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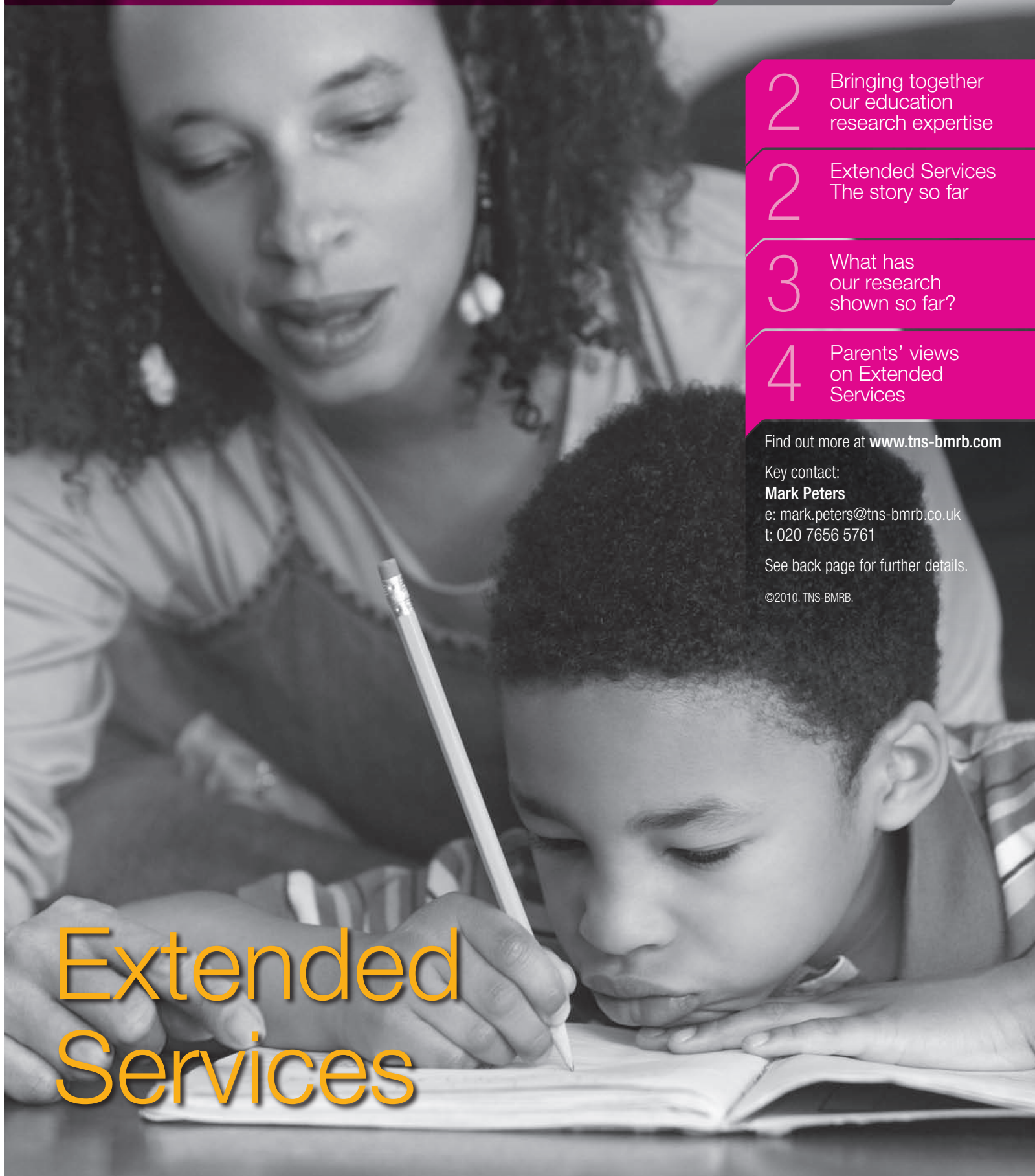
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Extended
Services



TNS-BMRB

Bringing together our education research expertise



Formed in 2009, TNS-BMRB combines the social research team from BMRB with the TNS social and polling team. Combining our expertise gives us a unique offer in the education research sector and our portfolio includes some of the most high profile projects across the entire education policy sphere, ranging from work in early years and childcare through to research with young people, parents and schools and our studies of further and higher education and adult skills. Our studies have drawn on a range of quantitative and qualitative methods.

Our research includes the 2009 Early Years and Childcare Providers Survey for the DCSF (a survey we have conducted annually since 2005), The Longitudinal Study of Young People in England, Youth Cohort Study (Cohort 13), 2009 Survey of Basic Skills in Wales and the National Evaluation of Extended Services. We have also undertaken the recent Children's Centre Evaluation amongst parents and carers of children aged under 5, a study of school meals in

Primary Schools on behalf of the School Food Trust, the Evaluation of the Connexions Direct service, as well as a Workplace Learning Study for the Institute of Education.

