



# Estyn

*Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all*

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg  
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate  
for Education and Training in Wales

## Provision of community-focused services and facilities by schools

May 2008



BUDDSODDWR MEWN POBL  
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



**The purpose of Estyn is to inspect quality and standards in education and training in Wales. Estyn is responsible for inspecting:**

- ▲ nursery schools and settings that are maintained by, or receive funding from, local authorities (LAs);
- ▲ primary schools;
- ▲ secondary schools;
- ▲ special schools;
- ▲ pupil referral units;
- ▲ independent schools;
- ▲ further education;
- ▲ adult community-based learning;
- ▲ youth support services;
- ▲ youth and community work training;
- ▲ LAs;
- ▲ teacher education and training;
- ▲ work-based learning;
- ▲ careers companies;
- ▲ offender learning; and
- ▲ the education, guidance and training elements of The Department for Work and Pensions funded training programmes.

Estyn also:

- ▲ provides advice on quality and standards in education and training in Wales to the National Assembly for Wales and others; and
- ▲ makes public good practice based on inspection evidence.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court

Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to [publications@estyn.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:publications@estyn.gsi.gov.uk)

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: [www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk)

**This document has been translated by Trosol (English to Welsh)**

**© Crown Copyright 2008: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the document/publication specified.**

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
Background	1
<b>Main findings</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Provision of community-focused services and facilities by schools</b>	<b>7</b>
Community-focused services provision and the use of grant funding	7
Provision in individual schools	9
The work of CFS cluster groups	9
Main benefits to the community	10
Co-ordination of CFS work	10
Local authorities' CFS strategies	11
Sharing information and removing barriers to progress	11
<b>Appendix 1: Case studies</b>	<b>13</b>
Preamble	13
<b>Appendix 2: Distribution of CFS funding to schools in individual local authorities</b>	<b>20</b>



## Introduction

- 1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Welsh Assembly Government with an evaluation of how well schools and local authorities use the community-focused schools grant. The objectives of this grant, together with the arrangements for its distribution, administration and audit, are set out in National Assembly for Wales Circular No 31/05.
- 2 The evidence base for the report includes:
  - an analysis of local authorities' end-of-year progress reports for 2006-2007;
  - an analysis of local authorities' responses to a questionnaire distributed by Estyn;
  - information provided by ContinYou Cymru;
  - inspectors' visits to five local authorities;
  - inspectors' visits to a sample of schools and other community-focused settings in the five local authorities; and
  - additional documentation relating to CFS work in the five local authorities.
- 3 Estyn selected the five local authorities that inspectors visited on the basis of evidence of their potential to provide examples of interesting developments for the case studies that are published in Appendix 1 of this report.

## Background

- 4 'The Learning Country', which the Welsh Assembly Government published in August 2001 as a paving document, sets out the Assembly Government's commitment to putting schools at the heart of their communities:

*"We want to see a much closer relationship between schools and the communities they serve. We want schools to act as a community resource – not just in school hours but out of hours and in vacations as well. We see them as being integral to community capacity building – providing a base for delivering, not just education and training (with links to FE and HE institutions), but also a range of other services like family support, health and enterprise promotion."*  
(*The Learning Country*, paragraph 35.)
- 5 'The Learning Country: Vision into Action' re-states the Assembly Government's objective of making all school buildings fit for purpose and, in particular, its commitment to "promote schools as a focus for the local community, providing opportunities for out of school hours activities (educational and otherwise) for pupils, their families and the local community, including local voluntary groups; and as a base for other services."

- 6 Sections 27 and 28 of the Education Act 2002, which came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2003, give school governing bodies powers to provide services for pupils, their families and the local community, and include provisions that make it easier for schools to provide such services and facilities.
- 7 In December 2003, the Welsh Assembly Government set out its policy for community-focused schools in National Assembly for Wales Circular No 34/2003. The Circular provides guidance to schools and their key partners on how they can make use of the new powers of governing bodies to develop services to help meet the needs of their pupils, their families and the wider community. The Circular defines a community-focused school as “one that provides a range of services and activities, often beyond the school day, to help meet the needs of its pupils, their families and the wider community.”
- 8 Circular No 34/2003 acknowledges that, across Wales, many schools were already providing some community services. It offers guidance to schools and their partners on how they can build on existing provision and consider what additional service or activities they might offer. It stresses that there is no blueprint for the types of activities that schools can provide, or how they might be organised. The Circular encourages schools to work with local partners, including other schools, community groups and the local authority, to develop whatever provision they might think suitable for their own community.
- 9 In September 2005, the Welsh Assembly Government issued National Assembly for Wales Circular No 31/05. This Circular provides guidance on the criteria for the use of the Welsh Assembly Government Community Focused Schools Grant in 2005/06 and subsequent years. The grant is administered by the local authorities and is available to support projects that are clearly linked to the concept of a community-focused school. The projects the grant supports must meet one of the following criteria:
- i. be a project that will lead to further community focused developments not funded under this grant; or*
  - ii. be an exemplar project that is innovative and can be used as a model of good practice for other schools or local authorities; or*
  - iii. be a project that only involves ‘start up’ costs with any ongoing running costs being met from other funding or from charges.*
- 10 Under an agreement with the Association of Directors of Education in Wales (ADEW), the 22 local authorities in Wales funded ContinYou Cymru for a period of 18 months, ending in March 2007, to provide support for the development of community-focused schools. The Welsh Assembly Government subsequently commissioned ContinYou Cymru to work with local authorities and schools from April 2007 to:
- offer support and guidance;
  - develop capacity and expertise;

