

Outward-facing Schools –the Sinnott Fellowship

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This research report was commissioned before the new UK Government took office on 11 May 2010. As a result the content may not reflect current Government policy and may make reference to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) which has now been replaced by the Department for Education (DFE).

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

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SUMMARY

A number of different trends in education – the Big Society, community cohesion, family learning, parental engagement, enterprise – require schools to look outwards. In 2009 the then DCSF introduced the Sinnott Fellowship (in memory of Steve Sinnott and his contribution to education) to learn from some of the best practitioners in schools in outward-facing work. It has been very successful, with numerous examples of powerful impact that can be seen at www.outwardfacingschools.org.uk/case-studies/.

The Fellowship gave a gift of time to successful applicants to spend two days a week for two terms developing innovative external links and relationships to improve pupil aspiration and attainment. This model of investing in a named individual rather than a school worked well because these highly effective people were passionate about making a difference and spent the resources with great efficiency in order to squeeze the maximum benefit from what they appreciated was a unique opportunity.

The Fellows were highly creative in their development of a wide range of projects and passionate about the power of outward-facing work for four inter-related reasons:

- To link everyone who might enhance students' learning, wellbeing and opportunities
- To raise student aspirations and broaden their horizons
- To ensure that the school is a valuable resource for pupils and community
- To raise student attainment and school improvement.

My role in leading the external evaluation of the Sinnott Fellowship for the Institute of Education was to:

1. provide support for the Fellows' evaluation of their own objectives
2. draw common threads across each of the Fellows' experiences
3. build a greater understanding of how an outward-facing culture can support attainment levels and provide opportunities for more young people to be successful, with a positive impact on their future aspirations and choices
4. provide a growing body of knowledge and good practice about what makes the role work well for schools.

This report builds on the case studies written about the Fellows' projects, (www.outwardfacingschools.org.uk/case-studies/) and is in four sections:

- Section 1 examines the 30 Fellows, their schools and the impact of the Fellowship.
- Section 2 examines what an outward-facing school looks like and the four key reasons why it is important: to link everyone who might enhance students' learning, wellbeing and opportunities; raise student aspirations and broaden their horizons; ensure that the

school is a valuable resource for pupils and community; and to raise student attainment and school improvement.

- Section 3 moves on to considering how an outward-facing organisation can be structured and suggests that it should be underpinned by three core principles relating to leadership, staffing and communication.
- Section 4 looks at ways to evaluate the impact of outward-facing activity. Although the Sinnott Fellows and their schools were convinced that outward-facing activity made a significant difference, there was very little hard evidence to back this up. Examples of different forms of evaluation are shown and a new 12 stage model explained.

There are so many facets of outward-facingness that schools need to ensure that it is strategically led and well-managed in order to make a difference to young people. The following recommendations emerge:

1. Outward-facing activity has significant benefits in enhancing attainment and raising aspirations, and must be sustained and developed across the education system.
2. Strategic leadership of outward-facing activity is required so that there is a clear vision focused on improving students' learning, aspirations and wellbeing.
3. All the outward-facing activities should be mapped to enable people to move forward strategically.
4. Tasks should be carried out by the most appropriate people – there are many exciting models that make only strategic use of teachers.
5. The various staff involved in outward-facing activities should have sufficient time and expertise to do their roles.
6. Systems are needed to facilitate communication and information-sharing between everyone involved in outward-facing activities and that enable external bodies know who to contact, and how.
7. Measuring the impact of outward-facing activities is important to justify the time and cost involved.
8. Successes should be recorded, shared and publicised in order to save wheels being reinvented.
9. Time and skills need to be dedicated to seeking and bidding for funding.

1. THE SINNOTT FELLOWS

A number of different trends in education – the Big Society, community cohesion, family learning, parental engagement, enterprise – require schools to look outwards. In 2009 the then DCSF introduced the Sinnott Fellowship (in memory of Steve Sinnott and his contribution to the field of education) to learn from some of the best practitioners in schools in outward-facing work.

The first 15 Fellowships took place in Summer and Autumn 2009 and were held by:

Jackie Barnes	Morpeth School, Tower Hamlets
Marcia Clack	Phoenix High School, Hammersmith & Fulham
Charlie Hodge	John Cabot Academy, Bristol
Carl Ward	Sutherland Business & Enterprise College, Telford
Shaun McInerney	North Liverpool Academy, Liverpool
Jane Delfino	Manchester Academy, Manchester
Joan Bloomfield	Marden High School, North Tyneside
Ryan Gibson	St Joseph's RC Comprehensive School, South Tyneside
Rob Palmer	Twynham School, Dorset
Ben Johnson	Bishop Barrington Sports College, County Durham
Tim Smith	Prudhoe Community High School, Northumberland
Annette Woodrow	Kingsbury High School, Brent
Sanjo Jeffrey	Pavilion Study Centre, Barnet
Chris Cullingford	Stoke Newington School, Hackney
Karine Waldron	Villiers High School, Ealing

The second cohort's Fellowships took place in Spring and Summer 2010 and were held by:

Brian Collen	Plume School, Essex
Phil Arnold	Reddish Vale Technology College, Stockport
Paula Howard	De La Salle Humanities College, Liverpool
Catherine Hughes	St Cuthbert's Catholic Community College, St Helen's
Marcel Ciantar	Budmouth Technology College, Dorset
Philip Avery	Bohunt School, Hampshire
Elizabeth Haddleton	Oriel Mathematics and Computing College, Norfolk
Dale Buckland	Hadden Park High School, Nottingham
Jacqueline Ley	Holly Lodge Girls' College, Liverpool
Wendy Parker	St Benet Biscop Catholic High School, Northumberland
Paul Bentley	St Edmund's Catholic School, Wolverhampton
Grahame Smith	Ulverston Victoria High School, Cumbria
Stuart Montgomery	Shepshed High School, Leicestershire
Charley Mellowship	Heath Park Business and Enterprise College, Wolverhampton
Robert Hope	St Joseph's RC Comprehensive School, South Tyneside

Their schools

The Fellows were from secondary schools spread across the country. Figure 1 shows the regional spread, with the largest numbers in the North-West (seven). The North-East had a disproportionately high number (six) in comparison to the number of secondary age students. The 30 Fellows were spread across 24 local authorities: there were four Fellows in Liverpool, two in Northumberland, two in Wolverhampton and one school (St Joseph's, South Tyneside) had two Fellows. Few Fellows visited each other, even when they were nearby, which seems a missed opportunity.

