants with new and exciting learning experiences both within and outside school.

As can be seen, there was a wide range of activity in each country that was held under the auspices of The Fund. In some cases, it followed a traditional Out-of-School-Hours Learning pattern, whilst elsewhere it provided something new. What is important to note is that it did, generally, meet the specific needs of the young people involved at the local level, and that was why there was such a variation of activity in evidence. However, as with any national programme in which schools identify their own needs within a general framework and develop provision accordingly, the overall focus becomes more diffuse. Consequently, this leads to a situation in which there is a degree of uncertainty regarding the extent to which The Fund's specific aims and objectives for the programme have been achieved.

Chapter 4

Partnerships

4.1 Chapter Summary

This chapter describes how the majority of schemes in all four countries were either LEA/EA/ELB schemes or multiple school schemes. Generally, there was little difference in the form of partnership engagement, and it appears as if the country context is perhaps less important than the availability of local networks and partners.

A common model of schools working together was of a single secondary school providing both activities for its own pupils and activities for pupils from its feeder primary schools. Other models included consortia of primary schools and consortia of secondary schools. The extent to which the schools shared activity varied from scheme to scheme.

Most schemes had input from one or more partners from the private, public or voluntary sectors. Some partner organisations had prepared the bid and managed the scheme; other partner organisations provided employees to work as main providers or mentors, while others supplied resources or additional funding.

Some projects were entirely school-based, which was appropriate for the type of provision. Other projects were partly or entirely based at non-school sites, such as community libraries, community centres, sports centres, outdoor education centres, art galleries and youth centres.

In England, a small number of schemes had the benefit of being able to use (for part of their provision) the state-of-the-art facilities of newly built City Learning Centres (CLCs) attached to certain schools, provided through funding from EiC.

4.2 Schools Working Together

Only six schemes in the evaluation sample were single school schemes. Five of these were secondary, while the other was a middle school scheme. This highlights the fact that the vast majority of schemes were based around some form of partnership. It is difficult to state with any degree of certainty the extent to which these partnerships had developed because of The Fund. It is more likely that many of these partnerships existed prior to The Fund monies, but what the funding has done was to enable them to develop or become more formal – so being more of a catalyst than a tool for innovation.   Of the schemes that comprised more than one school, 18 were LEA/EA/ELB schemes and 15 were multiple school schemes, either led by one of the schools or by a non-school partner.

A common model of schools working together was of a single secondary school working with a number of its feeder primary schools, with some activity for the secondary school alone and other activity for the primary schools in the form of 'taster' activities provided at the secondary school.   Typically, for LEA/EA/ELB schemes this was organised on the basis of cluster groups of schools that were already in existence.

One example of this model was the Warley High School and Feeder Primary Schools Project, Sandwell LEA, England. Funded activities at Warley High School included:
- A Homework Club, for Years 7 to 9, from 3.00 to 4.00pm Mondays to Fridays.
- Activities for Year 5 children from four feeder primary schools from 4.00 to 5.00pm every Wednesday.

Other models of schools working together were consortia of primary schools, and consortia of secondary schools. For example, the Gloucestershire LEA Scheme in England was a consortium of 13 primary schools. The extent to which schools worked together varied from consortium to consortium, and depended largely on the type of provision and the target group.   Where there was no shared activity amongst the schools, it was because the particular scheme was focusing on a specific need within each school, rather than having a main aim of improving links between them. For example, a consortium scheme might be providing literacy support in one scheme

in one school, a sports focused project in another school, an arts and craft project in a third, and so on, with each school having decided what should be provided in their own context in relation to needs they had identified.

One consortium of primary schools was The Urdd Gobaith Cymru Scheme in Wales, which involved 26 primary schools in the Pembroke region. Urdd Gobaith Cymru is a voluntary organisation that relies on the commitment of volunteers. It is independent of schools, but most activities are held in schools with teachers traditionally leading many of the activities, which was the case for the scheme funded through the Fund, so having little shared activity amongst the schools.

An example of a primary school consortium in which there was shared activity between the schools was the Chinese Welfare Association Scheme, Belfast, Northern Ireland. As described in Chapter 2 – Scheme Aims, this scheme involved Chinese children from eight primary schools with provision held after-school, five days a week, at a community centre. With one of the aims of the project being about celebrating the culture of the target group, it was appropriate that all activity was shared.

An example of a secondary school consortium was the Reading is Fundamental Scheme, Dundee, Scotland, which involved all ten secondary schools and the special school in Dundee. With the provision taking the form of weekly lunchtime clubs in each school, there was no coming together for shared activity for these schools. So although there was a consortium (as in a group of schools was involved in the scheme), there was no joint provision of activity.

Generally, across the schemes where schools were working together, the partnership arrangements were successful, according to providers, whether or not under the leadership of the LEA/EA/ELB. Nevertheless, for some schemes there was often a considerable amount of liaison necessary between the schools, and, for some, the lead organisation. For example, the Gloucestershire LEA Scheme in England (a consortium of 13 primary schools) was run by a steering group of four headteachers who spent a considerable amount of time on matters to do with recruiting staff for the scheme, setting up a financial system, discussing and deciding on activity, and

devising approaches to monitoring and evaluation. On occasions in such schemes, there were initial areas of disagreement, such as whether the authority or the schools should have direct control over the budget, but these were quickly resolved and did not affect the smooth running of the schemes.

4.3 Private, Public and Voluntary Partners

The majority of the schemes in the evaluation sample consisted of a school or schools working with one or more partners from the private, public or voluntary sectors. Some smaller schemes had one or two partners, while the number of partners making some contribution to many of the larger schemes was often considerable.

The Cardiff Out-of-School-Hours Learning Programme, Wales, had a variety of partners involved in the scheme. Those from the public sector included local Further Education Colleges and the Leisure and Learning Department of the City Council, the Youth Service and the Libraries. External agencies from the voluntary sector included Education Extra (now known as ContinYou), Arts in Education, a number of education theatre groups, and Safer Cardiff. Private sector agencies involved included Business in the Community, local training providers, the Career Paths Business Partnership and Cardiff City Football Club. These partners all provided a wide range of skills and expertise, as well as venues for projects throughout the scheme. Although there were a large number of partners involved in the scheme, the partnership arrangements worked well, largely due to the administration and coordination work of the lead partner, the City and County of Cardiff LEA.

The City of Edinburgh Education Authority Scheme was one of the largest in the UK. With funding of over £3 million from The Fund, the scheme aimed to provide activity to benefit over 11,000 disadvantaged young people in 135 primary, secondary and special schools in the city over the three years of funding. The scheme provided a range of activities from a large number of external partners. These included:

- Sports activities – Hearts of Midlothian FC, Hibernian FC, Edinburgh Rocks Basketball Club, Royal Commonwealth Pool, Benmore Outdoor Education Centre, and a number of sports centres and local sports clubs.

- Arts and cultural activities – Edinburgh International Festival, Stills Photographic Gallery, Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh International Film Festival, Scottish Ballet, Traverse Theatre, Filmhouse, and Fruitmarket Gallery.

- Study support activities – Standard Life, The Royal Bank of Scotland, Boots the Chemist, Shell (UK), Festival Theatre, Mercat Tours, Edinburgh and Lothian Police, and the four local universities.

- Community Life activities – Muslim Association, Indian Arts & Cultural Centre, Edinburgh Young Carers Association, Gorgie/Dairy City Farm, Community Education Centres, Water of Leith Conservation Trust, Scottish Cycling Development Project, and Sikh Sanjog.

The involvement of so many in a scheme such as this, meant that the provision was inclusive, in terms of delivery partners and the young people involved. The consortia approach adopted in Edinburgh gave many communities the opportunity both to provide and to learn. In this sense, widening participation was not only related to the young people, but to the providers themselves.

The involvement of partner organisations in schemes was varied. Some organisations, such as Business in the Community (North Wales) and Youth Sport North East in Northern Ireland were lead organisations, which prepared the bid to the Fund and generally managed the scheme. Other organisations provided a direct input into scheme activity through providing employees to work as main providers or mentors. These organisations included a range of private companies working in the performance arts as well as local authority bodies (for example, the Youth Service), and organisations from the public sector. Other partner organisations supplied resources or additional funding to the grant from the Fund, but did not make a direct contribution to activity. A small number of schemes (for example, the Melton Mowbray Library Scheme in Leicestershire, England) made arrangements with local bus companies so that young people could have free transport from school to the community venue for the provision, and then home afterwards.

The involvement of the Youth Service in some schemes, with a direct input from youth workers, was particularly successful with regard to the personal and social

development of individual young people within a community setting. For example, the Patrician Youth Centre Out-of-School-Hours Learning Project, Downpatrick, Northern Ireland, was one scheme with youth worker involvement. Homework support and other activities for young people from three primary schools were provided at the local youth centre, with a main aim of supporting the academic, personal and social development of the participants, who had been recruited because they were experiencing acute educational and social disadvantage. A senior youth worker described how he worked with participants:

> *There needs to be sensitivity at all times, each child has different needs and an awful lot of one-to-one work needs to be done. The children know they have been referred for homework support, but we want them to feel part of the bigger and wider organisation.*

There were some difficulties for a small number of schemes regarding the roles and responsibilities of different partner organisations. For instance, one multiple school scheme comprising a primary school and five secondary schools, had two lead organisations: the primary school and a youth volunteering agency. Each lead organisation had a distinct role. The primary school planned the activities, recruited external instructors, identified the participants from Years 4 - 6 to be involved, and supplied the necessary resources. The youth volunteering agency liaised with the five secondary schools that had agreed to participate in the scheme in order to recruit and train Year 10 volunteers, who were to work as peer mentors on activity at the primary school. However, at a point early on in the scheme there was a difference in opinion between the two organisations, which resulted in a one-term break in the volunteer support for the scheme. During this term, the management group reappraised the scheme to the satisfaction of both organisations. The outcomes were that the training of volunteers was adapted to improve the mentoring of homework support, and primary school staff were asked to focus on supporting positive interaction between the volunteers and participants. This is illustrative of the difficulty that partnership working can bring – it clearly has its benefits, but it can also raise a series of issues and challenges which would not have arisen in a single school scheme.

Around one-quarter of the schemes in the evaluation sample were led by a private, public or voluntary partner organisation, rather than by a school, or consortium of

schools, or an LEA/EA/ELB. These lead organisations included a scheme in England led by Grimsby Town Football in the Community, a scheme in Scotland led by Reading is Fundamental, a scheme in Wales led by Urdd Gobaith Cymru, and a scheme in Northern Ireland led by Barnardo's.

A main advantage to the schools and LEA/EA/ELBs involved in schemes led by these organisations was that the amount of management, and monitoring and evaluation, which schools and authorities had to undertake, was typically very little. As a consequence, teachers felt that they were not overburdened with the demands of the scheme. For example, for the Grimsby Town Football in the Community Scheme in England, the amount of administration each of the 15 primary schools involved was required to do was kept to a minimum. As the contact teacher at one of the schools explained: *'There is no onerous preparation to do. The football club recognises that we have a lot of work in addition to our teaching, and so have made things as easy for us as possible.'* It may be that from schools' point of view, schemes organised and run by a partner organisation are the most advantageous, in that once the provision has been discussed and set up, the schools' administration work is minimal.

Apart from one case, lead organisations of this type had the necessary structures and contacts with schools and other organisations to put their plans, as outlined in the bid to The Fund, into operation. The exception was a scheme that was led by a company whose core business had no connection to education. The company experienced serious difficulties in working constructively with its single partner school and had to abandon plans to make use of an ICT facility at a non-school site, instead making use of a computer room at the school. At the time of the research, the scheme was proceeding less successfully than had been initially hoped, operating with very low attendance figures. The reason for this may be that the in-school site was, for whatever reason, less attractive to participants, than an off-site location, hence the low attendance.

Despite such difficulties, it was evident that throughout the schemes in all four countries the involvement of partner organisations added to the quality of the schemes.

4.4 Project Venues

Some of the projects in the evaluation sample were entirely school-based. These included projects with the aim of supporting transition from one phase of schooling to the next, where participants from primary schools had 'taster' sessions at a secondary school. As one young person who had attended such a project said: *'It's given me an idea that I do want to go to Warley High* [the secondary school where the project was held]. *I feel more confident about going, we've seen some of the teachers.'* In schemes such as this, though they were held in schools, they were still new and stimulating learning environments for the young people involved. A reason for schemes focusing on transition, was that these were new schools for participants, so in that sense for them, they were 'off-site'.

Other projects were only partly based in schools. The other venues used included community centres, sports centres, outdoor education centres, environmental centres, theatres, art galleries and museums. The use of these venues had the effect of promoting the idea that learning is something that takes place beyond the school. A small number of projects in England were able to use the excellent facilities of newly-built City Learning Centres (CLCs) attached to schools.

A small number of projects decided to include occasional visits to places of interest in their programme. The general purpose of these visits was to encourage young people to become more aware of the facilities within their community, and hopefully to make greater use of them in the longer term. For example, the Fort Primary School Homework Club, which was part of the City of Edinburgh Council Scheme in Scotland, took participants to the nearby Botanical Gardens, which many had not visited before as they had considered it as not for them. This approach may have the added benefit of encouraging young people to develop greater ownership of their local area.

Some projects were based entirely at venues away from a main school site. These venues included community libraries, community centres and youth centres. Providers thought that the use of venues like these was useful with regard to widening the horizons of the young people. However, there were difficulties for some young

people in accessing provision away from school, as described later in this section. Where there were very few difficulties for young people in accessing the provision, it appeared that they were particularly motivated by having the opportunity to participate in activities at venues they had not previously visited, and to use up-to-date facilities and resources. A common type of provision at non-school sites was homework clubs based at community libraries.

Some of the individual projects within the Barnardo's After School Project, Belfast, Northern Ireland, were held at family centres and community centres. These venues were all particularly successful at providing a warm, comfortable and positive learning environment for participants. For example, the Ligoniel Community Centre was the venue for one project. The centre is situated near to the primary school, which meant that participants had a short supervised walk to the centre after school, and were collected by a parent or other identified adult after the session had been completed. With regard to provision for primary aged participants, it may be that an off-site venue situated near to the school, and therefore probably familiar to many participants, has benefits.

The evaluation identified that the project venue was an important factor in the take-up of provision by young people. Some projects reported that certain venues had appeared daunting to some potential participants, to the surprise of providers, and the young people involved had been reluctant to enter these buildings. This meant that these projects initially experienced low attendance, and then took some weeks to increase numbers. Other venues were discovered to be outside the 'territory' of the young people, and again it appeared that because of this many chose not to make use of the provision.

For a number of schemes in Northern Ireland, the issue of personal safety of young people had been carefully considered due to the particular context in which communities in Northern Ireland live, and arrangements for the selection of suitable venues made accordingly. Nevertheless, despite considerable effort, some young people remained anxious about travelling to venues in unfamiliar areas in a small number of schemes, because of the concerns they had, as outlined above.

A further factor in this regard was the ease of travel to the project venue from school and/or home. In some projects, the distance travelled by many participants to these venues had been regarded by them as too far or inconvenient, and so they had stopped attending. This was a difficulty experienced in both rural and urban areas. Some providers concluded that what they and other adults regarded as short and convenient distances might not be regarded as such by the young people.

For particular projects, the use of a non-school venue was essential. One example was the use of the Merthyr Tydfil Youth Access Bus on the Merthyr Tydfil Scheme in Wales. The bus took ICT and other learning media direct to locations in the community where young people gathered. Disaffected young people who were not attending school, and who were considered unlikely to attend provision at a school or even a youth centre, accessed the provision on the bus. This approach was illustrative of the innovative ways that some providers had employed to address issues that the provision of Out-of-School-Hours Learning activity had raised.

4.5 Discussion

Generally, the partnership arrangements for schools working together were successful; nevertheless for some schemes there was often a considerable amount of liaison necessary between schools in order to ensure that the scheme ran smoothly. This frequently meant that there was a considerable initial investment in time (as well as resources) needed to ensure that partnership approaches were successful.

The majority of schemes had input from one or more partners from the private, public or voluntary sectors. The involvement of these partner organisations added to the quality of schemes in all four countries. The involvement of the Youth Service in some schemes, with youth workers as main providers, was particularly successful in responding to the needs of disaffected young people.

Some schemes were led by a private, public or voluntary partner organisation. Generally, these lead organisations had the necessary structures and contacts with schools and other organisations to put the scheme plans into operation. There is a suggestion that some schools felt overburdened with the amount of administration

work they are required to perform across a variety of areas in their everyday work, and that the administration work for the scheme added to this burden. As such, it may be that schemes in which a partner organisation takes responsibility for organising and running activity is the most advantageous from the schools' point of view, and perhaps this may also provide the opportunity for young people to work with adults other than teachers.

It may be that the involvement of local businesses in OSHL may decrease in future years, in England at least, because of the proposed changes in the 14-19 curriculum. These changes entail a much greater emphasis on vocational courses, with local businesses working in partnership with schools and colleges. As such, employers may feel that their time and efforts should be largely focused on supporting these vocational courses rather than on OSHL.

Providers thought that the use of non-school venues, such as community libraries, outdoor education centres and youth centres, was helpful in widening the horizons of young people, and providing them with learning activity that took place outside of the formal school-site context. Also, young people appeared to be particularly motivated by being able to use up-to-date facilities and resources at these venues, that their schools could not provide.

However, there were difficulties for some young people in accessing provision at some non-school sites. These difficulties related to the ease of travel to the venues, or that they were perceived to be in areas outside of their 'territory', which meant that the young people concerned did not feel safe. It was apparent that a small number of schemes would have benefited from a more thorough investigation of the suitability of non-school sites at the planning stage. In relation to this, it is noted that young people will certainly learn more productively at venues where they feel they have some 'ownership' of their surroundings.

