



School Daze

A resource to support the voluntary and community sector to engage with schools



Acknowledgements

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Background Information

Introduction

Engage London is a partnership between Children England, Partnership for Young London and the Race Equality Foundation, funded by London Councils. The aim of the programme is to support the children, young people's and families voluntary and community sector (CYP & F VCS) across the region, through the provision of training, resources, networks and briefings.

One element of the programme is a focus on engaging with schools and this briefing aims to support groups to create more effective partnerships with schools.

Further information about Engage London can be obtained from the website:

www.childrenengland.org.uk/engagelondon

or by emailing the programme:

engagelondon@childrendengland.org.uk

Voluntary and community sector organisations have for many years had close relationships with schools, either directly, through joint work, or indirectly, through the children and young people that both support. Recent changes to the schools system in England will, in many cases, lead to alterations in the nature of these relationships, particularly with regard to the commissioning of support services. This guide aims to support voluntary and community sector groups to understand and adapt to this new environment.

Education policy, particularly the reform of schools, has been at the top of the political agenda since the formation of the Coalition Government. The Academies Act 2010 was one of the first pieces of legislation that it passed, followed up more recently by the Education Act 2011. Combined with the localism agenda and continued austerity, they have had a significant impact on how schools in England are organised and run.

For voluntary and community sector organisations, a notable element of these changes has been the continued devolution of spending to schools. In the past, local authorities were principally responsible for commissioning additional services for schools. However, all schools are increasingly commissioning a range of services beyond their core education responsibilities. As schools gain greater control over their budgets many are developing links with a range of providers who can deliver specialist support. Childcare, education psychology, HR support, legal services, behaviour support, music and sports services, school improvement, school meals,

counselling, CAMHS, speech and language services are just some examples of the types of support being contracted out.

At the same time resources available for the commissioning of children's services have been in decline. Voluntary and community sector providers have turned to schools as potential partners and funders. As such, they increasingly need to understand the new education environment, drivers for improvement and the importance of local priorities if they wish to engage effectively with schools.

This resource aims to:

- Explain recent changes to the schools system
- Help you understand the commissioning requirements of schools
- Guide you through the development of your organisation's 'pitch'
- Offer helpful tips, exercises and checklists
- Signpost to additional resources

This guide consists of four sections:

1. Background Information – Understanding Schools
2. Selling your services to schools
3. Demonstrating impact
4. Other useful information, sustaining the relationship and collaboration

This guide should be used alongside a number of other publications from Children England including:

School Fact Sheet 1 – Policy Context **download pdf**

School Fact Sheet 2 – Funding Reform **download pdf**

School Fact Sheet 3 – Performance and Accountability **download pdf**

School Fact Sheet 4 – Effective VCS Engagement with Schools **download pdf**

Love Your Tender

www.childrenengland.org.uk/publications

Safe Network and the Safe Network Standards

www.safenetwork.org.uk/Pages/default.aspx

Disclaimer

The information in this guide is believed to be correct at the time of publication. It is general in nature and is not intended to be exhaustive nor to provide or replace legal advice in relation to any particular situation.



Section 1

Background Information – Understanding Schools

For more details please see Schools Fact Sheet 1 – Policy Context

The Coalition's reform programme is driven by its analysis of the current education system and is a response to the perceived failings of the previous Government's policy. The Coalition characterises Labour's approach as one that significantly increased public spending on schools in order to improve performance, with a particular focus on driving up minimum standards.

However, they believe that this was accompanied by an increase in centrally imposed bureaucratic control, leading to a deskilling of teachers and a lowering of education standards as schools were incentivised to direct resources towards meeting externally imposed guidelines and targets.¹ They argue that this encouraged a proliferation of low quality qualifications that enabled schools to perform well in league tables but didn't equip students, especially students from disadvantaged backgrounds, with the skills required for university or employment. The consequence of this has been a failure to address the gap in attainment between advantaged and disadvantaged students and a decline in educational achievement when measured against international standards like the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).²

The Coalition has adopted a three-pronged approach to rectifying these perceived shortcomings.

1. Firstly, giving parents more choice over where their children go to school by introducing a greater plurality of provision (and reducing the power of local authorities to plan local education provision).
2. Secondly, devolving greater power to school leaders over how to run schools and teach lessons.
3. Thirdly, focusing on success in traditional academic subjects by promoting the English Baccalaureate (Ebacc).³

How are state schools managed?

There are four main types of state school. They follow the national curriculum and are inspected by Ofsted. (Taken from the BBC website for parents)

1. Community schools

Community schools are run by the local authority, which employs school staff, owns the land and buildings, and sets the entrance criteria (such as catchment area) that decide which children are eligible for a place).

2. Foundation and Trust schools

Foundation schools are run by a governing body, which employs the staff and sets the entrance criteria. Land and buildings are owned either by the governing body or by a charitable foundation. Trust schools are similar, but are run together with an outside body – usually a business or charity – which has formed an educational trust.

3. Voluntary-aided schools

Voluntary-aided schools are religious or faith schools. Just like foundation schools, the governing body employs the staff and sets the entrance criteria. School buildings and land are usually owned by a charity, often a church.

4. Voluntary-controlled schools

Voluntary-controlled schools are a cross between community and voluntary-aided schools. The local authority employs the staff and sets the entrance criteria, like a community school, but the school land and buildings are owned by a charity, often a church, which also appoints some members of the governing body.

Other Models

What are Specialist schools?

State secondaries often specialise, which means they have an extra emphasis in one or two subjects. Schools can specialise in: the arts, maths and computing, business and enterprise, music, engineering, science, humanities, sports, languages, and technology.