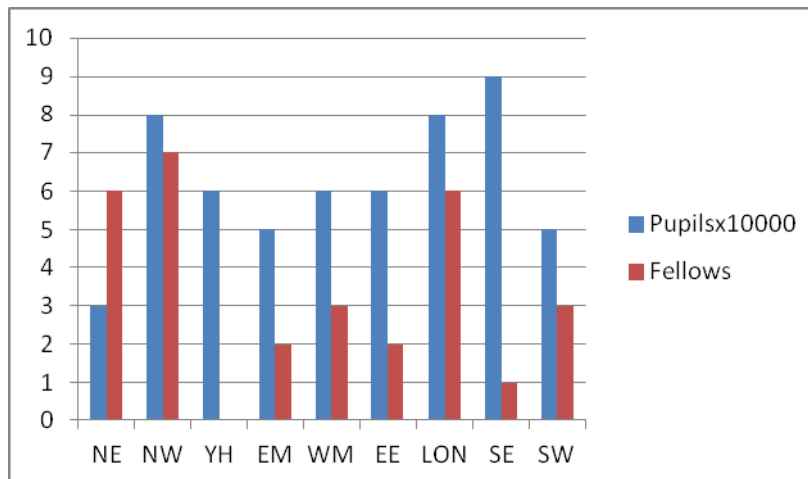


Figure 1: Regional spread of Fellows compared to secondary pupil numbers

The schools ranged in size from a very large comprehensive with 2030 students to a pupil referral unit of 50. Two-thirds of Fellows worked in schools with high levels of pupil deprivation. It is interesting to note that six - a fifth - of the Fellows' schools were Roman Catholic, which is double the national picture (41% of Catholic secondary schools in England made an outstanding contribution to their communities, compared to 24% of all schools www.cesew.org.uk/standard.asp?id=9654). Schools with Sinnott Fellows were more effective than most, as Figure 2 shows.

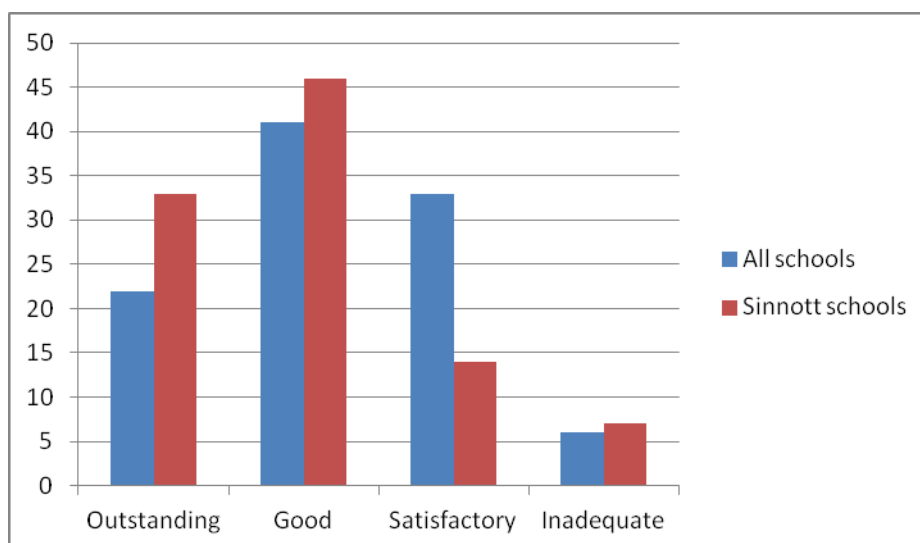


Figure 2: Ofsted judgements of all Sinnott schools compared with nationally

How people felt about the Fellowship

The impact of the Fellowship was powerful. Jackie Barnes said,

I got my Sinnott Fellowship in my 25th year of teaching. It was the first time that I was given the opportunity to do something I really believed in, that wasn't about tick boxes and wasn't about fulfilling somebody else's agenda. It was brilliant.

People valued the Sinnott Fellowship for ten reasons.

1. The recognition it gave to individuals, teams and schools for work which had often had a low status.

You do question whether you should be doing this kind of thing – shouldn't I be in the classroom doing the best possible teaching I can?

2. The time to build the relationships required with external bodies.

The unique luxury of time to develop existing work, which often has to be squeezed around timetable and other commitments, has been wonderful.

3. The impetus it gave to work which had previously been squeezed into spare time.

It provides the freedom to make your outward-facing vision into reality.

4. The opportunity to reflect, which led to people becoming more strategic and confident.

I feel more confident to make a statement about the importance of out-facing work and inspired to do more adventurous projects in the future.

5. The requirement to prove the impact of their work.

If I believe that it's right for young people I teach, then I need to share and convince others so that more benefit.

6. The inspiration gained from like-minded people.

The Fellows and those guiding and supporting them are an inspirational, if rather daunting, group of people. There has been a feeling of sharing and mutual respect which has supported and encouraged us all to work on such exciting projects.

7. Greater access to wider networks, more funding streams and new opportunities.

Being a Sinnott Fellow has a caché: it opens doors.

8. The opportunity to make more difference to more people.

It's not right just to make things great for students in my school. I should be helping other teachers so that more children can benefit.

9. The freedom to get on, with minimal demands in terms of accountability.

The chance to use my professional judgement to create projects for students, without constraint, has been a real delight. Most initiatives are only open to restricted groups with predetermined outcomes. This project has been a refreshing change from this.

10. The feeling of being in the vanguard of a new movement, with the potential to influence policy.

The most obvious impact of the Fellowship on me has been a feeling of being connected to something bigger, and to others moving in the same direction.

The Fellowship gave a gift of time to successful applicants to spend two days a week for two terms developing innovative external links and relationships to improve pupil aspiration and attainment. This model of investing in a named individual rather than a school worked well because these highly effective people were passionate about making a difference and spent the resources with great efficiency in order to squeeze the maximum benefit from what they saw a unique opportunity.

2. WHAT AN OUTWARD-FACING SCHOOL LOOKS LIKE

Schools might look outwards in a number of ways: to parents, to the community, etc. Fellows found it useful to map all their school's outward-facing activity (see Figure 3).

