

Study Support

Contributing to school improvement



Study support, also known as out of school hours learning, covers activities which take place outside normal school hours and which have a learning focus. Participation is voluntary. Study support can happen before or after the school day, at lunch and break times, at weekends and during school holidays.

Study support includes a wide range of activities such as:

- breakfast clubs
- homework and study clubs
- sports
- music and other creative arts
- learning about learning (study and thinking skills)
- opportunities to pursue particular interests (e.g. Information and Communications Technology and languages).

department for

education and skills

The benefits of study support

For young people

Young people enjoy taking part in study support. They can choose what activities to do or what clubs to attend, and appreciate the relaxed atmosphere which often helps them to relate to their peers and adults (often teachers) in a new way. There can also be significant benefits in terms of attainment – see benefits for schools below.

For teachers

Teachers enjoy the opportunity to get to know young people better in informal surroundings, and the freedom to experiment with new ways of teaching away from the confines of the classroom. Not all study support activities are run by teachers – classroom assistants, parents, community workers, older pupils, volunteers and a variety of others can be involved.

For schools

Research shows that young people who participate in study support activities do better than would have been expected from baseline measures in academic attainment. In addition, study support participants often show an improvement in their behaviour and attendance at school. Study support appears to be especially effective for students from minority ethnic communities.

For parents and carers

Most parents and carers want to support schools and help their children to do well. Many already work as volunteers in out of school clubs. Often the positive effects of the activities on the children will also motivate parents and carers – some of whom may themselves have had negative experiences of education.

Links with the wider education agenda

Study support is central to a number of government priorities relating to young people and education, including:

Every Child Matters

Every Child Matters (DfES, March 2004) reiterates the importance of personalisation within the context of allowing every child to have the opportunity to fulfil his or her potential. Study support is central to the achievement of this aim.

Secondary Education

A New Specialist System: Transforming Secondary Education (DfES 2003) reaffirms the place of study support in helping to raise achievement at secondary and transition levels. It restates the target that “By 2006, we want all schools to be providing some study support, be it breakfast clubs, after-school

clubs, homework clubs, summer schools...with more Playing for Success centres...”.

Primary Education

Excellence and Enjoyment: a strategy for primary schools (DfES 2003) similarly reaffirms the central role played by study support in raising achievement at primary level.

Personalised Learning

Study Support plays a crucial role in underpinning the Beyond the Classroom element of the Personalised Learning agenda.

Extended Schools

Extended schools are required to include study support as part of the offer to young people and parents. An Extended School is likely to be open to pupils, families and the wider community throughout the school day, before and after school hours, at weekends and during school holidays. In addition to study support, the services offered by the school might include childcare and learning and recreational activities for all members of the community.

Playing for success: a national study support initiative

Playing for Success is establishing out of school hours study support centres within top football and at other sports' clubs' grounds and venues. The focus of the centres

is on raising standards of literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology (ICT) amongst key stage 2 (age 7-11) and key stage 3 (age 11-14) pupils using the environment and medium of sport as motivational and curriculum tools. DfES is on track to meet the target of 100 Centres open by 2006.

For further information contact <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/playingforsuccess/>

Further information about study support

For further information, visit:
www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/studysupport
email: study.support@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

For an up-to-date list of our publications, visit our Library:
<http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/studysupport/docs/>

Information about study support is also available from our national partner organisations:

ContinYou, supporting and promoting new and existing study support provision:
www.continyou.org.uk

Quality in Study Support (QiSS), supporting and promoting improved quality in study support provision: www.qiss.org.uk

University of the First Age (UFA), supporting and promoting innovative learning methods, including out of hours:
www.ufa.org.uk

Children's University, supporting and promoting study support in the Primary Sector:
www.childrens-university.co.uk

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