Provision of community-focused services and facilities by schools  
May 2008

- avoid duplication of effort;
- share good practice; and
- promote networking and produce materials and resources that can be applied and adapted to different local needs.

## Main findings

- 11 Community-focused schools (CFS) grant funding has enabled local authorities and schools to build on their existing practice, and has provided the stimulus for some worthwhile initiatives and developments. In a few local authorities, the impact of funding has been reduced by its allocation to too many schools. In these authorities, the funding has been spread too thinly to support ambitious pilot projects. Instead, it has tended to provide a small financial 'top-up' for a large number of existing schemes.
- 12 The projects in receipt of funding are clearly linked to the concept of a CFS as defined in Circular 34/2003. However, it is likely that significant numbers of projects will not meet any of the three specific criteria for funding. Only a small minority of projects can justifiably be regarded as exemplar, innovative or models of good practice. Many of the other projects are unlikely to continue without further grant funding. Uncertainty surrounding future CFS funding arrangements has made it difficult for local authorities to plan for the medium and longer term.
- 13 In distributing their share of the CFS grant, few local authorities have prioritized schools in their most disadvantaged areas although they have usually targeted their efforts to establish integrated service centres in their most disadvantaged communities. ContinYou Cymru and ADEW have published a joint vision that sets out the range of CFS provision that can be made available. The wide variety of CFS provision across Wales ranges from basic activities, focusing mainly on improving the learning of schools' own pupils, to local community centres that can offer integrated services involving a number of agencies. However, this wide variety means that the benefits to pupils and the wider community have also been variable. Only a few schemes realise the full potential of CFS to bring significant benefits to their local community. This means that learners in some communities will enjoy much greater access to out-of-hours learning and other services than elsewhere.
- 14 Across Wales as a whole, the main benefit to local communities has been improved access to school premises and resources, especially for physical exercise and information and communications technology (ICT). There has also been an improvement in the relationships between schools and their local communities. Effective partnership work with a range of local agencies is a good feature of some of the most successful CFS provision.
- 15 The co-ordination and management of authorities' CFS strategies are carried out effectively by CFS co-ordinators where they have this as their main responsibility. Co-ordination is less effective when it is given as an additional responsibility to existing teams of local authority officers. In many authorities, co-ordination of the CFS activities of schools, either working individually or in clusters, is ineffective or weak. As a result, there is unhelpful duplication of activity, its impact is dissipated, or CFS activity is not well matched to the needs of the wider community.
- 16 Only a few local authorities have CFS strategies that are clearly and coherently embedded in the strategic priorities, policies and plans of the council as a whole. In the other authorities, opportunities for more coherent strategic planning and



operational activity are missed. Very few local authorities have linked their CFS strategies to their school re-organisation plans. A few of the other authorities believe their ability to make this link is constrained by the current method of calculating a school's capacity.

- 17 Many local authority education departments have a relatively narrow view of multi-agency working. Most commonly, they do not have effective partnership arrangements with community health and social services.
- 18 Schools and local authorities have received good support and guidance from ContinYou Cymru in developing their CFS programmes. Overall, they have acted on this guidance to good effect. However, not all local authorities have a robust risk assessment system to identify and remedy issues posed by the community use of their school buildings. Most local authorities are not monitoring and evaluating their progress in establishing effective community-focused schools. Because of this, they cannot set targets for improvement or feed information into their planning for the future.

## Recommendations

- 19 In order to increase the effectiveness of CFS activity in Wales, the following recommendations should be implemented.

### **The Welsh Assembly Government should:**

- R1 clarify future funding arrangements for CFS and ensure that the arrangements support local authorities' medium-term and long-term planning;
- R2 ensure that future funding arrangements promote the Welsh Assembly Government's CFS objectives more securely;
- R3 withhold funding from any CFS project that does not meet the criteria specified for allocation of the grant; and
- R4 ensure that calculations of surplus school places and the accommodation needs of new schools take full account of the facilities that CFS activities may require.

