A Case Study of an Emerging Community-Oriented Extended School – Issues of Process and Policy

A thesis submitted to The University of Manchester for the degree of Doctorate in Education (Ed.D) in the Faculty of Humanities

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# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declaration</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copyright Statement</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication and Acknowledgement</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Author</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 1 - Introduction</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of Purpose</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justification of the Topic</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of my Position</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outline of the Study</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 2 - Review of Literature</strong></td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended Schools Literature – Historical Perspective</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of Literature on Asset-Based Approaches</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of Community Organizing Literature (in relation to schools)</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of Co-production Literature</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Literature – Families and Schools Together (FAST)</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 3 - Methodology</strong></td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aim and Research Questions</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justification of the Research Study</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underpinning Assumptions</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design of the Study</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Relating to Families and Schools Together (FAST)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beachstream – the case study school</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection and Analysis</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framework</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positioning of the Researcher and Trustworthiness of Data</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access and Ethical Issues</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 4 - Findings</strong></td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview of School’s Position as Scaled by Stakeholders</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understandings of Engagement</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of Assets within the Community</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-productive Working and Planning</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendices

Appendix 1 – Additional information from the literature review .......... 165
Appendix 2 – Research Timeline .......... 165
Appendix 3 – Interview Questions (Adults) .......... 170
Appendix 4 – Interview Questions (School Council) .......... 172
Appendix 5 – Participant Information Sheet .......... 173
Appendix 6 – Parent / Carer Information Sheet .......... 174
Appendix 7 – Consent Form (Adults) .......... 177
Appendix 8 – Parent / Carer Consent Form .......... 179
Appendix 9 – Case Study Feedback Session (slides and notes) .......... 180
Appendix 10 – FAST Interview Questions .......... 181
Appendix 11 – Local Authority Interview Questions .......... 185
Appendix 12 – Pilot Study Interview Questions .......... 186
Appendix 13 – Additional information relating to the FAST programme .......... 187
Appendix 14 – Characterisation of Beachstream Community Setting .......... 188
Appendix 15 – Glossary of Acronyms .......... 190

Tables and Figures

Table 1 – Research Participant Information .......... 47
Table 2 – Scaling Responses .......... 72
Fig. 1 – Framework Skeleton .......... 59
Fig. 2 – Framework Depicting Stakeholder Positionings .......... 107

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Abstract

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The purpose of this study was to explore the extent to which and the ways in which extended schools can become more community oriented in their extended provision. Within this a focus was placed on co-production and asset-based working and how they take these approaches and implement them into the delivery of the school. Whilst there are many arguments in favour of co-production and asset-based working within communities there appears to be a gap in literature relating to schools adopting these approaches. This thesis seeks to add to the limited range of these literatures by focusing on a case study school and the extent to which a group of stakeholders involved in the school are able to recognise and build upon assets within the community and the extent to which co-production plays a role in the provision made by the school.

This study was qualitative and longitudinal in nature. It took the form of a case study of a school attempting to develop a community oriented approach. The main method of data collection was semi-structured interviews with a group of eight stakeholders taken from a purposive sample as they were connected to the school. The stakeholders were interviewed and additional data was collected through two further feedback and observation sessions with six of the original stakeholders over a period of twelve months.

The thesis begins by introducing the topic, moving on to explore a range of literatures around extended schools, asset and deficit-based working, community organizing and co-production. Each of these approaches are explored in the way they relate to work between schools and their local communities. Methodologies are then introduced, findings presented and then discussed and conclusions offered in the following chapters.

The findings highlight the difficulties faced by schools in becoming more community oriented in their extended provision. The thesis explores some of the potentials, possibilities and constraints of the extended schools agenda by examining the implications of these findings. The study concludes by arguing that schools are often professionally dominated institutions and that the balance in partnerships between schools and the local community will always be tempered and restricted by the expectations and demands placed upon schools by local and national policy.
**Declaration**

No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

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**Dedication and Acknowledgement**

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my much-missed parents – Ann and John Metcalfe, who encouraged me to be brave enough to start this journey and in whose memories I have finally completed it. I just wish you were both still here to share the moment.

Acknowledgements and thanks go to Professor Alan Dyson for his good humour, patience and persistence with me and to Professor Carlo Raffo for his additional support.

Finally, huge acknowledgments and thanks go to Andrew Dunham; for having faith in me, for his patience, love and support – without you I am nothing.

**The Author**

This thesis has been undertaken alongside my full time role within a local authority. My initial degree was a BA (QTS) in primary / middle education with a Music and Drama specialism. I then undertook an MA in Inclusive Education alongside my full-time teaching post and also became an Advanced Skills Teacher. I moved into the LA to work on the extended schools agenda which I found challenging and enjoyable. Whilst leading on extended schools for the LA I developed a keen interest in the evaluations around the impacts and outcomes of the approach and was keen to explore some of the research behind it. At that point I chose to apply for the Ed.D programme at the University of Manchester. Other than the above work, my research experience is limited, the majority of which has been undertaken for this thesis.
A Case Study of an Emerging Community-Oriented Extended School – Issues of Process and Policy

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Schools in England have a long history of working with their communities. This way of working was championed in England by New Labour during the 2000’s through the extended schools agenda which was aimed at “lifting children out of poverty and improving outcomes for them and their families” (DfES, 2007, p.2). This was to be done by developing “…more schools at the heart of their local community, providing learning and cultural experiences for all and offering help and support where it can be easily accessed.” (DfES, 2002, p.4) From 2005 I was involved in the development and delivery of the extended schools agenda within my Local Authority (LA) for a number of years, initially as a network manager, working with schools to develop provision in order to offer these learning and cultural experiences alongside help and support to local children, young people and families. This was done by encouraging schools to become more community-oriented in their provision, which meant increasing the awareness of colleagues within schools of the community. By encouraging schools to identify important characteristics of the local community and applying an understanding of these characteristics it was intended that schools would look to optimise the use of them to inform and improve the extended provision of the school. This also involved encouraging schools to work co-productively with their community whereby the knowledge, ability and resources of the school and the community are used to plan and develop extended provision through a more balanced relationship of power. However this also meant that colleagues within schools needed to be able to develop their knowledge of assets within the local community. By recognising the assets that could already be found within the community they could then be harnessed and built upon to support the extended provision of the school. These assets could take on many forms including buildings, local network groups or individuals such as parents or community members. A background to and
description of the extended schools agenda along with more detailed definitions of the approaches referred to above can be found in the Chapter 2.

**Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to explore the extent to which and the ways in which extended schools can become more community oriented in their extended provision with a focus on co-production and asset-based working and how they take these approaches and implement them into the delivery of the school. Whilst there are many arguments in favour of co-production and asset-based working within communities there appears to be a gap in literature relating to schools adopting these approaches. This thesis seeks to add to the limited range of these literatures by focusing on a case study school and the extent to which a group of stakeholders involved in the school are able to recognise and build upon assets within the community and the extent to which co-production plays a role in the provision made by the school. Schools are often professionally dominated institutions that seek to engage the local community with little balance in the partnership between schools and communities. In order to explore these issues, this thesis will ask the following research questions:

- In what ways and to what extent is the school becoming more community oriented in its provision of extended services and activities?

This will explore in more detail how the school has recognised the need to work with the local community, delivering extended services and activities that are planned through consultation and build upon existing assets in their local area.

- In what ways and to what extent do the school and its stakeholders recognise and build upon the assets within the local community and to what extent does co-production play a role in the extended provision made by the school?
More information about asset and deficit-based working can be found in the literature review, but this question explores in more detail whether or not the school actually recognised the assets within its local community and whether or not it then harnessed these assets and built upon them in collaboration with the local community in order to become more asset-based and co-productive in its outlook and delivery. This was explored in order to investigate the extent to which co-production in terms of the school and the local community working and planning together played a role in the extended provision of the school, whether or not it was acknowledged, encouraged or actively discouraged.

- How do the stakeholders view the school’s relationship between the school and the local community?

This focused on the way in which the stakeholders viewed the involvement of the local community in the work and planning of extended provision within the school. It also looked at the kind of relationships with the community that extended provision was creating.

- What are the stakeholders’ understandings of the priorities for the school in developing extended provision for the local community in the future and to what extent and in what ways are these priorities limited?

This question explores the extent to which the stakeholders were clear about how the school was developing its extended provision and what the current priorities around that actually were. It also related to the kind of relationship with the community that the stakeholders wanted to create for the future, as well exploring whether or not the priorities around extended provision were limited in any way by funding, policy or any other means.
**Justification of the Topic**

As mentioned earlier, from 2005 my role was to bring together a range of providers around the delivery of the extended schools core offer (DfES, 2007, p.2) as the Extended Schools Remodelling Adviser for the LA. The question of how schools can become more community oriented in their extended provision became increasingly important to me as I developed my role within the LA and began to work with increasing numbers of schools from all phases across the borough. I formally began my research into this area around 2007. As my research developed it became increasingly evident that there was a gap in literature relating to schools operating as part of an asset-based community development approach or developing co-productive methods of working with local communities. Therefore I was keen to add to a limited range of these literatures - pertaining to the work of schools and communities by conducting a case study, exploring how schools can become part of such an approach.

**Statement of my Position**

Throughout my different roles within the LA I worked closely with schools to support them in developing their extended provision. That meant that I was linked into and supported the processes that schools had to go through to become more extended in their provision. All LAs were given targets and deadlines to meet in relation to the numbers of schools offering extended provision. This meant that colleagues were often directed to accept provision in some schools that was not always of the standard and detail ideally required by policy publications (DfES, 2007, p.2) with the provision across some schools and clusters being significantly less than others. In the early 2000s under New Labour extended schools became an English Government’s agenda item and pilot projects were developed in England on a small scale. This agenda had some similarities to the community schooling ideas and village colleges which were developed earlier in the 20th century (Morris, 1925, p.iii).
However, the extended schools agenda became a significant national initiative which changed and evolved from extended schools to extended services before it culminated in a 2010 English Government target. The development of this agenda is documented in more detail in the following chapter.

My experience of the extended schools agenda and its core offer was that it caused much concern when it was first introduced into my LA. It was the reaction by the schools to the introduction to the extended schools agenda and its core offer that first sparked my interest in researching this area and these different ways of working in more detail. Many schools claimed that they would not be able to fully offer the range of services and activities that was becoming expected of them in addition to providing education to children and young people.

Nursery schools were angered at the thought that all primary schools would be establishing nurseries in order to cater for the wrap-around care requirement; some schools were reluctant and hesitant at the prospect of having to open their doors to allow anyone and everyone from the local community in to access their facilities, there were fears around safeguarding as schools were concerned that people would have a right to roam throughout their buildings; many schools initially refused to even negotiate opening their doors after the end of the school day, and would not agree to let local communities use their playgrounds and playing fields out of school hours, citing concerns and costs about vandalism etc; many schools were however interested in the ‘swift and easy access to targeted and specialist services’ element of the core offer as they felt this would speed up referral processes and improve links between schools and other support agencies. Some schools saw the benefits of ‘parenting support’ (one of the elements of the core offer) much more readily than others.
and were keen to develop a range of coffee mornings, reading groups and other means of engaging with parents to strengthen the links between home lives and schools.

Many of the schools within my LA were initially hesitant to work with their local communities. As mentioned some had already been relatively pro-active in engaging parents but this on the whole took time to develop across the borough. Many headteachers were unfamiliar with the demography of the local community surrounding their school and unaware of many of the actual or potential human and physical assets within local communities. As a result they were often unable to recognise assets within their areas and the focus of most schools tended to be around the deprivation and deficit factors in the school’s surrounding area; the celebration of the assets and positive aspects that existed alongside everything else remained undiscovered. However even now, many years after the extended schools agenda was introduced in England, some schools in my LA – particularly those with a more deficit focus – do not seem to recognise the importance of the links between home and school as a means of supporting the development of the children and young people they work with and support (Egan, 2012, p.9). A significant part of my role was to encourage schools to strengthen and develop these links and this way of working more closely with families and communities. In order to develop my knowledge and strengthen my role I began to explore some of the literatures around asset and deficit-based approaches as a way of examining the extent to which this was an issue on a wider scale than just my locality. This led to further research on literatures relating to community organizing and co-production. As I explored these literatures, initially as a way of developing my role in order to support the schools and communities I was working with it became clear that these areas relating to community oriented development, asset-based working and co-production between schools and their families and communities were significant at local level but also at international and theoretical level.
Outline of the Study

This thesis continues on to Chapter 2 - the literature review, which provides a background to extended schools to set the scene for the paper. This is then followed by an examination of some of the literatures that relate to aspects of asset and deficit-based approaches. These helped to provide much of the grounding for my research and developed opportunities to explore whether or not they could be linked in to the school environment. Next comes a review of some of the literature available (mostly from America) on community organizing, looking how schools work closely with communities to develop tailored provision together. The penultimate area of the literature review focuses on co-production as a way of exploring how agencies and communities work together to develop provision and services that are planned and delivered through mutually agreed ways of working. The literature review ends with a short note on additional literature explored once the research and case study was underway, with specific reference to the Families and Schools Together (FAST) programme.

Chapter 3 describes the methodology, where the aims and research questions are documented and explanations around the terms such as 'the local community' are provided. The design and justification of the study are provided here, with an outline of the school chosen for the case study. This school was chosen as for some time it has been committed to a very high level of community engagement and so presents a good case study to explore in terms of the development of a community oriented approach. The underlying assumptions of this research are highlighted in this chapter along with methods of data collection which provide an explanation of and detail around the interviews conducted. Within this chapter positioning of the researcher is documented, along with trustworthiness of data and ethical issues that arose as part of the research. The theoretical framework which is used later in the research to position responses from interviewees is introduced here and an outline of the timetable of the research process, which describes interviews and feedback sessions
planned (which can also been seen in the Appendices). There then follows a section on data collection and analysis and how this has been used to support the research process. The chapter concludes with a section on the design limitations which discusses some of the issues that arose during the research process.

Chapter 4 documents the findings of the research. The interviews and responses are provided in detail in this section. During the interview process a common theme in terms of the Families and Schools Together (FAST) programme was illuminated as a model of asset-based working with elements of co-productive work included. This is a programme that was run after school where parents and professionals worked together to help children succeed, more detail on this can be found in later chapters. The programme formed part of a smaller embedded case study which included additional interviews with a smaller group of stakeholders and an LA officer. Feedback from a group session at which the theoretical framework was anonymously shared then follows. Chapter 4 concludes with responses from the second group feedback session and a findings summary which leads on to a discussion of the findings provided in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5 examines the findings in more detail and offers some recommendations, by analysing the findings specifically in relation to the case study school. The responses to each of the research questions are looked at in more detail, then analysed individually, broken down and discussed.

Chapter 6 is the final chapter where resolutions to the wider implications that were raised in this research are provided, along with a discussion of the literatures. Implications for
practice, policy and further research are then highlighted followed by an outline of the
collection to knowledge. This chapter concludes with a personal statement and reflection.

The thesis concludes with a bibliography and Appendices but first let us begin by exploring
the different literatures that were examined which formed the basis and further focus of this
paper.
Chapter 2 - Review of Literature

The purpose of this literature review is to bring together areas that are related to the focus of the case study in this paper: developing community oriented provision; the recognition of and building upon assets within the local community and the degree of co-production between schools and communities. The main background area of this work relates to the development of extended schools and this research has been conducted over the last 5 years. There are a number of different literatures that focus on some of the above elements, but there is a gap in literature which relates to a combination of the different areas above. This gap in literature relating these topics to schools supports arguments in favour of a study of this kind.

This literature review begins by briefly describing the historical perspective to extended schools and setting the scene for the thesis. This is then followed by literature relating to asset and deficit-based working which can then be examined in more detail against the findings of the case study research. The review examines some of the positives and negatives of these approaches within our communities and how they relate to work between schools and their local communities. This literature is used to facilitate an understanding of the asset and deficit-based descriptions and then applied to the way the case study school works with its children, families and communities. The recognition of assets by the case study school forms a key part of this research. Included here is a brief reference to literature relating to community organizing, the ideas behind this and the role it has played in schools within the United States of America (as this is where the main literature has come from). The reason for referring to this literature is to explore the possibilities of it being a potential way of working for the case study school.
The penultimate area of the literature review is around that of co-production. By reviewing this literature we can explore the extent to which such a way of working may be possible for our case study school and see what lessons can be learnt from the evidence documented around co-production in other areas and with a range of different agencies. This area also forms a key part of the research as it has become a major theme in the design of my study. The final area in the literature review relates to the Families and Schools Together (FAST) programme which was explored much later than other literature. This came about as a result of the initial round of interviews and so was explored at that time, once the fieldwork had already begun. The examples highlighted in the literature review are later used to support and challenge the findings gathered through this research. Details of searches undertaken for the literature review can be found in Appendix 1.

**Extended Schools Literature – Historical Perspective**

There are a significant amount of similarities between historical examples and the more recent extended schools agendas. The vision behind extended schools is not a new concept. Henry Morris, Secretary of Education for Cambridgeshire from 1922 to 1954 argued that there was a major role in the regeneration of an area to be played by establishing ‘village colleges’, in the heart of communities where previously isolated activities could be brought together and delivered alongside each other, thus creating a focal learning institution for the community.

Moving forward almost a century, New Labour began to explore ideas around additional activities and services delivered through schools, taking ideas from some of the different models of extended school provision that had already been developed across the United Kingdom, amongst other places. Scotland developed the role of the ‘New Community School’
in the late 1990’s, aimed at raising educational attainment and promoting social inclusion (Scottish Office, 1998, p.1) with the focus being placed on the early years in children’s lives. Wales developed the ‘Community Focused Schools’ approach which recognised the role that community focused schools had to play in bringing together partners to develop a “...strategic approach to delivering services, facilities and learning opportunities...embodying...the concept of client-focused integrated services.” (Continyou Cymru, 2006, p.3). There did not initially appear to be the same emphasis on addressing the socio-economic situations in Wales as there did in some of the Scottish and English literature, but more recently the Welsh Government has placed an increased focus on reducing the poverty gap with a range of initiatives explored in a Save the Children report (Egan, 2012). However this came after the initial community focused work. Northern Ireland appeared to develop their extended schools work significantly later than their colleagues in England, Scotland and Wales. Extended Schools were launched in 2006 as part of the “Children and Young People Funding Package [to] reduce underachievement and improve the life chances of children and young people by enhancing their educational development and fostering their health, well-being and social inclusion through the integrated delivery of the support and services necessary to ensure that every child has the best start in life.” (Education and Training Inspectorate, 2009, p. 1) this was a 10 year strategy with the aim of establishing “…a network of extended schools...in order to help:

- Raise school standards;
- Foster the health, well-being and social inclusion of children and young people; and
- Regenerate and transform local communities.”

(Education and Training Inspectorate, 2006, p.1)

In England, the extended schools (and later the extended services) agenda gained momentum in 1999 with a report about ‘Schools Plus’ activities, the overall aim of which was to “...develop a coherent and comprehensive approach to supporting the learning of every child in deprived communities.” (DfEE, 1999, p. 4) The key areas of the report related directly to the Scottish new community schools model, but the rationales came from a
regeneration angle, with an initial focus on children living in deprived communities, with schools playing a "...key role in the emerging neighbourhood renewal strategy." (Cummings, Dyson and Todd, 2007a, p.189). It would seem that a great deal of information came from the pilots, research and evaluation already completed in Scotland, with their new community schools. Indeed, the Schools Plus report suggested that:

...The Scottish New Community Schools provide a helpful blueprint for the developments of projects in England offering a One-Stop Family Support Centre...as...initial evidence is encouraging and providers of education, health and social services in England should consider further how this approach can be of benefit to students and families in disadvantaged areas of England...locally agreed pilots should be run in England along the lines of the Scottish model of New Community Schools. (DfEE, 1999, p.26)

In 2002 the DfES launched ‘Extended Schools – providing opportunities and services for all’ in which Baroness Catherine Ashton (Minister for Sure Start, Early Years and Childcare at that time) spoke of improvements in “...children’s skills, confidence, achievement and behaviour with less disruption to their learning...[by]...having key professionals such as health workers, psychologists and youth workers based on school sites and working closely alongside teachers...” (p.4) The aim, stated by Baroness Catherine Ashton at that time, was:

...to see more schools at the heart of their local community, providing learning and cultural experiences for all and offering help and support where it can be easily accessed. (DfES, 2002, p.4)

The DfES funded 25 Local Authorities (LAs) to act as pathfinders from September 2002 – August 2003. Their role was to work with schools and others within the LA to examine approaches used to develop services and facilities on school sites for use by families and communities. A model of delivery that came from this work became known initially as that of Full Service Extended Schools which emerged in more detail in 2003, a project aimed at ensuring that every LA would have one designated school in their LA which would provide a full range of community and family services by 2006. It was envisaged that nationally 240
extended schools would be funded between 2003 – 2006 to provide health and social care, lifelong learning opportunities, family learning, parenting support, study support, sports and arts and ICT access (GONW / DfES 2003, p.2) This provision ultimately became known as the ‘core offer’ for extended schools, which later was refined to:

- a varied menu of activities, combined with childcare in primary schools
- community access to school facilities
- swift and easy access to targeted and specialist services
- parenting support

(DFES, 2007, p.2)

Extended schools was promoted as being the vehicle for the delivery of the above offer and the Government in England was clear about its targets when it stated that all schools must be extended by 2010. The Government in England was also clear about the expectation that an effective extended school should be able to “…help raise standards and support the wider community.” (Cheminais, 2007, p.2)

By 2010, all children should have access to a variety of activities beyond the school day. Well-organised, safe and stimulating activities before and after school provide children and young people with a wider range of experiences and make a real difference to their chances at school...Schools already have an important role to play in their community. Through extending their services, schools will be able to develop and deepen their links with children, families and the wider community.

(DFES 2005, p.4 / p.17)

As the extended schools agenda increased in momentum there was a shift in terminology changing it to the extended services agenda in the later 2000s, with schools being expected to deliver extended services in collaboration with other schools, rather than every school delivering every service and becoming an extended school. Initially the extended schools agenda was aimed at addressing deficits in areas that were seen to be socially and economically disadvantaged (DFES, 2007, p.2). However it soon became clear that not all community use of schools or childcare was being accessed by families who were socially or
economically disadvantaged. The lack of a clear blueprint from the DfES in terms of what a full service extended school should look like highlighted the different rationales that schools began to develop. Cummings et al (2005, p. 10) state:

The specification formulated by the DfES set out detailed requirements in terms of the sorts of activities in which the schools should engage. However, it stopped short of imposing a single model in the sense of a rationale for how activities should relate to one another, what they should look like in detail or what the overall aims for the full service approach should be.

This meant that individual schools or clusters of schools were able to dictate their own rationales, which inevitably impacted on their outcomes when they were evaluated at a later date. Craig, with others (2004, p.3) found there to be “...at least four, and counting...” sorts of extended schools. Cummings, Dyson and Todd (2007a, p. 189) also commented on the lack of guidance or blueprint for the delivery of the agenda:

...in the absence of agreed models of how such community-oriented schooling should operate, its form will depend on how it is understood by the education professionals and their partners in other agencies who have to make it work in practice.

Black et al also comment on this lack of clarity and consensus:

...the concept and terminology of extended service schooling has developed within the past two decades...This...has seen the development of numerous initiatives and individual sites of practice...characterised by a pervasive lack of clarity and a troubling lack of consensus about the definition, purposes, best practice implementation and even the terminology of extended service schooling.

(Black, Lemon and Walsh, 2010, p. 4)

This again highlights the fact that often schools were not always easily able to evidence the impact of their work as due to the lack of a blueprint confusion remained over how best to define, monitor and evidence the impact of the delivery and development of the extended schools programme. It also became apparent that it was neither practical nor possible to deliver the whole of the core offer in every school. Increasingly schools began working in
partnership through cluster or hub approaches that varied in size and makeup but worked together to provide the core offer through delivery and signposting mechanisms.

Over the last 20 years, if not the last century, across the United Kingdom the main developments around full service schools and community schools were to promote community and family learning and access to activities beyond the traditional school day (DfES, 2007, p.2). It would seem that the rationales behind the development of these schools shifted as society and cultures changed, in response to the differing demands called for by society as a whole. Many other countries have been developing agendas similar to the extended schools agenda all along but it was not the purpose of this research to focus on every offer in every individual country. However, what remains unclear, and could possibly be focused on at a later date is the issue relating to how rationales were developed and delivered, and how comprehensively people within the children’s workforce understood the implications and intended outcomes of those rationales.

The next stage of this literature review is to examine the differences between asset and deficit-based approaches to working with children, young people, families and communities and how the approach can enhance or constrain the very individuals they are trying to support. An important element of this is the way the stakeholders linked to the school operate and where the individuals place themselves in relation to deficit or asset-based thinking relating to the community they are working with. Are the stakeholders committed to a process that is “…aimed at bringing about change in local communities in a positive manner for the well-being of that community?” (Keeble, 2006, p.3). This question forms an interesting link to the research aim and interview questions as the research looks at how stakeholders are committed to or invited to be involved in bringing about changes through
joint working in their local community. Much of the literature surrounding this tends to have a focus on ‘doing to’ families and communities often portraying them in deficit terms. Therefore the question arises as to whether or not there is an alternative viewpoint that can be explored. Schools are tasked with developing and improving the educational outcomes for children and young people, however they cannot always do this alone but they do not appear to always recognise and represent the needs and views of what their communities may hold. Families and communities can generally offer a whole range of assets in many different forms. Some agencies and professions have begun to recognise this and have worked with communities to harness the assets as a form of community development. The review that follows which explores some of the literature around asset and deficit-based work will help to address the alternatives.

**Review of Literature on Asset-Based Approaches**

The review of this particular set of literatures was conducted in order to explore examples of asset-based working between schools and communities. This is where the gap in relevant literatures began to become increasingly evident. Definitions of asset-based approaches are provided below:

*The asset-based approach is a bottom-up approach that shifts the emphasis from a services perspective to an empowerment perspective...One of the implications of the asset-based approach is that professionals need to become partners in their efforts in the true sense of the word. Collaboration and effective communication are key ingredients in this process. (Eloff and Ebersohn, 2001, p.151/157)*

This is echoed by Mathie and Cunningham (2003):

*...the appeal of ABCD [Asset-based Community Development] lies in its premise that people in communities can organise to drive the development process themselves by identifying and mobilising existing (but often unrecognised) assets, thereby responding to and creating local economic opportunity.*

*(Mathie and Cunningham, 2003, p. 474)*
Whilst conducting the literature review it became apparent that much of the literature was dominated by a deficit focus with little literature available documenting evidence from an asset-based perspective. There also appeared to be a gap in literature relating to asset-based or co-productive work that has been used to support and develop communities from a more positive perspective, including that relating to the work of schools. However, some of the wider community development literature related to asset-based projects and that proved to be a useful starting point whilst conducting this literature review. For example, Eloff and Ebersohn (2001) describe the differences between asset and deficit-based approaches:

Professionals differ greatly in the approach they take when addressing a challenging situation...On the one hand there is the needs-driven approach that has a strong focus on problems, deficiencies and needs...On the other hand there is the capacity-focused approach, also known as asset-based approach...many professionals focus on the areas of difficulties or problems (the medical model), and on the other side of the divide there are the professionals who focus on a more holistic view (the social model). (Eloff and Ebersohn, 2001, p. 149)

However in relation to schools and education, much of it appeared to have a deficit focus, often concerned with issues that could only be resolved by 'doing to' schools and communities, not 'doing with' them, thus only pathologising them, not empowering them. This is referred to by Mathie and Cunningham (2003):

In the needs-based approach, well-intentioned efforts of universities, donor agencies, and governments have generated needs surveys, analysed problems, and identified solutions to meet those needs. In the process, however, they have inadvertently presented a one-sided negative view, which has often compromised, rather than contributed to, community capacity building. (Mathie and Cunningham, 2003, p. 475/476)

This 'doing to' has reinforced the deficiency orientation, conveying negative images of children, young people, families and neighbourhoods:

These negative images, which can be conceived as a kind of mental “map” of the neighbourhood often convey part of the truth about the actual conditions of a
troubled community. But they are not regarded as part of the truth; they are regarded as the whole truth. Once accepted as the whole truth about troubled neighbourhoods, this “needs” map determines how problems are addressed, through deficiency-oriented policies and programs...They [the clients] become consumers of services, with no incentive to become producers. (Kretzman and McKnight, 1993, p. 2)

This deficiency-oriented approach is one which schools often unwittingly fall into the trap of. In order to attract funding and additional resources schools are encouraged to highlight the deficiencies, as they are “…being forced to denigrate their neighbours and their community by highlighting their problems and deficiencies, and by ignoring their capacities and strengths.” (Kretzman and McKnight, 1993, p.4) Hence the need to capture asset-based provision and promote it as a way of moving away from the deficiency-oriented images that often portray inaccurate ‘whole truths’ about our communities and neighbourhoods, and ultimately our children and young people:

...where full service and extended schools initiatives focus on supporting disadvantaged children, families and communities, they will have an inbuilt power imbalance between the professionals who drive the initiative and the local people who are its intended beneficiaries. (Dyson, 2011, p. 185)

In much of the literature that carries a deficit focus professionals tend to have particular views about how to address disadvantage, linking in many of the perceived needs as being deficit rather than asset focused. Kretzman and McKnight argue that negative images can have serious consequences for communities:

The fact that deficiency orientation represented by the needs map constitutes our only guide to lower income neighbourhoods has devastating consequences for residents...Viewing a community as a nearly endless list of problems and needs leads directly to the much lamented fragmentation of efforts to provide solutions. It also denies the basic community wisdom which regards problems as tightly intertwined, as symptoms in fact of the breakdown of a community's own problem-solving capacities. (Kretzman and McKnight, 1993, p.2)
Gewirtz et al (2005, pp. 658) refer to Government initiatives aimed at raising educational achievement by working with local communities, but this research uncovered local delivery of programmes that highlighted parents as being “deficient and dysfunctional”, evidencing an imbalance in power between parents, communities and schools (which is referred to in more detail later within the review of community organizing literature). Whilst a significant amount of the literature available is concerned with the reporting of deficit-based interventions and how policies, procedures and initiatives have been created and developed to lift families out of poverty, other publications refer to moving away from the deficit orientation, a need to “…reinvigorate the public sphere” and develop “the notion of the democratic common good.” (Thrupp and Tomlinson, 2005, p. 551)

Mathie and Cunningham suggest that Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) is a model that engages and empowers communities by building on the positives that have been recognised:

In summary…we propose that ABCD can be understood as an approach, as a set of methods for community mobilisation, and as a strategy for community-based development. As an approach to community-based development, ABCD rests on the principle that recognition of strengths and assets is more likely to improve positive action for change in a community than is an exclusive focus on needs and problems.