Chapter 5

Scheme Providers

5.1 Chapter Summary

For schemes in all four countries, a wide range of people were involved in managing, delivering or supporting project activity. There was no discernible difference in terms of type of scheme provider, and their roles and responsibilities, for each country.

This chapter describes the roles and responsibilities of those involved in schemes, namely scheme coordinators, school coordinators, teachers, non-teacher providers, adult mentors, peer mentors and parents, and the general benefits that had accrued for participants as a result.

5.2 Scheme Coordinators

For LEA/EA/ELB schemes, the scheme coordinator was usually an authority/board officer who had responsibility for Out-of-School-Hours Learning or a related area. For some schemes there was a director, who took responsibility for the strategic planning and direction of the scheme, while a scheme manager took responsibility for the day-to-day management.

Other schemes were coordinated by a senior employee of the partner organisation, from the private, public or voluntary sector, which was leading the scheme. Generally, this worked well with the partner organisation having the necessary structures and contacts with schools and other organisations, and the employee sufficient authority, to put the scheme plans into operation and to ensure that it ran smoothly.

For schemes that had the model of a secondary school working with a number of its feeder primary schools, it was typically the case that the scheme coordinator was a senior teacher at the secondary school and each primary school had a school coordinator.   This management structure appeared to work well, with no

disagreements between schools concerning the focus of the provision reported in any of the schemes.

For individual school schemes, the scheme coordinator was either a member of the senior management team (SMT) or a member of staff who had good access to senior levels in the school. For one secondary school, which was a relatively small school and therefore did not have a large senior management team, this post was held by a head of year, who was not a member of the SMT. Another secondary school had started with a member of the SMT as scheme coordinator, but then discovered that the amount of time needed to coordinate the scheme had become too great alongside all other responsibilities at that level. As a result, the school decided to appoint a new coordinator, and the post was advertised to all staff. The post was awarded to a member of the non-teaching staff, who had much greater flexibility in their time, as well as provided with the necessary support from colleagues, to conduct all the required duties.

There were examples of others taking the role of scheme coordinator, such as a recently retired headteacher who was the coordinator of the Castlewellan Out of School Hours Learning Project, South Eastern Education and Library Board, Northern Ireland. In this case there had been recruitment difficulties because of the part-time nature of the post.

The work of those responsible for coordinating schemes entailed a variety of tasks, including:
- contacting schools and partner organisations to discuss and plan their involvement
- setting the aims and general content of scheme activity in discussion with others
- recruiting staff to work on activity, organising staff training where necessary
- approving courses and activities, setting up financial systems to deal with the grant
- devising formal methods of monitoring and evaluation
- delegating specific tasks to individual schools
- reviewing the provision on a regular basis
- leading steering group meetings

- contacting The Fund's case manager and redirecting the scheme when necessary
- collecting and collating the required data for the monitoring form for The Fund
- writing progress reports.

The scheme coordinator also had to take account of local and national initiatives in order that the scheme complemented other work currently taking place or about to start in schools. For example, one scheme in Northern Ireland planned to emphasise in its provision the importance of nutrition in readiness for learning, particularly for breakfast clubs, which linked with the Education and Library Board's healthy eating strategy. What was of importance, in order to ensure that the scheme complemented other initiatives, was that the scheme coordinator had a good working knowledge of the educational context, both locally and nationally. This knowledge is certainly likely to be useful in devising any plans regarding the sustainability of the scheme beyond the period of funding.

An example of the job description for the post of coordinator for non-sporting activity for a single secondary school scheme in England is shown below. This job description is typical of a coordinator for a single school scheme in that in entails both strategic and operational tasks.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES FUND
OUT-OF-SCHOOL-HOURS LEARNING

Required as soon as possible
A Coordinator for non-sporting Out-of-School-Hours Learning

Responsibilities will include:

1. Liaising with SMT and Community Education Officer.
2. Planning and coordinating activities (delivery will be by others).
3. Liaising with the delivers of activities.
4. Advertising the scheme in school and assisting with recruitment of pupils.
5. Liaising with parents when necessary.
6. Contributing to the sporting or non-sporting programme.

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7. Contributing to the monitoring process throughout the term.

8. Contributing to the evaluation process at the end of each term.

The ability to plan, manage, organise, monitor and evaluate will be looked for.

The post will be supervised by the SMT and, where appropriate through the local Community Education Officer.

Remuneration: An honorarium of £500 for the calendar year.

The tasks and responsibilities in this job description are illustrative of the wide range of duties that scheme coordinators were expected to undertake, even for single school schemes. Scheme/school coordinators were either paid a small honorarium (as in the example above) or received one or two extra responsibility points.

5.3 School Coordinators

School coordinators were responsible for scheme activity within their own school. Their duties included:

- acquiring resources
- liaising with teachers and other providers
- reviewing progress
- publicising the activities to young people (and parents, in some cases)
- monitoring the impact on young people
- collecting relevant information (e.g. attendance figures) and supplying this to the scheme
- dealing with any problems on a day-to-day basis.

Typically, school coordinators were teachers, although there were a few cases of non-teaching staff taking the role, as described below.

The benefit of having teachers as coordinators appeared to be that they were aware of the systems and structures within schools, and had the knowledge of who they had to contact about activities. In addition, they also had the generic teaching and learning skills that ensured that the experiences were suitably matched to the abilities and interests of the young people. In some cases, there were others (who were not

teachers) who took the role of coordinators, and this too was seen to have benefits. This is highlighted by the developments in one scheme in Scotland.

The Reading is Fundamental Scheme, Dundee, Scotland, was a programme comprising a consortium of 10 secondary schools and one special school. The scheme had the main aim of promoting reading for pleasure. The coordinator in each school was a librarian, paid an additional £70 per month for their work. Locating the project in the library, and having it led by a librarian, was seen to give it a certain dimension, as it emphasised the cross-curricular nature of the provision (rather than being led by a teacher of English, for example). The coordinating role also enabled librarians to use further their training in promoting literacy and reading for pleasure. A point of interest, which may have particular implications for replicating a project like this, is that the position in Scotland may well be different from elsewhere, in that a greater proportion of librarians in Scottish schools are professionally trained. This said, it is evident that the involvement of others, apart from teachers, can have a positive impact on provision.

5.4 Teachers

The majority of schemes involved teachers for either part or all of the provision, especially for those schemes in primary schools. At secondary schools, single subject revision sessions and 'taster' activities for young people from feeder primary schools had teachers as main providers. Literacy and numeracy focused projects were typically led by a teacher, while the picture for arts and craft, performance arts, and sports and physical education focused projects was more mixed, with some being led by teachers, and others led by non-teacher professionals. The reason for this was that where teachers had subject-specific knowledge or skills they generally led the project. For those projects that required different skills (performance arts and sports, for example), then professionals from the wider community could make a major contribution.

The style of teaching and learning followed in projects was typically more relaxed and less formal than that for school work, largely because attendance of the activity by young people was voluntary and the number of attendees was often much smaller

than average class sizes. For example, young people were allowed to work in friendship groups, take breaks when they needed to, and generally engage in a greater level of social interaction than was the case during the school day. It was apparent that teachers were able to adopt such a teaching and learning style, without compromising on young people's standards of behaviour or health and safety matters. Furthermore teachers still had high expectations for the quality of work produced by young people.

Typically, teachers took responsibility for preparing and delivering courses, once the content had been agreed with the scheme or school coordinator. During activity, teachers had responsibility for supervising any support staff, such as adult or peer mentors, and keeping records of attendance. Teachers also had a role in liaising with parents and in contributing to the evaluation of the scheme as a whole.

For some projects, teachers worked as support workers alongside non-teacher professionals delivering the activity. This arrangement enabled some teachers to receive informal staff development within the professional's area of expertise, for example, music or sport, which was an unexpected outcome. Some secondary school teachers who had provided 'taster' activities for young people from primary schools commented that working with a younger age group had provided an element of staff development for them as they had experienced working with young people of different ages – something they would not have been able to do without the opportunity provided by monies from The Fund.

For some schemes, there was a particular issue concerning the payment of teachers in schools, which caused some ill feeling. This is best described by the situation in one school, highlighted below:

Though funding had had a great impact on out-of-hours activity, it was evident that it did not cover all out-of-hours activity that took place in the school.
A number of clubs did not meet the funding criteria for the grant and therefore were not in receipt of additional funding that could be used to pay providers. The impact

of this was that some staff received payment for their involvement in clubs whilst others did not. In a number of cases, the same member of staff received payment for one activity but not for another. Staff felt that this approach was not equitable and that it was a matter that needed to be reviewed. The reasons for this were based both on the perception that payments to staff were not equitable, but also because that activity not funded through The Fund provided young people with similar learning experiences and opportunities. It was felt that the funding made a distinction between clubs that in reality did not exist. It was also noted that the difference in payment for some clubs meant that the staff payment at the end of each term was complex.

Whilst this issue did not impact on provision at this school, and others where it had emerged, in that teachers still provided activity, it clearly had a negative effect on morale. It is worth noting that when funding comes to an end the issue of staff payment may still be problematic, as staff who have been used to receiving payment for out-of-school-hours activity may not continue to do so. This could impact on their willingness to provide activity in the longer-term.

5.5 Non-teacher Providers

Many schemes in all four countries made good use of professionals who were not teachers. These included classroom assistants, play workers, youth workers, sports coaches, and professional artists, musicians, dancers and drama providers. It was evident that the young people appreciated their input into project activity.

Some teachers commented that for some young people their relationships with teachers had become strained, and so for these young people to have the opportunity to work with other adults was thought to be a first step in them becoming more motivated about learning. The key here was that the learning context was less formal than that of school, along with the fact that the providers had a range of skills that were not necessarily academic-related but appealed to the interests of the young people involved.

Projects that involved youth workers supporting disaffected young people or those with low self-esteem were reported by providers as being particularly successful with regard to participants' personal and social development.

It was also the case that these professionals acted as positive role models for many young people. This was particularly so for boys, some who came from homes where there were few (if any) male role models. Indeed, this situation was exacerbated by the fact that many primary schools had very few male teachers. In one primary school involved in the Stockton LEA Scheme in England, young people took part in football courses run by a private sports school as part of their programme. The headteacher explained what she saw as one of the main benefits of this provision:

> *It has been particularly helpful for the children here, especially the boys, to work with these football coaches, who are healthy young men. They are providing positive role models for the boys, as they* [the football coaches] *are promoting the importance of a healthy lifestyle, fitness and exercise, and the idea that it is necessary to follow rules to gain skills. At first I couldn't see how football coaching would help meet the citizenship agenda, but I can see now that it many ways it does.*

As well as providing specific role models, the use of professionals (from the wider community) was valuable for the development of young people's skills. An example of the type of involvement non-teacher providers made to schemes, in this case the Chulmleigh Community College Scheme in England, is described here:

In the spring term 2003, a ten-week drama course was funded through the grant. This took place in the school hall and was attended by about 35 young people from Years 7, 8 and 9. The course was held from 3.50 - 5.50pm on Tuesday evenings, run by two freelance professionals, who were joint directors of the Rural Devon Shakespeare Company. This company had worked with the school in recent years, as well as having recently performed at an arts festival in Chulmleigh. As such their work was

well known to the school's drama teacher, who had recruited them for this course. The providers were paid £20 per hour, which meant that the staffing cost of the entire course was £800.

The objectives of the course were:

- to develop theatre and drama skills through participation
- to stimulate confidence
- to co-devise presentation pieces for public showings

This course had been advertised to pupils in Key Stage 3, and was open access on a first come first served basis. A total of 40 places had been available, but it had been apparent that many more wanted to attend. The intention was to run the course again in the autumn term, so that those who were unable to attend the first course would be able to attend a repeat course.

Much of the work of the course was focussed on teamwork, with various techniques covered throughout the ten sessions. As the course developed, an increasing emphasis was placed on short drama pieces, performed by small groups of participants, which were to be the end product of the ten-week programme.

The general pattern for each session was that there were warm-up activities in which participants worked in groups of various sizes. The remainder of each session was then spent with the participants working on drama improvisations and practising and refining their short drama pieces. These drama pieces would be performed to parents and others in the final session. The course providers conducted a short review of each session immediately afterwards, and also recorded the attendance.

This example is illustrative of the ways in which external providers can make a valuable contribution to young people's learning.

An ambitious and successful scheme that had employed non-teacher professionals as main providers was the Under Pressure Project, Derry/Londonderry, Northern Ireland. This was an arts-based project involving around 200 young people aged 14-15 years. The project addressed issues of risk behaviour, suicide and self-harm through drama, and also involved creative writing, the visual arts, videos and sound recording, the

development of stage management skills, ICT and the creation of multi-media products (a website and a CD-ROM) to aid and inform young people and professionals within the health and education sectors. In the middle phase of the project, young people worked with professional artists, from a company called Artemis, based at the Verbal Arts Centre (a community-based arts and educational centre). There they developed and performed a short play and designed teaching material for teachers and other professionals. The product was regarded as an extensive and locally significant programme of creative activities focusing on the issue of suicide. The activities were reported as professional, of a high standard and were granted high status by the participants. The programme was led by a team (the Artemis artists) that was seen as inclusive in both intent and practice, and which was highly regarded by those involved. As one teacher explained:

> *The project was really very interesting, because it can be so easy to get this sort of thing wrong. It can be easy to patronise young people and just irritate other professionals. They* [Artemis] *really didn't do that. They were just very, very professional and very committed to it all ... much better than anything we've had here before.*

Teaching assistants and play leaders also had a role on some schemes with regard to supporting or leading activity. In some cases, teaching assistants led activity that had content in which they had particular expertise, such as in a foreign language. Joys Green Primary School, in the Gloucestershire LEA Scheme in England, was one school which successfully recruited play leaders to develop and lead family learning activity.

Some schemes were keen that the relationship between teachers at school and non-teachers providing support elsewhere was a mutually supportive one. As one headteacher of a primary school involved in a project in which homework support was provided at a community centre explained:

> *I had to ensure that there was always that relationship between the teachers in the school and what was happening out of school ... so that there was no judgement on the homework that was being given and no negative feedback to teachers. There was a sensitivity here that the leader was aware of ... the role was to support and encourage the children, and the teachers were happy with that remit as well. The relationship was aired at the start and homework*

policies discussed and how the club could reinforce what went on in the school.

A small number of schemes recognised that if they were to employ non-teachers as main providers then it was necessary to provide appropriate training. The Merthyr Tydfil Scheme in Wales employed a number of youth workers on part of their scheme, and regarded it as essential that they receive training on matters such as health and safety, first aid and child protection. Generally, across the schemes in all four countries, there was little training offered for non-school providers. The training that was offered was typically based around health and safety matters rather than being concerned with project content or teaching and learning styles. If future provision is mainly to be led or supported by non-teachers, then any funding body might usefully consider emphasising the value of training so that project content is appropriate and contains an element of innovation, and is delivered in ways that encourage and motivate young people.

5.6 Adult Mentors

Some schemes recruited volunteers from the workplace to act as mentors on particular projects. Adult mentor involvement on schemes was typically for short periods and quite specific, but nevertheless this enabled young people to have support from an adult. One such scheme was The 'Learning Link' Out-of-School-Hours Learning Programme: Business in the Community Cymru (Wales), North Wales. In this scheme, part of the grant was used to recruit and develop volunteers from local companies to act as mentors for disengaged young people in Years 10 and 11 in secondary schools. Another strand of the work entailed volunteers helping to improve standards of literacy in primary schools by working with Year 3 and 4 pupils to support their reading. An example of their mentoring work, at one primary school, is described below.

At Gwynedd Primary School, Flint, the reading mentoring was based around the use of reading packs and reading records. Individual books were dedicated for each ten to 15-minute session. These included *'The Hodgepog'*, *'Stuff n' Nonsense'* and

'School in the Valley'. One of the reading mentors, who worked for NicePak International, volunteered because *'it was nice to be involved in a community school'*.

The reading mentor's manager had been contacted by Business in the Community regarding the scheme, and had encouraged her to volunteer for an hour a week. She enjoyed the experience as *'it felt you've achieved something ... you feel like you're doing something worthwhile'*. One, a seven-year-old boy, enjoyed reading with the reading mentor, who only helped him out when he could not read certain words. Jack liked non-fiction books and preferred reading with a mentor than on his own. Another, a seven-year-old girl, also enjoyed reading with a mentor. She said: *'I used to think reading was boring, but I read at home at bedtimes now. I think reading is fun.'*

The reading mentor felt that it was essential to have a sense of humour when working with the children, and to be *'sensitive to the confidence of the children'*. She had received some training from the LEA and was aware of the links between classroom practice and mentoring work. Overall she felt that the scheme was extremely successful saying: *'I think it's a really good idea, the more people that get involved in it the better, I can see a difference from when I started'*.

Some schemes stated that they had attempted to recruit volunteers from the community to work as mentors for part of their provision but this had been unsuccessful. Typically, it appeared that these schemes had misjudged the number of local people with the necessary skills who were willing to support activity.

Other schemes commented that they would have liked to have used volunteers but had decided not to attempt to recruit any, feeling that this would have been unproductive because of the circumstances of the particular area. In some cases, this was because there were few companies of sufficient size that could be approached. In other cases, local companies had recently been approached to support other education initiatives, and it was thought that they would not welcome further requests for support.

5.7 Peer Mentors

Unlike the summer school schemes, the number of term-time projects that employed young people from schools to work as peer mentors to support activity was relatively small. This may be because summer schools were of short duration, usually one week, so making it easier for a young person to make a commitment for such a period.

Peer mentors were most commonly employed on schemes that had the aim of supporting young people's transition from one phase of schooling to the next and/or improving links between schools. One such scheme was the Rosherville Primary School After School Learning Club (RASLC), Kent in England.

Rosherville Primary School ran after-school activity largely focused on the language and literacy development of eight to 11-year-olds. Year 10 mentors to support the activity were recruited from five local schools by a youth volunteering agency, which was responsible for training the peer mentors and supervising their work.