¹ HM Government, Department for Education, Education White Paper, 7-8

² Education White Paper, 47

³ <http://www.education.gov.uk/inthenews/inthenews/a00197623/more-students-study-core-subjects-thanks-to-ebacc>

What are City Technology Colleges?

City Technology Colleges are urban-based, independently managed secondary schools geared towards science, technology and the world of work. They offer a range of vocational qualifications as well as GCSEs and A levels.

What are special schools?

Pupils at a special school have usually been assessed and given a statement of special educational needs (SEN). These may include learning disabilities or physical disabilities. Some special schools are funded by the local education authority. These could be community, voluntary-aided or controlled, or foundation special schools. Some special schools are independent.

What are Academies?

Academies are independently managed schools set up by sponsors from business, faith or voluntary groups in partnership with the local authority and the Department for Education.

What is a free school?

Free Schools are normally brand-new schools set up by teachers, charities, community or faith groups, universities and groups of parents where there is parental demand. They will be set up as Academies and will be funded in the same way, directly from central government. They also share with Academies a greater control over their finances, the curriculum, and teachers' pay and conditions.

What is an academy?

The renovation of the academies programme is at the centre of the Government's school reforms, acting as the primary mechanism for increasing choice and competition in the state education system. Academies remain publically funded but are self-governing, outside the direct control of the local education authority, with powers to set pay and conditions for staff, alter the length of their school day and holidays, and have extra flexibility in terms of how they deliver the national curriculum.

Academies, or City Academies as they were originally called, were first introduced in 2000 by the Labour Government, replacing failing maintained schools (this phrase will be used to mean all community, community special, foundation (including trust), foundation special (including trust), voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools) in underachieving urban areas. External organisations such as charities or businesses acted as a sponsor to the new academy, gaining an influence over how the school was run, including setting the school's ethos, academic curriculum and the appointment of governors, although they were not allowed to make a profit from their involvement with the school.

Outstanding schools were subsequently allowed to gain academy status but only if they were part of a trust that included a failing school.

The Coalition's Academies Act has significantly expanded the scope of the academies programme by making it possible for any school in the country to become an academy. Initially, only those schools rated outstanding could apply but this has now been extended so that any school rated as good with outstanding features is also now eligible for academy status. All other schools, irrespective of their Ofsted rating, will also be able to apply to become academies if they are part of a group including a high-performing school or if they join an existing successful academy trust. However, while a poorly performing school must partner with a high performing school, the opposite is no longer true. The Education Act also specifies that from now on all new maintained schools must be set up as either an academy or a free school.



In addition to allowing secondary schools to become academies, the Academies Act also allows primary schools, 16-19 colleges and pupil referral units to become academies for the first time, opening up new areas of the education system to a range of providers.

The new model converter academies, which now represent the vast majority of academy schools, are quite different from the original City Academies. Whereas old style academies were generally relatively poorly performing schools which were taken over by 'civil society' groups, the majority of new academies are likely to be high performing schools which have been taken over by their governing bodies and senior management teams.

The changes introduced by the Academies Act have resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of academy schools, from 203 in May 2010 to 3,444 in November 2013.

Resources

More information about academies can be found on the Department for Education website:

www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/types_ofschools/academies

What is a free school?

Free Schools are another mechanism for increasing parental choice in school provision. They are legally identical to academies, are also outside local authority control and have the same powers over how they are run. What is different about free schools is that they are not based on an existing school and can be started by a wide range of groups, including teachers, parents, charities, businesses and religious organisations, without support from an existing school or the local authority. Instead independent groups apply directly to Department for Education.

There are already 81 open free schools, with a further 109 which were aiming to open in September 2013 and beyond. In total, all currently approved free schools would deliver 130,000 new school places when full.⁴

Resources

More information about the policy context and free schools can be found on the Department for Education website:

www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/types_ofschools/freeschools

Children England Fact Sheet 1 – Schools Policy Context:

www.childrenengland.org.uk/schools

How are schools funded?

Schools in England are currently funded using the “spend plus” system. This dates back to 2006-7 when the Direct Schools Grant (DSG) was introduced based on what each local authority planned to spend on schools in 2005-06. As a result, present levels of school funding are based on a collection of various grants and historic funding decisions that may no longer reflect an area’s current levels of need.

To add to this complexity, the funding relationship between local authorities and schools is uneven. Central government sets a minimum-funding guarantee for all schools, but beyond this local authorities are relatively free to operate their own formulas to distribute money and services to schools (some of which comes from the main local authority Formula Grant). The result of this complexity is a wide disparity in how much funding schools in very similar circumstances receive per pupil, up to £1,800 per pupil in extreme cases.⁵

The Coalition has stated its intention to reform school funding and the Department for Education has set out three main principles for reforming the school funding mechanism:

- It should “distribute money in a fair and logical way” and ensure “schools in similar circumstances and with similar intakes would receive similar levels of funding”
- It should distribute extra resources towards pupils who need them most
- It should encourage greater choice and competition among providers by allowing both schools and parents to clearly understand and predict levels of funding, helping parents to make better informed choices about where to educate their children, and helping new providers enter the market with a greater degree of certainty over potential funding⁶

Although the Government has decided not to move towards a national funding formula immediately, the changes for 2013/14 could still have had the potential to significantly change the amount of per pupil funding received by schools. The Government has therefore committed to retaining the current system for 2013/14 and 2014/15 whereby schools will only experience a maximum funding decrease of -1.5% per pupil each year.