### **Local authorities should:**

- R5 ensure that they embed their CFS strategies firmly in corporate priorities, policies and plans;
- R6 work more closely with key strategic partners, especially health and social services;
- R7 make suitable arrangements for the effective co-ordination of CFS activities in schools;
- R8 make effective risk-assessments of the community use of their school buildings and resolve any issues raised; and
- R9 make suitable arrangements to monitor progress and evaluate the effectiveness of their CFS activity.

### **Schools should:**

- R10 intensify their efforts to work with families to make learning desirable for people of all ages;
- R11 intensify their work to enhance their reputation in the local community and to emphasise the value of educational opportunities; and
- R12 increase community access to their facilities.

## Provision of community-focused services and facilities by schools

### Community-focused services provision and the use of grant funding

- 20 Before the introduction of the CFS grant, many schools throughout Wales had already established CFS activities. The CFS grant funding made available from 2005 to 2008 has been useful in enabling local authorities and schools to build on their existing practice, and has provided the stimulus for some new initiatives and additional developments. In most local authorities, only a minority of schools have benefited directly from CFS grant funding. Even so, many other schools in these local authorities continue to offer CFS provision from their own and/or other resources. In a few other local authorities, the impact of CFS funding has been reduced by its allocation to too many schools. In these authorities, the funding has been spread too thinly to support ambitious pilot projects that have a clear focus on the main targets in the authority's educational plans. Instead, it has tended to provide a small financial 'top-up' for a large number of existing schemes. Appendix 2 provides examples of the proportions of schools in receipt of CFS grant funding in 13 local authorities.
- 21 The end-of-year progress reports that local authorities submitted to the Welsh Assembly Government in 2007 indicate that there is a wide and varied range of community-focused provision in those schools and local authorities that benefited from the Welsh Assembly Government's CFS grant. This variety of provision is consistent with the guidance in Circular 34/03, which states:
- "There is no blueprint for the types of activities that schools can provide, or how they might be organised. Working with local partners, schools can develop as little or as much provision as they think suitable for their own community."*
- 22 The variety of provision is also consistent with 'Community focused schools – a joint vision', which the Association of Directors of Education in Wales (ADEW) and ContinYou Cymru published in 2005. This document underlined the desire of both parties to provide a framework for the development of community-focused schools across Wales "that is flexible but that points towards the full potential and the possible breadth of provision".
- 23 It is clearly appropriate that CFS provision should be flexible enough to meet local needs. However, in practice this flexibility often leads to variable provision, in which only a few schemes realise the full potential of CFS to bring significant benefits to their local community. This means that learners in some communities will enjoy much greater access to out-of-hours learning and other services than elsewhere.
- 24 Circular 31/05 states that, to be eligible for CFS funding, projects should have a clear and explicit link to the concept of a community-focused school as set out in Circular 34/2003 and must meet one of the following specific criteria:
- be a project that will lead to further community-focused developments not funded from the CFS grant; or

- be an exemplar project that is innovative and can be used as a model of good practice for other schools or local authorities; or
  - be a project that only involves 'start up' costs with any on-going running costs being met from other funding or from charges.
- 25 Overall, the projects in receipt of funding are clearly linked to the concept of a CFS as defined in Circular 34/2003. However, it remains to be seen whether all of the projects meet at least one of the three specific criteria. The activities in the great majority of projects follow well-established patterns and are often replicated in other schools or local authorities. Only a small minority of projects, therefore, can justifiably claim to be 'exemplar', 'innovative' or 'a model of good practice'. The two other criteria will be met only if projects or CFS developments continue after the grant funding has ceased. Most local authorities' responses to the Estyn questionnaire express the view that they and their schools would be unable to maintain CFS activity at current levels without the grant funding. A few of the responses take a more optimistic view of the potential for schools and local authorities to find an equivalent level of funding from other sources. The Welsh Assembly Government recently announced that funding would be made available for a further three years from April 2008. However, the uncertainty surrounding future CFS funding arrangements has made it difficult for local authorities to plan for the medium and longer term. In one local authority, this uncertainty has been exacerbated by what the authority sees as inflexible deadlines for spending the grant and an inability to carry forward some of the funding.
- 26 Circular 31/05 advised local authorities to give particular consideration to funding CFS projects that involved youth work and/or supported area-based initiatives such as the Heads of the Valleys Initiative, Communities First Programmes and Objective 1 Programmes. The great majority of local authorities have engaged Communities First as one of their main partners in CFS work. A few projects support other area-based initiatives. Very few of the projects funded in 2006-2007 involved youth work, although this is a prominent beneficiary of CFS funding in one local authority.
- 27 Circular 31/05 made it clear that there was scope for CFS to help tackle disadvantage and crime, and encouraged authorities to have regard to links with other relevant strategies, such as the local authority's community development plan. However, in distributing their share of the CFS grant, few local authorities have prioritised schools in their most disadvantaged areas. In April 2006, the Welsh Assembly Government released a two-year grant of £32 million to 'raise attainment and individual standards in education' (RAISE) of disadvantaged pupils. In the schools that benefit from this grant, at least 20% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. In two local authorities, most of the schools benefiting from CFS funding are also in receipt of RAISE funding. In a further five authorities, there is some correlation between schools designated CFS and those receiving RAISE funding. In the remaining authorities, there is little or no correlation between CFS and RAISE-funded schools.