The after-school activity included a half-hour homework completion session, followed by a one-hour focused activity. The peer mentors were required to arrive at the primary school by 4.00pm to begin supporting participants completing their homework. Typically, participants were those who would not have completed homework at home, and so this gave an opportunity for one-to-one mentoring support that had a direct link back into classwork.

The peer mentors then supported the one-hour focused activity. For example, during one observed French language session they supported a group role-play and had active involvement in creating French scenes. The peer mentors' own knowledge of French, and their organisational skills, were used by each group of participants to improve the short role play dramas presented at the end of the session.

As one outcome of their involvement, according to the secondary schools, the peer mentors had gained in confidence and self-esteem. As one peer mentor, now in Year 12, explained:

> *When I first started coming to the Rosherville club I would hardly speak to anyone, now you can't stop me. I know I've become more confident as I've worked with these children. I've had a lot to learn about how to support these kids, but it's been the best three years of my life.*

Schemes that recruited peer mentors had clearly thought carefully about the role they wanted these young people to take. Sometimes they had to apply for the position and were interviewed. It was evident that participants on projects gained from the support they received from peer mentors, who were often not much older than themselves. At the same time, the peer mentors had a valuable experience, which helped them to develop their communication and social skills.

5.8 Involvement of Parents

Very few parents had a direct involvement in any of the schemes, apart from those who had been recruited to family learning projects, in which they worked alongside their primary age children (see Chapter 3, Section 2.8 – Family learning projects). It should be noted that The Fund stipulated that funding for family learning schemes should only be for used for young people's learning, and that any costs incurred for parents' involvement should be funded from other sources.

Generally, parents were informed of the various clubs and activities that were being funded in order that schools could recruit their children as participants. Feedback to parents regarding how their children were progressing in clubs and on activities was typically informal. Sometimes, parents were informally given advice on how they might further support their children's learning at home. On occasions, particular parents were discreetly targeted as teachers had identified their children as the ones who were more likely to benefit from the provision.

In some isolated rural areas, parents had the responsibility of ensuring that their children were met when after-school provision had been completed and taken home. The Inverclyde Out-of-School-Hours Learning Project in Scotland recognised that this was an issue that might impact negatively on attendance, and so encouraged parents to operate a car rota to share the cost and time involved.

Some professionals involved noted that schemes would have benefited from more contact with parents. This was the case for The Fiddle Playing Club at St Agnes' Primary School, which was part of the Glasgow City Council Education Services

Scheme. As one of the violin tutors remarked: *'I would like more liaison with parents as it makes it easier for parents to encourage their children. When you meet the parents you can tell if it will work with the children.'*

On the other hand, one or two schemes were wary about having too much contact with parents as this unintentionally might have a negative effect. The view was that if a parent had been approached to have some greater involvement in supporting activity and had subsequently declined, then this would then result in non-participation in the scheme from their child.

There were examples of benefits for individual parents as a result of the provision. For example, as one voluntary worker on the Patrician Youth Centre Out of School Hours Learning Project, which was an after-school club for disadvantaged eight to 11 year-olds, in Downpatrick, Northern Ireland, explained:

> *Our realisation for the need of the club stemmed from our work with some young mothers, who were trying to hide from their children the fact that they couldn't read properly. One mother was having to send her child across the road for help with homework. We intervened and got the child into the club and the mother on to a Home Management course.*

This particular example is illustrative of the benefit that involvement could have, not only for the young people involved, but for their parents/carers as well.

5.9 Discussion

Whilst the majority of teachers were very positive about their involvement in activity, there was a particular issue of concern for a number of projects regarding the payment of teachers for delivering activity, which caused some ill feeling. Some teachers were paid for delivering activity, while others were not, as the provision had been regarded as not meeting the Fund's criteria, even though teachers thought it was offering young people similar learning experiences. Whilst this did not impact on provision, in that the teachers still provided activity, it clearly had some effect on morale. Also, as funding for Out-of-School-Hours Learning through the Fund comes to an end, it is worth noting that the issue of staff payment may be problematic, as staff who have

been used to payment for providing activity may not continue to get this. This could impact on their willingness to provide activity in the longer-term.

Overall, the use of professionals other than teachers on a number of schemes was a positive experience for the participants. For schemes with participants from primary schools, it was frequently the case that the school staff did not have the necessary skills or expertise to deliver the provision themselves. The subject areas most often mention in this regard were sports, dance and music. It was apparent that young people had experiences that they otherwise would not have had but for the involvement of such professionals.

The opportunity of working with these adults was particularly motivating for young people who were becoming disaffected with school. Learning to work with people who were not teachers and who brought a range of skills that were not necessarily academic-related appealed to the specific interests of the young people involved.

Adult mentors from local businesses and young people from local schools recruited as peer mentors supported a small amount of project activity. Where they were involved, there were benefits for both the participants, in having on-to-one support, and for the mentors themselves. For the adult mentors, it was thought that their involvement had added to their professional development and understanding of educational matters, while peer mentors, usually young people from secondary schools, had gained in developing their social and communication skills. However, there were relatively few schemes in all four countries that had recruited peer mentors. As such, it may well be the case that many schemes are not making full use of a resource, that is older pupils in school, that could enhance the provision, especially as the benefits of this approach were clearly evident within the context of summer schools.

Chapter 6

Participants

6.1 Chapter Summary

Projects in all four countries were either entirely open access for young people from particular year groups or key stages, or were targeted on particular groups. The proportion of open access projects, compared with targeted projects, was roughly similar in the evaluation samples for England and Wales with around three-quarters of projects being open access and one-quarter being targeted. The Northern Ireland evaluation sample contained a greater proportion of targeted projects than elsewhere. The evaluation sample for Scotland showed very little targeting of young people within schools.

This chapter describes how schemes went about the process of recruiting young people to projects, and provides information on the level of attendance and retention obtained, along with methods used by schemes to keep attendance at high levels, as well as highlighting some differences between the take-up of provision between boys and girls.

6.2 Recruiting Participants

Many projects within the evaluation sample were entirely open access for young people from particular year groups or key stages. Other projects targeted young people who they had identified as underachieving and/or in need of support.

It should be noted that while many projects within schools were open access, there had been some targeting of disadvantage through the selection of schools, especially by a number of the larger schemes. For example, the target schools for The 'Learning Link': Business in the Community (North Wales) project had been identified through referrals from the LEAs in North Wales with regard to these schools having being identified within strategic plans as schools with particular needs. Other large schemes selected schools to be involved according to social deprivation indicators, such as the

percentage of young people entitled to free school meals. Other schemes reported that they had identified schools to be involved in activity through subject performance statistics, usually National Curriculum Assessment data in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, which showed relatively low performance in key subject areas.

While being open access, much of the provision of these schemes was designed to attract the more disadvantaged, for example, after-school support for homework. In this sense, it was a matter for the young people to decide whether or not to attend. However, several schemes reported that while their provision had been accessed by disadvantaged young people, those who were the 'most disadvantaged' generally had not been attracted to such provision. It was not part of this research to identify why certain groups of young people had chosen not to access provision. It is suggested that readers refer to the Education Extra (now known as ContinYou) report in 2003: *Non-Participation in Study Support: Research Study conducted for the Department for Education and Skills by Education Extra* (Maidment *et* al., 2003), which describes the factors associated with young people's non-participation in out-of-school-hours activities from a study of eight schools.

Generally, participants at the secondary school level were initially recruited through in-school publicity material, such as leaflets and posters, and through teachers promoting the clubs and activities. Some teachers stated that they had made particular efforts, in a discreet manner, to recruit those young people who they felt would benefit the most. At the primary level, parents were usually given information sheets about the forthcoming provision, as it was they who usually made the decision for their children to attend. A small number of schemes presented details about the various clubs and activities on school websites. For a small number of schemes, others were involved in promoting activity and recruiting participants, such as youth workers, Education Welfare Officers and Family Link Officers. Overall, the initial recruitment of young people, at both primary school and secondary school level, appeared successful, although there were a few difficulties with low attendance of provision at some non-school sites partly because of a lack of publicity. The evidence suggests that in order to achieve a high level of attendance, projects needed to be well publicised before the start, with further publicity at times throughout the year.

While some schemes had stated in their bids to The Fund that activity would be aimed at young people from disadvantaged groups, or who were at risk from underachievement or disaffection, in practice most clubs and activities were entirely open access, and no obvious attempt at targeting the provision had taken place. The evidence suggests that some providers were wary of targeting particular groups as they felt this might make young people feel stigmatised, other schemes did not know how targeting might be conducted effectively, and others felt, on reflection, that all young people in specified year groups were entitled to access the provision, if they wished. While some literacy and numeracy focused projects were targeted at those young people performing poorly in relation to their peers, there were some projects of this type that had abandoned targeting or, on reflection, regarded it as inappropriate.

The Fort Primary School Homework Club as part of the City of Edinburgh Scheme, Scotland, was one project that had decided not to target young people. One of the providers explained that participants from Primary 5 - 7 had been recruited on a *'first come, first served'* basis. The decision had been made not to target low achievers, as it was felt that this would make those recruited *'too visible'*. In practice, the take-up from Primary 7 had been low, especially by the boys. Recognising this situation, providers had focused on encouraging those from Primary 5 and 6 to attend, and to continue attending throughout their primary schooling, so getting the benefit for longer.

At the beginning of the Reading is Fundamental Scheme, Dundee, Scotland, there had been intentions to target young people in S1 classes, using information obtained from their primary schools. However, the providers (school librarians) had quickly rejected this approach, as one explained: *'That was a waste of time and effort really, you can't make kids come to these things.'* Another added: *'If you drag in kids because their name's on a list, they're not going to stay.'*

Projects that targeted young people did so with the intention of involving the more disadvantaged, as was stipulated by The Fund to schemes at the application stage. Described here are some of the criteria used by different projects with regard to targeting particular groups of young people for whom the project activity had been largely designed:

- Young people in Year 10 who are GCSE grade C/D borderline (England)

- Young people from the Chinese community from eight primary schools (Northern Ireland)

- Young people, of secondary school age, who were no longer attending school (Wales)

- Young people at a secondary school who are at risk of permanent exclusion (England)

- Young people in key stage 3 with very low reading ages, as identified through a standardised reading test (Wales)

- Young people in key stage 2 who do not have a parent/carer at home immediately after school has finished or who are on the special needs register, or who have English as an additional language, or who have shown social interaction difficulties at school (England).

In many respects, these types of target group were relatively well defined and as such the young people recruited generally recognised that their involvement would bring personal benefits. Furthermore, those excluded from the target group were unlikely to feel that they had been discriminated against, as it was clear who the provision was for and its purpose. Nevertheless, where targeting was conducted, schools were very sensitive about the approach to young people, and their parents.

One of the primary schools in the Belfast Education and Library Board Scheme, Northern Ireland, targeted travellers' children for involvement in their provision of a basketball club and a dance/drama club, recognising that they were a disadvantaged group. The Principal remarked:

> *The basketball club was a great confidence booster for them* [travellers' children] *... that was as much our target as raising their skills in the sport, and developing links between the travellers' community and the settled community, because there are a lot of negative perceptions and attitudes on both sides.*

6.3 Attendance and Retention

All schemes recorded attendance by young people at their various clubs and activities as a requirement for the completion of the annual monitoring form for The Fund. For some schemes, it was apparent that attendance data constituted the main measure by which they judged the success of the provision (see Chapter 7 – Internal Monitoring and Evaluation).

The level of attendance by young people for the majority of projects was generally regarded by providers as good. The projects that had the greatest fluctuations in attendance were homework clubs, which was not surprising as attendance was largely dependent of the amount of homework or coursework young people had at any one time. For example, one homework club at a secondary school reported attendance figures varying between 20 and 50.

While some homework clubs at community libraries were well attended, others were not. For example, one scheme in England provided homework clubs at two community libraries in addition to two existing library-based homework clubs that had been operating successfully prior to funding through The Fund. One of the new homework clubs proved much more successful than the other at attracting young people. It appeared that the more successful homework club was in a better location, with regard to young people's journeys home afterwards, being situated close to an underground station. The providers at the time had been unprepared for this outcome. This is illustrative of the impact that external factors, such as transport, can have on the level of success of a project. In this instance, the providers had not fully considered extraneous issues, yet this still had a major impact. This highlights the fact that a wide range of factors needs to be taken into account by schools and individuals when planning schemes. This issue has relevance to Out-of-School-Hours Learning schemes generally, rather than only to activity funded through The Fund or to homework clubs.

An example of a scheme that realised that it was necessary to plan carefully in order to ensure a high level of attendance was the Under Pressure Project, Derry/Londonderry, Northern Ireland. This was an arts based project involving

around 200 young people aged 14-15 years, with the project comprising three distinct phases. Some details about attendance are described below:

The project secured high levels in all three phases. During Phase One, attendance at any one session was contingent on a young person's presence at school that day. Data from young people suggested that they valued the sessions as an alternative to usual activities and some, albeit a minority, made a special effort to attend the school on the day of the session. Attendance in Phases Two and Three was slightly lower, with some young people missing some sessions. Overall, the attendance rate was above 85 per cent, which was high bearing in mind the out-of-school nature of the project, and the fact that some young people had concerns about travelling into the city. Furthermore, young people attended additional sessions during Phase Two, offering to work at weekends to rehearse and develop the play, which was to be a main outcome of the project.

One factor reported as facilitating good attendance was the provision by the project of transport for participants, with taxis being used to take them to particular sites. On similar projects, young people with limited resources and whose parents did not own a car, or where the project had not arranged convenient transport to and from sites, reported that they had been unable to attend such courses.

Some projects examined the difference in take-up between boys and girls to determine whether the provision was equally appropriate for either sex. For example, the Fort Primary School Homework Club, which was part of the City of Edinburgh Scheme in Scotland, identified that the overwhelming majority of attendees were girls. The project coordinator and class teachers of the school had recognised this issue, in particular boys from Primary 7 regarding it as not 'cool' to be seen attending an after-school homework club, and were planning to encourage more boys from Primary 5 and 6 to attend. However, there was a recognition that accessing the provision was voluntary, and such encouragement might not be successful, as the project coordinator explained: *'At the end of the day, you can have all the reasons for you wanting kids, or teachers wanting kids, or parents wanting kids to be in the group ... but really they've got to want to do it themselves.'*

Another scheme that experienced an imbalance between the numbers of boys and girls accessing particular provision was the Debenham High School Scheme, Suffolk, England. For this scheme, whilst the clubs were open to all young people within particular year groups, it was evident that particular activity appealed mainly to boys or to girls. For example, girls mainly attended the Creative Writing Group, while boys mainly attended the Young Engineers Club. Despite these differences, the school was persevering with offering opportunity to all young people, as it was their participation that was the key feature for the school. For example, those teachers involved in out-of-school sports provision described how they had developed clubs to attract certain groups of the school population. For these teachers, the fact that young people were engaging with sport was the key issue rather than ensuring a gender balance within individual clubs or activities. In this regard, weights/strength training was very popular amongst boys, while girls had been attracted to a girls-only football team. So though there was some effort to encourage particular groups of young people, there was also the realisation that the effort was not always successful, and that perhaps it was just as important to get young people involved generally, rather than only those for whom the activity was originally intended.

Some projects applied rules to help maintain high levels of attendance. At least two projects in the evaluation sample operated a rule whereby if a young person had missed three sessions without a valid reason, then another took his/her place. Another project operated a similar rule; in this case a young person lost their place if they had not attended a minimum of four out of every five sessions. Having such rules meant that providers analysed attendance data, rather than simply saw the keeping of an attendance as a necessary chore, as well as made it clear to participants that a place on the course was of value.

Many projects experienced a decline in attendance at after-school activities towards the end of the autumn term. Some providers thought that this was due to a combination of darker evenings, poorer weather, general fatigue on the part of young people and the various other attractions in the period leading up to Christmas. Other providers mentioned the higher incidence of illnesses at that time of year. It could be argued that schemes would benefit from stopping provision at the end of November and then restarting in early January, so as to avoid the situation where projects have

lost their momentum, as well as being less cost-effective by operating well below capacity.

For projects for upper year groups in secondary schools, especially for Year 11 in England, there was a sharp decline in attendance at activity when mock examinations were being taken and in the period leading up to GCSE examinations (or Standard Grades in Scotland). At least two schemes in England reported that they had experienced very low attendance at after-school clubs on occasions when major football matches were televised.

Several projects had stopped running particular clubs or activities, and had replaced them with others, in response to poor attendance. This is illustrative of the fact that these schemes recognised that they had to be flexible and willing to make changes to their provision so as to keep attendance at a relatively high level and thus maintain cost-effectiveness. Some projects spoke about a minimum number or a 'critical mass' of participants that needed to be established quickly in the life of a club, for that club to be viewed by other young people as being of value and therefore something that they might consider accessing.

One of the schemes in Scotland operated a junior section (for P6, P7, S1 and S2) and a senior section (for S3 upwards), with a separate programme of sports, arts and craft, enterprise activities and learning skills for each. In practice, while all activities were well attended within the junior section, it was only the sports activities that attracted young people in the senior section. The scheme had recognised that they needed to take action to address this matter. It was this more flexible approach to provision that enabled schemes such as this to appeal to a wide variety of ages, by offering different age groups different types of activity.

6.4 Discussion

One of the main issues for schemes regarding recruiting young people was whether to make provision open access or to target particular groups. Several schemes that had indicated that they would be targeting particular groups of young people, such as those underperforming or those becoming disengaged with learning, in practice did

not do so. In any future initiative of this type, it may be the case that schemes would benefit from advice, from the funding body or any support organisation, on how targeting might be conducted effectively. A main concern about open access provision is that if places are offered on a 'first come, first served' basis, then certain young people who are hesitant about accessing the provision, and who may be those who would benefit the most, will not get a place.