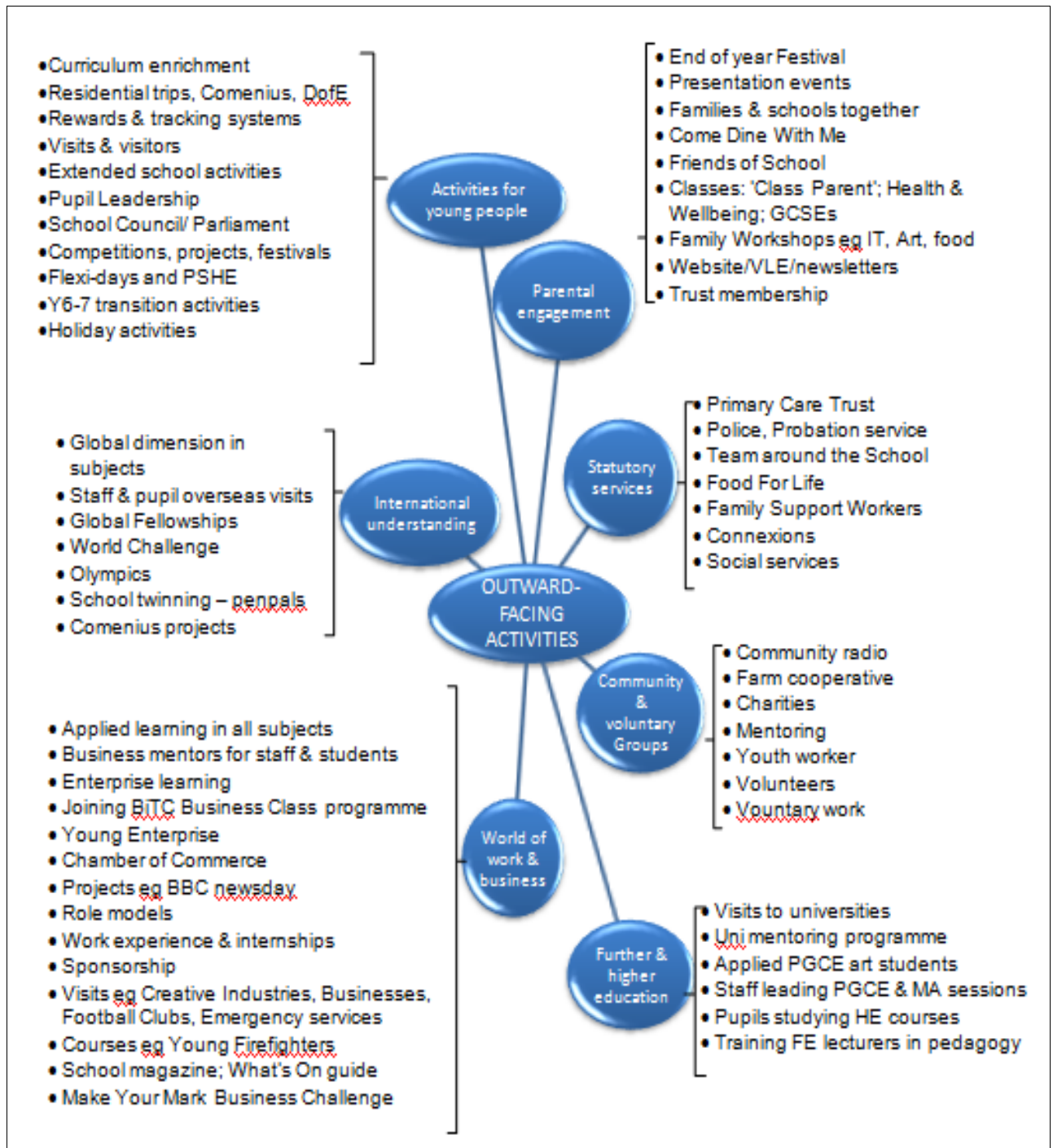


Figure 3 Outward-facing activities

The Fellows were highly creative in their development of a wide range of projects and passionate about the importance of their outward-facing work whether it was with parents, the world of work, higher education or international links. They shared a commitment to the power of outward-facing work for four inter-related reasons:

- To link everyone who might enhance students' learning, wellbeing and opportunities
- To raise student aspirations and broaden their horizons
- To ensure that the school is a valuable resource for pupils and community
- To raise student attainment and school improvement.

Linking

Tim Smith captured the need to connect through the image of a safety net:

I have this vision of the school as a massive safety net. We need to encourage students to get on the high wire and achieve but to have safety nets for them. If you're not connecting things then there are going to be holes and kids are going to fall through. Bringing the outside world into the classroom and connecting the school to the wider community in every way possible is just as important as formal learning. If we imagine that these connections form nets then the more there are, the smaller the gaps there will be and the harder it will be for anyone to slip through.



They believed that education should connect young people to the wider world. They recognised that the school's role was particularly important where families may not be well placed to establish such links. Many of the Fellows' passion was driven by an appreciation of how deprived their students were. One said,

Our knowledge of the home circumstances of many of our students makes it clear to us that we have to mobilise and engage parents, carers and the local community as fully as we can, in our efforts to raise their achievement and improve their life chances.

Raising aspirations

Raising students' aspirations was a key rationale for facing outwards, and the achievements made through the Fellowship made people yet more convinced of its value, as this quotation epitomises:

We have to raise awareness amongst colleagues and drive forward an agenda to raise the aspirations of every child in the school. It will be crucial to their life chances as the world changes, and make them happier and more able to make a positive contribution to their community. Creativity and collaborative outward-facing work is not an add-on.

The achievement of individual young people was a powerful way to open the door for others to follow. One Fellow's ex-students uploaded a Christmas song and video that he had made in his loft onto YouTube. Within three weeks it had been played 300,000 times by people across the world; had been featured on an American TV show; and others had made cover versions of it. The school celebrated this achievement, which raised the bar for the whole school, encouraging others to be ambitious in stretching beyond their small rural community.

As another Fellow said,

In an insular school, in an insular community, in an insular county students have to have their horizons broadened. They have to be made to believe that they have talent. We have to identify the talent and give them as many ways of expressing it as possible. Containing it within a school will never create the success that the majority desperately need.

The school is a valuable resource for pupils and community

Many Fellows saw their school as a vital resource for the community:

Everyone in a community will have something to do with the school: as a pupil, as a parent, as someone that walks past. Not even the church has the impact that at a school can take in being the centre of the community. That's why community groups need schools to work with them.

External partners acted both as a critical friend and a source of inspiration. One Fellow in an area of urban regeneration believed that an outward-facing ethos in the school encouraged young people,

to build capacity for what the community needs: a new generation of community leaders who can make a difference by succeeding in their own lives through taking responsibility for themselves and others.

School improvement

All the headteachers and principals considered that outward-facing activity was fundamental to raising pupil attainment and school improvement. Many Fellows reported increased pupil exam success. Inspectors do not make a judgement on the impact of schools' outward facing activities as such but they do grade two related areas:

- how well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being
- the extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community.

The Fellows' schools do well at both, with half judged outstanding in these areas (see Figure 4).

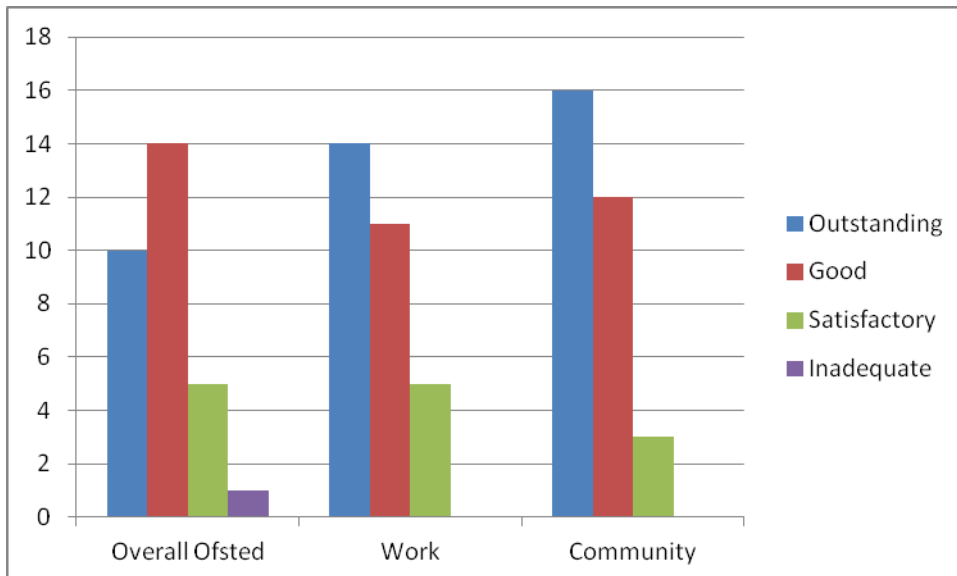


Figure 4 Ofsted's judgements of Sinnott schools – overall; for students' workplace skills; and contribution to the community