### Provision in individual schools

- 28 In the great majority of local authorities, all or nearly all of the CFS work is carried out by individual schools on their own premises, largely using their own resources. It is possible to place the work of most of these individual schools in one of the following categories.
- a) The minimum level of provision, in which the school mainly provides support and/or extension activities for its own pupils, for example, out-of-school-hours learning (OHSL), including study support.
  - b) In addition to (a), the school engages families mainly in order to improve their ability to support their children's learning, for example, by offering family learning and/or childcare.
  - c) In addition to (a) and (b), the school seeks to involve pupils, their families and other adults in a range of community learning or recreational activities, including some cross-generational activity.
- 29 In addition, a few individual schools provide facilities for members of the community to access provision and information, for example, relating to other council services, childcare, healthcare and citizens' advice matters.

### The work of CFS cluster groups

- 30 In a few local authorities, schools work together in clusters to provide a range of services in partnership with external agencies. These collaborative arrangements are usually facilitated and supported by a locally-based CFS co-ordinator, who is able to develop an overview of provision in the wider community. The CFS co-ordinator is well-placed to ensure that schools and their partners make best use of available expertise and resources, and that they avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and activity. The co-ordinator is also well-placed to facilitate similar, helpful links with other local initiatives that complement CFS, for example eco-schools work, the healthy schools strategy, and physical education and school sport (PESS). Some cluster groups form an effective foundation for the provision of integrated services to the local community, where a designated centre offers, or has the potential to offer, a 'one-stop shop' for education, health, social care and related community services. Case study 4 in Appendix 1 provides an example of a range of services being provided at a school-based community centre.
- 31 Local authorities have usually targeted their efforts to establish integrated service centres in their most disadvantaged communities. One authority is establishing a pilot initiative in one area which, depending on its success, it hopes to extend to other areas in the authority. This authority has established a preventative services strategy for children, young people and families. The strategy has secured the support and commitment of senior managers of the main service providers. These providers are represented on a wide-ranging strategic group that includes professionals from education, social services, health, police, the youth offending service, the voluntary sector and community groups. The group is developing a joined-up approach for the delivery of services at both strategic and local level.

- 32 The integrated service approach clearly requires effective consultation, communication and collaboration among the partner agencies at all levels, and especially in relation to strategic and operational management. It also requires a wide definition of multi-agency working.

### **Main benefits to the community**

- 33 The benefit that local authorities identify most commonly in their end-of-year reports is improved access to school premises and resources for use by members of the local community. Case studies 2, 3, 4 and 5 in Appendix 1 provide examples of improved community access. Several end-of-year reports highlight, in particular, the increased access to facilities for physical exercise and information and communications technology (ICT). Case study 3 provides a good example of community use of school ICT facilities. The other most commonly-mentioned benefit is an improvement in relationships, communication and mutual understanding between schools and their local communities. All five of the case studies provide examples of such improvements. Much of the best work in CFS owes its success largely to effective local partnerships with a range of agencies. Most of the CFS provision described in the case studies, for example, involves close collaboration between schools and other local agencies. Several authorities, where multi-agency partnership working is a prominent feature of CFS provision, identify this aspect as a major benefit to the communities concerned.
- 34 A number of individual school projects, including those described in case studies 3 and 5, identify quantitative improvements in pupils' attendance, behaviour and attitudes to learning. Most local authorities are unable at present to substantiate a link between CFS activities and improvements in pupils' attainment. However, the manager of a learning centre in one local authority carried out an investigation that identified a measurable improvement in pupils' attainment in the most disadvantaged school catchments in the local authority. The amount of improvement was half a GCSE grade or more for pupils who regularly attended at least one study support session in their local learning centre.