In addition to the deprivation funding in the main school funding formula, the Government has also introduced a Pupil Premium that will provide additional funding to schools for every eligible disadvantaged pupil that attends. The Pupil Premium is currently £900 per child in 2013/14. The Pupil Premium is attached to all pupils that have been eligible for free

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/more-than-100-free-schools-applications-approved>

⁵ A consultation on school funding reform: Rationale and principles

⁶ A consultation on school funding reform: Rationale and principles

school meals (FSM) in the last six years and pupils in care who have been continuously looked after for six months. The pupil premium is given directly to schools without any ring fencing, leading to fears that the additional funding will be used by schools to compensate for budget cuts in other areas rather than being spent on raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils. However, schools are required to publish online how they have used the premium.

Resources

More information about school funding can be found on the Children England website:

www.childrenengland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Fact-Sheet-2-School-Funding-Reform.pdf

How do schools collaborate?

Under the Education Act 2002, governing bodies of maintained schools are able to collaborate in different ways, ranging from joint committees and joint governing body meetings to federations under a single governing body.

There is a range of existing collaborations in place for schools, these can be linked to existing and new cluster arrangements, based on geography, or traded services links. The more formalised clusters of schools are no longer always in place; schools increasingly make links themselves rather than taking part in designated structures from the Local Authority.

Academies also work collaboratively in chains. There are two broad types of academy chains: sponsored academy chains and converter academy chains. A sponsored academy chain will have a lead sponsor (e.g. ARK Schools or the Harris Federation)

that sponsors or is responsible for two or more academies. Sponsored academy chains can contain schools that became academies through the sponsor route as well as converter academies that have chosen to become part of these chains.

Converter chains are created when schools decide that there are benefits to converting to academy status as part of a formal partnership or chain arrangement. There is a range of ways in which schools can work together as a formal partnership, from loose collaborations with no shared governance to being part of the same multi-academy trust.

Schools that collaborate may:

- Develop joint staff training or mentoring schemes
- Provide a forum for the exchange of information
- Provide peer support for a school's senior leadership team, in particular head teachers and school business managers
- Share resources, for example by sharing the services of a specialist
- Jointly procure goods and services (one school in the cluster can procure on behalf of the other schools or alternatively a separate procurement company could be set up to procure on behalf of all of the schools)
- Combine forces to achieve enhanced purchasing power, gaining economies of scale from single (rather than multiple) contracts relating to buildings and grounds, ICT, catering or caretaking

Resources

More information about school collaboration can be found on the Department for Education website:

www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/governance/a0056911/collaboration-and-federations-an-overview



Section 2

Selling Your Services to Schools

In this section, there is a range of resources, including tips, checklists and case studies that will help you understand how you can promote your services to schools.

Understand the Jargon!

Schools jargon exists in the same way that VCS jargon does, it is important for any organisation selling services to schools that they understand what the various acronyms mean. For more information see the checklist on page 13 for what may well be used in schools (this is not exhaustive there may well be more or variations across schools).



Think through how you will present your services

1. One Minute Lift Exercise

Imagine that you are in a lift going up to the top of a tall building with someone you need to impress. You have one minute to tell him or her why your group matters and why it should be supported. You need to explain:

- Who you are
- What your organisation does – what its unique selling point is
- Exactly what you need from the person and why she or he should give it to you

Ensure that your pitch is not too woolly or abstract and that you find a way of helping the person recognise the value to him or her of what you are doing.

Why bother? It is useful to practice. If you get the chance to talk about something you are doing, but there is not much time, you will be ready. It also makes you think again about your group or service and what it is really about. Finally, if you cannot explain it in a minute to somebody who is interested, do you really know what you are doing? This is also a useful exercise to undertake with the trustees of your organisation, who will often be the ambassadors of your work to the outside world – a shared message is vitally important.

Love Your Tender:

www.childrenengland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Love-Your-Tender-2nd-Edition-Mar-2012.pdf

2. Get a link or a key contact

HT? DHT? SENCO? School Business Manager? Governor? Learning Mentor?

3. Each school will be very different: know and understand the context of that school

See exercise Understanding Schools Checklist on page 13.

4. Be concise and talk schools targets

See exercise Mapping Your Services in line with Ofsted Criteria.

5. Presenting services and accurate costs that can also be broken down into unit costs

For further details see Children England's website for resources on unit costs and personalisation.