Two schools that were inspected during the period of the Fellowship were given a notice to improve. It has been particularly interesting to track these two schools: would their outward-facingness diminish as they battened down the hatches to concentrate on improvement or would they use it as a lever for raising attainment? The latter was a key to success for both schools. Kingsbury was judged inadequate in May 2009 but good a year later and outward-facing activities played a part in this transformation. Sutherland Business & Enterprise College's ongoing partnership with Midcounties Co-operative won the 2010 National Education Excellence award from Business in the Community for its 'Co-operative Approach to Education' which helped the school significantly improve its performance, including students' GCSE results. It became one of the top five most improved schools in the country.

3. THE STRUCTURE OF AN OUTWARD-FACING SCHOOL

While the Sinnott Fellowship celebrates and learns from the work of outstanding individuals, the premise is that – for the work to be sustainable - the outward-facing ethos must be embedded in the school. So, what models are there for others to learn from?

The Fellows' schools organised staff in a range of ways. At one extreme the Fellow was the sole person in their school ploughing a lonely furrow to the outside world; at the other extreme, the school had a sophisticated but clear model involving many staff where outward-facingness was at the very heart of everything – and this was seen in the staffing structure and responsibilities (see Figure 6).

There are so many facets of outward-facingness that schools need to ensure that it is well-organised in order to make a difference to young people. From the evaluation of the Sinnott Fellowships, three principles emerge:

1. Strategic leadership of outward-facingness is required so that there is a clear vision focused on improving students' learning, aspirations and wellbeing
2. Staff need sufficient time and expertise to do their roles so that tasks are carried out by the most appropriate people
3. Communication must be excellent and enable people outside the school know who to contact, and how.

Each of these is now looked at in turn.

1. Strategic leadership

Outward-facingness needs to be led strategically if it is to have a significant impact. It is an area in which people can spend a lot of time and effort but there is a danger of taking the eye off the ball because individuals can get so engaged in different activities that they find that they have lost their focus on children's learning and wellbeing. Is the time and effort expended on outward-facing activities worth the effort? The vision and rationale for all the elements of outward-facingness should be clear. What difference will it make to the students? Sometimes there are hard judgements to be made:

- Is the residential trip going to be beneficial or is it going to eat up valuable revision time?
- Will time spent on after-school activities mean that students fall behind in their homework or are too tired to learn the next day?
- Should teachers put more effort into their teaching rather than the extras?

Certainly outward-facingness needs to enhance pupil learning and wellbeing - and not distract from them.

Strategic leadership should pull all the individual components of outward-facingness together for, like the blind man and the elephant, it is possible to understand all the elements but the size, shape and sheer complexity of the whole needs to be clear.

Schools need to identify their baseline (where they were at), what they want to improve and why. The North Liverpool Academy did this well. In June 2008 the school held a two-day Future Search community stakeholder planning event from which emerged five Task Groups:

1. Supporting safer communities – police officer
2. Supporting students' health – nurse, health survey, community health, PE dept
3. Supporting students' personal development – Soulmates, youthworker
4. Supporting parents' learning – ICT, parenting support, families and students together
5. Supporting students' economic wellbeing – enterprise team.

They formed the Student Wellbeing, Enterprise and Enjoyment Team. The people involved in these teams come from within and outside the school but work together to develop the Academy's Extended Services strategy by matching community needs to provision. This model has helped build an ethos of community involvement within the Academy. Interestingly, this way of working freed Sinnott Fellow, Shaun McInerney, up to spend more time teaching.

It is important to be strategic in choosing students to take part in different activities. Some Fellows who tracked what was going on in their schools found that some students and year groups had many more opportunities than others – indeed, some had too many and others none at all. Who are the most appropriate young people to take part in activities? For instance, is taking the whole of Year 7 on a trip to a university a good idea? Will it raise their aspirations or might it scare them off? Would another year group benefit more?

2. Staffing

One Fellow spoke of how in her large school, nobody really knew what others were doing and who was responsible for what. Individuals would be doing things within their subjects but there was no clear way of others finding out about these things. Office staff who opened the mail and electronic communication did not know who to pass information or queries on to. Opportunities were missed because the right people didn't get to hear about them in time. Equally there was no way of somebody from an outside organisation to find the right person to talk to within the school. One significant outcome of her Sinnott Fellowship is that she has been given a new role: to coordinate all outward-facing work and link public, private and third sector organisations to meet needs.

Choosing the most appropriate people for tasks is vital. There were numerous examples of individual staff doing too much and spending a great deal of time on tasks for which others were better qualified. One of the significant benefits of the Fellowship was that more administrators were employed, enabling Fellows to use their time more efficiently. In one

school, the funding was used to employ two part-time workers to focus on the outward-facing work, freeing the teacher up to spend more time in the classroom than he had before the Fellowship. The new people employed often added a great deal to the school and the projects, such as a parent whose contacts with the community enhanced her work. In almost all instances, these extra staff were kept on beyond the Fellowship funding period because they proved their worth.

The Sinnott Fellowship resulted in a new staffing structure within Sutherland Business & Enterprise College, with many extra people being involved as can be seen in Figure 5.