### **Co-ordination of CFS work**

- 35 The funding regulations allow local authorities to keep a proportion of CFS grant (up to a maximum of 30% or £30,000 in the last two years) for their central strategic development role. All but a few authorities have kept the full permitted amount and allocated most or all of it to help fund the work of CFS co-ordinators, managers or improvement officers. Some local authorities have used this element of grant to finance the appointment of full-time CFS coordinators. Other local authorities have added the co-ordination of CFS activities to the responsibilities of their existing team of school improvement officers. These officers have difficulty finding enough time to support schools in their CFS activities and to promote the development of a coherent strategic approach to CFS work in the local authority. In one local authority, an implementation team staffed by officers from the lifelong learning service manages the CFS strategy. Although schools value the help this team provides, the team is unable to influence planning, as it does not form part of the strategic planning process and appears to work in isolation from the activity and planning of related partnership groups.

- 36 Many cluster groups of CFS schools have made suitable arrangements to involve a range of community partners in overseeing the work of the cluster. These cluster groups engage local partners and community representatives to establish and direct the work of the cluster, including, in some instances, forming a cluster management board. One local authority has established a central CFS management board to oversee the work of all its CFS clusters. This arrangement enables all of the partners on the board to gain a broad view of CFS provision across the entire local authority area. The operational management of CFS is delegated largely to local cluster workers. This arrangement is effective overall, but does not enable the authority to keep up-to-date central records, including detailed information about the involvement of individual schools.

### **Local authorities' CFS strategies**

- 37 Most local authorities have secured council approval for their CFS strategies, usually in the context of the council's educational priorities, policies and plans. Some authorities see CFS activity as complementing the council's main priorities for education, whereas others see their CFS strategy as a fundamental aspect of the authority's vision for education. Only a few local authorities have CFS strategies that are clearly and coherently embedded in the strategic priorities, policies and plans of the council as a whole. It is mainly these authorities that have targeted their CFS work effectively to meet the needs of their most deprived communities.
- 38 Very few local authorities have linked their CFS strategies to their school re-organisation plans. The great majority of authorities are therefore unable to take advantage of the opportunities that school re-organisation plans can offer, for example by making sure that any new school buildings and facilities are planned to offer the fullest possible range of CFS activity, or by making more effective use of local authority-owned premises, or parts of premises, that become surplus to schools' requirements. A few local authorities take the view that the current formula for calculating school capacity does not take enough account of the potential for community use of school buildings.
- 39 Local authorities work with a wide range of partners including, in particular, voluntary and public sector organisations, to promote CFS activity. Partnerships with the private sector are less common. Many local authority education departments have a relatively narrow view of multi-agency working. Most commonly, they do not have effective partnership arrangements with other council departments, such as social services, or with local health agencies.

### **Sharing information and removing barriers to progress**

- 40 In their end-of-year reports to the Welsh Assembly Government, local authorities identified a number of issues that they and their schools had to resolve in order to develop CFS work. The obstacles they had to overcome included issues related to health and safety, caretaking and cleaning, child protection, accessibility of premises, and terms and conditions of staff. 'Making it happen', the toolkit that ContinYou Cymru, has developed in collaboration with ADEW and the Welsh Assembly Government, addresses these and other potential barriers to progress. Many local authorities have clearly made good use of the toolkit to resolve any initial difficulties

and to make progress towards achieving the objectives set out in the joint vision document published by ADEW and ContinYou Cymru. However, not all local authorities have a risk assessment system in place that is robust enough to identify and remedy issues posed by the community use of their school buildings. At least two local authorities have developed and published their own CFS toolkit, which schools use to good effect.

- 41 Local authorities have established effective means of sharing information and advice with schools. Most local authorities do this mainly through the work that the CFS co-ordinators or improvement officers carry out directly with the schools, supplemented by newsletters and other relevant publications. Almost half of the local authorities hold at least one CFS conference each year, often with the involvement and support of ContinYou Cymru.
- 42 The documents that ContinYou and their partners have published, and the work of ContinYou Cymru officers in schools and local authorities, have been highly influential in encouraging and helping to shape the development of CFS in Wales.
- 43 The main remaining obstacle to further development is the failure of local authorities to establish adequate systems for monitoring and evaluating their progress. ContinYou Cymru has placed considerable emphasis on the importance of establishing a baseline measure of CFS activity, but few authorities have succeeded in doing this. As a result, most authorities have found it difficult to measure their progress to date, and to establish a suitable direction and set measurable targets for further development.
- 44 The current approach to CFS funding allows local authorities and schools to use the grant in a variety of ways. As a result, the benefits to pupils have also been variable. In some areas of Wales, pupils can attend enriching out-of-school-hours provision on most school days, and there are crèche facilities and support for parents and other carers to enrol in family learning programmes. Other parts of the country offer very little or no provision of this kind. In these areas, schools are a long way from becoming a 'one-stop shop' for community services in the way that the Welsh Assembly Government envisages.