(Mathie and Cunningham, 2003, p. 477)

But whilst the ABCD literature is useful, this research is more about exploring whether or not there is such a thing as asset-based school development. The development of an asset-based approach to extended provision is an exciting and interesting opportunity to be explored but given that many of the initial extended school priorities had a deficit focus the development of this way of working may prove difficult and flawed from the outset.
An asset-based approach starts with the *status quo*. It focuses on what is currently present in the environment and what the capacities inherent to the individuals and the environment are. It does not start with what is lacking or problematic... As with the rest of the asset-based approach the relationships that are developed while taking this approach, should be based on the strengths and talents of the individuals involved, and not on the weaknesses and problems. Relationships need to be built and rebuilt constantly. (Eloff and Ebersohn, 2001, p.151)

Robinson (2006) talks of the challenges with ABCD:

The challenge for an external agency...is to stimulate this process in other communities without having the opposite effect of creating dependency...ABCD draws upon collecting stories, organising a core group, mapping the capacities and assets of individual, associations and local institutions, building a community vision and plan, mobilising and linking assets for community development, and leveraging activities, investments and resources from outside the community.

Robinson, 2006, p. 9)

The literature referred to above provided key ideas and focus points for the research undertaken during this thesis. The description of ABCD, in terms of organising core groups, mapping provision and linking assets together is not traditionally how many schools approached their provision of extended services and activities in my experience. Once more Robinson (2006) highlights some interesting factors which schools could take into consideration:

Schools must create a greater sense of community. They must listen to the child’s voice and to the community to avoid unnecessary duplication. Schools need to be (re)conceptualised as community hubs, the co-location for services to enhance access, provide parenting support, working with a transformed and transformational curriculum. (Robinson, 2006, p. 11)

Before moving on to the area of co-production let us briefly examine some of the literature behind the Community Organizing work that is developing across the United States of America in relation to schools. This was referred to briefly earlier in relation to the imbalance of power between parents, communities and schools.
Review of Community Organizing Literature in relation to schools

When examining the relationships between schools and communities the concepts of ‘asset-based’ and deficit-based’ approaches are useful. As we have already seen, much of the literature on school community relationships appears to focus on deficit-based approaches. This illustrates some of the issues around the power imbalance between schools and communities, which enables the deficit-based views of school professionals to be imposed on communities. Whilst asset-based working aims to create a more enhanced level of equality in the relationship of power between professionals and communities the findings documented later in this thesis highlight that this level of equality in the power relationship is in reality often difficult to achieve. Although there are few examples of such attempts in relation to school-community relations, one interesting development is around Community Organizing for educational change.

A review was undertaken of some of the literature relating to community organizing in order to gain a perspective on how communities have worked together to empower each other and bring about changes. Some literature related to work that had been done around schools and education, this appeared to be fairly limited, with America providing the main examples of where community organizing appears to have been around for some time. The idea behind community organizing is that rather than advocate ‘for’ people, organizing groups ‘engage’ people and encourage and empower them to directly work for change in community situations. These groups have developed from many other American movements but Warren (2010, p.491) claims that they:

...draw most explicitly from the community organizing tradition developed by Saul Alinsky in Chicago in the 30’s...Alinsky sought to work with institutions that structured community life, like religious congregations, to build leadership and power for working-class people. At the same time, as unions were organizing
workers in industry, Alinsky sought to create organizations through which working people could create change in their neighbourhoods.

More informal strategies to empower and organise low-income parents and communities to influence the education systems that their children are involved in have been developing for some time:

Strategies aimed at increasing parental participation in school site decision making can either compel schools to become more responsive toward the need of students and parents or, put more positively, open up possibilities for constructive partnerships between the two parties. (Noguera, 2001, p. 189)

However, community organizing work in schools is still relatively new. “Although the field of parent involvement and community-school partnerships has been written about extensively, the work of community-based organizations in parent engagement is a new field of study.” (Warren et al, 2009, p.2214). Many groups are now working across America to encourage school reform, particularly in areas that are deemed as being low-income as there are considered to be significant inequities between lower income and the more affluent schools, in terms of the amount of money given (and spent) per pupil, the physical conditions of the school, the level, qualifications and abilities of teaching staff and the availability of appropriate courses for pupils:

Frustrated with their inability to raise test scores, many educators and policy makers have looked outside the schools for answers and have blamed parents and communities for their lack of concern and involvement. (Gold, et al 2004, p. 55s)


Poor communities face problems associated with concentrated poverty and racism, but too often educators see families and only problems to be ‘fixed’... Parents in low-income communities seldom venture into schools unless the school has problems with their children, or when parents perceive problems with the school. (Warren, 2005, pp. 134, 136)
Changes are now beginning to occur in the form of more detailed research and the valuable links that can be made between school, families and communities in jointly supporting the education of young people:

In more recent years however, educators and researchers have begun to realize that schools cannot do it alone. Rather than blame parents and communities for failure, experts increasingly acknowledge that schools need the participation of parents and community members to provide the kind of environment where children can flourish.

(Gold, et al 2004, p. 55s)

Community organizing groups are looking to become more involved in improving education systems and schools in their local areas. Much of the need for this appears to have stemmed from deficit views of parents and communities as highlighted above. Communities have begun to recognise and address the inequities for their children and young people by engaging with other community members:

Community organizing aims to alter long standing power relationships that produce failing schools in under-served communities in order to create excellent and accountable school systems for all students...The goal is to challenge the patterns of inequality that are built into the rules and laws that guide schools; the individual belief of many educators and administrators about who is capable of learning; and the relationships between stakeholders that dictate how a reform is adopted and implemented. (Renee and McAllister, 2011, p.3)

This takes the relationship between the school and the community to a much higher level, forcing different relationships to develop and challenging the notion of power between the different individuals and agencies:

Community organizing for education reform aims to build the capacity of a community...and ultimately improve the educational, social and political environments within and surrounding schools so they more effectively educate under-served young people...community organizers work to overhaul the entire process of schooling: how problems are defined, who is included in developing and implementing decisions, and what is the role of schools and education in our society...Community organizing for school reform leverages the collective power of parents, youths, community residents and/or institutions to alter existing power
relationships and policies and create more accountable, equitable, and high-quality schools for all students. (Renee and McAlister, 2011, p.3)

Whilst it could be argued that community organizing is much needed and one of the only ways of addressing inequity in education in parts of America, in order for it to work there also needs to be some significant changes in culture on both sides:

Collaboration between educators and organizing groups also requires some mutual appreciation of very different cultures. Whereas organizing values leadership that is distributed and decision making by consensus, schools and districts are often hierarchical and decisions continually passed up the chain of command.  

(Renee and McAlister, 2011, p.3)

Renee and McAlister refer to community organizing as being “…best understood as a force” with a "shared capacity to take leadership roles in demanding change." (2011, p.9, p.5) so there is nothing subtle about this work or about the way in which it is described. But this way of working also brings about reservations and on occasions resentment from professionals:

...some teachers also perceived community organization as encroaching on their professional autonomy and resented the additional workload that parent engagement required. (Gold et al, 2004, p. 59s)

This in turn also brings about resistance and conflict between the different groups involved, creating tensions and stalling the process of development:

...an ongoing challenge for community organizing is how to build bridging social capital when schools resist change and discourage parent activism...When parents and community members press schools on sensitive issues and demand accountability, conflict often erupts...Thus, community organizing is perceived to be threatening to many educators. (Lopez, 2003, p. 4)
It cannot be denied that there is a difference in power levels and also in expertise between educators and communities but these are some of the issues that need to be addressed from the beginning. Whilst these differences may not disappear, if they are acknowledged then they are more likely to be harnessed as positive starting points and used to everyone’s advantage:

Building collaborative relationships between parents and educators is challenging, however, because the starting point is one of unequal knowledge and power. By nature of the professions, teachers are college educated, middle class, and experts in the work of schools... [parents] may have expert knowledge about their own children, and they may have sound understandings about many schooling issues, but they often lack sophisticated expertise in curriculum and pedagogy. (Warren et al, 2009, p. 2240)

However, as an increasing amount of community organizing work has begun in America, the instances whereby parents and educators have come together for the benefit of children and young people in their communities has had extremely positive effects:

When parents are respected as partners in the education of their children...the entire culture of the organization can be transformed...More important, the familiarity between school and parent that develops as a result of such partnerships can also begin to generate social closure and transform urban schools from alien and hostile organizations into genuine community assets. (Noguera, 2001, p. 207)

Research in America has shown that real reform in the education system is reliant on involvement of outside groups such as communities and groups that can take collective action to address the issues of inequity that have arisen in some parts of America:

Community organizing strategies strengthen relationships within communities for the purpose of taking collective action around shared interests such as education quality... Community organizing groups add value to schools reform by sustaining the visions and momentum of change over time, persisting despite obstacles and setbacks, creating the political will that motivates officials to take action, and producing meaningful changes in policies, practices and programs that reflect the concerns of parents and community members. (Gold et al, 2004, p. 70s/71s)
Despite conducting searches, there does not appear to be literature readily available relating to community organizing for school or educational reform in England as there is in relation to America. It could be that this is known under another name or it could be argued that the differing education systems and monitoring bodies in England, as well as the debatable relationships some LAs have with their schools prevents the need for a ‘force’ such as community organizing to play such a prevalent role in our schools. However, the case for increased parental and community involvement and participation in our schools has become increasingly highlighted through the extended schools agenda and other poverty strategies (Egan, 2012, p. 13, Egan, 2013, p.9). Community organizing encourages parents and local communities to be viewed as assets in the education of children and young people and to work together in a co-productive manner. Therefore the final area of my literature review focuses upon the area of co-production. This may be viewed as a natural progression from the asset-based approach and community organizing, whereby all stakeholders are viewed equally and are encouraged to plan, develop and deliver plans and ways of working together in a positive manner.

**Review of Co-production literature**

Literature relating to co-production has been reviewed in order to explore the ideals behind co-production and whether or not it is practical or possible to develop this further between schools and communities in the way that it has been developed between communities and other agencies. There is an increasing amount of literature available around the area of co-production. A flurry of activity seemed to prevail in response to the election of a new English Government in 2010. The extended schools agenda brought about proposed new ways of working whereby schools and local communities would be encouraged to work together to support each other and help bring an end to the poverty and long term unemployment issues that were so highly publicised at that point in time.
The government says it is committed to building a ‘Big Society’, by getting more people working together to run their own affairs locally. It aims to put more power and responsibility into the hands of families, groups, networks, neighbourhoods and locally based communities, and to generate more community organisers, neighbourhood groups, volunteers, mutuals, co-operatives, charities, social enterprises and small businesses... Co-production is central to delivering the 'Big Society' vision because it offers a way of integrating the public resources that are earmarked for services with the private assets of those which are intended to benefit from services. (Boyle et al, 2010 (a), p.8)

These perspectives of co-production and asset-based community development provide a positive element to an area of work which until now has appeared to be concerned primarily with the 'doing to' rather than 'working with' children, young people, families and communities involved in the provision meted out by the extended schools agenda.

Co-production means delivering public services in an equal and reciprocal relationship between professional, people using services, their families and their neighbourhoods. Where activities are co-produced in this way, both services and neighbourhoods become far more effective agents of change. (Boyle and Harris, 2009, p.11)

Examples of how communities have moved from being passive recipients of services to having their expertise and assets harnessed as a way of informing the improvements of services, are documented by Needham and Carr (2009) Scott (2002) and Whitaker (1980)

Co-production emphasises that people are not passive recipients of services and have assets and expertise which can help improve services...it refers to active input by the people who use services, as well as – or instead of – those who have traditionally provided them...these assets are not usually financial, but rather are the skills, expertise and mutual support that services users can contribute to effective public services. (Needham and Carr, 2009, p. 1)

Whitaker talks of the relationship between the ‘agent’ and the ‘citizen’:

The agent can supply encouragements, suggest options, illustrate techniques, and provide guidance and advice, but the agent alone cannot bring about the change.

35
Rather than an agent presenting a “finished product” to the citizen, agent and citizen together produce the desired transformation. (Whitaker, 1980, p.240)

The relationship that Whitaker (1980) refers to is key if true co-productive work is to take place between schools and their communities. There needs to be a “…recognition of the need to encourage and involve the community in meeting their own needs and the needs of the children.” (Wilkin et al, 2003, p.31). However in terms of literature around co-production, some of the main pieces of work highlighted examples from within the Social Care service and the Police force. Co-production between communities and neighbourhood policing teams has also proved to be successful in addressing issues that have arisen in specific areas:

…community policing represents a redefinition of the role of residents in problem solving. This appears to be such a central component that it is almost difficult to find a description of community policing that does not, in some way, offer a description of resident participation in problem solving. This component stresses the importance of community partnership and collaboration between police and residents. (Scott, 2002, p. 151)

However, to date there appears to be a gap in literature available that explores the extent to which schools are able to work co-productively with local communities and partners. Parents have a key role to play as co-educators and schools should be working with and supporting the local community as a way of raising standards within schools:

Parental involvement is seen as a mechanism for simultaneously raising standards, developing new partnerships between schools and parents in the local community and promoting social inclusion. Parents are invited to take up a variety of roles as they are encouraged to become co-educators of their children...In return, schools are expected to support the involvement of parents through providing the necessary support and opportunities for parents to become involved in schools, and act as a resource in promoting the wider inclusion of families and the local community. (Brain and Reid, 2003, pp.291/292)
Parents are generally the main educators of their children, children spend a mere 12% of their waking time in school, (Egan, 2012, p.19) so this is significantly less than time spent with family, friends and peers. If relationships between the ‘agent’ and the ‘citizen’ (Whitaker, 1980) were harnessed and together schools and communities became the co-producers of our children and young people, massive benefits to all may well occur. Co-production implies that “…citizens can play an active role in producing public goods and services of consequence to them” (Ostrom, 1996, p.1073). Often schools, or perhaps more specifically teachers, are seen as the professionals who know how our children learn best and communities are generally reluctant to encroach on the teaching ‘territory’ of schools. It may be that traditionally parents expect schools to continue to take the lead in the learning process and have never particularly been encouraged to participate in or are unaware of the benefits of co-production.

Much of the literature talks of the importance and gains to be made from co-production. Horne and Shirley (2009) refer to evidence that co-production in practice already shows potential gains in many areas however; they also found that co-production is not always the most appropriate way of working across all public services. “We suggest the greatest potential benefits are in ‘relational’ services such as early years, education, long term health conditions, adult social care and mental health, rather than transactional services.” (Horne and Shirley, 2009, p.5)

The literature shows how co-production has taken place between communities and services relating to the police, adult social care, community development work and urban infrastructures. All of these are arguably different from the service a school may provide. Communities may be keen to engage with public service providers such as the police, in
order to have a say in how the service should be developed. There may be some clear parallels between the police and schools relating to co-production that can be explored more closely.

Much of the literature reviewed highlights the use of co-production as a positive tool but this way of working does also have its drawbacks. Below are listed some of the challenges behind co-production:

Co-production... barely fits the standard shape of public services or charities or the systems we have developed to ‘deliver’ support...Co-production can be awkward for funders and commissioners, who tend to look for specific objectives and pre-determined outputs generated from a narrow range of anticipated activities and evidenced by limited indicators of success... It actively prevents co-production projects from evolving... Many organisations that co-produce services find themselves needing to fit into the existing measurement and evaluation models to demonstrate the value of what they are doing and get more funding.

(Boyle, et al, 2010, p.28-30)

These issues can stand in the way of securing funding which is often sought by groups who may want to develop their provision and work co-productively. However their planned way of joint working hinders the ability to secure the funding which then in turn stops the programme or project from getting off the ground or further developing.

**Additional Literature – Families and Schools Together**

Additional literature was explored as the case study was underway. At the time of the fieldwork being undertaken, the main funding areas relevant to this research were around the extended services agenda. Pupil Premium and early years funding did not form a part of this research as they were not the focus of the work. There had been a significant amount of funding for early years through Sure Start, Beachstream had a Sure Start Children's
Centre on site which had developed outreach programmes to families and developed partnership working with a range of agencies. However this funding and provision was targeted at early years children and their parents, and did not impinge on the school’s policy as it was managed separately. It was not specifically aimed at school age children, extended provision or wider community engagement in the same way that the extended schools model was:

The ultimate goal of Sure Start local programmes (SSLPs) is to enhance the life chances for children less than four years of age growing up in disadvantaged neighbourhoods...Thus, SSLPs not only aim to enhance health and well-being during the early years, but to increase the chances that children will enter school ready to learn, be academically successful in school, socially successful in their communities and occupationally successful when adult. (SureStart, 2005, p.1)

Pupil Premium funding came about later, once a large part of this fieldwork and research had been undertaken and similarly, the focus of the Pupil Premium was based more around work in school than work with the wider community so it was not included in this research:

One of the Government’s key priorities is to introduce a pupil premium to support disadvantaged pupils, who continue to underachieve compared with their peers. Funding for the premium, which will be introduced in September 2011, will come from outside the schools budget to support disadvantaged pupils from Reception to Year 11. Schools will decide how best to use the premium to support the attainment of disadvantaged pupils. (DfE, 2010, p.4)

However the requirement that the funds be spent on interventions that have a direct impact on attainment made it significantly less likely the funding would be used to develop community links and engagement.

The main additional literature explored was that relating to the Families and Schools Together (FAST) programme, which appeared as a consistent theme throughout the first
group of interviews. More detail can be found about the specifics of FAST programme in relation to the case study school in later chapters. However, as the programme appeared so significantly in the interviews the research design was then adapted to include this in a second, embedded case study. The FAST programme has been developed in the UK by Dr Lynn McDonald and is based on a programme first developed in 1988 in America:

FAST is a holistic, multi-systemic, parent involvement and relationship-building programme with a multi-family group approach. It aims to build protective factors against stress for children, and thereby to increase their resilience, well-being and ability to learn. This community strengthening programme is based on the social ecological theory of child development, as well as family systems theory, family stress theory, attachment theory, social learning theory, and community development strategies and theories of adult education... The focus on building strong families, reducing stress, increasing social support, increasing social capital and increasing social inclusion promotes the strengths of any school and local community, and all of the families who live there.

(McDonald and Puniskis, 2013, p.14/15)

Ideally the 2 year programme is aimed at families with children aged between 5 and 9 years, serving potentially between 30 and 60 families a time, although it is preferred to work in groups of approximately 10 families – and involves running sessions and group activities over an 8 week period. Once the families have completed the eight week programme they then ‘graduate’ and are able to attend follow-up meetings every month for the next two years – these meetings are called ‘FASTWORKS’. The idea behind these follow-up meetings is that they help to sustain and build upon relationships between families and individuals, as well as relationships between parents and children. By supporting each other parents then develop plans for the future of the group, which may include setting goals, networking opportunities and future agenda items:

Today, FAST has been implemented in over 2500 schools in 18 countries, including in 49 states in the US. FAST is known for its high average retention rates of 80% and its established track record for engaging socially marginalised parents across languages, cultures, religions, race, and socio-economic strata, in both urban and rural settings.

(McDonald and Puniskis, 2013, p.14)
The evaluation report by McDonald and Puniskis (2013, p.28) states that the current UK retention rate for families on the FAST programme is 81%; the retention rate at Beachstream was 90%. Multi-family group activities run for eight sessions using a range of approaches, including experiential learning, coaching and support, all delivered as a mean of encouraging positive approaches to parenting. All activities are planned to strengthen the bond and relationships between parents and children. Programme goals for the FAST work are detailed below:

- **Enhance family functioning**
  - Strengthen the parent-child relationship in specific and focused ways
  - Empower the parents to become the primary prevention agents for their own children
  - Improve child behaviour at home
- **Prevent the target child from experiencing school failure**
  - Improve the FAST child’s behaviour and performance in school, both short-term and long term
  - Empower the parents in their role as partners in the educational process
  - Increase the child and family’s feeling of affiliation toward the school
  - Improve child behaviour at school
- **Reduce the stress that families experience from daily life**
  - Offer on-going opportunities for building social support among parents
  - Link the family to appropriate community resources and services, as needed
  - Empower parents to establish relationships and increase their effectiveness in dealing with everyday life
- **Prevent substance abuse by the child and family**
  - Build protective factors against children becoming involved in substance abuse in the future by strengthening the parent-child and family relationships and improving child behaviour at home and at schools
  - Reduce parent substance abuse

(McDonald and Puniskis, 2013, p.16)

There is still relatively limited evaluative literature available on the FAST programme within England. Increasing numbers of schools are beginning to trial the programme and evaluations of the different programmes are currently underway.

All of the above literature has formed the basis for my research and has allowed me to sharpen the focus of my case study, research aims and questions. There are many different literatures available, the ones reviewed are key to forming the links between the focus areas
of research for this case study and the gaps in literature available that link them. The aim of this study is to examine the extent to which and ways in which schools can become more community-oriented in their extended provision. As such the reviews have incorporated a background to the extended schools agenda; moving on to examine some of the arguments relating to asset and deficit-based working, briefly encompassing some of the literature relating to community organizing; and finally a review of some of the literature available that relates to co-production. These areas of literature have been reviewed in order to establish how they to link to each other and relate to the aim of this research, providing a good basis from which to develop the case study as we explore how they complement each other in the development of a community oriented extended school.
Chapter 3 – Methodology

Aim and Research Questions

The aim of this study is to examine the extent to which and the ways in which extended schools can become more community-oriented in their extended provision. For the purpose of this research the interpretation of community-oriented is defined as the extent to which and the way in which the school in this case study pays attention to and takes into consideration the community’s assets, needs and voices and the extent to which the school incorporates them into its daily work and planning. Once again, for the purposes of this research, when referring to community-oriented this also includes asset-based approaches and co-production as defined in the previous chapter. This has involved looking at some of the potentials, possibilities and constraints of the extended schools agenda by examining a specific school in terms of the following:

- In what ways and to what extent is the school becoming more community oriented in its provision of extended services and activities?

- In what ways and to what extent do the school and its stakeholders recognise and build upon the assets within the local community and to what extent does co-production play a role in the extended provision made by the school?

- How do the stakeholders view the school’s relationship between the school and the local community?

- What are the stakeholders’ understandings of the priorities for the school in developing extended provision for the local community in the future and to what extent and in what ways are these priorities limited?

This paper is concerned with exploring through the use of a case study how schools become more community-oriented in the way they recognise, embrace and invite the local
community to become involved in and aware of the school and what it has to offer in response to the needs and requests of that local community.

**Justification of the research study**

The case study for this research involved working with a group of stakeholders to explore the extent to which and the ways in which one particular school could become more community-oriented in its extended provision. This research aimed to generate new knowledge through a case study to explore whether a group of stakeholders were able to learn from both their experiences and those of others. Further research in this area would have been useful in order to compare and contrast attitudes, provision and rationales, however given the amount of information the one school and its stakeholders produced and the fact that my full-time role within the LA placed significant time constraints on my research opportunities it was not physically possible on this occasion to widen the research that far. This research was conducted alongside my full-time post within the LA with no study or research time allocated. Initial research plans had included two case studies, however on reflection it became apparent that two case studies would have made this a potentially unmanageable task in the time allocation planned. This sample is a purposive sample:

Purposive sampling whereby a selection of those known to be surveyed is made according to a known characteristic...Numbers may be small here and...the 'fit for purpose' defence of the method may be deployed. (May, 2001, p. 95)

The concept of purposeful sample is used in qualitative research. This means that the inquirer selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study. (Creswell, 2007, p.125)
After careful consideration one larger study was decided upon – in order to provide a purposive sample of evidence of an emerging community-oriented school. The sample also included critical cases and convenience cases:

...critical cases, which provide specific information about a problem, and convenience cases, which represent sites or individuals from which the researcher can access and easily collect data. (Creswell, 2007, p.125)

This research was conducted by exploring the understanding of the stakeholder group in relation to asset-based provision, linked to elements of co-production.

**Underpinning Assumptions**

This research is based on a number of underlying assumptions. Having worked in the LA for a number of years on the development of the extended schools work, the assumption is that in this case the provision of the school has generally developed in accordance with the leader of this school (the Headteacher) supported by his senior leaders and Governors, as when the school takes action in any particular way it is guided primarily by the headteacher. Another assumption is that extended schools such as the one in the case study operate on the basis of implicit and competing rationales. This also links back to the literature review in terms of models and agendas followed that were provided and recommended by English Government policies and publications. (DfES 2002, p.4, GONW / DfES 2003, p.1, DfES 2007, p.2). Other assumptions are that the school and other stakeholders engaged with this research are guided by their key understandings and principles when working towards making a difference to the lives of others they may work with. These assumptions are related to my positioning and could be considered to have some implications as to the trustworthiness of this study but this is discussed in more detail later on. This study has been conducted in the belief that if people want to change then assumptions need to be
challenged. This research aims to challenge those assumptions; therefore the research plans and methodology were adapted accordingly.

The research explores how (or indeed if) the school works with the local community to develop and add to the asset-base that already existed within that local community. The local community has been defined as being the community of families that send their children to the case study school, which also includes the neighbours, families, stakeholders and other agencies already involved with or situated within the immediate physical proximity of the school, the geographical community surrounding the school. This includes an element of a geographical community but the main focus is on the families within that geographical area who attend the school. There are many different definitions of community that could have been used; the focus was not on a wider specific geographical area as some of the families who have children at the school do not live on the estate which immediately surrounds the school. Similarly, some of the families who live close by to the school do not send their children to the case study school. There are roads and boundaries around the school across the estate which separates some of the communities from one another. There are also a small number of faith communities across the estate but as the case study school was not a faith school such communities were not selected for the sample. This was not done to exclude different groups within the community but to limit the area and provide a definition of local community. The case study school is typical of many other schools in that whilst many of its pupils and families live close to the school the school itself does not serve families across a tight geographical area, not all the pupils come from a single geographical community, hence the reason for defining it as being the community of families within a limited geographical area that send their children to the school.
Design of the study

The design of the study took on the following form: initial interviews with the whole group of stakeholders; a group feedback session analysing the positionings of the stakeholders and any key themes that emerged from the interviews (positionings were analysed using a framework which is described in more detail later in this chapter); a new round of interviews based on a common theme - FAST (Families and Schools Together) which was identified in the first round of interviews – these interviews included an LA officer and FAST interviews with two key stakeholders and the final feedback session was conducted with a mix of the original stakeholders. The sample group differed according to the research activities listed above. The FAST theme developed into a smaller embedded case study within the overall case study. More detailed information about the reasons for the groups differing can be found later in the design limitations. The table below identifies each of the stakeholders, the interviews they took part in and an indicator as to whether or not they attended the first and / or second feedback sessions:

Table 1. Research Participant Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Participants</th>
<th>Interview 1 (Beachstream case study)</th>
<th>Attended 1st feedback</th>
<th>Interview 2 (FAST case study)</th>
<th>Attended 2nd feedback session</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended School Co-ordinator</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>No/No</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governor</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>No/No</td>
<td>No/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Ward Councillor</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>No/No</td>
<td>No/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Children’s Centre Manager</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Council Reps</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>No/No</td>
<td>No/No</td>
<td>No/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA Officer</td>
<td>No/No</td>
<td>No/No</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>No/No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This study is a single school case study, a focus on one primary school and the extent to which and the ways in which it can become more community-oriented in its extended provision. I was keen to explore and research the extent to which stakeholders recognised and built upon assets within the local community and also whether they are co-producers of an increased community orientated delivery of extended provision through the school. The case study school has for some time been viewed as a school that is committed to developing its extended provision and working closely with the local community by the LA and by examining it more closely it was hoped that the research would indicate whether this was because of, or in spite of, the rationales held by the key stakeholders.