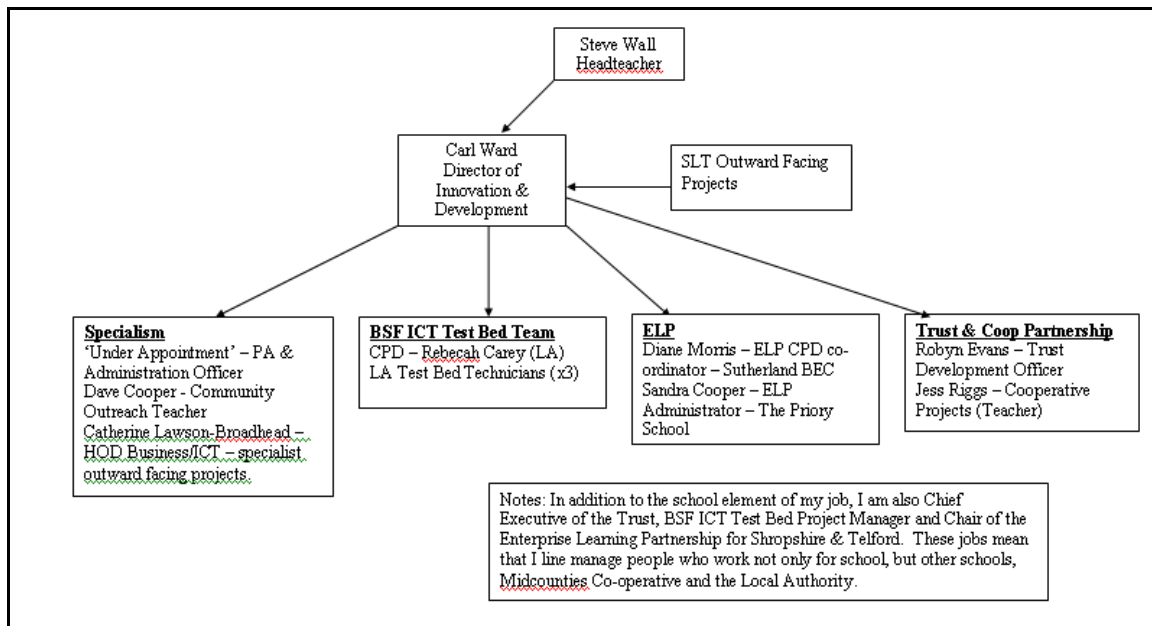


Figure 5 Sutherland College's outward-facing roles after the Sinnott Fellowship

Fellows saw advantages in having staff with a range of skills and from varied career routes, rather than having a background in teaching. Indeed, one said,

I believe that anyone who has previous career history in the private/corporate sector would be particularly valuable in an outward-facing role. Their experiences and knowledge of working in the 'world outside the school gate' are worth so much in terms of liaising, influencing and negotiating at all levels credibly and at the same time working within the dynamics of the education sector.

As another put it,

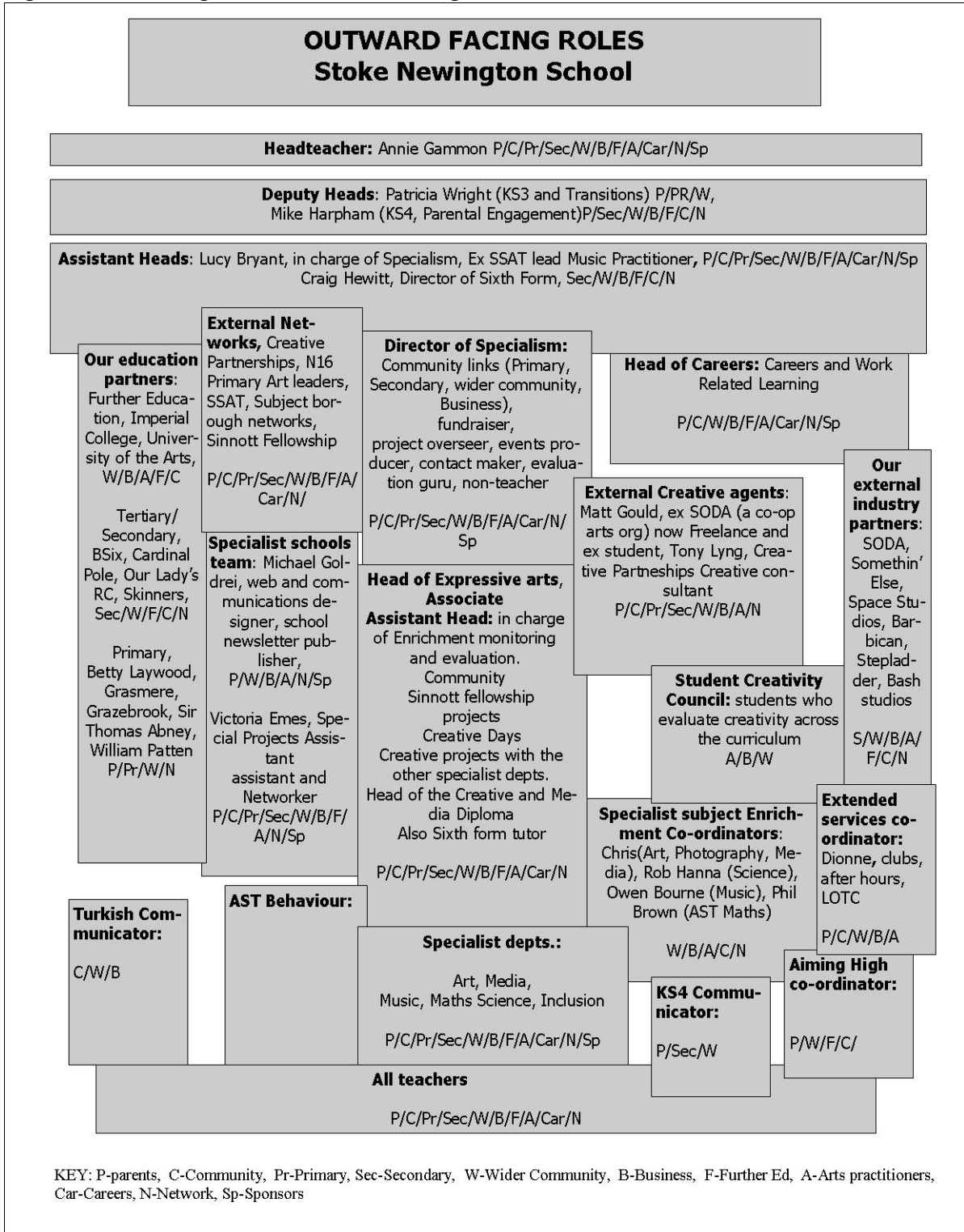
Schools need to have paths leading in many directions to the outside world. As teachers, we've often trodden a circular path: we enjoyed and succeeded at school as students, then come back as teachers. But there are other paths and we need to open them up.

However, having authority and status in their own institution were important. Over half of the Fellows were on their schools' senior leadership teams, and this was considered important in order to get things moving and have a wide impact. Fellows in this position considered that they had more flexibility, freedom and authority to make decisions and that

this was particularly valuable in outward-facing roles. Several were on their school's governing body, which was considered important in gaining buy-in from key players.

Chris Cullingford mapped the outward-facing roles of staff at Stoke Newington as seen in the Figure 6, below. What is interesting is that the workforce has been remodelled so that tasks are carried out by people with suitable skills – meaning that teachers can focus on teaching.

Figure 6 Stoke Newington School's outward-facing roles



3. Communication

Clear communication is a vital component of outward-facing schools. There are a vast number of people to stay in contact with. Figure 7 illustrates the number of parties involved in just one school.

