

Event report

SUPPLEMENTARY EDUCATION: BEYOND THE PUPIL PREMIUM

An event in partnership with John Lyon's Charity

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HOSTED BY

The British Museum

VENUE

The British Museum
Great Russell Street
London
WC1B 3DG

On 18 January, London Funders and John Lyon's Charity brought funders together to discuss the way forward for supplementary schools and community-led out of school hours education and some of the key issues such as their interaction with mainstream schools.

There are an estimated 5,000 'supplementary', 'complementary', 'community' or 'Saturday' schools in Britain, in a variety of shapes and forms. In general they offer out of school hours educational opportunities for children and young people, many of whom come from minority ethnic communities.

Nick Stuart, CB, Member, John Lyon's Charity Grants Committee, chaired the meeting and gave a warm welcome to those gathered. Today's meeting followed a summer event at which John Lyon's Charity had launched research findings demonstrating how supplementary education provides positive returns for children at Key Stages 1 and 2. John Lyon's Charity is keen to help mainstream schools see how much they could achieve with the Pupil Premium by working closely with supplementary schools. Nick introduced a panel of speakers to share their range of experience of supplementary schools from these perspectives:

- the national support organisation
- a specific supplementary school
- a Borough champions project
- a mainstream school
- a consortium of supplementary schools
- a funder of the field, and
- a Museum connecting its collections with parents and children from many of these schools.

Between them they gave a vivid picture of the development and function of supplementary schools and the scope for interaction with the mainstream.

The National Resource Centre (NRC) for Supplementary Education: Pascale Vassie, Policy and Delivery Manager is convinced of the potential of supplementary education to make positive improvements in educating children and supporting parents by focusing on the quality of supplementary schools.

The NRC was established in 1997 following investigatory work and then recognition by funders in London that supplementary schools needed not only financial support but also longer term partnerships with a view to improving sustainability. An England-wide model was developed in 2006, aided by a merger with ContinYou, and more recently NRC has been established as an independent charity.

A key part of its work is to set standards for its member schools and in 2007 the NRC launched its Code of Practice. 1,300 supplementary schools have signed up to this and from it has developed a three level Quality Framework that ensures standards as follows:

Bronze: the supplementary school provides a safe and well-organised environment;

Silver: a mentor works with the school to check specific procedures are being used and guidelines followed on what to teach and adequate teaching resources;

Gold: the school has a clear programme of study with professional teachers.

Key benefits of community-based supplementary education are

- reinforcing positive identities
- supporting the building of cohesive communities
- providing community language teaching and exam success
- raising attainment across the curriculum
- engaging parents in school and learning.

Pascale noted that parents with children at supplementary schools want information about their children's education and how the English education system works. They may also be keen for their children to learn their mother tongue and share their cultural heritage with school friends and the local community. They value being able to help their children with school work and educational choices. Supplementary education forms the basis of meeting these needs and fundamentally links the schools and the communities they serve.

See Pascale's presentation [here](#).

The perspective of a supplementary school working in a mainstream school setting including the practical and communications challenges: Ahmad Farid Mall and Emily Beckwith, Afghan Association Paiwand

The Afghan Association Paiwand manages supplementary schools based in four schools in Harrow and received its first funding in 2002 from Trust for London. Farid detailed the importance of the involvement of the Head Teacher at Whitefield School, where the first partnership was developed, in spearheading support for the supplementary school, for instance offering classrooms for use at the weekend, thus providing appropriate, high quality facilities.

Emily argued that being based in a mainstream school holds many benefits such as providing a safe and appropriate learning environment with shared learning opportunities. She detailed survey findings which demonstrate that mainstream schools see a perceptible improvement in pass rates and attendance levels amongst children who attend supplementary schools compared with their peers who do not.

Farid detailed the practicalities of partnerships between mainstream and supplementary schools including the need for a written agreement and policies and clear allocation of responsibilities but, even with these, maintaining the relationship can depend on having a champion at the mainstream school. Having a Head Teacher in full support of the partnerships has enabled Farid's Association to run 15 classes on a Saturday, in turn enabling the supplementary school to expand by offering activities for parents too.

Farid and Emily were quick to point out both the challenges and solutions for partnerships between supplementary and mainstream schools, for instance the practical issues of classroom tidiness, which needs checklists and a 'leave as you find' ethos. Having supplementary school staff based at the mainstream school, however, ensures better communication and information sharing between the schools.

See Farid and Emily's presentation [here](#).

“Supplementary education fundamentally links schools and the communities they serve”

“Being based in a mainstream school provides a safe and appropriate learning environment”

The importance of champions to the successful development of supplementary schools: Joy Collins, Manager, Enhancing Achievement Service, Education Strategy and School Organisation (ESSO), LB Harrow

Joy outlined the development of Harrow Weekend School, set up in 2009 by the Council at the request of Somali parents for study support for their children in English, maths and science. The School aimed to support underachieving groups of children and enhance the status of supplementary schools, especially to align the school with mainstream services and projects. Key partners included the Head Teacher, Afghan Association Paiwand, Somali Cultural and Educational Association and the National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education.