For the purposes of this research a small group of stakeholders who were involved with the school were interviewed. The stakeholder group were selected based on previous research (Metcalfe, 2009) as the group used previously represented some key stakeholders and they generated some comprehensive responses, experiences and rationales in relation to the research. However with this case study school no such group existed so a small group who represented a fairly diverse range of stakeholders were selected, which consisted of people in roles similar to my previous research as I found that this group was fairly representative in the field in which I was planning my research. Interviews were planned for the small group who included: the Headteacher, extended school co-ordinator, parent, Governor, local ward Councillor, Integrated Children’s Centre Manager and 2 representatives from the School Council. Initial plans had included more School Council members but it became problematic to gather them all together for one interview session. Therefore it was decided to focus on people more closely linked through their roles in connection to the school as they represented the school and community earlier defined – the community of families that send their children to Beachstream.
The school and stakeholders had a history of working closely together. Access to the school and the stakeholders was readily achievable as they were often in school. The headteacher and stakeholders often got involved with new initiatives and had a positive working relationship with many multi-agency staff; this made access to the stakeholder group easier. It would have proved interesting to interview and work with more members from the community, however on this occasion as a researcher I was strongly governed by time and resources. Therefore the focus of the research was on the stakeholders referred to and how they responded to the school driving its approaches forward and how the key players developed their roles by getting the views of the school staff and stakeholders involved. A further study could have examined more closely the involvement, role and opinions of wider community members at some other time.

After the first round of interviews it became obvious that design of the study needed changing. Initially plans were to conduct a round of interviews, bring the group together to discuss the findings and present them with a framework which represented individual positions. From there it was intended to observe the forward planning process that developed as a result of the group reflecting on the anonymised visual framework, follow this up with further individual interviews and a final group discussion session in order to examine what learning had taken place and what actions had been taken in light of the previous findings, if any. However, in response to themes that were highlighted during the initial interviews in relation to the FAST programme the research and interview processes were adapted. Due to the strength of the theme around the FAST programme that emerged from the interviews the opportunity arose to embed a smaller case study around the FAST programme into the thesis. This allowed for more in-depth interviews with an LA officer and two of the stakeholders about the FAST programme and the role it played in enabling the school to become increasingly community oriented. It was also useful in assisting with
answers to the research questions as stakeholders were able to give examples through their experience of the programme which provided evidence for this research. During each of the interviews the stakeholders were prompted for more detailed responses where possible. Their answers were probed in order to gather as much information as possible. This supported the further feedback sessions as it allowed the stakeholders to contemplate the differing responses of individuals and question the framework which highlighted the individual positionings thus presenting a challenge as to how better the group could work together as a result of gathering information about colleagues that they had not previously been aware of. The embedded FAST case study also supported the work as it added an additional element that had come about as a result of responses taken from the initial round of interviews.

**Information relating to Families and Schools Together (FAST)**
The purpose of this embedded case study was to look in more detail at one particular aspect of the school’s delivery of extended provision and the role it played in developing the community-oriented school - in this instance the FAST programme - which was emerging as a new way of working co-productively and from an asset-base by recruiting and training parents, family and community members. This focus was to gain more of an insight into the role FAST played in developing the community-oriented school. The LA lead officer for FAST was interviewed along with two members of the original stakeholder group – the Extended Schools Co-ordinator and the Integrated Children’s Centre Manager – both of whom were heavily involved in the design and delivery of the FAST programme at Beachstream. The full set of interview questions for both the LA and FAST interviews can been seen in the Appendix (Appendices 10 and 11). It was intended that findings from these interviews were to be fed back to the wider stakeholder group as a way of informing the future delivery of the FAST programme and also as a discussion point as to how the group could explore the
key areas of developing a co-productive and asset-based approach to their continued delivery of extended provision. As this work formed a smaller, embedded case study within a larger piece of research interviews were limited to the small group as they played a key role in the development of the programme and the links with the parents and community who the project was being aimed at. Qualitative methods formed the focus of the study:

We conduct qualitative research because we need a complex, detailed understanding of the issue. This detail can only be established by talking directly to people, going to their homes of places of work, and allowing them to tell the stories unencumbered by what we expect to find or what we have read in the literature. (Creswell, 2007, p.40)

The research engaged in depth with stakeholders from the one school as a way of exploring whether the understanding of the stakeholders could be changed. Qualitative work supported the engagement of individuals in this instance, quantitative research did not lend itself quite so readily as qualitative research in this case study. I was looking at ways of developing an understanding about a particular school: “…where one seeks to understand people and their ways, numbers and statistical analyses are of little real value.” (Robson, 2007, p.21) I chose to collect my data through interviews on the school site wherever possible:

Qualitative researchers tend to collect data in the field at the site where participants’ experience the issue or problem under study. They do not bring individuals into a lab…This up-close information gathered by actually talking directly to people and seeing them behave and act within their context is a major characteristic of qualitative research. (Creswell, 2007, p.37)

I chose to conduct a case study as I felt that it provided a “…unique example of real people in real situations” (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007, p.253). Robson (2007, p.27) provides a useful definition:
...a case study is the study of a case...Cases are selected because they are, in some way, interesting or important...case studies have a wide variety of data collection methods with perhaps interviews and observation, both participant and non-participant, being the most common.

The flexibility of the approach and the opportunity to carry out a study in more depth (Robson, 2007, p.27) has proved to be advantageous in this work. However, the flexibility also proved to have disadvantages as the study design had to be modified and altered in line with events and occurrences which caused issues around deadlines at times (Robson, 2007, p.28). The case study was carried out over two years, (see Appendix 2) as the research methodology involved working with different stakeholders and their rationales and policy viewpoints over a period of time. The study was taken from an ‘idiographic perspective’ (Willig, 2001, p.70) as it was concerned with one particular case, rather than a number of general cases, with a focus on its particularity. This was also an ‘intrinsic case study’ (Willig, 2001, p. 73) as it presented an interesting research topic; the school states that it is committed to developing community work and therefore this case study offered a chance to see this work developing under favourable conditions.

The case study survey method is mainly concerned with the analysis of qualitative evidence in a reliable manner. The method enables the reviewer to note the various experiences found in each policy study and then to aggregate the frequency of occurrence of these experiences. (Yin and Heald, 1975, p.372)

The plan was to see what evidence could be gathered from the case study and how that could be shared with the stakeholders at later feedback sessions: “We expect an inquiry to be carried out so that certain audiences will benefit...to help persons toward further understanding.” (Stake, 1978, p.5) This was in order to explore more about this particular instance – how do these stakeholders, linked to this partnership, working with this school share or not share rationales around the extended schools agenda?
**Beachstream – the case study school**

The case study school is an amalgamation of two primary schools resulting in a new build which opened in 2006, for the purposes of this research it shall be referred to as Beachstream. The school was created as a purpose built large community primary (with Nursery) extended school and opened in September 2006. It is situated in the northwest of England, approximately 10 miles north of the nearest city centre. The town has a population of over 30,000 and is close to both rural and urban areas, with two major motorways bordering the town. Capital money for the new school came from the Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC) and Sure Start. The school appointed an ‘Extended School Co-ordinator’ to co-ordinate and ensure delivery of an extended programme of services and activities for local children, young people, families and communities. The school is situated in an area of disadvantage but the headteacher and extended school co-ordinator in particular are keen to develop an asset-based approach to their delivery of extended provision, capitalising on the positive aspects and links they have established with their local communities through a variety of means. The school, through the work of the headteacher, the extended school co-ordinator and the links with the Children’s Centre on site have developed substantial extended provision and considers itself to have good links with its community:

> When you look at [our] parent surveys... you get a really great feel of how our community appreciates the school putting that effort into actually having that facility for their children. I think it shows that we care about our community as schools and as other services as well and that the coming together of services on this sight has actually made that very clear, that it is not just a school it is a group of agencies coming together to work for the benefit of our community... *(Headteacher)*

There is a well-established and sustainable variety of extended provision already on offer through the school and in the local area as the extended school co-ordinator now also coordinates provision for a number of schools in the local area through a hub approach. This includes a large number of study support activities and holiday provision delivered in partnership with other local providers throughout the year, both on and off site. A number of
other agencies provide services for families and the local community on site but are also signposted to where necessary. Community use of the school is encouraged and made affordable through subsidised sessions where required. Attendance and attainment of the pupils is also regularly monitored and the impact of extended provision is highlighted as a way of gathering evidence to support the increased development of this way of working.

The main reason for choosing this school is that it was one of the earlier providers of extended provision in the Borough and it is significantly more community oriented than many others across the Borough. Therefore it is a purposive sample. The school regularly reviews its provision and works hard to develop its links with the community. The school has made significant moves towards the co-production of its services and activities by actively encouraging inclusive ways of working with the local community. They hold regular open days and events which provide opportunities for local consultation and have established partnership boards which include local providers, agencies, parents and community members. They are also keen to develop co-production further as a way of increasing the sense of ownership and belonging within the local community. The sample also has an element of convenience as the school is located within the LA and so provided easier access for my research purposes.

**Methods**

For the purpose of this research the interviews were used in order to gain a better understanding of how Beachstream was working towards becoming increasingly community oriented in its’ delivery of extended services and activities. The interviews provide useful opportunities to prompt or explore questions and answers in more detail and then compare and contrast answers given to the same questions.
The interview is a flexible tool for data collection, enabling multi-sensory channels to be used: verbal, non-verbal, spoken and heard. The order of the interview may be controlled while still giving space for spontaneity, and the interviewer can press not only for complete answers but also for responses about complex and deep issues. (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007, p.349)

This assisted in determining the positioning of the stakeholders interviewed in relation to the research questions and aim of this work. Using interviews also allowed the challenging of assumptions on a first hand basis during the interview process - by closely examining responses given during interviews it could be demonstrated to individuals how their responses complement or differ significantly from the colleagues they perceive to be working with to achieve the same goal. "It is an unusual method in that it involves the gathering of data through direct verbal interactions between individuals." (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007, p.351). Robson, (2007, pp.77-78) listed some of the advantages and disadvantages of using interviews as a research tool. The most relevant of these that occurred whilst conducting this research are listed below:

The face-to-face situation gives you the opportunity to develop empathy with the interviewee, which can help in getting better, fuller, responses and increase the chance that they will take the questions seriously...this also gives you the chance of assessing the value of answers, through non-verbals, throw away comments, etc.

It can be difficult to keep on topic...they usually need to be taped, followed by lengthy transcription and analysis. They are subject to bias (e.g. interviewees are likely to say what they think you want to hear, or puts them in a good light).

With one of the main research aims being the exploration of asset-based provision the questions had a focus on any positive thoughts or experiences the interviewees may have had relating to their work or involvement with the school and the community. Each of the interviews were planned to begin with some scene-setting at the beginning in order to engage the interviewees as it was intended to provide them with a few moments to reflect and enable them to list some of the joint initiatives that have taken place between the
school and the community in recent years. It was also used to help to encourage a positive angle from which to begin the interviews as everyone would be encouraged to share their experience of when things were working well for them as individuals. Extended schools will generally develop in a particular way or be driven in a specific direction according to the perceptions and understandings of their leaders and the research aimed to examine how much (if at all) the stakeholders were involved in this development and also whether or not the local community were recognised and encouraged to have a role in this development.

A pilot study had been completed prior to this research, using a specimen set of interview questions (see Appendix 12) but it became apparent that much more detail would be needed for this research. The questions were re-written and purposely closely linked in order to allow them to follow on well from each other, edited, tailored to the correct audience and an additional set produced in order to ensure they were accessible to the younger members of the School Council, without differing significantly to the version for the adults (Appendices 3/4 and 10/11).

Interviews were conducted with a small group of stakeholders: the Headteacher, extended school co-ordinator, parent, Governor, local ward Councillor, Integrated Children’s Centre Manager and 2 representatives from the School Council. All interviews were conducted in the school’s community room during the school day, with the exception of the Governor and the local ward Councillor, who were interviewed at pre-determined locations around their work commitments. Everyone that was interviewed was given a copy of the interview questions for reference. The questions were aimed at exploring how closely the school and the community worked together. This included probing for examples of activities, joint working, joint planning and a scaling exercise to establish where each of the stakeholders felt the school was in terms of being a community oriented school. Open questions were used to encourage stakeholders to both recall and process their answers. Some questions required
more depth information and were funnelled through the use of prompts and probing to extract more detailed responses.

Once the first round of interviews was completed, a feedback session was planned to share information gathered around the positionings of the stakeholders and discuss key issues that had arisen. The purpose of the feedback session (both the first and second sessions) was to share information and allow stakeholders to reflect on this information, this was then to be interpreted in the findings chapter of this thesis. As mentioned earlier, the interview process illuminated a strong theme around the FAST programme (Middlesex University, 2013, p.1) which was in its infancy at Beachstream. Such was the strength of this common theme with its focus being around working co-productively, identifying and working with people as assets within the community that it complemented the work of the larger case study and the opportunity was taken to embed a smaller secondary case study of FAST into the thesis. Three additional interviews were conducted in order to explore the significance of the programme and the role it played in developing the community-oriented school. These interviews were used to gather relevant information around key incidents that occurred (both positive and negative); and discover what learning had come from these incidents and how it was used to solve practical problems and develop broad principals or ways of working. It was intended to use the data and evidence collected to support earlier interviews and group discussions and observations.

The use of these interviews helped to clarify positionings and raised key areas for discussion in relation to areas for development for all the stakeholders. Stakeholders were encouraged to answer questions relating to their experiences and interpretations of real-life events that they could mark by the occurrence of specific incidents. This proved to be an effective way of gaining an insight into how the FAST programme was working, how it linked into the
aspects of asset-based and co-productive working that was being researched and the role it
played in developing the community-oriented school in this study. The sessions finally
concluded with the group discussion (as planned) in the form of a second stakeholder
feedback session in order to share some of the learning that had been highlighted by the
two stakeholders interviewed and examine the learning that had taken place and actions
that had been taken in light of the previous findings.

**Data collection and analysis**

Data was collected through the use of interviews, notes from the interviews and
transcriptions from the interview process as well as notes from the two feedback sessions
with the stakeholders. All interviews were recorded on a Dictaphone; notes were taken
during each of the interviews, recordings comments and responses made by the
stakeholders. The feedback sessions were also recorded on a Dictaphone and notes were
made to accompany the recordings. Interviews, notes and data collected have been
analysed by themes. Other options for analysis of data considered were; question by
question, overall thematic analysis, or working through the responses participant by
participant. Analysing the interviews by theme supported the positioning of each of the
stakeholders and enabled me to see whether or not any other common themes emerged.
These were then analysed alongside the themes which were highlighted in the literature
review, i.e. recognition and building upon assets within the local area; the development of
cooproduction and ensuring that the extended provision is moving towards becoming more
community-oriented. The data gathered was used to identify the underlying constructions of
the stakeholders and then plotted that onto a framework according to the positions they
hold. The framework was used as an aide to help stakeholders understand their position in
relation to that of others and is described in some detail below.
In previous papers (Metcalfe 2008, 2009) a simple diagram has been used as a framework to illustrate the positioning of different rationales gathered through research. This has proved to be an extremely useful way of demonstrating the outcomes of interviews in relation to positioning, at a glance. This also proved to be an extremely useful tool whilst conducting research and interviews for this work as it provided a visual representation to the stakeholders being interviewed as individuals and was a key discussion point when presented in an anonymised fashion to the stakeholders as a group. Below is the skeleton of the framework which was used as a starting point for plotting responses from the individual stakeholders after interview;

**Fig.1. Framework Skeleton**
For the purpose of this research a framework was created using four simple headings (or themes). ‘School led’ and ‘Community led’ forming one axis, then ‘Asset-based’ and ‘Deficit-based’ forming the other axis. These definitions were plotted around an axis to create a framework. Stakeholders who placed a heavy focus in their answers on things being school led were placed higher up on the ‘y’ axis. Responses that were more around community led activities and priorities placed them further down the ‘y’ axis. Positioning in relation to asset or deficit-base was depicted depending on the answers and responses given during interviews and based on the definitions provided during the literature review (Eloff and Ebersohn, 2001, p.149). Stakeholders whose answers appeared to focus on the ‘doing to’ elements were positioned towards the deficit area – the left of the ‘x’ axis, whereas those whose answers appeared to focus on the ‘doing with’ elements were placed towards the asset area - further to the right of the ‘x’ axis. The stakeholders were placed onto the framework in the position that their responses most closely aligned to in relation to the definitions taken from the literature review. This created an evidence based interpretation of their responses.

The purpose behind this framework was to demonstrate a broad understanding and portrayal of their positionings, it was not intended to be a precise and definitive model. The criteria for the positioning of different individuals is based on information taken from the literature reviews as well as my own judgement based upon the individual stakeholder’s responses. The positionings are based upon their responses at interview and triangulated with definitions provided through the literature reviews. The framework was presented to the stakeholders as an anonymised framework which allowed them to see where everyone had been placed in relation to the four headings (or themes). Interpretational placings based on the information gathered from the interviews, including notes made and analysed through
the interview process were then used to stimulate further responses and discussions from the group.

By analysing the transcripts of the interviews, plotting the stakeholders on the framework and by reviewing literature available an understanding of how and why different information and outcomes appear is demonstrated. This helps to enhance the credibility of the research produced. By completing the research in this way it will assist in “...providing insights not otherwise apparent...[with] the ultimate goal...not to merge differing views, but to build knowledge by extending an explanatory and predictive reach” (Bennett, 1997, p. 101). Some of the stakeholders appeared to demonstrate a more deficit-based approach when plotted on the framework - this proved a useful discussion point when sharing positioning with the stakeholder group as it triggered questions from individuals. This also enabled me to explore the different perspectives presented by the stakeholders through their comments and thoughts that were captured during the interview and also to build on the knowledge of myself and others who share an interest in this field. More information on the effect and impact of this framework is discussed in the findings section later where the framework is referred to as a tool for the stakeholders to develop plans around future provision. The framework provided a visual interpretation of the stakeholders’ positionings, allowing them to make links between each other and to see both their position and the positions of the people they work alongside and serve. This framework was of particular use in this case study as the research focussed exclusively on qualitative data and allowed the data to be analysed in a format which was helpful and clear to interpret and share with others.

The information gathered has been triangulated, using “…multiple methods, data sources and researchers to enhance the validity of research findings.” Mathison (1998, p.13). This
was done by analysing the information from the interviews and feedback sessions and comparing the responses of the different stakeholders, as well as relating their responses to the information and definitions gathered through the wide reaching literature reviews. Whilst conducting the research the use of triangulation was beneficial in that “…triangulation may not only be used to examine the same phenomenon from multiple perspectives but also to enrich our understanding by allowing for new or deeper dimensions to emerge”. Jick (1979, p. 604) This helped to support the understanding of the data produced and the emergence of themes and issues that arose that had not been anticipated, thus supporting explanations of how and why different information and outcomes appeared and helped to enhance the credibility of the research produced.

**Positioning of the researcher and trustworthiness of data**

For the purpose of this research the positioning of a supporter of the extended schools agenda approach as outlined by the DfES (2007) has been adopted. This relates back to my previous role within the LA which was to work with schools to develop and roll out this agenda prior to 2010. Many schools within my LA still continue to value and deliver their extended provision, despite no longer being monitored, evaluated or funded in the same way as they were previously. That helps my confidence in my role as a supporter of the agenda. I believe that the underlying principles of the agenda aimed at increasing the life chances, opportunities and experiences for children, young people, families and communities are one of the more positive ways of addressing issues around poverty and disadvantage.

For the purposes of this research the position of Insider / Outsider has also been adopted. As an employee of the LA it is expected that I will work with stakeholders from within the LA. However, this research required me to work with members of the local community with
whom I have previously had no connections. The research has been conducted from a personal rather than professional perspective. In terms of being an 'Insider' I am familiar with the school and some of the stakeholders but have examined the functional response to the development of a different way of working.

Insider research is research carried out by someone who, prior to the research, has already got some role or position in the setting or organization that is the focus of the research. (Robson, 2007, p. 104)

There are particular implicit domains and perspectives that as an insider I am already subconsciously aware of. As Robson (2007, p. 105) suggests, this indicates that “You will have both formal and informal knowledge of the [school / stakeholders] helping you to avoid pitfalls that an outsider might not.” However, this also raises some ethical issues. As a researcher it was necessary to be clear with the school and the stakeholders that the findings gathered could be shared amongst the rest of the group at a later date, as a tool for them to develop the ways of working and strengthen the delivery of the group if they chose to do so. Decisions would also need to be considered as to which bits would be helpful and constructive to share at a later date, and which may be counter-productive.

Trustworthiness of the data was also given consideration as some of the stakeholders were already familiar with me and my role in a professional capacity. Therefore there was a possibility that some of the responses given during the interviews and feedback sessions could have been what the stakeholders thought they should be saying in terms of what they thought the LA may want to hear, as opposed to how they truly felt or what they truly believed. This was dealt with by regularly reaffirming the position my role as a researcher, not a LA representative and by analysing the data gathered, checking for inconsistencies in response or other issues that arose. There was also the possibility that the younger
members being interviewed (School Council group) may have felt they had to provide answers that were ‘correct’ or would please the adults. Consideration was given to this risk as it potentially meant that some of the interview responses may not have been truly authentic. However the group were consistently encouraged to say what they thought not what they considered others wanted to hear. It is acknowledged that there are limitations to this research, as the stakeholders may not fully trust me as a researcher so the grounds for the research and what the work would be used for were communicated often and as clearly as possible.

The ‘Outsider’ part of my role in this process, related to me conducting this work as a researcher, not an LA employee. The positioning as an ‘Outsider’ was adopted when it came to working with some of the stakeholders in this research – the children, young people, families and communities, as these were a group of stakeholders that I had not had any prior involvement with or worked with before. This role required me to step outside my domain and communicate my anonymity as an outsider which was perhaps difficult for some of the stakeholders initially to comprehend. It was also necessary to try to understand the positioning of the stakeholders in relation to what they were collectively trying to do, exploring their rationales, what exactly they were and how they could be successfully developed from an asset-based beginning, whilst also exploring opportunities for co-production. This required different issues to be taken into account in order to suggest why the rationales were what they were. Having spent time exploring literature relating to extended provision it enhanced the importance of careful consideration around the various positions taken towards extended schools and where I positioned myself in relation to this research. This reaffirmed my decision to position myself as Insider / Outsider as it demonstrated a clear reflection of my true situation.
The interviews have been analysed in terms of responses from individuals and whilst it is hoped the data is valid and trustworthy it will also relate to issues previously discussed around the Insider/Outsider part of my role within this research. The strength of the data collected has helped to determine the validity and trustworthiness of such data. The focus on the case study and the themes that emerged have been used to help develop theories from an analysis of the data collected around the extent to which schools can be community oriented in their extended provision; the extent to which the school and stakeholders are able to recognise and build upon the assets within the local community and the extent to which co-production plays a role in the provision made by the school. It is intended that other schools and researchers could learn from this research in these areas.

**Access and Ethical Issues**

Ethical issues have been addressed by the completion of an ethics application, as it was always intended that interviews would be undertaken with some of the children and young people linked to the school, along with other stakeholders. Guidelines identified by the University of Manchester in relation to ethics and the protocols surrounding interviewing children and young people have been followed and adhered to. All participants were made aware of their right to withdraw at any time. They understood and agreed to take part in the interviews with a full knowledge of what the research is to be used for; by signing consent forms (see Appendices 5-8). The participants’ right to privacy and confidentiality has been acknowledged and agreements signed in relation to sharing only information that has been consented to beforehand.

The main ethical issue in this study related to conducting interviews with a group of children from the school council. They were conducted with parental consent and always with
another adult present. This adult was a representative elected by the school to support the children during the interview process. Other ethical issues related to the challenging of stakeholders' views during the interview process and the feedback sessions as this potentially could have influenced the school and stakeholders to develop in directions they may not previously have considered. Stakeholders were challenged in order to provide more detailed responses but this could have potentially lead them to provide false responses, offering what they thought they should say as opposed to what they wanted to say, as referred to earlier. This issue relates to the positioning of the researcher and the trustworthiness of the data which have previously been referred to. They could possibly have viewed me in my role through the LA as a 'critical friend' not as a researcher, providing answers and responses that they thought an LA colleague may be wanting to hear. Therefore, these distinctions had to be reinforced throughout the interview process to stakeholders.

Limitations
This research took significantly longer than was initially predicted. The initial ideas and plan were written some time ago, the first phase of the fieldwork was conducted within a relatively short timescale. The remaining fieldwork was finished almost 2 years later, which worked well in terms of reflection and progression of initiatives however, a number of changes in policy and funding affected the development of this research and this caused significant delays on a number of occasions. Despite initial clear plans and development of the research design, situations within the UK national and local Government overtook the research progress. With the election of a new Government in England, the extended schools agenda became lost in the bigger scheme of changes taking place within schools. Funding streams were re-designated and ring fences removed. Many schools within my LA had recognised the value of delivering extended provision, but there was no longer a recognised
need for a co-ordinating role within the LA and so the post ceased to exist. This had some implications in relation to my positioning as I could no longer be perceived to be an ‘Insider’ as previously and so worked to some in extent in my favour. However the impact of the change in Government in England and also the change in agenda on this research was minimised as the stakeholders were already engaged willing participants in the case study and remained committed to the delivery of their extended provision.

Some limitations occurred in relation to the involvement of all stakeholders in every session. ‘Adult’ stakeholders were all at work during the daytime and so were unable to attend a joint feedback session during normal working hours. This was addressed by conducting the feedback sessions at the end of the school day; however this meant that the School Council members were unable to attend either feedback session. There may have been a further opportunity to conduct another feedback session with the School Council members present but this would have delayed the wider stakeholder group meeting. This could have potentially caused a gap in the data but after analysing the interviews it became apparent that the responses provided by the School Council members did not add too much to the overall research on this occasion. Their responses were limited in detail and their understanding of the way the school and the community linked was not readily apparent during interview. They took some encouragement initially to respond to questions by the teaching assistant who was with them and did not engage as readily in the process as the other stakeholders, possibly because this was a new and different experience for them.

This potential hole may have had implications for the trustworthiness of the data but after considering the responses in terms of value to the overall work it was felt that by not including the group in this feedback session it would not impact on the integrity of the data.
Their responses had not added a significant amount to the overall work and they did not appear to be wholly independent contributions. Therefore in order to minimise the impact on the feedback sessions a decision was made not to include them in further feedback sessions and to hold feedback meetings at the end of the school day. Despite arranging feedback sessions at the end of the day it still proved difficult to get all the stakeholders to attend the sessions. The extended schools agenda, whilst still prominent in Beachstream, was no longer an English Government target and so twilight feedback sessions did not take priority for some stakeholders over other work. However, after some negotiations the feedback sessions were completed with good stakeholder representation which enabled the research process to continue effectively.

With the School Council members no longer involved in the feedback sessions there were some concerns about the extent to which stakeholders are involved in co-production. However the School Council members were younger members of the whole group; had it been possible to conduct interviews with older members of the group then it was possible that their answers would have been different and the contribution they made to the process would have been different also. The younger members were chosen by the school as the older members were unavailable due to a pre-planned school visit which had not been communicated when interview dates and times were set. It could be that further work with the School Council members may form part of another study at a later date but unfortunately on this occasion this was a significant limitation that it became necessary to accept.

The LA in this study has scored very highly on the Indices of Deprivation for a number of years. Poverty has increased, life expectancy has reduced and the town has endured far too
many negative episodes of publicity in the media, both locally and nationally, through newspaper publications, ‘fly-on-the-wall’ documentaries and recent court cases. Previously, this promotion and celebration of our deprivation has served the Borough well in terms of attracting external funding but many argue that there is little to show for it. Direction at a strategic level has floundered, lacking clarity and forward planning, missing many significant opportunities as other surrounding towns flourished. This confusion over direction links to a conveyor belt of senior postholders moving into and out of the town as various situations arose and the reputation of the Borough diminished.

The LA was amongst the biggest losers in Government funding in England from 2010. Cuts to the council of £95million have been implemented to date (2014) with a further £51million to be found by 2016. These cuts have resulted in the Integrated Children’s Centre Manager posts being placed at risk on at least 2 occasions, as well as being restructured also on at least 2 different occasions. This has impacted on the study in that it has delayed the process of research; some of the interviews had to be delayed, due to changes in roles and increased responsibility (and therefore less time for interviews) and at one point there was uncertainty around whether or not the research process could be completed as planned with new colleagues as such colleagues would have been unfamiliar with processes at Beachstream and therefore only able to make limited contributions due to inexperience in this setting. Fortunately the original list of stakeholders remained engaged in the case study, which was a significantly positive aspect to the research process.

Despite the removal of funding ring-fencing the extended school co-ordinator’s post at Beachstream was retained as the headteacher (who line-managed the post) remained committed to the development of extended provision and services in his school. However,
once the initial interviews had been completed the extended school co-ordinator went off on maternity leave. This caused an additional unforeseen delay in the research process as the post was not back-filled and so delayed some of the interviews and feedback sessions. Similarly changes in role within the LA and the lead person heading up the FAST Programme also caused delays in the interviewing process as there were authority led discussions taking place around the consideration of rolling out the FAST Programme and identifying other potential schools to take part in the programme. It may have been helpful to interview additional stakeholders or even consider leaving these two stakeholders out of the further research process. However it was decided to wait for the return of the extended school co-ordinator and then resume the research as their contribution to the whole of the case study was of great interest and significance. It merely meant there was a delay in the completion of the research process.