In this issue of our Education Policy Newsletter, we turn our attention to the policy surrounding Extended Services in and around schools – including an overview of the policy background and our research in this field.

Extended Services The story so far

The Extended Services agenda continues to be very central to national policy development. Previous 'extended school' initiatives originated from urban renewal strategies in the late 1990s, which talked of a range of services and enrichment activities which use the school as the hub of the community. Extended Schools form part of the Government's wider strategy for enhancing the lives of children through the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda and the Children's Plan. In particular, it forms part of an attempt not only to make services more effective individually, but to enhance their effectiveness by ensuring that they work closely together in pursuit of common aims and objectives.

The Extended Schools Prospectus, *Extended Schools: Access to Opportunities and Services for All*, published in 2005, set out the vision for extended schools. It emphasised how extended services are a key vehicle for delivering the Government's objective of lifting children out of poverty and improving outcomes for them and their families. It set out the key priority, and challenge, for schools in reaching the most disadvantaged families within a universal framework of providing mainstream services for all families.

The Government White Paper – *Your Child, Your Schools, Our Future; Building a 21st Century Schools System* (June 2009) builds on the Children's Plan vision to 'make this the best place in the world for children to grow up'. "By 2010, through extended services, we aim for all schools to work in partnership with other schools and local providers to offer access to year-round opportunities for additional learning, and enriching activities. ...The best schools have long recognised that offering a wide menu of positive activities, both in and out of school hours, can be integral to improving attainment, narrowing gaps between different groups and engaging with parents". (p.37). The New Parent Guarantee will ensure that parents have access to a range of extended services by 2010.



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What is an Extended School?

An Extended School works with the local authority and other partners to offer access to a range of services and activities for children and young people. The Government wants all schools to provide access to a 'core offer' of extended services by 2010. The core offer comprises: 8am-6pm all year round childcare; a range of study support activities; parenting support; swift and easy referral to a wide range of specialised support services; and providing wider community access to ICT, sports and arts facilities including adult learning.

Access is often provided through a cluster of local schools or through other providers. Since first talk of 'extended schools', the language has moved on to describe 'extended services in and around schools'. This forms part of the wider provision of integrated child and family support services offered under the ECM agenda.

Policy challenges

The development of extended services in and around schools is a complex initiative. What is on offer through different schools will vary in type, quality and take up. Sustainability of services is also important. The future of services will, in part, depend on how effectively they meet the needs and aspirations of their users. In this respect, effective consultation with parents and pupils is imperative, as is the need to engage and motivate users.

Our research in the area of extended services has addressed some of these important issues. We have also focused on engaging disadvantaged families and some of the challenges that face schools and other services in this area.

Previous research has already pointed to some of the benefits that extended services can offer (e.g. Peters *et al* 2009, Cummings *et al* 2007) and over the next few years we will contribute further to this evidence base. We will offer deeper insights into some of the longer term impacts of extended services on schools and families. The Government has invested heavily in the development of extended services and some of our research will help provide robust information to assist in future policy development in this area.

Extended Services Evaluation

Last year, TNS-BMRB were commissioned to carry out the DCSF's national Evaluation of Extended Services. We lead a consortium including the University of Manchester, the University of Newcastle-Upon-Tyne and TECIS. The aim of this flagship evaluation is to provide rigorous information and evidence about the delivery and effectiveness of extended services. The research also aims to provide an assessment of the impact of extended services, building on information of service provision, usage and programme implementation. The five-year evaluation will focus on measuring how extended services affect different types of pupils, families, schools and communities, including the most disadvantaged.

TNS-BMRB will be responsible for surveying schools, parents and pupils throughout the life of this important evaluation.



What has our research shown so far?

Disadvantaged children and young people

As part of the investment in extended services in schools the Government is investing over £200 million between 2008-09 and 2010-11 to enable extended schools to do more to support economically disadvantaged children and young people. This funding is specifically aimed to ensure that economically disadvantaged children and young people can access the full range of activities offered in extended schools.

To find the most effective method of delivering this subsidy funding to the children and young people most in need, the DCSF is running a pathfinder which started in September 2008. This pathfinder involves around 440 schools in 18 local authorities and aims to test 2 different models of delivering the subsidy.

TNS-BMRB and the University of Newcastle-Upon-Tyne are conducting an evaluation of this pathfinder on behalf of the DCSF. The evaluation involves surveys of schools, parents and pupils, collection of management information from schools, and qualitative case studies involving staff at LAs and schools, other relevant workers involved with extended services provision, and parents and pupils.

The evaluation is ongoing but an interim report has been published (available at www.dcsf.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/DCSF-RR132.pdf). Interim findings showed that three in ten schools agreed that they struggled to involve economically disadvantaged pupils in activities, and secondary schools were more likely than primary schools to struggle. A key message in guidance given to schools at the start of the pathfinder was the importance of consultation for engaging disadvantaged pupils, and three quarters of schools had consulted with pupils or parents within the first term after the introduction of the subsidy.