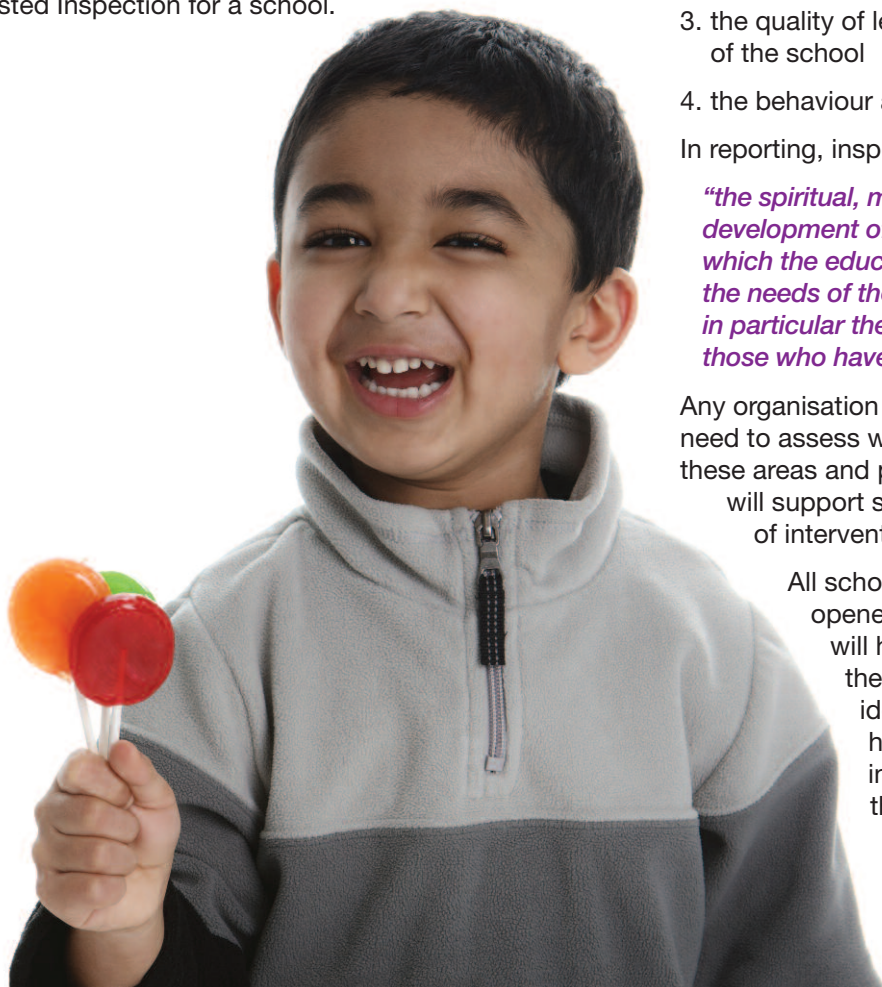
6. Use data on impact/outcomes

- We have worked with XXX numbers of pupils and XX % of these improved their attendance
- We have delivered XXX parenting classes and now XXX teachers report improved engagement with parents
- We have delivered XXX training sessions for teaching assistants and lunchtime supervisors on dealing with challenging behaviour and the school now reports a % decrease of incidents at break times

7. Understand how your service meets the school's requirements on outcomes for Pupil Premium spending

If your service is being or likely to be commissioned through the use of pupil premium, check what the school allocation is, how many FSM children they have and how they need to evidence impact.

The Pupil Premium will be worth £2.5bn by 2014-15, and the equivalent of £900 per pupil from 2013/2014. At the moment, the Pupil Premium is attached to all pupils that are currently eligible for free school meals (FSM) or have been in the last six years. The pupil premium is given directly to schools without any ring fencing. Schools are required to evidence how pupil premium has been allocated to support the attainment of disadvantaged pupils, and this will form part of the Ofsted Inspection for a school.



*'We will also require schools to publish online how they have used the premium. This will ensure that parents and others are made fully aware of the progress and attainment of pupils covered by the premium and concentrate schools' minds on using it appropriately'*⁷

And finally, be aware of the school's timetable, services will have to operate within the context of the timetable!

Map your services in line with the drivers for schools

For more details please see **Schools Fact Sheet 3 – Performance and Accountability** and the **Love Your Tender World Map** exercise.

Ofsted inspection framework

The single best way of determining a school's priorities is to understand the Ofsted inspection framework, which applies equally to academies, free schools and maintained schools.

The 2012 Ofsted Inspection Framework states "Inspectors are required to report on the quality of education provided in the school and must, in particular, cover the following four areas:"

1. the achievement of pupils at the school
2. the quality of teaching in the school
3. the quality of leadership in and management of the school
4. the behaviour and safety of pupils at the school.

In reporting, inspectors must also consider:

"the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school, the extent to which the education provided by the school meets the needs of the range of pupils at the school, and in particular the needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs."

Any organisation delivering services in schools will need to assess where their services fit in relation to these areas and provide evidence accordingly that will support schools in evidencing the impact of interventions.

All schools, except for those very recently opened, will have an Ofsted report which will highlight strengths and weaknesses in the school's effectiveness. Reports will identify "Key Issues" which the school has to address before the next inspection and can be found on the Ofsted website.

Mapping your services against Ofsted – Test yourself and map your services

Ofsted Criteria	Which of your services can address these targets	Evidence you can show
1. Achievement of pupils at the school		
2. Quality of teaching in the school		
3. Behaviour and safety of pupils at the school		
4. Quality of leadership in, and management of, the school		

Many schools also still complete a School Self-Evaluation Form (SEF), which helps them to prepare for inspection and review their strengths and weaknesses. The SEF covers the areas on which a school will be judged and can therefore provide useful clues for VCS providers.

Resources

The Ofsted framework for school inspection can be found here:

www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/framework-for-school-inspection

For more information about the Ofsted inspection framework and tips on how to tailor your services read Children England's fact sheet on school performance and accountability:

www.childrenengland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Fact-Sheet-3-Performance-and-Accountability.pdf

Schools will also have their own websites, which will contain a range of information and should give a clear picture of the school's priorities. Although no longer a requirement, most schools will have a prospectus, which will also contain useful information. Additionally, schools will have a strategic plan, which is agreed by the governing body. This may be known as a School Improvement Plan (SIP) or School Development Plan (SDP).

If the school is a "Church School", the Diocesan Board or Arch Diocese (Roman Catholic) for the area may have useful information about the school.

Local parents/carers, community groups and other organisations may also know a lot about a local school, which can be helpful information to have before making contact yourself.

The Equality Act 2010⁸ replaced all previous equality legislation such as the Race Relations Act, Disability Discrimination Act and Sex Discrimination Act. It also provides some changes about which schools need to be aware. This requires schools and other public bodies to publish relevant, proportionate information demonstrating their compliance with the Equality Duty and to set themselves specific and measurable equalities objectives. Schools should have published their initial information and first set of objectives by the 6th April 2012. They will then need to update the published information at least annually and to publish objectives at least once every four years. This will be useful information to map your services against and demonstrate how your organisation can help schools to meet their Equality Duty.