Taking all the above limitations into consideration, the strength of the design remained significant as all the stakeholders were initially keen to be involved and dedicated to the focus of the research area. The sample size could have been argued to have been relatively small but capacity and time were significant influencers of the design. This research was conducted alongside my full time job and increasingly responsible senior management workload. The study vied for attention alongside local authority redundancy, efficiency, streamlining and restructuring priorities within my job, which had not previously been an issue, as well as significant personal issues and close family bereavements. All these factors contributed to a delay in the gathering of fieldwork and data. However my commitment to the research remained as did the commitment to the extended schools agenda within Beachstream, which meant that the impact on the case study was minimised and it helped to ensure the continuity of the research.
Chapter 4 – Findings

This chapter is organised into sections according to the different themes that emerged during the fieldwork. This includes the setting of the context; information gathered during interviews; the FAST case study and evidence gathered during feedback sessions. The fieldwork consisted of interviews with the stakeholders; an initial group feedback session; a second round of interviews with a different group which had a focus around the FAST Programme, (a common theme which was identified in the findings and as a result became a smaller, embedded case study); and a second group feedback session. This chapter concludes with a findings summary, which leads on to the next chapter where the findings are responded to by answering and addressing the research questions in more detail.

The interviews and feedback sessions varied in their depth and detail. The interviews ranged from approximately 20 minutes to almost one hour. The questions for the first round of interviews (Appendix 3 and 4) worked well in that they allowed the interviewees to talk at length and in detail about topics relating to the questions. The same questions were asked of each stakeholder during the first round of interviews albeit with certain simplifications for the School Council group. The School Council group provided somewhat limited responses; this reflected the fact that their time in school had been relatively short and they weren’t always aware of the bigger picture as the parents and other stakeholders were. The School Council group also attended the interview with a teaching assistant, who they often looked to for direction or clarification as to whether or not their answers to the questions ‘right’. As referred to earlier, this seeking of clarification had been somewhat expected, however the teaching assistant encouraged the children to say what they wanted to say, without worrying about saying the ‘right’ thing so earlier concerns around trustworthiness of responses were not an issue. The teaching assistant reassured them and encouraged them to express their own opinions but as mentioned, due to the age of the children (Year 3) they
weren’t always quite sure what to say and their responses were limited in depth and detail and so their contributions did not necessarily add a great deal to the overall research. However, they did provide some useful answers and it was interesting that many of these answers were reflected in more detailed comments given by other stakeholders who were also interviewed, which provided some interesting themes when comparing findings from interviews. During the second set of interviews, once again each stakeholder was asked the same questions during interview, although these then had a focus around the FAST programme. What follows is evidence of the different themes that emerged during the fieldwork.

Overview of School’s Position as Scaled by Stakeholders

During the first interview process, all the stakeholders were asked to scale (between 1 and 10 with 10 being the higher score) what they thought was the current position of the school in relation to the school and community acting as equal partners. The idea behind scaling their answers was to see how well they thought things had or were developing and to encourage them to offer ideas and suggestions as to where things needed to further develop or move to next. For ease of reference their scaling responses can be seen below in table form:

Table 2. Scaling Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Scaling 1 – 10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1=low 10=high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended School Coordinator</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Children’s Centre Manager</td>
<td>7/8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Everyone scaled their responses very positively. Throughout the whole interview and feedback process all the stakeholders had responded very positively when questioned about their extended provision and work with the local community but it was useful to be able to record these scaling responses and compare them against each other. Many initial responses were higher and then changed as stakeholders were challenged on their scoring, adding more detailed information to their responses. Given the themes that were already evident whereby the stakeholders more closely linked with the school thought that things were already very positive, the responses and scalings provided by the ward Councillor and the Integrated Children’s Centre Manager appeared to be surprising positive and highly scaled:

I think it [the school] does recognise some of the other organisations that are involved with the work in the community…because I think they have stepped things up…A couple of years ago I would have suggested 5.5/6 but I think at the moment it’s probably a good 7… (Ward Councillor)

I would put it as a 10, it is potentially a 10. I think we are probably a 7 or 8 now because I think we could include more community in it. We did invite more community but they have let us down unfortunately, some came to do the training and then haven’t followed through and done the sessions, others couldn’t attend the training but have bobbed in and supported one or two sessions… (Integrated Children’s Centre Manager)
What was similarly surprising was that, given the postiveness of the responses made by the headteacher and the extended school co-ordinator in relation to engagement with the community they both appeared to be much more cautious in their approach to scaling the work than other stakeholders had been. Prompts were required in order to encourage them to define their responses. The extended school co-ordinator stated she found the exercise difficult:

I would probably rate it different for each lot of people but as a whole it is difficult isn’t it? ...I would probably say a 7 overall because I do think we are a good model and if anyone wanted to come and see how it can be done I think we have got a lot of things going on but with the young people I’d like to get that a bit more off the ground...It’s probably higher, I’m probably not giving it its due I do think we are a good model. (Extended School Coordinator)

A good 7, a strong 7. I have got high expectations of everything...I always see there are places to go and things to do so that is the challenge to have the utopia of provision really...we have been very successful in our extended school provision because it has been a cornerstone of our whole provision we have kept on that journey...it has been up there at the forefront of things...So I think we are a good strong 7 there are things we could do differently, we try things out at school, we are not afraid to try things out... (Headteacher)

A couple of the stakeholders scaled the progress quite decisively as an 11, one of these being a member of the School Council, although no qualifying reasons in their instance were provided, despite prompts from me. The other person who scaled the work highly was the Governor:

I think Beachstream is pretty near perfect I would have to say...11, definitely a 10...you would go a long way before you found a better example of a school that has got clear vision, has the kids’ best interests at heart in the widest sense, works as closely with the community, I mean the school and the community are almost like one and I think if you were to talk to the parents they would say similar sorts of things where the school is growing all the time. (Governor)
Despite the Governor’s concerns over working as ‘equal partners’ when challenged for the scaling exercise she felt that the school was doing extremely well as an ideal in relation to being a community-oriented extended school.

As a continuation of the scaling exercise during the first round of interviews I chose to ask a supplementary question to find out what individuals thought needed to be done or happen in order for their chosen scaled number to increase. This was also to probe for more depth and challenge where possible. So, for those who scaled it as a 7, how could it move towards an 8 or even higher on the scale and so on? With the exception of the School Council everyone was able to suggest ways in which things could be developed or improved, which suggests a willingness to build on the progress already made and grow even further.

Suggestions and responses made by the stakeholders reinforced many comments made previously about what else needed to happen, it was interesting to see how many of them shared similar viewpoints:

I think include some more community partners, maybe a couple of the churches, maybe somebody from the GP service could come over, people who are visual in the community who we don’t necessarily see because we don’t live here or if we do live here we don’t see. (Integrated Children’s Centre Manager)

This is echoed by the ward Councillor:

I think if they truly want to go into a coproduction of extended plans then I think there has to be then a community involvement in the planning of those particular activities...I have been to a few community events where the school could have been represented and said it would like to be represented in what’s going on but nobody has actually turned up. (Ward Councillor)

This similarity of ideas and viewpoints may be as a result of previous joint discussions at some point in time, however if this was the case it was not referred to when further challenges were made, and nothing was said that would indicate that fact. It was interesting
however to find that the majority of the stakeholders shared similar viewpoints, concerns and areas for development. This was further evidenced when the understandings of engagement evidenced by the stakeholders was also explored.

**Understandings of engagement**

Throughout the fieldwork, what emerged was that all the stakeholders shared a general consensus of opinion, they all felt that the school worked well with the local community, but their understandings of engagement differed somewhat. They shared a consensus around specific activities, but when it came to discussions around engagement of the community in forward-planning as equal partners the views began to differ more obviously.

Each of the stakeholders referred to specific initiatives that they felt clearly demonstrated the engagement of the school with the community, although some hesitance around this emerged from one stakeholder in particular. The responses from all of the stakeholders, with the exception of the ward Councillor, referred to two specific initiatives which they viewed as being examples of the school and the community coming together – The FAST programme, which will be explored in more detail later and ‘Beachstream Cares’. ‘Beachstream Cares’ is a week each year where the children throughout the school go out into the community and help community members.

The school (staff, pupils and volunteers) supports members within the local community or invites the local community (often older members within the community) to participate in activities within the school. Nobody referred to the community leading the event or activities
and after probing for more detail, everyone mentioned that it was school-led, even down to
the selection of the dates of its occurrence. Everyone that referred to ‘Beachstream Cares’
week spoke very positively about how the work between the school and the local community
had developed, how well it was received and how much both the school and the community
looked forward to it as it was a good way of bringing everyone together. They viewed this as
engagement between the school and the community:

We do all sorts of things like that within the community... they was only here the
other week with the year 6 participating in a Beachstream Cares thing... so again it’s
the community coming together it’s not just my children, my mother its part of the
school as well. So it is that mix of generations. (Parent)

We’ve involved our children in Beachstream Cares week... where we have gone into
the community and we’ve helped with gardening and we have held parties where
other community members and older citizens come into our school...which again
give you that strong feeling of community coming together. (Headteacher)

I think one of the... good ideas that we came up with was Beachstream Cares week
and that was basically a week where the children are asked to show in different
ways to the community that we care. (Extended School Co-ordinator)

‘Beachstream Cares’ obviously has a very high profile in school as it was referred to by
stakeholders as a way of demonstrating that the school is becoming increasingly community
oriented in its’ provision of extended services and activities. It was presented as an example
of engagement between the school and the community however, whilst the school and the
community are both involved in this work, it is wholly initiated by school.

Evidence of the understanding of engagement appears to relate predominantly to the
practical activities that the school delivers to the community. The stakeholders who were
more closely linked to the school, either through their professional role or as direct recipients
of the schools delivery of services - the Headteacher, extended schools co-ordinator,
Governor and the parent, all reflected that they thought the school and the community were
already working in a relatively democratic and inclusive manner. They felt that the school engaged well with the community. But after further probing during interviews and feedback sessions about who the school and stakeholders actually defined the local community as, the responses that emerged showed that all of the above mentioned stakeholders referred to members of the community as being either being parents or Governors. This is highlighted in one of the responses by the Governor below – values are shared but the only reference made to others is about those connected to the school in a ‘professional sense’.

I think the values at Beachstream are really good values and I think they are widely shared by everybody that is involved in a professional sense with Beachstream. (Governor)

There was no discussion around people other than those directly linked to the school (as recipients of the school’s delivery of education) being involved in any democratic or inclusive work or co-productive planning and no evidence was provided as to whether or not this was an area for development in order to improve the engagement with the local community. When challenged about this the stakeholders who commented reverted back to the fact that they already thought they were working in a democratic and inclusive way and continued to refer to the community as parents or Governors:

We have got governors who are members of our community as well so they are always feeding back to us and then we do surveys within school our children and also throughout our community and our parents as well so we have got our fingers on the pulse I feel to a great extent and they seemingly are not coming up with much more than what we are already doing. (Headteacher)

My impression of the school is it is relatively democratic in the way that it works...but the community...are welcome in the school and there are things happening in the community room and stuff like that...I know that the Head at Queensroad Park is going to join the governing body as a community governor so that element of it I suppose is part of the wider community and she will then be involved in some of the decision making that we take at Beachstream. (Governor)

When I am organising things it’s me and school and I’m outreaching so it’s rather than things coming to me it’s me going to them. When I run things it’s based around school rather than based in the community. (Extended Schools Co-ordinator)
It could be argued that whilst these Governing body roles may make up part of the school community they do not truly reflect the wider community. This is highlighted by the local secondary headteacher (Queensroad Park) joining the governing body as a community governor. The secondary school is situated on the outskirts of the estate but the headteacher lives some 40 miles from the local community so it is her role as head of the local school that is seen as the link with the community, as opposed to her taking on the role because she lives within the local community and would be a useful person to represent the voice of local families and residents. Despite challenges during interviews and feedback sessions, no reference was made by the stakeholders to other members of the community such as the residents whose houses bordered the school playing fields, or residents who lived opposite the school as examples of the local community. Therefore it appears that all the stakeholders had an understanding of engagement between the school and the community but in reality this was very school led and involved the school choosing to invite the community to engage when the school decided it was relevant.

**Recognition of assets within the community**

As the interviews and feedback sessions developed, further probing through questions and challenges made it clearer that stakeholders viewed the school as an asset within the community, but despite further questioning and prompts none of the stakeholders were able to identify any assets within the local community that were outside the school. No reference was made to any other assets within the local community, the responses were purely around how the school have supported and brought the local community into the school.

The ward Councillor talked about different initiatives that were ongoing within the local community, but was not able to identify any assets based within the community other than referring to some of the community led projects around regeneration. After further
discussion it appeared that these projects were not generally community led but co-ordinated by ‘key individuals who work professionally within the community’, as well as other agencies and ‘local housing management organisations’.

A common underlying theme had begun to develop between the stakeholders in relation to identifying assets within the community. Their positioning in relation to identifying assets within the local community all appeared to be very similar at this point. All the stakeholders directly involved in the school appear to see themselves as partners with an enhanced level of equality, but no reference is directly made to the local community also being a partner with a similar level of equality and still no mention of the assets and skills that could be built upon from the local community is made. The only reference to using assets and skills from people within the community came from the Integrated Children's Centre Manager, and this related directly to parents becoming assets after they have been involved in one of the prescribed programmes referred to earlier:

As part of FAST the parent volunteers recruited families because there is no better recommendation really than from a parent to a parent because the recommendation has come from somebody who is in the same situation from the same area...there are a lot of positive things that come from having parents as partners... when they come to volunteer, when they want to get involved they may have been through quite a bad experience and they are out the other side so they are a really valuable asset to have as a community member. (Integrated Children’s Centre Manager)

The identification of assets as above once more indicates that again this is school led and focuses around assets being developed as a result of work that the school has initiated. Very little evidence came from the fieldwork about genuine partnership working between the school, stakeholders and the community.
Co-productive working and planning

During the interviews and feedback sessions many challenges were made about the notion of equal partners and how the school and stakeholders perceived that, but the strong theme that prevailed throughout the fieldwork was that whilst the school did work with the local community, everything was school led. The importance of things being school led was clearly highlighted by the Governor who, when asked in more detail if she felt that the local community were included on a democratic and inclusive level was keen to establish that the school’s main focus was around educating the children:

The school...is plainly there to educate the children that come into the school and educate them in the widest sense so educate them obviously around the academic side of things but equally that wider education which encompasses the community and all the kinds of events, particularly parts of sports that I have already talked about and I think that is a very strong thread, a very strong focus within the school for that kind of wider education. (Governor)

The Integrated Children’s Centre Manager referred to a couple of other initiatives that the school has been part of but again these were both school (not community) led. These were Total Place and the Families and Schools Together (FAST) programme. As the interviews progressed, the FAST programme became a strong theme throughout, hence the decision taken to incorporate a smaller, embedded case study around FAST into the fieldwork. However after further questioning about FAST, the programme did not appear to be demonstrating democratic and inclusive co-productive work with the community but with other agencies, little evidence of this way of working was given. Both Total Place and FAST are school and Children’s Centre led programmes that came about as a result of external funding and regional government interest, not something the community themselves had initiated or something that had come about as democratic or inclusive co-productive planning with the local community. Her response when asked again about what it would look like if the school and community were working democratically and inclusively together to co-productively plan for the future was a combination of the two agency led pieces of work:
I think it would look more like housing working with Total Place and with FAST... We had a vision of what we wanted to try and achieve so there were some objectives although they were quite loose initially on what we were trying to do and we had the evidence to prove that what we wanted to do was justifiable, we all agreed that it needed doing and we came together and planned work together, talked about and produced something that is now embedded within the school life of the children and that is completely, we have to be together we can't do it without it being together, I suppose if the children's centre disappeared the school would sort of botch something together that was similar but it has come from working together and that involved health as well and other people that were invited to that so they have all had an input in it to make sure that we weren't just going off and doing what we thought was right we were actually being anchored by the professionals that really know child development and child health inside out as well.

(Integrated Children's Centre Manager)

There are many references here to 'working together' and 'partnership working' but these only relate to the school and other agencies working democratically and inclusively together, not families or the local community. The community and families had no involvement in the establishing or choosing of the initiatives, they became recipients and were invited to be involved in the delivery of the initiatives but were not democratically and inclusively linked in from the inception of the work. When the stakeholders were challenged about this they appeared to be under the impression that they were working with the families and the community by providing things for them, but the community did not necessarily need to be part of the planning and delivery process. This links once more to everything being school led and the level of understanding the stakeholders demonstrated around engagement.

The local ward Councillor once more offered a slightly different viewpoint. He was in favour of developing and strengthening the links in planning and working co-productively between the school and the community but also highlighted other concerns that he felt needed to be taken into consideration by both the school and the community, such as how aspirations on the estate surrounding the school had also risen since the 'new' school had become established:
I think aspirationally we would like the community, the school that serves that community to mutually recognise that there is a fundamental role for that school within that community... some kind of collaboration would be to the benefit of both the community and school... if we are looking at planning and trying to meet the expectations of both the school in terms of education but also the expectations of the community which have now had a raising of their expectations around the quality of education provided at Beachstream... I think that to produce some kind of plan to deal with those changes both in the way that the communities are aware of the on-going problems and as a school but also for the school to communicate that it is dealing with the problems sensibly, satisfactorily and everything is under control... where a community and a school which serves the community can produce some kind of plan so that the school continues to successfully be a part of the community without any withering or reduction of activities. (Ward Councillor)

He appeared to be keen to make sure that the school and community strengthened their links by regularly sharing information and planning together, but when asked in more detail about what he felt was important information that needed to be shared he said he was keen to hear about how the school was dealing with ‘problems’ which he felt related to lack of funding and provision of additional activities for children and families at Beachstream. This, as in the responses by other stakeholders did not relate to co-production. The concern of the Councillor was more about general information sharing than consultation with the local community and similarly again, with the school once more taking the lead. This led on to exploring the ideas behind the levels of equality amongst partners and whether or not the stakeholders thought that was something they were already developing.

**The Notion of ‘Equal’ Partners**

The idea of equal partners provoked some very different responses from the stakeholders. This is where differences in opinion of the stakeholders became clearer and where the FAST programme began to make more frequent appearances as stakeholders talked about the school and community working together and gave an example (FAST) of what sort of activities they felt would help the families to thrive. The Headteacher, extended school co-ordinator and parent genuinely believed that the community were treated as partners with a
similar level of equality and they evidenced this by referring back to examples such as the local community being invited in to school. They also referred to school events and a range of provision on offer in the form of FAST, clubs for children and families within the local community, but in relation to the wider school - the planning and development, holding the same values and such, little evidence was apparent and everything once more appeared to be led and decided by the school.

...we have got things like Beachstream Cares week which is a real success where we have the community coming into school and the school going into the community... we are working on FAST and we have worked on Total Place which again is helping our community get ready for getting their children ready for school and helping families to become stronger units and support children through the school...

(Headteacher)

Has anybody discussed FAST...Families and Schools Together and we are the first school in [the Borough] to champion it. So that brought over 40 families into the school. (Parent)

The examples above continue to support the fact that many things are school led. Anyone can attend or access the provision, so it could be that it is seen as being on offer to ‘equal partners’ but when challenged about the partners being involved in these events through planning and delivery on a similar level of equality, this still didn’t seem to register with many of the stakeholders. The extended school co-ordinator, who it could be argued maintains the closest links between the school and the community and vice versa talked about what the community or parents ‘can be involved in’.

The way we do things for my job is I’ll sit down with [the Headteacher] at the start of every year and we go through the diary and we go through what we think, what the community can be involved with, what parents can be involved with...Basically we go through the whole year’s diary based on the year before and we look at what do we want them to be involved with... (Extended Schools Co-ordinator)
The ward Councillor after further questioning expanded on his earlier response in which he voiced his concerns about the lack of equality in the partnerships between the school and the community, reinforcing the fact that in his opinion everything it still very school led:

I think schools have traditionally thought that they know best and certainly I don’t think this has changed to a certain degree in terms of an extended school, they might have a long teaching professional who comes into coordinate the activities but in the sense that although that person coordinates the activities regardless of where the hub is on behalf of the school and its hub peers within that particular grouping, I still think that though there is a challenge therefore community representatives need to be involved with the planning process... the hub at Beachstream has been pretty much education led and there have been representatives from other schools and from time to time I have been invited... although most of the time I can’t go... would suggest that maybe the other partners need to be represented and should be involved with the hub meeting which obviously is an essential planning function for an extended schools offer. (Ward Councillor)

The responses by the ward councillor highlight the theme that has been running through the majority of the responses so far; everything has been school led, and all the assets that have been recognised in the responses have also focused on the school. The ward Councillor suggests that an equal partnership is still some way off, however he does also state that he hasn’t been able to attend many of the meetings so he is not fully informed of events and is unable to provide an accurate response. However, it is also difficult for schools to develop the ‘equal collaboration between the community and the school’ if partners are not always able to engage and attend where necessary. There is evidence to show that consultation between partners exists but little to show that the partnership can be demonstrated as being equal. This was highlighted once more by the Governor when asked to provide a clear explanation of how she saw the term ‘equal partners’ and why she had difficulties with that phrasing:

I think equal partners, I understand where that is coming from but I think in some sense that is a little bit of a tricky concept because at the end of the day, the school and the people in the school have to take responsibility and be accountable for the education that goes on within that school, that is the primary purpose and that is where we are under public scrutiny via particularly OFSTED for example so in a
The Governor also has an educational background, she holds a senior position within a secondary school in the Borough but does not live within the local community. This may offer some explanation behind her reasoning in relation to the role of equal partners. It may also provide some background as to why the stakeholders who are more closely linked to the school always refer to school led type activities in their responses. However it echoes the point that maybe it is not possible for equal partners to exist within the school and community environment. The Governor refers to the school as having to take responsibility and be ‘accountable for the education’ and also mentions OFSTED and public scrutiny.

Beachstream, like many other schools works under national curriculum restraints and would be investigated if they chose not to follow these guidelines and recommendations. Therefore the notion of equal partners may have to be tempered to a certain extent in order to comply with guidelines, expectations and recommendations laid down by local and national authorities.

The parent very much saw herself as a partner with an enhanced level of equality and felt very involved in the processes and events of the school. She had become involved in the delivery of the FAST programme, and cited this as an example of how the school and the community were acting as strong partners. However, it would seem that in her responses the parent saw herself as an equal partner in her role within school, not necessarily as a parent or a community member.

...when they come in we are trying to coach the parents into sitting with the children to eat...we are table coaching as in we are having to whisper into their ears to let them know what they have got to ask their children we are not allowed to take over that parental role... After a certain number of weeks when they have done the 8
week course, it will happen again and we will facilitate it but we want the parents then to run it. (Parent)

The use of ‘they’ and ‘we’ suggests that the parent associated herself more closely with the school than the local community. Therefore the answers she gave during the interview could be slightly swayed towards her role in school and not as a parent, despite being reminded during the interview that she was being interviewed as a ‘parent’. When asked in more detail about whether or not she saw herself as part of the local community or as part of the school in her role as a parent stakeholder she chose to clarify that she did not live on the estate, so she did not class herself as part of the local community in that way, but more closely linked to the school as a partner with an enhanced level of equality.

...I don’t live on the estate, I live just outside the estate...my mother is part of four different clubs on the estate although she doesn’t live on it... (Parent)

When further challenged during the interview and feedback sessions about what else could be done to engage and work jointly with the local community, the stakeholders were keen to focus not so much on the future but on what was already happening. There was already quite a significant amount of community oriented provision and work established, particularly in relation to the FAST Programme and ‘Beachstream Cares’. All those that were more involved with the school on a daily basis – Headteacher, Extended School Coordinator, Parent and Integrated Children’s Centre Manager related to the FAST Programme as something good that was happening and could be built on. The Head Teacher talked of building on things already in place:

I’d like to open it [the school] up again more evenings more than anything...the evenings are within then 6 o’clock framework so it generally stops at 6 o’clock but to me it could go on to 8 o’clock on say three of those evenings and that will help even more cement our place within the community and the standing within that community and see if as not somewhere to fear...I think that is where our journey would go if at all possible really. (Headteacher)
Although everyone acknowledged there was still work to be done at Beachstream in relation to working with the local community, everyone spoke very positively of what was already happening - however once more this was still limited to school led activities. The school led theme proved a constant throughout the fieldwork, but given the policy environment this is possibly to be expected to a certain extent.

**Impact of Policy Environment**

Beachstream was specifically chosen as the case study for this thesis as the Headteacher is committed to the extended schools agenda and is infectiously enthusiastic about engaging with the local community to improve the opportunities, life chances and outcomes for the children and young people who attend Beachstream. This school provided a good case study for examining the extent to which a school can become increasingly oriented in its extended provision. However, the evidence gathered from this fieldwork suggests that even when a school lists this extended provision as one of its’ whole school priorities in its’ development and improvement plans there are certain restraints imposed through policy and accountability frameworks as well as changes in funding streams that can temper even the most committed and enthusiastic of ideals.

Throughout the fieldwork, the recurring theme appeared to be that everything was school led. One of the strong reminders which also appears throughout the fieldwork is that the school is accountable and has to comply with local and national English Government policy:

> I think this particular community oriented extended school has always felt that it had a remit to reach out to the wider community so it has developed a programme of events which have been primarily focused on education and learning...

(Ward Councillor)
This emphasises the work that the school does with the local community but also reinforces the fact that the main core purpose of the school is about education and learning. The importance of keeping that school focus is referred to also by the Governor:

...school has to have that primary focus, that primary role so you couldn’t ever allow yourself to be in the situation where other elements from either the community or for example, the Head of Queensroad Park have an undue influence on things because it suits their particular agenda because it has to be the schools agenda really... for example if you look at the attendance figures, attendance is now really high and really good and above national average. (Governor)

Attendance figures and attainment (amongst many other things) are crucial to the inspection regime that our maintained schools are inspected against. Beachstream make conscious efforts in their work with the local community as well as ensuring that the focus on education and learning remains, this has been recognised by OFSTED:

When we’ve had OFSTED inspections the parents have been very supportive to us because of elements of our extended school and that is one of the elements of it which I think is really successful. (Headteacher)

When we had the last OFSTED we got the outstanding judgement against all the odds really because our attainment wasn’t really good enough, I don’t know whether it would happen under this regime but certainly under the last one and we went for the feedback and the lady inspector, the lead inspector said that we had achieved outstanding and her exact words were ‘because you can do no more’ and at that point I cried. (Governor)

However, the Headteacher also refers to issues relating to funding, where under previous national policies and initiatives funding was allocated to the development of extended services and activities this is now no longer the case and prevents the school and other agencies from delivering services and activities that a need has been identified around:

...if you are constrained with finance and money becomes difficult and you have to make hard choices, it is the edges that get cut instead of the core stuff but I understand that but I think that [the extended provision] has been extremely successful and invaluable... I’d like to see say a Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday where our facilities are used even more than what they are so we have got one
evening now, my vision in the first for four, five, six years would be to be two or three evenings but because of so many cost restrictions and grants which have been taken off people, simply these groups don’t have the money to be able to open up our facilities and as a school I can’t open the facility unless I have the money to do it so it is a catch 22 situation where we are held in a void we are looking at things. (Headteacher)

Many other schools across the LA now only deliver basic extended provision, usually offering childcare before and after school but nearly the same amount of provision as previously when there was specific funding allocated for this work. Schools continue to signpost to provision elsewhere and relations between schools who worked across hubs has significantly improved. The role of the extended school co-ordinator has now all but vanished from within the LA, however Beachstream has remained committed to the importance of this role and has retained this post within their hub.

**Role of Extended School Co-ordinator**

Throughout the interviews and feedback sessions the role of the extended school co-ordinator was constantly referred to. When the school was reorganised the post was created to ensure that the school was able to deliver extended services and activities:

> It [the extended provision] has been successful because we have created a management structure for it and its been pushed by the leadership of this school and the leadership of our partners in the school as well... because of our structure again we have got time to do that because that staff member isn’t a teacher, they are not in the classroom so they haven’t got all that workload to worry about, it’s not a piecemeal job which it is in most schools. (Headteacher)

The post was created and the extended school co-ordinator now works on behalf of a hub of schools to co-ordinate extended provision for the children, young people and families within the local community. This role is solely dedicated to that work, however that also means that there is nobody else to take responsibility for the work should the extended school co-
ordinator not be able to do so – this will be discussed in more detail later. When challenged about how the extended school co-ordinator thought the school could move from a ‘7’ to an ‘8 or 10’ during the scaling exercise the extended school co-ordinator stated: “I’d need a team. Other schools have family workers as well.” Further issues about the provision that had been started by the extended school co-ordinator which then failed to continue were highlighted when the extended school co-ordinator went off on maternity leave and the delivery of sessions ceased to exist. These issues were highlighted during the feedback sessions and second interviews when the FAST programme was referred to in more detail.

The extended provision as a whole was seen as effective and wide-ranging as can be seen in comments made by the Headteacher and other stakeholders. The other theme relating to the school’s extended provision which ran throughout the interviews and feedback sessions was the FAST programme. Further information on the importance of this programme to the school and the contribution it makes in relation to developing assets and opportunities for co-production now follows.

**FAST Case Study**

One of the main points that was continuously referred to during both interviews and feedback sessions was the mention of the ‘Families And Schools Together’ (FAST) programme. This appeared to be a core part of the extended schools delivery work which was new and considered by the stakeholders to be effective in that it brought the school and the community together and addressed some of the issues in supporting families to thrive. The school itself delivered a large range of extended provision and activities, which had been in existence for some time and remained part of the school’s longer term plan. The FAST programme was something relatively new which also seemed to have a focus around
asset-based provision and as it was a programme that brought families and schools together it would seem that there were elements of co-production also incorporated into the work, which appeared to make it all the more relevant to this study.