Overall, attendance levels in all four countries were acceptable or high, apart from declines at certain times of the year, such as towards the end of the autumn term, and initial low attendance for provision at some non-school sites. For some schemes in making future provision, it would be advantageous to shorten the duration of programmes in order to maintain young people's interest and to be more cost-effective. Also, some schemes clearly would have been more successful if they had promoted the provision more at the outset. There was a view amongst some projects that clubs had to attract a 'critical mass' of participants fairly quickly for them to be seen of value by other young people.

Some projects examined the difference in take-up of provision between boys and girls. While there were significant differences within individual clubs or activities, the view taken by these projects was that this was unimportant provided there was an equal balance between boys and girls overall in accessing some type of provision. Such a view seems entirely reasonable and the fact that these projects were monitoring take-up in this way, with the view that they would make changes to their programme should there be an imbalance, should be applauded.

It appeared that most young people attended and continued to attend provision because they felt they were benefiting from it. For some young people, these benefits were mainly to do with developing particular skills, whereas for others, it was the opportunity for greater social interaction (see Chapter 7, Section 3 – Perceived impact, for further discussion).

Chapter 7

Internal Monitoring and Evaluation

7.1 Chapter Summary

The approaches followed by schemes in each of the four countries to monitoring and evaluation were broadly similar. In each country there were examples of good practice in this area and practice that needed further development.

This chapter describes the range of monitoring and evaluation methods used by schemes, including the use of attendance data, analyses of performance, participant evaluation forms, project review meetings, Quality in Study Support (QiSS) involvement, and the evaluation of the products of projects.

All schemes, at the time of the research visits, reported projects notable successes or main benefits to participants as a result of the provision. These included improvements in homework completion and quality, the development of specific skills, and improvements in young people's attitudes to learning self-esteem, confidence and motivation. This chapter highlights details of this perceived impact.

7.2 Methods used to Monitor and Evaluate

7.2.1 General comments

While the monitoring and evaluation methods used in each of the four countries were broadly similar, they were quite varied in type and in quality.

It was not part of the methodology of the NFER evaluation to collect monitoring and evaluation data systematically from schemes – the approach here was to determine, through interviews with key providers and participants, the methods of monitoring and evaluation that were being used. However, during the fieldwork, some monitoring data from schemes were obtained, which have informed the writing of this chapter.

Generally, individual schemes used a range of approaches by which to gather information and make judgement on the effectiveness of their provision. The approach to monitoring and evaluation followed by one large scheme, the 'Learning Link' Business in the Community Cymru Wales (North Wales) Scheme, is described below.

The scheme was monitored internally by Business in the Community, the lead organisation, through the use of evaluation questionnaires used with participants. The completed questionnaires were analysed by Business in the Community, and formed a detailed evidence base. This was complemented by focus group discussions involving representatives from all the schools involved in the scheme. The progress of the scheme was also monitored through regular meetings of Business in the Community, the partner LEAs, schools, and partner companies (of which there were 15). In addition, the LEAs monitored the impact of the scheme on participants' literacy skills through the use of reading tests.

This example illustrates the thorough approach that was taken to monitoring and evaluation by some schemes. The collection of both quantitative and qualitative data by the lead organisation provided a range of useful data that could inform future development and practice. In addition, the involvement of an external body (in this case the LEA), and its use of reading tests to judge the effectiveness of the scheme on young people, was a positive feature.

7.2.2 Attendance data

All schemes used registers to record the attendance of young people at their various clubs and activities. These data were then collated for the completion of the annual monitoring form required by the Fund. Some projects also examined the differences in take-up between boys and girls to determine whether the provision overall was appropriate to both sexes, and meeting their needs.

Most projects closely monitored registers to see if there were any fluctuations in overall attendance, while some also looked at the pattern of attendance by individual participants.

For a number of schemes, it appeared that attendance data formed the only measure of judging the level of success achieved by the provision, whereas in other schemes it was one of several measures. Though this approach was limited in its size and scope, a number of schemes, as has been discussed, did amend provision in the light of attendance data, but it was not a suitable tool to judge overall effectiveness or impact of activity.

More detailed information about attendance is to be found in Chapter 6, Section 3 – Attendance and retention.

7.2.3 Analyses of performance

A number of projects had the explicit aim of raising levels of achievement, and so wanted to use methods by which to judge the level of impact made on young people by them accessing project activity.

A small number of projects in England conducted analyses whereby they compared the GCSE performance of young people who had been regular attendees of homework clubs or individual subject revision sessions against the performance of those who had not attended or were irregular attendees of this provision. The judgement made regarding whether attendance of the provision had impacted positively on results was usually made on the basis of an analysis of the actual GCSE results against predicted grades. In general, projects were convinced that their data showed that the provision was helping to raise levels of achievement. However, such conclusions should be treated with some caution. Firstly, such conclusions were typically based on relatively small numbers of young people, and secondly it is not known whether those who had improved on their predicted grade would have done so anyway, not because they had attended the provision but largely through factors associated with their personal characteristics. With regard to the first point, it should be noted that none of

the projects following this approach had conducted a test of significance to determine whether or not the difference between groups was statistically significant.

An example is shown below of the data collected and analysed by a secondary school department for a particular subject at a school which had provided a study club for young people during key stage 4.

Students	No. entered for GCSE	No. gaining pass	% pass	No. gaining A*-C	% A*-C	No. who attended Study Club regularly
Male	6	6	100	3	50	2
Female	32	32	100	22	69	13
Total	38	38	100	25	66	15

The department identified that of those students who had regularly attended the study club, six improved on their predicted grade for the subject, while the others achieved their predicted grade. Of those who attended less regularly, one student improved on their predicted grade, six achieved their predicted grade and three declined. Of those who did not attend any sessions at the study club, none improved on their predicted grade, four declined, and the remainder were as predicted.

A small number of literacy and numeracy focused projects reported that they had used standardised tests at particular time points to determine whether young people had significantly improved in the subject area addressed by the tests. One project in Scotland had used a standardised reading test, as one of its approaches to monitoring and evaluation. However, there had been problems with the particular test as it was many years out-of-date and included 'old fashioned' words and phrases, to the amusement of participants. A replacement test was being sought in consultation with the local authority for use in the remaining two years of the schemes.

Many sports and physical education focused projects relied on informal subjective judgements by providers about the extent to which young people had developed their

skills. This usually took the form of an observation that certain individuals had progressed or that the whole group had progressed, without any measurement of the extent of this development. One scheme that did measure the extent to which individual young people had developed particular skills was the Grimsby Town Football in the Community Scheme, Grimsby, England.

The young people from Years 5 and 6 from each participating primary school were assessed on football-related skills by the coaches on two occasions during the 10-week course. The first assessment occasion was typically during the second session of the course, while the second assessment occasion was during the penultimate or final session. The skills that formed the focus of the assessment were:

- running with the ball
- passing
- dribbling
- coordination

The coaches used a rating scale of 5 – Excellent, 4 – Good, 3 – Competent, 2 – Poor and 1 – Very Poor for their assessment of each young person's performance for each skill. This enabled the project to determine how the young people have progressed on each skill and overall. A total score of 20 points was obtained by summing each young person's score for each of the four skills. The total score was then expressed as a percentage.

The young people were motivated by the assessments, and regarded them as 'fun', as well as provided valuable information for providers to judge the effectiveness of the programme.

7.2.4 Participant evaluation forms

The majority of projects collected information from participants regarding their views on particular aspects of the provision through evaluation forms. These forms were sometimes used alongside other monitoring instruments. The information obtained in this way was used by projects to make additions or alterations to their provision, or to discontinue unpopular activity. This is illustrative of the ways in which many

schemes were responsive to the needs of the young people involved in that they were generally concerned to provide activity that met what young people felt they wanted, but also had specific learning aims and objectives, so this being a fusion of participant-led needs focused on sound pedagogical principles.

The Merthyr Tydfil Youth Access Bus (part of the Merthyr Tydfil Scheme in Wales) used an evaluation form with the young people accessing the provision on the bus. These were young people who were currently not attending school. The form asked them what they thought they had gained from the provision, whether they had enjoyed it, and what were the most and least enjoyable parts. The project analysed young people's responses on the basis of each neighbourhood and by gender. The providers regarded the information obtained as valuable in identifying needs and in forming a basis for the development of the project.

7.2.5 Project review meetings

All schemes reviewed their ongoing provision through consulting with those making a contribution to projects and, sometimes, participants. Such project reviews ranged from brief informal meetings, such as conversations between the school coordinator and teachers during coffee time, to formal after-school meetings with an agenda and minutes taken.

The larger schemes, including those led by a partner organisation from the private, public or voluntary sectors, generally had regular review meetings, either every term or every year, to which representatives of all partner organisations and schools were invited. At these meetings, the progress of the programme was discussed, and decisions made concerning the future direction of the scheme.

A small number of projects directly involved the young people in review meetings. For example, St Patrick's RC Primary School was one of several schools in the Stockton LEA Scheme in England. As part of the monitoring and evaluation approach at the school, young people provided feedback on the NOF-funded after-school clubs and made suggestions for future activities, through the 'children's forum', which comprised elected representatives of each class from Year 2 to Year 6,

who met with senior staff every month. Other schemes consulted young people at the outset about what they would like to see provided. Such an approach to monitoring and evaluation is likely to lead to young people having more 'ownership' of the provision, and consequently more control over their learning outside of the school day.

7.2.6 Quality in Study Support (QiSS)

A small number of the larger schemes involved schools that were following the Quality in Study Support (QiSS) recognition scheme to obtain quality marks for study support at particular levels. One such scheme was the Cardiff Out-of-School-Hours Learning Programme in Wales. At roughly halfway through the scheme, nine schools had been awarded QiSS quality marks, and the scheme was expecting that some further schools would be receiving awards in the near future.

Schools that follow QiSS are required to create an evidence portfolio on the impact of the provision through regular meetings with providers, and advice, if requested from a QiSS 'critical friend'. The approach to monitoring and evaluation is very thorough in QiSS schemes, but this appears to be due to the requirements of QiSS rather than something schools feel they have to complete by way of monitoring and evaluation for The Fund.

7.2.7 Products of projects

Some schemes were such that participants worked over an extended period, usually a whole term, towards a final product.

Arts and craft projects typically had a final product for each individual or the whole group, such as a piece of pottery, a mural, a set of photographs, as the main outcome of the provision. There were examples of displays of young people's work to which parents were invited. As such, the quality of the product, as judged by main providers, was the measure by which they evaluated the success of the project. In many cases, the standard of work produced by young people on these projects was considered high.

In a similar way, performance arts projects had a final product, although ephemeral in nature. These products were drama, music and dance performances. There were examples of young people performing music pieces to the rest of the school at assemblies or at assemblies at other schools. Again, main providers, most whom were professionals in their field, generally regarded the quality of work as being high.

7.3 Perceived Impact

Typically, a researcher or researchers visited each scheme on three occasions during a school year, although a small number of schemes were evaluated over a longer period. On these occasions, interviews were held with key providers, with part of the interviewing focusing on what had been the notable successes of the project, or main benefits that had accrued for participants, up to that time. This research methodology meant that there may well have been other successes or benefits at a time after the final visit had taken place. Indeed, some schemes intimated that they expected a very positive impact on young people in the long term.

At the time of the research visits, all schemes reported notable successes or main benefits to participants as a result of the provision. The providers of the Rooks Heath High School Project, which was part of the London Borough of Harrow Scheme, England, reported a number of benefits, as described below.

Providers at Rooks Heath High School felt that the provision had had a positive impact on the school as a whole. Generally, this impact was in relation to:

- The extension of the school day from 7.30am to 5.00pm
- The fostering of a community spirit within the school between staff and young people
- The heightened commitment of staff to young people
- The rise in confidence and self-esteem amongst young people
- The positive impact on standards of work in terms of National Curriculum assessments and GCSE results
- The increased pride shown by young people in the school

- The positive impact on the ethos of the school
- The fact that out-of-school-hours activity had provided the opportunity for further study for young people who had been finding their schoolwork challenging
- The fact that activity had enabled young people to access skills that the in-school curriculum did not have the flexibility to provide.

Many of the above aspects are not easily measurable, and, not surprisingly, schemes generally did not attempt to do so. As such, this is illustrative of the wide-ranging impact that those who were interviewed believed that activity had had in these areas. It is not possible, due to the research methodology structure, to make any further judgements on this type of evidence, which is largely anecdotal.

The providers of the Cwrt-yr-ala Junior School Project, which was part of the Cardiff Out-of-School-Hours Learning Programme, Wales, similarly felt there had been a number of successes at the time of the research, as described below. Again, these cannot be validated, but are based on the perceptions of the providers involved.

Cwrt-yr-ala Junior School operated a range of clubs and activities funded through the grant. These included an 'accelerated learning' group, a writers' club, a language skills and numeracy group, 'Learn a Language' clubs, and a club for 'more able' readers. The headteacher thought that the most successful aspects of the provision so far had been the improvement in young people's academic standards. For instance, National Curriculum assessment results had improved, particularly in English. The headteacher also believed that the clubs and activities were invaluable for *'raising self-esteem'*, and that had happened by *'stimulating their interest, making work a pleasure'*.

The teacher that ran the 'Learn a Language' clubs felt that teaching foreign languages and making them fun was good both for the young people and a good experience for secondary school teachers such as herself.

For participants, it was often the little things that they found helpful in their learning

, for example, as one commented that the library club had helped him *'to know where the books are and to know what section the books are in'*.

Overall, the headteacher underlined that the project was *'an unmitigated success'* with the school *'able to buy things'*, especially through *'a trip to* [a bookshop] *for Year 5's to buy a book each to put in the school library'*.

Schemes that provided after-school homework clubs reported that as a main benefit to young people was that there was a warm supportive environment where they could complete their homework. There was a childcare element for some young people regarding projects of this type, as otherwise they would have been going home to an empty house. For others, it was the opportunity to do work without distractions from others, as one young person explained: *'It's easier to do your homework, you don't get your little sister running around and things like that, or the dog jumping up'*.

Providers of arts and craft and performance arts projects felt that participants had made significant advances in particular skills in these areas. Similarly, sports and physical education focused projects reported that many participants had progressed in their skills (though many of these projects did not take the opportunity to measure skill development, which would have provided valuable information). Many of the young people themselves commented that they had welcomed the opportunity to have more time on these areas, as they had been frustrated by the limited time available at school. As such, they felt that a main benefit for them had been the development of specific skills, but equally important for them was that the experience had been an enjoyable one. Whether such advances are reinforced or developed further will depend on the extent to which the participants are able to take part in similar activity at school or elsewhere.

For projects with a main aim of supporting transition from one phase of schooling to the next, the notable successes, according to providers, had been that young people were more confident about this process as they had benefited from attending sessions at their likely destination school, had used some of the school facilities, and had meet some of their future teachers. The young people themselves echoed this benefit. As

one young person from Year 6 said: '*I didn't know what it would be like … it's a big school .. but now I've been there, and know where some of the rooms are, and some of the teachers, I'm not so worried about going there*'.

Many schemes spoke about a general improvement in young people's attitudes to learning, and increases in their confidence, self-esteem and motivation, which was anticipated would lead to improved academic performance at a later date. For a small number of schemes, there was an observation that there had been a decrease in anti-social behaviour on the part of some young people, such as fewer reports from the local police of incidents of graffiti and other acts of vandalism by young people on the way home after school.

Some schemes spoke about the benefits that were accruing for providers and support workers. These included young people who had worked as peer mentors having developed their communication and social skills, and were showing more self-confidence back at school. Other schemes in which teachers were supporting activity delivered by non-teacher professionals, such as musicians or artists, observed that this was providing an element of professional development for the teachers concerned. Some teachers had worked with young people from year groups outside of their everyday experience, such as secondary school teachers delivering 'taster' sessions to young people from primary schools. The teachers felt that this had been an enjoyable experience and had contributed to their professional development, enabling them to develop their experience of working with young people of various ages.

7.4 Discussion

It was apparent, especially during the early part of the NFER evaluation, that many schemes needed to develop more fully their approach to monitoring and evaluation in order to obtain more useful information from participants that could be used to judge the effectiveness of the provision, and to redirect activity where necessary. A number of schemes appeared to be relying largely on anecdotal evidence concerning the impact provision had had on young people's performance or attitudes.

For literacy and numeracy focused projects, it is a good idea to use standardised tests to measure the impact, which a small number of schemes did, provided the content of the tests matches the general content of the provision. However, it is not prudent to use formal assessment instruments, such as standardised tests, during actual sessions, as this is likely to be demotivating for the young people. Providers should appreciate that any significant improvement in young people's skills, as indicated by the tests, may be only partly due to the provision as there are likely to be other targeted programmes of work on the subject area for these young people within school. Furthermore, any significant improvement is more likely to appear over the longer term.

A main criticism that could be made of a number of the evaluation forms devised and used by schemes was that they focused entirely on what young people had liked and disliked and, sometimes, on what they thought might be improved. These forms would have collected more useful information if they had included a small number of questions about what participants felt they were actually gaining by attending the provision. Also, the evaluation forms provided very little information from participants on specific aspects of the provision that providers wanted feedback on. A further problem with one or two evaluation forms, devised by non-teacher professionals, was that the reading content of the form was too complex for the participants to read and understand.

A small number of schemes were following the QiSS recognition scheme to obtain quality marks for study support. It may be that other schemes with schools not following QiSS would benefit from doing so, and smaller schemes might gainfully employ QiSS-type practices.

There is no doubt that providers believed that the grant had enabled schools to extend the curriculum, either within school or in the wider community, to the benefit of large numbers of young people, who gained not only in an academic sense but also in terms of developing their personal and social skills. It was also evident that many teachers and other providers were committed to continuing out-of-school-hours provision, recognising the benefits for young people, providers and the wider community. However, there were widespread concerns in all four countries that such benefits

might be short lived, as many providers felt that projects, or large parts of them, were not sustainable beyond the period of funding.