As a result of the subsidy around two thirds of schools had made each of the following changes: provided new activities for economically disadvantaged pupils; increased the number of activities offered to economically disadvantaged pupils; improved economically disadvantaged pupils' access to activities; and improved the quality of their provision for economically disadvantaged pupils.

According to management information collected from schools, in the summer term and summer holidays 2008, just before the introduction of the subsidy, on average 35% of economically disadvantaged pupils took part in at least one activity (although there was enormous variation across different schools).

In comparison, during the spring term 2009 an average of 63% of economically disadvantaged pupils had taken part in at least one activity. This shows very encouraging progress is being made with the help of the subsidy funding.



Parents' views on Extended Services

In 2008, the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) established a *Parents' Panel*, which aims to provide parents with a voice at the heart of Government and to ensure that parents' opinions are reflected in Government policy making. BMRB Social Research was commissioned by DCSF to set up and co-ordinate the Panel, which comprises 40 parents (with children aged 0-19) from around England. The Panel meets quarterly to discuss a range of issues linked to Government policy around children.

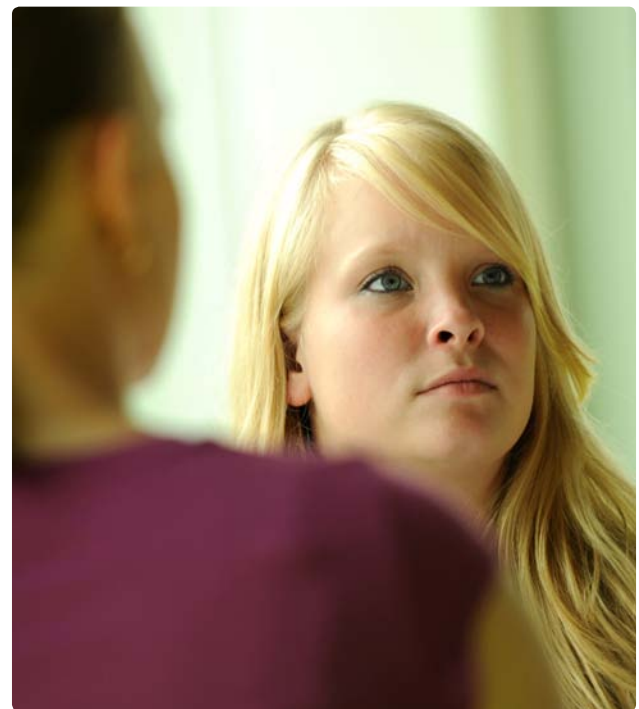
One theme discussed with parents was their views about extended services in schools. The day long event took place on the 31st March 2009 and was attended by Jim Knight, the then Minister of State for Schools and Learners, and Baroness Delyth Morgan, Parliamentary Undersecretary of State for Children, Young People and Families.



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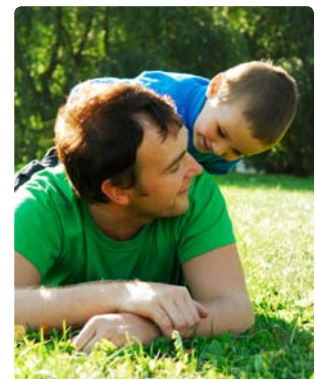
Generally, Panel members' awareness of extended services in schools was limited to childcare provision and activities for children outside of schools hours. Parents acknowledged that limited awareness of other elements of the 'core offer' may be partly due to lack of perceived need, rather than simply lack of provision.

There were useful discussions on extended services which raised issues about ensuring the services on offer were well publicised and communicated locally with parents. Regular consultation on the services to be offered was identified as a key requirement in this area. This is contributing to taking forward policy development in this field.



Consulting parents and young people

Good quality consultation and information about extended services is necessary to help raise awareness and usage of services. Previous research (Wallace *et al* 2009) has shown that the majority of schools engage in consultation with parents and pupils. However, two in five parents did not recall being consulted in the last year. Research by BMRB



in March 2009 has shown that 31% of parents claimed that they had been consulted about the type of extended services they would like to see. These findings should be interpreted with caution as it is possible that many parents do not recall being consulted (i.e. they may have been consulted by schools but chose not to respond). Nevertheless, promoting parental engagement in the development of extended services is likely to enhance the quality of extended services on offer and create a more 'demand led' system.

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The TNS-BMRB Education Policy Group is headed up by Mark Peters. Mark has 15 years' experience of education policy research. Mark is currently involved in a number of important studies for the DCSF and has a wide range of experience across the entire education sector. Mark has an interest in researching parenting issues and is involved in the DCSF Parents' Panel research. He has also been involved in TNS-BMRB's research on extended services and is currently involved in the DCSF national evaluation.