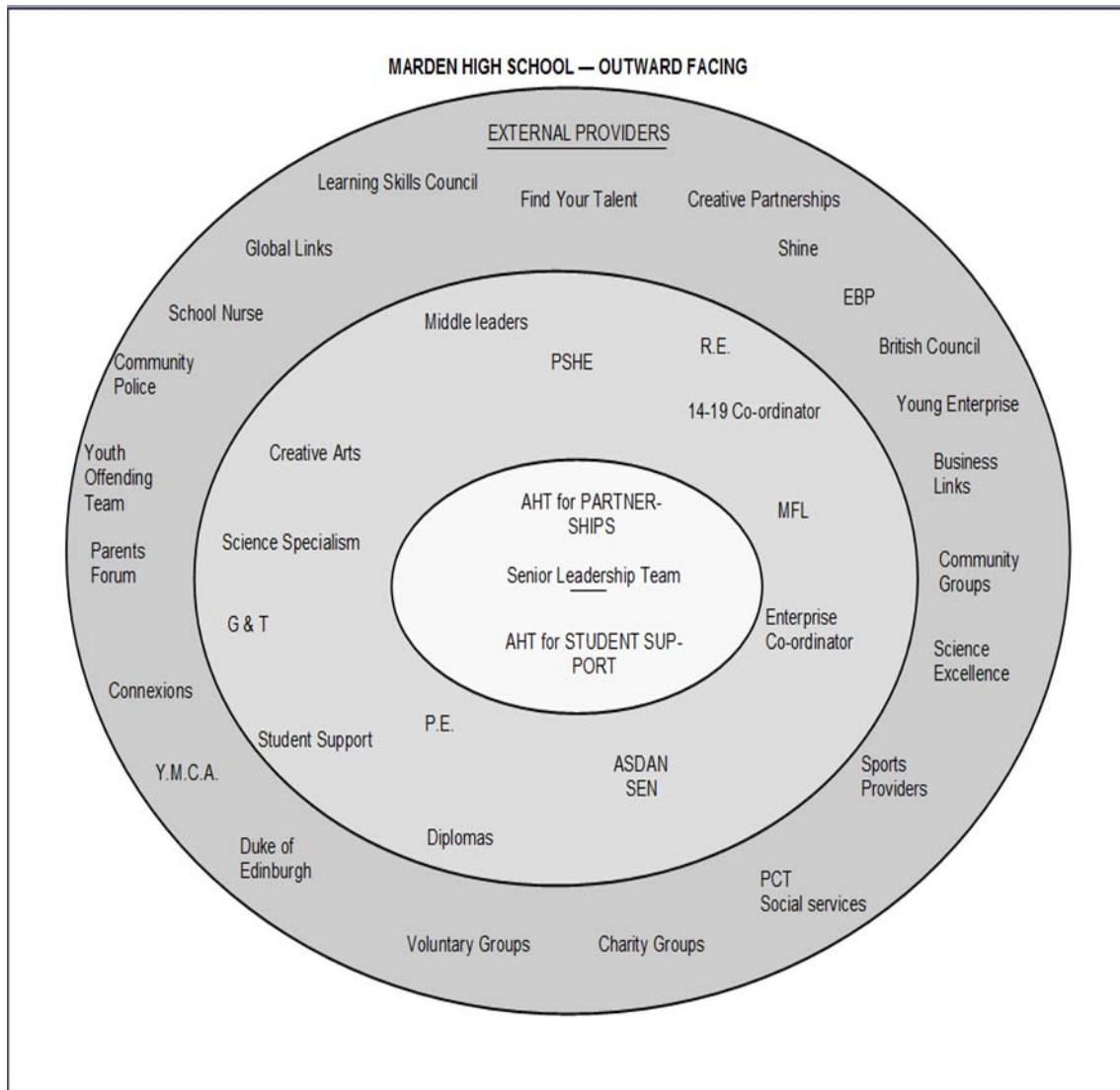


Figure 7 Marden High School’s outward-facing roles

School websites are the outward face of the organisation. However, few are useful to an outside body wanting to make contact or trying to form a partnership. In almost all cases, the only way to make contact is through the general school office phone number and email. The gatekeepers of these vary in effectiveness. Indeed some seem actively anti-outward-facing: to stop outsiders disturbing staff so that they can focus on teaching and learning.

One positive example is Manchester Academy’s website (www.manchester-academy.org). A key tab is entitled ‘Our Community’, which leads to pages with useful information, such as:

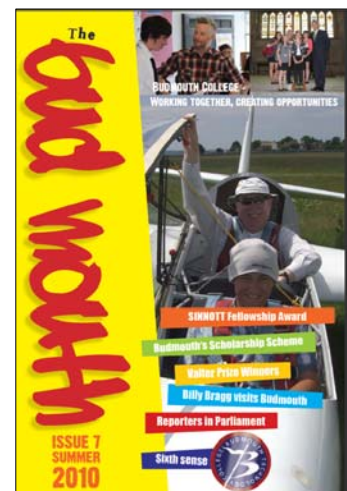
- an impressive list of 23 partners
- facilities for letting, with tariffs and booking form
- a getting involved section where outsiders are invited to help in a variety of ways
- getting to know Manchester with a map of free places to visit
- the 'Partners in Learning Association', made up of parents, teachers and other supporters of the Academy.

The Enterprise for Employability section is large and there is also information about foreign exchanges, Debate Mates and the BBC news desk. Clubs are detailed under what is called an 'Enrichment for Enjoyment' schedule. Under 'Wider Community Effort' there is information about mentors from businesses who come in to help students regularly with literacy and numeracy.

Stoke Newington's website (www.sns.hackney.sch.uk) is outward-facing to a high degree. It has many sections and friendly questions to inspire the outside world, such as:

- Could you spare an hour to visit the school to talk to small groups of students about your career?
- Could you host a visit by a group of students to your workplace?
- Do you have skills or specialist knowledge you could share with students?
- Do you have specialist knowledge that could help us improve delivery of the curriculum, making it more relevant to young people?
- Are you interested in offering after school or holiday sessions in a particular field?
- Do you have ideas of how you would like to engage with Stoke Newington? We're open to suggestions so do get in touch and we'd be happy to talk further about how we could help you.

Magazines such as Villiers' and Budmouth College's do a great job of communicating what a school is doing. Under Marcel Cianter's editorship, *The Bud Mouth* showcases outward-facing projects in an attractive manner, gives students a purpose to their journalistic and sub-editing roles, promotes local businesses through advertising and encourages other organisations to become involved with the school.



4. EVALUATING IMPACT

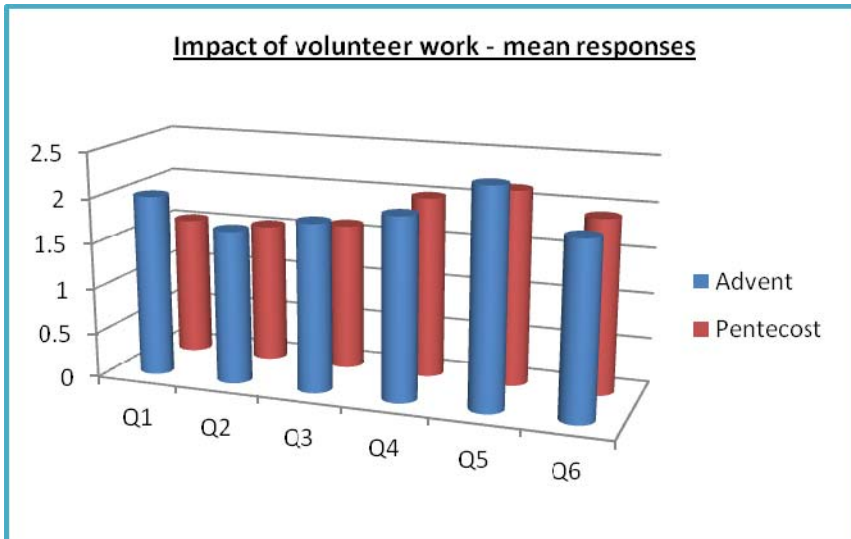
Although the Sinnott Fellows and their schools were convinced that outward-facing activity made a significant difference, the Fellows struggled with evaluating the impact. It is not easy: there are rarely clear cause and effect relationships. However, with limited resources and time it is important to know which activities make the most difference.