It may also be useful to review the local area Children and Young People's Plan to establish what local provision exists to meet the identified needs as well as the local area Joint Strategic Needs Assessment to assess the wider community needs.



⁸ <http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/e/equality%20act%20guidance%20march%202012.pdf>

Do your Homework – Understanding Schools Checklist

This checklist will support you to get the right information in place for a school you may be approaching; doing your homework is critical!

Understanding Schools Checklist		
What type of school is it?	(See fact sheets of the various types of schools on pages 5 and 6)	
What are the key issues or challenges for the school?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What issues have been highlighted by Ofsted on this particular school http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report What other areas for development have been noted in other documents (if you have access to them) i.e. school development plan, self evaluation framework, governors' meetings, school achievement review 	
What can you find out about the school via the website and newsletters?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What other services do they have in place? For example reading volunteers, theatre in education groups, counselling, family support, parenting groups, speech and language therapy 	
Who is the key link to talk to?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HT, DH, SENCO, business manager 	
What is the school doing with the Pupil Premium?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How much do they have? How many Free School Meals (FSM) pupils do they have? How are they spending it? From the Ofsted reports you will be able to tell if FSM children are performing as well as their non FSM peers 	
What does the PTA do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities, events, meetings 	
What does the school say about their Equalities Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All schools have to publish information about their Equality Impact Duties on line – what does this tell you? 	
Financial Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools now have to complete the Schools Financial Value Standard on their financial processes, how does your service meet these criteria – see page 18 	

What schools are concerned about?

This will be variable according to the needs, ethos and approach of each school but some of the key areas include:

Priorities	What does this look like?	Yes/No	Examples of Evidence
Services Mapped Against Schools priorities How can you demonstrate that your service will support them on meeting their targets?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The service meets the identified needs of the schools The service provides demonstrable value against pupil premium targets Schools governance structures identify how the contracted service impacts on improved outcomes for pupils 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentations & briefing sheets on service offer and its links to Ofsted criteria Feedback and testimonials from other schools Case studies on impact Data analysis (in line with Ofsted criteria) Ofsted feedback on the impact of the service (if available)
Measuring Impact What evaluation frameworks are in place to assess impact of the work? How can you demonstrate that your services will support the school with reporting in line with pupil premium requirements if you will be funded through that source and targeting FSM children?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation feedback demonstrates outcomes against schools and Ofsted priorities Reporting gives schools the feedback required to evidence impact in line with pupil premium 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systems for data analysis of impact in line with Ofsted criteria Evaluation frameworks link to pupil premium targets
Safeguarding What do you have in place to make sure you are meeting good safeguarding standards? For more details see the Safe Network standards and resources www.safenetwork.org.uk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding procedures are robust and there are clear lines of accountability in place All staff understand their roles and responsibilities with regards to safeguarding Safeguarding practices are reviewed as part of monitoring arrangements 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust management structures Safeguarding policies Safer recruitment processes in place, records of DBS checks for all staff and volunteers where eligible Lead designated safeguarding officer in place Partnership agreement with schools on roles and responsibilities
Health and Safety How will your service comply with the requirements for schools?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services are delivered in line with health and safety regulations 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Safety policies and procedures Risk assessments Lone working policies

Priorities	What does this look like?	Yes/No	Examples of Evidence
Quality Assurance How is the quality of your work assured – do you have kite marks? What governance and management processes are in place to maintain quality? (please see Simply the Best resource)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality assured and well managed services 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality marks Evidence of good governance structures Organisational Business Plan
Workforce skills What qualifications and skills do your workers and volunteers have to undertake the work?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff and volunteers have the required expertise and experience to deliver the work Staff and volunteers are supported and supervised 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff recruitment, training and supervision protocols Regular reviewing systems are in place both internally and externally with the school
Track record Where and how have you delivered services before, do you have references, feedback, impact and data to support your track record?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The service offers good quality provision that is endorsed by others 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback or testimonials from other schools Annual reports Case studies Evaluation data/reports
Schools financial value standard How can you ensure that contracting your service meets the requirements of the school's financial value standard?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All contracted services represent value for money Good contracting arrangements identify the best providers 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial records and audited accounts Business plans Service costs breakdowns (including unit costs where needed) Added value/social value



Section 3

Demonstrating Impact

In order to be successfully commissioned by schools you will need to show that you can meet their desired outputs and outcomes.

Outputs are the activities, products or services that an organisation provides, for example the number of pupils that will be worked with over the course of the project or the number of after school classes run. These should be listed in contract or grant specification documents produced by the school.