It is not possible, due to the research methodology structure, to make any further judgements on the veracity of this evidence for many of the schemes. What can be said is that some of the schemes did have structures for monitoring and evaluation in place, but to say, with any certainty, that Fund OSHL activity had definite impact on young people is not possible. The reason for this, is that young people are often exposed to a wide range of interventions and developments in school, so to disaggregate impact of just one, relatively small, intervention is not possible. The monitoring and evaluation approaches generally taken highlighted what were perceived to be benefits of involvement, but little else. This is not to suggest, in any way, that monitoring and evaluation activity should not be carried out, but rather to highlight its limitations and the claims that can be made from the results.

Chapter 8

Sustainability

8.1 Chapter Summary

This chapter describes the views held by providers in each country regarding the likelihood of sustainability. It includes examples of plans undertaken in a small number of schemes to ensure that elements of provision might continue beyond the period of funding by the Fund.

Scheme coordinators in all four countries were asked in interviews about their plans for the sustainability of the scheme beyond the period of funding. In the first year of provision by schemes, the overwhelming majority reported that sustainability was not an issue for them at that time, as they were more concerned about getting activity set up and established.

In the second year of provision by schemes, the plans for sustainability for the majority of schemes remained vague. A small number had identified possible sources for future funding, but there was little evidence of longer term planning. Some of the smaller schemes reported that they did not expect to be operating after the period of funding, or if they were then it would be in a greatly reduced form.

Schemes generally did not think that they would be able to obtain financial support from local companies, either because there were very few or no companies of a reasonable size to approach or because where there were such companies they were already supporting other education initiatives.

8.2 Sustainability

The majority of schemes in the evaluation sample had funding for three years, after which it was anticipated that they would seek funding and/or in-kind support from other sources in order to sustain the scheme, perhaps in a reduced form. As a main

part of the research, providers in all schemes were asked in interviews about any plans they had for sustaining the scheme beyond the period of funding.

In the first year of schemes, the overwhelming majority reported that sustainability was not an issue for them at that time. Providers said that they were more concerned with getting activity set up and established, indicating that sustainability would be of more concern to them from the mid-point of the funding period. As one scheme coordinator noted:

> *What we are doing now is making sure we've got our structures in place, the right people delivering the programme, and the children making use of the activities, enjoying them, and benefiting in all sorts of way. Now, if we can demonstrate that this is making a positive difference to their learning, then I'm sure that the government, or whoever, will put more money into it. So in a way, we are taking a wait and see position.*

However, in the second year of funding, the plans of most schemes for sustainability generally remained vague, with many appearing hopeful that 'something will turn up'. This was not to say that schemes did not recognise that Out-of-School-Hours Learning was of value but, at a time when there was increased pressure on school budgets, schools were more concerned about resourcing and delivering the curriculum.

A small number of schemes had identified possible sources for further funding that could be used, but very little in the way of longer term planning for sustainability was evident. In fact many of the smaller schemes, such as those in single schools or in consortia of schools indicated that they did not expect to be operating after the period of funding, or if they were then it would be in a greatly reduced form. In these cases, it was expected that there would be substantially fewer activities, fewer participants or year groups involved, a reduced timetable, and no 'extras', such as refreshments or visits to places of interest.

One scheme that had clearly been very proactive in exploring avenues for future funding, despite a number of challenges, was the Barnardo's After School Project, Belfast, Northern Ireland. Described below are details concerning the funding of the

Barnardo's scheme, which had been working with ten primary schools and one secondary school in Belfast, and their plans with regard to future funding.

The Barnardo's Scheme in Belfast was felt to be extremely important and something worth continuing beyond the period of funding by the Fund. Barnardo's itself was committed to this type of study support and was prepared to continue its commitment. Two principals of schools who were interviewed as part of the research believed that it was vital that the scheme should continue, one referring to the provision as *'the life and blood of school life, here now five days a week'*. To withdraw the scheme now was seen as disadvantaging the young people again.

The greatest challenge to the work of Barnardo's, identified both by the organisation itself and school staff, was securing future funding. The previous year (2000), the grant from the Fund had been delayed whilst the scheme was waiting for its statutory funding to be confirmed. At the time, there was a severe funding crisis, with Barnardo's in the position of issuing notices to staff and considering how to reduce its service to schools. This insecurity impeded long-term planning, but the fact that staff retention was so good was believed to be a testament to their commitment to the work. Both Barnardo's and school staff made the suggestion that the provision should be 'mainstreamed' in some way, so that it would become an entitlement for all young people. Senior scheme staff lobbied the Department of Education in Northern Ireland (DENI) to adopt the scheme and to put some statutory funding towards it.

In 2001, the lobbying had proved successful and the Minister of Education had intervened through the Department to sustain the provision whilst longer-term funding was sought. The scheme was relaunched in September 2002 under its new name 'Learning Together'. At that time, Barnardo's applied to The Children's Fund for three years of funding that would from 2003 replace the grant from the Fund of £56,000 per year. In January 2003, Barnardo's heard that they had been unsuccessful with the application, and so began a search for other sources of future funding. This resulted in a sum of £17,000 from a national bank for specific activities, but in the autumn 2003, Barnardo's were continuing their search.

It should be noted that the Barnardo's Scheme was not typical of schemes in each country regarding their efforts to secure further funding from an early stage. This scheme also highlights the fact that searching for future funding is a time-consuming and often frustrating exercise. Some perspectives on the issue of sustainability from other schemes are highlighted below.

The Glasgow City Council Scheme in Scotland received approximately £5 million over five years to run Out-of-School-Hours Learning activities in over 80 schools. A small part of the provision made was an arts club, a tennis club, and a 'Fiddle Playing Club' at St Agnes' Primary School. In June 2002, the coordinator of the 'Fiddle Playing Club' was asked about sustainability, and her responses are typical of the uncertainty about the future of many of the schemes, not only in Scotland but also in all four countries, at that time.

The project coordinator was unsure whether the 'Fiddle Playing Club' and the other clubs would continue after the funding had ceased. For the 'Fiddle Playing Club', there was the expense of purchasing the violins and the cost of tuition. It was anticipated that only one of the young people attending the 'Fiddle Playing Club' would be able to continue taking lessons because of the expense, coupled with the financial position of the parents. The norm within the Scottish education system was that music provision was for the musically 'gifted', but this project provided an opportunity for all young people who were interested in accessing violin tuition to do so.

The music tutor leading the tuition described the broader context: *'Children if given the opportunity to play a musical instrument will do it well. Private schools have this facility, some other schools have the opportunity if the children pay £80 per term.'*

The project coordinator added: *'If we knew that the funding was on-going or going to continue we could do so much more. These are not sports* [referring to the tennis club] *and activities these kids will get the chance to do, but kids in private schools do.'*

There were a number of examples like this project in all four countries, where those delivering activity were unsure whether funding would be in place for future provision. Generally, providers appeared to have had little knowledge about any planning that might have been taking place at a higher level. Some providers expressed views along the lines that there was little point in looking ahead, the most important aspect was that some young people now were benefiting from schemes, and that should be applauded.

A small number of schemes were optimistic about continuing despite no obvious source of further funding. This was the case for the Whiston Stars (Striving for Achievement and Results) Project, Knowsley LEA, England.

The Whiston Stars Project was considered by providers to be well worth continuing. Study support in Knowsley was now regarded as an integral part of provision in the community and so would continue in some form. However, without money from the Fund, the schools and partner organisations would have to look for alternative sources of funding to continue it at the level at which it currently operates. At least half the schools and partner organisations had intimated that they were planning to extend the range of activities on offer, despite the fact that there was no extra money.

Some schemes were particularly concerned that activity would have to be significantly reduced after the period of funding, because of the staff costs involved, and the fact that schools did not feel able to commit funding from their school budgets to support future provision. One example was the Leicestershire LEA Scheme in England, which operated a study support centre for young people at Melton Mowbray Library, and had initiated a range of activity at outlying village schools and community centres.

Although the Melton Mowbray Library homework club was likely to continue within the library's existing resources, there were increased cost implications and difficulties to do with staffing for the scheme to continue in the outlying village schools/community centres.

The Study Support manager had spoken to many headteachers in the area about whether they would be willing to fund a study support worker to run a club at their school. The majority did not feel that they could fund the scheme in this way. This said, a number of schools had continued to run a homework club following its initiation by the library. Ultimately it was noted that the outlying village schools need a strong commitment to study support for the scheme to continue. Furthermore, without the financial support of the county council for staffing it would be more difficult to sustain.

It is of interest to note that the greatest expense for the overwhelming majority of schemes was on staffing. As an approximate figure, this accounted for around 80 per cent of the cost of running activity, according to providers. The intention to use staff directed time to continue activity beyond the period of funding appeared to be particularly rare. Moreover, it emerged during fieldwork that a number of schemes were 'irritated' by the suggestion, attributed to the DfES or The Fund, that there was a sizeable pool of volunteers with particular skills and expertise that could be drawn upon to lead and support future activity. While some schemes did have input from local volunteers, this was extremely rare, and many schemes felt that it would not be a worthwhile exercise to attempt to locate and recruit volunteers for any future provision, especially if this might not take place anyway.

With regard to local companies providing financial support, there were challenges for many LEAs and schools. In a number of cases, there were very few or no companies of a reasonable size that could be approached to fund any continuation of the scheme. In other cases, all local companies had recently been approached and were supporting other initiatives, such as the EiC initiative in England, and could not be expected to provide further sponsorship. Furthermore, for some schools there were ethical considerations with regard to seeking funding from local companies. One headteacher felt that there was a strong possibility that obtaining sponsorship from particular local companies would conflict with the ethos and principles of the school. In this regard, it is worth noting that this school was involved in a national healthy eating initiative.

Some schemes were also concerned about sustainability because of the ongoing transport costs. This was a particular concern for schemes in isolated rural areas in Scotland and Wales, where young people often had to travel considerable distances from home to school and other venues where provision was offered. Interestingly, the provision that was centred on Melton Mowbray library as part of the Leicestershire LEA Scheme, mentioned earlier in this chapter, had formed a partnership with a local bus company, which provided free transport to young people to and from schools, the library and young people's homes in what is a rural area of England. It may be that many schemes could benefit from such partnerships.

A small number of schemes reported that they had considered asking for a payment from parents to support future provision, but they (the schemes) had rejected this idea, as the amount of money that would be obtained would be small and it was thought that any payment could deter young people from disadvantaged families.

8.3 Discussion

At the time of the research (mainly in school years 2000/1 to 2002/3), the general view across schemes in all four countries about the likelihood of large-scale sustainability was relatively pessimistic. However, this did not deter a small number of schemes from making plans for sustainability at an early stage. It is possible that other schemes might have gained from making such plans, although it is appreciated that this was a time-consuming exercise.

There appeared at the time of the research to be a likelihood of significant differences amongst the four countries in the level of sustainability that might be achieved. It appeared that sustainability might be easier in England than elsewhere, as there were thought to be a greater number of funding sources, and generally more commercial organisations that could be approached for funding or in-kind support, despite the difficulties mentioned earlier. However, in Scotland the McCrone agreement (SEED, 2001) was set, limiting the hours that teachers should work per week, which specified that teachers would have five hours a week with young people that was beyond their normal teaching duties, to be used at the discretion of the headteacher. Some scheme providers in Scotland thought that this could result in teachers having more capacity

to provide OSHL activity, and therefore could lead to a staffing resource for the future.

The position regarding possible funding sources for Out-of-School-Hours Learning activities had clearly been changing rapidly throughout the fieldwork stage and afterwards. For that reason, a further piece of research was conducted in October 2003 in order to investigate matters to do with funding, including what provision, if any, country governments/assemblies were making to ensure the continued development of Out-of-School-Hours Learning. The findings from this research are reported in Chapter 9 – Country Specific Element of OSHL.

Chapter 9

Country Specific Element of OSHL

9.1 Chapter Summary

This chapter will examine specific issues relating to OSHL in the four countries of the UK.

9.2 General Comments

Discussions concerning England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales were held with representatives of The Fund. The purpose of the discussions was to explore how country-specific policy has and will continue to impact on OSHL in the future. Whilst this activity did not form part of the initial evaluation brief, it was felt that the impact of devolution and country-specific policy on both current development and sustainability of OSHL was becoming so great, that it was important these issues were included in the study.   An interview schedule was developed that addressed the following issues:

- how in-country policy has developed over the past two years with regards to OSHL
- future development of policy
- provision made by country governments/assemblies to ensure the continued development of OSHL.

9.3 General Issues

By 2001, the New Opportunities Fund had allocated £180 million to promote and improve OSHL provision throughout the UK. With the publication of the Green Paper *Building on Success* (DfEE, 2001) the Government announced plans to modernise secondary education and OSHL was mentioned as a key element. By 2002, a further £25 million had been allocated to provide an additional 250,000 places for young people to attend summer schools.

There are general features relating to OSHL in the four countries that illustrates the ongoing commitment to OSHL in the UK. These include:

- governments/assemblies support for OSHL activities since the Millennium
- positive impact of OSHL activities to date, relating to re-engaging young people with learning, improving truancy and attendance levels and increased confidence and motivation for learning
- a realisation by governments/assemblies of the positive contribution of OSHL activities
- a strong philosophical and/or financial commitment by governments/assemblies towards promoting and developing study support and OSHL in the future.

9.4 Country Specific Issues

This section will explore themes specific to each of the four countries, focusing on how policy has and will develop, and the impact of this.

9.4.1 England

9.4.1.1 Background and Context

The DfES has demonstrated on-going commitment towards the development of OSHL within England. This has been evidenced through a number of their initiatives. Currently all LEAs receive funding for OSHL provision directly from the Government via the Standards Fund (this being additional to activity provided by Fund monies). LEAs are entitled to retain a percentage of this funding to provide OSHL provision across the authority however, most of the funds are devolved to schools. At a strategic level DfES are keen for continued funding of study support co-ordinators.

In 2002, the Government announced plans for the roll out of Extended schools in England (DfES, 2002). Extended schools will provide a range of functions including providing young people, their families and the wider community with access to study support, childcare and life long learning. The aim is for at least one school within each LEA to have Extended school status by 2006, and each will also serve and

support local schools. Extended schools will be created in the most deprived areas of England, for example in Excellence in Cities (EiC) areas.

In recent years, OSHL activity has broadened and has moved away from concentrating on academic subjects. Young people have been encouraged to participate in a variety of OSHL schemes, including sport-related activities, the arts and drama and healthy eating initiatives. For example, Playing for Success is a Government initiative that establishes study support centres at sport grounds (i.e. football and rugby grounds) encouraging young people to learn through sport activities. Another initiative which includes OSHL is Creative Partnerships. This initiative encourages creativity amongst young people making good use of partnership working with artists and other creative organisations in some of the most deprived areas in England. Originally envisaged as an OSHL activity, it has now developed into supporting activity within schools hours.

9.4.1.2 Future development

Last year, the Government proposed that all schools should provide OSHL activities for their students by 2006. Schools will be expected to improve links with the community and increase parental and voluntary work in OSHL activities.

Further commitment towards future OSHL provision is demonstrated by the government's announcement that £75 million will be made available for OSHL for each year from 2003 to 2006. This includes the £19 million available specifically for EiC and Excellence Clusters.

During this year and next, a variety of funding streams will be amalgamated into one grant called the School Development Grant, which will encompass previously ring-fenced funding for study support and OSHL. From 2004, LEAs and schools will have greater autonomy over expenditure of their allocated funds enabling schools to make a more informed decision about how best to prioritise resources for the benefit of their young people. The implications for OSHL may be substantively better, if schools choose to prioritise OSHL activities, or worse, if schools prioritise other areas as more in need of additional financial support. The Fund hopes that LEAs and schools will see the benefits of OSHL and will continue to fund such activity in the future.

9.4.2 Scotland

9.4.2.1 Background and Context

There is a strong commitment to OSHL in Scotland with estimates that over 375,000 pupils took part in study support activity during 2001-02. Significant additional funding is available for OSHL both directly from the Scottish Executive and from other NOF funding programmes.

During 1999 – 2002, The Scottish Executive invested £27 million in OSHL/study support from the Excellence Fund. A further £44 million was committed for 2002 – 2006, from the National Priorities Action Fund (formerly the Excellence Fund). This funding is to be distributed as follows:

2002-03   £10 million
2003-04   £10 million
2004-05   £12 million
2005-06   £12 million

Indeed within Scotland, every education authority receives funding from the Scottish Executive for OSHL/study support from the Scottish Executive's National Priorities Action Fund. This funding is intended to be targeted at the same groups as benefited under the Fund's OSHL programme i.e. those who are disadvantaged or at risk of under achievement. It intends to support delivery of a range of out of school hours learning activities to help pupils reach higher standards of attainment and raise their levels of self esteem and confidence. The aim is to ensure that OSHL/study support activities are available in all secondary schools and selected primaries.

The Scottish Executive also funds the Scottish Study Support Network (SSSN) which is based at Strathclyde University. The SSSN was set up to support all those involved in promoting, planning and delivering OSHL/study support. It is the national co-ordinating group for the OSHL/study support co-ordinators with the education authorities in Scotland

In addition to supporting OSHL/study support, the Scottish Executive also promotes a link between childcare and OSHL/study support. The Fund's out of school hours childcare programme has funded projects that combine care and learning and its new opportunities for quality childcare programme has 'projects which combine care and learning' as one of its priorities. This means Childcare partnerships had the opportunity to include projects that combine childcare and out of school hours learning if these were identified as a local priority in their area. The Fund made £14.5 million available for this programme.