Fellows evaluated impact in a range of ways: measuring numbers involved; photos, audio and video; interviews; case studies and questionnaires. Some Fellows designed questionnaires on Word but then had to spend a great deal of time trying to analyse them. Those using online systems, such as Survey Monkey, found questionnaires easier to design and analyse. Paula Howard wanted to improve parental engagement at De La Salle School in order to help students settle into the school better and so she asked 83 year seven students to complete a survey at the start and end of the project, two terms later (see Figure 8). The results suggest an increase in confidence and social support, and there is also evidence of stress levels being reduced. This and other questionnaires would have benefitted from some support in devising effective questions and response options.

Year 7, 83 boys	Yes Dec	Yes July	Change
1) Were you worried about starting secondary school?	76	65	-11
2) Are you still worried about school now?	35	8	-27
3) Were your parents worried about school?	53	45	-8
4) Did you like the parent / community events?	62	80	+18
5) Do you worry about things out of school?	68	48	-20
6) Do your family worry about things out of school?	58	38	-20
7) Would you like your family to attend FAST?	32	75	+43
8) Would you like to attend activities with your parents/family after school?	45	65	+20
9) Do you like school?	78	81	+3
10) Do you go out at night?	28	32	+4
11) Do you parents/family go out at night?	32	43	+11
12) Would you like more activities in the holidays?	79	81	+2

Figure 8 Students' views before and after parental engagement activities

Catherine Hughes looked carefully at the difference that volunteer work made on St Cuthbert's students. Not only was she able to say that all had given at least 25 hours of their time and recorded a DVD of their activities but she surveyed students at the end of each term. They had to look at a collection of statements and decide whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed. For the response to be positive it had to have a value of less than 2.5. The chart (Figure 9) below it is clear that all statements for both terms had a positive response and that students became even more positive in the second (Pentecost) term.



- Q1** *I have enjoyed this project*
- Q2** *This project is worthwhile*
- Q3** *The project means we put our mission statement into action*
- Q4** *I have put what I learn in RE into practice*
- Q5** *I feel I have made a difference to my own life*
- Q6** *I feel I have made a difference to someone else's life*

Figure 9 Impact of voluntary work

Brian Collen ran a Parent Power event at Plume School. He evaluated it using a five point Likert scale (Fig 10) to see which of the interactive information sessions were of most use.

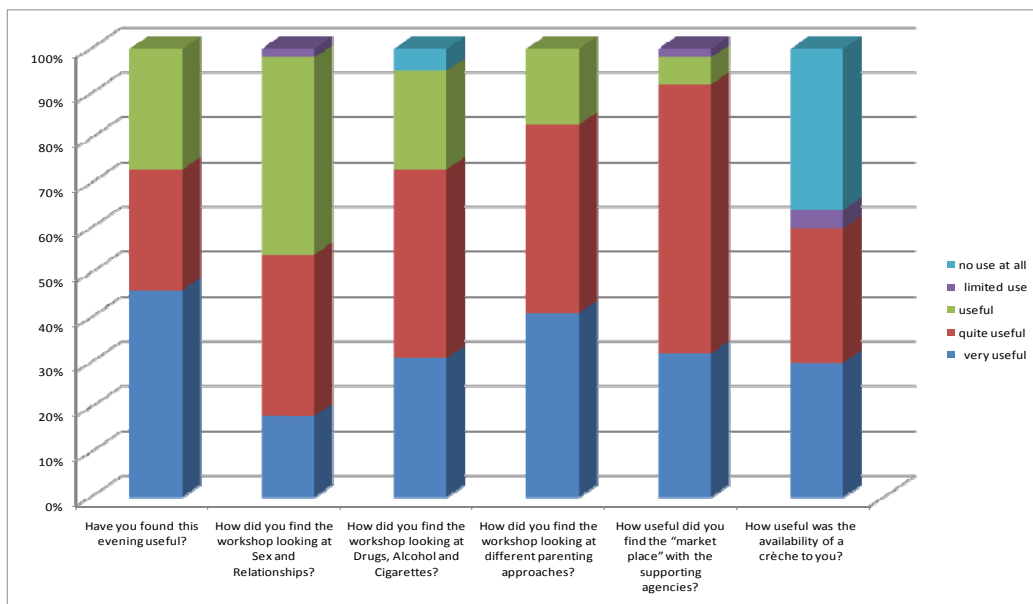


Figure 10 Parent Power evaluation

A thorough evaluation approach is seen in Jacqueline Ley's two-day health and wellbeing festival the aim of which was to encourage Holly Lodge students to take responsibility for their own learning. They were tasked with learning a new skill and developing workshop ideas that they could pass on to younger primary school students, thus developing their team-working, confidence, creativity and resourcefulness. She evaluated the impact through:

1. Counting numbers involved – in addition to all Holly Lodge students and staff, 530 primary students were involved.

- Gathering verbal and written feedback from a range of people: the staff and students at Holly Lodge and the primary schools. For instance, one said:
 ‘It was a pleasure to watch our students’ confidence grow and to see them making independent decisions and communicating in such a positive and supportive way.’
- Carrying out a before and after questionnaire to evaluate students’ team-working, confidence, creativity and resourcefulness (see Figure 11).

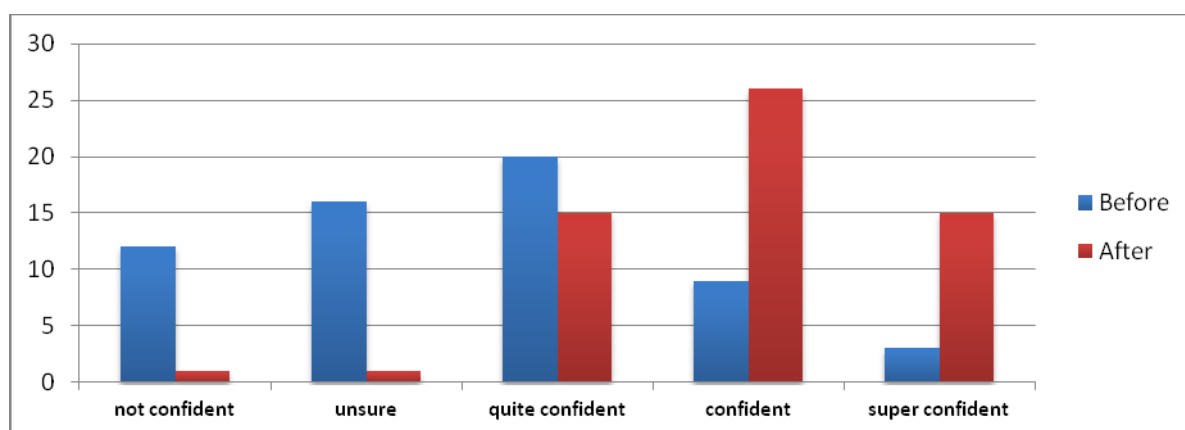


Figure 11 Impact of festival on students’ on confidence

- Using a semi structured interview with individuals

One disaffected pupil showed a highly significant improvement in her skills and so Jackie interviewed her to get greater insight into the impact:

What did you do during the festival?