In FAST, parents and professionals work in partnership together to support one another in order the help every child succeed. The name of this programme, Families and Schools Together suggests the fundamental values of co-production. (Middlesex University, 2013, p.1).

When the stakeholders were interviewed, they all spoke highly and with enthusiasm about the FAST programme; how it was starting to play a key role in changing things for local families and parents. The FAST programme has been developed in the UK by Dr Lynn McDonald and is based on a programme first developed in 1988 in America. Additional information about the FAST programme can be found in Appendix 13. The extended school co-ordinator and the Integrated Children’s Centre Manager played key roles in the FAST programme as it was run under the extended services arm of the school. A great deal of joint working had already taken place between these two colleagues to increase participation and involvement of local families and communities in school and Children’s Centre life so whilst the previous English Government’s target and funding around extended services has ceased to exist, the provision of extended services still played a key role in Beachstream’s agenda. It became a welcome and natural progression for them to offer to host the FAST pilot when approached by the LA.

**Responses from Local Authority and FAST Interviews**

What follows are responses taken from an interview with an LA officer which was conducted in order to provide some background information into the FAST programme at Beachstream and what it entails and also information taken from the responses of two of the original stakeholders who were interviewed about the FAST programme – the extended school co-
ordinator and the Integrated Children’s Centre Manager. Interview questions for both the LA officer interview and the FAST interviews can be found in Appendices 10 and 11.

The programme at Beachstream involves recruiting 40 families, each of these families has to have a child aged between 3 and 5 years, the ages of the other children in the family does not matter too much, however, the focus of the programme is that they must have at least one child within the 3-5 age range. These 40 families are then split into 4 hubs, so there are 10 families in each of the FAST sessions:

The 40 families are split into 4 hubs so there are 10 hubs in each FAST session. The hubs are supported by 3 trained FAST leaders and they have to have a trained partner from the school. This will be someone employed by the school, it can be a teacher, teaching assistant, cook, caretaker, anybody employed by the school. Then there has to be a parent partner. The parent partners can’t have a child of the FAST age but have to have a child in the school. These 3 people lead the FAST hub. They are all equal partners in it and they all take part in the sessions. (LA Officer)

The number of families represented a challenge initially to those who were planning to deliver the sessions. The surprise in the take up is evident in the response from the extended school co-ordinator below:

The interesting thing is that as a staff team when you are first approached about the programme you think ‘40 families!’ and that it’s going to be impossible. You put on courses and you put on coffee mornings and you get a handful of parents.

We invited families, mum and dads, to have a brew and sign up. Fill in a questionnaire... that first day we had 47 families who filled in the questionnaires...we had every single member of staff from the kitchen staff to the cleaners, to [the headteacher], teachers, every single member of staff had a tee-shirt on saying “FAST is coming” and on the back it said “ask me about FAST”.

The interesting thing as well was the amount of parents and families who wanted to be involved. The retention rate was really good... the parents kept coming every week wanting to do it...we were getting parents who have never come into the building before...That’s what I found interesting, people stuck at it. (Extended School Co-ordinator)
This response indicates the journey that this person undertook, from the initial doubt around the numbers expected, to the large numbers of questionnaires completed by families at the coffee morning, then the whole staff commitment followed ultimately by the take up and retention rate of families who chose to become involved in the programme and the positive experiences they shared with other families. The programme is heavily scripted with a large manual to follow. Colleagues interviewed were aware of the need to comply with the prescribed programme:

The FAST session is very structured and most of the elements have to be run exactly true to the programme so you can’t leave things out or do things in a different way. (LA Officer)

I think that although FAST is a really prescribed programme, what we didn’t realise from the first time we did it is that we can make it Beachstream’s FAST programme. We went along with the very prescriptive way of doing things without it being flexible whereas now we know we can be flexible. So next time it will feel like we have a bit more ownership of it, and I think that will make a difference because we won’t be worried about getting it as wrong, because we have been through it. (Integrated Children’s Centre Manager)

The Children’s Centre was opened at the same time as the school when it was amalgamated and built on the new site. Other initiatives have taken place over the years however one of the interesting things listed by the Integrated Children’s Centre Manager was the fact that relationships have been built and an awareness of the different roles has been developed. She also felt that the programme was also interesting in that it provided an insight into the background of the families which may not have been accessible by other means. She refers to ‘reports’ that were written some time ago, when questioned more about what sort of reports she referred to information gathered by children’s centres and other agencies such as health visitors that may have been involved with families when the children were much younger.

The before and after evaluations that were done, the questionnaires, gave us a really good insight into the background of the families that were on the FAST programme and because they are not targeted it gave us a snapshot of the families who are coming to Beachstream. That was really good because we got to know a bit
more information that was really current, because a lot of the reports that are out were written two years or a year ago. (Integrated Children’s Centre Manager)

This information was useful in gauging more detail about how the programme had impacted on individuals and families and also as a record for both the school and the children’s centre in terms of individuals who may be accessing the school at a later date.

**Outcomes of the FAST Programme at Beachstream**

For the purposes of the research the stakeholders were asked what they felt were the outcomes of the FAST programme at Beachstream; what were some of the specific incidents for them that occurred during the programme; what the impact of the FAST programme was on the links between the school and the community; what the legacy of the programme would be – what happens next. As the FAST programme had been referred to by all the stakeholders during the first round of interviews and the feedback session one of the key focus areas of the second round of interviews related to the positive and negative aspects of the programme in this instance. More specifically how the outcomes had impacted on relations between the school and the local community:

> It is not negative, I can't think of anything particularly negative about any of it. It has either been positive or an addition to something that is already positive.
>  
> (Integrated Children’s Centre Manager)

The above response appeared somewhat guarded and perhaps not quite as detailed as had been hoped for. The Children’s Centre in this case study has a long established role of working with parents, the Integrated Children’s Centre Manager was not as heavily involved on this occasion due in part to restructures and the reorganisation of her role. Therefore her response may be that she feels there is already a lot of good work going on with families and communities across the school and the Children’s Centre and this was another positive
welcome addition. In contrast, the enthusiasm shown in the response from the extended school co-ordinator is markedly different:

It has had a positive influence. The relationships between the parents and staff on the whole are much better. The parents of the families and the children have improved and just as a whole the relationships are much better. They come in now and say "can I get involved". A few parents have been asked to lead on the next FAST because it is progressive like that. (Extended Schools Co-ordinator)

The extended school co-ordinator felt that the programme had been positive. She felt it was positive because of the improvement in relations between parents and staff, with parents now asking to become increasingly involved. However this also highlights the lack of involvement parents may have felt to date, hence the need to ‘ask’ to become involved and linked to that, the lack of co-productive work already established between the school, parents and local community. The different perceptions of where the positivity lies is also interesting and highlights to some extent where the priorities for each of the stakeholders interviewed lies – people and process. Further information was forthcoming when the stakeholders were prompted in relation to the positive and negatives outcomes of the programme:

It’s the parents. They have got to know the staff in a way you don’t usually get to know them because you are spending a lot of time together. Also... it has broken down that formality barrier which has been a positive. There have been people who have come to FAST who haven't accessed other things and they have come to all of the sessions and then we've not seen them again, which has been interesting. The relationships which have been built within the FAST families have got nothing to do with the school or children or anything else, but friendships and community have been developed. (Integrated Children's Centre Manager)

It has been positive for the staff team. It has brought the staff team closer together, the ones who were on it. It brought people together who would never normally work together and it has picked up on each other’s strength and weaknesses and we have really bonded as a team doing that, which is good. The other positive is the impact on the school and the parent relationships which obviously impacts on the parent and child relationships as well and a lot of the time the parents say "we still do 15 minute special play" which shows that it is still having an impact on them now... (Extended Schools Co-ordinator)
The responses during interview of the Integrated Children’s Centre Manager throughout the case study has always shown a focus towards parents and the work with other agencies. By sharp contrast, the extended school co-ordinator feels that the main positives have been around the staff. They appear to be at the forefront of her responses in this instance. This once more highlights that the school is the main player, with activities being school led which has been the theme that has run throughout these findings so far. However some reference is made to the school and parent relationships and parent / child relationships which prove that those positives have also been recognised:

It has been positive for the staff team. It has brought the staff team closer together, the ones who were on it. It brought people together who would never normally work together and it has picked up on each other’s strength and weaknesses and we have really bonded as a team doing that, which is good. The other positive is the impact on the school and the parent relationships which obviously impacts on the parent and child relationships as well and a lot of the time the parents say “we still do 15 minute special play” which shows that it is still having an impact on them now... (Extended Schools Co-ordinator)

When asked to describe a specific incident, something that made the difference in the whole programme for each of them they were both able to readily provide an example of something which they felt was a key event in the delivery of the programme.

**Specific Incidents in the Programme**

It became clear during the interviews and feedback sessions that the FAST programme was seen as a vehicle for the delivery of extended services and activities for Beachstream, as well as being an effective way of working with the local community and families to support them with ensuring their children and ‘school ready’. It was also aimed at strengthening links with the local community, as the parent commented: "That’s the whole point of it".

...when we started to hear about FAST and what the benefits of that may be it seemed to sit alongside the things that we were doing - about building stronger units and our parents and our families and our relationships in school and how best
we can have an impact on our children’s lives even before they come into school and how we can support our parents supporting their children to prepare themselves for school which is so important because a lot of the other structures and systems we have in place are working. (Headteacher)

The FAST programme was intended to be a whole school message delivered to parents and local families. Some of the specific incidents that helped to make the programme a success from the stakeholders viewpoint included the opportunity for families to have time together to celebrate. Other examples were around the fact that families who had previously been reluctant to engage did so, even in fairly extreme circumstances:

The best bit of the programme for me is the special place for the children and parents together, that was something that happened every week. But probably the best part of it all is the graduation because it brought everything together and made the parents really proud, and there isn’t really many opportunities like that when the parents and children are celebrating at the same time. (Integrated Children’s Centre Manager)

There was one family, mum was heavily pregnant and she already had 3 children. She had the baby one week and came back the week after with the baby. She didn’t want to miss a week. And she’s not that type of parent. She is the type of parent who starts something and doesn’t finish it. The week after [she had her baby] she is at the FAST session with the baby in her arms and she refused to miss a week because she got so much out of it. (Extended Schools Co-ordinator)

The focus is around families working together, accessing provision jointly that has been developed and led by the school. These examples allowed the stakeholders to see the value of the programme as they were able to see a hugely positive transformation in one particular family, which was put down to the fact that they had become involved in the programme. There appeared to be a number of positives from the programme however further prompts were required to find out more about whether or not the specific incidents had been expected or come as a surprise to the stakeholders.

No, everyone was surprised that it worked. Everyone was really apprehensive about it... afterwards people were saying I can’t believe that such and such – and give an example of it in feedback sessions. (Integrated Children’s Centre Manager)
It would seem that the stakeholders were surprised that the FAST programme had proved to be so popular and successful amongst parents and the school. It could be argued that the people who were initially involved and were not expecting it to work were positioning themselves in a deficit-based way, not expecting parents to take up the programme or to engage so easily or to become so positively involved. However it could also be argued that this was a new programme, which nobody had prior experience of and so people were naturally feeling somewhat apprehensive and wary of the publicity and claims being made around the programme from the research and publications which surround the FAST work.

No, not at all. They tell you on the training that there is 98% retention rate and that people love it and you watch the video’s about families talking about the impact that it has had, but you can’t envisage working with 40 families one evening, never mind the impact that is going to have, you just can’t… We couldn’t have known that the impact would be so great really. It has been so good, and so positive.

(Extended Schools Co-ordinator)

One of the key areas of this research involves the links between the school and the community. The FAST programme claims to develop these in a highly positive way, (Lindsay, Cullens and Welling, 2011) but further evidence was sought in order to establish whether or not the stakeholders felt that the FAST programme had strengthened these links at Beachstream.

**Impact on the Links between the School and the Community**

Both the Integrated Children’s Centre Manager and the extended school co-ordinator commented on how they felt the links had been strengthened between the school and the community as a result of the FAST programme:

I think it has strengthened the relationship between school and children’s centre and then children’s centres and parents and schools and parents. I think it strengthened it at the time that it was happening and not long after that.

(Integrated Children’s Centre Manager)

Yes, definitely. FAST is open to grandparents, uncles and whoever is in that family, they can come and we had quite a few extended families involved and they
definitely took back to their wider families and communities what was going on because people had already heard about it when we went to Holy Lord… and that has improved that massively. They know who they are now when they come because it is very intensive and you get to know each other really well.

(Extended Schools Co-ordinator)

However this is where the issues referred to earlier about the responsibility for the programme lying with one individual began to be highlighted. The Integrated Children’s Centre Manager felt that once the programme had ended it became a distant memory. The programme improved relations during the delivery period but due to a number of different reasons those relationships were not generally sustained. Time was lost in the roll out and repetition of the programme as the extended school co-ordinator who was overseeing the programme went off on maternity leave. This meant that the programme was left as there was nobody else to take it on.

When we started to reignite it in September we have not been able to sustain the enthusiasm and we’ve lost people…it’s not something they still feel part of. It’s not supposed to; it’s supposed to make you feel part of it for 2 years. My personal view is that people felt part of it for while it is going on but not a part of it now – it is just seen as FAST work. (Integrated Children's Centre Manager)

This did not bode well for co-production or asset-based provision as it has been interpreted here by the Integrated Children’s Centre Manager as being short term and she felt it had limited impact on the links between the school and community as it did not continue. However, the extended school co-ordinator was also involved in the delivery of the next round of the programme at a second school, so their viewpoints differed. One stakeholder saw the programme as not being sustained as it did not continue in the same place, whereas another stakeholder saw the programme as being rolled-out as it was being delivered on a second site. In relation to the programme being of benefit in allowing the school to develop as a result of it being delivered the views also differed:

I think it’s probably difficult for me to say from where I am because it goes on in school. I can comment as an outsider…I think that the main thing about the
relationship with the school is that it has kind of humanised teachers and made them more accessible to the parents, there isn't that sort of teacher/children/parent divide in the same way for those parents, but it is difficult to say really.

(Integrated Children's Centre Manager)

...we have developed as a staff as a whole really. They didn't want to wear the bright yellow tee-shirts at the beginning, but when they saw the impact they were having they really got on board and supported it in any way they could...It was a real whole school approach and this helped a lot. (Extended Schools Co-ordinator)

The Integrated Children's Centre Manager's comments here reinforce the comments made earlier by the extended school co-ordinator about how staff in school had developed as a team and the positive impacts on parent/school relationships. Whilst she is one of the stakeholders involved in the delivery of the programme she appears to find it difficult to give a subjective view on this question as she sees herself as an 'outsider', despite the Children's Centre which shares the same site, and many of the same parents, being viewed by others as part of the whole school. In terms of evidencing how the programme had impacted on the community and allowed them to develop, despite prompts and challenges during interviews there was very little clear evidence of the impact that had been made:

I think that some of the parents who volunteered to cook are some of the ones who came to FAST. Some of them have gone on, one of them I can think of in particular is a really major part of the Kirkway 'Big Local' money and she gets in touch with the FAST parents she knows and gets them involved. It is a £1Million project for Kirkway 'Big Local' and she is on that. So the skills that she has learnt from FAST and the links she has made through FAST has clearly given her a big leverage with 'Big Local' and that is about community. (Integrated Children's Centre Manager)

It was funny really because the only time the parents saw all the other 40 families was the first week when we were dividing them up into hubs and on the last night at the graduation... They knew the other people were on it as well and I think they felt that they were part of something and weren't on their own. So they were a community in a hub and quite competitive but only friendly banter, but it did go out to the community and I think it has made relationships stronger.

(Extended Schools Co-ordinator)
This evidence the fact that specific members of the community have developed since becoming involved in the FAST programme but cannot clearly demonstrate the extent to which the wider community or other FAST participants have developed. The stakeholders ‘think’ certain things have happened but don’t have the concrete evidence. It is difficult to say from this response whether or not FAST has provided large numbers of people with the experience and confidence to develop in ways in which they may be keen to develop and is somewhat singular in its example.

The Legacy of the FAST Programme at Beachstream
The evidence provided by the two stakeholders was closely linked to their direct involvement with the programme, the school (as the base from which it was being delivered) the staff and the changes and developments in their relationships and also the parents and their commitment to the programme. Despite prompts and challenges during the interviews and feedback sessions, no reference was specifically made to the growth of people within the community as assets, or how the programme could be further developed if it were to be planned in a co-productive way. Some aspects of planning were referred to later on: “We are going to ask them to be parent volunteers or parent partners because they are the ones who are able to recruit best because they have done it.” (Integrated Children’s Centre Manager). What wasn’t clearly evident was the legacy of being involved in the programme. Little appeared to be known, or was mentioned about how the parents or community moved on from this programme, or what the legacy of the programme had become:

I think that although FAST is a really prescribed programme, what we didn’t realise from the first time we did it is that we can make it Beachstream’s FAST programme...So next time it will feel like we have a bit more ownership of it, and I think that will make a difference because we won’t be worried about getting it as wrong, because we have been through it... I think we will recruit families easier because we know what we are talking about and I think we will be able to keep hold of them better afterwards. (Integrated Children’s Centre Manager)
Well, we are doing another one in September and because we have done it now and we have learnt from the first time, we won’t be as apprehensive about meal times... We are doing our second phase of FAST which is in September/early October and some of the parents that were on the last FAST will be leading on this FAST. The idea is that it is parent led the second time around because eventually that is the way it is supposed to go. A lot of our parents have a lot of needs so it may be a bit slower here than at other places, to get this off the ground. They like that support and that you are there... (Extended Schools Co-ordinator)

The stakeholders describe aspects of learning to be taken from the FAST programme, although these relate to the professionals and volunteers involved in the programme as opposed to what is planned next for the participants in the first programme. This shows how the stakeholders have learnt from delivering the sessions and what needs to be changed and adapted for future programmes. It also indicated the recognition that more could be done to work with parents and families after the programme next time, although it is not clear if that is meant in terms of keeping them linked into the Children’s Centre or school, or if it is in terms of continuing to work with those parents and families to establish a legacy of the FAST programme at Beachstream. References were made to participants in the first programme leading the programme the next time it runs. Plans are evidently in place for the next delivery of the programme, but there is a significant risk that planning will be based on what the school and the stakeholders think need to happen next, not what the parents and families have said or asked for to happen next. The extended school co-ordinator refers to the parents liking ‘support’ so whilst is has been mentioned that parents will lead the sessions; it isn’t totally clear whether or not they will be empowered to take the lead when professionals are already planning their support. The full extent of this support is not made clear in this interview and when she was asked to clarify what she meant by ‘support’ she said the parents liked having other people around to help organise and run the sessions, so whilst in one respect parents are expected to be leading the programme in a co-productive asset-based way, this may take some time to evolve, depending on their confidence and also whether or not the professionals actually allow them to lead and show faith in their ability to do so without providing too much support and guidance.
During the interviews and the feedback sessions it became very clear that the stakeholders saw the FAST programme as a significant initiative that would take the extended provision in the school to a further level. Feedback and evaluations provided by Middlesex University (2013, p.2) talked of improved outcomes for families and increased engagement with communities, both of which according to the stakeholders, were priority areas for the school. Despite challenging and prompting the stakeholders during their interviews, not all of these outcomes were evident. Numerous times the stakeholders were asked about the positive outcomes and improvements in relations between the school and the community but no detailed response were given. Given the takeup and retention of families with the programme something must have encouraged them to engage and continue attending, but again evidence of exactly what that was, was not given by the stakeholders. This appeared to be an opportunity for development and learning that was missed by the stakeholders.

Another of the key areas of learning was that the failure of the programme to continue was down to the fact that one key member of staff went off on maternity leave. Despite this being billed as a ‘whole-school’, multi-agency joint approach to a programme, when the extended school co-ordinator went off on maternity leave, the whole programme ceased to happen. This is somewhat surprising given the investment in the approach around the “Ask me about FAST” t-shirts and other publicity that abounded prior to the start of the programme. It became quite apparent that without the extended school co-ordinator on site the programme would not run and so the links that had been developed, the strengthening of the community that had begun was not fully sustainable. What promised to be a highly effective programme which would address all the priorities of Beachstream, did not do so to its fullest potential as it all rested on one individual, so the process was not fully integrated into the school and stakeholder systems, but remained on a superficial level at that point. This will be examined in more detail in the following chapter.
Response to Feedback

The idea behind the feedback session was to demonstrate what findings the research interviews had brought up in relation to the title and interview questions. A short PowerPoint presentation was prepared (Appendix 9) which outlined key points for the session. Group members were given copies of the slides for reference or prompts to guide discussions about key issues and also copies of the interview questions as a reminder. It was explained that the school council members had similar questions but these were written in slightly more ‘child-friendly’ language. The questions were revisited with an outline provided which was particularly interesting given that all the answers provided during the research interviews had significant similarities and a number of commonalities between them. The group found this useful as, given that they were different stakeholders with different perspectives, roles and priorities between them the fact that many answers were directly linked, replicated or correlated helped to indicate the strength of the work they perceived to be taking place. It was highlighted to the group that this was a piece of research to show issues of policy and practice within an emerging community-oriented extended school, so there were no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answers. The group were then shown the skeleton of the framework (see Fig. 1 in Chapter 3) which demonstrates the four key areas in which the responses were placed.

A brief definition was provided for the group on each of the areas within the framework which highlighted deficit-based as ‘doing to’ schools and communities, whereas asset-based work generally revolved more around ‘doing with’ schools and communities, as defined earlier in the literature review (Eloff and Ebersohn, 2001, p.151) Looking at how communities moved away from being passive recipients of services to having their expertise and assets harnessed as a way of improving things in the area. During the fieldwork themes emerged which highlighted the way in which the stakeholders responded to the interviews. In order to demonstrate a broad portrayal of the responses given each of the stakeholders
was placed onto a simple framework. Once the findings from the interviews had been analysed and placed on the framework the interviewees were invited to take part in a follow up feedback session at end of the school day, from 4-5pm at the school. Unfortunately on the occasion of the feedback session school council members were unable to attend (it was their annual Christmas pantomime trip) but all other interviewees were invited to the session. The framework was used as a discussion point during the group feedback session. The stakeholders were given an anonymised version of the framework above (Fig.1 in Chapter 3) – showing no names, just the positionings. The framework was left open to their own interpretation – the version displayed below (Fig. 2) shows actual names on positions, which the stakeholders were not privy to:
The group reacted well to the anonymised placings of the individuals, commenting that they found it to be a positive diagram with no real surprises – “I think this is shows a fair
representation of where our school is at just now” (Headteacher) and “It’s good to see so many of us are closely positioned towards the middle right hand side” (Extended School Coordinator). They group generally agreed that they viewed the middle / upper right hand side of the diagram as where they collectively wanted to be. Prompts were introduced to encourage discussions about how the placings worked and whether a conscious effort may be needed from the stakeholders to move them all to one particular area or spread them further. Discussions followed about whether or not they felt they should all be closer to the ‘school led’ area than the ‘community led’; the members whose roles were based more closely with the school felt that the diagram was positive but they were still keen to ensure that they did not neglect the community angle. All members were happy that the comments from their interviews (and those of the other stakeholders) had led to them being placed in their particular places on the diagram. It was felt that as school is a statutory body it is there to address a number of factors such as attendance, attainment and achievement then it may be that the work is naturally school led. However when challenged about everything appearing to be school led the Headteacher and the Integrated Children’s Centre Manager stated that an increasing number of activities being delivered by the school deemed as part of the school’s ‘extended offer’ were in the process of being made sustainable due to being taken over by members of the wider school community that would allow the influence of ‘community led’ ideas to develop. This had provided the stakeholders with the beginnings of a plan in relation to increased work with families and the local community. The FAST programme was referred to once more as an area that was under development in which the community would be able to take a stronger lead.

When asked if there were any individual issues that people felt they may need more support from other stakeholders to achieve, the group stated that they felt they already liaised well in relation to their extended provision and nothing was stopping the work going forward.
Their main concern was in relation to funding and efficiencies within the LA which were hampering delivery of provision as much of that which used to be on offer in the area had recently been cut. Almost everyone agreed that they felt involved in the extended provision on offer, but the ward Councillor still felt that he wasn’t as involved as he should be but admitted that he wasn’t always able to attend meetings.

The results from the scaling exercise were also received very positively and raised some discussion. The stakeholders enthused about the FAST programme and felt it would help to develop the school and community links and were optimistic about the potential benefits of the programme for families involved. They were informed that as FAST had become a key theme it would be used as a smaller, secondary case study that would be embedded in this work. A second set of interviews were planned around FAST, the findings of which would be fed back so that the stakeholders could use the information to inform their future provision, should they chose to do so. The group agreed to go and consider the implications of the positionings on the framework and how they could be used to improve and develop the work of the community oriented extended school. They also agreed to reconvene at a later date for a further feedback session around the FAST interviews, to see how that work was developing in the school.

Second Feedback Session
Once the second round of interviews were completed the stakeholders were reconvened for a second feedback session to discuss any changes or developments within the school that had occurred and to be informed about the key findings from the interviews around the FAST programme. Once again all the stakeholders were invited to the feedback session, with the exception of the School Council members. Not inviting them was a conscious decision as
their information had not added a significant amount to the overall research and it was felt that their contributions to the group feedback session would not have been of significant enough impact. As the School Council members had not been able to attend the first feedback session it remained important to carry on with the second session as the continuity with the original attendees was also an important element.

The scheduling of the session was dictated by the availability of the majority of the stakeholders and was held after the school day, at the school. The timings meant that there were fewer constraints on the stakeholders but unfortunately the Governor and the ward Councillor were unable to attend and requested that the session continue in their absence. The decision was taken by me as the researcher to conduct the second feedback session with those who were able to attend. This caused some concerns as it would have been preferable to have had the same group of stakeholders at the session but by this stage it had become apparent that the group were not meeting regularly and the extended provision, whilst still a key aspect of school life, had been superseded by other English Government priorities. Another concern was that the extended schools agenda had ceased to be the priority locally and nationally that it was previously, so there was a possibility that very little developmental work had taken place in the time between the two feedback sessions.

The second feedback session began with a reminder of the framework with the anonymised positionings shown at the previous feedback session. Previously the stakeholders had commented that they felt the diagram to be generally positive and that they collectively wanted to be positioned in the middle/upper right hand side of the diagram. This sentiment was echoed once more and a brief discussion then took place as to where people felt the
overall positioning should be for the school to move forward and become increasingly community oriented and whether or not it was possible given the starting point of the positions.

Discussions took place as to whether or not any significant changes or developments had occurred within school as a result of the information given at the previous feedback session. The stakeholders felt that the first feedback session had been helpful in highlighting the positioning of all the stakeholders, making everyone more aware that not all other roles had the same professional outlook or priorities which required a need to be more tolerant around those priorities was acknowledged. However, it soon became apparent that no specific actions had come about as a result of the first feedback session but the awareness raising of the positions had helped to develop better working relationships and tolerances. The fact that no specific actions were taken was not totally unexpected. The extended schools agenda had moved on, funding streams had changed; policies and priorities at local and national level had altered so the lack of action did not come as a surprise. However, given the general consensus of opinion around the success and positivity of the schools’ extended provision during the first round of interviews and feedback session there appeared to be questions around whether or not there was the motivation or significant challenge from within the stakeholder group to develop things further? The group appeared content with their work, reliant on one individual to take things forward and carried on in the same way they had been doing, relatively successfully according to OFSTED for the last few years.

The concept of the FAST programme was reintroduced as the common theme from the first round of stakeholder interviews. After the first feedback session a couple of the stakeholders referred to activities being delivered as part of the school’s ‘extended offer’ which were in
the process of being made sustainable and which would become more ‘community led’. The FAST programme had only just begun its first cycle at that time. The stakeholders were all familiar with the FAST programme, but the analysis of the first cycle of the programme had taken place after the first round of interviews and the first feedback session. Some of the stakeholders had met as a small group since then to discuss the programme in general but this was the first time that some of the key areas of learning from FAST had been discussed. The questions that had been used for the FAST interviews were shared with the group and (with the permission of stakeholders interviewed) some of the points that been made when the interviews had taken place.