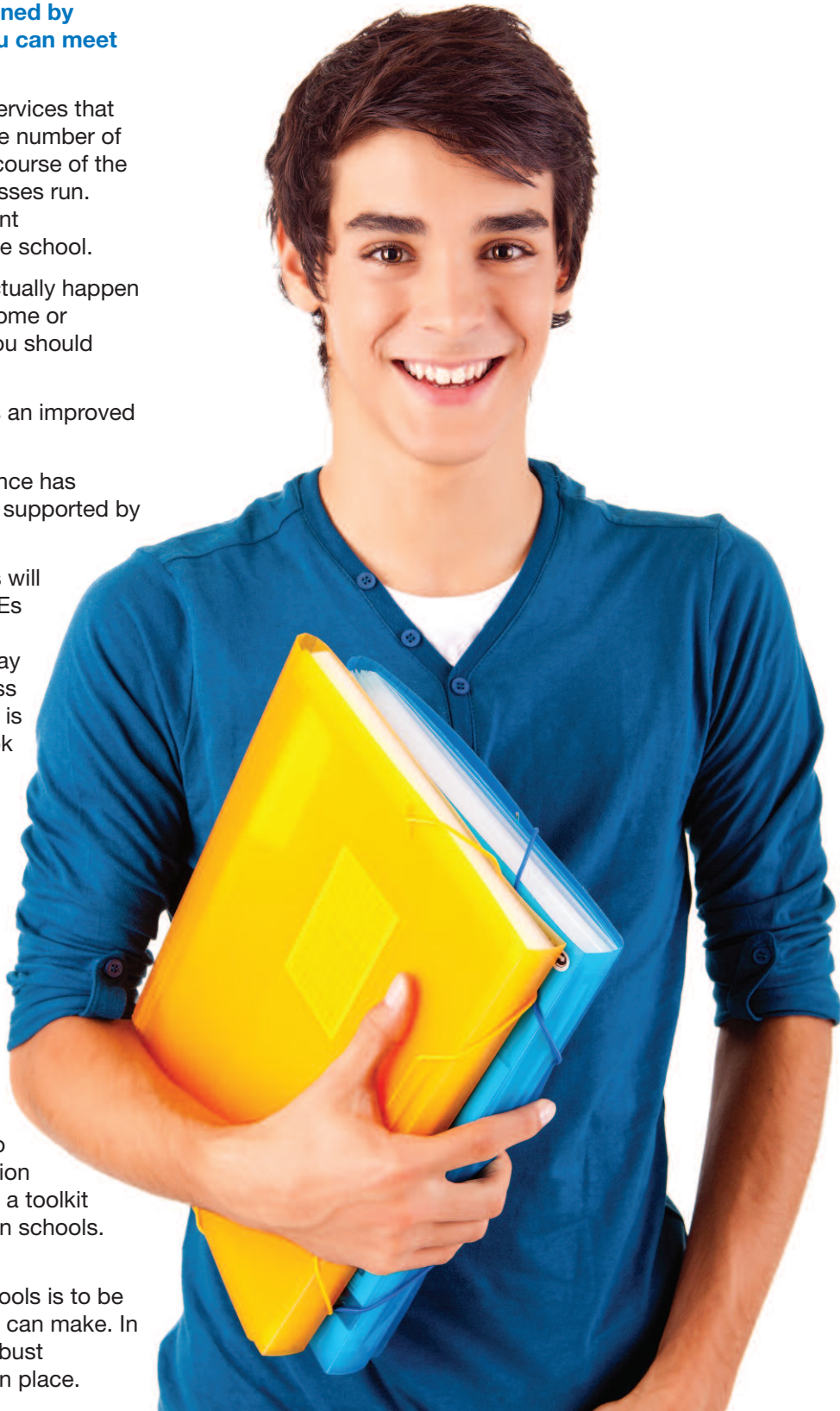
Outcomes are all of the changes that actually happen as a result of your project, whether welcome or unwelcome, expected or unexpected. You should consider three levels of outcomes:

- Individual outcomes – e.g. pupil A has an improved attendance record
- Service level outcomes – e.g. attendance has improved by 10% amongst the pupils supported by the project
- Strategic outcomes – e.g. more pupils will achieve 5 A* to C grades in their GCSEs

The intended outcomes of the project may not necessarily be explicitly stated, unless a 'commissioning for outcomes' method is being used. Instead you may have to look elsewhere to determine the school's principal areas of concern.

Like other public sector commissioners, schools' budgets are being squeezed. Most have a limited amount to spend on additional services and those that do will increasingly expect this funding to directly improve the educational attainment of pupils. If you want to successfully sell your services to a school then you will need to demonstrate the impact that they will have. You will also need to understand how schools demonstrate their impact to Ofsted. The Sutton Trust and the Education Endowment Foundation have developed a toolkit for schools on evidence-based delivery in schools. (See resources)

An important aspect of approaching schools is to be able to evidence the impact your service can make. In order to do this, you will need to have robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place.



The National Audit office has stated that “monitoring, both internally for providers and externally for funders is an element of good management practice. Done well, monitoring gives all those with an interest in a financial relationship – funder, taxpayer, provider, user – information about what is being achieved with the fund”⁹

People often see monitoring and evaluation as a burden imposed by others but unless you integrate this into everything you do as part of your everyday work, and can demonstrate how effective you are, funders, including schools, may not be convinced of the quality and impact of your work. This is also as important for the development of your organisation as it is for potential funders. Top tips for monitoring and evaluation include:

- Get feedback and references or testimonials from other schools – show how you have already worked successfully with the pupil group that is being targeted, or how other work you have done has given you transferable expertise that will allow you to successfully deliver the service
- Be clear on the agreed outcomes and the systems for measuring impact from the outset of any work
- Build the cost and time of monitoring and evaluation into your bid
- Collect monitoring information according to what you (or partners or funders) need to know. This might be total numbers, or more detailed quantitative data
- Collect output information i.e. details of the age, gender, and ethnicity of participants, how many disabled people access your service, how many people come from a certain area or community
- Get impact feedback from the schools including teaching staff, TAs, SMT and SENCOS
- Use participative techniques with the children, young people and their families – questionnaires, or suggestion boxes, or interview people, get case studies
- Include activities like video box sessions (where people speak privately to camera) or discussions, or a graffiti wall

Remember above all, do it regularly and make it a habit, not a chore!