Joy developed Harrow Council's flagship activity, the Narrowing the Gap Project, to provide training for schools in relation to new arrivals and advanced but underachieving bilingual learners. What developed was a network of three supplementary schools fed by 18 mainstream schools and addressing Key Stage 1 and 2 (though with Key Stage 3 also being developed). Barnet and Harrow Councils now work together in a partnership that helps with teacher training and other resources. They encourage teachers through online continuing professional education and Joy coordinates bespoke training for teachers.

Through this, mainstream schools are now able to refer to the Weekend Schools children that they identify as underachieving. Termly meetings are held to discuss pupil progress and share data. Funding for the work came initially through an Ethnic Minority Achievement grant, followed by support from John Lyon's Charity, Paul Hamlyn Foundation and contributions from schools. Joy sees "phenomenal" results for children, not only in improved confidence about their mainstream school work but in educational attainment that exceeds the expectations of the mainstream schools. A bonus is that supplementary schools are no longer marginalised and are aligned with many other services and projects.

In looking to the future, Joy identified the potential for cross-borough working and the need to strengthen the capacity of supplementary schools forums.

See Joy's presentation [here](#).

A view from the mainstream education sector: Elena Evans, Head Teacher, Stag Lane & Executive Head Teacher, Camrose School, Harrow

Stag Lane Saturday School developed in partnership with Camrose Primary School when Elena took on responsibility for a school threatened with special measures, coping with, for example, a high number of excluded children, 92% of whom were from ethnic minority groups.

Setting up the supplementary school also aligned with the Narrowing the Gap Project, providing one-to-one support and other pupil-focused intervention. Staff were recruited from each school and funding was received from the local authority, Afghan Association Paiwand and the schools themselves. Crucially the supplementary school was targeted at children who were not on the Special Education Needs register, but those receiving free school meals and who had been identified as underachievers.

“Educational underachievement can be effectively tackled with the help of supplementary education”

Elena described the “overnight impact” on children and their parents, and that by the end of the first year both schools saw progress in maths, reading and writing, with children showing confidence about participation in their mainstream lessons. She also noted that maximising the use of the schools’ had allowed the supplementary schools to offer good projects for parents too, such as a Dads in Schools project. Camrose School’s Key Stage 2 results are now in the 90% range, a clear demonstration that educational underachievement within children from ethnic minority groups can be tackled effectively with the help of supplementary schools.

See Elena's slides [here](#).

A funders’ perspective on supplementary schools: Noelle Gilbert, Grants Officer, Education and Learning Programme, Paul Hamlyn Foundation

The Foundation has been a long-standing supporter of supplementary education, making grants since 1998 and providing core funding for the National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education. A review in 2010 confirmed commitment to this field as a Foundation priority yet noted the changing context in which there have been significant cuts in local authority funding, rising numbers of young unemployed people and changes in the funding of schools, with a growth in academies.

These changes persuaded the Foundation to adopt a more strategic position in its support of supplementary education, and it now focuses on improving partnerships between mainstream and supplementary schools. They have commissioned research into the impact of supplementary schools on children’s educational attainment, hold networking days, develop case studies and provide capacity building support for their grant recipients.

Noelle argued that supporting the National Resource Centre enabled the Foundation to play a role in improving the quality of supplementary schools whilst reducing the level of risk involved. She stressed that when mainstream and supplementary schools come together as equal partners there are mutual benefits: improved partnerships lead to better premises and access to the pupil premium for the supplementary schools and improved results for the mainstream.

See Noelle's slides [here](#).

Working in a consortium: Ertanch Hidayettin, Supplementary Schools Coordinator, Community Barnet

Barnet is a borough of economic extremes, with around 30 supplementary schools. Barnet Supplementary Schools Forum (BSSF) supports a huge diversity of communities. Ertanch detailed its work in partnership with voluntary organisations and the Council, through which informal networks of support and innovative working have developed, including a safeguarding sub-group and a fostering champions scheme.

Ertanch commented on the much broader benefits of supplementary education as a vehicle for engaging ‘hard to reach’ communities; and sees much creativity in the community in raising resources for this work.

See his presentation [here](#).

“The better the relationship between a mainstream and supplementary school the more successful and sustainable the school is likely to be”

“Supporting the National Resource Centre enables funders to play a role in improving the quality of supplementary schools, whilst reducing the level of risk involved”

The British Museum's work with supplementary schools: Siân Hunter Dodsworth, Community Programmes Coordinator, Supplementary Schools, The British Museum

The Museum's work with supplementary schools has brought great numbers of new visitors to the Museum through an evolving programme over the last three or four years. This began in a fairly ad hoc fashion without specific funding, but as Museum staff gained experience and ideas as to what was possible they developed a programme that is now funded by John Lyon's Charity. The Hajj exhibition in 2012 provided exciting evidence of the potential for linking communities all over London with access to artefacts and information relating to their history and geographic and cultural origins, when thousands of children and parents involved in Islamic and Arabic schools attended special weekends and creative activity sessions.