Many of the stakeholders shared some of the same positives and surprises with the way the programme had developed. The Headteacher, the extended school co-ordinator and the parent in particular felt that the school and community had significantly strengthened their links as a result of the programme. However the Headteacher was unable to provide specific examples but was led and agreed with the examples given by the extended school co-ordinator. They felt the learning from the first round of the FAST programme had moved their individual positioning more towards the asset-based / community led area of the framework as the school’s relationship with the parents and community had grown as a result of the take up and retention of families to the programme. They were keen to involve the families who had been part of the first programme in the second round, but this time as workers on the programme. They felt that more of the strengths of the families had been recognised as a result of the programme and so the asset-base within the community had increased with some of these parents now keen and willing to take a lead on the programme the next time around. However once more, despite challenges they were unable to give specific examples; it was more that they ‘thought’ some of these things had happened, their feelings were based on supposition. They did however feel that due to the maternity leave
of the extended school co-ordinator some of the momentum of engaging and harnessing what the families had to offer had been lost as there had been a time lapse in that engagement with families, due to there not being anyone in post to cover the gap in the maternity leave. Yet there appeared to be no plans to address this issue so it wouldn’t happen again. The Headteacher said funding had been the main reason behind the gap as there were insufficient funds to ‘back-fill’ the post during the maternity leave and so the FAST work had stopped. Acknowledgements were made about the importance of this resting with one individual but the funding was a barrier, along with the inability for anyone else to subsume this work into their other roles. So whilst the group knew it was a problem there were no developmental plans in place to address it for the future, they appeared to be more reliant on the probability it wouldn’t happen again. The Integrated Children’s Centre Manager had not seen the continued engagement of these families as her role, as many of the families involved were not as closely connected to the Children’s Centre as they were to the school - so she had not been pro-active in trying to maintain the links or sustain the engagement. On a wider LA scale the role of the Integrated Children’s Centre Manager altered a number of times during the process of this research with her geographical area and responsibilities changing too. Out of all the stakeholders, her role had undergone the most significant changes affected by LA funding and priorities.

The Integrated Children’s Centre Manager recognised areas for future improvement in relation to working with the families engaged with the programme and agreed that relationships between the school and the community had improved to a certain extent. But she felt there had not yet been a sustainable development in terms of engaging families and empowering them to take on the delivery of the FAST programme to the same extent that the Headteacher, the extended school co-ordinator and the parent felt there was. Everyone felt that it was a positive model that supported their extended provision and allowed them to
work more closely with the community, identify people as assets and plan more co-productively around this model together for the future. However, the ‘school led’ theme still persisted through these interviews and the second group feedback session.

In light of the previous findings, each of the stakeholders at the feedback session felt that they had made conscious efforts (mostly through FAST and through the analysis that took place of the programme) to ensure that the school continued to become increasingly community oriented in its positioning by working with local families and communities to involve them in the planning and delivery of FAST as part of their extended provision. They felt there was increased involvement in relation to co-productive planning, although in reality no other examples were given and this only related to the FAST programme and the fact that they had worked more closely with parents to plan the delivery of the next cycle of the programme. However they stated that more regular conversations were now taking place between stakeholders in terms of the school’s extended provision. The feeling at the feedback session was that the FAST programme was a very useful vehicle for developing strong community links and relations and was also a good way of empowering the families and communities to engage with others as a way of developing and supporting their own families. “We couldn’t have known that the impact would be so great really. It has been so good, and so positive.” (Extended School Co-ordinator) The surprise which was evident in the interviews with both the extended school co-ordinator and the Integrated Children’s Centre Manager in the take up and retention of families who had previously been reluctant to engage or who had previously had very few links or relationships with the school, increased the belief of the stakeholders in the programme as a way of the school becoming increasingly community-oriented. “…everyone was surprised that it worked. Everyone was really apprehensive about it saying that it might have worked in whatever little village it worked in, but it wasn’t going to happen here.” (Integrated Children’s Centre Manager) They
talked of the next stages of development for the school and further rollout of the FAST programme to encourage parents and families to take ownership of the programme and run an increasing amount of it themselves. "We are going to ask them to be parent volunteers or parent partners because they are the ones who are able to recruit best because they have done it." (Integrated Children's Centre Manager). "We are doing our second phase of FAST which is in September/early October and some of the parents that were on the last FAST will be leading on this FAST.” (Extended School Co-ordinator)

Another factor that emerged from the feedback session was an agreement with the points that had been raised during the FAST interviews relating to sustainability. The first round of the FAST programme, whilst very successful in terms of the engagement and take up of families, had failed to retain families and support them through the next phase of their development as nobody had been in post to take this forward with them due to the maternity leave and back-filling funding issue. It was clear that some families had developed enough to want to take on the leadership of this programme, but others still needed some form of support, link or encouragement to move further forward if they were interested in doing so. The feedback session did not entirely resolve this issue, various stakeholders talked about the need to continue to work with some of these families and it was something they were clearly keen to ensure happened after future sessions, but as mentioned, there was no clear role, person appointed or actions specifically decided upon to do this work at that time. Future uncertainties around roles and funding for continued FAST programmes had not been resolved or decided at that point. So whilst there was the enthusiasm and interest in taking this programme forward more clarification from the LA was required at that point, who themselves were awaiting information from central Government in England.
The developmental process that the stakeholders went through may at best be described as minimal. They appeared to be comfortable with what they were offering and there was little or no challenge from within the stakeholder group to develop or change their delivery. They were interested in finding out more about the positioning of other colleagues and how this related to their own roles and positioning but their capacity for change seemed limited. This is possibly down to competing priorities, changes in national policy, or a lack of funding but despite the group initially saying they were keen to use the information given to develop their extended provision this did not happen. They continued to provide a wide range of extended provision and it could be argued that they have become increasingly community oriented with the development and delivery of the FAST programme but this was something that they were invited to take part in by the LA. Not something they chose to initiate and deliver to their families and the community. They were keen to participate but despite the challenges that were raised during the interviews and earlier feedback sessions in relation to the recognition of assets within the community and the development of co-production with the local community, nothing further appeared to have developed as a result of the stakeholders making the conscious decision to take things forward.

**Findings Summary**

The findings of the research through the use of the interviews and feedback discussion groups indicate that the main research questions were addressed; some in more detail than others. The responses gathered during the interview processes go some way in addressing these questions. The framework provided helps to demonstrate the positioning of each of the different stakeholders and their priorities, validated by definitions gathered during the literature review. Some are clearly more school than community oriented and that has been discussed in these findings. Similarly some of the stakeholders come from a deficiency oriented approach, pathologising the families involved with the school (Kretzman and
McKnight, 1993, P.2) with a focus on ‘doing to’ as opposed to ‘doing with’ the families. Some are keen to encourage parents and families to become more involved, but also feel that they can only do this with support. There is a general consensus amongst the stakeholders that places them all in fairly similar positions on the framework in that they all err towards the side of the asset-based approach, as opposed to the deficit-based. This is strikingly different to the positionings of the school or community led approach. The majority of the stakeholders could clearly be plotted as focusing on a school led as opposed to a community led approach and this was further highlighted in their responses to the interview questions; but interestingly the Headteacher and the Integrated Children’s Centre Manager were the closest in their positioning, both of them close to the middle of the axis, indicating that their responses during interviews placed them fairly centrally in terms of working with both the school and the community. The following chapter will address the findings above and begin to investigate what can be drawn from this research in more detail in relation to Beachstream.
Chapter 5 – Discussion of Findings

This chapter responds to the findings from the fieldwork and offers answers to the research questions and implications of the findings in relation to Beachstream, the case study school. The final chapter goes on to look at the wider implications of the findings in more detail.

Responses to the Research Questions

The research questions were outlined earlier in this research. Here is a reminder of them:

- In what ways and to what extent is the school becoming more community oriented in its provision of extended services and activities?

- In what ways and to what extent do the school and its stakeholders recognise and build upon the assets within the local community and to what extent does co-production play a role in the extended provision made by the school?

- How do the stakeholders view the school’s relationship between the school and the local community?

- What are the stakeholders’ understandings of the priorities for the school in developing extended provision for the local community in the future and to what extent and in what ways are these priorities limited?

In what ways and to what extent is the school becoming more community oriented in its provision of extended services and activities?

A number of stakeholders were interviewed during the case study, their roles varied between running the school, working in the school and being associated with the school in some way. The delivery of extended provision at Beachstream has evolved since 2006 (when
the new school opened) as parents and the local community have become more familiar with its offer. An earlier definition of local community was given which was referred to it as being the community of families that send their children to Beachstream, and the neighbours, families, stakeholders and other agencies already involved with or situated within the immediate physical proximity of the school, the geographical community surrounding the school. The school has a Children’s Centre on site, and the same main entrance to the two establishments is shared so families are now used to entering the school. When the interviews were conducted the Headteacher scored Beachstream as “A 7, a good, strong 7”, and went on to clearly outline his plans for further development of extended provision of the school. “…we have been very successful in our extended school provision because it has been a cornerstone of our whole provision… up there at the forefront of things… but we have still got lots to do, lots of things I’d like to do…”

If we are to take the definition of community that has been used as the basis for this research it is evident that the school is becomingly increasingly community oriented in its extended provision as it is building on the strength of its existing provision is also adding to the initiatives it offers to local families and the community – such as the FAST Programme which has already been referred to. Messages about partnership and extended school provision and working are shared and encouraged by the Headteacher and his senior leadership team amongst the staff. The Headteacher felt the extended provision had been successful because it lay within the management structure of the school. Plans are put in place at the beginning of the year to actively encourage and develop links with parents and the local community. The development of these plans show how the school is becoming increasingly community oriented in its provision of extended services and activities but this still appears to be a very one-way process. However as Beachstream has experienced success with initiatives they have become involved with, their confidence in further
developing links with families and the local community has increased. Since 2006 the variety of things that have been provided based on responses from consultation with the community has increased significantly. The school has widened its way of working with the local community through the links forged with the children’s centre as families who have not yet begun to access the school are becoming involved in programmes such as FAST. The school now works with younger children and includes them in the delivery of extended provision on a wider scale. The planning session referred to by the extended school co-ordinator has been developed over the last few years as relationships with families and the local community have grown: “...at the start of every year...we go through what we think...the community can be involved with, what parents can be involved with...”.

The findings indicate that the school is becoming increasingly community oriented in its’ provision of extended services and activities as, led by the Headteacher (and supported by staff, Governors and other stakeholders) new ways of working which encourage partnerships with and the involvement of parents and the local community continue to be developed and rolled out. The interviews and feedback sessions showed that there was a general consensus between stakeholders as to how the case study school has developed its extended provision and ways of working with the local community. Everyone agreed that they were working very well with the local community but they could still do more to become increasingly community oriented and they were keen to strengthen and develop links with the local community. By creating a role within the senior management structure for extended provision a symbol of the school’s commitment to the extended schools agenda was made apparent. For a number of years the school has been an active deliverer and signposter of extended provision, they accessed support for this way of working from the LA and they approached neighbouring schools to develop a networking hub of extended provision. As mentioned earlier, Beachstream has a history of working with local communities and families.
as well as engaging with other agencies, and becoming involved in new initiatives and programmes, as is evidenced by their involvement in FAST.

The extent to which the school and its stakeholders recognise and build upon these assets and the extent to which co-production plays a role in the provision of the school is examined in more detail below. The research question has been split in order to explore each area in more detail, with a focus on one point at a time in order to provide clearer examples of the two issues.

**In what ways and to what extent do the school and its stakeholders recognise and build upon the assets within the local community?**

As relationships have developed between the school, stakeholders, parents and the local community an increasing number of assets have started to be identified and built upon but this appears to be more through chance than through a pro-active approach. There are two different forms of assets recognised in this study – one being the assets that the school has recognised can be used and built upon to serve its own purpose, and the other being assets that can be built upon to benefit and serve the community.

When challenged about assets in the community, each of the stakeholders referred to the school as being the asset. With the exception of the Integrated Children’s Centre Manager who referred to a parent as an asset, and the ward Councillor who referred to other agencies on the estate as assets, nobody was able to provide any examples of assets outside of the school. No indication was made that the school did not value assets within the local community but they did not mention them and appeared unaware of them, everything
remained school led. The Headteacher was keen to offer the school itself, in terms of physical buildings and access to resources and staff as an asset that could be built upon to serve the community. This idea of the school as the asset was shared by the other stakeholders. However, the stakeholders were keen to develop their asset building model in similar ways to those documented by Robinson (2006, p.11), creating a greater sense of community, listening to the child’s voice and to the community and providing the co-location of services, as is evidenced in the comments made to by many of the stakeholders during interview. The transition to developing an asset-based approach within school whereby “…professionals need to become partners in their efforts in the true sense of the word…” (Eloff and Ebersohn, 2001, p.151 / 157) has not yet fully occurred in the wider sense with the local community at Beachstream.

During the interviews none of the stakeholders directly referred to any deficits that the children may be bringing to school with them, but many of the programmes and initiatives that the school had become involved in were based around Beachstream being in the centre of an area of significant deprivation. So whilst the stakeholders viewed things relatively positively, the reason programmes and initiatives were chosen was often heavily based on a deficiency orientation as outlined by Kretzman and McKnight (1993, p.2)

The stakeholders are keen to work with the local community – the Headteacher talks of ‘us’: “Every time I see the parents I mention partnerships, I mention us doing things together…” This is in direct contrast to many other schools I have worked with in within the LA. It also reinforces the ‘doing with’ that the co-production literature relates to earlier in this work. The Headteacher is encouraging active input from the families and communities, the Headteacher is the ‘agent’ (Whitaker, 1980, p.240) and the families are the ‘citizens’. The
community focus is apparent, but whilst the school and the stakeholders are beginning to identify and build upon the assets within the community, be they human or physical, this is currently not being done proactively.

When further challenges were made about how these assets have been built upon, no clear answers were given other than referencing the FAST programme. It was not clear whether or not the stakeholders were looking for assets within the local community; when prompted as mentioned, a couple of them were able to provide examples of assets, although they did admit that there were some good examples of how people in particular had become recognisable assets. However the evidence indicated that very little was done to build upon this work; a lot of it appeared to be either left to chance or came about as a result of the delivery of the FAST programme.

FAST is a very recent initiative so this supports the theory about these assets not being planned for, and also the fact that they are not always actively encouraged and developed once they are recognised, as none of the stakeholders clearly saw this work as part of their individual role. The FAST programme is heavily prescribed but in this instance is still controlled by professionals, not parents. The programme sets out to put parents in control, parents and workers are ‘trained’ and then these people train others. It could be argued that the programme itself is not asset-based, because of the training element. However the difference is that the programme allows assets to be recognised in the form of people who are then trained to support and also train up other parents, family members and members of the community. This in turn increases the asset-base in terms of both numbers and skills. Thus encouraging the building or growth of assets and empowering and developing the skills
of individuals rather than merely drawing on existing assets and skills – the existing asset is the individual themselves in this instance.

As we have seen, evidence in the interviews and feedback sessions indicates that assets are recognised when they present themselves, such as the parents in the FAST programme, but have not actively been looked for or encouraged outside the school. This may be as a result of some of the issues listed in the findings section – key staff being on maternity leave at important times in the programme; funding not being available to backfill relevant posts when required; changes in stakeholder roles and responsibilities; staff unwilling to take on additional work that they don’t see as part of their role; the primary focus of the school being the education and development of the children who attend; or lack of clarity and direction from the LA. It may still be rather early in the development of FAST programme to be able to clearly evidence how the school recognises and builds upon the assets within the local community. Similarly as the role of extended schools has changed over the last few years and is now no longer at the forefront of the Government in England’s (and also schools’) agenda there is not the same urgency for schools to recognise and build upon assets within the community as there once was. This is now much more down to the individual Headteacher and Governing body and whilst it is still a high priority in this school, it is evidently a personal goal of the Headteacher and would more than likely cease to be an objective for the school should there be a change in Headship as it is not the national or local priority it once was.
To what extent does co-production play a role in the extended provision of the school?

Evidence gathered during interviews and feedback sessions indicates that as the school has evolved there has been an increasing movement towards working with others to plan and develop future provision. The extended school co-ordinator talked of coffee mornings and recruiting parents and families to be part of various initiatives including the FAST programme and reading groups as a couple of examples, but these ideas come from the school, not necessarily the parents. This could not be defined specifically as co-production in the way that Boyle and Harris (2009, p.11) or Needham and Carr (2009, p.1) explain and define it. Certain elements of the school’s extended provision are planned in a more co-productive way but evidence indicates that this tends to be done with other stakeholders who are professionals that are linked to the school, not parents, families or members of the wider community. What seems to happen in this case study is that the stakeholders develop ideas and then consult with parents, families and the community before delivering their ideas anyway. Parents, families and other community members are asked for feedback and responses after the event which is used in some instances to inform future planning, but this takes place once more in school with specific stakeholders. It could be argued that the school takes the initiative in developing provision as nobody else wants or is able to start things off, with parents and families preferring to be led in this way, or it could be more closely linked to the lack of genuine co-production taking place when developing the extended provision of the school.

In this instance it would seem that Beachstream is not working with parents and communities as co-educators as such in the way that Brain and Reid suggest (2003, p.291) and therefore not reaping the potential benefits and gains as documented by Horne and Shirley (2009, p.5). Similarly it is in direct contrast to Needham and Carr’s (2009) example:
“Co-production emphasises that people are not passive recipients of services...” Similarly the consultation methods referred to above by the extended schools co-ordinator do not include the wider community and are heavily schools led, as already mentioned. This way of working falls short of co-production as the school ‘invites’ parents and families to be part of something, not specifically planning and delivering things in partnership with them.

Currently, due to the lack of an enhanced level of equality the school dominates the relationship between the stakeholders and the community, but as they themselves are subject to national imperatives, inspections and judgements this hinders the development of genuine co-production in the way in which it is defined in the literature review. So as much as the school may want to work on developing their methods of co-production alongside parents, families and the community by recognising the contribution everyone can make to this learning process, other national and regional factors are limiting the development of this at Beachstream and many other schools.

**How do the stakeholders view the school’s relationship between the school and the local community?**

The interview process highlighted the fact that the stakeholders viewed the relationship between the school and the community as a very positive one. Some stakeholders took the view that relationships have developed with families who previously were more reluctant to engage with the school. Parents are slowly starting to become recognised as an asset that can be used as a means of recruiting other families and getting messages out to the local community that support the messages that the school and its stakeholders are trying to convey. The Integrated Children’s Centre Manager referred to the role of parent volunteers and the value of those roles: “As part of FAST the parent volunteers recruited families
because there is no better recommendation really than from a parent to a parent.” She felt that there were a lot of positives to come from having parents as partners and that this relationship was improving and becoming stronger. The FAST programme is a particular intervention with a strong community oriented stance that appears to be much more asset-based than other traditional activities.

Through coffee mornings and other opportunities, the extended school co-ordinator works with parents to find out what assets or hidden talents they may have that she was not previously aware of as a way as developing the relationship between the school and the community. This is a way of recruiting them and involving them in wider school activities which in some instances has resulted in some of the parents becoming employed in a role by the school. The school and stakeholders acknowledge the value of the contribution that parents and families can make, in that way their working agrees with the suggestions made by Gold et al (2004, p.55s) whereby they realise that they “…cannot do it alone...[they] need the participation of parents and community members to provide the kind of environment where children can flourish” but as referred to earlier whilst the stakeholders view the relationship between the school and the community as being positive, stakeholders haven’t yet developed that true sense of partnership working with parents, families and the local community. However, whilst the partnerships still appear to be heavily professionally dominated there is a possibility that the rollout of FAST programme may begin to initiate some small changes in the development of these partnerships if it is to develop in the way it is prescribed to.
What are the stakeholders’ understandings of the priorities for the school in developing extended provision for the local community in the future?

The school was designed as an extended school as the initial staffing structure and earlier comments highlight. As the school has become more established over the last few years, work with parents, families and the local community has increased, through the school and also the Children’s Centre as this has been a key priority. Through the role of the extended school co-ordinator more members of the community are becoming familiar with and more closely linked to the school. The development of these links has enabled stakeholders (many of whom are not from the local area) to foster more of an understanding as to who is in the community and how they can help to support the children and young people in the area through positive ways of working.

During the stakeholder interviews the FAST programme was mentioned a number of times by different people. This is a current priority for the school as it is strengthening relations between families and schools and also helping to prepare children in their readiness for school. The school alongside the Children’s Centre have delivered a pilot of this programme and regard that as having helped significantly in the development of their extended provision and also in improving the community focus of the school and partners. The Headteacher clearly felt that the community focus within school and partners was developing as he described the journey the school would need to take to move from a 7 towards a 10, relating to things like the FAST programme and building stronger family units with parents and families and relationships in school.

Even though priorities at national level have changed the Headteacher and stakeholders’ vision and commitment to the delivery of extended services and activities remains, as does
the enthusiasm and interest with which new initiatives and projects are approached, such as the FAST work. Clear links have been established between programmes and the attainment and achievement of pupils, along with the positive relationships that have been developed with parents and families, which once more reinforces the points made by the Governor “...the school has to have that primary focus...”

We saw in a previous chapter that the take up of extended provision in Beachstream is significant which is why it remains a priority for the stakeholders. Around “…100 children on average coming to our breakfast club” (Headteacher). Other activities ranging from reading clubs to sports clubs are helping to foster relations between school and families but also these relation are developing between families across the local community as different children access the extended provision on offer. Sessions such as these which are accessed by large numbers of children and their families remain a priority for the stakeholders, the school and its extended provision.

**To what extent and in what ways are these priorities limited?**

The findings indicated that priorities were limited to a certain extent in two different ways. The first being the way the stakeholders limited their priorities by their views of what was possible and the second was by being constrained by external issues, such as funding or policy expectations. As already mentioned, the school and stakeholders do not appear to be proactively recognising and building on the assets already out there in terms of the local community (Eloff and Ebersohn, 2001, p.151/157). The stakeholders appear to see the school itself as the asset within the local community and are looking for ways to build upon the assets of what is already in existence in the school. Parents and families are slowly being recognised as assets but still viewed as recipients of services as opposed to partners in the
planning and delivery of services (Whitaker, 1980). These somewhat restricted views of assets and building upon existing good practice limit the development of this priority of encouraging the local community to grow and support the delivery of programmes such as FAST. However the Governor talked about how this vision continues to develop and how links with the community are being encouraged stating that “...You would go a long way before you found a better example of a school that has got clear vision, has the kids best interests at heart in the widest sense, works as closely with the community.” She felt that “…the school and the community are almost like one and I think if you were to talk to parents they would say similar sorts of things where the school is growing all the time.”

The Governor appears to refer to parents as the community, which reinforces her earlier statements about the role of the school in developing links and working with the community, “…the school and the people in the school have to take responsibility and be accountable for the education that goes on within that school...” this also is a reminder that she feels that the primary responsibility of the school is not to the geographical community but to the children who attend the school. She felt that educating the children was the main focus of the school so the stakeholders could be limited in their vision of what else is going on outside the school. Whilst supportive of the way Beachstream works with families and the community and that aspect of working in partnership, she talked of how the school was more answerable to OFSTED and the local authority. She felt that Beachstream’s core purpose was around the advancement and achievement of its pupils through education and that whilst there was a place for partnership working other things should take priority. Extended provision and partnership working are an important, but what mattered more and what the school would be inspected, judged and categorised on was the core issue of teaching. The school is working to continue its delivery of priorities around extended
provision but is limited and constrained by the conflicting number of national and LA policies it has to respond to.

The role of the extended school co-ordinator is key to ensuring links with parents and the community develop and are sustained, without this role there is the potential for priorities around extended provision within the school to become severely limited. The importance and strength of the role became evident when she was on maternity leave and the continued support and work with parents and families ceased to happen when the first cycle of the FAST programme had been completed. Links that had been established quickly faded, momentum for the programme and the next phase of the delivery of FAST faltered. If FAST had been part of the school ethos and embedded in the school practice the it would not have faltered as it did. Whilst FAST is viewed as a priority and a catalyst for change with some of the more ‘hard to reach’ families at Beachstream, the headteacher and stakeholders cannot afford to delegate the lead of the project to a single individual. In doing so this isolates the future of the whole programme and the intervention to one person. Everything connected to the programme is invested in one individual. This seriously limits it as a priority and makes its success extremely precarious. When asked to scale the work of the school in terms of extended provision and working with families and the community the extended school co-ordinator scaled it as a 7. She felt that in order to become an 8 or a 10 she would need a team. However, if the school truly were operating in a co-productive way it would be expected that the team could actually come from the stakeholder group and other partners themselves, including parents, families and the community. If the school and community were to become more equal partners, and achieve a greater or enhanced level of equality then responsibility would become more of a joint area, rather than the role of one individual. The co-production could then carry forward the work and make it sustainable, whereas at
the moment if one element is missing as mentioned above, the whole delivery of this provision fails.

**Overview of answers to the research questions**

When this research began, the extended schools agenda was still part of the Government in England’s agenda and way of working. Since then the Government in England in power has changed and along with it so have a series of educational initiatives. Extended provision remains a key focus of the Headteacher in this school, however if he were to move on and another Headteacher take on his role, it is not clear how much of the extended provision would continue. The extended provision appears to be embedded in the school but without the supportive policy environment or the enthusiasm of the Headteacher there is a distinct chance that the current breadth of extended provision and community oriented offers would cease to exist. Similarly, with co-production not yet embedded there may be implications for the development of this work in the future. The contribution that parents, families and the local community make to the development and education of children and young people at Beachstream is beginning to be recognised and encouraged – this has become more evident through the recent FAST programme but as already mentioned, this is generally left to chance rather than part of a longer term plan.

If the school were to continue along the current path of including parents, families and the local community in events – consulting with them and encouraging them to participate in programmes such as FAST then the assets, such as individuals in this instance will continue to grow and become more easily recognisable in terms of the value of their contribution to the school and the stakeholders. Once their role is more easily identified then there would be more chance of the co-productive work becoming the reality that is documented by
Needham and Carr (2009) Scott (2002) and Whitaker (1980) and referred to in the literature review. This is possibly more likely to begin with the planning and delivery of future FAST sessions, which would be a step in the right direction in terms of developing the role of co-production in this instance. The outlook of the stakeholders has already changed with the rollout of the FAST programme. Their surprise at the success, take up and continued attendance by people they felt would not be able to maintain their commitment to the programme was evident in the interviews. If the initial success of the FAST programme can be recaptured then the growth of assets in the form of parents are a distinct possibility, providing they are encouraged to grow and not smothered by professionals who feel threatened or reluctant to relinquish their control of the programme. If the role of parents and the community in the planning of future sessions is encouraged, this could lead the way to the further development of co-productive work with the local community. This could be the catalyst for further co-productive work and planning which would widen the stakeholder group and encourage contributions from a wider group of people, not all whom would be professionals.

All of the above findings relate specifically to Beachstream as the case study school. The final chapter aims to explore the wider implications that came about in this research; drawing together information from previous chapters; discussing how the findings relate to the literature reviewed; and the implications on practice, policy, and potential ideas for further research are then considered. The chapter concludes with a summary of the contributions to knowledge created through this thesis and a personal reflection on the research and fieldwork undertaken.
**Chapter 6 – Conclusion and reflection**

The main areas of research reported in this thesis have related to community oriented working, asset-based working and co-production, based around one particular case study school. The findings from the interviews and the interpretation of the responses to those findings in the preceding chapters have provided answers to the research questions in relation to the case study school specifically. This final chapter draws together each of the preceding chapters and offers a conclusion to the research by using examples from the case study to make assertions about schools more generally. Beachstream is typical of the majority of schools in England in that it was not specially resourced or established as a community-oriented school and was subject to the same constraints and accountability processes as most other schools. However, it was also chosen as a ‘best case’ example i.e. it was taking the need to be community oriented seriously and had committed leaders and governors. If, therefore, any schools are able to develop community-oriented approaches, it is schools such as this. Insofar as Beachstream was unable to do this, it is reasonable to suppose that other schools would encounter similar issues – but perhaps be less able or inclined to struggle against them. Conclusions in this final chapter are explored by examining some of the key themes that were raised in this thesis, suggesting recommendations for future research areas and ideas that could be taken into consideration. This takes the form of exploring how the findings agree with the literature; identifying gaps in the findings and the literature; providing answers to the issues raised and then moving on to look at the implications of the study on practice, policy and research, where recommendations will be made. The contributions to knowledge are then highlighted to indicate what has been learnt from conducting this research, followed by conclusions drawn from conducting this research. The chapter ends with a personal statement which is a reflection on the research as a whole.
Wider Implications

Community oriented working
The purpose of this study was to explore the extent to which and the ways in which extended schools can become more community-oriented in their extended provision with a focus on co-production and asset-based working and how they take these approaches and implement them into the delivery of the school. The research undertaken through this thesis indicated that the move for schools to become increasingly community oriented is limited in the extent to which it has become a reality. The strongest thread that ran throughout the case study was that the majority of the extended provision was school led. If we take the case study as our example, the menu of extended activities and provision and the target audiences have changed and developed but everything that has been provided has been based around funding from the LA and initiatives set by the school in order to raise the attainment and achievement of their pupils, “...when I run things it’s based around the school rather than in the community.” (Extended school co-ordinator).

Prior to the end of the funding for extended schools, the appointment of extended school coordinators was a common occurrence. However, whilst these roles were recognised for their importance their agenda tended to remain secondary to the school agenda, and many of these posts disappeared around 2010 in my LA when the funding ended. This emphasises the fact that the development of the community oriented provision in schools is not often in reality a joint approach when it comes to the planning and delivery of provision, but can be one person leading a separate activity that others support and engage when it fits in with their professional role and responsibilities. However that provision often decreases or disappears when the individual is not around to drive it forwards.
Schools may be keen to promote extended provision and ways of working with the local community but in my experience it would seem that it is often the case that many staff within schools are not members of the local community so are second guessing what is needed. There are no requirements for schools to conduct audits of need within the local community either nationally or through the LA. Such audits were recommended as best practice during the time of the extended schools funding but were never made statutory. As referred to earlier, Governing bodies may also not be representative of the communities they serve; this was highlighted in the research by the fact that the community representative of the case study school was the headteacher of a local secondary school. The case study school is in an area of significant deprivation and historically many people in disadvantaged communities such as these do not want to put themselves forward to become members of governing bodies, and often don’t feel that they have to skills to work with others at these levels (Dean, Dyson et al, 2007, p.7). Therefore the work of the governing body, the stakeholders and the school is dominated by external and often professional agendas (Dean, Dyson et al, 2007, p.22) which conflicts with the suggestions made by Keeble (2006, p.3).