- Evaluation helps to improve practice during the project and for future projects, and it shows what happened as a result of the project
- Evaluation should be open to everybody involved in your project

Resources

There are a large number of tools available that can help you demonstrate the impact of your work. NCVO has provided a helpful list of models that can help you to plan impact, assess impact and financially value your impact.

Education Endowment Foundation

Providing funding and evaluation for cost effective projects addressing educational disadvantage:

educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk

Education Endowment Foundation Toolkit

A summary of educational research to support schools in allocating their resources effectively to impact on attainment:

educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/toolkit

CES

Resources to strengthen the performance management and evaluation of the voluntary and community sector:

www.ces-vol.org.uk

Prove and Improve

Online quality impact toolkit for charities:

www.proveandimprove.org

NCVO

www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/strategy-impact/learn/tools-and-techniques/tools-for-demonstrating-impact

nef

Has published ‘Tools for You’, a free guide to over 20 different quality and social impact frameworks for third sector organisations:

www.neweconomics.org/sites/neweconomics.org/files/Tools_for_You_1.pdf

Toynbee Hall

Has produced a spreadsheet showing various outcome measurement tools that can be applied to different sectors:

www.toynbeehall.org.uk/page.asp?section=000100010001000800060002

New Philanthropy Capital

Has published a number of useful reports and toolkits to help charities better measure their impact:

www.thinknpc.org/publications/?industry=all&subject=measurement_and_evaluation&publication_year=all&article_author=all



School financial accountability

Schools manage many billions of pounds of public money each year. Effective financial management ensures this money is spent wisely and properly, and allows schools to optimise their resources to provide high-quality teaching and learning and so raise standards and attainment for all their pupils.

Maintained schools are required to use the **Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)** to manage their finances (other schools are permitted to use any of the material associated with the standard if they find it useful). The standard consists of 23 questions which governing bodies should formally discuss annually with the head teacher and senior staff. This is then used by local authorities and other auditors to inform their financial assessments.

There a number of sections of the **SFVS** that may be useful to VCS providers working with schools:

Section B – Setting a Budget

- Is there a clear and demonstrable link between the school's budgeting and its plan for raising standards and attainment?

Section C – Value for Money

- Does the school have procedures for purchasing goods and services that both meet legal requirements and secure value for money?
- Are balances at a reasonable level and does the school have a clear plan for using the money it plans to hold in balances at the end of each year?
- Does the school consider collaboration with others, e.g. on sharing staff or joint purchasing, where that would improve value for money?
- Can the school give examples of where it has improved the use of resources during the past year?

When you are presenting your services to schools reference the SFVS and how your service can help them comply with this standard.

Resources

Further details about the standard can be viewed on: www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/financialmanagement/Schools%20Financial%20Value%20Standard

Section 4

Other Useful Information

Sustaining the relationship

There is a variety of ways in which you can sustain your relationship with schools. Schools operate in very specific ways and good relationships are crucial to maintain links and embed your services in the context of the school's community, this can happen by:

- Having good links with key staff and being clear on communicating what you are doing
- Attending activities and events
- Illustrating your strong links with the local community and your added value outside of the school gates
- Promoting the schools through publicity and media
- Keeping up to date with policy changes
- Keeping up to speed with changes in staff, data, Ofsted inspections, the mobility of pupils in and out of the school
- Having clear exit strategies if you are externally funded, so that you can redevelop a relationship should you get further funding

Each school will be fairly unique and a different approach in each one may well be required!

Collaboration

Applying for funding collaboratively

Collaboration comes in many forms. It can range from informal networks and alliances, through joint delivery of projects (often known as consortia) to full merger, and can last for a fixed length of time or can form a permanent arrangement. What these options have in common is that they involve some sort of exchange, for mutual advantage, that ultimately benefits end users.

Collaborative working can bring specific benefits both in terms of the quality of service that beneficiaries receive, and for partners who may experience increased access to funding; capacity building; peer learning and support; shared resources and raised profile.

However, partnerships and consortia cannot be built overnight and are not without risk. In order to ensure that any partnership arrangements you enter into are robust enough to survive what may be a complicated, sometimes even messy arrangement, time needs to be given to sort out the details of the relationship. All details need to be examined. Do you mean the same thing when you are talking about specific groups of children? Are you trying to reach the same people? Are your methods compatible? Do you know who will take responsibility if something goes wrong?

It is important to be aware that collaboration, if it is to be successful and effective, represents a cost.

If you feel that collaborating, whether that is through forming a formal consortium or a loose partnership, will allow you to deliver a much better service, in other words, that it will provide added value, then it is worth trying to make a case for having the set-up and maintenance of the collaborative relationship appropriately costed and funded when putting in a bid. This may be easier to do when a good relationship already exists with the funder.

Collaborative funding applications with respect to school services can take two forms; applying to



schools and applying with schools. In the first scenario, working in partnership may enable you to provide a more holistic service to the school and its pupils or allow new entrants to the market to utilise the existing relationship of one of the partners. Commissioning a partnership, rather than lots of individual voluntary and community sector groups may also be attractive to schools due to the reduced contract administration required.

In the second scenario, working in partnership may enable the school to access additional funding. The ability of the voluntary and community sector to bring in match funding from the public, trusts, foundations and the lottery (that might otherwise be out of reach for a public sector body) can act as a significant selling point.