I learnt how to grow things and found out different plant names to show the children. Then we made up designs that we thought the children would like.

How was this experience different from everyday school?

It was a big responsibility and you could concentrate and feel yourself.

Would you like to do it again?

Yep. We enjoyed it and the kids because we got used to helping someone else.

What did you learn about yourself?

That I can be responsible and show them a good example.

Did you enjoy working in this way?

Yep, because I felt I had no one telling me what to do and I could do my own thing.

What part of the two days did you enjoy the most?

Helping the kids and teaching them what I have been teached so they learnt. I loved it.

Has this experience changed the way you feel about school?

I feel like I understand it now. IT WAS BOSS! [Liverpool slang for great!]

The combination of these different forms of evaluation resulted in her gaining a rounded picture of the impact on which to judge whether the effort and time the festival took was worthwhile.

Ideas for improved impact evaluation

When impact evaluation was built in from the start, rather than as an after-thought, then activities were more likely to make a difference. Understanding the development cycle is vital: to identify and analyse needs, set targets, plan how to meet them, do the activities, monitor progress and then evaluate the impact before starting to look at new needs. Target outcomes can be planned before engaging in an activity. This requires a clear picture of what things are like before the activity takes place (the baseline) and a vision of how things should look when it is completed (the impact). Although impact evaluation is the final part of the cycle it is helpful if targets answer the questions, 'what difference do we hope to make and how will we know that we have?'. Fellows also found that there were unexpected gains, such as new contacts.

As a result of evaluating the Sinnott Fellows' many projects, I have designed a model that might help and encourage people to consider levels of impact:

1. Baseline picture – what things are like now
2. Goal – how much better they should be
3. Plan – how to get there
4. The experience – the activity
5. Learning of participants – what people felt and learned from the activity at the time
6. Organisational support – what help is needed to do something differently
7. Into practice – doing something differently

Levels of impact

8. Impact on students
9. Impact on other people - in school, home, community, etc
10. Impact on other students
11. Impact on other organisations
12. Unintended impact.

This model is illustrated with Ryan Gibson's project to promote employer engagement by creating time where staff at St Joseph's, Hebburn could dedicate their efforts to developing meaningful links that would ultimately benefit the students (see Figure 12).

Figure 12 An Evaluation Model

Stage	<i>Evidence (example from St Joseph's, Hebburn)</i>
1. Baseline picture	<p>From a whole school audit of work-related applied learning there was clear evidence that students responded well to applied learning (increased achievement, attendance, enjoyment) and that staff were keen to develop this area as a result. However, two aspects inhibited further development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff felt they did not have the time to contact or develop resources with employers. • Some staff wanted to engage with employers but did not know how to do so effectively.
2. Goal	<p>To promote employer engagement by creating time where staff could dedicate their efforts to developing meaningful links that would ultimately benefit the students.</p>
3. Plan	<p>It was agreed that an INSET day would be set aside for staff development in applied learning. Every member of staff would spend the day in industry making contacts that would enhance schemes of learning, help them develop resources, give them a greater professional insight into what they were teaching and enhance student learning.</p> <p>Staff discussed and debated the opportunity within departments, analysing their schemes of learning to see where engaging with employers could have the most impact on the students. Curriculum teams negotiated what they intended to get out of each placement (eg resources, contacts or a greater understanding of a role/topic/issue) so that more 'applied context' work could take place within lessons.</p> <p>The staff were provided with a form where they wrote three possible placement ideas, what they intended to get out of the placement and a clear list of objectives. The local Education Business Partnership (EBP) had the most substantial contacts and so brokered the placements. This freed up the school staff and meant that the employers knew exactly what individuals wanted and so could tailor the visit to meet needs.</p>
4. The experience	<p>On 29th June 120 teachers and 30 support staff made work-related visits. Evaluations included comments such as, "Really valuable experience. One of the most worthwhile CPD/inset sessions ever". The date was a good one. It was a Monday when both school and business staff were fresh. It was after exams and just in time for the planning of the next year's curriculum.</p>
5. Learning of participants	<p>Staff developed their subject and pedagogical knowledge, skills and resources; made many contacts and enjoyed themselves. Impact on students was at the forefront of the minds of all staff. For instance, a textiles teacher took photos to show the scale of production of a clothing factory – a place that students would not be able to visit.</p>
6. Organisational support	<p>There were team meetings in July and the Autumn term to discuss impact, next steps and to put changes into place. Dedicated time was created after the placement so that teams could come back together to</p>

	share their experiences and look at how these could enhance the curriculum opportunities and learning of students.
7. Into practice	Each department and member of staff had a post placement action plan eg updating of resources and schemes of learning. For instance, a Physics teacher made a short DVD of his time at a local multinational firm and this is now utilised in the teaching of applied science.
8. Impact on students	There are numerous examples. The extended school's coordinator visit to a local premier league football club resulted in students being able to use their facilities. Business Studies students worked on marketing live comedy for a local arts centre. Their ideas have been used for real as well as for coursework – and their grades were well above predictions.
9. Impact on other people	Everyone was involved and they shared their learning and contacts with each other. Links with businesses were extended. The local arts centre did a presentation to all subject leaders and as a result other departments became involved.
10. Impact on other students	More students had a purpose to their school work. Some benefited from the Arts Award that was set up with the local arts centre and photographers had a public venue to exhibit their work. Ones studying Geography were involved in a project on eco-awareness and sustainability, displaying results for the public.
11. Impact on other organisations	Many more employers asked to be involved. Raised status of the local EBP and the businesses visited.
12. Unintended impact	Enhanced teamworking and collegiality amongst staff. The model was shared with the wider education community through articles in several magazines and journals, raising the status of the school further.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are so many facets of outward-facingness that schools need to ensure that it is strategically led and well-managed in order to make a difference to young people. The following recommendations emerge:

1. Outward-facing activity has significant benefits in enhancing attainment and raising aspirations, and must be sustained and developed across the education system.
2. Strategic leadership of outward-facing activity is required so that there is a clear vision focused on improving students' learning, aspirations and wellbeing.
3. All the outward-facing activities should be mapped to enable people to move forward strategically.
4. Tasks should be carried out by the most appropriate people – there are many exciting models that make only strategic use of teachers.
5. The various staff involved in outward-facing activities should have sufficient time and expertise to do their roles.
6. Systems are needed to facilitate communication and information-sharing between everyone involved in outward-facing activities and that enable external bodies know who to contact, and how.
7. Measuring the impact of outward-facing activities is important to justify the time and cost involved.
8. Successes should be recorded, shared and publicised in order to save wheels being reinvented.
9. Time and skills need to be dedicated to seeking and bidding for funding.

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