New community schools, similar to Extended Schools in England, have been introduced in Scotland. Since 1999, 430 schools have adopted the new community school approach. From 2002, the Scottish Executive has, and is, providing around £78 million to encourage schools to adopt the new community school approach with the aim for all schools to be new community schools by the end of 2007. New community schools aim to promote social inclusion and raise standards by addressing the needs of young people. These schools encourage involvement from parents and the wider community, and promote the delivery of a range of services including family support, family learning and health improvement. The move to increase community schools has positive implications for OSHL/study support in that the increase in community schools will support young people and the community in a variety of ways.

9.4.2.2 Future Development

It is felt to be difficult to report how policy will specifically develop in the future other than to reiterate the Scottish Executive's commitment to extending new community schools and further promote OSHL/study support. The Executive's aim is to provide OSHL/study support in all secondary schools and selected primary schools across Scotland. OSHL/study support is an increasingly embedded notion for Scottish education. This is illustrated by the continued and increased funding for OSHL/study support provision. The Fund intends however to continue to discuss the future sustainability of out of school hours learning, with the Scottish Executive.

9.4.3 Northern Ireland

9.4.3.1 Background and Context

Due to the suspension of the devolved administration, there has been very little policy development relating to OSHL to date in Northern Ireland.

The education system in Northern Ireland has a number of distinctive features. In 2000, the Burns Report (DENI, 2001) outlined proposals for major educational reform. The report examined the realignment of schools and promoted religious integration, thus advocating an end to the segregated schools structure and the 11-plus system. The Post-primary Review Working Group was set up in April 2003 to advise the Education Minister on options for future post-primary arrangements, taking account of the responses to the consultation on the Burns Report. The Group submitted its report (the Costello Report), and in January 2004 the Education Minister announced new post primary arrangements and confirmed that academic selection would end in autumn 2008.

The OSHL programme has involved almost 850 schools across Northern Ireland. Until the Fund's commitment to developing OSHL provision, there was limited funding in Northern Ireland for after school learning activities. As such the Fund has been Northern Ireland's main financial supporter of OSHL activities, acting as a catalyst in its promotion and development. Initially, individual schools and community and voluntary sector bodies led the bidding. Education and Library Boards and other school authorities then developed more extensive consortium bids with a greater strategic focus. Bids then became focused on strategic themes and developed activities with greater co-ordination and partnership working with schools and community/voluntary sector partners. In some instances this has led to partnership working across communities as well.

The Northern Ireland Programme for Government 2001 – 2004, stated a commitment to improve school performance by supporting under–achieving schools, small primary schools and increased out-of-school hours-learning opportunities. The Second Programme for Government 2002-2005, 4.3 Sub-priority 1: stated 'We will provide high quality education and training for all… to improve standards, we will continue to

increase pre-school provision and maintain programmes of support for under-achieving schools, small primary schools and for increased out-of-school hours learning opportunities' (OFMDFM, 2002).

9.4.3.2 Future Development

Due to the suspension of the devolved administration it is difficult to predict how policy will develop in the future in relation to OSHL in Northern Ireland. However, it is important to note that, prior to suspension, the devolved administration saw OSHL as a very valuable and positive development for education. However currently no future funding for OSHL has been explicitly identified.

9.4.4 Wales

9.4.4.1 Background and Context

The Welsh Assembly strategic policy document on education, 'The Learning Country' (National Assembly for Wales, 2002) sets out its desire for schools to act as a community resource both in school time and out of school hours. It is gives a commitment to provide every school with a full prospectus of out of school learning activities by 2010.

The Assembly commissioned Education Extra (now ContinYou) to develop an OSHL Code of Practice, together with associated training materials. The Code draws upon a number of projects across Wales and is intended to promote good developmental practice. The Assembly also supports two ContinYou development officers and its Community /Transfer project, which enables clusters of schools to develop a co-ordinated plan for community school activities with an initial focus on developing OHSL to support primary/secondary transition. The Assembly's Better Schools Fund also includes a measure for training teachers and out of school hours co-ordinators.

The Assembly's plans for a specific funding programme to support out of school hours learning is currently dependent on the outcome of a major review of expenditure.

Other initiatives that relate to out of school hours learning include:

- The Welsh Assembly's policy on young people 'Extending Entitlement' is based on the principle that young people have rights and responsibilities and there should be a comprehensive service framework to support and help them realise their potential and become full and active citizens. Services for young people are co-ordinated through local Young People's Partnerships. Local Young People's Fora have been set up to consult young people.

- The Learning Pathways for 14 – 19 year olds aims to get 95 per cent of young people ready for high-skill level employment or higher education by 2015. The programme provides flexible pathways, through academic, vocational and occupational qualifications, by which young people can learn and achieve. Young people will be able to gain accreditation for relevant experience gained in work and other settings, including out of school learning activities.

- The Assembly has issued guidance on the development of Community Focussed Schools as resource centres for young people and the wider community. Out of school hours learning activities would fit well within this new role for schools, however they are expected to be self-financing and there is no new funding available at present.

- The Sports Council for Wales is implementing the Assembly's PE and School Sport Action Plan through the establishment of Curriculum Development Centres - clusters of schools, sometimes working with colleges and leisure facilities, charged with developing PE and sport in their area. One objective is to promote the use of sports facilities by young people outside school hours.

- The Assembly has recently committed to provide young people in disadvantaged areas with a daily free healthy breakfast. This will have an impact on the future development of breakfast clubs in these areas.

- The Welsh Network of Healthy Schools aims to promote the health and well being of young people through the promotion of good nutrition and healthy lifestyles in schools. The programme receives some financial support from the

Assembly and includes some health promotion and exercise activities that take place out of school hours.

- The Youth Justice Board supports the local Youth Offending Teams in running sporting and other activities during school holidays. The activities aim to divert young people away from anti-social and offending behaviour, and work alongside youth intervention programmes. These activities have been largely supported by Home Office funding, although the New Opportunities Fund has supported further development of these activities in some areas.

9.4.4.2 Future Development

Although the Assembly has a long-term policy commitment to the development of out of school hours learning, the financial support to take this forward is currently dependent on the outcome of a major review of expenditure. The Fund is working with the Assembly's Education Division on measures aimed at sustaining the activities developed under the out of school hours learning programme.

9.5 Other Programmes

The Fund is also continuing to support the OSHL agenda through other programmes. Namely:

9.5.1 Out of school hours learning / School Sports Co-ordinators (or School Sports Activities as it is known in Wales)

This programme aims to provide out of school hours learning creative, sporting, physical and outdoor activities to promote pupils' well being and contribute to their personal and social development. Working with **sport**scotland, Sport England, Dragon Sport (in Wales), and the Sport Council of Northern Ireland, the programme aims to support innovative activities that combine sport, education and health outcomes, for young people who would not normally be expected to participate in physical activities (In Wales the programme targets primary level and transition

pupils in particular). This programme, totalling almost £25.5m (gross) in the UK, will be committed by the end of 2004.

9.5.2 New Opportunities for PE and Sport (NOPES)

The New Opportunities for PE and School Sport programme will commit a total of £750 million in the UK for projects designed to bring about a step-change in the provision of sporting facilities for young people and for the community generally. A key aim of this programme is to modernise existing, and building new, indoor and outdoor sports facilities for school and community use. It is hoped this investment will encourage the use of school buildings outside of schools hours, by both pupils and the wider community.

In Scotland in particular, where there is an *activities* element, the programme supports the OSHL agenda more closely. In addition to providing £52 million (gross) to invest in facilities, £35 million (gross) of the programme is going to support projects that fall into two different strands: one for out of school hours activity (OSHA) projects and the other for *active steps* projects.

- OSHA offers children and young people, aged five to 16, a wide range of sporting and cultural activities, including dance, outdoor education, adventure and other challenging pursuits outside the normal school day.
- *Active steps* funds activities designed to promote the role of sport in diverting children and young people, aged five to 16, from crime or behaviours likely to lead to crime.

In August 2002, policy directions issued by the Government, after consultation with the Scottish Executive, provided an additional £1.3 million of funding for diversionary activities. This represented Scotland's 'share' (11.5 per cent) of the funds allocated to support the Splash summer activity programmes run by the Youth Justice Board in England and Wales. In accordance with the directions given by the Scottish Executive, these funds were added to the LA allocations for the *active steps* strand.

The Fund's participation in 'Awards for All' will allow schools to continue to apply for funds to deliver out of school hours learning activities. Many projects funded through the 'Space for Sport and the Arts programme' (a joint initiative between Sport England, Arts Council England and the Fund) in England are also intending to link these facilities to projects receiving OSHL funding.

9.6 Conclusion

It is evident that the financial contribution of The Fund towards OSHL has made many positive contributions in each of the four countries. The financial commitment and policy provision committed by governments/assemblies demonstrates their political and financial support of OSHL activities. This said, it appears that where there is a degree of financial and political uncertainty this will undoubtedly impact on future policy development. Specifically, in Northern Ireland and Wales, uncertainty remains in relation to specific OSHL policy development in the future. Having said this, the situation is more certain in Scotland and England where continued funding has been allocated for OSHL/study support activity in the future.

Chapter 10

Conclusions

10.1 Chapter Summary

This chapter gives details regarding the level of success achieved by The Fund in meeting its stated objectives in relation to a range of issues that emerged during the fieldwork. This chapter ends with a section focusing on the overall success of the programme in which the researchers give their views on the extent to which it has achieved its original objectives.

10.2 General Comments

As mentioned elsewhere in this report, it should be noted that these conclusions are largely based on the opinions of providers, as the methodology was such that the amount of observation of activity was limited. Furthermore, aims and objectives to do with raising levels of academic achievement are not likely to emerge in a significant sense in the short-term, and may only appear after the lifetime of the funded scheme.

The stated objectives of The Fund's Out-of-School-Hours Learning Programme were:

- To set up, improve and develop Out-of-School-Hours Learning activities, encouraging innovation and diversity
- To provide learning activities that encourage and motivate young people and build their self-esteem
- To raise levels of achievement in school
- To benefit those who suffer from disadvantage and who would benefit most from help to raise achievement.

These provide the basis for the discussion included in this chapter and for the recommendations highlighted in Chapter 11.

10.3 Issues

10.3.1 Raising levels of achievement

Raising levels of achievement within schools was one of the stated objectives of The Fund's Out-of-School-Hours Learning Programme. In an 'academic' sense (i.e. in relation to National Curriculum test scores or end-of-course examination results), there was no valid hard evidence to suggest that activity had led to this outcome in the lifetime of the schemes, whether they had this was an explicit scheme aim or not. It is likely though that changes in young people's attitudes to learning and increased motivation may well lead to raising levels of achievement in the longer-term. However, this is outside the scope of this research.

In a 'non-academic' sense (i.e. in relation to young people's skills in such areas as arts and craft and sports skills), many young people taking part in enrichment/extension activity had improved in particular skills during their involvement in these projects, as measured by skills checklists used on some sports focused projects or through judgement by teachers and non-teacher professionals making provision in arts and craft and similar areas. The extent to which such gains for young people are maintained beyond the period of project funding would appear to be largely dependent on whether the young people are able to continue their involvement in further activity.

10.3.2 Motivation and self-esteem

The Fund encouraged schemes to devise learning programmes that would help increase young people's motivation and self-esteem. According to providers, project activity had indeed had this outcome for many participants. Also, a number of young people who were interviewed as part of this research made comments describing how they were feeling more confident and more motivated about future learning as a result of attending the provision. This was particularly so for young people from primary schools who were attending transition schemes and for those attending projects in which they had the opportunity to spend more concentrated time on a subject area in which they were interested, such as performance arts (i.e. music, dance, drama), arts and craft, and IT/ICT projects.

There were a small number of schemes that had been set up to meet the particular needs of young people who were disaffected or becoming disaffected with learning. Although young people from these groups were accessing the provision, providers typically thought that it was too early to judge whether a significant, positive effect on attitudes to learning, motivation, self-esteem and other related areas had resulted.

10.3.3 Innovation and diversity

A stated objective of The Fund was to encourage innovation and diversity amongst the schemes. Across the schemes in all four countries there was a diverse range of projects in evidence, including homework clubs, literacy and numeracy focused projects, sports and physical education focused projects, performance arts projects, arts and craft projects, IT/ICT projects, breakfast clubs, family learning projects, individual subject revision sessions and projects for 'more able' young people. There were other types of project as well, including gardening clubs, first aid courses, enterprise clubs, visits to universities, conservation clubs, cookery for boys, team building/problem-solving activities, and foreign language clubs for primary age pupils.

Generally, providers thought that much of their provision was innovative in terms of offering new experiences to young people. This innovative approach related to such aspects as activity provided at non-school sites, the use of a greater range and higher quality of resources, teaching and learning styles that were more informal than that of the school day, the employment of non-teacher professionals, the opportunity for young people to work with others from a wider age range or from other schools, and course content. Even homework clubs, which superficially may have appeared quite traditional, often included elements, such as the opportunity for participant choice, social interaction and the use of computers to play games, that made the experience more stimulating for participants.

10.3.4 Transition projects

Projects that had aims relating to supporting young people's transition from primary to secondary school were perceived by providers as being particularly successful in reassuring young people about aspects of the secondary school that most would

shortly be joining. Participants had the opportunity to see the secondary school, meet some of the teachers, experience 'taster' activities in new subject areas, and work alongside pupils from other schools. Secondary school teachers felt that this type of project would result in a shorter settling in period for young people on joining the secondary school, leading to higher levels of achievement during the first and subsequent years of secondary schooling.

Primary schools in a small number of these projects wanted to gain from this type of provision as well, so they included some pupils in their penultimate year of primary school, with the general view that the experience would increase their motivation during their final year.

10.3.5 Arts and sports

Arts and sports focused projects generally appeared successful in attracting young people for whom homework clubs had little appeal. Providers reported that this type of provision had been devised to enrich or extend the curriculum and was attracting young people who were less 'academically' inclined, as well as those who were 'more academic'. These projects were clearly successful while they were operating, with providers reporting gains for young people in their social and communication skills, for example, cooperating as a member of a team, as well as in skills relating to the content of the activity. However, few projects appeared to have given much thought to the further development of young people's skills in such areas after funding for the project had ceased.

10.3.6 Scheme management

A great deal of the success achieved by schemes could be attributed to the fact that schemes were well managed, whether by an LEA/EA/ELB, a consortium of schools, a single school or a partner organisation from the private, public or voluntary sector. Generally, partner organisations managing schemes had the necessary structures and contacts with schools and other organisations to put scheme plans into operation and to ensure its smooth running.

For schools managing schemes, successful coordination was a result of the scheme being managed either by a member of a school's senior management team (SMT) or by someone at a lower level who had been given sufficient responsibility to make decisions, reporting back to SMT as and when necessary.

However, a small number of schemes experienced difficulties because of the lack of information that was passed on when there was a change of scheme coordinator. Also, in many cases the amount of scheme management and administration that schemes had to conduct in order for them to operate successfully was considerably more than they had initially anticipated. A small number of scheme/school coordinators questioned whether the amount of time and effort involved had been worthwhile in relation to the outcomes.

10.3.7 Partnership working

Most schemes had input from one or more partners from the private, public or voluntary sectors, and/or comprised a consortium of schools working together. There were a number of different partnership models in evidence across the schemes in all four countries. In almost all cases the partnership arrangements worked well, although for some schemes there was often a considerable amount of liaison necessary between schools and partners before and during the programme.

It was largely through the involvement of partner organisations that many schemes addressed the stated objective of The Fund concerning setting up and developing learning activities that encouraged innovation and diversity. It was apparent that the involvement of partner organisations added to the quality of schemes in all four countries. For instance, participants on a number of schemes had the opportunity to work with non-teacher professionals, who had specific skills that motivated the young people concerned.

10.3.8 Linkage to other initiatives

A number of schemes took into consideration local and national initiatives so that the scheme complemented other work taking place or about to start in schools. These initiatives included:

- the Learning in Neighbourhood Centre (LINC) scheme, for a scheme in England

- the EiC programme in England

- The Scottish Executive's audit and improvement planning tool *'How Good is Our School?'*, for a scheme in Scotland (Her Majesty's Inspectorate Of Education, 2001)

- the Wales Basic Skills Strategy, for a scheme in Wales

- the Education and Library Board's Healthy Eating Strategy, for a scheme in Northern Ireland.

This linkage was a particularly effective way of planning and operating a scheme so that there was complementary activity addressing a main aim of the LEA/EA/ELB concerned. It should be noted that the extent of linkage to other initiatives varied considerably from scheme to scheme, and typically corresponded to the experience and knowledge of the scheme coordinator. Clearly, if schemes are to maximise their potential impact through linkage with other initiatives then it is imperative that they are coordinated by someone with this experience and knowledge, as well as with the necessary contacts and authority to develop the scheme overall.

10.3.9 School and community links

Only a small number of schemes had explicit aims about improving links between participating schools and the community, although there is evidence to suggest that many more had these as implicit aims. Typically, these schemes had some provision at non-school sites, such as community libraries, and/or had input from non-teacher professionals, such as freelance artists or youth workers. In this way, these schemes were addressing The Fund's stated objective concerning the encouragement of innovation and diversity.

Providers reported that, in their opinion, the provision had enhanced the links between the schools and the wider community in such ways as young people becoming aware that there were learning opportunities that could be accessed outside of school. In some cases, young people were reported as becoming more positive about the idea of employment on leaving school or accessing further education.

10.3.10 Involvement of peer mentors

Only a small number of projects employed young people from schools to work as peer mentors to support activity (in contrast to summer school schemes). Peer mentors were most commonly employed on transition schemes. It was evident that the use of peer mentors was a very positive experience for the participants and the peer mentors alike. Participants were able to gain from the help provided, with the peer mentors acting as good role models. In this way, participants were helped to build their self-esteem, which relates to one of the stated aims of The Fund. At the same time, the peer mentors indicated that their involvement had helped them develop their own skills, including personal and communication skills. It is likely that many other schemes would have benefited from employing peer mentors, which would have been at minimal cost.