The Museum is nine months into its two year funding programme which supports free events focused on temporary exhibitions (and will soon link to the permanent collections). These are attracting many first-time visitors. They offer training for supplementary school teachers in how to organise visits, and outreach work where children take part in object handling sessions. They are planning a conference later this year on Museum-supplementary school links. Siân detailed the process of working with supplementary schools as one of collaboration and partnership. A steering group with ten schools has been meeting to make decisions on the content and development of the programme.

See Siân's slides [here](#).

Question and answer session with the presenters

Participants had many questions for the speakers and much discussion focused on the proven results of supplementary education in improving the educational attainment and life chances of children from ethnic minorities.

The audience was keen to hear more about steps being taken to improve the engagement of mainstream schools in supplementary education. The panel argued that this was mainly an issue of quality assurance and that better relationships and trust needed to be built with local authorities being open to risk. Pascale in particular argued that there needs to be a willingness from funders to work strategically as cuts to local council funding are savage-something which will continue to impact vulnerable communities. She and other panel members urged mainstream schools to see the Pupil Premium as being well used if added to the support for supplementary schools.

There is undoubtedly still some suspicion of supplementary education among the teaching profession. Yet as teachers are under great pressure to increase their pupils' attainment, it is now more vital than ever that supplementary schools are given the recognition and support they deserve, for their achievement in improving children's capacity to thrive at school and achieve ever better results, at the same time bettering the life chances, of a significant proportion of children, families and communities.

"Supplementary education empowers families and strengthens communities"

Nick Stuart closed the meeting, with the reflection that supplementary schools have a relevance to and contribution to make, to a number of important agendas including:

- Raising attainment for children, particularly those from disadvantaged communities and on free school meals, both by reinforcing mainstream education in core subjects but also by helping parents to understand better how they can support their children and to understand the way schools operate
- Giving parents the confidence to undertake courses to improve their skills, particularly through English language courses: this ties in with the family learning agenda and ways to stimulate adult learning
- Enhancing society through a vibrant voluntary sector and developing communities ready and equipped to become active citizens
- Through the Arts and in other ways acting as a powerful instrument for celebrating diversity in our society.

Participants

Vicky	Arvaniti	British Museum
Sharon	Barbour	Peabody
Emily	Beckwith	Afghan Association Paiwand(speaker)
Steve	Bywater	London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
Anna	Clemenson	John Lyon's Charity
Joy	Collins	London Borough of Harrow (speaker)
Sarah	Cook	British Museum
Elena	Evans	Camrose School (speaker)
Kathleen	Frenchman	Richard Cloudesley's Charity
Noelle	Gilbert	Paul Hamlyn Foundation (speaker)
Cate	Gordon	London Borough of Harrow
Elaine	Grant	Mousetrap Theatre Projects
Neal	Green	Charity Commission
Katharina	Herrmann	London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
Ertanch	Hidayettin	Community Barnet (speaker)
Jennifer	Humphrey	London Community Foundation
Sian	Hunter Dodsworth	British Museum (speaker)
Rakhia	Ismail	London Borough of Islington
Marina	Jenkyns	
Malcolm	John	London Borough of Harrow
Tadas	Khazanavicius	British Museum
Helen	Laker	London Borough of Southwark
Farid	Mall	Afghan Association Paiwand(speaker)
Erik	Mesel	John Lyon's Charity

Jaishree	Mistry	Charity Bank
Maria	Nawrocka	London Borough of Croydon
Lekan	Ojumu	sported
John	Orna-Ornstein	British Museum
Norma	Pearson	Heritage Lottery Fund
Catherine	Pender	John Lyon's Charity
Denise	Ramsey	UnLtd
Gemma	Rocyn Jones	Young Foundation
Kate	Rounce	The Mercers' Company
Neeraj	Sharma	London Councils
Rianne	Sintim	Royal Borough Of Greenwich
Rena	Sodhi	Safer London Foundation
Nick	Stuart	John Lyon's Charity (chair)
Hugh	Stultz	Big Lottery Fund
Marina	Svistak	New Philanthropy Capital
Emma	Taylor	British Museum
Sian	Thurgood	British Museum
Pascale	Vassie	National Resource Centre For Supplementary Education-Continyou (speaker)
James	Weddup	British Museum
Susan	Whiddington	Mousetrap Theatre Projects (Chair Of John Lyon's Grants Committee)
Andrew	Wright	Cripplegate Foundation

In attendance

Gaynor	Humphreys	London Funders
Catherine	McLoughlin	London Funders

Apologies for absence

MaryFrancis, Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames; Katie Higginson, BBC Children in Need; Clare Kiely, Homeless Link; Carol Taylor, National Institute of Adult Continuing Education

With thanks to The British Museum for their support in hosting this meeting.