Community involvement that takes place at many schools is peripheral, usually around non-core activities. Parents and the local community are often enlisted to do what schools want them to do, albeit in a positive and welcoming way. For many schools this may be in part due to the historic lack of an extended schools blueprint (Cummings, Dyson and Todd, 2007a, p. 189) as no specific guidelines were ever issued about how schools should work with local communities. Therefore, there is little or no challenge to the level of detail of community involvement within schools, and there are no longer any identified people within LAs or elsewhere whose role it is to offer that challenge around definition, purpose or suggestions of best practice (Black, Lemon and Walsh, 2010, p. 4). Occasionally it may be that some challenge is offered but generally this is not consistently made, as was
exemplified in the case study by the ward councillor who said that he offered some challenge but as he admitted he rarely attends the meetings, so this challenge often goes unheard.

Schools generally have a range of stakeholders who are made up of a group of people from different personal and professional backgrounds who are working collaboratively. We need to understand the nature of professions as collaborative working often takes place at the boundaries of the differing professions. Their personal and professional views and priorities differ, and on occasions may be conflicting (Edwards, 2008, p.7) However, these boundaries are important as it is the crossing of these boundaries and the ‘conflict’…‘questioning’ and ‘dissatisfaction’ between them that leads to transformation of practice (Edwards et al, 2009, p.197).

It would seem with the case study school that often there is no structured process through meetings or discussions which encourages these differences to be aired, inhibiting and preventing the challenge process, resulting in relative complacency from the stakeholders. The extended schools agenda previously offered challenge around this area but this is now no longer a requirement of schools and the stakeholders all felt that they were doing lots of work in this area anyway, so why would they need to become much more increasingly community oriented if they felt they were already well on their way?

This study has shown that the main voice within this community is that of the school. All extended provision is decided upon and delivered by the school. If we take this school as the example we can see that the stakeholders are very keen to engage and involve the local
community in their extended provision and will actively seek and canvas representatives from the community to become involved in their provision but ultimately the community play a very small part in the development of and decisions around provision. The stakeholders’ believe they are developing community oriented ways of working but in reality their approach is more around developing community involvement. This may be as a result of their lack of community awareness and representation (Dean, Dyson et al., 2007, p.7). The school’s offer has increased but their focus and orientation has not shifted particularly. The stakeholder group work well together and the provision is positive but real challenge from the community is not apparent so the need for change and progression is not of paramount importance. Things can continue to progress in the way they always have. The good will and intentions are there but the reality is lacking as the local community do not play a significantly strong enough role in the decision making surrounding the school. Those that potentially could take on this role have not yet put themselves forward and the school and stakeholders have not yet recognised the individuals as such assets within the local community. Therefore, the extent to which the school becomes more community oriented in its provision of extended services and activities will never truly be realised until this change occurs.

Asset-Based Working
As already documented in earlier chapters, schools do not appear to be recognising assets within the local community to the extent to which the literature relating to this field advocates. Schools and the stakeholders associated with them generally tend to see the school as the biggest asset within the community; this doesn’t appear to be through arrogance but is possibly through ignorance. It should be noted that this research is not concerned with a school’s role in promoting asset-based community development – that is a different subject entirely and not what the focus of this research has been about. The focus
here is around how the case study school recognises, harnesses and builds upon assets that already exist within the local community as a means of developing the provision of the school, not the community.

If we take the case study school once more as the example, we can see that the school and the stakeholders are beginning to recognise some of the assets within the local community but building upon these assets is still an issue for all. As the task of building on these assets is not a key priority for this school it is likely that this would be the same issue for most other schools. Whilst in many respects the school is uniquely (in comparison to other schools in the Borough) quite outward-looking in the way it consults with and provides for the local community, it is also however notably insular in the way it fails to recognise people, groups or physical buildings outside itself as assets that can contribute to the wider agenda of the school. This was evident during interviews when the stakeholders were unable to give specific examples of assets within the local community that were unconnected with the school. The couple of examples given were around community regeneration schemes, which were run by outside agencies and parents who had been through the first cycle of FAST, which was connected to the school.

Asset-based working is a developmental process. It can work well in communities and with many agencies (Eloff and Ebersohn, 2001, Mathie and Cunningham, 2003) but in the case of schools it is difficult to promote and develop as ultimately the school has an agenda that must be delivered and it is unable to merely rely on assets to deliver the core ‘business’ of the school. Parents and other groups within the community who could be regarded as assets and positive role models for schools could support across the curriculum but we have seen that in order for them to be recognised as assets they would need to meet the school’s
agenda. Whilst it would seem schools are keen to work with local communities, our case study highlighted that many of the stakeholders still view the community from a deficit perspective. The case study showed that the work the school and stakeholders do is around raising aspirations and providing opportunities, hence the involvement of programmes such as FAST which are based around deficit models. Such work with families does not start from the "status quo" and build upon it as stated by Eloff and Ebersohn (2001, p.151) rather it works on identifying problems and issues and putting in programmes to support the resolution of those issues. By concentrating on this focus, schools and other professionals are in danger of imposing ideas and initiatives that are not always in the best interests of the families and communities and are not asset-based (Renee and McAlister, 2011, p.3). The case study indicated that the school and its stakeholders are beginning to understand the value of recognising these assets to a certain extent but don’t have ideas, plans and structures in place to harness assets within the local community and such work is distinctly slow and unclear.

The extended schools agenda on the whole had a strong orientation towards disadvantaged communities; this is the way funding for provision was generally allocated. Assets do not always attract additional funding so there is the danger that they can be overlooked and a focus placed on perceived deficits as a means of accessing funding and the provision of additional support as documented by Boyle et al (2010, pp.28-30). However, this has reinforced some stereotypical deficit judgements which hinder the possibility of anyone or anything within the local areas of schools ever being considered an asset. Historically Kretzman and McKnight, (1993, p.4) spoke of schools being forced to “…denigrate their...community by highlighting their problems and deficiencies, and by ignoring their capacities and strengths.” This issue remains as schools and many other agencies are often incentivised to not recognise assets within their local community as it fails to attract funding.
Therefore it is possibly not the fault of schools and stakeholders as they have generally been encouraged to explore deprivation and deficit issues, not to recognise assets.

The mapping of assets within the local community and linking them together with the school is not an expectation of schools and with the passing of the extended schools agenda it is unlikely that schools will ever consciously seek to recognise and build upon future assets – it is a time consuming exercise with limited benefits in the eyes of the stakeholders. In the case study school the development of assets is left to chance with the FAST programme. Should any assets in terms of individuals come out of the programme, there is a significant chance they will be harnessed by the school, but to meet and support in the delivery of the school’s agenda, as this agenda is prevalent; it is a state run organisation that has inspections, national and local targets and a range of subjects to deliver during a limited school day and educational attainment / school improvement remain at the heart of this accountability system (Education and Training Inspectorate, 2006, p.11). Schools have to operate within a policy context, not in a vacuum and there is a strong accountability system established around all state run schools. The accountability is to the education and the development of the children in their care, not the development of an asset-based approach. The roles of the professionals that work within the school are defined by their job descriptions none of which are likely to include a responsibility for identifying assets within the local community. Recognising and building upon assets in the local community is not a key part of this agenda and whilst it is something that schools may have an interest in, competing priorities do not allow the time for schools to explore these opportunities in more detail. Stakeholders generally view the school as the main asset and that has often come about in part due to the building of relationships with parents and the local community (Noguera, 2001, p.207) and the legacy of the extended schools agenda which emphasised
the recognition that schools need to work with parents in order to provide positive environments for the children (Gold, et al 2004, p. 55s, Renee and McAlister, 2011, p.3).

**Co-production**

Much of the literature I reviewed around co-production relates to public services working with local communities. There was very little available that related to co-production between schools and local communities. Co-production does not currently play a clearly identified role in the provision of the case study school used for this research – it remains at a fairly basic level and the power relations are still decided by the school (Warren et al, 2009, p.2240). Schools may seek contributions from parents and the local community but there is little evidence of decision making done by these groups and the contribution schools make to disadvantaged groups within their locality is still in danger of being dominated by professional views (Eloff and Ebersohn, 2001, p.149). If other schools are like the case study school they may consider that they work in a co-productive way but as referred to earlier, the findings indicate that this co-production is in reality more like community involvement. “Co-production means delivering public services in an equal and reciprocal relationship...” (Boyle and Harris, 2009, p.11) This is not currently the way many schools operate. “Co-production emphasises that people are not passive recipients of services...it refers to active input by the people who use the services.” (Needham and Carr, 2009, p.1) Once again, the evidence indicates that children, families and the communities surrounding schools are generally recipients of services with little or no active input into them. These service users do not generally play an active role in the planning and delivery of the work of the school but are encouraged to join in once the plans have been made. “The agent can supply encouragements, suggest options...provide guidance...but the agent alone cannot bring about the change.” (Whitaker, 1980, p.240). Here we can see the case study school and its
stakeholders involved as the agent(s) are making the suggestions but falling short of making a reality of the ‘equal and reciprocal relationship’.

Schools may be genuine about working with their local communities but there are always going to be boundaries around what is shared and how relationships develop when stakeholders continue to voice that the school has to be the primary focus. There also is the question as to whether or not the public service that schools provide can be viewed in the same way from a co-productive angle as the public service that the Police or health service (for example) provide. Schools are singular statutory institutions in a physical sense, they don’t provide a service in the same way that the Police and health service do. There is a statutory requirement for children to receive an education, although parental preference can play a role in the institution they choose to access, schools have a clearly defined curriculum and targets that they have to deliver and achieve under close scrutiny. There is very little relational power by way of the local community; Governing bodies may offer opportunities for local communities to become involved but representation there is often in reality only minimal (Dean, Dyson et al., 2007, p.10). Therefore local communities may have very little effect or opportunity (other than through consultation when the stakeholders choose to consult) to shape and define the delivery of the work of schools as a public service.

Community organizing could be a way in which communities ensure their role in co-production. However such activist individuals and organised groups did not appear to exist within the area of the case study school; none were ever referred to and their presence is not readily apparent. Historically some groups did exist in the local area but these were generally led by the voluntary sector. A somewhat unusual fact that was made evident during the case study was that whilst situated within an area of significant deprivation,
unlike examples provided through literature such as Warren (2005), Gold et al (2004), Renee and McAlister (2011) and Lopez (2003) the school is not a failing school. Successive OFSTED inspections have judged the school to be outstanding and results are generally in line with expectations. So whilst this school is situated within an area of significant deprivation it cannot be viewed in the same way as schools referred to in much of the literature around community organizing. The findings show that stakeholders such as the headteacher, parent, extended school co-ordinator and Governor felt that the parents and community are happy with the provision in this school. There is an imbalance of power between the school and the community as has been highlighted but there is also a degree of mutual respect as the school has worked hard to consult with and engage the community over a number of years, albeit around the school's agenda. “When we've had OFSTED inspections the parents have been very supportive to us...” (Headteacher).

The similarities between the case study school and examples provided by Noguera (2001, p.189) are more striking than the other literature relating to community organizing. Increasing parental participation has played a key role in the development of the extended provision at this school as the headteacher and other stakeholders have recognised the links between parental participation and attainment and achievement of the children in school (Egan, 2012, p.13, Egan, 2013, p.9). However we have seen that the notion of equal partners is not something the stakeholders view as possible or proper at Beachstream. This tallies with the comments from Gold et al, (2004, p. 59s), Lopez, (2003, p. 4) and Warren et al, (2009, p. 2240) which refer to resistance, conflict and differences in power levels between schools and parents and communities as there are still boundaries in existence around what is to be shared. “...in a sense you have to temper this idea of equal partners a little bit because the school has to have that primary focus.” (Governor)
Therefore the evidence shows that co-production is not in existence in the case study school in the way that the literature reviewed discusses. There is no clear evidence that “The public frequently want to be more active partners.” (Horne and Shirley, 2009, p.5) and Beachstream, in this instance the agent, often tends to present the “finished product” (Whittaker, 1980, p.240) rather than working closely with the community to “…produce the desired transformation.” The stakeholders recognise the need to work with parents and the local community to raise standards (Brain and Reid, 2003, pp.291/292) but as Horne and Shirley (2009, p.5) also recognised, co-production is not always the most appropriate way of working across all public services. Ultimately, it is also not an expectation or requirement of schools to work and plan in this way and so is very much left down to individual headteachers and stakeholders as to how this work evolves.

**Implications for policy**

One of the key issues highlighted in the literature review (Cummings, Dyson and Todd, 2007a, p.189; Black, Lemon and Walsh, 2010, p.4) was that throughout the extended schools policy documentation across England there lacked a blueprint for schools and LAs to follow as a guide for developing their provision. This resulted in the agenda being flexible but also left it open to a certain degree of interpretation. When the agenda was rolled out in my LA many schools were initially wary of the core offer (DfES, 2007, p.2) The LA quickly established an ‘Extended Schools Award’ which schools began to work towards, in the absence of a national blueprint. This required schools to evidence what provision they had developed or were delivering in partnership in relation to the core offer. This helped to define what the expectations were for our schools, but this was a subjective view, designed by colleagues within the LA in conjunction with officers from regional groups. Similarly, although the Government in England had a 2010 target for extended schools (DfES, 2005, p.4) it was never made a statutory requirement. This gave confusing messages to schools
and LAs as although it was an expectation - schools and LAs were RAG rated on their success. RAG rating related to Red, Amber and Green ratings for schools, with Red meaning there was little or no evidence or provision, Amber meaning there was some evidence of provision but it wasn't established and Green meaning provision was extended and built into the schools’ development plan. However, whilst schools and LAs were monitored and reviewed on their development of extended provision there was no statutory obligation to deliver it (Cummings et al, 2005, p.10).

When policies came out (DfES, 2005) many schools were unfamiliar with working in such a way that involved multi-agency or family centred approaches. Schools that had been run as Community Schools (Scottish Office, 1998, p.1, Continyou Cymru, 2006, p.3) recognised the role schools could play in the community but they did not necessarily recognise the role the community could play in schools. Wilkin et al, (2003, p.ii) referred to outside agencies basing themselves in schools as a solution to working with children, young people and their families in order to address the growing demands school staff were facing but in reality this did not happen in the majority of schools until the 2010 target for extended provision was almost upon them. Schools did not appear to recognise other educators within the local community and so failed to harness their potential and build upon the assets as mentioned.

The findings of the case study supported the argument from the literature review around the need for a blueprint for policy agendas. The theoretical framework used in this research shows how far apart stakeholders can be when they feel they are all working on the same ideas, so a clearer blueprint, goals and reasons for doing things need to be communicated at a range of levels so the benefits are made explicitly clear and the professional boundaries understood (Edwards, 2008, p.7).
If the extended schools agenda were to be reintroduced then experience shows that it would be helpful if the reasons and benefits for these ways of working were more clearly communicated to people within schools and also to parents. This would allow the priorities between stakeholders to become more transparent and shared. Some of the community organizing literature reviewed earlier in chapters (Warren et al, 2009; Gold et al, 2004; Lopez, 2003; Noguera, 2001) provides a background as to how this has worked, mostly in the United States of America, highlighting the balance and imbalances of power that can cause problems when developing joint working.

**Implications for further research**

Further studies exploring in more detail a range of schools that consider themselves to be community oriented, how they identify and build upon the assets within their communities and how they work co-productively would provide a range of potentially useful models for future school development. Currently the literature in this field appears to be dominated by professional perspectives. Extended schools are seen as places where professionals deliver extended services to disadvantaged communities. Do those schools consider themselves to be more community aware and do they genuinely play a key role in identifying community assets and help to build on them in a co-productive way? The stakeholders at Beachstream maintain that they have a very high level of commitment to community engagement and it is a high priority for them. If this way of working was to be successful anywhere surely it would be at Beachstream given their level of commitment to these areas? The stakeholders consider themselves to be very community aware, yet the research has shown that they are not fully able to recognise community assets outside the school and co-production is still some way off.
Literature reviewed in Chapter 2 (mostly from the USA) shows that often this way of working involves many different professionals jointly planning together and in some instances communities, (Scott, 2002, p.151; Warren et al, 2009; Gold et al, 2004; Lopez, 2003; Noguera, 2001) but there appears to be very little literature available relating to schools in the United Kingdom. Much of the co-production literature relates to circumstances whereby the direct recipients are involved in the planning and delivery of the services or activities. This raises a question about who would be the co-producers if the focus of the school is the children and young people? Would it be a true representation of co-productive work if parents, families and communities worked with schools to develop and deliver services if they were not the direct recipients? This would be an interesting issue to research in more detail as a way exploring the finer points of co-production and the extent to which direct recipients need to be involved in the planning to make it genuine.

When the study with Beachstream was initially undertaken, part of the purpose was to gauge whether or not my presence would be viewed as an intervention to move forward. The school were happy with their progress in relation to becoming increasingly community-oriented but the study was undertaken as a way of exploring whether or not they were able to develop this even further. As the research progressed it became clear that there were not as many opportunities to work with the school as initially planned. Absence, other priorities, workload, timings, and apathy to a certain extent from stakeholders played a role in this engagement with the school. If a researcher were able to work closely with the school over a longer period of time then maybe the school could develop further as a community oriented school, with clear actions planned and evaluated. I feel that my dual insider / outsider role was not the best role to play during this research as it may have limited opportunities for further development with the school. The insider role possibly compromised some of the responses given, despite reminders about my role as a researcher.
for the duration of the interviews and feedback sessions. However there is no doubt that the insider part of my role supported the acceptance and readiness with which the school and stakeholders engaged with the process, as there are so many conflicting priorities within school I doubt whether they would have granted an outsider the same level of time and interest. It allowed me to probe the accounts of community orientation provided as my insider knowledge meant that I was less likely to take these accounts at face value. The insider role worked particularly well in that it allowed me to gain access to the school fairly easily and explore issues which the stakeholders may have been more reluctant to discuss with an outsider. The strength of this role enabled me to remain closely linked to the school over a fairly lengthy period of time during the research process as positive relationships had been established through my insider role some time previously. The insider role also supported the commitment of the stakeholders as they remained constant throughout the research process, with no changes other than the decisions taken by me to not include the School Council pupils in the feedback sessions. The outsider role was perhaps not as easily recognised by the stakeholders due to their level of familiarity with me as an LA colleague, so this sometimes made it difficult to get the depth of answers and detail I was keen to explore. It also prevented the stakeholders from stating some of the facts as there was a certain level of supposition they expected me to be aware of and they occasionally appeared uncertain when prompted or challenged about specifics that they seemed to believe I should already be aware of, as an insider.

**Contribution to knowledge**

This thesis has examined the extent to which and the ways in which extended schools can become more community-oriented in their extended provision, with a focus on one case study school. Reviews of literature did not reveal any other study that presented evidence around the extent to which a case study school can become increasingly community oriented
in its extended provision; the extent to which a school is able to recognise and build upon the assets within the local community and the extent to which a school is physically and practically able to work co-productively with the local community, despite the constraints placed upon it at local and national levels.

This is one of a few studies that has critically looked at the internal processes of a specific school as it developed its extended provision. Reviews of literature have produced studies that are often advocates of particular ways of working but this study has explored the extent to which and the ways in which extended schools can become more community-oriented in their extended provision with a focus on a case study school. This study has begun to address the gaps in literature available by showing that despite these many constraints a school can become increasingly community oriented in its provision of extended services and activities. This is evidenced in the development of provision highlighted in the case study. However the development of this provision and move towards becoming increasingly community oriented this will always be limited by a range of internal and external factors, including stakeholders and local and national policies.

This study has also addressed gaps in literature available relating to the development of a community oriented school by showing that even with the level of commitment to extended provision a school may offer, they are not always able to clearly recognise and build upon the assets they may have in the local community. Two different assets were evident – one being the assets that schools recognise as those that can be used and built upon to serve their own purpose; such as individuals within the local community, and the other being assets that can be built upon to benefit and serve the community; such as the physical buildings, resources and staff offered through individual schools. This is the first study which
documents through the use of a case study how school stakeholders make genuine attempts to consider the community’s needs and voices in the local area through surveys and encouraging feedback from parents. They generally act upon much of this information and feed it back into the daily work and planning within the school. However the stakeholders fall short of clearly recognising and acknowledging the assets within the local community that exist outside of the school. A lot of this is left to chance or driven by a needs-based approach, which has a tendency to focus on the deficit model (Eloff and Ebersohn, 2001, p.149 and Kretzman and McKnight, 1993, p.2), pathologising not empowering, lacking faith in the ability of the community to deliver without support. This study unlike others previously conducted highlights that even for a school as committed and enthusiastic about working with the local community as the case study school, assets that are already in existence within the local community are not easily recognised, harnessed and built upon. Professional assets and physical resources such as the school dominate the stakeholders’ views as being the obvious assets within the local area.

This is the first study to contribute to the debate in the field of co-production by examining the extent to which a school is physically and practically able to work co-productively with the local community. As we saw in the literature review, very little information around schools working co-productively is currently available. However the reason for the gap in literature relating to schools may be because there are few (if any) examples documented of where this has worked particularly well. This research attempts to address that gap in literature by providing an example of how a school with a strong commitment to community engagement still has other factors which it has to abide by and adhere to which limits the extent to which it can develop co-productively. The literature indicates that where co-production is actively encouraged and equal partnerships have been developed it can work very well (Whitaker, 1980, p.240) but this was not clearly evident in the research findings to
the extent in which Needham and Carr (2009, p.1) describe it. It does exist but only in a small and limited way.

This study highlights the way in which schools have a very school-centric way of delivering their provision and planning for the future. If a school is like the case study school we can see that much of what is planned and delivered is actually for the community, but the assets that exist outside the school are not clearly recognised. The case study school has developed much of its provision to offer pathways for its pupils out of disadvantaged communities the evidence showed that this provision is planned from a professional rather than a parent / community perspective.

This study has begun to explore the extent to which co-production can occur within schools. The findings indicate that such work is possible but limited by a number of factors outside the control of the school and the stakeholders. Schools are constrained by regional and national expectations and directives. Limitations set through local and national expectations often make it difficult and unwise to challenge when extended provision and working with local communities are no longer the priority they once were. The community may remain the same for a considerable length of time, whereas the priorities within schools are constantly changing with shifts in English Government and LA funding, initiatives and policies. The study shows that stakeholders may be committed to developing their work with families and communities but they cannot get everything done without the involvement of some form of genuine co-productive work. The ideas and successes of working in this way are not deeply enough ingrained in many schools, as was evidenced by the breakdown of delivery and sustainability in our case study school when the extended school co-ordinator went off on maternity leave. This way of working does not encourage the development of an ethos or
the embedding of initiatives, but leaves too much to chance. When everything is invested in one individual it can isolate the provision and hinder its development and sustainability.

Throughout this study a range of literatures have been explored. Literature relating to the extended schools agenda was reviewed to set the scene; then we went on to explore literature around asset and deficit-based provisions; next we moved on to explore aspects of community organizing and finally literature relating to co-production was reviewed. The reason for undertaking this research was because a gap in the literature available had been identified and searches for literature that related directly to schools linking in asset-based working and co-production had proved unsuccessful. Much of the literature reviewed helped to set things into a context, and discussed how things were able to work in practice, but there were few examples of this in relation to schools, and more specifically schools within the United Kingdom. The bulk of the literature available was dominated by professional views; this may be the reason for there being a limited amount of asset-based literature available. Literature around community organizing was much more relevant to the ideals of developing the community-oriented approach but generally focused around work in America. This was still of relevance, but placed a focus around the dissatisfaction and inequality between communities and their schools in America, which was not a particular issue that became apparent in my case study. Whilst there is still much more literature to explore in relation to asset-based provision, community organizing and co-production, it is hoped that this research makes a contribution to knowledge by addressing the gaps in the literature above in relation to schools and the work of other stakeholders.
Conclusions

This study has demonstrated that whilst schools may be keen to work in increasingly community oriented ways; whilst some are beginning to recognise assets within their local community and whilst some are working in a slightly co-productive way, there are a number of limits and constraints that often prevent these ways of working from developing to the extent that many of those who advocate this ideal such as Mathie and Cunningham (2003), Gewirtz et al (2005) and Thrupp and Tomlinson (2005) would like. To some extent there are limits bound by deficit thinking as highlighted in Kretzman and McKnight (1993), Eloff and Ebersohn (2001), but this study has shown that it is often difficult for schools to come to terms with their local community other than through professional dominance, as education of the children in their care is generally the key priority of the school. The extended schools agenda offered support for community oriented working and enabled the stimulation of critical friendships between many schools and their communities, but this is no longer a national or local priority. The co-production element is the one that generally falls short of working in the way that advocates for that would prefer and this case study show that it is difficult to actualise the reality promoted by Whitaker (1980), Scott (2002), Boyle and Harris (2009) and Needham and Carr (2009) because of the constraints and expectations placed on schools by local and national government.

Insofar as Beachstream can be seen as typical of schools in England it would appear that schools find community oriented work difficult as they do not access the wider community in the same way that other groups, agencies or organisations often do and in reality have no need to. Schools have a wide and detailed agenda to deliver and meet and so, with this way of working already identified as being difficult to do there is not the expectation or desire to pursue it further than is already in evidence in this situation. Therefore we can conclude that whilst some schools, such as Beachstream choose to engage in community oriented work
they can pursue and develop this in many ways but ultimately community oriented working is dominated by school priorities and the work is focused around the needs identified by the school, not the community.

Similarly insofar as Beachstream can be seen as typical of schools in England, schools may have difficulty in readily identifying community assets and again the expectation is not there nationally or locally for them to do so, there is no external or internal challenge for schools to further develop in this area. Therefore if we take the case study example, other than what happens through chance or what comes out of programmes that schools engage in, it is fairly unlikely that schools would ever want or have the need to engage proactively in seeking out assets within the local community and build upon them. As the research indicated in the case study, schools are often not concerned with the wider community; their main focus is primarily the children on roll within the school and their families to a lesser extent. Schools such as Beachstream often see themselves as the prime asset and do not proactively go out into the community to seek to identify further assets as once more this is not part of their role and they generally do not have the facility in terms of resources (human and financial) to undertake this work.

The case study appears to indicate that schools do not have to work co-productively, because education professionals are not actively encouraged to work with local communities in the same way that other agencies sometimes are. In the instance of Beachstream the number of groups in existence within the community are significantly less than previously. Historically there were a small number of community and voluntary sector groups that were active in this area; church groups, tenants and residents groups and a handful of voluntary groups many of whom were funded in part by the LA. The community centre closed down a few years ago and the voluntary sector groups ceased to exist when funding was withdrawn.
around 4 years ago. Some of the faith groups and churches have also now closed down so their presence is no longer as strong in the community as it once was but the education system is not viewed as needing community assets as a core part of its provision. The extended schools agenda promoted this work to a certain extent but it is now an optional way of working rather than a specific requirement of schools. It takes significant resources; human, financial and time in order to pursue this way of working to the extent to which it becomes an accepted feature in the makeup of the school.

Beachstream built extended provision into its management structure and they maintain their commitment to this work. However whether they further their focus around recognising and building upon assets within the local community or develop the role that co-production plays in the provision of their school is something only the stakeholders can determine from this point forward - whether this work continues has now become a matter of choice rather than urgency.

**Reflection**

In some ways this research has become outdated. It would perhaps have been more topical a few years ago when the extended schools agenda was still developing to see how one school, or different schools (for a more in-depth study), developed in terms of the areas highlighted in the research questions. However, the gap in literature relating to the areas mentioned remains significant, no matter what the current Government in England’s policies and agendas are. Whilst the extended schools agenda has been superseded, extended provision still exists in many of our schools to a large extent as parents continue to demand additional services and activities through our schools and the areas highlighted in the research questions remain highly topical.
It could be argued that studying one case does not enable generalisations to be made about all cases, but this case study was a carefully and specifically chosen example of a school that was engaging in the extended schools agenda and was keen to develop and strengthen links with parents and the local community once the Government in England’s national agenda had ceased to be at the forefront of educational policy. Therefore the choice of the school for the case study was actually a strength in this research.

There is an increasing amount of collaborative working evident in the majority of schools in my LA and in others. This may be as a result of schools developing their extended provision but may also be linked to initiatives developed as a result of a number of reports produced in relation to children and young people - Allen and Duncan Smith, 2008; Field, 2010; Allen, 2011 and 2011(a). Professionals are now working more closely together to resolve issues, bringing expertise to families that has not previously existed in such local forms. Examples of this include the FAST programme that was in evidence at Beachstream. Horizontal learning is taking place as the different agencies begin to work more closely together, professional boundaries are beginning to merge in some instances but there are still gaps as many agencies still appear to be starting from a deficit-base instead of embracing and building upon the asset-base which so often exists within our local communities. Work still falls short of including learning opportunities that could exist from working with parents, families and local communities (Mathie and Cunningham, 2007, p.477). There still appears to be an element of schools and stakeholders wanting to maintain that overall control, possibly because they feel that their professionalism is being challenged (Gold et al, 2004, p.59s; Warren et al, 2009, p.2240). Generally, schools consist of staff (some of whom may have been in post for many years) who may have entered the profession with priorities purely around teaching and learning, and suddenly they are expected to comply or take on a shared vision of something they know little or nothing about (Todd, 2007, p.155).
Being involved in the extended schools agenda from the early days within my LA was an exciting and extremely valuable (although at times highly challenging) experience. The changes the agenda brought about sparked the idea for this research. I have enjoyed the privileged position of working with groups of extremely positive schools across my LA, who place their children and families at the centre of their extended provision. This may not have resulted in those schools becoming completely asset-based in their provision or delivering their services in a truly co-productive manner in the way in which those whose literatures I have reviewed would like. However the commitment to New Labour’s extended schools agenda and the way in which our schools embraced the core offer and different ways of working with other agencies - albeit at different paces with different schools – reinforced much of the good will still in evidence in schools across my LA. Many schools still continue to deliver extended provision as they are aware of the benefits it can provide to children, young people, families and communities as well as the school as a whole.