10.3.11 Targeting disadvantaged groups

Around one-quarter of the projects in England and Wales were targeted at particular groups who they had identified as underachieving and/or in need of support. The Northern Ireland sample included a greater proportion of targeted projects, while in Scotland there were very few targeted projects. It should be noted that a number of the larger schemes had targeted disadvantage not within schools but through their selection of schools to be involved. The involvement of young people from disadvantaged groups addressed The Fund's stated objective of the programme providing activity that benefited those who suffer from disadvantage and who would benefit most from help to raise achievement.

While some schemes had stated in their bids to The Fund that activity would be for young people from disadvantaged groups, or who were at risk from underachievement or disaffection, in practice most clubs and activities were entirely open access, and no obvious attempt at targeting had taken place (see Chapter 6, Section 2 – Recruiting Participants).

Schemes that did target particular groups of young people handled this matter with sensitivity using well-defined criteria for the target group. In conclusion, it appears that some schemes needed to give more thought at the outset regarding whether or not

to provide targeted activity, and how any targeting might be conducted. It may be the case that in any future initiative of this type, schemes would benefit from advice, from the funding body or any support organisation, on how targeting might be conducted effectively.

10.3.12 Take-up by boys and girls

For the majority of schemes there was roughly equal take-up by boys and girls throughout a range of activity. For certain content, there were significant differences, such as more girls than boys accessing particular performance arts projects, or more boys than girls accessing particular sports projects. There were a small number of cases where certain activity was open only to one sex, such as girls only football teams in secondary schools, which was entirely appropriate.

Some schemes examined differences in take-up to determine whether provision was equally attractive to each sex. In a number of cases, these schemes identified that particular activity appealed mainly to boys or to girls. These schemes took the view that while there were significant differences within individual clubs or activities, this was unimportant provided there was an equal balance between boys and girls overall in accessing some type of provision.

Therefore, though some projects realised the gendered nature of some of their provision (or at least they were aware that the activity they were offering was of more interest to boys than girls for example), there was also a perception that for them the issue of gender participation was not of importance. For the majority of schemes, the issue was of attendance rather than of gender.

10.3.13 Ethnicity

The overwhelming majority of schemes were not targeted at particular minority ethnic groups. One exception was the Chinese Welfare Association Scheme, Belfast, in Northern Ireland (see Chapter 2, Section 2.7 – Aims relating to culture, identity and heritage experiences).

Apart from these exceptions, young people from all groups could access the provision if it was open access or provided they met any specified criteria for targeted provision. Throughout the schemes in all four countries, there were no reports of a disproportionate number of young people from minority ethnic groups not choosing to access activity. Indeed, observation of schemes by researchers identified that young people from minority ethnic groups were participating in activity. This suggests that schemes provided activity that was appropriate for all groups. It is worth noting that ethnicity was not generally seen as important within the schemes involved in this evaluation. Activity was usually open to all, and although there was a perception that certain groups might benefit, this was not seen in terms of ethnicity.

10.3.14 Special educational needs

During interviews, researchers asked coordinators and providers about the involvement in activity of young people with special educational needs, and whether there were any emerging issues in this regard. This relates to The Fund's stated objective of activity benefiting those who suffer from disadvantage and who would benefit most from help to raise achievement. For school-based projects, it was reported that young people with a range of special educational needs were accessing activity in the same way as they would do activity provided during the school day, and so there were no issues of note.

For projects based at non-school sites, coordinators informed providers at these sites about the participation of any young person with a particular special educational need, for example, a need concerning physical mobility, before activity began. Some coordinators visited these sites to check that they and the available resources were suitable.

10.3.15 Attendance

The level of attendance by young people for the majority of projects in all four countries was relatively good. Homework clubs had the greatest fluctuations in attendance, which was not surprising as it was largely dependent on the amount of homework young people had at a particular time, with attendance levels high when there was a considerable amount of homework to complete.

Many projects experienced a decline in attendance at after-school activities towards the end of the autumn term. Some projects (not homework clubs) applied rules about regular attendance by individuals (see Chapter 6, Section 3 – Attendance and Retention) in order to maintain attendance at a high level, as well as making it clear to participants that the activity was of value. Generally, schemes appeared concerned with achieving high levels of attendance in order to make an impact on as many young people as possible.

10.3.16 Parent involvement

Very few parents/carers had a direct involvement in any of the schemes, apart from those who had been recruited to family learning projects, in which they worked alongside their primary aged children (see Chapter 5, Section 8 – Involvement of Parents). Generally, parents were informed of the various clubs and activities on offer so that schools could recruit their children as participants. Feedback to parents from providers on how their children were progressing was typically informal.

There were mixed feelings amongst the schemes regarding the desirable level of involvement from parents. Some providers commented that they would have liked more involvement so that participants could receive further support at home, whereas other providers thought that trying to increase parent involvement might have a negative effect and lead to some young people not participating. However, on the whole, it appeared that projects had achieved an appropriate level of involvement from parents that enabled a degree of encouragement for young people but without them feeling under pressure.

10.3.17 Monitoring and evaluation

As reported in Chapter 7 – Internal Monitoring and Evaluation, there were examples of good practice conducted by schemes in this area and practice that needed development. It may be the case, with 24 of the 39 schemes in the sample being evaluated in their first year of operation, that many schemes had learnt from their first year experiences and had developed their approaches to monitoring and evaluation so

as to obtain more useful information by which to judge the effectiveness of the provision and to redirect activity where necessary.

A particular weakness for a number of schemes was the quality of participant evaluation forms. These generally provided very little information from participants on key aspects of the scheme that providers wanted feedback on. One main consequence of this was that these projects mainly relied on anecdotal evidence, rather than more valid, systematic evidence, by which to judge the effectiveness of their provision.

10.3.18 Travel arrangements

Generally, schemes in both rural and urban areas had carefully considered issues to do with young people's journeys to and from sites where provision was held and their homes. In this way, young people who were from homes where parents did not have cars, or where public transport was infrequent, were not disadvantaged.

Some schemes organised rotas by which those parents with cars each took several young people home after activity, other schemes hired additional transport when necessary, and a small number of schemes formed partnerships with local transport providers for participants to have free or cheap travel.

It was evident that for schemes in rural areas, the overall cost for travel was considerably greater than that for schemes in urban areas, which is an issue that may impact on any continuation of schemes in rural areas after funding has ceased.

On the negative side, it should be noted that despite considerable efforts on the part of providers, some young people remained anxious about travelling to venues in unfamiliar areas because of concerns about personal safety, in a small number of schemes.

10.4 Success of the Programme Overall

As mentioned in Chapter 1, Section 1 – Background, The Fund intended to support sustainable projects that would improve the quality of life of people throughout the

UK, address the needs of those most disadvantaged in society, encourage community participation and complement local and national strategies and programmes. This is an ambitious set of aims.

Overall, the research evidence from the 39 term-time and 30 summer school schemes that comprised the NFER evaluation samples, suggests that the level of success achieved by The Fund's Out-of-School-Hours Learning programme was mixed. Certainly, there was much activity in evidence that was of value in meeting the needs of the participants, leading to increased motivation and generally improved attitudes to learning. However, the extent to which substantial numbers of young people from the 'most disadvantaged' groups were involved is questionable. Indeed, some schemes indicated that they had failed to recruit other than a few such young people or had not attempted to do so.

The level of community participation in schemes was varied, but this appeared to be related to the amount of funding provided for each scheme. Some schemes made good linkage with local and/or national initiatives, but it was evident that many more had not.

With regard to sustainability, it is doubtful whether much of the activity of the schemes in all four countries will be sustainable beyond the period of funding unless large-scale funding is earmarked for OSHL by governments/assemblies. Any expectation that schools and authorities alone will be able to continue the level of activity that existed under the auspices of The Fund is misguided.

Chapter 11

Recommendations

11.1 Chapter Summary

This chapter provides recommendations made by the research team, based on the findings of this report.

11.2 General Comments

The NFER research team makes the following recommendations for LEA/EA/ELBs, groups of schools, single schools or others, in all four countries, who may wish to set up or extend out-of-school-hours provision at a future date, whether funded through an organisation like the Fund or other sponsors. These recommendations relate to both term-time projects and summer school schemes, unless otherwise stated. It should be noted that the summer school schemes evaluation provided the basis for an earlier report submitted to The Fund in August 2003.

11.3 Recommendations

11.3.1 Planning schemes

- Schemes, wherever possible, should link their aims and objectives, and consequently the content of the summer school programmes, to the LEA/EA/ELBs aims or priorities concerning strategies to address specific needs or disadvantage. This will add to a coherent approach to meeting needs within the authority and support wider plans about social inclusion.

- When setting the general aims for the provision, the characteristics of the potential participants (e.g. ages, ability) should be taken into account, along with the intended content, so as to set aims that are appropriate for all participants. It may be necessary to revise general aims, target different groups of participants, or change the intended content, or a combination of the three.

- When the general aim is to ease the transfer of young people from one phase of schooling to the next, the potential benefits to the feeder schools should also be

considered. There are likely to be benefits to these feeder schools from carefully selecting pupils in their penultimate year at such schools.

- Schemes should provide training or induction for providers and support staff who have had little or no experience of working with young people, such as non-teacher professionals, adult mentors and peer mentors. This will enable all providers and support workers to be clearly focused on the aims of the provision, and the teaching and learning approaches to be followed.

- When the general aim is to provide particular types of activity (e.g. performance arts, sports focused projects, enrichment or extension activities) delivered by professionals other than teachers, it is useful to include a staff development element for teachers within the programme. This may be achieved by recruiting teachers to provide support for specific sessions of the programme led by these professionals.

11.3.2 Content of schemes

- Plan the content to be different from participants' experiences of school. This may be achieved by involving professionals other than teachers from partner organisations to lead sessions, by including one or two visits to places of interest in the programme, by creating a more relaxed environment for sessions, limiting the size of the group, and by giving participants some choice in the activities they wish to pursue or in the direction they want the work to proceed.

- Providers should have high expectations for the quality of participants' work and for their behaviour. While activities may take place in a more relaxed and more informal environment than that experienced by young people at school, this should not mean that expected standards should be lower. With this in mind, the tasks given to participants should be sufficiently challenging and purposeful.

Summer schools

- Where the summer school programme is focused specifically on core subjects or key skills, it is useful to plan this provision to be one small element within a systematic, long-term strategy to raise levels of achievement for the participants. It is not realistic to expect to raise levels of achievement significantly in such a short time scale. Providers and sponsors should take the view that the purpose of

the programme is to stimulate participants' interest in the subject area, which may in the medium and long-term lead to raising achievement.

11.3.3 Partnerships

- Begin planning and preparation for the provision at an early stage, especially if more than one school is involved, or there is an intended input from partner organisations. It is useful to have regular progress meetings at frequent intervals in the lead up to the start date, to which key representatives from all partners are invited. This would facilitate a sense of shared ownership for the scheme, and enable those responsible for the overall scheme to anticipate potential difficulties, which can then be addressed, and the programme redirected.

- Build in a level of flexibility with plans. This is necessary to deal with any unexpected difficulties just prior to the start of the provision or in its early stages. There may be difficulties to do with staff from partner organisations being unavailable at the last moment, so making it necessary to have contingency plans for activities and staffing that can be put into operation. There may be difficulties with unexpected poor weather, making activities planned for outdoor venues unsuitable, so having to be transferred to indoor locations.

11.3.4 Scheme providers

- The recruitment of peer mentors to work on schemes will bring benefits to the participants, and also to the peer mentors. Peer mentors may help individuals and groups of participants on a range of activities, and provide valuable background support work. Peer mentors typically provide good role models for their younger peers. At the same time, the peer mentors are likely to develop their own skills, including personal and communication skills.

- Recruit professionals other than teachers to contribute to schemes as main providers. The involvement of experts in a particular field can add to the quality of the overall programme. For some young people, this involvement can provide a positive role model, or enable them to work with another adult in cases where their relationships with teachers had become strained. Having professionals lead sessions may also enable teachers working in a support capacity to receive staff development concerning the professional's area of expertise.

- Induct professionals who are not teachers into key aspects of the provision, and where necessary, provide training. For effective provision, it is necessary that all providers are aware of the aims of the provision and the intended outcomes. Schemes that plan to include a substantial input from professionals who are not teachers would benefit from holding an induction meeting for such providers. The meeting could cover aspects such as overall aims, the planned activities, intended outcomes, the characteristics of the group of participants, health and safety procedures, and any necessary paperwork. The pedagogical skills of these professionals should be considered, as it may be beneficial to provide specific training for some on working with young people especially in relation to behaviour management.

11.3.5 Participants

- Schemes should make efforts to publicise extensively the planned clubs or activities in a variety of ways. Pupils who had attended the scheme in previous years, and had gained from the experience, and/or peer mentors, could be used to promote the scheme to groups of potential participants. Posters, attractive leaflets, and letters to parents would all help to raise the scheme's profile and help ease any difficulties with recruitment.

- When provision covers a wide age range, or when young people are recruited from different phases of schooling (e.g. Year 6 and Year 7 in England), schemes need to consider carefully the content of clubs or activities, so that all are fully engaged. Often, it will be helpful to build in a degree of differentiation with various activities, and at times to offer separate activities for particular groups of young people.

Summer schools

- When young people with special educational needs are recruited as participants it is particularly helpful for them to have some continuity with their term-time experiences. This may be achieved through holding the summer school at their own school, or by recruiting some staff members who have worked with these pupils at school to be summer school providers or support staff. Above all, it is imperative that those partners in the scheme with responsibility for pupils with

special educational needs are fully involved in all aspects of planning and preparation.

- In recruiting underachieving young people for summer school provision it is advantageous not to be too rigid in applying specific criteria for the intended target group. This type of target group is quite hard to recruit. Such summer schools would benefit from broadening the criteria, but still focusing on relative underachievement, or have a reserve list of participants who would also benefit from the provision.

11.3.6 Internal monitoring and evaluation

- The level of success achieved by the scheme should be determined through the use of appropriate monitoring and evaluation methods and instruments, including participant review sheets. Such review sheets should focus on what participants had actually gained from participating in specific activities rather than simply asking if they had enjoyed the experience and what might be improved. It will be necessary to revisit the aims and objectives of the provision in order to develop monitoring instruments that collect useful information.

- The scale of any monitoring and evaluation programme should be commensurate with the size of the actual provision. For large schemes, consideration should be given to obtaining feedback from a sample of participants or through using focus groups.

- Careful consideration needs to be given to the use of formal assessment instruments, such as standardised tests, during actual sessions, so as to avoid participants becoming demotivated. Such instruments may well have a use, but it should be appreciated that any significant improvement in attainment is likely to be over the longer term. (For summer school schemes, it is not valid to use pre- and post-tests during the short timescale of the typical summer school programme.)

- Prepare an internal report that includes details of the extent to which the stated aims of the provision have been met, using general evidence acquired from both providers and participants. The report should be disseminated to all those who were directly involved in planning, managing or providing activities, as well as the partner organisations, including schools which had supplied participants.

Summer schools

- Schemes should use strategies to achieve a high level of attendance on the first day and throughout the programme, which would ensure a greater level of cost-effectiveness. To do this, it is necessary to give the scheme a high profile in the lead up to the summer school, to send out reminder letters to parents at opportune times, and to organise appropriate transport arrangements for those participants who would otherwise find it difficult to attend, for both rural and urban schemes.

11.3.7 Other

- For certain types of activity, include a celebration event towards the end of the programme, or shortly afterwards, to which parents/carers and others interested in the work of programme are invited. Celebration events may include drama productions, music performances, dances or displays of artwork. Celebration events provide a clear goal for the provision and enable participants to share their work and experiences with their parents/carers. Celebration events are particularly useful for summer school schemes as they complete the summer school on a high note so making it a more memorable experience.

- For schemes in isolated rural areas, or in urban areas where journeys may be difficult for young people, suitable transport arrangements need to be devised from the outset. It may be possible for the scheme to form a partnership with a local transport company to subsidise the cost of transporting young people to and from sites where provision is made and their homes. Alternatively, it may be useful to involve parents who have cars to provide a transport rota.

- Schemes with their partners should plan ahead for the period immediately after the funding ceases. Where full-scale sustainability is unlikely, schemes should identify which parts of their provision could be continued and how that is to be funded. Schemes should also plan 'exit routes' so that young people are guided to clubs, societies and activities in the community after their involvement in the provision has ceased. This is particularly pertinent in the areas of performance arts and sports.

Summer schools

- Summer schools should give careful consideration to the location of activities. For particular types of summer school (e.g. transition summer schools, those where the content focus is on core subjects/key skills) a school location is entirely appropriate, while for others (e.g. those providing enrichment activities), a non-school location for all or a major part of the programme may bring benefits. Participants are likely to be particularly motivated and have their horizons widened by taking part in activities based at youth centres, environmental centres, community centres, sports clubs, dance studios, and outdoor pursuits centres.

11.4 Issues for the Funding Body

A number of schemes in all four countries expressed frustration with putting their plans into operation because of delays in receiving the grant, with the result being that certain clubs or activities were delayed, altered or cancelled. Though the delay in funding allocation was made more complex by funds being distributed to the schools by LEA/EA/ELBs, it was felt that The Fund was generally perceived to be lacking in this respect.

It should also be noted that a number of schemes, especially the smaller ones, felt that the application process was unnecessarily bureaucratic, with many having to spend long periods of time producing revised bids when it was felt by the scheme coordinators/main providers, who had vast knowledge of the local context for their proposed scheme, that the initial bid was appropriate. Also, the annual monitoring information required by The Fund was found by a number of schemes to be unnecessarily detailed. (It should be noted that the Fund devised a simpler monitoring form later on in the initiative, which was welcomed by schemes.) The amount of administration work involved at both the application stage and throughout the life of the scheme was not felt to be commensurate with the size of the grant.