## **Appendix 1: Case studies**

### **Preamble**

The case studies that follow illustrate how CFS funding has enabled schools to establish, maintain or increase their community provision. The CFS grant has not directly funded all of the activities described in these case studies. In some cases, the grant has funded a central administrative structure that encourages and supports schools to develop their community provision. In other cases, the use of the grant to fund one aspect of provision has enabled other aspects to flourish with support from alternative sources of funding. The case studies also provide examples of the wide variety of provision that the grant has promoted, ranging from a single, highly successful project in one village primary school to a more extensive programme of CFS activities in schools serving a much wider geographical area.

### **Case study 1: A primary school in south Wales**

**Context:** The school serves a Communities First area in one of the south Wales valleys. It has about 120 pupils aged from 7 to 11, many of whom are from disadvantaged backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who are entitled to receive free school meals is above the national average and almost two-fifths of the school's pupils have special educational needs.

**Strategy:** The local authority has a clear vision for the development of CFS and the Council has approved the CFS strategy. The local authority has used the CFS grant to fund the appointment of a CFS cluster worker in each cluster of schools, and of a CFS co-ordinator. The CFS co-ordinator works with the local authority's CFS management board to steer the planning, operation, monitoring and evaluation of CFS work across the local authority. The board includes representatives of headteachers and a wide range of other stakeholders and service providers. It has effective links with the Fframwaith partnership and the 14-19 partnership, as well as with other partners and agencies. All schools can access the support of the CFS cluster workers, although about a tenth of the local authority's schools have not yet been directly involved in the CFS programme.

**Action:** With support from the local CFS cluster worker, the school and the local authority have worked with the local health authority, Communities First, the local housing association and Age Concern to establish an inter-generational learning project linked to the school curriculum. The project enables pupils from Year 6 to visit a sheltered housing and retirement housing scheme near the school, where older residents are encouraged to answer the children's questions and tell them their stories of growing up and living in the village. The pupils use a journal and a disposable camera to record their work. The project aims to have a direct effect on the pupils involved, by opening up their horizons to working within the health and social care sector, breaking down generation barriers and stereotypes, and showing the pupils a range of career options.

**Outcomes:** The project has raised pupils' self-esteem and developed their social skills, as well as their knowledge of local history and their understanding of the circumstances of the residents. The housing association reports that the project has increased local interest and uptake in residential care homes in general, as well as in the housing scheme that the children visited. As a result of the project, the local authority has won a Welsh Local Government Association 'Excellence Wales' award for its work with older people and the housing association has gained a Chartered Institute of Housing good practice award for housing and the community.

## **Case study 2: A group of schools in south Wales**

**Context:** The secondary school and its five feeder primary schools serve a disadvantaged community on the outskirts of a large city. The schools are in a Communities First area which has considerable economic and social disadvantages. Just over a third of pupils are entitled to free school meals and almost a third have special educational needs. Literacy levels in the area are well below national averages.

**Strategy:** The schools work in partnership with two local special schools to form a learning centre for the area. This is one of a number of learning centres in the city which provide the basis for the local authority's CFS strategy. Each learning centre has a management board with representatives of all the schools in the area, together with other agencies and organisations. The board works under the leadership of the CFS co-ordinator, whose work is funded by part of the local authority's CFS grant. The CFS co-ordinator works as part of a team that meets monthly and includes the following officers:

- 14-19 co-ordinator;
- out-of-hours learning co-ordinator;
- Children's University co-ordinator; and
- alternative curriculum co-ordinator.

The local authority has funded the appointment of a learning centre manager in each secondary school to carry out administration and support future developments.

**Action:** The learning centre that is the subject of this case study used grant funding to provide a safe, suitable environment for a range of community-focused activities. During 2006/2007, the centre's many projects included:

- the development of a community website;
- the contribution of articles to the local community newsletter;
- increased participation in community events, such as the local summer festival;
- an inter-generational healthy cooking course;
- an inter-generational transition project for Year 6 pupils;
- IT for senior citizens;
- a road safety course for cyclists;
- an anger management course;
- a youth exchange visit to Stuttgart;
- a school nutrition action group that promotes healthy eating at school;
- a social action project that raised awareness of the dangers of making hoax telephone calls to the emergency services; and
- a wildlife and nature reserve project.