Whatever kind of collaboration you are entering into, it is important to formalise the relationship. Ideally, you should:

- Involve the Board of Governors/Trustees in plans for partnership development from an early stage
- Check the financial standing of all the other potential partners
- Avoid breaking Competition Law in planning the services to be delivered by the various partners
- Obtain legal advice from an early stage in the development of the partnership
- Allow sufficient time for the partnership to develop prior to bidding
- Allocate sufficient resources for effective partnership development including staff time
- Ensure that all partners are able to demonstrate sound ethical governance and business probity at Board level
- Identify, address and insure all areas of risk throughout the partnership
- Make sure that evidence is available which demonstrates that the individual members and the partnership as a whole has the capacity and capability to deliver the service
- Put in place both an Information Sharing Agreement and a Confidentiality Agreement which all potential partners must sign before entering into any discussions regarding matters relating to the partnership
- Obtain confirmation from all levels of management in your organisation, including governance, that you are happy to work with each of the other potential partners and that there is a risk assessment process in place to manage risks which might arise from working in a close and integrated way or by association

Resources

More information about collaborative funding bids can be found in **Love Your Tender, Children England's guide to commissioning:**

www.childrenengland.org.uk/toolkits-and-guides

Better Together:

www.childrenengland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/WasItBetter.pdf

The Charity Commission

Has published research on the issues that small and medium sized charities have delivering public services through consortia:

www.charity-commission.gov.uk/Publications/rs26_consort.aspx

NCVO's Collaborative Working team

Offers guidance on, and examples of, the various documents you should have in place for good partnership working. You can also find helpful information, training dates and resources about all aspects of collaboration in the VCS, including a 'should you collaborate?' decision tree:

www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/collaborate

Renewal.net

Has a partnership toolkit available for download. You may find some elements helpful to your work, although it is not specifically for children, young people and family organisations and has a neighbourhood renewal focus:

www.renewal.net/toolkits/BuildPartnership

The Department for Work and Pensions and its welfare to work providers have developed the Merlin Standard; a set of principles designed to regulate the key areas of the relationship between a prime contractor and its supply chain partners:

www.dwp.gov.uk/supplying-dwp/what-we-buy/welfare-to-work-services/merlin-standard

For case studies to see how various groups have provided services to schools please look at the Children England's website and also the Learning Exchange for ideas and tips. (see links)

Section 5

Schools Jargon Buster

AfL

Assessment for Learning – Assessment in the classroom to raise pupils' achievement. This is based on the idea that pupils will improve most if they understand the aim of their learning, where they are in relation to this aim and how they can achieve the aim.

ALS

Additional Literacy Support.

EAL

English as an Additional Language – Refers to children whose first language is not English.

EYFS

Early Years Foundation Stage – A framework for care and education of children from birth to five years of age.

FSM

Free School Meal – Children are entitled to free school meals if their parents/carers are earning less than £16,190 per year and if they are in receipt of a range of identified benefits.

Foundation Stage

Covers education provided from 3 years old through to the end of Reception Year.

HLTA

Higher Level Teaching Assistant – An HLTA is further qualified to support the class teacher in undertaking roles such as teaching the whole class during PPA time or delivering whole class areas of learning such as Letters and Sounds.

G & T

Gifted and Talented pupils – Pupils identified by the school who have specific skills and abilities across a range of areas.

IEP

Individual Education Plan – This identifies the special educational needs of a child and outlines targets and strategies to support their learning. This is generally completed by teacher in consultation with the school's SENCO.

MSA

Mealtime/Midday Supervisor Assistant.

PPA

Planning, Preparation and Assessment – Teachers are entitled to 10% of their weekly teaching time out of the classroom. During this time, teachers will plan future lessons, mark children's work, undertake small assessment tasks or work alongside a colleague to target a specific area of learning.

SAR

School Achievement Review – Usually conducted by the SIP, a review of schools progress against targets undertaken on a termly basis, key focus is on attainment data.

SATs

Standard Assessment Tasks (also referred to as National Tests) – Children are tested in Maths, English and Science at the end of Key Stages One and Two and are awarded a level which indicates their ability, compared to the national average.

SEF

School Evaluation Framework – Schools self-assessment process which outlines where they feel they are in relationship to Ofsted Criteria.

SEN

Special Educational Needs.

SENCO

Special Educational Needs Coordinator – This role leads on coordinating all of the support programmes for SEN children across the school.

SDP

School Development Plan – This is the forward plan for the school, outlining what it hopes to achieve within a prescribed time limit. This includes all areas of school life from the curriculum to the school building and environment.

SIP

School Improvement Partner – The role of the SIP is to provide expert support to schools in their drive to raise standards, this was a role previously identified in partnership with the LA.

SLT

Senior Leadership Team – This consists of the Head Teacher, Deputy Head, Assistant Head and possibly other senior members of staff.

TA

Teaching Assistant.

Section 6

Useful Links

Children England Resources

Schools Fact Sheets

www.childrenengland.org.uk/schools

Love Your Tender

www.childrenengland.org.uk/publications

Was It Better – Collaborative working in the Children, Young People and Families VCSE in the North East of England

www.childrenengland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/WasItBetter.pdf

Are They Safe?

www.safenetwork.org.uk/resources/are_they_safe/Pages/default.aspx

The Safe Network Standards

www.safenetwork.org.uk/resources/safe_network_standards/Pages/default.aspx

Commissioning – A Better Way Forward

www.childrenengland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Commissioning-a-Better-Way-Full-report-with-summary.pdf

Evaluation

Charities Evaluation Service

www.ces-vol.org.uk

Prove and Improve

www.proveandimprove.org

Education Endowment Foundation Toolkit

educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/toolkit/about-the-toolkit

Schools

Ofsted

www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report

DFE

www.education.gov.uk/schools

Other Services

Learning Exchange

www.learning-exchange.org.uk

National Resource Centre for Supplementary Schools

www.supplementaryeducation.org.uk





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