Some providers felt that there was 'a lack of trust' on the part of The Fund (or the government) about schemes making every effort to deliver what they had set out in their bid. Without wishing to be named, several main providers who had prepared

bids said that if there were to be a further programme of funding then they would decide not to be involved unless there were major changes in the central administration of the programme.

While the majority of teachers were very positive about their involvement in Out-of-School-Hours Learning activity, there was a particular issue of concern for a number of projects regarding the payment of teachers for delivering activity. Some teachers were paid for delivering activity, while others were not, as the provision had been regarded as not meeting The Fund's criteria, even though teachers regarded it as offering young people similar learning experiences. While this did not appear to impact on provision, in that the teachers still provided activity, it clearly affected morale. Also when funding has ceased, it is worth noting that the issue of staff payment may be problematic, as staff who have been used to receiving payment for providing out-of-school-hours activity may not continue to receive payment. This may impact on their willingness to provide activity in the future.

It is suggested that these issues are addressed should there be any future programme of funding for Out-of-School-Hours Learning activities, whether through The Fund or a similar organisation.

Appendix 1: The term-time projects in the NFER evaluation sample

England

Warley High School and Feeder Primary Schools Project, Sandwell LEA

Grant awarded December 1999

Evaluated in school year 2000/1

Rooks Heath High School Project, London Borough of Harrow

Grant awarded February 2000

Evaluated in school years 2000/1 and 2001/2

Whiston Stars Primary Schools Project, Knowsley LEA

Grant awarded December 1999

Evaluated in school year 2000/1

Debenham High School, Suffolk LEA

Grant awarded December 1999

Evaluated in school year 2000/1

Chulmleigh Community College, Devon

Grant awarded March 2000

Evaluated in school year 2000/1 and then continued into the school year 2002/3

Melton Mowbray Library Homework Club, Leicestershire County Council

Grant awarded December 1999

Evaluated in school year 2001/2

Rosherville Primary School After School Learning Club (RASLC), Kent

Grant awarded December 1999

Evaluated in school year 2001/2

The London Borough of Enfield Out-of-School-Hours Learning Programme

Grant awarded April 2001

Evaluated in school year 2001/2

Grimsby Town Football in the Community Project

Grant awarded June 2001

Evaluated in school year 2001/2

Stockton Borough Council

Grant awarded September 2000

Evaluated in school years 2002/3 and 2003/4

Swanage Ahead Regeneration Agency

Grant awarded March 2001

Evaluated in school years 2001/2 and 2002/3

Gloucestershire LEA

Grant awarded February 2001

Evaluated in school year 2002/3

Dearne Valley Partnership

Grant awarded September 2000

Evaluated in school year 2002/3

Scotland

Glasgow City LEA

Grant awarded February 2000

Evaluated in school year 2000/1

Reading is Fundamental, Dundee

Grant awarded February 2000

Evaluated in school year 2000/1

Stonelaw High School, South Lanarkshire

Grant awarded February 2000

Evaluated in school year 2000/1

Fort Youth and Community Association, Edinburgh

Grant awarded May 2000

Evaluated in school year 2000/1

Glasgow City Council Education Services

Grant awarded February 2001

Evaluated in school year 2001/2

Clackmannanshire Council Education and Community Services

Grant awarded September 2000

Evaluated in school year 2001/2

Rutherglen High School, South Lanarkshire

Grant awarded February 2001

Evaluated in school year 2001/2

Midlothian Council Education Division

Grant awarded February 2001

Evaluated in school year 2001/2

Inverclyde Council

Grant awarded September 2001

Evaluated in school year 2002/3.

Wales

City and County of Cardiff

Grant awarded February 2000

Evaluated in school year 2000/1

Pembrokeshire Comprehensive School

Grant awarded December 1999

Evaluated in school year 2000/1

Urdd Gobaith Cymru

Grant awarded December 1999

Evaluated in school year 2001/2

Business in the Community, Denbigh

Grant awarded July 2000

Evaluated in school year 2000/1

Gwernyfed High School, Powys

Grant awarded December 2000

Evaluated in school year 2001/2

Merthyr Tydfil

Grant awarded December 2000

Evaluated in school year 2001/2

Queen Elizabeth Cambria School, Carmarthenshire

Grant awarded June 2001

Evaluated in school year 2002/3

Mountain Ash Comprehensive School, Rhonda Cynon Taff

Grant awarded March 2000

Evaluated in school year 2002/3.

Northern Ireland

Barnardo's After-School Project, Belfast

Grant awarded February 2000

Evaluated in school year 2000/1

St Comgall's College, North Eastern ELB

Grant awarded September 2000

Evaluated in school year 2000/1

Chinese Welfare Association, South Eastern ELB

Grant awarded September 2000

Evaluated in school year 2000/1

The Under Pressure Project, Derry, Western ELB

Grant awarded September 2000

Evaluated in school year 2000/1

Castlereagh, South Eastern ELB

Grant awarded June 2001

Evaluated in school year 2001/2

Omagh, Western ELB

Grant awarded September 2000

Evaluated in school year 2001/2

Youth Sport North East, Antrim

Grant awarded December 2000

Evaluated in school years 2001/2 and 2002/3

Belfast ELB

Grant awarded July 2001

Evaluated in school year 2002/3

Patrician Youth Centre, County Down

Grant awarded September 2000

Evaluated in school year 2002/3

Appendix 2: The interview schedules used during fieldwork

SCHEME COORDINATOR INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Introduction

As you know, I work for the National Foundation for Educational Research on the evaluation of the New Opportunities Fund programme. We are visiting a number of schemes this year to learn as much as possible about the experiences of providers and pupils, so that we can report to the New Opportunities Fund about how the Out-of-School-Hours Learning programme is functioning. Part of the evaluation involves describing case studies of good practice, which we intend doing for this scheme.

All interviews will be recorded (with the agreement of participants). It is standard practice to record these interviews as a back up to my notes. You will have the opportunity to read and comment on the write up of the scheme before it appears in any report.

Aims

1. What are the aims and objectives of the scheme?
    - (does the project address a particular need within the schools or community?)

2. How did you identify which schools would be involved?

3. Does the scheme address any priorities or any strategic plans of the LEA (your organisation)?

4. What do you expect the outcomes of the scheme to be?

    - in the short term?
    - in the longer term?

Staffing

5.   What is your main role with regard to the scheme?

6.   Is there anyone else in the LEA (your organisation) involved in the scheme?
        - what do they do?

7.   How did you go about recruiting staff for the scheme?

        (How easy was it to recruit staff with the necessary skills?)

8.   Did you provide any training or induction for staff?

        (is there any training or induction planned for the future?)

External Agencies

9.   What (other) external agencies are involved in the scheme?

        - local businesses, local communities, higher education institutions, local authority departments

10.   What is the involvement of these external agencies?

        - provide staffing
        - provide resources or premises
        - input to part of the scheme

Monitoring and Evaluation

11.   How are you monitoring and evaluating the success of the scheme?

        - what kinds of evidence are being collected? e.g. attendance, performance attitudes, etc.

12.   In what ways is the progress of the scheme reviewed with staff?

        - management or steering group meetings
        - informal meetings with some staff
        - internal report

Finances

13. Have you supplemented the NOF grant with support in cash or in kind from other sources?

- if yes, by how much or with what resources?

14. What are the main areas in which the grant (and any other money) has been spent?

Sustainability

15. Do you think the scheme will continue beyond the period of the NOF grant?

- Why/why not? – what will it depend upon?

16. Have you made any plans yet so that the scheme will carry on?

Additional Information

That was all I really wanted to ask you, but is there anything you would like to add?

Ask for copies of any relevant documents that may help you in your writing of the case study.

Thank you very much for your help with this research.

SCHOOL COORDINATOR/LEADER INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Introduction

As you know, I work for the National Foundation for Educational Research on the evaluation of the New Opportunities Fund programme. We are visiting a number of projects this year to learn as much as possible about the experiences of providers and pupils, so that we can report to the New Opportunities Fund about how the Out-of-School-Hours Learning programme is functioning. Part of the evaluation involves describing case studies of good practice, which we intend doing for this project.

All interviews will be recorded (with the agreement of participants). It is standard practice to record these interviews as a back up to my notes. You will have the opportunity to read and comment on the write up of the project before it appears in any report.

Your school's involvement

1.   What are the aims and objectives of the project for this school?

- (does the project address a particular need within the school?)

2.   If involved in a consortium. Are there any particular issues with regard to being in a consortium of schools? (e.g. liaising with other schools, negotiating aims, pupils having to go to other sites)

The activities

3.   Would you give me a brief outline of what the children/young people are doing on the project?
(curriculum areas?, materials used?, relationship with school curriculum?, teaching approaches?)

4.   Are there any external organisations involved in the project?

- how are they involved?
- what do the external organisations gain from being involved?

The Children/Young People

5.   Does the project target particular groups of pupils?

- which groups, and why?
- how did the summer school target these groups?

6.   Are any children/young people with special educational needs involved?

- what are the issues with regard their involvement?

Staffing

7.   What is your main role on the project?

- planning and preparation
- day-to-day management
- teaching on the project

8.   What is the staffing of the project?
- school staff, adult volunteers, pupil-mentors, parents

9.   Is there a management group for the project?

(who is in the group?, what do they do?)

Monitoring and Evaluation

10.   How are you monitoring and evaluating the success of the project?

- what kinds of evidence are being collected? e.g. attendance, performance attitudes, etc.

Finances

11.   Have you had to supplement the NOF grant with support in cash or in kind from other sources?

- if yes, by how much or with what resources?

12.   What are the main areas in which the grant (and any other money) has been

spent?

Successes and Challenges

13.   In your opinion, what have been the most successful aspects of project so far?

14.   Is there anything about the project that is not working so well?
- what changes will you make because of this?

Sustainability

15.   Do you think the project will continue in future years beyond the period of the NOF grant?
- Why/why not? – what will it depend upon?

Issues regarding projects of this type

16.   In your view, what is necessary to make projects like this successful?
(You may need to prompt the interviewee. Factors may relate to staff recruitment, partnerships with external agencies, celebrating achievements, the activities, use of pupil mentors, involvement of parents, funding, etc.)

Additional Information

That was all I really wanted to ask you, but is there anything you would like to add?

Ask for copies of any relevant documents that may help you in your writing of the case study.

Thank you very much for your help with this research.

TEACHER INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Introduction

I work for the National Foundation for Educational Research on the evaluation of the New Opportunities Fund programme. We are visiting a number of projects this year to learn as much as possible about the experiences of providers and pupils, so that we can report to the New Opportunities Fund about how the Out-of-School-Hours Learning programme is functioning. Part of the evaluation involves describing case studies of good practice, which we intend doing for this project.

All interviews will be recorded (with the agreement of participants). It is standard practice to record these interviews as a back up to my notes.

Your involvement

1.   What activities are you involved in on the project?
        (Why did you become involved in the project?)

2.   What do you see as being the main aims of the project?

3.   Are you paid for your involvement or do you receive any other form of reward
        or recognition for taking part?
        (e.g. time in lieu, extra responsibility point?)

4.   Did you receive any induction or training for your role?
        (if yes, was it helpful?)

About the pupils

5.   What kinds of pupils come along to the activities provided?

6.   What factors affect pupils' attendance?
        • are there any incentives or strategies you have found helpful in attracting
          pupils and keeping them attending?

7.   Are any children/young people with special educational needs involved?

- what are the issues with regard their involvement?

The activities

8.   What kinds of materials do you use for the activities?

(were these materials provided or did you devise your own?)

9.   In what ways do the activities link in with the pupils' school work?

Monitoring and Evaluation

10.   Are you involved in any internal monitoring or evaluation of the project?

- how is it being monitored/evaluated – what kind of evidence is being collected?

11.   So far, what aspects of the project have been particularly successful?

12.   Are there any aspects of the project that have proved difficult or are not working so well?

13.   What advice would you give to another teacher getting involved in an out-of-school-hours learning project like this for the first time?

Additional Information

That was all I really wanted to ask you, but is there anything you would like to add?

Ask for copies of any relevant documents that may help you in your writing of the case study.

Thank you very much for your help with this research.

PUPIL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Introduction

My name is _____. I work for the National Foundation for Educational Research, which is an independent research organisation. We're visiting projects like this one around the country and asking the people involved a number of questions.

The questions I will be asking have no right or wrong answers and everything you say will be treated confidentially. No one will be named in any report that will be written, nor will I tell any teacher what you have said.

All interviews will be recorded (with the agreement of participants). It is standard practice to record these interviews as a back up to my notes.

(Interviewer to use specific name for project if possible e.g. homework club, computer club.)

Your involvement

1.   Who suggested you should go on the project?
        (are you attending out of interest?, persuaded?)

2.   What do you actually do on the project?
        (regular pattern to the work?, any special events?)

3.   How often do you attend the project?

4.   Is what you do on the project like school work?
        (if not like school work, how is it different?)

5.   Do you get any rewards like certificates, commendations, or books, for your work on the project?
        (if yes, what rewards?, what do you have to do to get them?)

Involvement of parents/carers

6.   What does your mum or dad think about the project?

7.   Does your mum or dad do anything to help with the project?
(e.g. go to meetings about the project, help to raise money for the project, helps out on the project?)

Evaluation

8.   Do you like going to the project?
(why?)

9.   Has the project helped you with your school work?
(if yes, in what ways?)

10.   What is the best thing about the project?

11.   How do you think the project could be improved?

Additional Information

That was all I really wanted to ask you, but is there anything else you would like to tell me about the project?

Thank you very much for your help.

ADULT MENTOR INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Introduction

My name is _____. I work for the National Foundation for Educational Research, which is an independent research organisation. We're visiting projects like this one around the country and asking the people involved a number of questions.

All interviews will be recorded (with the agreement of participants). It is standard practice to record these interviews as a back up to my notes.

(Interviewer to use specific name for project if possible e.g. homework club, computer club.)

Your involvement

1.   How did you become involved in this project?
         (Why did you become involved?)

2.   What activities are you involved in?

3.   Are you paid for your involvement or do you receive any other form of reward or recognition for taking part?

Your role

4.   What is your main role on the project?

5.   What qualities and/or expertise do you bring to this kind of work?

6.   Did you receive any induction or training for your work here?
         (if yes, who provided it?, was it helpful?)

Evaluation

7.   What would you say were the main benefits of the project?

          (for pupils and for others – the school/parents/the community)

8.   So far, which aspects of the project have been particularly successful?

9.   Are there any aspects of the project that are not working so well?

10.   What advice would you give to another person getting involved in a project like this for the first time?

Additional Information

That was all I really wanted to ask you, but is there anything you would like to add?

Ask for copies of any relevant documents, that may help you in your writing of the case study.

Thank you very much for your help with this research.

PUPIL MENTOR INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Introduction

My name is _____.   I work for the National Foundation for Educational Research, which is an independent research organisation. We're visiting projects like this one around the country and asking the people involved a number of questions.

The questions I will be asking have no right or wrong answers and everything you say will be treated confidentially. No one will be named in any report that will be written, nor will I tell any teacher what you have said.

All interviews will be recorded (with the agreement of participant). It is standard practice to record these interviews as a back up to my notes.

(Interviewer to use specific name for project if possible e.g. homework club, computer club.)

Your involvement

1.   How did you become involved in this project?
        (Why did you become involved?)

2.   What do you actually do on the project?

3.   Are you paid for your work?
        (if so, how much?)

4.   What qualities or skills do you bring to this kind of work?

5.   Did you receive any training or preparation for this work?
        (if yes, who provided it?, was it helpful?)

Evaluation

6. Do you like being involved in the project?
   (why?)

7. So far, which aspects of the project have been particularly successful?

8. Are there any aspects of the project that are not working so well?

9. How do you think the project could be improved?

10. What advice would you give to another pupil of your age who was about to start work on a project like this?

Additional Information

That was all I really wanted to ask you, but is there anything you would like to add?

Thank you very much for your help with this research.

PARENT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Introduction

My name is _____. I work for the National Foundation for Educational Research, which is an independent research organisation. We're visiting projects like this one around the country and asking the people involved a number of questions.

Everything you say will be treated confidentially. No one will be named in any report that will be written.

All interviews will be recorded (with the agreement of participants). It is standard practice to record these interviews as a back up to my notes.

(Interviewer to use specific name for project if possible e.g. homework club, computer club.)

About the project

6.   How did you get to hear about the project?

7.   Why did you want your child to be on the project?

8.   How often does your child attend the project?

9.   What sorts of things does your child do on the project?
        (is it like school work or different?)

10.   Do you do anything to help with the project?
        (e.g. attend meetings about the project, help to raise money for the project,
        help out on the project?)

Evaluation

11.   Does your child like going to the project?
        (why?)

12.   Has the project helped your child with their school work?
        (if yes, in what ways?)

8.   What is the best thing about the project?

9.   How do you think the project could be improved?

11.   Are there any problems with the times when the project takes place?
        (problems with after-school projects, having to go home in the dark,

        transporting children to sites, etc.)

Additional Information

That was all I really wanted to ask you, but is there anything else you would like to

tell me about the project?

Thank you very much for your help.

THE FUND REPRESENTATIVE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The purpose of the interview is to discuss how country-specific policy has and will continue to impact on OSHL in the future.

All interviews will be recorded (with the agreement of participants) and I will take detailed notes as well. The information will be used in the forthcoming NFER report on NOF OSHL and will provide a country specific context in which to locate the findings of the evaluation.

1.   **How has in-country policy developed over the past two years with regard to OSHL?**

2.   **What has been the impact of policy on OSHL to date?**

3.   **How will policy develop in the future?**

4.   **What will be the impact of this policy development on OSHL in the future?**

5.   **What, if any, provision have country governments/assemblies made to ensure continued development of OSHL?**

6.   **AOB**

Thank you very much for your help with this research.

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