Provision in the area's primary schools includes:

- community allotment and garden projects that enable pupils and adults in the community to grow vegetables and other produce;
- increased involvement of pupils in school and community councils;

- a taster mathematics workshop for parents;
- “Steps to Becoming a Teaching Assistant” (preparation for an OCN-accredited course);
- a school energy team (monitoring the use of energy and promoting sustainable development);
- the provision of a bicycle shed to encourage more pupils to cycle to school;
- an inter-generational textile project;
- parent and child literacy classes;
- language and play programmes; and
- a ‘Healthy Links Club’ providing healthy snacks for nursery-age children.

Funding for many of the projects comes from sources such as Cymorth, Communities First, the healthy schools scheme, Learning Promotion Grant and [Communities@one](#). Some projects involve partnership working, for example with Careers Wales, community police, arson reduction team and Media4Schools.

**Outcomes:** Pupils in the area have become more involved in making decisions that affect their own lives and those of other members of their local community. They have also become more involved in out-of-school-hours learning generally and in artistic and cultural projects in particular. The CFS activities have helped to raise pupils’ awareness of the importance of maintaining healthy lifestyles, and of issues relating to sustainable development and global citizenship. The community has benefited from increased access to school facilities.

### **Case study 3: A primary school in north Wales**

**Context:** The school has about 80 pupils aged from 7 to 11. About two-fifths of the pupils are entitled to have free school meals and about half have special educational needs.

**Strategy:** The school bases its work on the Welsh Assembly Government’s definition of a community-focused school (Circular 34/2003) and on the seven core aims for children and young people that the Assembly Government published in ‘Children and Young People: Rights to Action’ (2004). It sees its work as inclusive, focusing on people of all ages and their communities, and not just on the school and its pupils. The school aims to be the catalyst for changing the local community’s view of learning.

The school received £24,500 over two years from the CFS grant: £18,500 in 2005-2006 and £6,000 in 2006-2007. The school used the first year’s grant, together with £5,000 of its own financial reserves, to adapt one room for use as a family learning centre and to convert some other rooms into a computer suite for school and community use. It spent the following year’s grant on resources for the ICT suite and the family learning room.

The school has received a substantial amount of funding from other sources in support of its work. These sources include:

- a Lottery grant through the community council to help develop the ICT suite for community use;

- Welsh Assembly Government RAISE funding to improve literacy and numeracy skills using interactive resources; and
- a charitable fund based in North Wales that helps to enrich the experiences of pupils who live in disadvantaged areas.

**Action:** The funding from all of these sources has enabled the school to establish and maintain the following activities:

- ICT facilities which are available for use by the school and by the community at designated times;
- family learning facilities on one morning each week;
- a computer club for girls for one hour a week after school, supported by Year 7 pupils who are former pupils of the school; and
- visits by pupils to museums and an outdoor education centre.

The school used the CFS grant funding, in accordance with the relevant criteria set out in Circular 31/05, for the 'start-up' costs of projects, the running costs of which the school would fund from other sources.

**Outcomes:** The school's CFS work has helped to improve pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning, and has fostered better links and relationships with the local community.

Charitable funding has enabled the school to take groups of pupils, some of whom have behavioural difficulties, on visits to museums and an outdoor education centre. The school has seen significant improvements in the attitudes and behaviour of many pupils as a result of the social and educational experiences they have gained from these visits.

The establishment of ICT facilities as a multi-media centre has enabled the school to offer opportunities for parents, grandparents and other carers to develop skills in using ICT, in some cases by working with their own children. The local authority has provided support for the community use of the facilities as part of its Family Learning scheme.

The new ICT facilities have enabled the school to run after-school computer clubs, including one for girls only – "CC4G" (Computer Club for Girls). The school offers its ICT facilities for use by the feeder infants' school on one morning a week. At all other times during the week, the facilities are available for use by pupils of the school itself. The school has already noted an improvement in pupils' learning as a direct result of the improved ICT provision.

#### **Case study 4: A community learning centre in south-west Wales**

**Context:** The community learning centre is located in a village community school which was originally established as a bilingual comprehensive 11-18 school. The school serves a wide catchment area and admits pupils from about 30 primary schools.

**Strategy:** One of the main education strategies of the local authority has been to establish families of schools as educational communities. This strategy is closely linked to the authority's other key strategies and plans. The aims of the strategy are:

- to raise learners' achievement and attainment across a wide range of educational activities;
- to improve the transition for learners from one stage of education to the next;
- to promote inclusion and access to education; and
- to provide services such as pupil support, behaviour support, and social care within families of schools.

The local authority funds the community schools co-ordinator from its own core budget. It has used CFS grant to fund an Out of School Hours Learning co-ordinator, who is also the local authority's 14-19 co-ordinator.