I have gained an much clearer understanding of the issues relating to asset-based working, community organizing and co-production through this research and have shared much of that information with the stakeholders who formed the focus of this study. It is now down to them to take this information if they choose and use it to strengthen their delivery to help make this school an even better working model of good practice from which lessons can be learned. This has been an exciting and interesting thesis to undertake, not without its challenges, difficulties and dilemmas but thankfully each of these have been overcome. It is hoped that this research offers new possibilities, inspiration and practical advice to those that may wish to explore the topic in more detail. Without the research I have undertaken this knowledge would not have been developed, it now needs to be used in the best way possible to develop the provision of the school and stakeholder group to drive the agenda forward in a strong and unified way.
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Appendices

Appendix 1

Additional Information from the Literature Review

England

The remit for the Schools Plus Policy Action Team was set out as a result of the Social Exclusion Unit’s report, which was published in 1998, which looked at a national strategy for neighbourhood renewal. They were asked to report on 7 key areas:

- The education projects e.g. homework centres, breakfast clubs, etc, which most improve educational outcomes;
- The best ways of involving parents in their children’s education and how these can be extended to improve adults’ skills;
- The best examples of mentoring and work-experience schemes;
- How schools can be encouraged and helped by LEAs and others to develop these activities more extensively;
- How schools can be used to engage the community more widely, drawing in greater support and making their facilities available to more people;
- Evidence that co-locating health and other social services at school level contributes to improved educational outcomes;
- How cost-effectiveness can best be measured and what can be done to promote good practice.

With an overall goal of identifying “…the most cost-effective Schools Plus approaches to using school as a focus for other community services, reducing failure at school, and to develop an action plan with targets to take these forward.” (DfEE, 1999, p.8)

The drive for all schools to become extended by 2010 was also directly linked to the Every Child Matters Green Paper which highlighted the necessity for integrated services to become a reality in each of our LAs and in turn, our local communities. This began in 2005 when the English Government introduced the target around extended schools. As schools began to deliver the core offer of extended provision it became clear that many schools did not have the capacity to deliver all aspects of the core offer and so schools were encouraged to work in partnership and ‘signpost’ to aspects of the provision they could not offer on site.
Gradually around 2007/2008 the shift developed from extended ‘schools’ to extended ‘services’ and partnerships with other agencies and schools were developed in order for schools to be able to either develop on site or signpost to the core offer for extended schools. These partnerships included schools working with private providers for childcare, Sure Start centres, youth services and other voluntary and community sector groups who specialised in different areas of the core offer. The drive in extended provision was also to ensure that schools and other agencies began to work more closely together in relation to the ‘swift and easy access to targeted and specialist services’ for children, young people and their families. Integrated and multi-agency working played a huge part in this agenda. Integrated working had been identified as a priority area previously in Scotland amongst other places when talking about the delivery of extended services and activities. The DfES (2007) talks about the success of extended services depending on “…effective planning by partners in children’s trusts, as part of the development of Children and Young People’s Plans and Local Area Agreements.” (DfES, 2007, p. 8) This will involve not only integrated working but also joint commissioning and pooling of budgets at a strategic level as a way of ensuring that the delivery of integrated and extended services and activities become part of everyone’s agenda.

**Scotland**

There was clear guidance in the prospectus about how new community schools should develop and what they were expected to look like. Once more, Wilkin et al (2003, p.35) provided a clear and coherent list of these principles and issues on which the new community schools programme is based:

- A focus on the needs of all pupils at the school;
- Engagement with families;
- Engagement with the wider community;
- Integrated provision of school education, informal as well as formal education, social work and health education and promotion services;
- Integrated management;
• Arrangements for the delivery of these services according to a set of integrated objectives and measurable outcomes;
• Commitment and leadership;
• Multi-disciplinary training and development.

It would appear therefore that the Scottish Government’s reasons for developing the new community school’s programmes were not dissimilar to those documented by the American literature available. However, the emphasis on the socio-economic reason was initially not quite so abundantly clear in the Scottish model. The Scottish Government saw the new community schools as ideal sites from where a range of services could be delivered, brought together by a single team of professionals. These services were to be developed and offered on schools sites as a means of addressing the “cycle of underachievement” (Scottish Office, 1998, p.1) and ensuring that integrated approaches enabled the early identification of vulnerable children and young people to become a reality.

The Scottish Government invested heavily in early years, focusing on a time in children’s lives where “...intervention and assistance can make the maximum impact on children, their families and the barriers they face to effective learning and development.” (Scottish Office, 1998, p.1) This was a conscious decision on the Scottish Government’s part to address issues early in a child’s life as a means to develop opportunities to promote positive attitudes to learning and to raise expectations of families for their children and themselves.

In later evaluations of the pilot programme clearer links were made between the New Community Schools (NCSs) policy and the wider Social Inclusion Strategy (Scottish Executive Education Department, 2003, p.1). Change did begin to occur as funding became more readily available from social work and health sources to support the delivery of the work on a more local level, some of this was also provided in the form of staff members as opposed to discrete finance. However the evaluation of the work in Scotland once more referred to confusion over the idea behind NCSs:
Lack of understanding of different agency roles, remit of and what NCSs really stand for and resistance to change were reported by some survey respondents as a particular hindrance...Lack of clarity combined with overly complex managerial responsibilities within and between partner organisations created difficulties within some NCS projects and sometimes led to confusion and conflict.

(Scottish Executive Education Department, 2003, p.10)

**Wales**
The first national conference for community focused schools took place in Wales in December 2005 (Continyou Cymru, 2006, p.3) This conference built on guidance already produced by the National Assembly for Wales who acknowledged the important role schools play in communities today and went on to provide a definition of a community focused school. This list of benefits from being involved in a community focused school for pupils and schools includes; improvements in achievement, motivation and self-esteem; access to specialist support, facilities and equipment; improved links with and status of the local community. Benefits for families include; increased opportunities for learning, for adults and links to supporting children’s learning; support from specialist services and improvements in children’s behaviour and social skills. Benefits for communities include; increased access to services; career development opportunities; improved links with schools and better supervision of children out of school hours and an increase in access to sports, arts and other facilities. (National Assembly for Wales, 2003, p.4) Whilst it must be acknowledged that children and young people and the delivery of better services and development of increased opportunities for them are central to this rationale, there is also a strong emphasis on developing the “...community spirit amongst parents...and to...reach out to the whole community” (National Assembly for Wales, 2003, p.3). The development of the community spirit may be compared to a certain extent with the rationales behind the work in the Ukraine, where democratic participation is being encouraged and communities are being empowered, however those links could not be described as being strong and at best could probably only be classed as coincidence.
The seven core aims of the Rights to Action, referred to above are:

...to ensure that all children;

- Have a flying start in life;
- Have a comprehensive range of education, training and learning opportunities;
- Enjoy the best possible health, and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation;
- Have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities;
- Are listened to and treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised;
- Have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional well-being;
- Are not disadvantaged by poverty.

(Continyou Cymru, 2006, p.9)

The seven core aims above are not dissimilar to those listed under the five outcomes from the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda in England, which children and young people said were key to their well-being:

- To be healthy;
- To stay safe;
- To enjoy and achieve;
- To make a positive contribution;
- To achieve economic well-being.

(DfES, 2005, p. 6)

A list of benefits for pupils and schools, families and communities are referred to by the National Assembly for Wales, which are taken from a report on the first phase of the Narrowing the Gap in the Performance of Schools Project from 2002 which found that: “...where schools engage with their local community this has a direct impact on pupil’s attainment and raised their aspirations to progress from school to further education, training and employment.” (National Assembly for Wales, 2003, p.3)
## Appendix 2

### Research timeline

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Project Milestones</th>
<th>Months</th>
<th>Year 1 - months</th>
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<td>Update literature where relevant</td>
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<td>Develop explanatory framework</td>
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<td>Revise explanatory framework</td>
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Appendix 3

Interview Questions - adults

Scene-setting – Think over your time in school, can you tell me about your best experience of when something worked well between the school and the community?

(Prompts to explore – what was special / how did people feel / what was different / who was involved / what were people saying?)

1) Tell me about a time when the school and the community came together based around the assets in the community.

(Prompts to explore – firstly if no response check if they can tell you about someone who may have had that experience. What was the event or experience / how did they work together / why did it work so well / what did the community offer or bring to the event / what did the school offer or bring to the event / how was it delivered or driven forward / who took the lead in driving it / what did people say about the event?)

2) If we knew that the school and community were working democratically and inclusively together to co-productively plan for the future what would that look like?

(Prompts to explore – provide a definition of co-production / how could (or does) this work / what may your role be in this / who else may need to be part of this?)

3) If we knew that the school and the community were acting as equal partners and held the same values, using their assets and skills to help our families thrive in the future, what would we be doing?

(Prompts to explore – how would you define equal partners / what does having the same values mean to you / what does thriving mean to you / what would you notice if families were thriving)

4) If the above situation was an ideal in terms of a school being a community-oriented extended school - providing an asset-based model of school for disadvantaged children, young people, families and communities on a scale of 1-10 we may put it as a 10. Using that same scale where do you think we are now?

(Prompts to explore – depending on number given ask why it isn’t a 0 this should show what is already working and as interviews progress a common core and things to work on should become more evident / what small step could move it on from eg. 3 / what one thing could you do to make a difference / what number on the scale would be good enough / what could you do to move it towards that number / on a scale of 1-10 how confident are you that you could do the small step?)
Appendix 4

Interview Questions – school council

**Scene-setting** – I am trying to find out how this school works with the community and how many things happen here where both the school and the community do things together.

(Prompts to explore – explain what I mean by 'community' and who that may involve (including them) / what was special / how did people feel / what was different / who was involved / what were people saying?)

1) Whilst you have been at this school can you remember anything really good that happened which brought school and the local community together?

(Prompts to explore – firstly if no response check if they can tell you about someone who may have had that experience. What was the event or experience / how did they work together / why did it work so well / what did the community offer or bring to the event / what did the school offer or bring to the event / how was it delivered or driven forward / who took the lead in driving it / what did people say about the event?)

2) If we knew that the school and community were working together to plan things for the future how do you think you would be involved?

(Prompts to explore – provide a definition of co-production / how could (or does) this work / what may your role be in this / who else may need to be part of this?)

3) If we knew that the school and community were working together to plan things for the future to make lives better for everyone, what sort of things do you think you would all be planning?

(Prompts to explore – how would you define equal partners / what does having the same values mean to you / what does thriving mean to you / what would you notice if families were thriving)

4) If it was as good as that (the ideal situation discussed above) we may say that on a scale of 1-10 that scored a 10 Think about your school now, at the moment where do you think your school is on that scale?

(Prompts to explore – depending on number given ask why it isn’t a 0 this should show what is already working and as interviews progress a common core and things to work on should become more evident / what small step could move it on from eg. 3 / what one thing could you do to make a difference / what number on the scale would be good enough / what could you do to move it towards that number / on a scale of 1-10 how confident are you that you could do the small step?)
Appendix 5

A case study of an emerging community-oriented extended school – issues of process and policy

Participant Information Sheet

You are being invited to take part in a study which is part of a Doctorate in Education research paper. Before you decide whether or not you would like to take part in this study it is important for you to understand why the study is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

Who will conduct the study?
Emma Metcalfe, The University of Manchester, School of Education, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL

Title of the study
A case study of an emerging community-oriented extended school – issues of process and policy

What is the aim of the study?
The aim of this study is to examine the ways in which extended schools can become more community-oriented in their extended provision, particularly in relation to the way schools and the professionals that both work in and with them can add to the asset-base of communities.

This study will form the basis for my Doctorate in Education thesis. Data collected will be analysed and conclusions will be drawn from the data.

Why have I been chosen?
You have been chosen as the study will be focusing on Beachstream Primary School and you are a partner in the extended provision that is offered by the school. A maximum of 10 research participants will be involved. It is intended that this will be made up of the Headteacher, extended school co-ordinator, children’s centre manager, 4 school council members, a Governor, a local ward Councillor, and a Parent – maximum of 10 in total. For the purpose of this research (interview schedules, questions, consent forms etc) I will treat the adults as one group and the children as a different group.

What would I be asked to do if I took part?
It is anticipated that there will be one initial interview with each stakeholder, which may last between 15 and 45 minutes (depending on your contribution). It may be that you are asked to take part in a further interview, should the need arise, depending on the contributions from individuals the first time around. It is anticipated that the second interview would be slightly shorter than the first.
The information from the interviews will then be used to help formulate a number of statements about how individuals may be positioned in relation to their perceptions of the school being community-oriented in its extended provision.

At the end of the study and first interview process you may be asked to meet as part of the group so information can be shared and built into a plan relating to increasing general stakeholder awareness and potential involvement in the development of the community-oriented direction of the local school.

There are no risks associated with taking part in this study. The research is not a test of your knowledge. There is no one right answer.

**What happens to the data collected?**
Data will be presented and analysed in a research paper as part of my Doctorate in Education. Findings will be used to inform the methodology and research instruments for my Doctorate in Education thesis. Data will be kept securely for no longer than one year after confirmation of my degree result. This is expected to be 2015.

**How is confidentiality maintained?**
Appropriate measures will be taken to store research data in a secure manner and methods of preserving anonymity will be used – names and locations will be altered as a way of breaking the link between data and potentially identifiable stakeholders / schools.

Personal data will be used only as a means of contact between researcher and participant and will be stored securely and not kept for any longer than is necessary. Anonymisation procedures will be put in place for the recording of interviews and the analysis of data gathered and the consequent publishing of data through the final piece of work. Information sent via email will be minimal and again only done as a means of establishing contact with participants, for example should an interview need to be re-arranged etc. Laptop to be used will be securely stored and password protected and any information stored will be on an encrypted memory stick.

**What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?**
It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason or an explanation.

**Will I be paid for participating in the study?**
No payment will be made for participating in this study.

**What is the duration of the study?**
You will be required to take part in a maximum of 2 interviews and one group meeting (if necessary)

**Where will the study be conducted?**
The study will be conducted in the community room at Beachstream Primary School.

**Will the outcomes of the study be published?**
The outcomes of the study will be included as part of my Doctorate in Education course. It is possible that the outcomes may be published at a later date but anonymity and confidentiality will remain preserved and names and locations will be altered as a way of breaking the link between data and potentially identifiable stakeholders / schools.
Criminal Records Check
I, the researcher, have undergone a satisfactory criminal records check.

Contact for further information
Please do not hesitate to contact me if you want to discuss the research and/or require further information about the research. My contact details are:
emhametcalfe@tinyworld.co.uk
Telephone/Voicemail: 07900 682019

What if something goes wrong?
If, following the research, you require help or advice, please don’t hesitate to contact me (see above for details).

If you want to make a formal complaint about the conduct of this study you should contact the Head of the Research Office, Christie Building, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL.
Appendix 6

Parent / Carer Information Sheet

The School Council group at Beachstream Primary School is being invited to take part in a session at school which will form part of some work I am doing towards a Doctorate in Education research paper. As your child is a member of the School Council it is necessary for me to seek your consent before I can work with the School Council. I am hoping to interview the whole of the School Council in a group together with their teacher being present throughout the session.

Before you decide whether or not you are willing to sign the consent form it is important for you to understand why the study is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to give consent for your child to take part. Thank you for reading this.

Who will conduct the study?
Emma Metcalfe, The University of Manchester, School of Education, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL

Title of the study
A case study of an emerging community-oriented extended school – issues of process and policy

What is the aim of the study?
The aim of this study is to find out how schools and the local community work well together.

Why have I been chosen?
Your child has been chosen as they are part of the School Council Group. I will be focusing on Beachstream Primary School and interviewing children and adults so I can get an idea of what everybody thinks.

The other people I am hoping to interview are the Headteacher, extended school co-ordinator, children’s centre manager, 4 school council members, a Governor, a local ward Councillor and a Parent.

What will be happening?
I will be arranging to come into school and work with the school council during two of their sessions. The first time will be to answer some questions about what they think about how the school and the community work together. The second time (a while later) will be to ask if things have changed as a result of some of the conversations we have had. Hopefully all my questions will be answered in one visit each time, if not, I may need to go back and finish the remaining questions off with the group. I will be recording the sessions on a tape recorder (Dictaphone) so I can listen to and type the answers up later. I will not be using anybody’s real name so everyone will remain anonymous – that is so people cannot be identified by anyone else later.

177
There are no risks associated with these interviews and there are no right or wrong answers to the questions – it isn’t a test! It is just for me to find out people’s different views, ideas and suggestions.

**What happens to the data collected?**
All the information and data I collect will be used to help me with my study. All data will be kept in a safe, secure and locked cupboard. It will be kept securely for no longer than one year after degree result has been confirmed. It will then be shredded and destroyed. This is expected to be in 2015.

**How is confidentiality maintained?**
Individual names and the name of the school will be changed so people cannot easily be recognised. This is what usually happens when research is being done.

**What happens if I do not want my child to take part or if I change my mind?**
It is up to you to decide whether or not you would like your child to take part. If you do decide they can take part you will be asked to sign a consent form. Even if you do decide your child can take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason or an explanation.

**Will I be paid for agreeing to let my child take part in the study?**
No payment will be made for your child taking part in this study.

**How much will be child be involved in this study?**
If you agree your child (within the School Council group) will be part of 2 interviews

**Where will the interviews happen?**
The interviews will take place in school during a School Council session.

**Will the outcomes of the study be published?**
The outcomes of the study will be included as part of my Doctorate in Education course. It is possible that the outcomes may be published at a later date but as I said all names and details will be changed as a way of breaking the link between data, people and the school being identified.

**Contact for further information**
Please do not hesitate to contact me if you want to discuss this in more detail:
emmametcalfe@tinyworld.co.uk
Telephone/Voicemail: 07900 682019
Appendix 7

A case study of an emerging community-oriented extended school – issues of process and policy

Student: Emma Metcalfe

CONSENT FORM

If you are happy to participate please complete and sign the consent form below

1. I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above study and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

3. I understand that the interviews will be audio-recorded.

4. I agree to the use of anonymous quotes.

5. I agree that any data collected may be passed to other researchers.

6. I agree that any data collected may be published in anonymous form in academic books or journals.

I agree to take part in the above project

Name of participant __________________________ Date __________ Signature __________

Name of person taking consent __________________________ Date __________ Signature __________
Appendix 8

A case study of an emerging community-oriented extended school – issues of process and policy

Student: Emma Metcalfe

PARENT / CARER CONSENT FORM

If you are happy for your child to participate in this process which will be conducted during a School Council session please complete and sign the consent form below

1. I have read the information sheet on the above study and understand what the study is about.

2. I understand that I am giving permission for my child to take part in this and that I am free to withdraw that consent at any time without giving a reason.

3. I understand that the interviews will be tape-recorded.

4. I agree to these recordings being used for part of the research process, but all names being changed or removed.

5. I agree that any data collected may be passed to other researchers.

6. I agree that any data collected may be published in the future but with all names being changed to prevent people being recognised.

I agree to my child taking part in the above project

Name of child

Date

Signature

Name of parent / carer giving consent

Date

Signature
Appendix 9

Case Study Feedback Session
PowerPoint Slides

Emma Metcalfe
Feedback Session – Sandbrook.

A case study of an emerging community-oriented extended school – issues of process and policy.

Research Questions

• Whilst you have been at this school can you remember anything really good that happened which brought school and the local community together?

• If we knew that the school and community were working together to plan things for the future how do you think you would be involved?

• If we knew that the school and community were working together to plan things for the future to makes lives better for everyone, what sort of things do you think you would all be planning?

• If it was as good as that (the ideal situation discussed above) we may say that on a scale of 1-10 that scored a 10 - Think about your school now, at the moment where do you think your school is on that scale?

• What would need to be done to move that scale to a 10?
Appendix 9 (cont)

Case Study Feedback Session – notes and ideas

Ideas for follow up session with interviewees:

**Suggested list:**
Headteacher
Governor
Parent
Ward Councillor
Integrated CC Manager
Ext Sch Co-ordinator

**Feedback session**
- Get them thinking without alienating them
- Agree to action from possible meetings for future plans
- Need people to talk about what is being done – look at actions etc
- Where are people on the diagram?
- Think about where people could be – where would they like to be and how can they get there?
- Get them involved in analysis
- Don’t identify individuals – let them recognise cluster of things going on in one area – no right or wrong over placings

**Actions – Em**
- Set date for meeting at Beachstream– approx 1 hour – 11th Dec, 4pm)
- Prepare PowerPoint
- Short meeting to show what findings the research interviews brought up in relation to the title and interview questions
- Remind everyone of title of research - A case study of an emerging community-oriented extended school – issues of process and policy.
- Show diagram with 4 different points on and explain idea behind each one
- Show diagram indicating the anonymised different positioning of interviewees (no right or wrong position) – this is my interpretation based on the answers to the interview questions
- I don’t want people to identify themselves and others, but would like them to think about where they think they are and where they would like to be
- Does the diagram look ok to the group – were people aware of where others may be positioned?
- Does the spread of the placings work well or is there anything that you may want to do to alter them? Quick discussion and feedback.
- What could people do next – is there some kind of specific focus / vision or task needed or are you happy with where everyone is?
- Are there any individual issues that people may want more support from the group to achieve or work towards – any specific issues that are stopping the work from going forwards?
- Anything that is currently being done that anyone doesn’t feel involved in or doesn’t fully understand – has anyone voiced those concerns?
- Everyone scaled the work happening so far very positively and highly. But everyone (apart from one person) also said there was room for it to get it even better.
• Can that be done through working more as a group like this or what do people suggest?
• If I were to come back and interview everyone again in 6 months’ time what would I be seeing in relation to changes or improvements – people working towards their ideal...?
• Where does it go from here, how do we ensure that people feel involved and consulted on the development of the work?
Appendix 10

FAST Interview Questions

1. Can you tell me that you think has been interesting about the FAST programme?

2. Do you feel the programme has had a positive or negative influence on school and community relations?

3. In what way has the programme been positive / negative?

4. Can you describe a key event / moment that made it positive / negative for you?

5. What happened? What did people do / not do?

6. What was the outcome of that positive / negative? Was it the outcome you expected? Was it the outcome others expected?

7. Do you feel this has strengthened the links between school and the community or not?

8. How has this allowed the school to develop?

9. How has this allowed the community to develop?

10. As a consequence of those outcomes, what will happen next?
Appendix 11

Local Authority Interview Questions

1. Can you give me an outline of the FAST Programme?

2. Why was Beachstream chosen to pilot the work?

3. What are the aims of the programme in Beachstream?

4. What are the outcomes and success criteria for the programme?

5. How will you know the programme has been a success, what measures are in place, what will it look like?

6. Have the parents been able to take a lead on the programme?

7. Has this worked in the way it was planned to work?

8. What is the legacy of the programme for the parents and the local community – where will it go from here?
Appendix 12

Pilot Study Interview Questions

1. To what extent and in what ways does the school recognise and build on the assets that already exist within the community – prompts to explore; As well as being located within communities, does the school work alongside those communities and other stakeholders to add to the asset-base that may already be in existence?

2. To what extent and in what ways does the school involve the community and stakeholders in its work – prompts to explore; How open, democratic and inclusive is the school in relation to its community and other stakeholders – do its actions and beliefs signal positive messages to those involved as well as children, young people, parents and other stakeholders?

3. To what extent and in what ways does the school encourage co-productive planning as a means of informing future provision – prompts to explore; How keen is the school in bringing the community and other partners into the school as a way of planning future provision and building on strategies and support mechanisms for what the local communities and stakeholders see as being important?

4. Is it possible that community-oriented extended schools can provide a more asset-based model of school for disadvantaged children, young people, families and communities than ‘standard’ extended schools?
Appendix 13

Additional information relating to the FAST Programme

There are programme goals for the FAST work, each of which are broken down into smaller, more specific targets:

- Enhance family functioning
- Prevent the target child from experiencing school failure
- Reduce the stress that families experience from daily life
- Prevent substance abuse by the child and family

(Middlesex University, 2013, p.2/3)

Each weekly session should also cover six key elements:

- a meal shared as a family unit
- family communication games played at a family table
- time for couples or buddies
- a self-help parent group
- one-on-one parent-child time
- a fixed lottery that lets every family win once followed by a closing ritual.

These core components aim to strengthen the bonds within and between families, and between families and the schools and the community. (Middlesex University, 2013, p.3).

Once the families have completed the eight week programme they then ‘graduate’ and are able to attend follow-up meetings every month for the next two years – these meetings are called ‘FASTWORKS’. The idea behind these follow-up meetings is that they help to sustain and build upon relationships between families and individuals, as well as relationships between parents and children. By supporting each other parents then develop plans for the future of the group, which may include setting goals, networking opportunities and future agenda items.

Fast at Beachstream

The LA in this case study is keen to further develop the FAST programme across a number of schools in the area and so they have now allocated the roll out and development of the FAST programme to one person in particular with the intention being that at some point the
LA will develop this role to become a trainer for other areas across the Borough. Each FAST cycle costs around £2,000 to run in school but much of this is initial training costs which if it could be delivered in house would significantly reduce these costs. The LA have been impressed by the strong evidence base of the FAST programme and already local schools who have run the programme are encouraged by the relationships that have developed with families who previously may have been considered harder to reach.

FAST started in America and there is a very strong evidence base because they did random controlled trials. Participants in FAST have to do complete very in depth, questionnaires before they start on FAST and that information goes off to be analysed at Middlesex University. (LA Officer)

It involves recruiting 40 families in the school and these families have to have a child who is a FAST child. This is a child aged between 3-5 years but if the school struggles (some of the single form entry schools do struggle to meet this criteria) they extend the age to 8 years. The family is anyone who has a strong involvement with the child or who lives in the home, so it can be older brothers and sisters, younger brothers or sisters, grandparents as they look after the children quite a lot. Mum and Dad, single parents, anybody. So the group can be quite big. (LA Officer)

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Appendix 14

Characterisation of Beachstream Community Setting

The estate on which Beachstream is situated is on the outskirts of the town and was built in 1945 by German prisoners of war. There are currently around 4,000 homes and around 9,000 residents on the estate. The homes are generally red brick terraced, semi-detached and cottage flats built along narrow roads, which are connected by poorly lit alleyways. The estate is currently the subject of a long term improvement plan whereby many of the council houses are to be demolished and replaced with private housing.

The estate surrounding Beachstream is one of significant deprivation. Information taken from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for the Borough (2009) indicates that three of the Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) within the immediate locality of Beachstream are rated as being in the 3% most deprived LSOAs across England. Statistics from the ward profile within the local Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (2013) state that children aged 0-15 make up around 23% of the population on the estate; around 47% of the population own their own home, the rest is made up of council and private landlord housing; 93% of the population is white, with the around 4% (which is the largest minority group on the estate) being Pakistani and the average figure of families claiming out of work benefits is around 28%.

There are 2 primary schools on the estate – one being Beachstream, the other is a Roman Catholic primary school. There is also a Children’s Centre, based on the Beachstream site which offers a broad range of sessions for parents, carers and young children as well as a private day nursery. Citizens Advice sessions are also available one morning a week at the Children’s Centre.
There are 2 Church of England churches, 1 Roman Catholic church and 1 Elim Pentecostal Church on the estate, although a couple of these are on the outskirts of the estate, so not immediately close to the Beachstream site. The local housing group have a priority area team who are based at the Drop In centre on the estate. The Drop In centre also has a Job Club; other services available at the centre include internet access, help with completing CVs and a range of information sessions.

The Children’s Society also have a base on the estate offering Missing from Home support; Advocacy Services and Children’s Counselling. The Youth Service also run regular provision on the estate with mobile youth workers and a youth bus. There was previously a very busy community centre on the estate but due to changes in funding this provision no longer exists as it once did. The local tenants and residents group remains active, but does not receive the same funding it once did. The estate around Beachstream has been the target for significant amount of funding and pilot projects over the last decade and was once home to a vast range of voluntary and third sector organisations. However due to funding changes the majority of these activities and services now no longer exist. Much of this impressionistic information has been gathered whilst working in this area in my professional role over a number of years.
Appendix 15

Glossary of Acronyms

ABCD – Asset-Based Community Development
DCSF – Department for Children, Schools and Families
DfEE – Department for Education and Employment
DfES – Department for Education and Skills
FAST – Families and Schools Together
GONW – Government Office North West
LA – Local Authority
LSOA – Lower Super Output Areas
MBC – Metropolitan Borough Council
OFSTED – Office for Standards in Education
RAG – Red Amber Green rating
UK – United Kingdom