



partnerships for schools
building schools for the future

This case study demonstrates how Chafford Hundred Campus Business and Enterprise College has co-located services and meaningfully engaged the community to improve and maintain attainment and high standards.

Key project information

School: Chafford Hundred Business and Enterprise College
Age range: 11-16
No. of students: 810
Location: Suburban
School type: Trust
Specialisms: Business and Enterprise, Applied Learning and Gifted and Talented
Free school meals: 15.9 per cent
Ofsted: Good, Spring 2008
 Outstanding, Spring 2009 (Business Education)
Local authority: Thurrock

The role of creative and cultural partnerships in raising aspiration and attainment

Background

Chafford Hundred Campus has a vision to support each of its students in education, employment or training. Impressive academic results are supported through whole school values, a strong Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and a building that was designed to support 21st century learning. The school has also recognised the impact of culture and cultural learning on all aspects of their provision; improving aspiration and attainment and fulfilling the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda.

The school is continuing to facilitate their transformation through innovative co-location of and partnership with other services for children and young people, and through supporting community access to facilities and engagement with the school.

Chafford Hundred was served with a notice to improve in Spring 2007, and used the approaches above to improve quickly and radically, with some aspects of their school judged 'good' with

'outstanding' features by Spring 2008. In May 2009 OFSTED judged the school 'outstanding' for its business education and in September 2009 Chafford Hundred became a High Performing school with a specialism in Applied Learning and a lead school for Gifted and Talented.

Project description

Chafford Hundred Campus Business and Enterprise College in Essex is a relatively new and smaller than average secondary school of just over 800 students, with 12 in a specialist speech and language resource base for autistic students. The student intake is from the largely residential areas of Chafford Hundred and West Thurrock.

The campus is comprised of three different organisations, a primary school, library and the college. The suite of buildings were opened in 2004, although the school has been in existence since 2001.

The role of creative and cultural partnerships in raising aspiration and attainment

The college doors are open from 7am to 10pm every day during term time, with local groups and students using the outdoor facilities as well as the learning spaces and meeting room facilities in the evenings.

Over the past three academic years, Chafford Hundred Campus Business and Enterprise College has been striving to improve attainment, with some extraordinary successes. Their latest results include 93 per cent 5 A* to C grades, and 65 per cent 5 A* to C grades including English and Maths. Their CVA is 1032. This has been achieved through a realistic pragmatism about the type of curriculum that will be successful for the students, and the need to offer appropriate and trusted qualifications.

Historically, students and families in the Thurrock area have tended to choose vocational qualifications. Chafford Hundred has worked through their new curriculum to broaden horizons, and in the past year they have seen an increase in the number of students going on to Further Education and the range of subjects being taken up.

The school recognises that creative/cultural partnerships are a lever to further progress, evidenced by their acceptance onto the Royal Opera House Creative Partnerships' (ROHCP) Change School programme. The school see this partnership as an integral part of their journey to becoming an 'outstanding' school.

The curriculum at Chafford Hundred Campus is innovative, personalised and creative. It is flexible enough to allow students to take more ownership of their learning and allow pupil choice. In Years 7 and 8 the curriculum is based on the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) 21st Century Curriculum, featuring five competences:

1. Learning

2. Citizenship
3. Relating to people
4. Managing situations
5. Managing information

Chafford Hundred Campus teaches this integrated curriculum through topic lessons. The team has focused on the skills development and personalised learning/enquiry strands of the RSA model to do this. Students choose their own learning pathways, and if they wish they can start a range of GCSEs early, which means there are students who have completed or started GCSEs from different subjects in just Year 8.

As some students have finished their GCSE courses earlier than they would conventionally, Year 10 and 11 students have more choice from a wide range of academic, vocational, recreational and practical courses. In Year 10 all students complete one day of work experience every Friday, apart from the first and last Friday of the term when the students come back into school for Citizenship, Careers and PSHE workshops delivered by external speakers.

They are placed in a range of local businesses and

companies. Businesses are now approaching the school to offer internships and the Principal recognises the role of creative enterprises in offering insights and experiences in the cultural industries for students, alongside manufacturing, crafts and trades. This method of delivering Key Stage 4 over three years from Year 9 to Year 11 allows Chafford Hundred to offer approximately 45 subjects and design the curriculum for the individual. The range of subjects reflects the industrial needs of the local community.

The Royal Opera House (ROH) Production Park is due to open in Thurrock in September 2010 and there is high local awareness and anticipation of the opportunities that this presents.



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The curriculum is supported and shaped by the ICT available. The ICT capability and facilities were planned into the new buildings, on the basis that it would support individual learning and support young people with differing needs. The campus has a high-speed, secure network, which supports industry standard video-editing and computer aided design and a Wi-Fi network that works across the campus grounds. The Wi-Fi complements the flexibly designed learning spaces and frees up staff and students to work where they wish with laptops.

The student and community voice has shaped these successes. For example the weekly work experience, rather than a two week block, came from both businesses and students.

Co-construction of lessons was developed from self-evaluation. Students observe lessons, monitor and evaluate their own projects or go on learning walks with teachers. The Principal is clear that a successful school needs to be owned by its students and community, and that effective communication is essential to create trust and respect.

Chafford Hundred Campus has just been accepted as a Change School with the ROHCP and they will be continuing to explore how creative and cultural partners can help them to improve.

Chafford Hundred Campus is a hub for the community, a function fulfilled through the co-location of a library, primary school and nursery on the campus. The library has a varied and active programme of events and

Successes

- Education Business Award 2008: Chafford Hundred Campus was runner up in the 2008 national 'most improved school in the county award' which was sponsored by BT.
- June 2009: short-listed down to the last six in the Times Education Supplement Secondary School of the Year awards.
- Approximately 80 per cent of Chafford Hundred Campus's students went on to further education, approximately 15 per cent started work and about five per cent apprenticeships in 2009.
- Attendance is now running at 96 per cent.

5 A* – C GCSEs (per cent)

| 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 |
|------|------|------|------|
| 54 | 64 | 80 | 93 |

5 A* – C GCSEs including English and Maths (per cent)

| 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 |
|------|------|------|------|
| 16 | 54 | 59 | 65 |

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Conditions for success

- A Business and Enterprise College can be innovative and student-centred, as long as it takes account of the local context and researches what local communities and businesses need now and in the future.
- The vision for a school has to be communicated and shared with the stakeholders in order for it to be understood and embraced.
- It's essential to have sustainability built into any programme of innovation and change; this can be achieved through continuity and continuous improvement of staff that also support the vision.
- Specialist curricula work most effectively if they are fine tuned to be student-centred.
- The key message to convey to stakeholders is the value of education. This can be achieved by turning it into a question: what can education do for you?
- Be open minded as to what will be considered valuable for stakeholders. For example, structured internships were supported by parents in Chafford Hundred Campus because they are more vocational in nature and that is 'valued' education.

Potential pitfalls

- Idealism and the need to innovate has to be balanced with a need for sustainability to embed practice and thinking.
- It is more difficult to come back from a poor position until perceptions are changed, sometimes through external validation or recognition.
- Sustainable success grows slowly and needs time to build up ownership; effective communication and see tangible results.

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