



2007-2008  
*Increasing Voluntary  
and Community Sector  
Service Delivery*



## **Case Study No. 8 – Croydon Supplementary Education Project**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Croydon Supplementary Education Project (CSEP) is a not-for-profit registered charity established in 1982. It provides supplementary education as a Saturday School for 150 children aged 4–18 years of age within the borough of Croydon, targeting the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) community. The school operates 30 Saturdays per year during term time providing two hours of educational support in class sizes of 10 students, in morning and afternoon sessions. There is currently a waiting list of 220 children.

CSEP's educational support enables children and young people to reach their full potential by developing skills and knowledge, to improve their long-term life chances.

Education provision supports English, Maths and Science for Key Stages 1 to 4. The project also provides an intervention service for the low educational attainment of BME students to correct the imbalance that currently exists in mainstream education, whilst supporting the cultural heritage and identity of its students and parents. This includes support through the Pacemakers Mentoring programme.

CSEP is one of the most established supplementary education providers in Croydon, with a good reputation of delivering services in education to minority groups in the voluntary sector. It also offers various life long learning programmes for adults.

In addition, the project offers various services to the wider community in Croydon, including: Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills, Curriculum Vitae (CV) workshops, basic skills, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), drug, alcohol and gun crime awareness. The project has provided basic ICT sessions to 1,040 adult learners in the community.

### **Management**

There is strong input from the 12 management committee members who provide support and guidance for the project which is run by operations manager Sasha Rhoden. CSEP employs 27 teachers to deliver

supplementary education on Saturdays and five staff, including the Operations Manager look after the day to day running of the project.

This case study will highlight how CSEP's relationship with the council, which goes beyond the direct funding of services, has increased service delivery in various ways.

## **BRIEF DESCRIPTION**

### **Funding**

CSEP was commissioned in 2004 by Croydon Council to run a pilot mentoring programme for disaffected young people at risk of exclusion. It successfully delivered the pilot, and was then commissioned to continue delivery of the Pacemakers Mentoring programme for three years.

Some of the programme's key aims are to: increase aspirations; develop life skills; improve communication skills; realise visions and raise self esteem. Mentees are matched with a qualified mentor and meet fortnightly. To date, 25 mentors have been trained, 22 mentees are currently matched and ongoing training for mentors is provided. There is a rolling intake of mentees.

Croydon Council provides £35k funding per year for the Saturday School and £12k per year towards the mentoring programme. CSEP also has access to other funding through the council, such as the Reaching Out grant which supported its recent Black History Bus Tour project.

### **Adding Capacity**

Previous longer-term funding and the funding of core costs for the Saturday School have assisted sustainability, enabling CSEP to plan and expand projects systematically. It has been able to attract other funding to support its projects and help improve outcomes for beneficiaries.

For example, with support from the council and its designated project workers, CSEP has gained £12k over two years (06-08) from the Local Network Fund to deliver further training to the mentors, support another 10 mentees and carry out some much needed research work on outcomes for participants.

CSEP has previously been awarded New Opportunities Fund and Lottery grants, and recently had two rounds of Home Office Connected Fund money to run Gun and Gang Crime initiatives for young people. CSEP applications were all supported by key persons in the council.

Sasha Rhoden, Operations Manager says: "In addition to core funding of these two projects, we are supported by the council in various ways. For example, when we secured additional funds for the mentoring project, we were able to use the Town Hall to train our mentors. That really helps us to make the most of the little pots of money out there."

The council provides free CRB checks for volunteers, free child protection training for volunteers and teachers tailored for a community group setting and access to other subsidised or low cost training (health and safety, child care and management).

Mr Rhoden says: "The success of the Beacon Award has certainly enhanced our reputation of being able to deliver what is needed. With council approval and support we are able to address more of the current issues by pulling in more money."

## **GOOD PRACTICE POINTS**

### **Continuous Support and Feedback**

The council's continuous support and follow-up by its project workers and liaison officers has provided additional expertise and capacity to CSEP.

Regular meetings with community liaison officers and project managers and direct access to key decision makers (via meetings, telephone and e-mail correspondence), gives CSEP opportunities to highlight emerging trends and issues and indicate forthcoming priorities.

Council representatives provide support for all of CSEP's activities. This is demonstrated by senior officers and councillors attending and often speaking at events.

### **Direct Commissioning**

"Direct commissioning of services by community groups and voluntary organisations who can deliver it is a positive thing, bearing in mind organisations are not necessarily savvy enough to prove they are the best at it," says Mr Rhoden. "The council know we have good ideas but don't necessarily have the full resources."

He adds: "We are able to take our ideas and the communities' views directly to people who matter. We help the council to achieve its educational targets by getting the communities to support these goals. We are the bridge between the community - what's going on with disaffected people - and the council.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION AND REFERENCES**

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