**Action:** The local community is able to use school facilities such as the library, theatre/cinema, playing fields and health centre. The school also provides an ICT and e-learning centre, indoor sports facilities (including a swimming pool), and a children's integrated service centre. The secondary school shares its campus with the area primary school that was established following the merger of three local primary schools. As the campus was designed for community use at the planning stage, the local authority funded the capital building costs. The learning centre has benefited from the strong leadership and strategic direction that the local authority has provided over many years. However, CFS work is now so well-embedded in the life and work of the centre that it has not required much support from the local authority's CFS officers and did not bid for CFS funding in 2006-2007.

The following organisations and services, among others, are located on the campus:

- Menter Iaith;
- Urdd Gobaith Cymru county development officer;
- careers officer;
- arts development officer;
- health centre;
- police station; and
- fire station.

**Outcomes:** A large number of local community organisations use the campus to provide social, cultural, recreational and other activities for children, young people and adults. In addition, the campus offers a wide range of adult education courses, many of which lead to certification. The school's community dimension has helped promote useful curricular links between pupils of the school and adults in the community. The campus is now user-friendly for parents and other adults, and provides a secure environment for pupils. As a result, the school's pupils benefit from courses and enrichment activities in curriculum areas such as Welsh, drama and ICT. The school's community dimension also provides a good foundation for the community participation element of the 14-19 Learning Pathways.

### **Case study 5: A primary school in south-west Wales**

**Context:** The school is situated in a small town and serves a Communities First area which is socially and economically disadvantaged. There are over 200 pupils on roll, aged from 3 to 11. About two-thirds of pupils are entitled to have free school meals and almost a half have special educational needs.

About a fifth of the pupils come from Romany Gypsy backgrounds. The school has a centre that provides education for Gypsy Traveller learners of secondary school age. The centre, which was established in 1996, also provides facilities for the Gypsy Traveller community in general.

**Strategy:** Inclusion is the main driving force for CFS work at the school. It aims to encourage Gypsy Travellers to participate as full members of the community, to reduce historical barriers between the Gypsy community and police officers, and to encourage the development of representative, integrated groups within communities. One Gypsy Traveller is a member of the school's board of governors. The school acts as a conduit in helping the Gypsy Traveller community to establish trust with local agencies. It acts as an advocacy service on a range of issues, for example, obtaining passports or claiming benefits, and in encouraging participation in the democratic process. By these means, the school aims to integrate the Gypsy Travellers into the mainstream life of their community and to provide continuity of education for their children, helping them to gain nationally-recognised qualifications and to enter into employment.

**Action:** In the last two years, the school has used CFS grant funding, together with some of its own financial resources, to adapt and equip rooms in the junior department for use in a community-learning project in partnership with Communities First. The refurbishment has provided computer facilities, a kitchen and a multi-use learning area. The project aims to provide a range of opportunities for local adults to engage in learning. In the summer term 2007, for example, 146 adults enrolled for a wide range of courses that included:

- literacy;
- family numeracy;
- ICT;
- Welsh for beginners;
- driving theory;
- first aid;
- beauty therapy; and
- cooking.

**Outcomes:** The retention rate for these courses has been running at about 95% and the centre estimates that up to two-thirds of the learners could go on to gain accredited qualifications. In all, 25 Gypsy Traveller adults have enrolled in classes at the project. The centre has achieved considerable success in enabling Gypsy Traveller learners of secondary-school age to continue in education at the centre, the local secondary school or the local further education college and to gain recognised qualifications.

## Appendix 2: Distribution of CFS funding to schools in individual local authorities

In 2007, all local authorities were required to complete and return an end-of-year CFS report for 2006-2007. The report invited the local authority to list the schools that had used the 2006-2007 CFS grant to support the development of services, activities and facilities for the community. As a result of the way in which 13 local authorities presented this information, it is possible to calculate the proportions of primary schools and secondary schools that made use of CFS funding in each of those local authorities. It is not possible to show the equivalent information for the remaining local authorities because their reports did not identify the primary schools separately.

The table below shows the percentages of schools in each phase that used CFS funding in 2006-2007 to support the development of services, activities and facilities for the community.

*Note: The total number of primary schools in each local authority ranges from 29 to 123. The total number of secondary schools per authority ranges from 4 to 20.*

Local authority	Primary schools using CFS funding	Secondary schools using CFS funding
A	5%	20%
B	7%	40%
C	7%	13%
D	10%	80%
E	10%	33%
F	10%	31%
G	20%	75%
H	24%	20%
I	25%	75%
J	26%	38%
K	54%	43%
L	65%	50%
M	68%	63%

All except one local authority in Wales has at least one special school and there are 43 special schools in all. Only three local authorities allocated CFS funding to special schools. One local authority allocated CFS funding to one of its three special schools and another authority allocated it to two of its three special schools. The remaining authority allocated CFS funding to its only special school.